



**HUON VALLEY
COUNCIL**

Nature Strip and Road Reserves Policy

GOV-ASSET 004

Version Number	Approval Date
1	26 February 2025

Authority and Other Information	
Date of approval	26 February 2025
Source of approval	Council resolution No. 15.005/25*
Date of commencement	26 February 2025
Source of authority	<i>Local Government (Local Highways) Act 1982</i> Section 11 of the <i>Roads and Jetties Act 1935</i>
Legislative Reference	<i>Local Government (Local Highways) Act 1982</i> <i>Roads and Jetties Act 1935</i> <i>Roads (Local Highways) By-law 2014</i> <i>AGVET Chemicals Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places</i>
Delegations	As provided by Council
Strategic Plan Reference	4
Date of review	At least once every 4 years or as a result of legislative change relevant to the Policy
Previous policies withdrawn or amended	Rural Vegetation – No Spray Policy, GOV-Asset 002
Department responsible for implementation	Infrastructure and Assets
Department responsible for policy	Infrastructure and Assets
Publication of policy	A copy of the Policy be placed on Council's website and copies made available for inspection at and free of charge from the Customer Service Centre.
Related Documents	Nature Strip Guidelines <i>AGVET Chemicals Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places</i>

1. Purpose and Background

1.1 Background

Council is responsible for the maintenance of vegetation on its *rural road reserves* to protect the condition and maintain the safety of roadways.

Maintenance works are only to serve the purpose of minimising vegetation from road shoulders, maintaining clear zones and free-flowing drains, and improving sight distances where practical.

Council acknowledges that many property owners and occupiers within the Huon Valley  municipal area like to manage vegetation within Council's Road Reserve adjacent to their own property frontages to improve the amenity, or to avoid application of herbicides near their properties.

Property owners and occupiers are responsible for the maintenance of *urban nature strips* adjacent to their property.

1.2 Legislative Context

Section 21 of the *Local Government (Highways) Act 1982* gives Council the responsibility and duty of maintaining the local roads in the municipal area that are maintainable by the Council as shown on its municipal map.

Council will maintain these roads in a manner it considers practicable and appropriate.

Section 50 of the Act extends responsibility to the care, control, and management of the local highways that are not maintainable by it and, if it thinks fit, may carry out in that highway any highway works that it is by this Act authorised to carry out in a local highway maintainable by the Council.

Section 11 of the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935* sets out the responsibility of the State Government to maintain Highways and Subsidiary Roads in a town or village where there is a footpath on one side or both of a State highway or subsidiary road. *The remainder of the State highway or subsidiary road, including drainage and shoulders but not culverts and bridges, shall be maintained and reconstructed by the local Council.*

1.3 Purpose

This Policy provides clear guidance for property owners including differentiating between Council and property owner maintenance responsibilities on both urban nature strips and Rural Road Reserves.

This Policy defines the work that may be undertaken by property owners and/or occupiers on road reserves and urban nature strips and provides a mechanism for omitting property frontages from the annual roadside maintenance spraying program.

2. Definitions

Landscaped Nature Strip: means a nature strip altered from lawn to include landscaping such as plants, mulch and/or gravel.

Occupier: means the persons living on a property.

Property Owner: means the name or names which appear on the property title.

Road Work Permit: means a permit issued under the *Local Government (Highways) Act 1982* or under any relevant By-law made by the Council pursuant to that Act and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Rural Road Reserve: means the unmade area between the edge of the road and adjacent land where there is no footpath present.

Spray Program Notification Register means a register of email addresses for property owners or residents who require at least 30 days' notice prior to Council commencing its spraying program.

Street Trees: means trees planted by Council as part of an urban beautification scheme on an Urban Nature Strip.

Tree: means long lived woody perennial plant generally with one or relatively few main stems or trunks.

