

Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

Date policy was adopted:	26 June 2024
Resolution number:	289/24
Next Policy review date:	June 2025
Reference number:	52.5.4
Strategic Pillar	Development & Compliance
Responsible Branch	Environment & Compliance

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1 OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council recognises the importance of a safe and accessible road network, and the need to appropriately maintain roads as a critical community asset.
- 1.2 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council additionally recognises the importance of the environmental and social benefits provided by road verge ecosystems and is committed to managing this resource sustainably and practically.
- 1.3 The policy aims to balance the competing needs of roads, road safety and road infrastructure with the ongoing conservation of roadside verges and reserves, particularly in areas identified as high conservation value.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 Road verges are key parts of our natural ecosystem, often providing intact native habitat and containing vulnerable species or key conservation hotspots. Council is committed to protecting these valuable ecosystems and complying with various State and Commonwealth Legislation relating to Roadside Vegetation Management.
- 2.2 The disturbed nature of road verges puts these environments under sustained threats from road use activities. Council will mitigate these threats through compliance with its Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP).

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 This policy applies to all Council staff and contractors who work in road or road reserve management, particularly staff under the Infrastructure Services and Development and Environment portfolios.

4 DEFINITIONS

Council means Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Road means any public road in the QPRC LGA for which QPRC is a roads authority under the Roads Act 1993.

Road Reserve means to the section of land between the road's edge and the fence-line of adjacent properties. Where no fence exists, this is the demarcated property boundary on planning maps.

The Road Reserve also includes components of the road formation that are critical to maintaining a safe and trafficable road network. These include but are not limited to:

- a) Road Shoulder
- b) Road Verge
- c) Road Drainage
- d) Road Cut and Fill Batters

Road Work Activity means to any action that applies to the use of roads including construction, maintenance or survey work

RVMP means QPRC's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan.

Road Worker means any QPRC employee or contractor who conducts work on roads or road reserves and/or conducts planning or surveying work that involves roads or road reserves.

5 LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

- 5.1 Roads Act 1993 defines the authority QPRC has over roads in the LGA
Part 1 Sec. 7 - Roads Authorities
(4) *The council of a local government area is the roads authority for all public roads within the area, other than—*
(a) *any freeway or Crown road, and*
(b) *any public road for which some other public authority is declared by the regulations to be the roads authority.*
- 5.2 *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
5.3 *Biosecurity Act 2015*
5.4 *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*
5.5 *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
5.6 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
5.7 *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
5.8 *Heritage Act 1997*
5.9 *Local Government Act 1993*
5.10 *Local Land Services Act 2013*
5.11 *National Parks and Wildlife Act*
5.12 *Rural Fires Act 1997*
5.13 *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
5.14 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
5.15 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
5.16 *Water Management Act 2000*
5.17 *Austrroads Design Guidelines*
5.18 *DPIE SOS Hygiene Guidelines to protect priority biodiversity areas in NSW from Phytophthora cinnamomi, myrtle rust, amphibian chytrid fungus and invasive plants.*
5.19 *DPIE Threatened Species of Roadsides and TSRs in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.*
5.20 *QPRC's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan is the plan supported by this policy.*

6 CONTENT

6.1 Roadside Vegetation Plan

- 6.1.1 QPRC will implement a RVMP for use by all Road Workers. This plan is to inform all road-related works, and will:
- i) identify legislative requirements for road reserve management.
 - ii) categorise road reserves by their environmental features.
 - iii) provide guidelines which must be adhered to while working on roadsides.
 - iv) provide a Management Action Plan that will inform all road related work.
- 6.1.2 The RVMP will be provided to all Team Leaders, Program Coordinators, Managers and other relevant staff related to road management.
- 6.1.3 All on-the-ground staff will be provided with either the RVMP or a simplified Standard Operating Procedures
- 6.1.4 The RVMP should be consulted during the planning phase of any Road Use Activity
- 6.1.5 The RVMP should be consulted when any Road Use Activity deviates from the work plan or does not require a work plan.
- 6.1.6 The guidelines in the RVMP must be followed by all Road Workers.

6.2 Roadside Environment Markers

- 6.2.1 QPRC will install roadside markers to identify all sites that contain threatened or endangered vegetation
- 6.2.2 These roadside markers will be discrete so to not capture unwanted public attention and traffic to the sites.
- 6.2.3 These roadside markers will indicate to all road workers to stop all work and consult the RVMP for site-specific guidelines.

6.3 Employee Training

- 6.3.1 All Road Workers will receive training specific to the RVMP
- 6.3.2 This training will cover:
 - i) The importance of roadside vegetation management.
 - ii) How to navigate and use the RVMP for practical road reserve maintenance.
 - iii) How to identify roadside markers

6.4 Hygiene Protocols

- 6.4.1 QPRC will prepare hygiene protocols for plant, equipment, vehicles and clothing used in Road Use Activities as required by site conditions.

7 REVIEW

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier as necessary if:
 - a) legislation requires it, or
 - b) Council's functions, structure or activities change, or
 - c) There is significant change to road reserves in the LGA