



# Nature Strip Guidelines

ANALYSIS OF PHASE TWO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

FULL REPORT

JULY 2022



Prepared by  
Global Research Ltd  
For the City of Port Phillip



**Global Research**  
Turning Information Into Insight



**Global Research**

150 Office Rd

Merivale

Christchurch 8014

New Zealand

+64 3 355 4562

[www.globalresearch.nz](http://www.globalresearch.nz)

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## Executive summary

The City of Port Phillip is undertaking a review of its existing Nature Strip Guidelines, which were prepared in 2013. The purpose of the NSG is to provide clear direction on how the community can garden on nature strips within the municipality, while ensuring nature strips remain safe and functional and that street trees are protected

The first stage of community engagement was carried out in December 2021 to February 2022. Following the extensive feedback received, the guidelines were revised and the community was able to comment on the revised draft guidelines from 17 June 2022 to 8 July 2022. This report contains the analysis of the feedback received during the second phase of community engagement.

Feedback from the second phase of engagement consisted of 10 online surveys through the City of Port Phillip Have Your Say website and 12 email submissions.

### Key findings

- The majority of the responses showed that the revised guidelines were still perceived as too restrictive. People felt that the extent of the clearances meant the guidelines would still limit or prohibit planting on smaller nature strips. Some respondents suggested this excluded the majority of verges in Port Phillip, with consequent losses for social wellbeing and the environment.
- These restrictions were viewed as at odds with expressed community wishes, with some feeling that Council was not genuinely willing to listen to the community on this matter.
- Respondents variously called for more flexibility, smaller clearances (offering specific proposals, e.g., 10% of the nature strip width rather than fixed measurements), more variation in allowed plant heights, or for mechanisms to find options that suit different contexts.
- It was generally argued that the restrictions around trees were too stringent, and that more planting could be enabled without harming tree health. Various suggestions were made as to how this could be managed.
- The evidence base for the guidelines was questioned, with respondents arguing that more convincing evidence was needed to justify the restrictions. Respondents wanted rationales to be transparent and all supporting documents to be publicly accessible.
- Compliance of existing gardens was raised as a concern, with respondents wanting further “crystal clear” reassurance that established gardens would be safe and requesting a clearly laid out process for how compliance would be managed. It was suggested that targeted community consultation should be a key part of this.
- A few positive comments praised the “helpful” meetings, the improved guidelines, or presented a counterpoint argument noting that accessibility needed to be prioritized over gardens.

## Introduction

### Background

The City of Port Phillip is undertaking a review of its existing Nature Strip Guidelines (NSG), which were prepared in 2013. Since that time, the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a significant increase in the interest in nature strip gardening across the City of Port Phillip. The revised NSG provide clear direction on how the community can garden on nature strips within the municipality, while ensuring nature strips remain safe and functional. Consultation was carried out on the first draft of the NSG from December 2021 to 13 February 2022. The guidelines were then revised, incorporating feedback from the community, and a second stage of consultation was carried out on the revised draft from 17 June to 8 July 2022.

Feedback from the second stage of community engagement has been considered in the preparation of the updated NSG which will be taken to an Ordinary Meeting of Council for consideration by Councillors. Community members can register to speak at this meeting.

### Engagement Overview

#### Stage one

The first stage of community engagement on the draft NSG occurred from December 2021 to 13 February 2022. Extensive feedback was received, with over 500 survey responses, 36 email submissions, and over 5,000 signatures to a community petition.

#### Stage two

As a result of the interest generated and the substantial volume of feedback received during the first stage of community engagement, Council decided to undertake a second stage of engagement on a revised draft of the NSG. The second stage of community engagement on the revised draft NSG was held from 17 June to 8 July 2022 and included two in-person consultation sessions and an opportunity to make a submission or ask questions through Council's Have Your Say website. There were also separate meetings with community members.

