

Agreed Action Plan – Friends of Nyrang Reserve

2023 to 2026



The core objective of this plan, as supported through volunteer actions, is to preserve and maintain the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community in ways that are ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.



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GUUDJI YIIGU

(GOO-JEE IK-KOO)

We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council’s culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all peoples. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to provide an agreed framework and detailed action plan to support and guide volunteer groups to undertake works in the Nyrang Reserve.

Objectives of the Plan

For the Friends of Nyrang Reserve and Port Stephens Council to work together to protect and enhance the character of Nyrang Reserve.

Site Details

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Site Address | 1 Beach Road, Lemon Tree Passage |
| Lot / DP | Lot 174 DP 223671, Lot 7026 DP 1113533 |
| Land zoning | RE1 – Public Recreation |
| Owner | Port Stephens Council (PSC), State of NSW (Crown)* |
| Local Aboriginal Land Council | Worimi |
| Reserve | Nyrang Reserve (See Action Plan Map) |

Scope of Works

Volunteer works within the Nyrang Reserve must be consistent with this Agreed Action Plan. This plan encourages the activities listed in the detailed action plan below.

If a volunteer group would like to undertake a project or activity that is outside of this plan, authorisation will be required from Council. The Volunteers Support Officer will provide support to the group and liaise with Council for any activities outside of this plan.

This plan does not provide permission to erect, place or repair any structures, nor remove any trees or native vegetation unless authorised under this plan.

Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with the Friends of Nyrang Reserve group and internal Council departments in the preparation of this plan.

Safety Considerations

All activities should be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Council, including Work Health and Safety processes such as site induction and daily attendance records.

Site inductions are required prior to the commencement of any works at the subject site for volunteers. First Aid kits are to be on site during working bees.

All volunteers are to sign attendance sheets and maintain an understanding of applicable Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) and Specific Worksite Assessment Toolbox (SWAT) forms. These forms are provided to volunteers and are also available via Council's Volunteers Support Officer.

Working bees require formal notification to all group members and Volunteers Support Officer including date, time and meeting location.

The table below lists the key safety hazard considerations for the site and the controls that are to be put in place to mitigate these hazards.

| Hazard considerations | General controls |
|--|---|
| Outdoor work | Fitness for work, appropriate PPE. |
| Working near water | Caution around drainage channels. |
| Working near access ways (vehicle and pedestrian) | Use of 'volunteers working' signage, yellow vests to be worn. |
| Pollution | Green waste to remain on site, only approved chemical use (if applicable). |
| Wildlife hazards | Awareness of surroundings, First Aid kit on site at all times. |
| Weather conditions | Reschedule works in unsuitable weather. |
| Antisocial behaviour | Maintain PSC Code of Conduct, report any dangerous behaviour to local police. |
| Fatigue | Rest breaks and hydration. |

The group cannot undertake the following activities: confined space entry, excavation, use of machinery/ unapproved power tools, tree removal, working at heights, burning and unapproved chemical handling.

In the event that an individual would like to use chemicals or power tools, approval from Council must be sought, followed by training and sign off by the Volunteers Support Officer prior to use.

All hazards, incidents, near misses, injuries and unsafe practices should be documented and reported to Council within 24 hours.

For further information, consult the Work Health & Safety Handbook (PSC 2020).

Action Plan Map

The below Action Plan Map is to be read in conjunction with the Detailed Action Plan below.



Detailed Action Plan

The below detailed action plan is to read in accordance with the action plan map above. Reference should also be made to Appendix A – Detailed Vegetation Map and Appendix B – Key Site Considerations when conducting work within the reserve.

