



Somerset Council

Environmental Maintenance, Verge Maintenance Specification and Design Requirements – Information Sheet 2026

The policy remains the same as previous years in relation to number of cuts that are to take place over the season. A & B network twice, (Inclusive of GMIS routes), C & Unclassified once. Sight lines and junction visibility splays are to be cut at the same time. Localised areas of the network will benefit from a 2-swathe width cut. This has been based on an assessment of risk.

1. General Cutting (Specification);

- Cutting shall be to achieve an even height of 75mm above general soil level with a tolerance of plus or minus 25mm.
- Mechanical cutting shall be carried out in swathes of minimum 1.10m width, where achievable, with the first swathe being cut neatly to the edge of adjacent hard surface.
- Forward speed of the machine shall be such so as to produce a clean even cut to the full width of the swathe. Cutting above the optimum speed which results in vegetation standing up after a few days shall be deemed a non-compliance with the Specification.
- Where more than one swathe is to be cut, sufficient overlap of each cut shall be made to prevent ridges of uncut vegetation being left.
- All street furniture within the prescribed swathe width cut is to be trimmed (crash barriers, signposts).
- Sight lines to road sign faces must be retained, even if the road sign face sits outside of the 1-swathe width cut (speed limit signs, destination signs etc). In relation to sight lines; The specific contract Service Information states:

Traffic Sign Visibility

- 15** Where general cutting or visibility cutting is being undertaken and seasonal growth from adjacent hedges/banks/trees/saplings would continue to obscure a traffic sign face following the completion of all cutting within the prescribed width and height, additional cutting shall be undertaken to remove such growth, even though such additional cutting may be outside the prescribed cutting width or height. The required outcome is that all signs faces are fully visible to highway users following the completion of the cut on any route.
- 15a** The required outcome is that the whole of any sign face has an unobstructed view specified as the 'minimum clear visibility distance' appendix A, chapter 4 and table 1.1 of Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manuals.



Table 1.1 of Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manuals;

1.8.2. Table 1-1 specifies minimum clear visibility distances. These should normally be measured from the centre of the most disadvantaged driving lane. It is important that the full recommended sight line to the whole of the sign face is preserved. Cutting back of vegetation only in the immediate vicinity of the sign might not be sufficient; sign visibility should always be checked from the appropriate viewing distance.

Table 1-1 Minimum clear visibility distances

85th percentile speed of private cars (mph)	Minimum clear visibility distance (m)
Up to 20	45
21 to 30	60
31 to 40	60
41 to 50	75
51 to 60	90
Over 60	105 (120)

2.

3. Timing;

- The cutting by hand to obstructions requirement for Visibility and General Cutting shall be undertaken within 7 days of the mechanical cut.
- Both sides of any carriageway shall be cut within 48 hours of one another.
- Unless agreed by the Service Manager grass cutting hours are not to be outside of the hours 07:00-20:00 and comply with the County's Traffic Sensitive Routes.