#### Stage two engagement reach

- 10 Have Your Say surveys
- 12 email submissions
- 18 questions asked in the open question forum on Have Your Say
- 751 views and 460 visitors to Have Your Say

## Analysis method and results presentation

Three questions were asked of survey respondents. Additional emails were analysed within the same framework as the survey. Global Research analysts read each comment received from the community and coded them into themes and topics. These are presented below.

Direct quotes from respondents' comments are included within the discussion to illustrate the flavour of community views. Comments have been included verbatim; however, obvious spelling or grammatical errors have been amended for clarity.

\*Note that as there were only a small number of respondents, and a substantial proportion of responses were email submissions which did not include demographic details, no demographic data has been included in the report.





## What do you like about the draft nature strip guidelines?

### Section summary

- > There were more negative than positive comments in answer to this question, with all respondents leaving fairly short comments.
- > Those who left critical comments condemned the second draft as still too restrictive and felt that the concerns of the community had not been adequately addressed.
- > A small number offered praise of the guidelines for various reasons.

### Negative comments

9 comments

Several people took the opportunity to state what they didn't like about the guidelines. The two main points raised were that the guidelines remained too restrictive and would inhibit planting, or simply that the Council did not appear to be listening to the community and taking their previous feedback on board.

*There have been changes made but Draft 2 still doesn't allow residents to have a street garden on all but the hugest of nature strips that have no trees and utilities.*

*I feel very strongly about street gardening. I enjoy the beauty of our local residents caring for the garden on the nature strip in front of the home in which they live. I have written in on many occasions sharing my deep concerns for the proposed Nature Strips Guidelines and know many other residents have indeed voiced their equally deep concerns. Why is the Council not listening?*

*Work has been done by the Melbourne Pollinator corridor team & it should be looked at - they've done a lot of good & hard work & know what they're talking about - having consulted experts - so be reasonable & take onboard what they are telling you.*

### Positive comments

4 comments

People commended the guidelines for different reasons, all in relatively short statements. One person noted their appreciation for the guidelines' recognition of accessibility needs and the impacts street gardens have on some people. One felt Council was recognising the value of street gardens, while another categorised the work as "a welcome initiative" which they would follow with "interest and enthusiasm". Lastly, one email submission acknowledged Council for incorporating community feedback into the revisions.

*It appears to consider accessibility which is important for those living with disability who are currently struggling with the current expansion of street gardens.*

*The 'revised' draft guidelines in our view are a great step forward on what was provided before, and it is nice to see that some genuine feedback has been listened to and acted upon.*





## Is there any part of the guidelines you disagree with?

### Section summary

- > The most prominent reason people disagreed with the guidelines was that they remained too restrictive or “one-size-fits-all” and would limit or prohibit planting on smaller nature strips. Some respondents suggested this would exclude the majority of verges in Port Phillip. These restrictions were viewed as at odds with expressed community wishes, and as not recognising the many social and environmental benefits of nature strip gardens.
  - o Respondents variously called for more flexibility, smaller clearances (offering specific proposals or suggesting percentages rather than fixed measurements), more variation in allowed plant heights, or for mechanisms to find options that suit different contexts.
  - o It was argued that the restrictions around trees were too stringent, and that more planting could be enabled without harming the tree. Various suggestions were made as to how this could be managed.
  - o The evidence base for the guidelines was questioned, with respondents arguing that clearer evidence was needed to justify the restrictions.
  - o Compliance of existing gardens was raised as a concern, with respondents wanting further explicit reassurance that beloved established gardens would be safe, and requesting a clearly laid out process for how compliance would be managed.

### General comments about the Guidelines

37 comments

#### The revised guidelines are still too prescriptive and limiting (14)

Several respondents argued that the revised draft was still insufficiently flexible to enable nature strip gardening across different contexts in Port Phillip. Some of these comments were strongly critical, describing the guidelines as “anti-community participation”, or stating that they will “effectively ban any future nature strip gardens through most of Port Phillip.”

