
VERGE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been formulated to assist residents in carrying out landscaping or other improvement works to the Verge adjoining their property.

What is a Verge?

A verge is the area between the road and the boundary of an adjacent property. The verge provides safe pedestrian space and vehicle access to properties. The verge also accommodates public service utilities such as street lighting and underground services like water, gas, sewerage and telecommunications. It can also comprise of vegetation, such as native vegetation, street trees and other vegetation.

Although the verge is owned by the City, the maintenance of lawns and gardens on verges is the responsibility of the adjoining landowner. The City of Albany (City) encourages residents to take pride in their verges to enhance the aesthetic value of their properties. However, street trees can only be planted, maintained and removed by the City, or with written approval from the City.

These guidelines have been formulated to assist residents in carrying out landscaping or other improvement works to the verge adjoining their property.

What is a Verge Development?

In order to ensure modifications to verges are consistent and to standard, a verge development application is required. This application will cover any proposed works on a verge that involves changing what is currently on the verge, usually undertaken by the adjacent landowner. Proposed works may include changing the surface of the ground, landscaping, reticulation and the planting of a garden or a tree.

All verge developments must have written approval from the City.

Verge development must not:

- Prevent any pedestrian from walking along the verge in preference to walking on the roadway.
- Prevent the City or any service authority from installing new services or maintaining existing services.
- Create a hazard for pedestrians/motorists/cyclists.
- Involve the clearing of native vegetation. [Remnant vegetation]

It should be noted that healthy trees will not be approved for removal unless they are considered dangerous or are determined to be causing infrastructure damage.

Application Process

Complete and submit a Verge Development Application Form to the City, ensuring that a sketch of the proposed development is attached. The plan will be assessed based on suitability, and in view of the safety of the community. The City will then provide written approval and notify you of any alterations or conditions that may be required. No works can commence on the Verge until a permit has been received from the City.

On completion of the development, a City officer may undertake a site inspection to ensure that permit conditions have been met. The maintenance of the Verge Development will be the sole responsibility of the owner of the adjoining property.

If the verge is altered in any way other than the approved development, the City must be notified immediately. Failure to comply with the permit may result in infringement or prosecution under *Activities on Thoroughfares and Public Places and Trading Local Law 2011 (as amended)*.

Irrigation

Waterwise verge gardens, that don't require permanent irrigation, are preferred as they use less water. However, residents may install belowground irrigation systems provided the resident accepts all responsibility for damage caused by the activities of the City, any service authority or the public.

When installing irrigation in the verge, the following must be adhered to:

- Irrigation pipes and connections shall be laid between 150mm and 300mm deep. Pipe fittings should not protrude above the surface.
- Irrigation pipes and connections shall be set back at least 250mm from the edge of the footpath or where applicable, the alignment of a proposed future footpath.
- No ground disturbance is permitted within the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of a street tree. The TPZ is calculated by multiplying the Diameter at Breast Height (measured at 1.4 m above ground) by 12.
- The installed irrigation system must have all valves located in the adjoining property and water supplied to the system must be sourced from the adjoining property.
- Where irrigation extends to the kerb line "half" sprinklers must be used to ensure that the flow of water is directed away from paved surfaces, such as footpaths and roads.
- Sprinklers are not to cause inconvenience to any person using the thoroughfare.
- The adjoining property owner remains responsible for any damage to public utility services within the road reserve. The City recommends utilisation of the 'Before You Dig Australia' service to determine where public utility services are situated in the verge area.
- Irrigation may only be operated as per allocated watering days between 6pm and 9am. For allocated watering days, visit <https://www.watercorporation.com.au/Help-and-advice/Watering-days/Find-watering-days-or-report-a-breach/Check-your-watering-days>.
- Residents may be eligible for a watering exemption when installing a new verge garden. For further information, visit <https://www.watercorporation.com.au/Help-and-advice/Watering-days/Apply-for-a-watering-exemption/Apply-for-a-watering-exemption>.

Gardens and Landscaping

The design of a garden is an important consideration of the verge development assessment process. It is the City's preference that verge developments are Waterwise, as they can improve water efficiency, provide habitat for local wildlife, increase biodiversity and improve streetscape amenity.

Lawn, although a preferred option for most verges by residents, is not a waterwise solution. An established low-water using garden using Waterwise or native plants can be an environmental and cost saving alternative.

Good soil preparation is the key to ensure a healthy successful garden. Removal of lawn/grass is crucial for a successful native Waterwise verge and there are a number of options available such as manual removal with a turf cutter, smothering with newspaper and mulch, or herbicides. Things such as carboard and carpet are not permitted to be used for smothering weeds due to potential slip or trip hazards.

