

Community Gardens Policy

21 October 2015

Important

This document contains important information about Rockdale City Council. If you do not understand, please visit Council's Customer Service Centre at 2 Bryant Street Rockdale, Monday – Friday from 8.30am – 4.30pm, Saturday from 9am – 1pm. Council Staff will be happy to arrange interpreter services for you.

You may also contact Telephone Interpreter Services on 131 450 and ask them to ring Rockdale City Council on 9562 1666 on your behalf.

Arabic

هام:

تحتوي هذه الوثيقة على معلومات هامة عن بلدية روكدايل. إذا لم تكن قادراً على فهمها، يرجى زيارة مركز خدمة زبائن البلدية على العنوان التالي: 2 Bryant Street في روكدايل من الإثنين إلى الجمعة بين الساعة ٨.٣٠ صباحاً و ٤.٣٠ مساءً، والسبت بين الساعة ٩.٠٠ صباحاً و ١.٠٠ بعد الظهر حيث سيقوم موظفو البلدية بتأمين مترجم لك بكل سرور. كما يمكنك الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على الرقم 131 450 والطلب منهم الاتصال ببلدية روكدايل على الرقم 9562 1666 نيابةً عنك.

Chinese

重要消息

本文件載有關於 Rockdale 市政府的重要資訊，如果您有不明之處，請於星期一至星期五，上午8時30分至下午4時30分，及星期六上午9時至下午1時，前來位於 2 Bryant Street，Rockdale，市政府的顧客服務中心。市政府的職員會很樂意為您安排傳譯員的服務。

您也可以聯絡電話傳譯服務處，電話 131 450，並請他們代您致電 9562 1666 給 Rockdale 市政府。

Greek

Σημαντικό:

Αυτό το έγγραφο περιέχει σημαντικές πληροφορίες για τη Δημαρχία Rockdale City Council. Αν δεν τις καταλαβαίνετε, παρακαλείσθε να επισκεφτείτε το Κέντρο Εξυπηρέτησης Πελατών [Customer Service Centre] του Δήμου στο 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, Δευτέρα - Παρασκευή από 8.30πμ - 4.30μμ και Σάββατο από 9.00πμ - 1.00μμ. Το Προσωπικό του Δήμου θα χαρεί να κανονίσει υπηρεσίες διερμηνέων για σας.

Μπορείτε επίσης να επικοινωνήσετε με τις Τηλεφωνικές Υπηρεσίες Διερμηνέων [Telephone Interpreter Services] στο 131 450 και να τους ζητήσετε να τηλεφωνήσουν στο Rockdale City Council στο 9562 1666 για λογαριασμό σας.

Italian

Importante:

Questo documento contiene importanti informazioni sul Comune di Rockdale City. Se avete difficoltà a comprenderne il contenuto, recatevi presso il Customer Service Centre del Comune a 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale dal lunedì al venerdì dalle ore 8.30 alle 16.30 e al sabato dalle 9.00 alle 13.00. Il personale del Comune sarà ben lieto di procurarvi un servizio interpreti.

Potete anche chiamare il Servizio telefonico interpreti (TIS) al numero 131 450 chiedendo che telefoni per vostro conto al Comune di Rockdale City al numero 9562 1666.

Macedonian

Важно:

Овој документ содржи важни информации за Rockdale City Council (Градската општина на Rockdale). Ако не го разбирате, ве молиме, посетете го општинскиот Customer Service Centre (Центар за услуги на клиенти), кој се наоѓа на 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, од понеделник до петок, од 8.30 наутро до 4.30 попладне и во сабота од 9.00 наутро до 1.00 попладне. Вработените во општината со задоволство ќе ви организираат да користите преведувач.

Исто така, можете да телефонираше во Telephone Interpreter Services (Служба за преведување по телефон) на 131 450, и да ги замолиме во ваше име да се јават во Градската општина на Rockdale на 9562 1666.