*We need to have fewer restrictions on plant heights and distances/gaps. Most of our nature strips are narrower than any of the guidelines permit. This is a huge loss of quality of life for ourselves and our children. We have very small house blocks and apartments, we need nature strip gardens much more than other suburbs which are less cramped. We pay very high rates and get so little. Please make the guidelines more flexible and enable more planting or we will be stuck in our tiny boxes that pass for homes with no nature.*

*I must emphasise that the main problem is that the guidelines as they stand will effectively ban new nature strip gardens from most streets within the City of Port Phillip (other than those with the luxury of wide planting expanses in nature strips).*

Where respondents expanded, they argued that either clearance areas needed to be smaller to allow planting on narrow strips, or that blanket, one-size-fits-all rules simply would not work and there should be flexibility or mechanisms in place to allow gardens in different contexts. One person proposed minimum setbacks (discussed in “Clearances” below) and suggested it could be left to resident’s common sense to enlarge them where needed.

*Blanket rules and regulations do not work well for local communities - they do not cater for nuance and the issues are rarely "black and white" so flexibility and mechanisms for compromise and mediation are essential.*

*There is nothing about mechanisms for flexibility and mediation to cater for situations where local groups want to have the blanket rules adjusted to suit their special circumstances*

### Greater focus on enabling overall goals and benefits of gardening (9)

In a similar vein to the comments discussed above, several respondents felt that the many social and environment benefits of nature strip gardens were not sufficiently recognised and enabled in the guidelines. Comments detailed the enjoyment residents gained from the appealing streetscapes, the deepened social connections, and the environmental benefits of increased plant diversity throughout the streets. They expressed fears that these would be diminished under the new, stricter guidelines.

One respondent stated there should be a strategic preamble regarding Council's intention and goals, while another noted that there was nothing about supporting or advising community groups to set up gardens. A couple of comments argued that the guidelines were at odds with Council’s position on sustainability and community participation.

*In the 12 years I've lived in South Melbourne, they have been the single most important source of community building I have experienced. And it cost Council nothing. Until you decided to interfere. I simply cannot understand why the City of Port Phillip appears hellbent on their removal and the destruction of the social fabric they support.*

*Council's obstructive attitude to street gardening is hypocritical and makes a mockery of its 'Sustainable' aspirations. It is also completely out of step with the growing momentum for real, multi-faceted action to avert the effects of global warming.*

### Changes are insufficient and do not incorporate community feedback (8)

Several comments were made arguing that the changes in the second draft were only minor and did not sufficiently address the strongly expressed views of the community, with the document remaining “unworkable.” The revised guidelines were described as “totally out of step with the wishes of the community”, with comments urging Council to collaborate with the community and gardeners to come up with a document that works for everyone.

*This has clearly been a difficult task for Council to come to grips with and it seems an adversarial situation has developed. It can only be hoped that a reassessment of these guidelines can take place and room made for the responsible encouragement of street gardens.*

*A clear and obvious way to get around all of the above and create a workable document for both council and residents is to look at what is being done by the street gardeners and write a set of guidelines around that. Work with the street gardeners. Work with the residents.*

### Clarity of guidelines – images and language (4)

The terminology and use of diagrams in the guidelines were discussed by a small number of respondents, all of whom generally felt there could be greater clarity and consistency.

One email submission suggested the guidelines could be a “clear and crisp” three-page document with one page each for “text reflecting the vibe from Thursday’s meeting morphed with v2’s vision”, operational details around heights (with their proposals discussed below in “Clearances”), and one page for diagrams, noting that diagrams should be included to show tree squares, intersections and pedestrian crossings. They also suggested more clarity around the terminology used for tree squares and raised edged gardens.