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Zone 1 Open space (road side of footpath) | Clear, accessible park area for community use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of fallen leaf litter and sticks Deposit all fallen branches and sticks into native bushland vegetation (water side of path) | Friends of Nyrang | Routine working bees | Ongoing | Encouraged |
| | Drain maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring drains are clear of litter and debris Excavation to maintain flow | Council | Council drain maintenance | Ongoing | Scheduled |
| | Drain maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunity for Council to spray drains with approved insecticide | Council | Undertake Part 5 Assessment | < 1-2 years | Pending further investigation |
| | Maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of small seedlings on road side of gravel pathway | Friends of Nyrang | Focused working bees | Ongoing | Encouraged |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|------|---|---|--|--|-------------|---|
| | | | | Hand tools | | |
| | Native garden (B) - Pollinator attracting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of proposed garden bed at site B (Figure 1) including removal of weeds and mulching • Selection of pollinator attracting natives • Provision of pathway in native garden areas • Maintenance of gardens after established • Provision of Council issued signage in support of works | Friends of Nyrang with support from Volunteers Support Officer | Focused working bees Plants and mulch Hand tools | < 1-2 years | Encouraged |
| | Seating and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of seating in native garden areas • Investigation of dog restriction signage | Council | Works on Council land application | Ongoing | Pending funding and further investigation |
| | Native garden (C) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal to remove some trees and manage understorey of | Council | Part 5 assessment required for tree removal | < 1 year | Pending further consultation |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|------|--|--|-------------------|---|----------|--|
| | | <p>site C as shown on the Action Plan Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to support group undertake relevant assessment under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 • Based on outcome of assessment, Council to assist in provision of garden bed preparation and planting materials | Friends of Nyrang | Volunteers to provide initial background information to guide application to remove trees | | and investigation |
| | Replacement of open drain with enclosed pipe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to undertake enclosure of existing open pipes when funds are available | Council | Staff and materials | TBC | Pending further consultation and investigation, subject to funding |
| | Restrict vehicular entry into the reserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate feasibility of bollards and fencing along Beach Road to restrict vehicular access to reserve | Council | Staff and materials | TBC | Pending further consultation and investigation, subject to funding |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|-------------|----------------------------|
| Zone 2 Central pathway | Footpath maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with Volunteers Support Officer when path maintenance is required Ensure path is level and free from trip hazards | Friends of Nyrang | Routine working bees | Ongoing | Encouraged |
| | Footpath border maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of vegetation on water side of path up to 1 m from pathway such as light trimming of overhanging branches and shrubs. | Friends of Nyrang | Routine working bees Hand tools | Ongoing | Encouraged with conditions |
| Zone 3 Unmanaged roadside verge | Weed removal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of identified weeds and management of grasses | Friends of Nyrang | Routine working bees Green waste to remain on site | Ongoing | Encouraged |
| | Native garden planting (A) - Pollinator attracting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of proposed garden bed at site A (Figure 1) including removal of weeds and mulching Selection of pollinator attracting natives | Friends of Nyrang with assistance from Volunteers Support Officer | Focused working bees Plants and mulch | < 1-2 years | Encouraged |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|--|-----------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of gardens after established | | Hand tools | | |
| Zone 4 Water side of path (Endangered Ecological Community) | Preserve endangered vegetation and promote native bush regeneration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual 'weeding' working bee with Council and local community to manage priority weed species | Council and Friends of Nyrang | Nominated annual working bee to be scheduled with Council and community Hand tools Green waste to remain on site | Ongoing | Encouraged with conditions |
| | Support community education on ecological values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor vegetation maintenance around educational signage Informal walking tracks, as indicated on map, not further widened Investigate opportunities for further educational signage | Council and Friends of Nyrang | Focused working bees Assistance from Volunteers Support Officer | Ongoing | Pending further consultation and investigation |
| | Access to 'Secret Beach' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise small track to area known as | Council | Undertake Part 5 assessment | > 2 years | Pending further consultation |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|------|--|---|-------------------|--|----------|---------------------------------------|
| | | 'secret beach' with timber border and mulch | | | | and investigation, subject to funding |
| N/A | Monitoring and reporting to support group resourcing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and record activities undertaken by group Reporting on areas weeded, areas planted, success rates, new and emerging weeds, fauna sightings, etc. | Friends of Nyrang | <p>Reporting should be undertaken through councils online CRM tool for <u>Environmental Works Records</u></p> <p>Regular working bee check ins with Volunteers officer</p> | Ongoing | Encouraged |
| N/A | Capacity building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate relevant educational opportunities | Council | <p>Resource materials and training</p> <p>Access to networking opportunities</p> | Ongoing | Encouraged |
| N/A | Signage for group to inform community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to provide 'working bee in progress' sign to | Council | <p>Council to supply</p> <p>Signage to be set up any time</p> | Ongoing | Encouraged |

