

Victoria's Largest and Most Vibrant Municipality

Naturestrip Guidelines



City of
Casey

December 2010

Introduction

A naturestrip, or roadside verge, is the narrow strip of grassed land owned by Council at the front boundary of a property. This is public land and contains underground pipes or cabling for services and utilities such as electricity, gas, water and telephone.

The naturestrip is an iconic feature of the Australian streetscape. It is part of our heritage and way of life; many a conversation has taken place on the naturestrip, helping neighbours become friends and building strong local communities.

Naturestrips are an integral part of the City of Casey's urban environment and can significantly increase the aesthetic and environmental appeal of Casey's streets and neighbourhoods.

There are many different types of naturestrips in the City of Casey and these guidelines are designed to assist you with any planting that you may wish to undertake on the naturestrip outside your property.



Naturestrips offer a range of benefits including:

- ◆ Reducing the amount of pollutants and storm water runoff before water enters the City's drains and surrounding waterways.
- ◆ Helping to cool the surrounding area; as natural surfaces do not get as hot as concrete, bitumen or plastic surfaces with less reflective surface area than roads or pavements.
- ◆ Supporting the growth of street trees and plants, and, therefore, increasing biodiversity and aesthetic appeal in urban areas. Street trees can also reduce household energy costs, especially during warmer months, by providing shade and moderating temperature.
- ◆ Adding value to your home through the creation of a hardy, water wise, low growing and low maintenance garden.
- ◆ Increasing the sustainability of your home and garden. Naturestrip plantings can act as green filters to help combat climate change and reduce your carbon output – every little bit counts.



Before landscaping your naturestrip, there are some things you need to consider:

- ◆ Always call 'Dial Before You Dig', or visit the website www.1100.com.au, to find out about the pipes and cabling under your naturestrip.
- ◆ Do not use rocks, pebbles, bollards, sculptures, pavers or built up edges or permanent structures such as fencing on your naturestrip as they can be a tripping hazard.
- ◆ Do not use any plants considered to be environmental weeds (see the City of Casey's *Weed Identification Guide* for clarification).
- ◆ Do not use plants that are prickly or sharp.
- ◆ If you are renting the property, you must have permission from the owner/ landlord before undertaking any work.
- ◆ Consideration must be given to sight lines for vehicles using the street, access for pedestrians, bicycles, prams, wheelchairs, motorised scooters and Australia Post representatives. (*Please note that your letterbox should be on the boundary of your property, positioned on the fence next to your driveway see www.auspost.com.au for the perfect letterbox specifications*).
- ◆ If you do not have a footpath, your letterbox will need to be at least 1.2 metres from the back of the kerb.
- ◆ Plants should not exceed 500 mm, including the flowering height.
- ◆ Let your neighbours know what you are planning to do.
- ◆ Ensure there is enough space for your rubbish and recycling bins, and hard rubbish collection.
- ◆ Sub-surface irrigation systems or above ground irrigation systems are not allowed.
- ◆ Select hardy plants as watering is only to be done by hand.
- ◆ Be cautious when considering the potential use of herbicides or pesticides on your naturestrip as these products may have unintended and detrimental effects on the local environment.
- ◆ Do not obstruct or plant around fire hydrants, fire plugs or access pits.
- ◆ There is to be no planting within 1200 mm from the back of the kerb. This area must be kept clear as a pedestrian movement zone. The pedestrian movement zone is to be granitic material, graded mulch or grass. If using graded mulch it must be laid at least 75 mm deep. If using granitic material it must be compacted to a depth of 75 mm.
- ◆ No planting or garden beds are permitted within 10 metres of a road intersection, to allow sufficient sightlines from the roads.

- ◆ The maximum length of continuous garden bed, or planting, is 20 metres before a break of 1.5 metres is required to allow pedestrian access to properties from cars parked on the road (driveways count as a break).
- ◆ In addition, planting or garden beds must be kept 500 mm clear from each driveway.

Please note that Council has the right to remove any landscaping deemed inappropriate under these guidelines

Planning Your Naturestrip

Planning your naturestrip is the best way to start. Remember that Council will care for your street tree but all other associated landscaping costs, including ongoing maintenance of the naturestrip, are borne by the resident.