Water use can also be reduced by using local native species. The City's website provides further information on suitable waterwise species and the Waterwise Verge Rebate <https://www.albany.wa.gov.au/services/sustainability-and-waste/community-sustainability-grants-and-rebates/waterwise-verge-rebate.aspx>

Declared and environmental weeds must not be used as per the City's Environmental Weed Management Plan: <https://www.albany.wa.gov.au/documents/469/environmental-weed-management-planning-strategy>. Suitable Waterwise verge plants can also be found via Water Corporation's Waterwise Plant Directory at <https://www.watercorporation.com.au/Waterwise/Waterwise-plants>.

Verge gardens must not be a hazard to pedestrians or motorists. Landscaping treatments must meet the following requirements:

- An area a minimum of 2m width from, and parallel to, the kerb line shall be kept clear of vegetation to allow pedestrians safe and clear passage.
- Vegetation must be kept clear from obstructing the roadway or any footpath.
- Landscaping on the verge area must not create any undue hazard to road users or pedestrians, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act.
- Adequate sight lines must be maintained at vehicle crossovers and at road intersections. As a general guide, landscaping shall not exceed 750mm in height at full maturity.
- For properties located at intersections, contact the City for further details.

Street Trees

Protection of existing street trees

No ground disturbance is permitted within the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of a tree. The TPZ is calculated by multiplying the Diameter at Breast Height (measured at 1.4m above ground by 12).

Request for a new street tree

Upon request, the City may provide a street tree through the winter street tree planting program. A request can be made via the City's website <https://arcg.is/0yTbS9>. A select number of suitable tree species will be available for the adjacent landowner to choose from including native and exotic trees. Further information can be found on the City's website <https://www.albany.wa.gov.au/services/sustainability-and-waste/urban-greening/request-a-street-tree.aspx>. Once planted, watering of street trees for the first summer will be undertaken by the City for the first two summers.. At certain times of the year, the City may also coordinate a street tree infill program in a particular area.

Surface Treatments

The permissible verge surface treatments are:

- Lawn (warm season varieties are preferred)
- Waterwise and native landscaping/gardens
- Fine grade mulch (see Figure 1 below). The mulch must be easy to walk on and not cause a tripping hazard.



Figure 1: Example of Acceptable Mulch

Hardstand Treatments

Hardstand treatments are areas with a hard/impervious surface. Hardstand treatments must be free of loose materials and dust, are not to occur within the TPZ (as defined above) of street trees and are to be constructed by competent tradespeople. Hardstand treatments are not to be installed over more than one third of the verge area (excluding crossovers). Crossovers are to be delineated from hardstand treatments either by colour or material. Hardstand treatments are not to be used for parking.

The following provides a summary of acceptable hardstand treatments:

- Brick paving
- Concrete
- Asphalt
- Cement stabilised gravel/ crushed limestone

Non-Compliance

Loose materials not listed under surface or hardstand treatments such as, fencing, rocks, kerbs and walls are not permitted on your verge. These materials create hazards for motorists and pedestrians.

The adjoining property owner may be asked by the City to remove treatments which are installed contrary to these guidelines, and may be requested to replace them with an approved verge treatment. Such work is to be carried out by the adjoining property owner at their own cost.

Conditions Applicable to all Verge Treatments

The City reserves the right to remove any verge treatment for the purpose of carrying out works, without being liable to compensate any person for such loss. The City also reserves the right to request the removal, any verge treatments that deteriorate in condition and are assessed as a risk to the public.

