

VERGE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES



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What is a street verge?

A verge is the area of land located between a street kerb and the boundary of an adjacent property.

The verge provides a number of benefits to the community including:

- social identity and connectivity
- a link to the environment
- stormwater management through increased infiltration and groundwater recharging
- reduction of heat (through the provision of street trees and vegetation).

The verge also accommodates public service utilities, such as street lighting, power, water, underground fire hydrants, sewerage, drainage, gas, telephone and optic fibre cables. Verge treatments must not cover or obstruct access to these services.

Whose responsibility is the street verge?

The City of Rockingham encourages the property owner or occupier to take pride in the verge which abuts their property including the corner verge, to enhance the amenity and aesthetic value of their properties and the streetscape as a whole.

Verge development, including acceptable materials and landscaping, is the responsibility of the owner or occupier. The owner or occupier needs to ensure that any verge treatment is completed, maintained and repaired in accordance with the lawful directive of officers of the City to minimise risk to the public.

In the event of a change of land ownership, the responsibility for a developed verge passes onto the new owner or occupier.

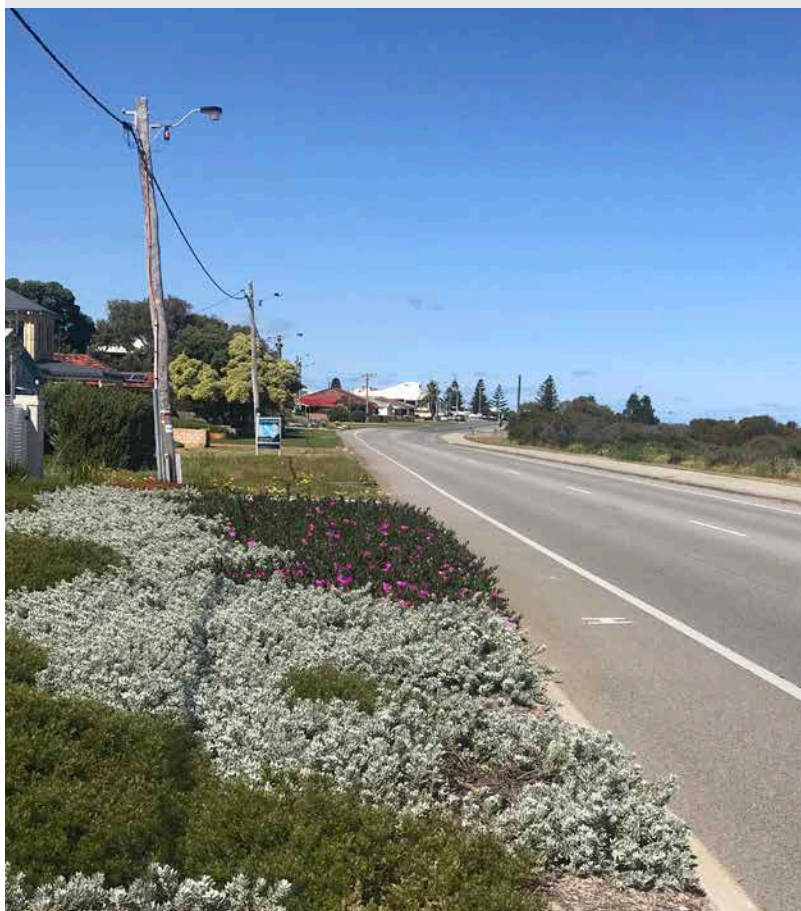
An undeveloped verge is one where no verge treatment has ever been undertaken. Primarily, these verges are adjacent to vacant land. The City undertakes a minimum standard of maintenance to alleviate hazards, generally mowing once annually and undertaking weed treatment as required.

Public utilities, state government authorities and their authorised contractors have specific responsibilities and rights to access and undertake works on the verge as defined in legislation and codes of practice.

The verge will be made safe upon completion of these works, however, there is no requirement from the City or any other service provider to rectify damage to irrigation, planting, turf or hard surfacing after maintenance works have been completed.

Reinstatement of verge treatments due to works undertaken by government authorities or authorised contractors will be at the owner or occupier's expense.

The City is responsible for the planting, removal and maintenance of approved trees in the street verge.



Pedestrian Accessibility

Where a public footpath is not provided on either side of the road, an area 2 m wide extending from the back of the kerb, and maintained:

- as lawn or
- with acceptable material suitable for pedestrian traffic as defined in the City's Verge Development.

Garden edging is not permitted in this area.

Hard surfaces are permitted however, the area will be included in the maximum coverage.

Visibility

Verge development and management must be undertaken to ensure that sight obstructions are prevented. In order to achieve this, vegetation must be maintained below 500 mm in the following areas:

- two metres behind the kerb or road shoulder
- adjacent to any vehicular crossover
- the verge area 10 m x 10 m at any road intersection.

In all other areas greater than 2 m from the kerb, the maximum height of vegetation is 750 mm.