It is also important to note that service providers, such as telecommunications, water, power or gas companies, may access their services located in your naturestrip at any time, without notice. This can often be due to an emergency or essential maintenance work, and there is no responsibility for any landscaping to be replaced should damage occur. You should also check your insurance policy to see if it covers naturestrips.



Rocks such as these are inappropriate on naturestrips as they are unstable under foot and a safety hazard.

Plant Selection

- ◆ Indigenous plants (native plants that are local to your area), such as the Tall Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia stricta*), are easy to grow as they have already adapted to the soil, climate and other local conditions. They include attractive wildflowers and groundcovers, and are often available in tube stock which is more cost effective and quicker to establish. Of course, there are also numerous native plants that may also perform well on your nature strip; the Australian Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne has a large selection and is open seven days a week if you would like to take a look before planting your own.
- ◆ Free, expert advice on plant selection is available from the Volunteer Master Gardeners at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, and comprehensive planting lists are available to give you suggestions and further ideas for other areas of your home garden.
For more information visit www.rbg.vic.gov.au/rbg_cranbourne.
- ◆ There are many low-growing plants available ranging from succulents such as *Sedum spp.*, hardy herbs such as Thyme and native ground covers such as Creeping Boobialla (*Myoporum parvifolium*).
- ◆ Lawn is fine but you will find that it requires more maintenance (including mowing), water and fertiliser than most native plants. Artificial turf is not recommended for naturestrips as it offers no intrinsic value to the environment and also requires ongoing maintenance.

The City of Casey's *Indigenous Plant Guide*, which includes a list of local indigenous nurseries in your area, is available from www.casey.vic.gov.au/indigenousplantguide.



The *Bulbine Bulbosa*, Bulbine Lily is a beautiful lily indigenous to the City of Casey.

Perhaps the most important consideration when choosing plants for your naturestrip is to avoid environmental weeds, including plants like Agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox ssp. orientalis*) and English Violets (*Viola odorata*), which invade bush land and threaten indigenous biodiversity.



Sedum sp. and *Echeveria sp.* make colourful, low growing water wise ground covers.



Scaevola albida, Purple Fan flower is a long flowering, hardy native ground cover.

The City of Casey, Cardinia Shire Council and the City of Greater Dandenong have a combined *Weed Identification Guide* which can be collected from Council's Customer Service Centres or viewed online at www.casey.vic.gov.au/environment.



Myoporum parvifolium, Creeping Boobialla.

Any garden by definition is a maintained environment, and this includes your naturestrip, so it is important to keep it weed free, with no foliage on the kerb or foot path, remove rubbish and consider any fire hazards, especially during the warmer months.