Two people noted that the images and diagrams used should be consistent with the guidelines while reflecting the real context of the city. One characterised the current diagrams depicting large nature strips as representing only a small sample of nature strips and therefore “disingenuous”. The other observed that an image shown in a meeting showed planting right up to the base of a street tree, and that as the owner of this garden was “the most qualified in the room”, it “sends a fairly strong message” that planting around trees can be done appropriately.

*The illustration in the guidelines shows a generous and wide nature strip where these setbacks interfere in only a minimal way with the opportunity to plant the nature strip. The problem is that this illustration is not indicative of the vast majority of nature strips within the City of Port Phillip - the illustration would only apply to a small number of nature strips in the more affluent areas of Albert Park and Middle Park.*

One person felt the principle “tread lightly” was unclear as a statement and therefore “meaningless”.

### Evidence base (2)

A couple of respondents made broad comments categorising the justification for the guidelines as “weak” or arguing that there was not enough evidence to justify the suggested restrictions. Note that comments specifically regarding the Independent Arborist Report have been discussed below under “Trees”.

*Data based, or research/evidence based rules should in theory work, and guide us. But the case here is that neither data nor research/evidence exists (in a statistically significant way), or if it does, neither COPP (its Independent Arborist), nor street-gardeners have located it, so the best we have is using what has worked, refining it, and not banning it. i.e. Good old pragmatism and a dose of common-sense.*

## Clearances

23 comments

### Proposed different or lesser clearances (14)

The majority of clearance comments advocated for smaller or less fixed clearance areas to enable more planting, suggesting either different measurements or that Council should simply encourage residents to use common sense and communicate with their neighbours to protect access while planting. One respondent proposed the following statement be included in the guidelines:

*Please consider the number of dwellings, and their need for waste & recycling bin space on collection days, whilst maintaining access. Please use common sense and collaborate with your neighbours.*

A few email submissions included proposals for appropriate clearance areas based on percentages rather than fixed measurements, recommending 10% of the nature strip with maximum offset distances. Proposed maximum offset distances included up to 50cm from the pedestrian footpath, up to 50cm off the kerb, and 1m off driveways. One person raised the current Cobden Street gardens as workable examples of these kinds of offsets, and added:

*This '10% rule' would ~match COPP's draft v2 when the NS is 3m wide.*

Another respondent suggested:

*Retain the guideline as stated for those nature strips which conform to the illustration - say greater than 2 metres width available for planting. For narrower nature strips allow for planting with no setback requirement but a requirement that plant selection and placement should ensure that plants do not obstruct the footpath or roadway.*

Car access and interval paths were discussed in a small number of submissions. One respondent argued that set intervals would "force another incorrect pattern" that would be at odds with where cars park (offering street trees as an example of poorly planned and inconvenient spacing). It was suggested that a better option would be to use common sense and neighbour collaboration to maintain access, with a maximum distance of 11m to the nearest crossing. Other suggestions included:

*Provide a mulch or other form of unplanted path at 5 metre spacings to provide an exit point for cars and means of traversing the planted area.*

*Angled parking only - 600mm width every 3 car spaces minimum (ground covers, grass and mulch are great)*

Utilities were mentioned in a small number of comments, with all respondents recommending that no clearance was necessary and a "simple disclaimer" asking residents to use common sense was all that was needed.

*No setback is required - disclaimer is simply needed saying that access should be left otherwise the plants might be trampled - planting and replanting is resident's responsibility.*

## Plant heights (7)

Various suggestions were made regarding plant heights. A couple of them generally described the current plant height restrictions as too limiting, while others proposed specific changes.

Regarding **intersections and pedestrian crossings**, respondents either agreed or suggested slight variants on plant heights. Proposals included:

- Plant heights: allowable heights could be raised to 70cm (now 50cm) within 10m from a corner, pedestrian crossing, or intersection, without unduly compromising safety.
- Within 5m - use only low ground-cover or grass. Within 10m - 500mm plant height.