Bush Fire Mitigation

In areas identified as a bush fire prone area or where bush fire risk is a concern, appropriate plant selection and maintenance can significantly reduce the risk of bush fire spreading. This is important in both rural and urban areas as fires can spread many kilometres from a fire front.

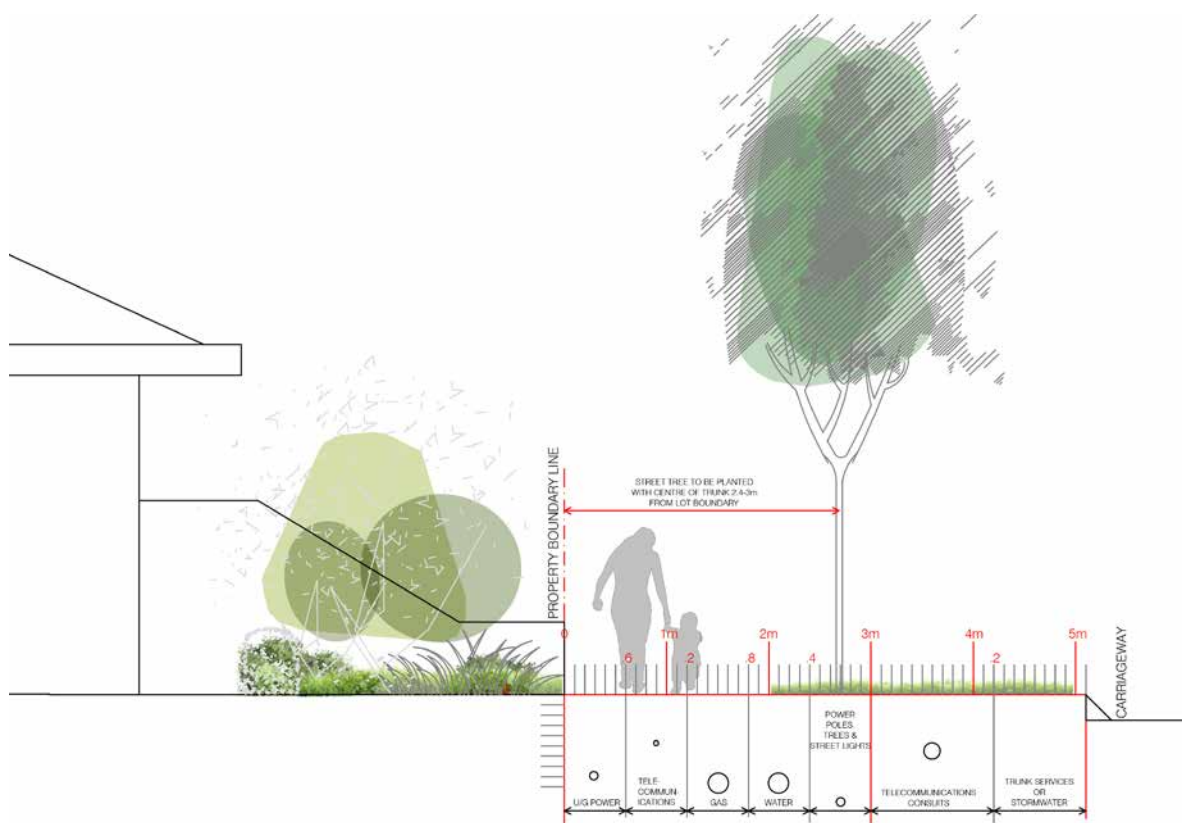
Research has identified a number of plants that are fire retardant and/or reduce the intensity of fire.

Further information can be found in the **FESA Plant Guide within the Building protection Zone of the Swan Coastal Plain of Western Australia**.

These plants must comply with the requirements.

Service Locations

Before any verge development work, call 'Dial before You Dig' on 1100 or go to www.1100.com.au to find out the location of any below ground services within your verge. It is the owner or occupiers responsibility to identify all services located within the verge.



Do I need permission to landscape my verge?

When landscaping of verges complies with the following table and only includes natural lawn, garden or organic mulch, landscaping can be undertaken without written approval.

When landscaping of verges includes any other acceptable materials, you must submit a written application and include a plan for assessment and approval.

Treatment Type	
Natural Lawn, Organic Mulch or Garden	Acceptable Material
<p>The verge is planted with suitable plants and covered with organic mulch, designed, installed and maintained to minimise the spread of plants and materials onto or over the road, footpath or crossovers.</p> <p>Care must be taken to ensure that any material placed on the verge cannot be blown or carried by wind or water - removable garden bed edging is permitted to assist with this requirement.</p> <p>Although not supported for Waterwise gardens, irrigation may be installed on the verge in accordance with the requirements of the City's Verge Development Policy and the Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2018.</p> <p>Maintenance must be undertaken to ensure the verge remains in a good and tidy condition.</p>	<p>A treatment which provides universal access through a level and stable surface. Acceptable materials must be placed according to manufacturer's instructions, placed on a stable and firm base which prevents movement of the surface. This treatment must be maintained to ensure that no trips, slips or fall risks are created.</p> <p>All hard surface treatments are to be installed to accommodate vehicle loadings in compliance with the City's specifications for the construction of residential crossovers.</p> <p>Maintenance must be undertaken to ensure the verge remains in a safe and tidy condition.</p>
Maximum coverage	
100% (excluding crossover and formed path)	Not to exceed 50% of the verge area, or 10m ² whichever is greater (excluding crossover and formed path)
Formal Approval Requirements	
Not required.	Applications are to be made in writing and include a plan detailing the proposed verge development showing lawn, garden and acceptable materials.