| Zone | Objective | Actions | Responsibility | Resources | Timeline | Status |
|-------------|----------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------------|---------------|
| | during working bees | support group when undertaking activities | | work in the reserve is being undertaken | | |
| N/A | Annual group meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual group meetings to review progress of action plan, complete inductions and provide support | Friends of Nyrang and Council | Volunteers Support Officer to schedule annual meeting, distribute agenda and prepare minutes Agenda items to be submitted to the Volunteers Support Officer | Ongoing | Encouraged |

Key site considerations

Environmental

Threatened species

There are no recorded individual threatened plant species within 200 metres of the Reserve. Over the last 20 years, approximately 42 sightings of Koalas and sightings of Grey-headed Flying-foxes and White-bellied sea eagles have been recorded within 200 metres of the site (NSW DPIE 2022).

The Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) is listed as Endangered under NSW and Federal legislation. The Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) and White-bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) is listed as Vulnerable under NSW legislation.

The site is mapped as 'Preferred' Koala habitat under the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM) (PSC 2002) which falls under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021.

Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC) / Biodiversity value

An Endangered Ecological Community is present, identified by an independent contractor as 'Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on Coastal Floodplains of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions' and confirmed by PSC ecologists in 2022 (Appendix A, Figure 2).

This vegetation community is rare in New South Wales as it has been largely cleared for urban development. In Lemon Tree Passage, it is highly susceptible to invasion of weeds due to animal and human encroachment of walking tracks, fragmentation and degradation, and drainage works, which threaten the health of the community (NSW DPIE 2022).

This vegetation is listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and is federally protected.

Proposed works may only consider impact on areas in existing managed condition.

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NOTE

Only permitted works may be undertaken within this vegetation type because it is highly sensitive.

Priority weeds

Nyrang Reserve is managed by PSC Environmental Operations in accordance with the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

The site is in good condition and receives scheduled weed maintenance under PSC Bushland Management. 1 annual working bee is recommended to provide biosecurity support without disturbing the sensitive vegetation. These working bees are to be coordinated with Council.

A specific licence is required under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, and applies to nominated individuals carrying out activities involving threatened ecological communities or areas of outstanding biodiversity value in accordance with the Department of Planning and Environment's *scientific licensing policy*. This licensing has not been obtained.

Heritage

The Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) (DPIE 2022) lists no recorded Aboriginal sites or Aboriginal places in proximity to the subject site. The site does not contain state or locally listed heritage items.

Unexpected Finds - if Aboriginal heritage items are uncovered during the works, all works in the vicinity of the find must cease and the Volunteers Support Officer must be contacted.

Bushfire

There are no asset protection zones (APZ) or strategic fire advantage zone (SFAZ) impacting the subject site.

Care should be taken to avoid the creation of bushfire hazards directly adjoining residential allotments. This action plan does not provide guaranteed commitment to future management as required by Planning for Bushfire Protection (PBP) (2019).

Waterways and soil

The site falls within the 40 m buffer of the Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park however is exempt from obtaining a Marine Park Permit under Clause 41 of the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018.

Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) may be present on site. Volunteers are directed to stop digging and fill any holes that indicate ASS present (scent of sulphuric acid).