Urban Nature Strip: refers to the public land between the road and property boundaries in residential and urban areas excluding footpaths, bicycle paths and shared paths.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Council Maintenance

- 3.1.1 Council will not contribute financially to the cost of altering an Urban Nature Strip or its ongoing maintenance, regardless of any changes of ownership or occupancy of the adjoining property.
- 3.1.2 Council will maintain vegetation in Rural Road Reserves by undertaking the following works:
 - Delivering an annual roadside maintenance spraying program to remove vegetation within 2m of road shoulders for the purpose of maintaining road integrity and allowing surface water runoff.
 - Mowing, and pruning priority areas to maintain safety clear zones and sight lines.
 - Drain clearing to maintain stormwater systems.
- 3.1.3 Council may take any action it deems reasonable at its own discretion to rectify safety problems such as tripping hazards or obstructions without prior notice on both Urban Nature Strips and Rural Road Reserves.

3.2 Property Owners and Occupiers Maintenance

- 3.2.1 Property Owners and Occupiers are responsible for maintaining the vegetation within the Urban Nature Strip adjoining their property including:

- all vegetation on the nature strip, regardless of whether they planted it;
 - mowing, weeding, trimming of edges and picking up litter;
4. ensuring the entire width of any footpath remains accessible by removing overhanging or encroaching vegetation;
 5. maintaining clear lines of sight for neighbouring driveways, intersections and footpaths;
 - the driveway crossover (including drainage culverts); and
 - adhering to all applicable legislative requirements, policies and guidelines when carrying out works within an Urban Nature Strip.

5.1.1 Property Owners and Occupiers on a Rural Road Reserve are responsible for:

- the driveway crossover;
- any culvert or stormwater infrastructure under the driveway crossover, including the headwalls or inlets/outlets on each side of the culverts;
- not obstructing the drain or water course; and
- adhering to all applicable legislative requirements, policies and guidelines when carrying out works within a Rural Road Reserve.

5.1.2 Property Owners and Occupiers on a Rural Road Reserve may mow, slash, spray or prune native shrubs, grasses, or herbs only where they occur within 2m of the road shoulder ~~or boundary fence~~. The remainder should be retained to provide a corridor for wildlife and plants.

5.1.3 Property Owners and Occupiers may independently manage non-native vegetation and weed species on the road reserve adjacent to their property by mowing, slashing, spraying or pruning.

5.1.4 In accordance with the AGVET Chemicals *Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places 2004*, Property Owners and Occupiers must obtain written permission from Council prior to using herbicides on public land.

5.2 Works

5.2.1 Property Owners and Occupiers are not permitted to plant, prune, damage or remove ~~Street~~ Trees.

5.2.2 Property Owners and Occupiers may create a landscaped nature strip providing it is within the specified guidelines provided in the *Nature Strip Guidelines* attached to this Policy and by obtaining a Road Work Permit.

5.2.3 Failure of a Property Owner or Occupier to alter and/or maintain an Urban Nature Strip in accordance with Council's *Guidelines for Nature Strips* may result in Council issuing a Notice to the Property Owner or Occupier to reinstate the nature strip to lawn. This is regardless of whether the ownership of the property has changed. The cost of the reinstatement will be borne by the current Property Owner or Occupier.

5.2.4 A Road Work Permit must be obtained prior to planting any vegetation on a Rural Road Reserve, with the exception of grass seed.

5.2.5 Removal of any trees on a Rural Road Reserve will require a Road Work Permit.

5.3 Responsibility

- 5.3.1 Works are undertaken at the Property Owners' and Occupiers' own risk and Council is not liable for any damage or personal injury that occurs as a result of those works.
- 5.3.2 Council is not responsible for reinstating or compensating any damage caused to a Landscaped Nature Strip that is above and beyond a 'normal condition' (generally top-soil and grass seeds). This includes damages caused by animals, persons, utility service providers, weather events, or Council works.
- 5.3.3 Utility service providers may require access to the nature strip to install, maintain or remove their infrastructure. Clear access to any utilities and essential services must be maintained, this includes access to telecommunication pits, manholes, stormwater pipes, water meters and electricity poles or lines.