Conditions will apply please refer to the **City of Rockingham Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2018**.

Unacceptable Materials for Verge Treatments

These include:

- ✗ inorganic mulches such as gravel, stone, crushed brick or rock
- ✗ bitumen or asphalt
- ✗ items that protrude above the surface of the verge, except removable garden edging.

Permissible Verge Treatments

Lawns

Grass species should be selected to provide an easily controlled and drought tolerant lawn. Choose a warm season grass that is suitable for our conditions, such as:

- Soft Leaf Buffalo
- Zoysia
- Bermuda

Lawns should be kept at a manageable height of no more than 50 mm at all times.

If you prefer lawn on your verge, you may like to consider reducing the area, such as along the kerb for pedestrians and bins.

Gardens

The City recognises that the Perth climate is changing and this places pressure on our water resources. The City encourages owners or occupiers to use these guidelines when planning and designing their verge treatment.

The selection of plants, mulch and preparation of the soil can have a significant impact on the amount of water needed on the verge.

Added environmental benefits of a Waterwise verge are:

- reduction in local temperatures as plants naturally cool the air
- provision of food and habitat to insects, which are an important foundation of the food chain
- provision of food and habitat to a range of fauna, providing wildlife corridors for the safe passage between significant environmental areas.

Waterwise native plants are encouraged in plant selection.

Vegetation should not be an unacceptable plant species as listed in the City of Rockingham Pest Plants Local Law 2000. Edible plants are permitted, however, caution should be used to ensure plants are not hazardous to people, pets or fauna. Fruit trees and climbing plants are not permitted.

Vegetation is to be maintained to meet the visibility requirements.



Acceptable Materials for Verge Treatment

Organic Mulch

Mulched verges may be left unplanted or planted with a verge garden. A blend of shredded and large particle bark mulches are the best for reducing drift, minimising evaporation and allowing water penetration. Mulch must not contain sharp or otherwise dangerous material.

Set the verge ground levels at least between 50-100 mm below surrounding crossovers, kerbs and paths to allow for bark mulch on top and ensure finished levels are only slightly below hard paved areas. Make sure levels allow for stormwater to be held within your verge rather than impacting nearby street stormwater drains.

Shredded green waste is available free to the public from the City's Millar Road Landfill. Owners or occupiers are responsible for loading it themselves. Contact the City on 9528 0333 to check availability.





Concrete, Bricks and Pavers

If you wish to install concrete, bricks or pavers on your verge, you must provide a detailed plan and obtain the City's approval. The treatment must not exceed 50% of the verge area, or 10 m² whichever is greater.

These treatments must be installed to accommodate vehicle loadings in compliance with the City's specifications for the construction of residential crossovers. This information is located on the City's web site within Streetscapes.

In addition:

- concrete for industrial verges must have a minimum thickness of 150 mm and contain F62 galvanized mesh
- concrete or decorative concrete must be a contrasting colour to any existing footpath
- all hard surface areas must be finished in an anti-slip treatment as per Australian Standard 4586-2013 Slip resistance classification of new pedestrian surface materials
- all finished levels must be flush with the surrounding surfaces.

The owner or occupier must maintain the treatment to ensure it remains in a level state and weed free. All pavers which are chipped, cracked or damaged in any way are to be removed and replaced. A permeable area should be left on the verge for street trees as detailed in these guidelines.

Compacted Limestone

If you wish to install a compacted limestone verge treatment, you must provide a detailed plan and obtain the City's approval. The treatment must not exceed 50% of the verge area, or 10 m² whichever is greater.

Compacted limestone verge treatments must be constructed per the following:

- material must be 19 mm crushed limestone
- minimum depth of 150 mm
- material should be wet down and compacted using overlapping passes with a vibrating plate compactor during placement.
- material to be finished flush with the surrounding surfaces.

The owner or occupier must maintain the treatment to ensure it remains in a level state, there are no loose stones and remains weed free.

Synthetic Lawn

If you wish to install synthetic lawn on your verge, you must provide a detailed plan and obtain the City's approval. The treatment must not exceed 50% of the verge area, or 10 m² whichever is greater.

Synthetic lawn must be installed as per manufacturer recommendations and meet the following requirements:

- installed with a firm level compacted sub base
- edges are flush with surrounding area and secured with flat head nails or pins no less than every 300 mm apart and at every corner
- nails or pins must not protrude above surface
- all joins are secured with no gaps
- sand infill is applied and maintained.