Proposed plant heights around **driveways** included:

- Plant height up to 500mm from up to 1m from driveway edges
- Nature strips: Planting beside a driveway: plant max height 1m, except in the area between 1 and 2 metres off a driveway where the max plant height is 500mm.

### Prioritise footpath accessibility (2)

The importance of retaining footpath accessibility was noted in two comments. One recommended a constraint could be included that no new planting on nature strips or tree squares may be introduced unless a minimum footpath width of 1.2m is achieved or retained. Another simply observed how important it was to ensure everyone has access:

*While we all love gardens and plants, footpaths need to be accessible and people with a disability need to be able to get out of a car.*

## Trees

19 comments

### Alter or reduce restrictions around trees (12)

Several respondents were critical of the restrictions regarding planting around trees, particularly the 1.5m or 3x diameter clearance requirement. This was considered excessive and to cause unnecessary planting limitations. A couple of people stated that there was no clear justification – either in the guidelines or in the arborist report – for the choice of 1.5m.

*Believe that a radius of 1.5m or 3 times the trunk diameter (whichever is greater) is far too restrictive... Definitely soil or plants should not be 'heaped' up right next to the tree base (may cause rotting etc.) but we believe something along the lines of 'a suitable area' should be left dependent on the type of trees/plants proposed, an example of what would be acceptable could be included.*

A few comments raised examples of planting which would not diminish tree health or could even support tree health through improving soil quality. One submission (from a horticulturalist and landscape architect) suggested that the council's "deep reservoir" of applied horticultural knowledge did not appear to be reflected in the guidelines and included photographic examples of council planting which would contravene the guidelines' restrictions around trees yet which, in his view, were still informed by sound horticultural principles. This submitter suggested that rather than the one-size-fits-all standard, there should be a graded system of restrictions (discussed further below), and that education initiatives could ensure appropriate planting:

*Council could ease potential problems with education. A brief how to document plus perhaps a three-hour workshop for residents two or three times a year would serve the clear need demonstrated at the meeting for information to guide those who would like to become responsible street gardeners.*

Proposals for tree restrictions included:

- 1 x diameter at breast height minimum, taken at the time the NS/TS is installed. Mulch no closer than 150mm to the trunk. New trees (<1 year old) must have a minimum of 500mm clearance. Inside the clearance area nothing additional can be added (includes plants, ground-covers, and soil).
- Trees less than a year old- 500mm no planting or adding soil please (mulch acceptable though). Trees more than a year old- 1 x DBH (diameter at breast height) to be left around the tree - no planting or build up of soil in this area (mulch is acceptable though).
- Council should adopt a graded system of restrictions. For example, where trees are growing in a small hole in the bitumen of either footpath or road it may be that underplanting of any sort is not advisable. So a blanket restriction on planting in tree

holes where the bitumen opening is less than 1 metre square might be applied. However other situations do not require such restrictions.

On the other hand, a couple of comments were made calling for greater tree protection, specifically for plane trees. These suggestions included retaining the relevant Australian Standard and that permits should be required to protect trees in some places, despite the bureaucratic burden of managing permits.

*If CoPP wants to proceed with some form of as of right, it must retain a permit process around the plane trees. The biodiversity value and canopy value - in the midst of the climate emergency - means we can't take any chances.*

### The arborist's report (7)

Criticism was levelled at the independent arborist's report. Respondents were unconvinced that the studies referenced in the literature review were relevant enough to nature strip planting (particularly those discussing trenching) or substantiated clear evidence for the restrictions in the guidelines. A couple of respondents, one of whom noted their respect for the arborist's abilities, felt that the context and brief provided by the council had biased the recommendations. They both pointed out that that the risks were considered but benefits were not, with one stating:

*[A]s with any such report the brief provided and the context inevitably colour the recommendations arising from the report. In this case the context is essentially the question of the degree of threat posed by nature strip plantings to trees and how to mitigate that threat. Clearly this is an important question to ask. An important question which was not asked relates to the contribution of street gardens to the urban ecosystem and community wellbeing, and how to expand and optimise this contribution... If such a question had been asked we might have a more detailed set of recommendations rather than a one-size-fits-all plant exclusion zone around tree trunks.*

### Compliance

### 6 comments

A small number of comments raised fears that many existing gardens would not comply with the revised guidelines and could still be removed, with respondents calling for more explicit protections and for these to be made more prominent in the document.

