



# YOUR STREET VERGE

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## GUIDELINES

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide information and advice to residents about the use of the verge area adjoining their property and their obligations in relation to installing and/or maintaining improvements on the verge in accordance with the *City of Joondalup Local Government, Public Property Local Law 2014* (the Local Law).

## 2. Objective

The objective of these Guidelines is to support the provision of safe, environmentally sustainable and aesthetically pleasing verges.

## 3. Background

A street verge is the portion of a thoroughfare which lies between the boundary of a carriageway and the adjacent property line. Verges form part of the road reserve that is owned by the Crown and managed by the City of Joondalup (the City). The verge provides a safe pedestrian space and vehicular access to properties. The verge also accommodates street lighting, footpaths, bus stops, storm water drainage and street trees along with public service utilities such as power supply, water, gas, sewerage and telecommunications cables.

The City appreciates the visual amenity afforded by verges that are maintained and improved by residents. While the City is responsible for City infrastructure including the road, the kerb, the crossover apron/fillet, street trees and footpaths as well as enforcing verge treatments, it is the householder's responsibility to maintain the verge so that footpaths, roadways and sightlines remain free from obstructions at all times to allow pedestrian access along the verge area, in preference to walking on the roadway, regardless of whether a footpath has been constructed or not.

Verges within Housing Opportunity Areas (HOAs) are subject to different requirements where lots are developed at the higher residential density, as outlined in these guidelines. Further information on HOAs can be found on the City's website.

## 4. Permissible verge treatments

Residents can undertake improvements to beautify the verge in accordance with the *City of Joondalup Local Government, Public Property Local Law 2014* (the Local Law) and in line with the permissible verge treatments described in the Local Law and contained within these Guidelines.

Clause 8.7 of the Local Law sets out what are permissible verge treatments and states:

- “(1) An owner or occupier of land which abuts a verge may on that part of the verge directly in front of her or his land install a permissible verge treatment.
- (2) Permissible verge treatments include –
- (a) The planting and maintenance of a lawn;
  - (b) The planting and maintenance of a garden provided that –
    - (i) Clear sight visibility is maintained at all times for a person using the abutting thoroughfare in the vicinity of an intersection or bend in the thoroughfare or using a driveway on land adjacent to the thoroughfare for access to or from the thoroughfare;
    - (ii) Where there is no footpath, a person has safe and clear access of a minimum width of 1.5 metres along that part of the verge immediately adjacent to the kerb;
    - (iii) The garden does not include a wall, built structure or anything of a like nature; and
    - (iv) The garden is not of a thorny, poisonous or hazardous nature.
  - (c) The installation of an acceptable material; or
  - (d) The installation of an acceptable material in accordance with paragraph (c), and the planting and maintenance of either a lawn or garden on the balance of the verge in accordance with paragraph (a) or (b)”.

Acceptable material is defined in Section 5.

## 5. Treatment types

### 5.1. Landscaping of verge with lawn and/or garden (excluding hardstand areas)

Many residents are becoming more water-conscious when planning landscaping, however this does not mean that vegetation has to be eliminated. The City supports residents' endeavours to beautify the road reserve and encourages the installation of low water use plants, ground covers, edible planting (vegetables and herbs), lawns and landscape treatments. The City encourages the use of local native plant species, without the need of irrigation once established.

\*Visit Water Corporation's [Waterwise Plants Directory](#) for further information and ideas. Please note this directory is not specific to verges, any selected plants will need to ensure they meet the requirements of this guideline (e.g. maximum plant height of 600mm).