Synthetic lawn must be predominantly green in colour.

The owner or occupier must maintain the synthetic lawn in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations, ensure it remains in a level state, there are no loose edges and is kept weed free.



Garden Edging

Garden edging is permitted to delineate verge gardens and contain mulch, subject to the following:

- edging products are placed so that they can be easily removed and replaced by hand
- edging must not be permanently affixed onto the verge
- the height of edging is no more than 150 mm
- the garden edging being located outside the pedestrian zone (see pedestrian accessibility).

Irrigation

Waterwise verges comprising of native plant species are encouraged so that irrigation of the verge is not required.

Irrigation is permitted as long as the following irrigation requirements are followed:

- **Irrigation depth**
 - pipes 150-300 mm below verge surface
- **Irrigation fittings**
 - if connected to a public water supply, complies with Water Corporation requirements
- **Other requirements**
 - connected so that no part protrudes above the surface whilst the system is not working
 - any pipework when passing under pavement footpath or crossover is at least class 12 PVC piping
 - has approved valves located within private property and fitted to give complete control of the flow of water
 - all sprinklers and spray heads are positioned to minimise spray onto footpaths or road pavements.



Street Trees

The City will provide and plant street trees in accordance with the City's Greening Plan, policies and guidelines. The City is aware of all underground services and current regulations regarding sightlines and setbacks from intersections, properties crossovers and the like.

The City is responsible for the planting and maintenance of all street trees however, we ask the owner or occupier to water newly planted trees.

If a street tree has not been planted by the City prior to the verge treatment being installed, the City will provide advice on the location(s) of future tree plantings and a minimum of 1.5 m x 1.5 m opening must be provided. Root barrier should be installed by the owner or occupier to prevent root intrusion.

For information on trees and City's Greening Plan or to request a street tree visit the City's website and search 'Trees'.