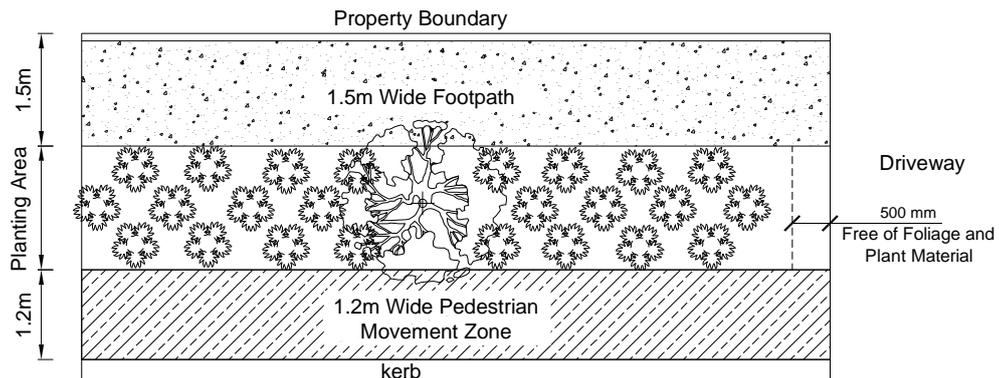
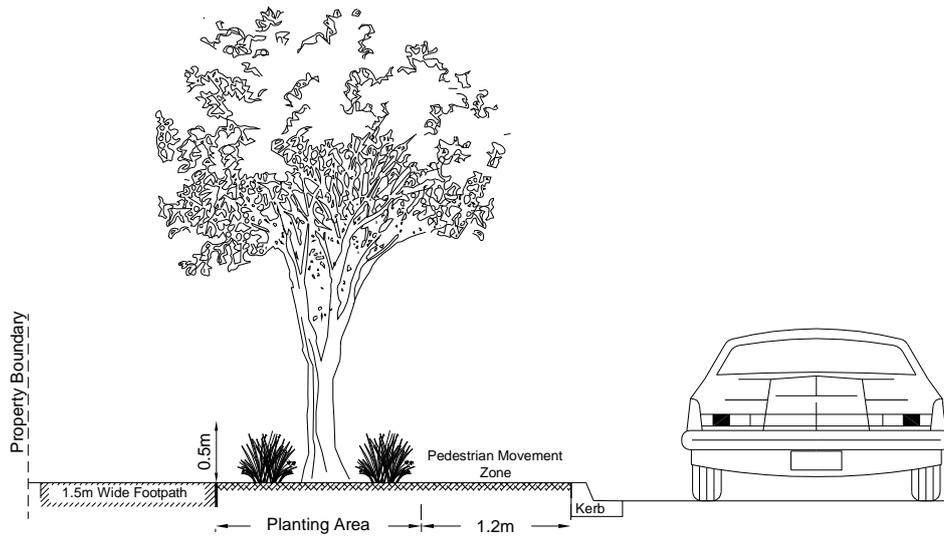


Bractyscome multifida 'Cut Leaf Daisy'
Eremophila glabra 'Kalbarri Carpet'
are native, low growing ground covers.

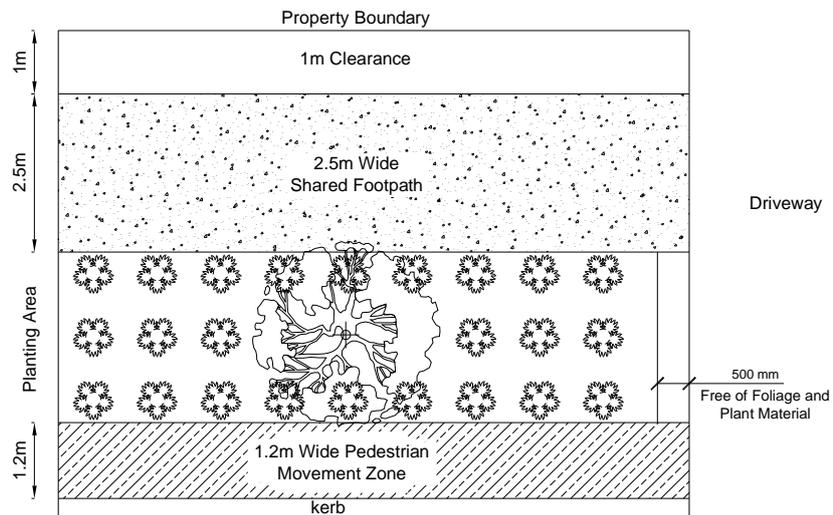
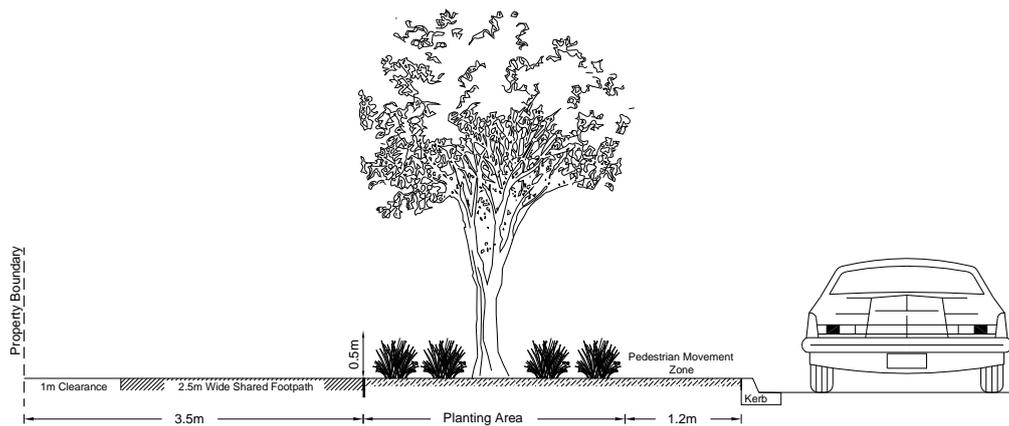