*It needs to be made 'crystal clear' that existing gardens will not be removed, except in cases where safety concerns of a serious nature have been raised and proven to require action. No-one wants to deliberately cause safety issues and the consultation process outlined should be sufficient to ensure nothing untoward happens.*

People also wanted to see a clearly set out process for how disputes would be addressed. They recommended that targeted community consultation should be part of this, in recognition of the fact that nature strip plantings are "a community resource to be resolved by the community." One comment offered the following suggestion:

*I would suggest a framework for dispute resolution which first of all empowered the Council officer to communicate with the complainant and the person responsible for the planting to attempt to reach a compromise. If compromise is not possible then any further dispute resolution needs to recognise that nature strip plantings are a community asset and should not be viewed or resolved simply as a dispute between two neighbours. Council should then invite neighbours (say within 100 metres of the planting) to make written submissions and adjudicate only after the adjoining properties have a time period to submit.*

### **Raised edges**

**4 comments**

Four respondents objected to the current provisions around raised edges. One argued that they were not a trip hazard as they align with the direction of pedestrian travel, while another argued that the extent of the debate was unnecessary as the tree roots are below the road-base anyway, and therefore the trees are minimally affected. Proposed solutions included:

- Raised edging allowed to keep soil and mulch and moisture in leaving small gap for passive irrigation.
- 100mm Raised-edge tree squares cannot be installed on a grassed nature strip unless that grassed kerb-footpath length is 1.5m or less.
- Raised-edges can be installed on an all asphalt pavement, irrespective of the grass to kerb distance (and providing other requirements such as minimum footpath width are met).

### **De-paving to accompany new guidelines**

**2 comments**

Two respondents called for a de-paving programme to come in alongside the new guidelines, with one arguing this was especially vital if planting was not allowed in tree pits.



## How could we have made your experience with the consultation process better?

### Section summary

- > Respondents expressed doubt that they were being heard, urging Council to align the guidelines more closely with the explicit wishes of the community.
- > Suggestions were made to:
  - o Make all documentation and evidence to be made available so people could understand the rationale for restrictions in the guidelines.
  - o Ensure the time window for consultation was long enough (and at a convenient time) to ensure people had the chance to contribute.
  - o Send notifications to people about the consultation.
  - o Simplify the online form and include options to attach documents.

### Listen to community voices

10 comments

Several respondents felt that the council was simply not listening to the community, arguing that the second draft still did not reflect the clearly expressed views of the community. A few of these comments conveyed doubt that the consultation was genuine and in good faith.

*Council needs to listen to the clear message coming from the community that more flexibility and common sense is needed.*

*I am taking Council at their word and that they really do want local community involvement, despite their poor track record with these nature Strip Guidelines.*

One person felt that the unsatisfactory consultation to date meant the situation was “turning combative”, and noted that extensive yet ineffective consultations were a poor use of resources. Another spoke generally about the Have Your Say process, raising the Ludwig Stamer Reserve project as an example of inadequate consultation.

### Timing, outreach and interface

7 comments

A couple of people felt the timing of the consultation – both the Have Your Say open period and the timing of the community meeting notice – was unfairly short, with one noting that there were several documents to be digested and that the consultation coincided with the end of the financial year and school holidays. Respondents felt they should have been notified of the consultation opening.

*You could have contacted me with the revised guidelines. By the time I learnt of them, the 'consultation' opportunities were closed.*



A couple of respondents found the online consultation form difficult to navigate, with one noting there was no option to attach a response document, and the other stating they had chosen to email rather than use the council's "poorly designed and implemented myriad online systems".