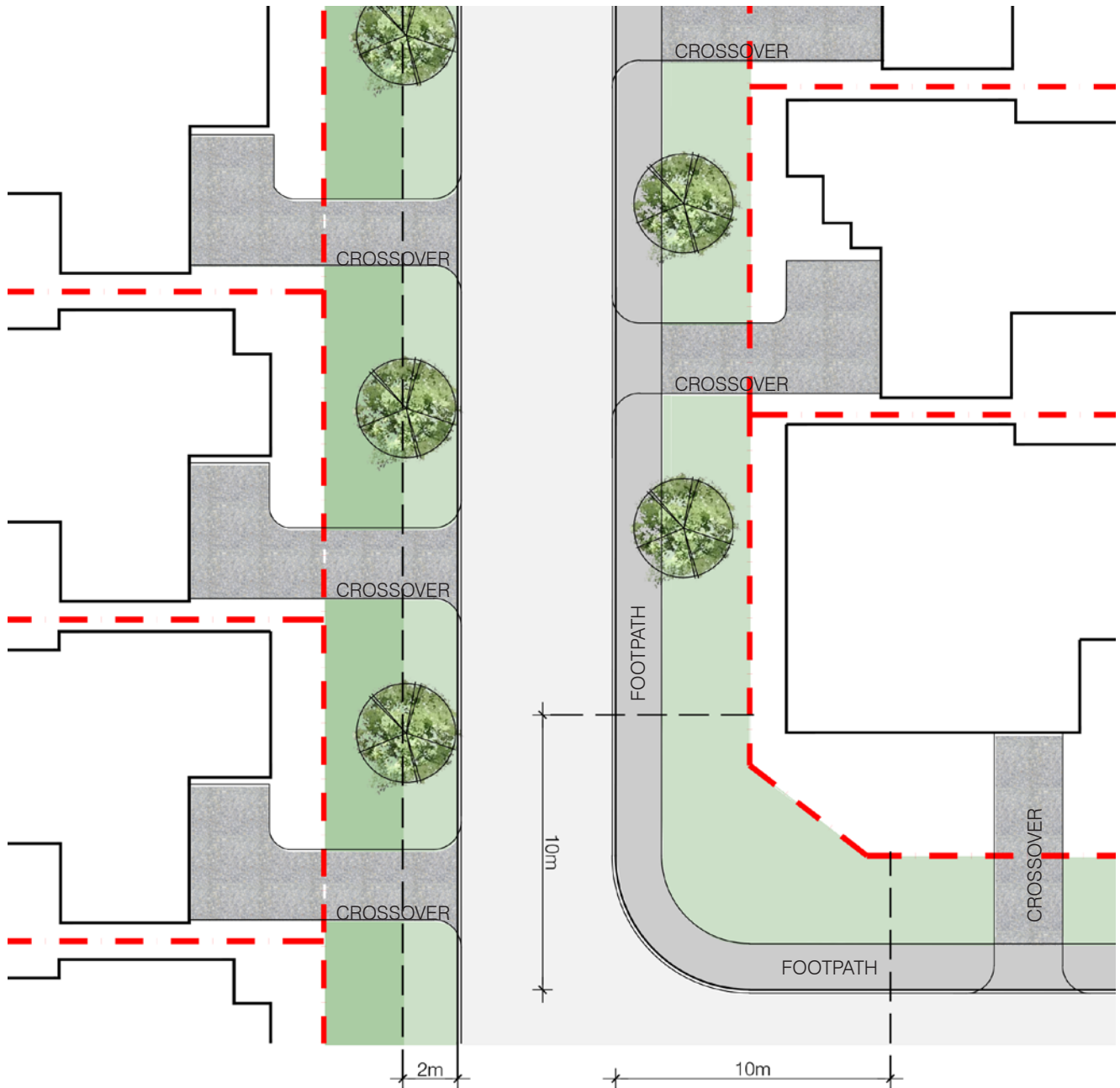



FIGURE 1: VERGE WITH FOOTPATH TYPE A

LEGEND

- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- LAWN OR GARDEN ON VERGE
750 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- LAWN OR LOW SHRUB ZONE FOR
VISIBILITY 500 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- CROSSOVER
- FOOTPATH
-  TREES ON VERGE APPROVED BY
THE CITY



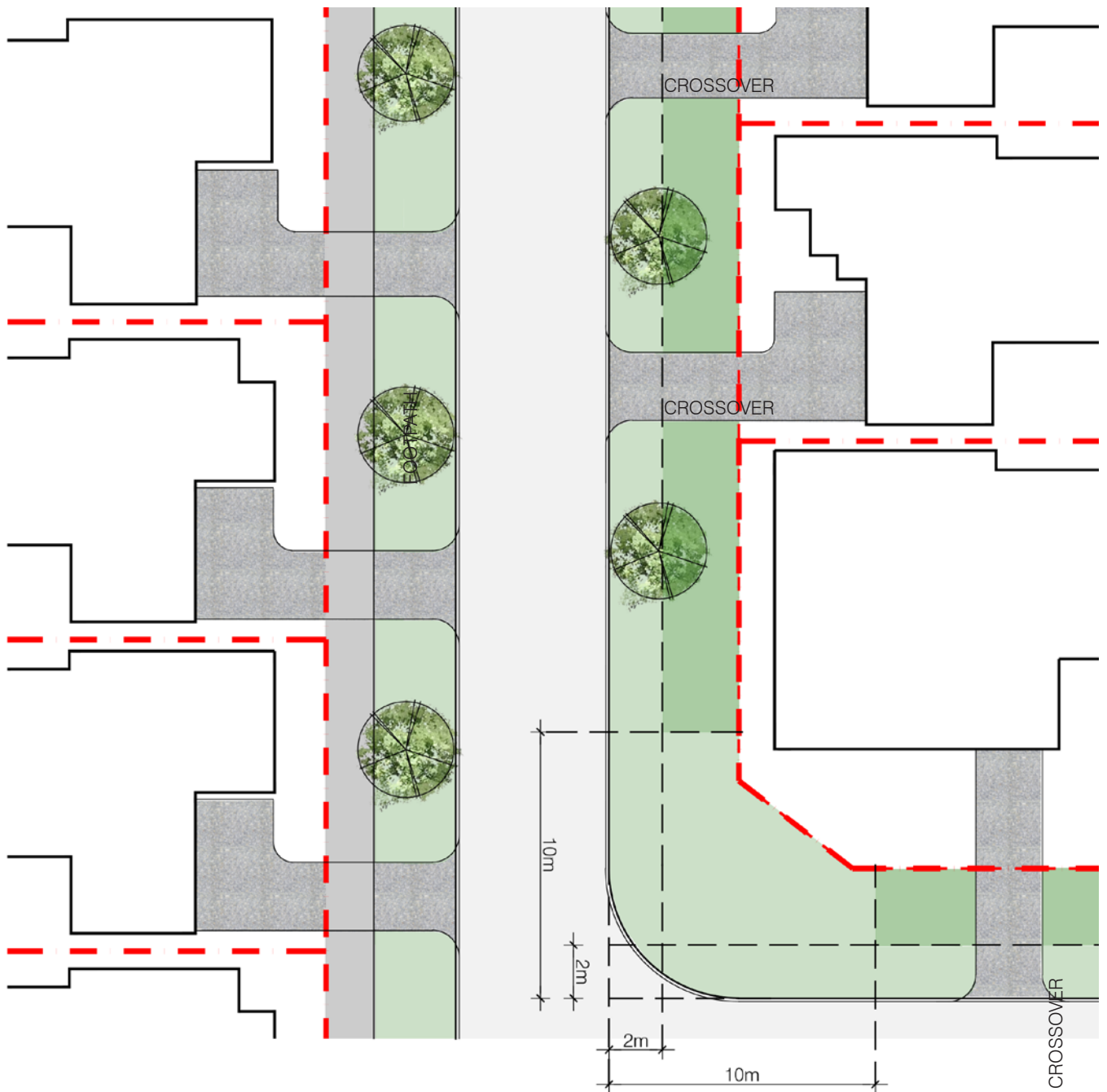



FIGURE 2: VERGE WITH FOOTPATH TYPE B

LEGEND

- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- LAWN OR GARDEN ON VERGE
750 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- LAWN OR LOW SHRUB ZONE FOR
VISIBILITY 500 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- CROSSOVER
- FOOTPATH
-  TREES ON VERGE APPROVED BY
THE CITY

