

WORKS

W 5.6 Verges Policy

<i>Responsible Department</i>	Engineering Services
<i>Resolution Number</i>	C.4843
<i>Resolution Date</i>	16/08/2023
<i>Next Scheduled Review</i>	2025
<i>Related Shire Documents</i>	Activities on Thoroughfares Public Places and Local Trading Law 2018; Street Tree Policy
<i>Related Legislation</i>	<i>Local Government (Uniform Local Provisions) Regulations 1996: 6. Obstruction of public thoroughfare by things placed and left — Sch. 9.1 cl. 3(1)(a)</i>

OBJECTIVES

To assist residents and the community generally to achieve aesthetically pleasing, water sensitive outcomes for verge treatments within the Shire of Northam, in conjunction with the Shire's Activities in Thoroughfares and Public Places and Trading Amendment Local Law 2018.

- To value the verge as an important component of the streetscape
- To promote the principles of environmental sustainability and biodiversity
- To provide direction and guidance to the Shire of Northam staff and community on appropriate verge treatments
- To encourage adjacent property owners to improve and maintain verge presentation
- To provide advice and regulatory control to property owners
- To improve verges to an appropriate and consistent standard.
- To encourage a waterwise and sustainable future

SCOPE

Any person who wishes to carry out prescribed works on the verge within the Shire shall do so in accordance with this policy.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Water Corporation's Waterwise Verge Best Practice Guidelines and provides further guidance for permissible verge treatments as stated in Shire's Activities in Thoroughfares and Public Places and Trading Amendment Local Law 2018.

POLICY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The street verge has been traditionally described as the area between the road and boundary of an abutting property. The verge provides a safe pedestrian space and vehicular access to properties. The verge generally accommodates public service and local government utilities above and below ground; street lighting, power, water, stormwater pipes, sewerage and telecommunication cables. The service providers need to access their assets in the verge to install, maintain and/or repair.

1.2 VERGE MAINTENANCE

The Shire encourages all residents and commercial property owners to endeavour to maintain the verge adjacent to their property, for their own benefit, the benefit of their neighbours and the wider Northam community.

1.3 PERMISSIBLE TREATMENTS

The Shire permits certain landscape treatments to be undertaken without obtaining permission from the Shire of Northam.

These permissible verge treatments are:

1. Shrubs and ground covers
2. Grass
3. Organic Mulch

Please refer to Activities on Thoroughfares Public Places and Local Trading Law 2018, for further information.

1.4 OTHER PERMISSIBLE VERGE TREATMENTS

1. Pavement
2. Permeable paving materials such as compacted aggregate subject to the size of the individual material pieces
3. Artificial turf

For these types of treatments to be considered on any portion of a verge, and “Application to alter the Verge” must be submitted to the Shire of Northam.

Irrigation will be considered upon application to the Shire in the “Application to Alter the Verge”.

1.5 STORMWATER WATER INFILTRATION

Stormwater runoff from large sections of hard surfacing must be effectively managed by the landowner, as the runoff can cause localised flooding on roads and adversely impact on the Shire's storm water disposal system and its maintenance.

1.6 NON PERMISSIBLE TREATMENTS/USE

Where essential services may be located, some hardstand treatments will not be permissible by the Shire of Northam.

The following cannot be installed on a verge:

1. Asphalt
2. Bitumen
3. Concrete
4. Structures (including walls, planter boxes, letter boxes and seating)
5. Loose aggregate (including pea gravel, blue metal, crushed brick or stone)

1.7 ACCESS BY UTILITY PROVIDERS

Under Section 2.13 of the Activities on Thoroughfares Public Places and Local Trading Law 2018; Service providers, including the Shire, retain the right to access the verge for service maintenance works that may disrupt or damage any verge treatment.

1.8 NO SPRAY REGISTER

The resident is to inform the Shire in writing if they wish for their verge not to be sprayed by having it placed on the "No Spray Register".

As a condition of being admitted to the "No Spray Register" is the resident agrees to maintain their own verge.

1.9 VERGE DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

All proposals for landscape treatment of the verge require approval from the Shire of Northam.

In order for applications to install landscape treatments on the verge to be assessed, property owners are required to submit an Application to Alter Verge which includes a diagram to illustrate the proposed work including plant species and the layout of any proposed reticulation system(s).

The Shire will then:

- Inspect the location;
- Notify the owner in writing whether the application is approved
- Maintain a register of the site and the approved verge treatment; and,

- On completion of any approved works the Shire will inspect the works; and,
 - Works not carried out in accordance with the relevant approvals will require any noncompliance issues to be rectified

1.10 VERGE MAINTENANCE

Occupants are encouraged to maintain and/or improve the verge directly abutting their property, in a manner that ensures the safety of themselves and/or pedestrians and road users.

The Shire of Northam aims to create a visually pleasing community, inclusive of tidy and attractive verges and roadsides.

The Shire will perform an annual verge maintenance program consisting of the following where practicable:

- Town site verges may be sprayed up to once per year;
- Town site verges may be slashed up to once per year in the following instances:
 - Community facilities
 - open space recreational areas, parks and reserves
 - corner lots.
- Rural verges will be assessed annually for spraying and slashing throughout the year within budget constraints.
- Spray and slash a minimum 1.5m clearance around registered bus stops on request.