5.4 Spray Program

- 5.4.1 Rural Road Reserves that have been maintained in line with the following conditions will be excluded from Council's annual road spraying program:
- A Rural Road Reserve where all grass and weed vegetation within 2m of the road shoulder or to a boundary fence (where less than 2m) has been maintained at a height of less than 200mm.
- 5.4.2 If the Rural Road Reserve property frontage is not maintained to the standard specified above at the time of spraying, Council may spray the frontage in accordance with Section 2, Clause 26 of the *AGVET Chemicals Code of Practice for Spraying in Public Places*.
- 5.4.3 The spray program exclusion referred to in Clause 3.5.1 applies only to Council's annual roadside maintenance spraying program; herbicide may still be applied by Council on roadsides and nature strips to treat priority weeds to meet legal obligations per the *Biosecurity Act 2019*.

5.5 Storing Materials on a Nature Strip

The Council may issue a permit for the temporary storage of building materials, skip bins, or storage containers within the road reservation.

5.6 Parking on a Nature Strip

- 5.6.1 A Property Owner or Occupier is permitted to park a registered vehicle on an Urban Nature Strip adjacent to the property and on condition that the parked vehicle does not obstruct other road users.
- 5.6.2 Property Owners and Occupiers are NOT permitted to:
- × Drive over the road kerb to access your property or nature strip.
 - × Park partly or wholly over a footpath.
 - × Park within the nature strip adjacent to your neighbours' properties.
 - × Park an unregistered vehicle on a nature strip.
 - × Park a truck, caravan, campervan, vehicle with trailer on a nature strip.

6. Application

- 6.1 This Policy applies to Rural Road Reserves and Urban Nature Strips on Council maintained roads in accordance with the *Local Government (Highways) Act 1982* and the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935* within the Huon Valley municipal area.
- 6.2 This Policy does not apply to roads and highways managed by the Department of State Growth (except where the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935, Section 11* applies), to Crown Land, or to any other non-road reserves adjacent to private property boundaries and is applied secondarily to any other applicable legislation.
- 6.3 Unless otherwise stated, this Policy does not require a retrospective permit for Landscaped Nature Strips existing at the date of commencement of this Policy.

7. Procedures

5.1 Annual Spray Program Exclusion

- 7.1.1 An advertisement will be placed on Council's website and promoted via social media no later than 30 June each year advising that Council's annual road maintenance spraying program will commence in Spring.
- 7.1.2 Council will also directly notify property owners/residents on the *Spray Program Notification Register* of Council's intention to commence spraying at least 30 days prior to commencement.
- 7.1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, clause 3.5.2 applies for owners/residents on the *Spray Program Notification Register* who have not maintained their rural road reserve property frontage in line with clause 3.5.1.

7.2 Application for landscaped nature strip

An application for a Road Works Permit to create a Landscaped Nature Strip must include a detailed landscaping plan* and a Dial Before You Dig report as well as photos showing the proposed area from the perspective of the road in both directions.

*a detailed landscaping plan is at a minimum a sketch showing the site, the location of landscape features and plant species.

Attachment - Nature Strip Guidelines

1. Introduction

Huon Valley Council developed these guidelines to help property owners and occupiers understand their maintenance responsibilities on urban nature strips and Rural Road Reserves.

2. Urban Nature Strips

Urban nature strips provide:

- Unpaved areas to allow infiltration of rainwater and oxygen into the soil, improving the health and growth of vegetation and reducing stormwater surface runoff.
- Visual softening of hard streetscape elements such as roads, footpaths, driveways, fences and buildings.
- Green infrastructure which reduces urban heat through both shading and evapotranspiration.
- Visibility and unobstructed sight lines for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, particularly at intersections, curves in the road and driveway accesses.
- Space for people walking where there is no footpath.
- Space to open vehicle doors between the road and footpath.
- Space for kerbside placement and collection of bins.
- Space to accommodate above and below ground services such as electricity, telecommunications, lighting, water, gas, stormwater, drainage and sewage.
- Space for streetlights, bus stops and shelters.