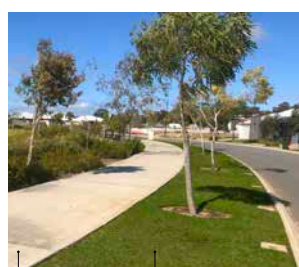


Footpath

Garden on verge
Low shrub 500 mm High Maximum
for visibility



Footpath
Low shrub zone 500 mm
High Maximum
Garden on verge 750 mm
High Maximum



Footpath

Lawn on verge

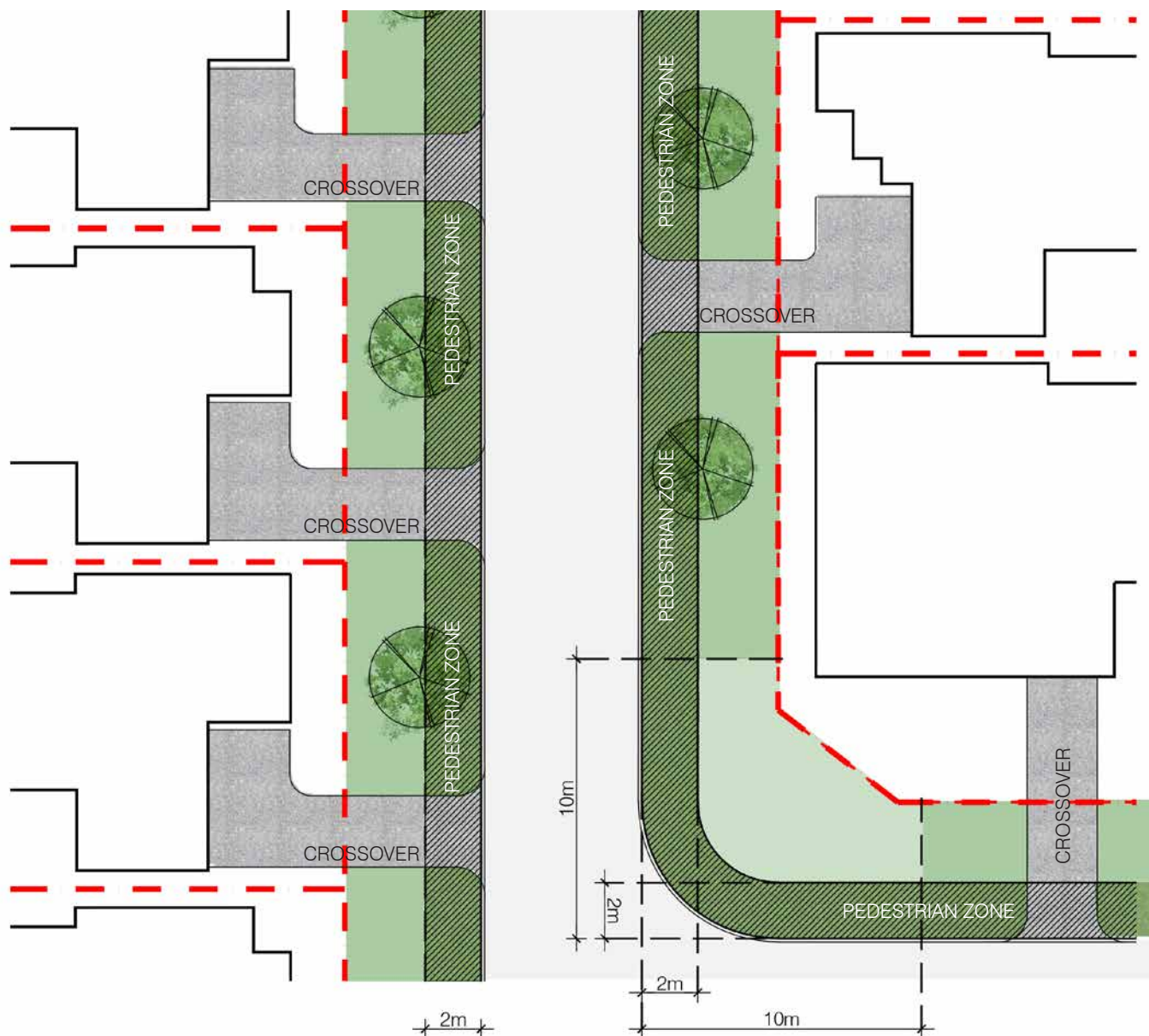



FIGURE 3: VERGE WITHOUT FOOTPATH TYPE C

LEGEND

- - - PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- LAWN OR GARDEN ON VERGE
750 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- LAWN OR LOW SHRUB ZONE FOR
VISIBILITY 500 mm HIGH MAXIMUM
- 2 METER PEDESTRIAN ZONE
LAWN ONLY
- CROSSOVER
-  TREES ON VERGE APPROVED BY
THE CITY



Verge garden design tips

Understand the City of Rockingham's Verge Development Policy. If unsure please contact the City.