Spanish

Importante:

Este documento contiene información importante sobre el Rockdale City Council (Municipio de Rockdale). Si no la entiende, le rogamos concurrir al Centro de Servicio al Cliente del Municipio, ubicado en 2 Bryant Street, Rockdale, atención de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm y el sábado de 9:00 am a 1:00 pm. El personal del municipio se complacerá en obtener los servicios de un intérprete para usted.

Puede asimismo llamar al Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131 450 y pedirles que llamen de su parte al Rockdale City Council, teléfono 9562 1666.

Caring for the Environment – In the interest of protecting and preserving our environment, Rockdale City Council uses Nordset paper for all of its pre-printed paper requirements. Nordset has been awarded the Nordic Swan label for environmentally friendly pulp and paper manufacturing. It is manufactured with fibre obtained from sustainable plantation forest, it is oxygen bleached, Totally Chlorine Free (TCF), dioxin and acid free. Nordset can be recycled and is biodegradable.

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Community Gardens Policy

File: F13/160 Document: 15/120405

Adopted: Council 21/10/2015

Class of document: Council Policy

Enquiries: Manager Place Outcomes

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1 Policy Statement

Community gardens provide local residents with recreational opportunities and a range of other environmental, social and educational benefits that can contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and the wider Rockdale community. The opportunities and values represented by the development of community gardens are echoed in Rockdale's City Plan including:

- Strategy 1.1.4 Improve the access and effectiveness of services and facilities available to all members of the community to encourage active living to improve health and well-being.
- Strategy 1.3.3 Build a vibrant and exciting City that reflects the range of cultures, entertainment, events and networks that contribute to the well-being of its community.
- Strategy 1.4.2 Provide parks, reserves and recreation areas which reflect the qualities of the City's social and environmental needs.
- Strategy 3.1.1 Ensure access to lifelong learning so that our community can maximise its potential.

2 Purpose

This Policy aims to provide a clear roadmap for the community and Council to develop and manage community gardens in the Rockdale LGA. This policy outlines the types of gardens that may be supported by Council, where they can be located and the ongoing roles of Council and the public in managing and nurturing community gardens.

3 Objectives

- Promote the development of community gardens in the City of Rockdale according to Council's capacity, community need and availability of appropriate sites.
- Promote community gardens as places where people can meet, work together, build stronger community relationships and learn about sustainability.
- Clarify the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in community garden projects including garden volunteers, Council and partnering organisations with reference to issues such as public liability, maintenance, safety and access.
- Document and standardise processes and procedures to ensure consistency in the management of community gardens across Rockdale.
- Identify planning controls that support the development of community gardens on land established for community use and integration into new developments.
- Provide equity, accountability, consistency in reporting and management of community gardens.
- Ensure community gardens are sustainable in terms of energy, water, materials, and chemical use.
- Reduce health and safety risk by identifying key issues and providing guidelines to underpin the Policy.
- Ensure that all public land is managed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993

4 Scope

This policy covers activities related to 'gardening' by community members on council or council managed land and does not include the activities of council or contracted land management activities.

5 Community Garden Definition

For the purposes of this policy a community garden is defined as a not-for-profit, community based enterprise producing food primarily for the consumption of the gardeners. Community gardens are also places for learning and sharing about sustainable living practices, and for actively building communities through shared activities.

There are several models of community gardens in existence throughout Australia, Council will support the following models:

- Gardens that include a shared area plus allotments for each member;
- Gardens where the entire area is managed collectively; and
- Verge gardens when they are managed collectively by a group of local residents and decisions are made jointly.

6 Establishment of Community Gardens

Establishing a community garden can be a complex process. Therefore, a clear process for development and management of a garden and clear roles and responsibilities are needed. All community gardening activities covered by this Policy must satisfy the following requirements to allow establishment and ongoing use.

Council encourages resident groups to contact Council early in the process and to review the many excellent resources available regarding community gardening including '10 Steps to Starting a Community Garden' on the Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network web site and the City of Sydney's 'Guide to Getting Started in Community Gardening' available on the City of Sydney's website.