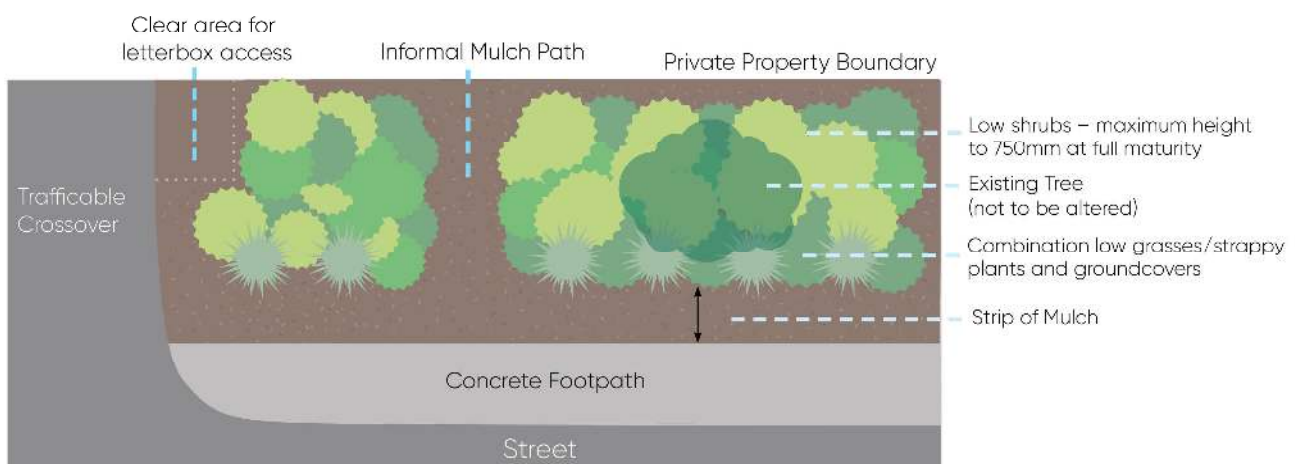
For further information regarding permissible verge treatments, please refer to the City's Activities in Thoroughfares and Public Places and Trading Local Law (as amended).

For more information on what you can do on a verge, please refer to the City's Verge Vegetation Information Form at www.albany.wa.gov.au/documents/360/verge-vegetation-information-sheet.

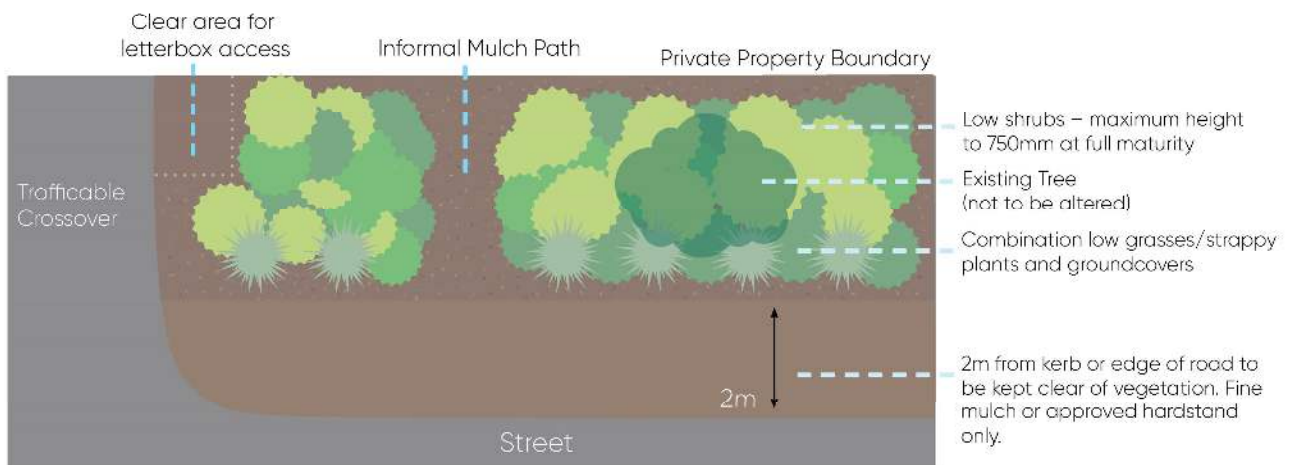
For information on managing Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL) on City managed land, please refer to [www.albany.wa.gov.au/documents/1958/bushfire-attack-level-\(bal\)-public-land-management-policy](http://www.albany.wa.gov.au/documents/1958/bushfire-attack-level-(bal)-public-land-management-policy).

Verge Example Diagrams

Verge example where a footpath is present



Verge example where no footpath is present



Document Approval			
Document Development Officer:		Document Owner: <i>(Executive Director and/or designated Manager)</i>	
Manager - Engineering		Executive Director - Infrastructure, Development and Environment	
Document Control			
File Number - Document Type:	CM.STD.4 – Guideline		
Synergy Reference Number:	NG21135518_2		
Status of Document:	Final		
Quality Assurance:	Executive Director - Infrastructure, Development and Environment		
Distribution:	Internal, Public		
Document Revision History			
Version	Author	Version Description	Date Completed
0.1	MES	Draft	December 2021
1.0	MES	Approved	12/01/2022
2.0	ME	Draft	4/2/025
3.0	ME	Final	1/8/2025