- Design your verge taking into account public utilities.
- Find inspiration.
- Choose plants suited to the sites soil conditions.
- Draw up a plan.

Measure and draw up a plan identifying the dimensions and existing features. This will help you to understand how you can arrange your verge and what can fit in, remember the requirements.

Set plants back from crossovers, kerbs and footpaths by 0.5 m to ensure plants do not obstruct pedestrians and vehicles as they grow.

If you do not have a footpath, all plants must be set back at least 2 m from the kerb to allow pedestrian movement. This area may also be used for rubbish bins or bulk/green waste during collection periods.

The verge is a corridor for a number of services; water, electrical, gas, telecommunications and fire hydrants may be located within these areas. Utility providers have a right to dig up your verge to gain access and to upgrade or repair existing services. Utilities will try to minimise disruption, however rectification of verge treatments following any work can be the responsibility of the owner or occupier.

Understanding your verge

Think about the existing conditions of your verge, such as soil type and sun exposure.

Local native plant species are the most appropriate for verge gardens as they can survive our hot dry summers with little to no additional watering.

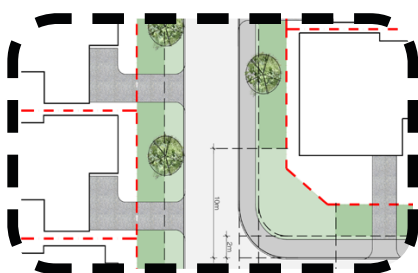
Find your local water wise Garden Centre at www.watercorporation.com.au/WaterWise

Or refer to the Guidelines Waterwise Verge Plant Selection on pages 15-17.

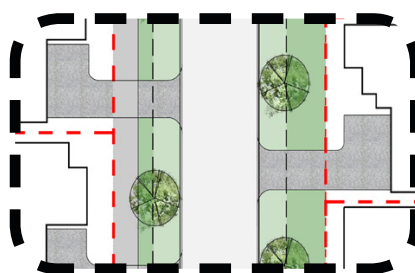
Check the plant height. Low growing shrubs and groundcovers are required for verges, as they provide better visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The maximum height permitted is 500 mm within verge areas 2 m behind the kerb or road shoulder, adjacent to any vehicular crossover and 10 m on street corners or major intersections. In all other areas, the maximum height of vegetation is 750 mm. For more details refer to the Verge Garden Plans.

Avoid plants that are prickly, poisonous or a listed as a pest plant or noxious weed.

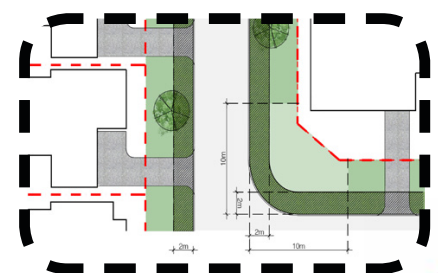
✓ Apply the correct verge scenario



Type A



Type B

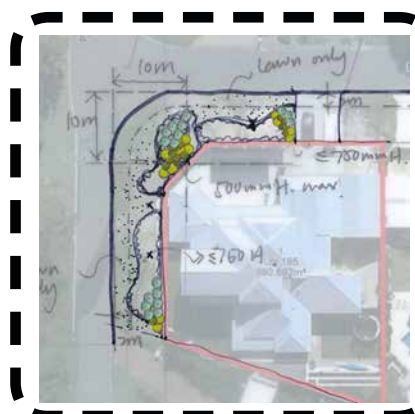


Type C

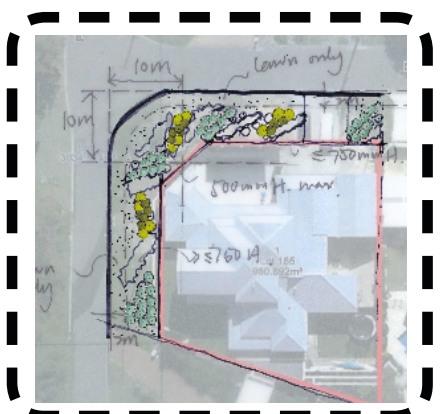
✓ Draw your plan



💡 Path through garden bed



💡 Informal arrangement



💡 Formal arrangement

Preparing your verge

Rockingham's sand will become water repellent during the year and adding organics will reduce that effect.