Application forms and a checklist for starting a community garden are included as appendices to this policy.

6.1 Where can community gardens be established?

For the purposes of the policy community gardens supported by Council can only be located on Council owned or managed land and be managed only by an authorised group of local residents. All community gardens on Council land will require approval from Council.

Not all Council land or open space is suitable for community gardening and the following areas are excluded from community garden applications:

1. Cook Park
2. Areas mapped as endangered ecological communities
3. State Roads
4. Median strips and roundabouts

6.2 Park Plans of Management

Council has Plans of Management (POM) for many parks and open space areas. Community gardening activities that occur in an area with an existing POM must be consistent with this Plan.

Where relevant, Council will incorporate community gardens into plans of management as 'community land'.

6.3 Establishing Community Garden Groups

Community gardens come in many shapes and sizes and the groups that manage them are just as varied, encompassing a range of ages, skills and experience. To ensure community gardens are managed effectively groups will need to develop and adhere to a set of rules agreed to by both Council and the garden group. For larger groups this will mean the development of a plan of management, for smaller groups it may be a simple license agreement.

Larger community garden groups of more than 12 members must also become incorporated through the NSW Office of Fair Trading. Incorporation allows garden committees to open a bank account, obtain public liability insurance and apply for government grants. To become incorporated garden groups must first establish a management committee with annually elected office bearers and commit to regular meetings. A management structure such as this, ensures good management of the garden; issues are addressed in a timely and transparent manner, tasks are shared avoiding excessive responsibility being placed on a few people or the garden becoming dominated by one person.

6.4 Insurance and Risk Management

It is essential that garden groups be aware of the risks associated with undertaking publicly accessible community garden projects and garden groups must provide a duty of care to community members who visit gardens. All community garden management plans will be required to include a risk assessment.

To ensure risks are financially covered each garden and its members must be covered by public liability insurance. Smaller garden groups may be covered under Council's public liability insurance but larger incorporated groups will be required to take out their own policy of at least \$10,000,000. Council recognises that there is a cost associated with obtaining public liability insurance and provides the following options for obtaining insurance cover:

- Council community grant or other grant
- Fundraising
- Garden membership fees
- A partnering organisation or agency that can extend their policy to cover the garden and,
- A group of community gardens with similar objectives might obtain insurance together.

6.5 Financial Sustainability

Long term financial viability is critical for the success of any community garden project. While Council has a community grants program that can be applied to for the purposes of community gardens, gardens should be planned so that they are not wholly dependent on grants or sponsorship. Financial sustainability must be demonstrated the garden's management plan and may require, as is the case for several community gardens around Sydney, an annual membership fee.

During the formation of a community garden, Council may, at its discretion and subject to budgetary constraints, fund the following materials and activities;

- Raised garden beds
- Recycling, worm farming and composting facilities and associated infrastructure

- Fencing
- A limited supply of soil, compost, mulch and tools
- Public signage and educational materials
- Soil contamination testing

6.6 Conflict Resolution and Complaints Procedure

Community Gardens should aim to be tolerant and caring environments. However, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise, either within the garden group or with external stakeholders such as local residents or Council. Council therefore recommends that all community garden management plans include a gardener's agreement and a conflict resolution process that provides expectations of behaviour that all members must sign and agree to follow. Garden groups of less than 12 twelve members that do not have a garden management plan, will be required to sign individual gardener's agreements with Council.

6.7 Security of Tenure

New gardens established on Council land will have a trial period of one year. If the garden group or individuals fulfil their responsibilities with regard to the management of the garden within the first year, a longer arrangement may be negotiated with the group.