These guidelines provide understanding on how urban nature strips can be altered by property owners without creating a hazard to service providers or the public.

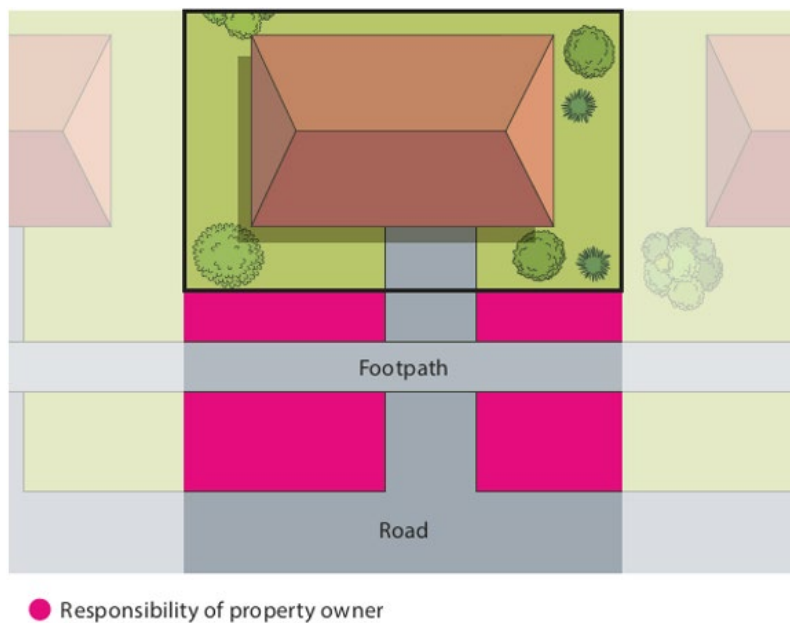
Huon Valley Council will not contribute financially to the cost of altering an urban nature strip or its ongoing maintenance, regardless of any changes of ownership or occupancy of the adjoining property.

The council does not maintain urban nature strips; it is the adjacent property owner's responsibility.

The council's preferred form of urban nature strip is lawn (as shown in the picture below).



Example below showing responsibility of property owner (urban nature strip)



Most urban properties will have a well-defined nature strip between the road and the adjacent property boundary and may or may not have a footpath.

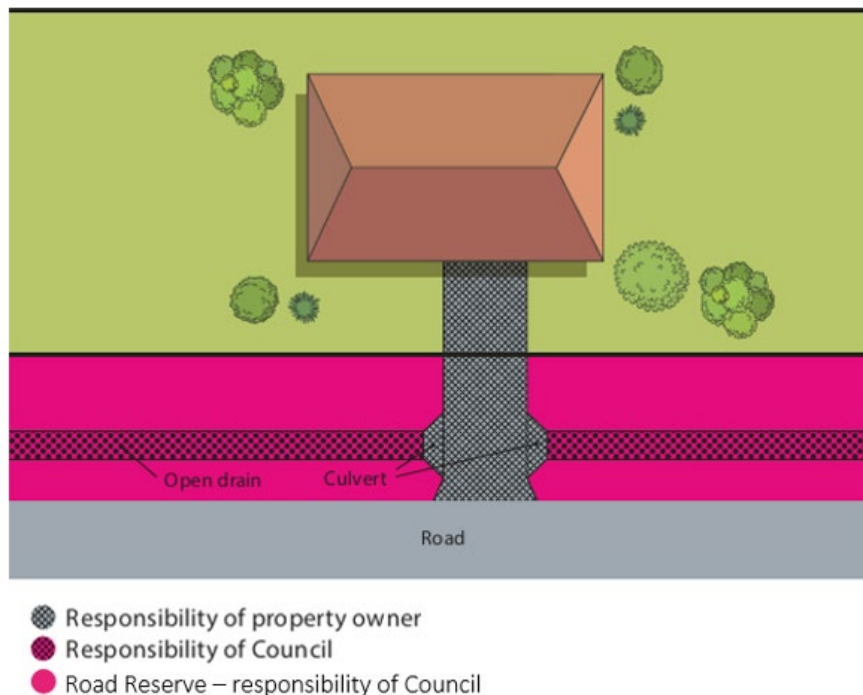
3. Rural Road Reserves

Rural Road Reserves provide:

- Many of the same functions but also often contain native vegetation that provides important ecosystem functions including erosion and wind control, wildlife corridors, and habitat for threatened species.

