

Responsible Department:	Technical Services
Responsible Business Unit:	Works
Date of Review:	20 May 2026
Council Resolution:	110526

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy is to outline expectations, responsibilities and the extent to which verge maintenance services will be provided by the Shire of Chittering (the Shire) in the overall management of the road reserve and verges within the Shire.

This Policy aims to recognise the verge as an important component of the streetscape, encourage property owners to maintain and improve verge presentation, define the extent of verge maintenance undertaken by the Shire, reduce the impact of unwanted vegetation, and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all verge areas within the Shire of Chittering and to all property owners, occupiers, contractors and Shire officers involved in the management, maintenance or use of verges within the road reserve.

3. DEFINITIONS

Resident / Landowner means the owner or occupier of land adjoining a verge.

Road Reserve means land under the care, control and management of the local government for road-related purposes.

Verge means the area within the road reserve between the edge of the road infrastructure and the adjacent property boundary.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Pursuant to s55(1) of the *Land Administration Act 1997*, the land comprising a road is the absolute property of the Crown and, subject to the *Main Roads Act 1930* and the *Public Works Act 1902*, the local government within the district of which a road is situated has the care, control and management of the road.

This care, control and management includes not only the road, drainage, footpaths and supporting infrastructure but also the naturally occurring vegetation contained within.

The verge area is generally considered to be the area within the road reserve between the edge of the road infrastructure and adjacent private property.

SHIRE POLICY 7.1 Verge Maintenance

The verge serves a range of functions, including providing safe pedestrian access, enabling vehicle access to properties, and accommodating public service infrastructure such as lighting, water, gas and telecommunications.

Due to the extensive amount of verges within the Shire, it is impractical to assign the level of resources that would be required to maintain all verges. The Shire therefore requires all residents and commercial property owners to maintain the verge adjacent to their property, for their own benefit, the benefit of their neighbours and the wider Chittering community.

4.1. Application

The Shire recognises that the appearance of road verges is important to owners / occupiers, due to the aesthetic impact on their properties and dwellings. This policy supports safe verge management while enabling owners / occupiers to improve the aesthetics and amenity of road verges adjacent to their properties.

4.2. Interpretation

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Shire relevant Local Law pertaining to property.

4.3. Residents Responsibilities

Residents are responsible for the maintenance of the verge adjacent to their property, including activities such as mowing, weeding, pruning and mulching. Verge improvements must be undertaken in accordance with the Verge Development Criteria contained within this Policy and the Shire's relevant local laws.

Residents should incorporate verge areas into their fuel management practices, noting that maintaining a low fuel load can significantly reduce fire risk to private property.

Where residents undertake planting, including street trees, such planting must comply with the Verge Development Criteria. Residents are responsible for the maintenance of any vegetation they establish, and non-compliant planting may require removal.

Residents are responsible for clean-up and repair of damage caused by naturally occurring vegetation, including fallen trees or branches. This is considered a normal aspect of residing within a rural and treed environment.

Approval must be obtained prior to undertaking hazard reduction burning on verges, in accordance with the Verge Burning Requirements set out in this Policy.

Residents who do not wish for verge spraying to occur must notify the Shire in writing and assume responsibility for vegetation management. Where verge maintenance is not undertaken to the satisfaction of the Shire, the Shire reserves the right to carry out maintenance.

Verge maintenance must consider environmentally sensitive areas, including high conservation roadside vegetation, and may require approval where impacts to flora and fauna are likely.

4.4. Shire Responsibilities

The Shire is responsible for regulating verge development and maintaining verges adjacent to Shire-managed buildings, parks and reserves.

The Shire undertakes verge spraying programs for weed control, primarily to protect infrastructure such as kerbs, roads, pathways, drains and public assets.

The Shire undertakes fire mitigation works within road reserves and verges in accordance with strategic bushfire risk management planning.

The Shire is responsible for addressing significant hazards and obstructions that impact road users or infrastructure.

The Shire may undertake planting and establishment of street trees and assumes responsibility for maintenance of those trees once established. Naturally occurring vegetation remains Crown land, with the Shire managing risks where necessary.

4.5. Verge Development Criteria

Council supports the development of verges in urban areas, including grassed and native garden styles. Native gardens are encouraged, with appropriate irrigation and limited tree planting. Irrigation systems must not create nuisance and must be installed to appropriate standards.

Tree planting must consider service clearance and visibility requirements, including setbacks from infrastructure, intersections and crossovers.

Vegetation must not obstruct the verge, and hard landscaping such as large rocks or non-frangible materials is not permitted.

The Shire does not provide financial or maintenance assistance for verge development undertaken by residents.

4.6. Verge Burning Requirements

Verge burning may be permitted for hazard reduction purposes subject to approval. Applications must be submitted using the prescribed form and are subject to site inspection and environmental considerations.

Burning is only permitted under appropriate conditions and must include measures to protect native vegetation, ensure public safety, and comply with all permit conditions.

Approvals are issued only by authorised officers during the unrestricted burning period.

4.7. Hazardous Trees

The Shire's involvement in tree management is limited to significant hazards or obstructions. Hazardous trees include those that are dead, structurally unsound, unstable, or pose a risk to infrastructure or safety.

Natural processes such as leaf or bark shedding, tree height, or proximity without risk do not constitute a hazard.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council is responsible for establishing the strategic direction and policy framework for verge management within the Shire.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Policy and for the allocation of appropriate resources to support verge management activities.

The Technical Services Department is responsible for the administration of this Policy, including assessing applications, managing verge maintenance programs, undertaking risk-based maintenance activities, and ensuring that verge works are carried out in accordance with relevant standards, legislation and Shire requirements.

Authorised Officers are responsible for issuing approvals where required, monitoring compliance with this Policy, and taking appropriate action where verge use or maintenance does not meet the required standards.

Property owners and occupiers are responsible for maintaining the verge adjacent to their property in accordance with this Policy, including ensuring that vegetation is appropriately managed, works are undertaken safely, and any required approvals are obtained prior to undertaking verge improvements or activities such as burning.

All persons undertaking works within the verge are responsible for ensuring that those works do not create hazards, damage infrastructure, or negatively impact the safety, amenity or environmental values of the verges.

6. COMPLIANCE

Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1995 (WA)</i> <i>Land Administration Act 1997</i> <i>Main Roads Act 1930</i> <i>Public Works Act 1902</i> <i>Agricultural and Related Resources Protection Act 1976</i>
Industry	Application for Approval to Burn the Verge
Organisational Documents	
Strategic Alignment	

7. ADMINISTRATION

Review Cycle	Every 3 years	Next Review Due	May 2028
Policy Owner	Executive Manager Technical Services		
Version	Decision Ref	Date	Change
1.0		20/07/2022	Initial adoption
2.0	11052026	20/05/2026	Amendment