A licence or other agreement with a group and/or individuals could be revoked or not renewed if:

- The group disbands or ceases to function
- Individuals fail to fulfil their agreed responsibilities
- The garden is not maintained or becomes unsafe for public access; and
- Appropriate insurance cover is not maintained

6.8 Use of the Gardens as Demonstration Sites

Council's vision of community gardens includes promotion of the gardens as demonstration sites for sustainable living. As such Council, while ensuring that garden activities are not disrupted, retains the right to use community gardens for community education events such as tours and workshops. Council would, therefore, encourage community garden groups to include sustainable practices such as recycling, organic/permaculture gardening principles as well as outdoor learning, performance, meeting spaces and interpretative signage in their plans of management.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Council

Council will provide the following support to community garden groups:

- A staff member who will act as a point of contact for all members of community gardens
- Assess garden proposals and management plans
- Provide initial advice on design and maintenance of gardens
- Assist with establishing worm farms and composting facilities.
- Connect local gardens and gardeners to each other to help build relationships and encourage the sharing of information and experiences.
- Promote community gardening through Council's website, publications and events.

- Determine if breaches of contract or licenses have occurred and revoke individual or group agreements if breaches have occurred.

Council is not in a position to provide the following services or resources;

- Ongoing administrative support (e.g. photocopying)
- Care of garden group finances
- The provision of large infrastructure (e.g. sheds, rainwater tanks, sun shelters)
- The ongoing provision of plants, seeds, soil or mulch, tools or other equipment
- The repair or replacement of damaged, lost or stolen infrastructure and equipment
- The development or hosting of any internet based platforms for group communications and promotion, e.g. websites, blogs, wikis
- Ongoing financial support

7.2 The Community

Community gardens should be initiated and managed by community members for the long term, taking into account the needs of all stakeholders and the surrounding community. Specifically gardeners are responsible for ensuring that:

- They maintain effective relationships with the surrounding neighbourhood, partnering organisations and gardener members;
- Garden members and visitors to the garden are not to be discriminated against due to differences in race, gender, culture or sexuality;
- Decision making by the garden committee is democratic, transparent and inclusive;
- The garden is managed in such a way that water contaminated by sediment, fertilisers etc. is contained on site;
- Garden activities that may incur noise, dust etc. do not disturb neighbours;
- Compost, worm farms and garden materials are maintained so as not to attract vermin or produce unpleasant odours;
- Rainwater harvesting systems are maintained to ensure water is of a high quality;
- Lawn areas are regularly mowed and garden beds kept tidy and
- Visitors are welcomed during daylight hours.

Community gardeners have the right to:

- Develop their own internal policies, organisational procedures and plan of management providing they liaise with and get support from Council;
- Be consulted with regard to any decision that may affect the garden and to be advised by the Council in a timely manner of any policy changes that impact them;
- Be treated with respect by other gardeners, local residents and partnering organisations; and,
- Negotiate a secure and reasonable agreement with Council.