Chrysocephalum apiculatum, the Common Everlasting is an indigenous plant with bright yellow button flowers in spring.

Example of a Naturestrip with a 1.5 metre Footpath

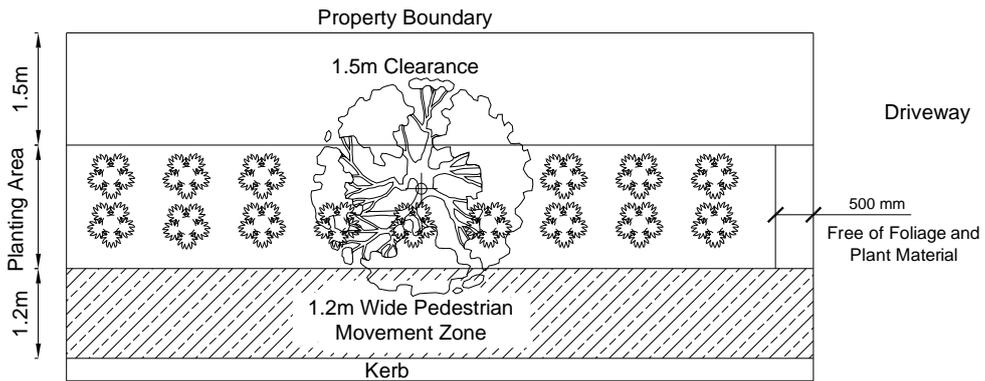
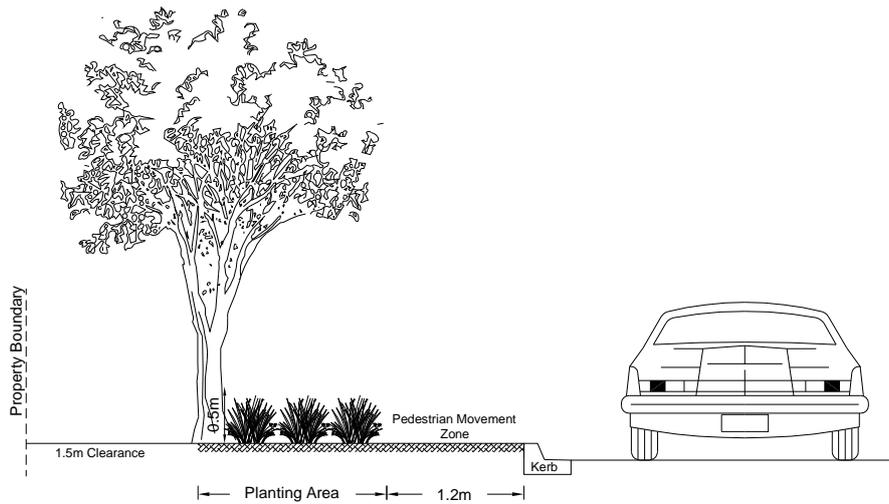


Example of a Naturestrip with a 2.5 metre Footpath





Example of a Naturestrip without Footpath



Customer Service Centres

Cranbourne
Centro Cranbourne

Narre Warren
Magid Drive

Narre Warren South
Amberly Park
Shopping Centre

Telephone: 9705 5200
Facsimile: 9704 9544

TTY: 9705 5568
TIS: 131 450
(Translating and
Interpreting Service)

Magid Drive
PO Box 1000
Narre Warren VIC 3805

Email: caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au

Website: www.casey.vic.gov.au