### **Transparency and availability of documents** **5 comments**

Respondents wanted full access to the evidence and reports that the guidelines are based on so they could understand the rationale. Specific information people wanted to see included complaints received about the gardens; the relevant Australian Standards 1428.1 2009 and AS 4970 2009; the full brief for the IAR; external professional reports; and the justification for the choice of 1.5m clearance around trees.

### **Praise for meetings** **3 comments**

Three people expressed their appreciation for the community meetings, which were considered helpful and conducive to progress.

*I've just attended the Nature Strip guidelines meeting. Please pass on my thanks to the meeting organisers. It was informative and well run, tho' sadly a bit fraught towards the end.*

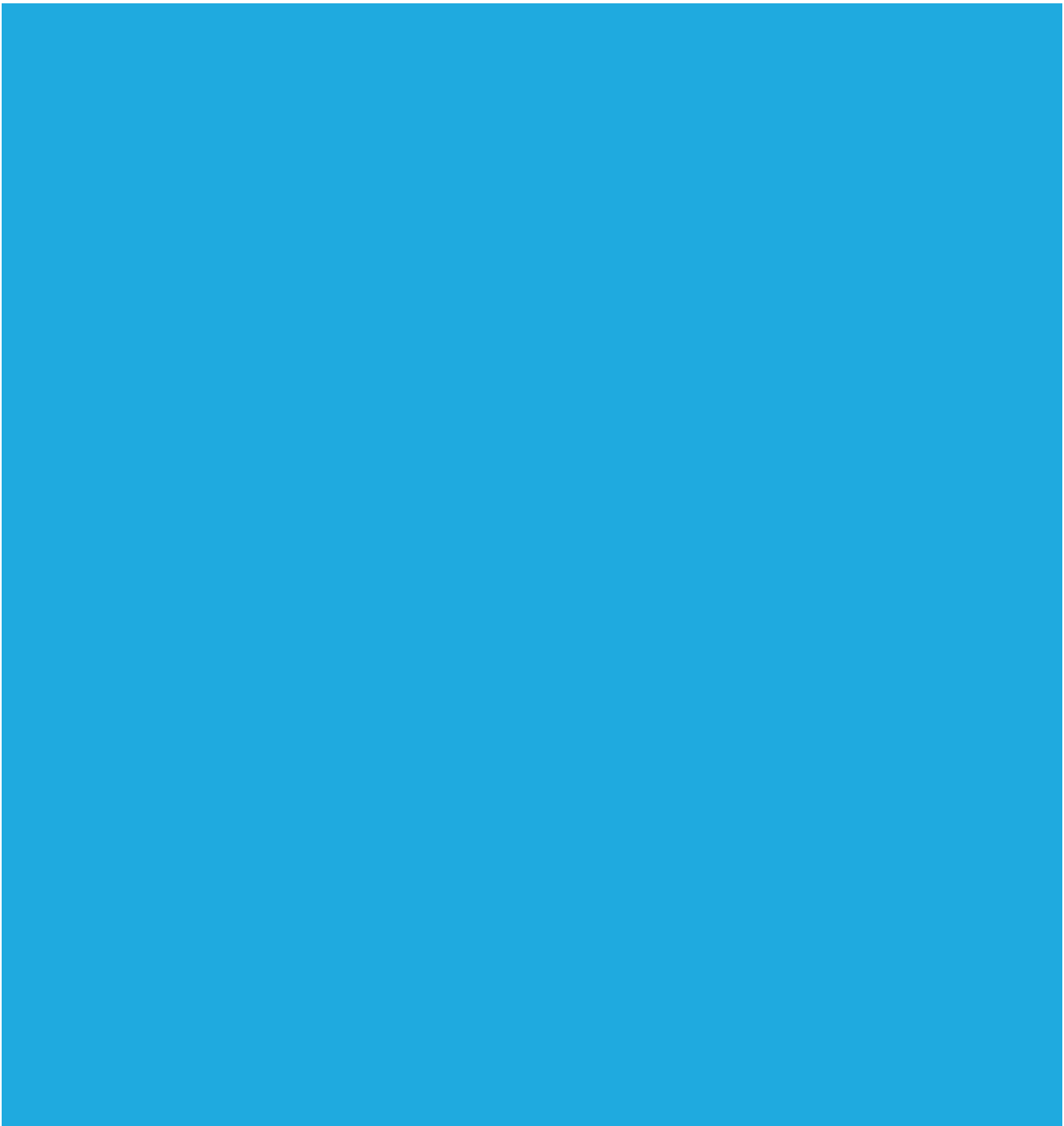
### **Concerns about lobby groups** **1 comment**

