



Policy

91 COMMUNITY GARDEN POLICY

Version 01

File Reference No:

Strategic Outcome: Supported and engaged communities

Date of Adoption: 16/11/2016

Date for Review: 18/11/2020

Responsible Officer: Strategic & Social Planning Coordinator

1. Purpose

To describe the nature of Council support for the establishment of community gardens initiated by community groups and to encourage, where appropriate, the development of community gardens on appropriate private and Council controlled land.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to promote the development of community gardens and to provide Council with a consistent approach in its response to requests for funding and or support that may, from time to time, be directed to the Council for the establishment of, and or the resources, needed to maintain a community garden.

3. Key Principles

Key principles that underpin this policy:

- Community gardens improve the health and wellbeing of the community.
- Community gardens provide a setting for inter-generational exchange across all abilities.
- Community gardens provide a range of physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits.
- Community gardens must operate and comply with existing Council policies including and where required all planning permit conditions.

4. Scope

The Berrigan Shire Community Gardens Policy is designed to facilitate the establishment of community initiated and managed community gardens on Council owned and managed land. Excluded from this policy are nature strip gardens where the garden beds are established on a nature strip and managed collectively or individually by local residents or community groups.



Policy

5. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, community gardens are defined as places where residents and community garden volunteers meet and undertake a range of activities associated with the day to day development and management of the garden.

6. Policy

6.1 Background

Community gardens provide a range of physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits. Benefits which include: educational opportunities, the promotion of community connections, and the sharing of knowledge, skills and local resources.

Community gardens can be divided into either shared or individual plots, however most gardens consist of a combination of both catering for a range of community needs.

For the purpose of this policy the type of community garden: kitchen garden; demonstration garden; sensory garden; memorial garden for example, will be determined by the community group developing and managing on a day to day basis the community garden.

6.2 Council Role and Responsibilities

The Berrigan Shire Council understands that community gardens provide a broad range of benefits to individuals, as well as the wider community. Council will therefore, provide the following support. Namely, it will

- Assist the development of community gardens through the provision of advice for interested community groups or individuals, which will include advice about insurance and risk management.
- Promote existing community gardens through Council's website, newsletters and events.
- Construct and install signage for community gardens on Council owned and managed land.
- Investigate, on request from Community groups, new opportunities to designate land for use as a community garden.
- Provide a consistent approach to the assessment of community garden applications on Council controlled or managed land by developing a set of procedures that will include the following Site Selection Criteria for Community Gardens.



Policy

7. Site Selection Criteria for Community Gardens on Council Controlled or Managed Land

7.1 Location: Sites classified as Community Land under the Local Government Act may be appropriate. In addition to Crown Land if the Council is trustee and the site is appropriate. These are sites that are usually established for community use such as park lands, open spaces and community facilities that have outside areas. Priority will be given to sites located in higher density areas and near existing community facilities or community organisations that might be able to support or partner the project.

7.2 Safety: Sites should have no major safety or health concerns; and have good passive surveillance (for example, can be easily seen from nearby houses or community facilities). Sites must also undergo a risk assessment with hazards identified, including the secure nature of the site. Where possible hazards should be eliminated, or where not possible, additional control measures adopted.

7.3 Accessibility: Sites should be accessible for a range of user groups. Sites should allow disabled access, have vehicle access (e.g. for delivery of mulch and soil) and accommodate groups wanting to visit the garden.

7.4 Solar access: Sites need to be suitable for growing vegetables and receive full sunlight - ideally for at least 5 -6 hours per day.

7.5 Size: Sites which are large enough to accommodate garden beds, composting systems, rainwater tanks, seating areas, shelter for gardeners and for community workshops and demonstrations.

7.6 Water: Sites with easy access to water or buildings nearby from which rainwater can be collected.

7.7 Soil Contamination: Sites may need to be checked for soil contamination. If high levels are present then advice will need to be sought from experts on whether it is suitable for growing food.

7.8 Multiple Use: Sites where a community garden can be integrated without conflicting adversely with other land uses and where the community garden can still be used by non-gardeners for passive recreation and educational workshops.

8. Related Policies and Strategies

- Social Justice Framework 2016
- Liveability and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2013-2017