The City requires that all landscaping complies with the following conditions:

1. The landscaping is to be of such a nature as to not create any undue hazard to road users or pedestrians and must comply with the Local Law including:
  - Vegetation must be kept clear of the roadway and/or any footpath at all times.
  - Vegetation must not restrict sight visibility from footpaths, crossovers and cross streets. The mature height of the vegetation will be maintained below 600mm.
  - Plants must not have thorns, sharp leaves, be poisonous or have any other similar feature that may cause injury to pedestrians or road users.
  - Climbing plants should be kept clear of infrastructure such as electrical poles, light poles and street trees.
  - Rocks, stakes, star pickets, wire fencing, frames, planter boxes or retaining walls are not permitted.
2. Where there is no footpath on the verge, an area measuring 1.5 metres from the back of the kerb and running parallel to the kerb, must be landscaped in such a way that provides pedestrians the opportunity to walk on the verge.
3. If a bus stop is located within the verge, only lawn, mulch, ground covers or similar are allowed within 1.5 metres around the bus stop.
4. The City has the following requirements when an owner or occupier installs irrigation to street verges:
  - Irrigation pipes should be laid beneath the verge at a depth between 150mm and 300mm. No fitting connected to the pipes shall protrude above the surface of the lawn or garden.

- Irrigation pipes and connections should be at least 250mm away from the footpath or the kerb alignment. Half sprinklers should be used and should direct the flow of water away from the road or footpath surface. For assistance selecting irrigation infrastructure, refer to Water Corporation's [Waterwise Specialists Directory](#) for further guidance.
- Only the pipes and sprinklers should be located on the verge; all valves, including solenoid valves, should be located within the abutting property.
- Watering and irrigation are only to be used on watering days or where exemptions apply. Refer to the Water Corporation's [website](#) for further guidance.

5. The following materials are accepted when used as a mulch incorporated within a garden bed\*:
  - Organic mulches, such as pine bark, hard wood or similar, are preferred. Recommended application depth of 50-100mm.
  - Inorganic mulches such as blue metal, pea gravel or similar are only permitted in garden beds.

\* For the purposes of these guidelines, a garden bed is defined as an area of planting with a minimum of two plants per square metre.

The City further recommends consideration of ground preparation and soil improvements when establishing a waterwise verge garden, inclusive of:

- If grass is to be removed and application of herbicide is required, residents should consider using a licensed contractor. Alternatively, if the resident is undertaking the task themselves the herbicide should be applied as directed on the pack, including follow up treatments as required.
- Verge ground levels should be left at least 75mm below surrounding kerbs and paths to allow for the installation of mulch, which must finish only slightly below adjoining surfaces.
- Residents must avoid damage to existing trees and their root systems.
- Residents should apply a quality soil wetting agent\* during establishment of the verge lawn and/or garden.
- Residents should incorporate soil conditioners\*, (e.g. composted organic matter and clay-based additives), within the top 300mm of soil where irrigation is used.

\*Waterwise or Smart Approved WaterMark soil conditioner or wetting agent products are recommended.



## 5.2 Hardstand Treatment

The City recognises that residents may wish to install a hardstand treatment to a portion of the verge abutting their property. For hardstand treatments the following conditions apply:

1. Acceptable material under clause 8.7 of the Local Law is to be of such a nature as to not create any undue hazard to road users or pedestrians including:
  - Is stable and able to be maintained that way;
  - Is free of material that will create a sharp or loose surface;
  - Will not create projectiles if driven on;
  - Will not cause run off that stains the road or contaminates drainage infrastructure;
  - Is aesthetically acceptable in considering the surrounding streetscape; and
  - Does not contribute to environmental issues such as heat retention or excess run-off.

Examples of an acceptable hardstand material would therefore include, but is not limited to:

- Permeable paving;
- Brick paving;
- Cement-based materials such as poured limestone and concrete; and
- Synthetic turf.

Examples of a non-acceptable hardstand material would therefore include, but is not limited to the following:

- Black Asphalt/hot mix/bitumen seal/black top etc. which contribute to heat island effects;
- Loose hard granular materials such as gravel, crushed bricks, stones, aggregate and blue metal unless they are compacted, bound and bonded, and also able to be kept stable at all times; and
- Crushed limestone.

