
2.8 Public Art Policy

Policy Owner	Community Services
Person Responsible	Manager Community and Customer Services
Date of Adoption	20 August 2025 – Resolution 230825
Date of Last Review	20 August 2025 – Resolution 230825
Date next due for Review	3 years / or earlier if required

OBJECTIVE

To establish a framework for the commissioning, approval, installation, and management of public art within the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu. This policy outlines the principles and processes guiding both Shire-led and externally proposed public artworks to ensure alignment with community values, cultural identity, public safety, and sustainable asset management.

DEFINITION

Public art refers to any visual artwork installed in a public space and intended to enrich the community's experience of that place. Public art may include, but is not limited to:

- Freestanding works such as sculptures
- Integrated pieces embedded into buildings or infrastructure
- Murals, painted surfaces, or artistic treatments
- Digital or interactive installations
- Temporary or ephemeral exhibitions

POLICY

This policy aims to celebrate and reflect the Shire's identity, culture, environment, and heritage by encouraging high-quality, original, and site-appropriate public art. It supports meaningful participation and collaboration between artists, community members, and cultural organisations, while establishing clear and consistent processes for external applicants wishing to propose public artworks.

Public art must consider public safety, environmental sustainability, and be practical to maintain. It also plays a role in supporting tourism, local economic development, and creative place-making that strengthens community pride and cultural expression.

This policy applies to:

- All public artworks located in public spaces under the Shire's care and control (e.g., parks, town centres, community facilities, and road reserves).
- Proposals submitted by external individuals, artists, or organisations, including community groups, arts collectives, and businesses.

- Temporary, permanent, and ephemeral public artworks, including sculptures, murals, installations, and architectural/artistic integrations.

All public artworks must align with the goals of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan, particularly in areas such as tourism, cultural enrichment, and community identity. Artworks must respect the region's Aboriginal heritage, local history, and distinct character. They are expected to demonstrate quality design and creativity, and avoid content that is political, offensive, or discriminatory. All installations must also consider public safety, accessibility, and the practicalities of long-term maintenance.

PUBLIC ART PROPOSAL BY EXTERNAL ARTIST OR GROUP

Any external artist, organisation, or community group wishing to install public art in the Shire must submit a Public Art Proposal Form, available on the Shire's website or by request. The proposal must include a project plan, concept designs, the proposed location, and a clear outline of the artwork's purpose and theme. It should describe how the artwork complements the surrounding environment, and provide details on materials, scale, and anticipated lifespan.

Applicants must also outline maintenance requirements, public safety considerations, and where relevant, a community engagement plan. A full budget breakdown and identified funding sources must be provided.

Once submitted, proposals will be reviewed by the Shire in consultation with relevant stakeholders such as local arts organisations or heritage advisors, as appropriate. Proposals will be assessed against criteria including:

- Artistic merit and originality
- Alignment with the Shire's objectives and community values
- Suitability to the selected site and local environment
- Community benefit and potential engagement opportunities
- Maintenance requirements and public safety implications
- Impact on Shire resources or ongoing commitments

Council approval is required for significant or permanent artworks. Temporary works, such as exhibitions or ephemeral pieces, may be approved under delegated authority by the Chief Executive Officer. Where an artwork is especially prominent or potentially sensitive in nature, the Shire may initiate public consultation before making a final decision.

Following approval, a Public Art Agreement will be established between the Shire and the applicant. This will outline each party's roles and responsibilities, ownership arrangements, installation timeframes and requirements, insurance and liability obligations, and expectations around future maintenance and potential decommissioning.

OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ART

Public artworks installed within the Shire remain the property and responsibility of the artist or commissioning group unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Shire. The artist or owner is fully responsible for maintaining the artwork's condition, including repair and restoration where required. The artist or group must also hold and maintain appropriate public liability insurance to cover any risks associated with the artwork's installation and presence in a public space. If the artist or group

does not have the appropriate public liability insurance, Council may exercise discretion and accept that the artwork will be subject to the Shire's public liability insurance.

The Shire reserves the right to relocate, modify, or remove public artworks if they pose safety concerns, become significantly damaged, obstruct future development, or if public interest or amenity requires their removal. Where possible, reasonable notice will be given to the artist or owner before any such action is taken.

POLICY REVIEW FREQUENCY

Every 3 years, or as required.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing this policy.