One person requested the council "give preference to anonymity" as they felt that pro-garden lobby groups make it "very difficult to be heard", describing how they were pressured into signing a petition that was contrary to their views given their experience with accessibility.

## Longform submissions from groups

- Note: The Heart Gardening Project re-sent their comprehensive submission from the first round of engagement. Their accompanying email has been analysed with other comments and included in the discussion above.

Group name	General position	Key points
<p><b>The Heart Gardening Project (Emma Cutting)</b></p> <p><i>The Heart Gardening Project's purpose is to "heal humankind by creating biodiversity in our cities." Since 2020, the project has created over 70 street gardens, and worked with volunteers, households and organisations to plant over 5000 plants and cover over 454 square metres with indigenous-focused gardens as part of the Melbourne Pollinator corridor.</i></p>	<p>The comprehensive submission opposes the draft guidelines, which are seen as at odds with Council's strategic direction and as reducing opportunities for street gardening.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft guidelines don't align with other Council objectives.</li> <li>- Emphasises social amenity and biodiversity/climate benefits of street gardens.</li> <li>- Commends Council's emphasis on safety, accessibility, and tree maintenance but views current approach as unnecessarily conservative, providing supporting evidence.</li> <li>- Suggests that safety and accessibility can be achieved through more flexible guidelines.</li> <li>- Suggests that draft guidelines will result in the removal of many current gardens and that they will deter gardeners or result in non-conformance due to being overly complex and inflexible, especially regarding clearance requirements.</li> <li>- Raises consultation and evidence issues regarding lack of consultation with Traditional Owners and other stakeholders, and lack of spatial analysis and socio-economic research.</li> <li>- Categorises tone as negative and disempowering.</li> <li>- Recommends rewriting the guidelines with community input and aligning them with community desires.</li> <li>- Offers a range of suggestions around guidelines for planting height, planting around trees and tree squares.</li> <li>- An extensive array of supporting documents accompanied the submission. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Multiple statements of support from various experts and locals highlighting the overwhelming biodiversity benefits of street gardening, particularly the Heart Garden's concept of a connected corridor, as well as the aesthetic and wellbeing benefits.</li> <li>o A letter of support from Sir David Attenborough praising the Heart Gardening Project's work.</li> <li>o Various NSGs from across Australia were offered as positive examples to emulate, alongside possible initiatives inspired by other councils.</li> <li>o New suggested guidelines for specific types of street contexts.</li> <li>o Research around tree safety in support of more lenient guidelines for planting around trees.</li> <li>o Results of a Connection and Safety survey carried out by the Heart Gardening Project which highlighted support for street gardening and its social and wellbeing benefits.</li> <li>o A biodiversity report detailing the species present at 3 street garden sites (all of which would be deemed non-compliant).</li> <li>o Reference to the 5890+ signatures on the "Keep street gardening growing in City of Port Phillip" petition.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



This report has been prepared by:

Global Research  
150 Office Rd  
Merivale  
Christchurch 8014  
New Zealand  
+64 3 355 4562  
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