Please note, that property owners or occupiers within the area bounded by Shenton Avenue, Lakeside Drive and Joondalup Drive are restricted to using a hardstand treatment of red paving brick which is compatible with 'Joondalup Red' or 'Topaz' pavers.

2. Maximum allowable area:

### Housing Opportunity Areas (HOA)

For properties within HOAs no additional hardstand areas are permitted exclusive of existing footpaths or crossovers constructed to the City's specifications. Further information on HOAs can be found on the City's [website](#).

### Non-HOA properties

- For standard (non-corner) properties outside of HOAs the maximum area permitted for a hardstand surface is 75 metres square or 50% of the verge area (whichever is the lesser) exclusive of any existing footpaths and crossovers;
- For corner properties, outside of HOAs the maximum hardstand area permitted is 150 metres square or 50% of the verge area (whichever is the lesser) exclusive of any existing footpaths and crossovers; and
- A minimum distance of one metre (four metre square clearance) must be maintained between the base of any street tree and any hardstand surface or crossovers.

## 6. Trees on verges

The City does not permit residents to plant their own trees on the verge without prior approval.

For information relating to street trees and their management, including tree planting, tree maintenance and a request for a [street tree form](#), please refer to the City's [Tree Management Guidelines](#) document or the City's ['verge treatments' webpage](#).

## 7. Obligations of owner or occupier

A person must not install or maintain a verge treatment which is not a permissible verge treatment.

Clause 8.9 of the Local Law states:

"An owner or occupier who installs or maintains a permissible verge treatment must –

