

Clearing vegetation on a road verge

There are occasions when council will approve a permit to remove or damage vegetation on the road verge, such as during building, renovating or constructing a driveway.

The road verge, also known as the nature strip or road reserve, within our region generally consists of grass, footpath and a council provided street tree.

To apply, you must complete the permit application form titled **'Verge Activities on Council Land – Clearing Vegetation Application.'**

Each permit application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. A non-refundable application fee applies and must be paid on lodgement of application.

A bond may also be applicable depending the extent of the works and will be quoted on assessment of the application. A bond is not payable until your application has been assessed and approved.

A fee is also applicable where council is required to deliver replacement tree planting to offset Cleared vegetation.

Why is a permit required?

A permit is required so council can assess the circumstances and ensure community safety is upheld and the road verge function is not compromised.

Services such as water, sewerage, power and telecommunications may be located within the road verge and can be damaged during digging activities. A permit also ensures that under and above ground utilities have been checked prior to any works being approved.

Certain activities conducted on the road verge require a local law approval under *Sunshine Coast Regional Council Subordinate Local Law No.1 (Administration) 2016 Schedule 4 - Alteration or improvement to local government controlled areas and roads.*

Where access to the road verge is required by a utility company, they will often cause damage to the surface area or surrounding infrastructure and usually re-establish this area with turf. They do not normally cover costs to reinstate additional beautification or infrastructure treatments.

What type of requests would likely be approved?

A permit application may be granted for clearing vegetation or street trees assessed as "low value". Each permit application is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Note: infrastructure and landscaping approved through the development assessment process is exempt from this permit.

Public liability insurance

Where a permit application is approved, public liability insurance of \$2 million is required for clearing vegetation on the road verge.

Public liability insurance is required to protect the residents' interest should anything happen on council managed or controlled land where you intend to conduct activities. This will ensure that you, and anyone traversing the road verge is protected in the case of an accident or incident. Your home insurance company may provide public liability insurance.

Why is there a bond?

The purpose of a bond is to cover any damage to existing infrastructure or vegetation and varies in accordance with level of risk and activity type.

On assessment of the application a bond will be quoted and is payable prior to works commencing. The bond is refunded once the activity is complete, photos have been submitted of the completed works and council is satisfied that there has been no damage to existing vegetation or infrastructure outside of what was permitted.

Street Trees

Council has a long term goal to establish a healthy and sustainable street tree network across the region.

Adequate Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) must be established around existing trees near to the proposed works. TPZ consider both the crown and root area of a tree that requires protection for long-term viability.

The below figure provides an example of adequate TPZ to protect existing trees.

Figure 1: Adequate Tree Protection Zones



Dial Before You Dig

Council encourages residents to Dial Before You Dig. This free service provides information on underground utilities to ensure there are no services located within your proposed garden that may be impacted.

Visit www.1100.com.au or phone 1100.

How do I lodge my application?

Applications can be lodged at council's customer service centres or via council's website. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the documentation provided and suitability of the proposed works.

If necessary, a site visit may be conducted by an authorised council.

What type of requests would not likely be approved?

Council aims to maintain and enhance the regions natural assets, liveability and environmental credentials through preserving road verge amenity and street trees. As such, the following requests would not likely be approved:

- where the proposed clearing may cause a hazard or risk to the environment or members of the public

- clearing for views or aesthetics reasons
- clearing to allow vehicles to park on the nature strip
- clearing or removing vegetation / street trees assessed as "medium to high value"
- clearing vegetation in an area other than the road verge adjoining the applicant's property i.e. parks, environmental reserves, dunal or foreshore areas

More information

For more information refer to council's [website](#).

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