Use soil conditioners like composted organic matter within the top 300 mm of soil. This helps to maintain microbial activity, as well as improve the soil's moisture and nutrient holding capacity.

Applying a quality soil wetting agent will increase your soils' 'wettability', allowing water to penetrate deep into the root zone. This is particularly important at planting to help with establishment.

For the best results, use products with the WaterWise symbol. Always follow the manufacturer instructions when applying these products.

Visit www.watercorporation.com.au/products for further information.

Irrigation

If in doubt, contact a WaterWise service provider to help in designing and installing an irrigation system that will best suit your plant selection and verge conditions. Check www.watercorporation.com.au/WaterWise for your watering times and rostered times. When planting a new garden, an exemption may apply, contact Water Corporation for further details.

Planting

For the best results, plant in late autumn/early winter as rainfall through the cooler winter months will help to establish your new garden without additional watering. Plants may struggle to survive if planted in the warmer months without regular watering.

Before digging any holes, set out your plants along the verge to ensure the design is correct and the spacing between plants is even. Consider the growth of plants so they don't obstruct access routes or public infrastructure as they grow.

Mulching

Once all plants have been installed, apply a 50-100 mm thick even layer of coarse organic mulch, making sure mulch is kept clear from the base of all new plants. Heavy coarse mulch like pine bark is less likely to blow away and takes longer to break down. Ensure the finished mulch level sits just below adjoining crossovers, kerbs and footpaths to prevent mulch from spreading beyond the garden bed.

Maintaining your verge

It is the responsibility of the owner or occupier to keep all verge treatments in a safe and tidy condition in accordance with this guideline.

Waterwise verge gardens should only require occasional weeding and pruning. You may wish to prune more frequently to maintain a formal verge design.

Check mulch every few months and top up as necessary to maintain a 50-100 mm even layer across all planting areas, mulch is not designed to last forever.

Street tree maintenance, including pruning must be undertaken by the City. Owners or occupiers should contact the City.

Enquiries can be directed to City of Rockingham, Engineering Services on **9528 0333**.



WaterWise Verge Plant Selection

Below are some suggested water wise plants that generally grow less than 500 mm tall. However, growth habits of plants will vary with soil condition and watering, therefore some may require pruning to remain below the required 500 mm high.

Image	Name	Growth/Habit
	Kalbarri Carpet <i>Eremophila glabra</i>	Prostrate to 20 cm groundcover to 1 m spread Attractive silver foliage. Yellow, Orange flowers that attract small birds
	Coastal Pigface <i>Carpobrotus virescens</i>	10-30 cm high x 0.5-3 m wide Sunny to partly shaded positions and prefers sandy coastal areas
	Gin Gin Gem <i>Grevillea obtusifolia</i> - 'prostrate'	Dense low groundcover to 3 m spread Good Lawn substitute - low dense fast growing hardy green groundcover with small pinkish spider flowers in winter/spring
	Scarlet Runner <i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	10 cm high x 3 m wide Prefers full sun to partly shaded position in well-drained soil
	Creeping Myoporum <i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	15 cm high x 50-150 cm wide Semi-succulent leaves drought-tolerant







Image	Name	Growth/Habit
	Green Carpet <i>Grevillea crithmifolia prostrate</i>	Grows to a height of 30 cm high and 2 m wide It rarely needs maintenance but will usually benefit from a light trim after flowering in spring
	Grey Cottonhead <i>Conostylis candicans</i>	Tufted to 30 cm tall by 50 cm spread A lovely grass-like plant with grey foliage and bright yellow bobble flower heads
	Prickly Conostylis <i>Conostylis aculeata</i>	50 cm tall by 50 cm spread Strappy, grass like
	Silver Nugget or Dwarf Cushion Bush <i>Leucophyta brownii</i>	Dense small shrub - choose compact dwarf forms Silver leaves with inconspicuous yellow flowers in summer
	Little Smokie PBR <i>Olearia axillaris mini PBR</i>	A small compact neat shrub to 50 cm high by 50 cm wide Silver foliage will not need pruning

Image	Name	Growth/Habit
	Little Rev <i>Dianella revoluta dwarf</i>	Clumping flax-like plant - choose dwarf varieties This tufted plant has a growth form similar to flaxes
	Fan-Flower <i>Scaevola varieties</i>	Less than 45 cm high and 50 cm wide A number of varieties of this native plant have been developed. Attractive deep blue, purple or white flowers
	'Seaspray'/'Gilt Dragon' <i>Grevillea preissii</i>	Small Rush to 70 cm tall by 50 cm to 1 m wide Dark green cylindrical leaves. Pruning is effective. Has a tendency to spread rapidly by seed
	Knotted Club Rush <i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Small Rush to 70 cm tall by 50 cm to 1 m wide Dark green cylindrical leaves. Pruning is effective. Has a tendency to spread rapidly by seed
	Coral Carpet <i>Adenanthos cuneatus</i>	Low growing shrub with vivid red margins on new growth.