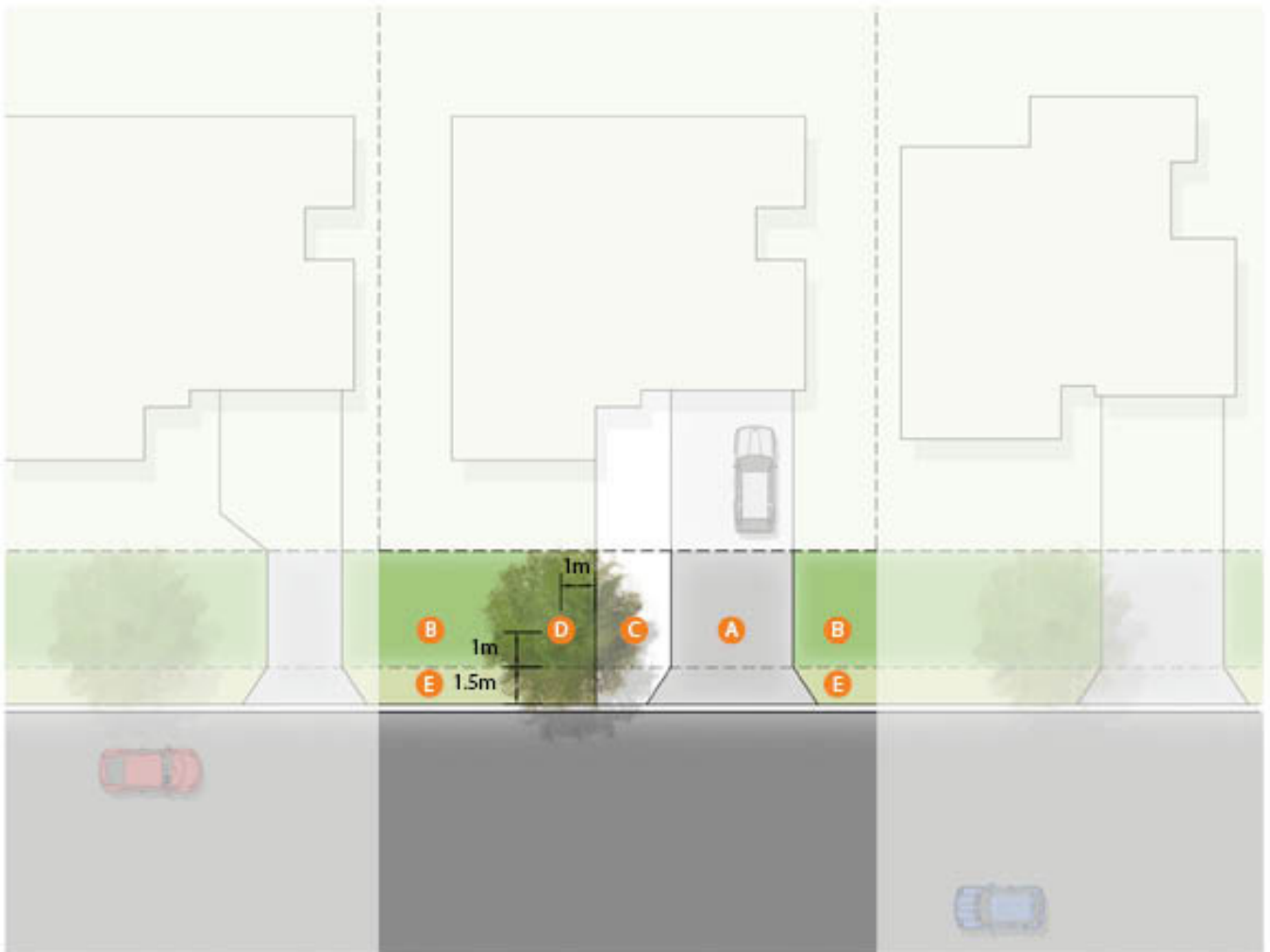
- a) Keep the permissible verge treatment in a good and tidy condition and ensure, where the verge treatment is garden or lawn, that the footpath on the verge and a carriageway adjoining the verge is not obstructed by the verge treatment;
- b) Ensure the verge treatment does not cause a sight distance obstruction to any person using the footpath on the verge or carriageway or crossing adjoining the verge or in proximity to it;
- c) Not place any obstruction on or around the verge treatment;
- d) Not disturb a kerb or footpath on the verge;
- e) Ensure the verge treatment does not damage or obstruct a drain, manhole, gully, inspection pit, channel, kerb, or tree; and
- f) Ensure that any sprinklers or pipes installed to irrigate a verge treatment are not used in a manner which causes or may cause a nuisance or obstruction to any person using the thoroughfare."

## 8. Advice notes

1. Residents should obtain underground services information prior to any works being carried out on the verge. The 'Dial Before You Dig' (DBYD) service can be accessed online via [1100.com.au](http://1100.com.au) or by telephoning 1100 during business hours, and is currently a free service for the public to gain information on underground services.
2. Should damage occur to any water, gas or sewerage pipes, or to any power or telecommunication cables during irrigation installation or repair, the damage must be reported immediately to the authority responsible for that particular service or equipment. Any expenses incurred in reinstating the service or equipment shall be wholly the responsibility of the property owner or occupier or person who caused the damage.
3. The property owner or occupier are responsible for the removal/relocation or reinstatement of treatments when works are carried out by the City or other utility provider.
4. The verge requires a two per cent positive grade over a distance of two-and-a-half metres from the back of the kerb in order to:
  - Facilitate stormwater runoff;
  - Prevent water collecting on verges or hardstand areas such as footpaths;
  - Prevent potential safety hazards; and
  - Prevent water from the road reserve entering property which may lead to flooding.
5. The City may remove non-conforming verge treatments, or request the owner or occupier to do so. If the City undertakes any works to make the verge treatment compliant, those costs may be recouped from the owner or occupier.
6. Under the provisions of the Local Government (Uniform Local Provisions) Regulations, the placement of obstructions on verge areas is not permitted. Obstructions are objects that could be dangerous to, or restrict access for, pedestrians, motor vehicles and cyclists, for example: rocks, stakes, fencing, bricks etc.  
  
