

Community Garden Policy



Purpose of Policy

The purpose of the community garden policy is to outline the role of Council in regard to community gardens on Council controlled parks and reserves. The policy describes the process to be followed prior to establishing a community garden. It also provides some parameters and areas for consideration prior to approving a licence to occupy public land for a community garden.

Definition of a Community Garden

A community garden is a small scale garden operated by a group or collective on public land for the purpose of growing plants, vegetables or fruit.

Role of Council in Relation to Community Gardens

Council will support community gardens in the following ways:

- Development of strategic relationships, encouraging collaboration between like-minded groups, residents and subject experts.
- Development and facilitation of a local network of community gardens to share information, knowledge and experience as well as reduce duplication of effort and minimise demand on community resources.
- Support groups (either established community groups or resident-led groups) to identify community garden needs, appropriate sites and funding opportunities.
- The provision of Council land where a case for a community garden has been established and a lead group has agreed to a licence to occupy.

Decision to Grant a Licence to Occupy for a Community Garden

Requests for permission to develop a community garden on Council land should be made in writing to the Community Services department in the first instance. All proposals will be initially assessed by Community Services on a case by case basis in regard to sustainability and the level of community support. Once Community Services officers have approved the application they will liaise with Parks and Reserves and the applicant to identify suitable land and determine the specific terms and conditions of the licence. Where appropriate the Manager of Parks and Reserves will then grant a Licence to Occupy.

Although permission to establish a community garden on Council land is at the discretion of Council officers, in exercising their discretion the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- the location of the proposed garden
- the purpose of the proposed garden

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- the legal structure and objectives of the group proposing the manage the garden
- the benefit to the community
- the level of support required from Council for the garden to be viable and sustainable
- relevant plans, policies and legislation (such as the District Plan, asset plans, RMA, LGA, LTCCP, Reserves Act 1977 etc)
- community consultation
- availability of public land
- any other matters Council officers consider relevant.

Licence to Occupy Process

Once permission to establish a community garden on Council land has been given, a Licence to Occupy agreement will be prepared and any specific requirements or conditions will be drafted on a case by case basis. Specific conditions will include, but are not limited to, the area being kept clean and presentable; appropriate access and security arrangements; noise restrictions; and any other such condition that the specific area may require as a result of community consultation.

The Parks and Reserves Manager has the authority to grant the Licence To Occupy arrangement. The Licence to Occupy will include monitoring and accountability arrangements, and the expected levels of compliance with terms and conditions. Council will be advised of these licenses and ongoing garden activity through reports to the City Services Committee. The Community Services Manager will be responsible for these reports, and for the ongoing monitoring of the agreed terms and conditions. The Licence to Occupy will be time limited, and will be revoked in the event of non-compliance with the terms and conditions.