The maintenance of Rural Road Reserves by the Council is limited to annual spraying and infrequent mowing and managing dangerous trees.

Driveway Crossover Responsibility



4. Landscaped nature strips

What you need to know

- Property owners may create a landscaped nature strip providing it is within the specified requirements within these Guidelines.
- Property owners must apply for a Road Works Permit before commencing work. The application must include a detailed landscaping plan*, a Dial Before You Dig report, and photos showing the proposed area from the road's perspective in both directions.
- All costs associated with installation and maintenance of alternative nature strips are property owners' responsibility.
- When working on or near roads, property owners must take appropriate safety measures for themselves and others using public land. Huon Valley Council may take any action it deems reasonable to rectify safety problems such as tripping hazards or obstructions.
- A detailed landscaping plan is at a minimum a sketch showing the site, the location of landscape features and plant species.

What is permitted in a nature strip?

- ✓ Small shrubs, ground covers or grasses under 600mm are permitted but must be planted 500mm away from the edge of the footpath and must be positioned so that line of sight is not obstructed.
- ✓ Edible plants under 600mm are permitted but remember, the nature strip adjacent to your property is public space. If you grow edible plants in your nature strip, people may harvest from your plants.
- ✓ Nature strip plantings on a corner, intersection, curve in the road and driveway access points are permitted with ground cover plants only to ensure clear line of sight for

pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Plants need to be maintained to a maximum height of 300mm.

- ✓ Compacted and contained organic mulch or fine/medium gravel or pebbles may be permitted where the property owner can demonstrate that the material will not contaminate any part of the road, including the drains and footpath or clearway.
- ✓ If there is no formed footpath within the nature strip adjacent to your property, then a clearway (in the form of lawn) of at least 2m from the edge of the road or kerb is required to provide safe and convenient access for waste and recycling bins, pedestrians and postal services.
- ✓ The council may install Water Sensitive Urban Design infrastructure.

What is not permitted on nature strips?

The following are NOT permitted on nature strips:

- × Hardscape elements or structures (such as rockeries, retaining walls, paving, sculptures).
- × Fencing (temporary protective fencing may be permitted with written approval from the Council).
- × Coarse gravel or pebbles.
- × Synthetic turf.
- × Declared weeds (Tasmanian Government declared weeds list).
- × Trees or large wooded plants (other than Council planted street trees).
- × Prickly, spiky and poisonous plants, or plants that are common causes of allergies.
- × Vegetable gardens are not permitted due to the regular digging and soil cultivation required.
- × Irrigation systems.
- × Grassed swale drains located in the nature strip are not permitted to be modified and must remain grass.
- × Altering or modifying any part of a Council Water Sensitive Urban Design installation is not permitted.