Items of public infrastructure, including but not limited to bus stops, bus shelters, bus stop seating, light poles and parking regulation signs, as well as approved street trees, will be located by the City or authorised agencies in the verge as they serve a purpose and provide a community benefit.
7. The installation of built structures, temporary or permanent, such as mail boxes, planter boxes or retaining walls is not permitted on the verge.
8. The construction, placement or installation of tree houses, play structures or equipment is not permitted within street trees or within the street verge.
9. Sporting equipment (for example, basketball hoop/stand, cricket wickets etc) must not be positioned temporarily or permanently within the verge area.  
When basketball hoops are located on private property please be mindful of the direction the hoop faces to prevent balls entering the road and neighbouring properties.
10. The City reserves the right to remove any verge treatment for the purpose of carrying out works within the verge. The City is responsible for leaving the verge in a safe and tidy manner. The City is not responsible for the replacement of any impacts to landscaping on verges.

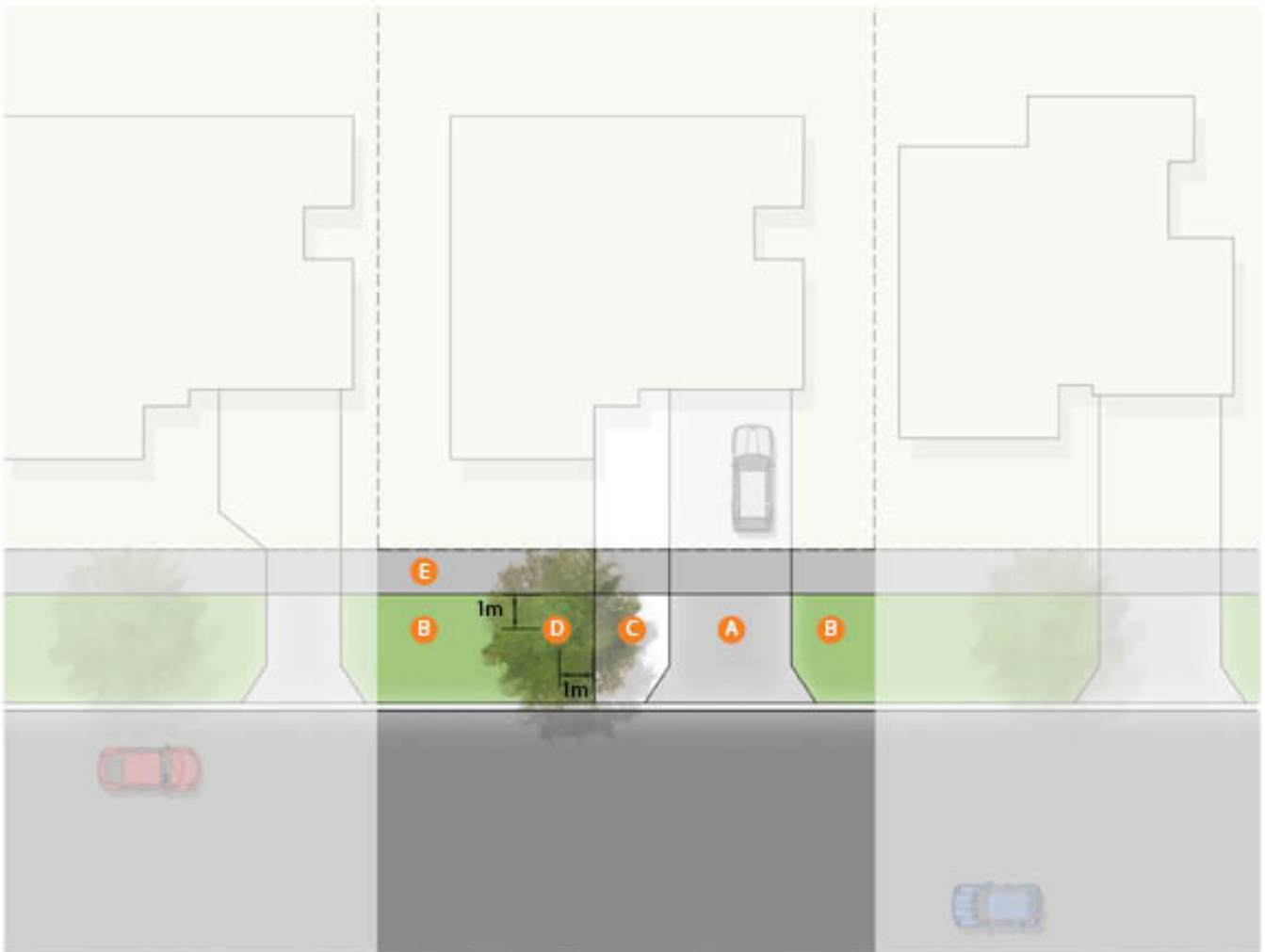
### Further information

Examples of verge layouts are attached for your reference. Please note these layouts are indicative only and for further information regarding the installation and maintenance aspects of verge treatments or if you are unsure whether your proposed verge treatment complies with these Guidelines, please call Infrastructure Services Customer Relations on **9400 4255** or email [info@joondalup.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@joondalup.wa.gov.au)



**FIGURE 1:**  
Typical verge layout without footpath

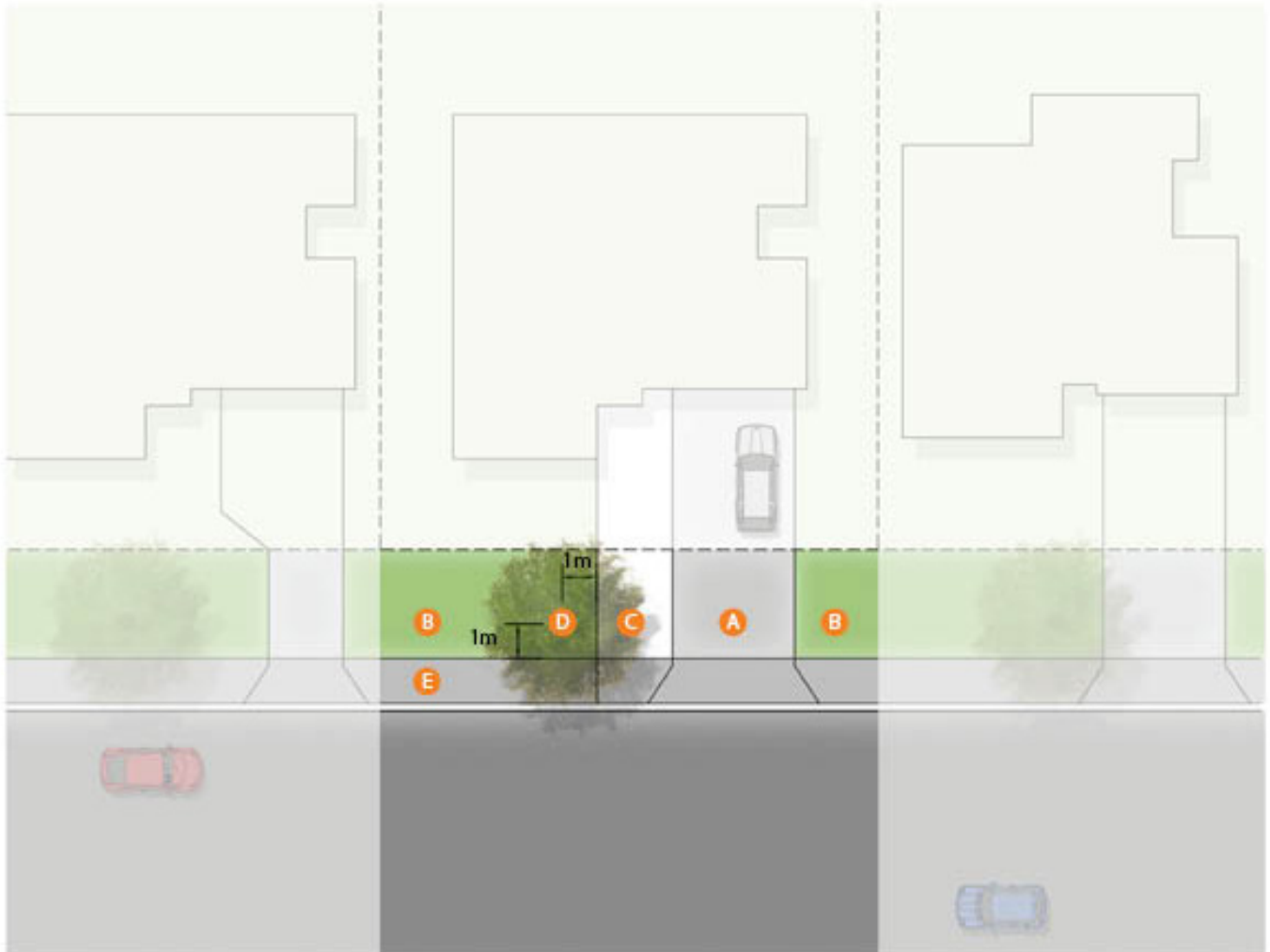
- A** Crossover.
- B** Lawn, groundcover or shrubs. To ensure sightlines the plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.
- C** Additional hardstand areas must meet the City's requirements in Section 5.2 Hardstand treatment.
- D** A minimum 1m offset must be maintained between the centre of the trunk of all street trees and hardstand areas.
- E** Where there is no footpath to the verge a 1.5m wide pedestrian refuge zone must be provided from back of road kerb. Area to be lawn, mulch or groundcovers.



