



# DRAFT VERGE MOWING POLICY

## PURPOSE

This policy outlines Cumberland Council's scope of activities in the road verge and clarifies the property owner's requirements regarding improvements and maintenance of this public land. To contribute to the community's amenity residents are to maintain the verge area, generally directly in front of their property. In most instances, this will include mowing of lawn grass and their driveway crossing.

The policy aims to:

- confirm and recognise the community's role in maintaining nature strips;
- define the extent of Council's involvement in the mowing footpath/nature strips;
- establish the mechanism for the creation of a Guideline for Nature strips and verge mowing.

## SCOPE

- This policy applies to all nature strips within the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA).
- This policy does not extend to the mowing of grass or landscaping on private property, which is the responsibility of the owner or occupier of the property.
- This policy incorporates Council's powers under Sections 98, 138 & 218 of the Roads Act and applies to all road reserves of which Council is the Road Authority, as defined by the Act, or has care and control.

## DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Nature Strip or Street Verge	Means any Council owned and/or controlled land located between a constructed road and a parcel of private property, that is, the street verge. It is generally that portion of the street verge that is grassed and may contain street trees, driveways and/or footpaths. It does not include land reserves for a public purpose or bushland.
Key Strategic Locations/Areas	Means main roads and locations such as town centres, strip shops, community facilities and high-profile public domain areas where a grassed nature strip or general maintenance requirement exist.

## PRINCIPLES

**Consistency:** The approach outlined in this Policy ensures consistency in service delivery standards and expectations across the Local Government Area.

**Equity:** All owners/residents of the Local Government Area are treated in equal fashion.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Council will not mow vegetated road verges and nature strips fronting private properties, commercial properties or properties owned by government authorities, except in key strategic locations and areas or where the service is provided under the *Verge Mowing Assistance Program*.
- Council generally relies on the civic pride of its residents and property owners to help maintain the local amenity of their neighbourhoods by mowing the grassed nature strips adjoining their properties.
- Council will continue to provide assistance to members of the community to maintain grassed nature strips in set circumstances and subject to certain eligibility criteria under the *Verge Mowing Assistance Program*.
- It is acknowledged that not all nature strips are grassed, as not all residents wish to have a grassed nature strip and in certain locations grass is not able to grow on nature strips.
- Council undertakes to maintain nature strips or verge areas that meet any of all the following requirements:
  - Nature strips directly adjacent to or fronting Council facilities, parks and reserves.
  - Nature strips at key strategic locations and areas, or as defined in any Guideline created to support this Policy.
  - Nature strips where the resident or owner of the property is unable to undertake the work themselves and has made an application to Council and had it approved under the *Verge Mowing Assistance Program*.
- The frequency and level of maintenance provided by Council will be determined with consideration to operational requirements and budget considerations. Maintenance may be carried out by Council or other contractors / service providers engaged by Council.
- All areas not maintained by Council are to be maintained by the owner and/or residents of the private property. Grassed nature strips are to be mowed regularly by residents, occupiers or property owners and be kept neat and tidy. This ensures a safe pedestrian environment and a presentable streetscape is maintained.
- It is important to note that utility service authorities such as water, gas, electricity, fire services and telecommunications, as well as Council have access rights to the road reserve. These service authorities and Council may be required to excavate the nature strip periodically. Residents who choose to modify the nature strip area will not be compensated for any loss of vegetation or landscaping items and will be required to reinstate the road verge at their own expense.
- Should the adjoining property owner / resident wish to have a treatment other than a

## Verge Mowing Policy

standard grass nature strip, they must seek Council permission and comply with all requirements of Council. Council will not maintain or assist with funding in these circumstances, and cannot guarantee that it or other agency's works will not impact this area.

- To support the implementation of this Policy, Council has developed a *Nature Strip and Verge Mowing Guideline*.

### RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)

Roads Act 1993 (NSW)

### RELATED DOCUMENTS AND COUNCIL POLICY

Nature Strip and Verge Mowing Guideline

### AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

<b>Policy Number</b>	<i>[Policy number]</i>
<b>Policy Owner</b>	<i>Director Works and Infrastructure</i>
<b>Date Adopted</b>	<i>3 July 2019 (and Council Resolution No.)</i>
<b>Version No</b>	<i>0.1</i>
<b>TRIM Number</b>	<i>HC-17-04-4</i>
<b>Review Date</b>	<i>July 2021</i>