5. Examples of suitable native plants for a nature strip

Botanical name	Common name
<i>Aotus ericoides</i>	Golden pea
<i>Astroloma humifusum</i>	Native cranberry
<i>Austrodanthonia caespitosa</i>	Wallaby grass
<i>Bauera rubioides</i> (prostrate form)	Wiry bauera
<i>Bossiaea cinerea</i>	Showy bossia
<i>Brachyscome multifida</i>	'Break O Day' cut leaf daisy
<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>	Bulbine lily
<i>Carpobrotus rossii</i>	Pigface
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Yellow buttons
<i>Coronidium scorpioides</i>	Creeping everlasting
<i>Correa backhouseana</i> (prostrate form)	Velvet correa
<i>Deyeuxia monticola</i>	Bent grass
<i>Dianella spp.</i>	Native flax lily
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney weed
<i>Diplarrena moraea</i>	Butterfly flag/ white iris
<i>Disphyma crassifolium</i>	Small leaved pigface
<i>Ehrharta stipoides</i> syn. <i>Microlaena</i>	Weeping grass
<i>Einadia nutans</i>	Climbing Saltbush
<i>Euryomyrtus ramosissima</i> (prev. <i>Baeckea ramosissima</i>)	Rosy baeckea
<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Knobby club rush
<i>Goodenia ovata</i> -prostrate form	Hop goodenia
<i>Hibbertia procumbens</i>	Spreading guinea flower
<i>Hibbertia riparia</i>	Erect guinea flower
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Running postman
<i>Leptospermum</i> spp. (prostrate forms only)	'Petal point spread' woolly tea tree
<i>Lissanthe strigosa</i>	Peach heath
<i>Lomandra nana</i>	Dwarf mat rush
<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	Creeping boobialla
<i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>	Long purple flag
<i>Pelargonium australe</i>	Southern Storksbill
<i>Pelargonium australe</i> Native storksbill	Wild geranium
<i>Pimelea humilis</i>	Common rice-flower
<i>Poa poiformis</i>	Coastal tussock grass
<i>Poa rodwayi</i>	Velvet Tussock grass
<i>Pultenaea pedunculata</i>	Matted bush pea
<i>Rhodanthe anthemoides</i>	Chamomile sunray
<i>Scaevola hookeri</i>	Creeping fan flower
<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i>	Grass trigger plant
<i>Styphelia adscendens</i>	Golden heath
<i>Tetragonia implexicoma</i>	Bower spinach
<i>Themeda triandra</i> (prev. <i>Themeda australis</i>)	Kangaroo grass
<i>Viola hederaceae</i>	Native violet

6. Weed Management and Biosecurity

Everyone living, working, or visiting the Huon Valley has a responsibility towards maintaining strong biosecurity. Introducing a weed, pest, or disease can be disastrous for our primary industries, economy, environment, and way of life. Home gardeners have an important role to play, particularly in reducing the spread of weeds.

In Tasmania, the *Biosecurity Act 2019* prescribes the general biosecurity duty (GBD) which gives everyone a statutory “duty of care” in respect to biosecurity. This means that everyone is required to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent, eliminate, or minimise biosecurity risks. More information on biosecurity and the GBD can be found online at nre.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania.

There are over 30 species of plants listed as declared weeds under the *Biosecurity Regulations 2022* that are known to occur in the Huon Valley. It is illegal to sell, plant, or distribute declared weeds, so they must not be planted in nature strips. Eradication or containment of declared weeds growing elsewhere on your property may also be required. A complete list of Tasmania’s declared weeds can be found online at www.nre.tas.gov.au/invasive-species

The following is a list of known environmental weeds in the Huon Valley. Always check the weedy potential of plants before planting. If plants known to be environmental weeds are planted on your nature strip you may be required to remove them.

Do not plant - examples of environmental weeds in the Huon Valley:-

Botanical name	Common name
<i>Agapanthus praecox</i> spp. <i>orientalis</i>	Agapanthus
<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>	Arum lily
<i>Vinca major</i>	Blue periwinkle
<i>Delairea odorata</i>	Cape ivy
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common dog violet
<i>Myosotis</i> spp.	Forget me nots
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove
<i>Gazania</i> spp.	Gazania
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese honeysuckle
<i>Malva</i> spp.	Mallow
<i>Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora</i>	Montebria
<i>Ipomoea</i> spp.	Morning glory
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye daisy
<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	Oyster plant
<i>Pittosporum</i> spp.	Pittosporum
<i>Echium candicans</i>	Pride of Madeira
<i>Kniphofia</i> spp.	Red hot pokers
<i>Allium triq</i>	Three-cornered Garlic
<i>Centranthus ruber</i>	Valerian
<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i>	Wandering creeper
<i>Euryops abrotanifolius</i>	Winter euryops