**FIGURE 2:**  
Typical verge layout with footpath

- A** Crossover.
- B** Lawn, groundcover or shrubs. To ensure sightlines the plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.
- C** Additional hardstand areas must meet the City's requirements in Section 5.2 Hardstand treatment.
- D** A minimum 1m offset must be maintained between the centre of the trunk of all street trees and hardstand areas.
- E** Footpath.





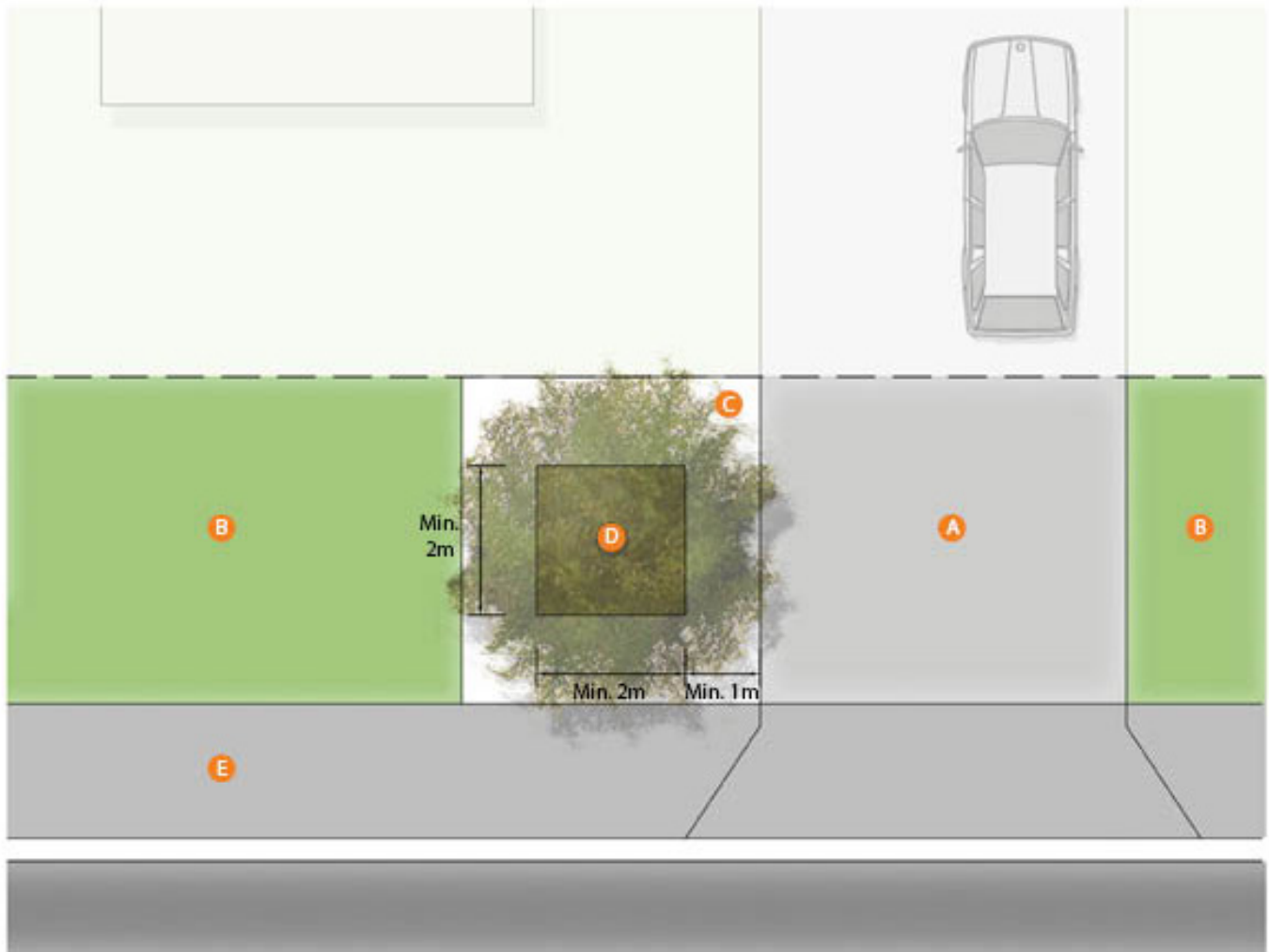
**FIGURE 3:**  
Typical verge layout with footpath to back of kerb

- A** Crossover.
- B** Lawn, groundcover or shrubs. To ensure sightlines the plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.
- C** Additional hardstand areas must meet the City's requirements in Section 5.2 Hardstand treatment.
- D** A minimum 1m offset must be maintained between the centre of the trunk of all street trees and hardstand areas.
- E** Footpath.



**FIGURE 4:**  
Typical corner verge layout with footpath

- A** Crossover.
- B** Lawn, groundcover or shrubs. To ensure sightlines the plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.
- C** Additional hardstand areas must meet the City's requirements in Section 5.2 Hardstand treatment.
- D** A minimum 1m offset must be maintained between the centre of the trunk of all street trees and hardstand areas.
- E** Footpath.
- F** To ensure sightlines trees cannot be planted within the truncation/clear zone. Planting of lawn, groundcovers and shrubs are accepted, plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.



**FIGURE 5:**  
Typical street tree planting to verge hardstand areas

- A** Crossover.
- B** Lawn, groundcover or shrubs. To ensure sightlines the plant species chosen must not exceed 600mm in height.
- C** Additional hardstand areas must meet the City's requirements in Section 5.2 Hardstand treatment.
- D** A minimum 1m offset must be maintained between the centre of the trunk of all street trees and hardstand areas.
- E** Footpath.



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*This document is available in alternative formats upon request.*