Infrastructure

Infrastructure within the reserve is owned and managed by Council. Council is responsible for erecting and repairing any structures within the reserve. No structures are to be erected by the group. The Volunteers Support Officer is to consult with the Parks Supervisor and the Community Assets Officers on any infrastructure work requested on the land.

There are a number of assets present at the site. Land management activities should not negatively impact these. "Before You Dig" should be consulted prior to any ground breaking activities.

*State of NSW (Crown) land may require additional permits and approvals as Port Stephens Council is not the land owner.

References

Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC). 2009. Lower Hunter Bushfire Risk Management Plan. 29 April.

Department of Premier and Cabinet. 2022. State Heritage Inventory. NSW Government.

EcoPollinators. 2022. Habitat Planting Guide – Local Native Plants of the Tomaree Peninsula. EcoNetwork Port Stephens, Nelson Bay NSW.
https://www.econetworkps.org/habitat-planting-guide_tomaree-peninsula/

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). 2022. Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS). NSW Government, Parramatta NSW.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). 2022. NSW BioNet Atlas. NSW Government, updated 28 June.

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NSW Government. 2023. State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007, Part 1 and Part 3 Division 12. Current version 1 January 2022 to 28 February 2022.

NSW Rural Fire Service. 2019. Planning for Bushfire Protection. RFS, Sydney.

Port Stephens Council (PSC). 2002. Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM) – June 2002. Prepared by PSC and Australian Koala Foundation, Raymond Terrace

Port Stephens Council. 2019. Procedure – Work Health and Safety, Management of Volunteers. Enterprise Risk Management System – WHS Management of Volunteers, EDRMS: 16/469990. Version 5.2, dated 15 January.

Port Stephens Council. 2020. Work Health & Safety 2020 Handbook. Raymond Terrace.

Port Stephens Council. 2023. Environmental Assessment Level 2 – Nyrang. EDRMS PSC2022-00941.