8 Site Selection Criteria for Community Gardens

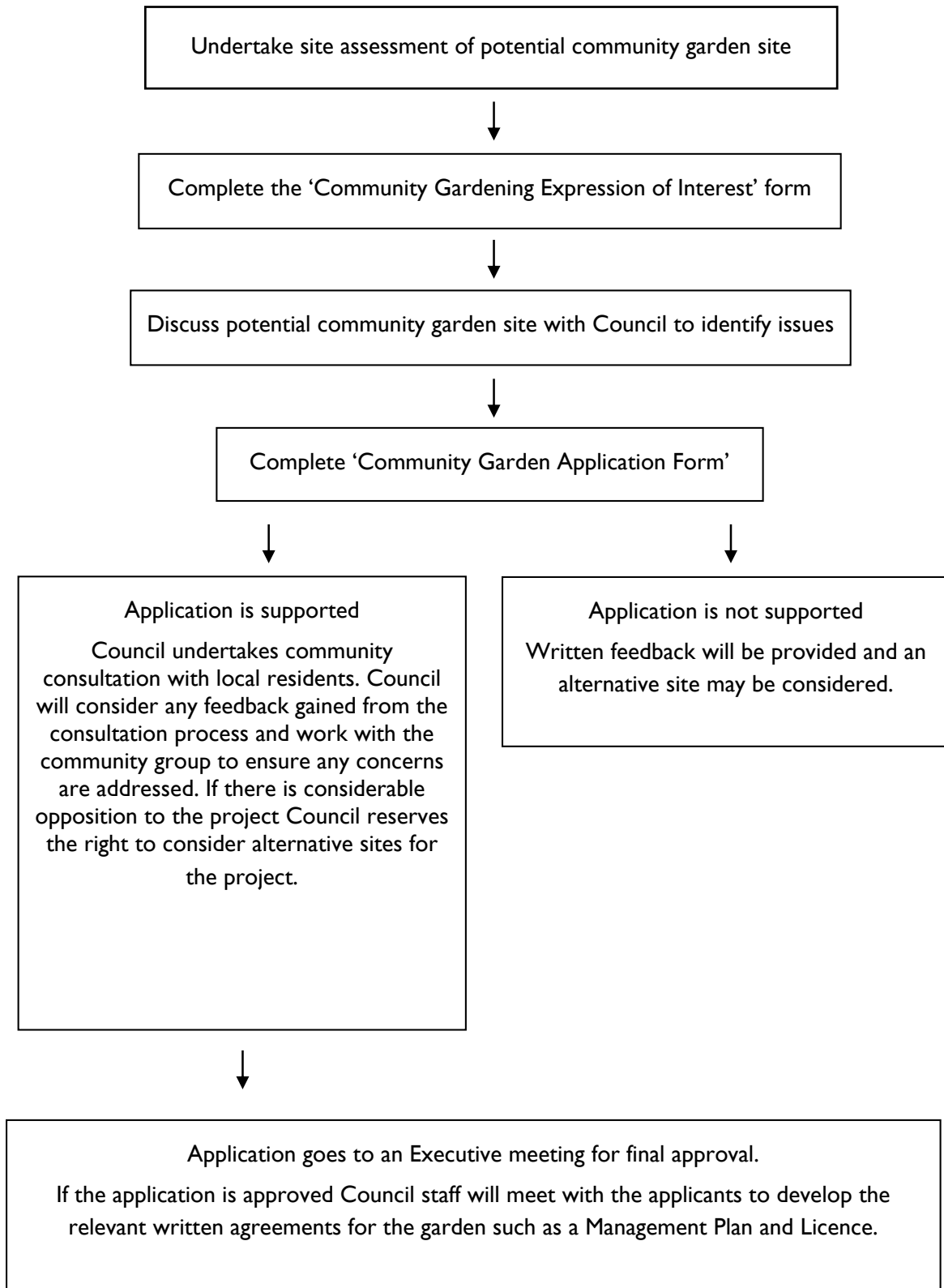
In order for Council to consider supporting the development of new community gardens on Council owned or controlled land, applicants will need to address the site selection criteria outlined below and follow the procedure for starting a new community garden. The first steps in this procedure is to establish a community garden group, conduct a site assessment of potential sites and discuss their proposal with the Council to identify possible issues. Once a preferred site

has been established, applicants will need to submit a completed application form to Council. If the application is supported, then the Council will organise community consultation with local residents and work with the community garden group to address any concerns.

1. **Location:** Sites classified as Community Land under the Local Government Act such as parks, open space and community centres that have outside areas may be appropriate for community gardens. Priority will be given to sites located in high density areas and/or near community centres or community organisations that might be able to support or partner the project.
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 shopping areas).
3. **Accessibility:** Sites should be accessible for a range of user groups, located close to public transport, allow disabled and vehicular access e.g. for delivery of mulch and soil.
4. **Solar access:** To be suitable for growing fruits and vegetables potential garden sites need to receive full sunlight for at least 5 - 6 hours per day.
5. **Size:** The selected site will need to accommodate the number of members in a community garden group. Large garden groups will therefore need to locate a site that can at least accommodate an appropriate number of garden beds with room for storage and composting systems but they may need to consider rainwater tanks, seating areas, shelter for gardeners and for community workshops and demonstrations. Smaller garden groups may be able to utilise verges or pocket parks that can support few garden beds with storage and composting off site.
6. **Water:** Sites need to have access to reticulated water or access to buildings where water can be harvested.
7. **Soil Contamination:** Contaminated land can be an issue in urban areas due to past land uses. As such some sites may require soil testing prior to the establishment of a community garden. If high levels of contaminants are present then advice will need to be sought from experts on whether it is suitable for growing food.
8. **Multiple Use:** Priority will be given to 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.