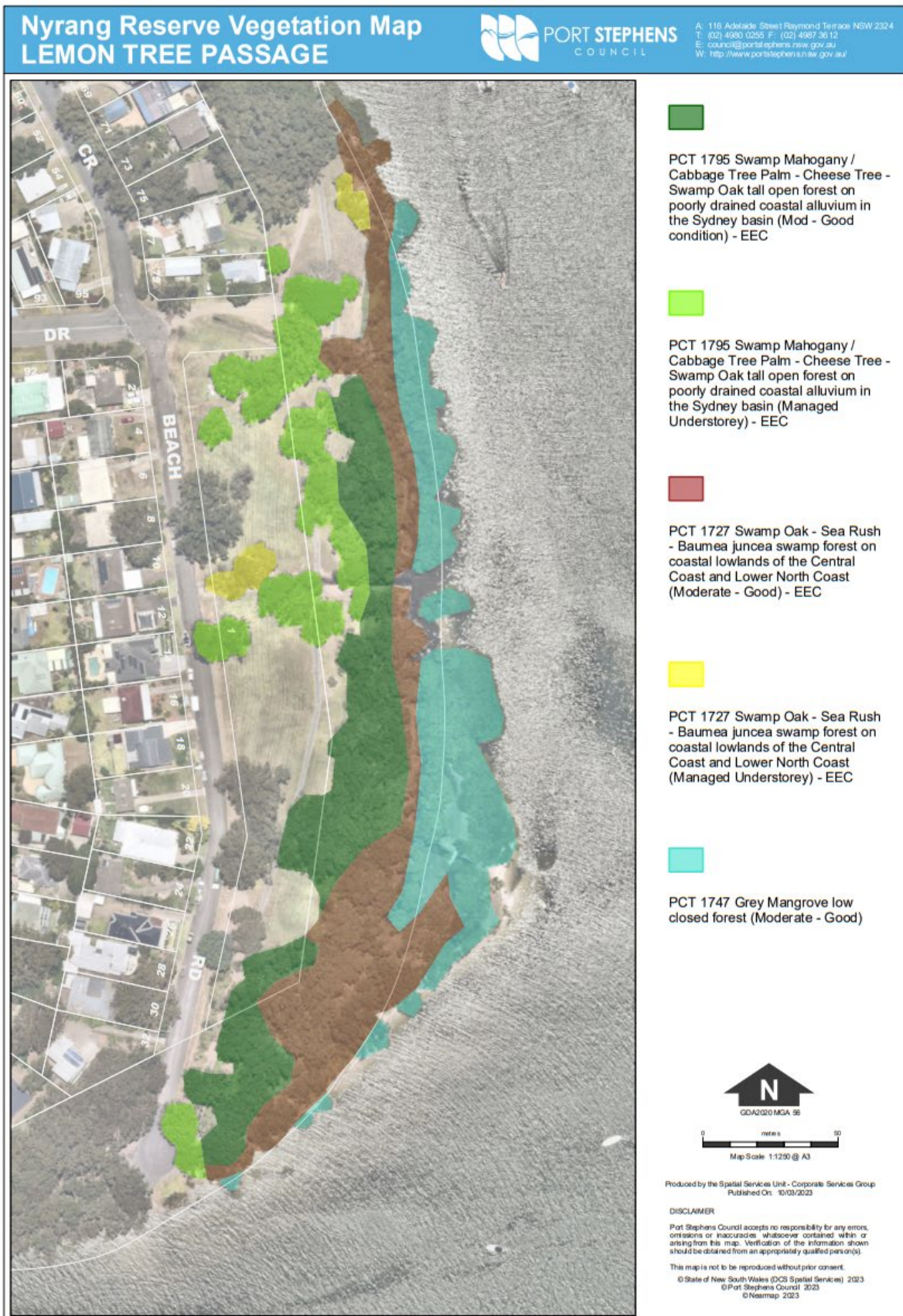
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| EDRMS container No | PSC2022-00941 | EDRMS record No | 23/182135 |
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| Process owner | Strategy and Environment Section Manager | | |
| Author | Volunteers Support Officer | | |
| Review timeframe | 3 years | Next review date | 18 July 2026 |
| Adoption date | 18 July 2023 | | |

VERSION HISTORY:

| Version | Date | Author | Details |
|---------|-----------------|--|---|
| 1 | 18 October 2022 | Volunteers Support Officer | Created document. |
| 2 | 21 June 2023 | Strategy and Environment Section Manager | Document reviewed internally. Volunteer feedback to be requested. |
| 3 | 18 July 2023 | Volunteers Support Officer | Final consultation with group and adoption. |

Appendix A – Detailed vegetation map



Appendix B – Native garden guide

Areas for planting and maintenance of native gardens identified during the focus session with the group are shown in the Action Plan Map. These areas are on the road side of the pathway and may be maintained as 'gardens', not requiring full bush regeneration.

Planting should not be undertaken within 3 metres of the drains. This is to allow maintenance machinery to access the drain.

Recommended species for planting are contained in the below resources, according to the existing native vegetation community and pollinator attracting objective. These resources and the Volunteers Support Officer are to be consulted prior to ordering/obtaining species for planting:

- Habitat Planting Guide – Local Native Plants of the Tomaree Peninsula (EcoPollinators 2022) https://www.econetworkps.org/habitat-planting-guide_tomaree-peninsula/
- Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on Coastal Floodplains of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions – profile (NSW DPIE 2021) <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10786>

The following steps provide guidance for the planting and management of the native gardens project:

- Mark out proposed garden beds as approved sites.
- Clear ground covers and non-native plants from the proposed garden bed, leaving some existing native plants where applicable.
- Place a layer of newspaper on the exposed soil to lock in moisture and prevent weeds. Ensure newspaper overlaps. Lightly water to keep down while working.
- Add mulch over newspaper and water.
- Plant into mulch and newspaper.
- Maintenance watering and weeding.



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