Note: It may not always be possible to find a site that meets all of the above criteria. Sites that meet as many of the requirements as possible will be prioritised.

9 Procedure for Starting a Community Garden



I 0 References

Ashfield Council 2012, 'Community Gardening Policy', Ashfield Council.

Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network, March 2011, 'Community Garden Plan of Management Template'.

Deborah Law, 2013, Public Place Gardening Policy, Waverley Council.

City of Sydney, 2009, 'Community Gardens Policy', City of Sydney.

Randwick City Council, 'Community Garden Expression of Interest Form'.

Randwick City Council, 'Community Garden Application Form'.

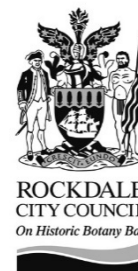
Thomas, F, 2008, 'Getting Started in Community Gardening', City of Sydney.

I I Document Control

| Version | Release Date | Author | Reason for Change |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| I.0 | 21 October 2015 | Madeline Hourihan | Original |
| I.1 | 31 May 2016 | Madeline Hourihan | New Template |

I 2 Appendices

Community Garden Expression of Interest



This form is to register an expression of interest in developing a community garden in the Rockdale local government area. The EOI allows Council to assess the proposed community garden site before a formal community garden application is submitted. Before completing this form, please familiarise yourself with the following documents (www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au or phone 9562 1666 to obtain hard copies):

- Rockdale City Council's Community Gardening Policy
- The City of Sydney's 'Getting Started In Community Gardening' booklet
- The Australian City Farms and Community Gardens 'Plan of Management Template'

Council will endeavour to contact you regarding your EOI within 14 days. Once your EOI has been accepted you can then lodge a Community Garden Application form.

| | | |
|---|--------|----|
| Applicant details | | |
| Name of your community garden team: | | |
| Primary contact: | | |
| Phone: | Email: | |
| Postal address: | | |
| | | |
| Have you identified a preferred site for the proposed community garden? | YES | NO |
| Proposed garden location (please attach a rough map of your garden) | | |
| | | |

Privacy Statement

The personal information provided on this form (including your name and other details) will be handled in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and may be available to the public under various legislation. Refer also to the Privacy Statement on Council's website.



Telephone Interpreter Services - 131 450 Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes
بخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية 電話傳譯服務處 Servizio telefonico interpreti
Τηλεφωνικές Υπηρεσίες Διερμηνέων Служба за преведување по телефон

Rockdale City Council

Office: 8.30am – 4.30pm (Mon-Fri); 9am – 1pm (Sat)
2 Bryant Street / PO Box 21, Rockdale NSW 2216
rcc@rockdale.nsw.gov.au www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au
Tel 02 9562 1666 Fax 02 9562 1777
ABN 66 169 730 052

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| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| How many members in your community garden team? | | |
| What skills and experience are available in your team to build and manage the garden? | | |
| What are your main motivations in starting a community gardening? | | |
| Outline the types of activities you propose for the community garden: | | |
| Has your team identified funding for your community garden? | YES | NO |
| If approval is given to start a community garden, are you aware that if your garden group has 12 or more members you will need to be an incorporated association and obtain public liability insurance? | YES | NO |
| Are you aware that all community garden groups will be required to pay an annual license fee? | YES | NO |

Please submit completed community garden expressions of interest to:

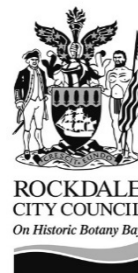
Email - rcc@rockdale.nsw.gov.au

Post - Rockdale City Council, PO Box 21 Rockdale, NSW 2016

Hand delivered - Rockdale City Council, 2 Bryant St Rockdale, NSW 2016

C/O Place Outcomes Unit

Community Garden Application Form



This form should only be completed if you have successfully lodged a 'Community Gardening Expression of Interest' form.

| | | | |
|---|--------|--------------------------|----|
| Applicant Details | | | |
| Community Garden Name: | | | |
| Primary contact details | | | |
| Family Name | | Given Name | |
| Street | Suburb | Postcode | |
| Mailing Address (if different from above) | | | |
| Tel 1 (Home/Work/Mobile) | | Tel 2 (Home/Work/Mobile) | |
| ABN (If applicable): | | Email: | |
| Current no. of members: | | Estimated maximum no.: | |
| Have you appointed a member of your group to liaise with Council? | | YES | NO |
| Have you registered as an incorporated association | | YES | NO |
| Has your community garden organisation purchased public liability insurance? | | YES | NO |
| If yes, please attach a copy of your insurance policy to this application form. | | | |

Privacy Statement

The personal information provided on this form (including your name and other details) will be handled in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and may be available to the public under various legislation. Refer also to the Privacy Statement on Council's website.



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Rockdale City Council

Office: 8.30am – 4.30pm (Mon-Fri); 9am – 1pm (Sat)
 2 Bryant Street / PO Box 21, Rockdale NSW 2216
rcc@rockdale.nsw.gov.au www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au
 Tel 02 9562 1666 Fax 02 9562 1777
 ABN 66 169 730 052
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| | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|----|
| Proposed community garden site details | | | |
| Please attach an A3 size (this can be hand drawn), concept plan of the proposed garden showing entry points, pathways and garden areas. Your final landscape plan will need to be submitted with your Development Application. | | | |
| Can the site be seen from nearby houses or other premises? | | YES | NO |
| Is the site accessible to a range of user groups? | | YES | NO |
| Is the site accessible by public transport? | | YES | NO |
| Does the site receive the minimum four to six hours of sunlight a day, throughout the year, necessary to grow vegetables? | | YES | NO |
| How will you irrigate the garden? | | | |
| What type of community garden are you planning? | | | |
| Single plots or allotments | | Shared garden | |
| Garden combining allotments and shared gardening areas | | | |
| What types of plants do you plan to grow? | | | |
| Vegetables | | Fruit/nut trees and shrubs | |
| Herbs | | Flowers | |
| Native plants/bush foods | | Other | |
| What structures do you plan to build? | | | |
| Seating | | Fencing | |
| Raised garden beds | | Sun shelter | |
| compost bins/worm farm | | BBQ | |
| Educational signage | | Shed | |
| Rainwater tanks | | Other | |
| What types of training does your group need assistance with? | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Site analysis | | Garden design | |
| Organic gardening techniques | | Organic pest management | |
| Seed saving | | Plant propagation | |
| Compost and worm farming | | No-dig gardening | |
| Running effective meetings | | Participatory decision making | |
| Checklist and applicant declaration. Please ensure the checklist below has been completed and the supporting documentation is attached. | | | |
| A concept plan of the proposed garden | | | |
| Plan of Management | | | |
| Letters of support (optional) | | | |
| Letter of support from auspic group (if applicable) | | | |
| Development Application including Statement of Environmental Effects (if applicable) | | | |
| Any other relevant documents (please provide details) | | | |
| Applicant's name: | | Date: | |
| Applicant signature: | | | |
| Telephone: | | Email: | |

Please submit completed community garden applications to:

Email - rcc@rockdale.nsw.gov.au

Post - Rockdale City Council, PO Box 21 Rockdale, NSW 2016

Hand delivered - Rockdale City Council, 2 Bryant St Rockdale, NSW 2016

C/O Place Outcomes Unit