

FOOD

PART F: FOOD

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SECTION 1 – FOOD

Objectives

Council encourages community gardens and food plots throughout the LGA as a way of implementing its adopted Community Gardens Policy and to help a wide range of residents to grow vegetables, fruits and native plants, encourage the cooking and eating of fresh food whilst fostering a heightened appreciation and a deeper understanding of the natural environment. Additional advantages include the wider usage of public open space and a broader range of community leisure activities. Parallel to this, Council supports markets selling organic produce, public cooking classes and the promotion of healthy eating programs which all contribute to a greater degree of local environmental sustainability, whilst encouraging healthier living and lifestyles throughout the community.

Council is committed to enhancing the sustainability of Inner West in order to better position the community to respond to changes in the social, political and environmental context. Facilitating food production, even at the smallest scale, is one way Council can enhance awareness of long term food security and contribute to sustainability goals by reducing food miles. Worm farming and composting are also important activities in any garden as they recycle green waste and return that energy to the soil to assist in growing food.

Gardening provides essential sustenance, social opportunities to connect with others and personal satisfaction in creating something new through cooking or growing our own food. The use of private open space for supplementation of household food requirements can greatly enhance the amenity of a dwelling.

Council encourages community members to produce their own fruit and vegetables utilising both public and private land, and provides further information regarding:

- Council's "Adopt a Plot" program, where people that are no longer able to maintain their garden are connected with others that want to grow fruit and vegetables;
- development and management of community gardens (see Council's Community Gardens Policy);
- development and management of private gardens, including ensuring soil is not contaminated (see Part C1.8 Contamination within this Development Control Plan); appropriate composting and waste management (see Council's website for information on minimising waste and composting guidelines); and
- the need to consider the quality of soil in relation to potential contamination.

Community garden spaces provide opportunities for members of the community to connect with each other in a shared vision which is focussed on the creation, maintenance and shared rewards of gardening. Community gardens provide food, recreation and therapeutic opportunities for a community. They also provide opportunities for developing new skills, developing friendships through socialisation, promotion of Sustainability principles, improving health and living standards and promoting a sense of community pride and well-being.

Council's Community Garden Policy provides clarity and direction to the community on Council's and the community's role in community gardening – from consulting and setting up a new garden to day-to-day management. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of everyone involved. The Policy should be read in conjunction with this section of the Development Control Plan, and can be accessed at: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/1453/Community%20garden%20policy.docx.asp>

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This section of the Development Control Plan also assists Council in achieving several key objectives of the adopted Leichhardt Community and Cultural Plan: 4 Year Service Delivery Plan, including:

- connecting people to each other by actively encouraging and facilitating people to make neighbourhood connections through programs such as the Community Gardens and “Adopt a Plot” programs;
- developing community strengths and capabilities by effectively resourcing Council’s community programs and utilising a capacity building approach; and
- promoting health and well-being by encouraging and supporting healthy and sustainable eating and equitable access to fresh food through programs such as the Community Gardens and “Adopt a Plot” programs.

F1.1 FOOD PRODUCTION

Historic land uses

The area’s rich industrial heritage has led to the issue of land being potentially contaminated within the area.

Council’s approach and responsibilities for contaminated land management are outlined within Part C1.8 Contamination of this Development Control Plan. The Development Control Plan creates the framework to ensure that while carrying out its planning functions, Council considers the possibility that a previous land use or environmental factors surrounding a specific site have caused contamination at the site.

It is recommended that consideration be given to the following precautions (refer to Table F1: Precautionary measures to consider prior to gardening food below) when gardening.

Table F1: Precautionary measures to consider prior to gardening food

Task or Activity	Common Hazards	Precautionary Control Measures
Garden use	Possible exposure to contaminants within soil Including (but not limited to):	Minor landscaping and planting activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor landscaping • Planting activities • Residential food production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and other metals • Asbestos • PAHs • Petroleum hydrocarbons. 	<p>Young children are particularly vulnerable to exposure from any contaminants within soil in residential areas due to their hand to mouth activities. The following precautionary control measures should be adopted.</p> <p><u>Minor landscaping and planting activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear gloves. • Wear a P2 face mask (if dusts are likely to be generated). • Avoid creating dust if possible (e.g. use light water sprays, avoid working in hot or windy conditions). • Do not eat, drink or smoke during activities. • Wash hands and face immediately after activities cease. • Brush or wash loose soil from tools at planting /

Task or Activity	Common Hazards	Precautionary Control Measures
		<p>work location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return any surplus (clean) soils to the garden bed. • Wash heavily soiled clothing thoroughly. <p><u>Residential food production:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that raised soil beds are used for residential food production (vegetables etc) and soil is regularly replaced with uncontaminated material as required. • Garden beds for food production should be avoided near heavily travelled roads, known industrial premises, near gutter downpipes or near buildings painted prior to 1970. • It is recommended that soil used for food production, if suspected of containing contaminants, should be tested. For further information contact Council. • The testing of soil on residential properties where soil has been 'imported' and the source is unknown. • Leafy vegetables and herbs are known to collect contaminants (e.g. lead) from the air as well as the soil more readily than other vegetables. Gardeners should aim to maintain soil that is high in organic matter at an approximately neutral acidic level (i.e. a pH of approximately 6.5 to 7). • Thoroughly wash all fruit and vegetables prior to storage and eating.

Objectives

- O1 To manage and encourage the responsible shared use of the public domain by establishing provisions regarding:
- a. general sustainable plant maintenance strategies;
 - b. use of private balconies for use in food production;
 - c. roof gardens; and
 - d. community gardens.
- O2 To outline Council's position towards localised household food production.
- O3 To facilitate opportunities for members of the community to engage socially through the production and harvesting of food in the Local Government Area.
- O4 To promote equitable access to fresh, organic and locally produced fruit and vegetables.

Controls

- C1 The following guidelines should be followed in order to facilitate sustainable food production:
- a. healthy soil is to be maintained through the incorporation of compost and well-rotted manure without excess nitrogen;
 - b. regular crop rotation strategies should be implemented to reduce build-up of soil diseases;
 - c. plant diversity should be maintained through the planting of both native and exotic species that are not weed species, and are not an exempt species as listed in Part C1.14 – Tree Management within this Development Control Plan;
 - d. plant species for food production should be appropriate to the site conditions such as solar access and site drainage, and should be planted at the right time of year with pest and disease resistant varieties. Further information on this can be obtained from your local nursery;
 - e. plants should be well-maintained in terms of pruning and watering, and mulching to maintain moisture and insulate soil; and
 - f. infected and diseased plant growth should be removed from the garden, but is **not** to be composted.
- C2 Council supports the use of existing private space for use in food production provided that:
- a. the amenity of neighbouring properties will not be adversely affected;
 - b. there is effective drainage on the site; and
 - c. the proposed garden is compatible with the structural integrity of any built element to be utilised.
- C3 Council supports the use of organic and chemical free agricultural practice in pest management and plant maintenance.
- C4 Council supports the sourcing of local fruit, vegetable and herb produce with limited food miles.

F1.1.3 Community gardens

Objectives

- O1 To encourage development of community gardens for local food production and permaculture education.
- O2 To support community gardens to be self-managed to increase community ownership.
- O3 To increase sustainable fauna and flora microclimates.

Controls

- C1 The requirements outlined in the Community Gardens Policy are to be fully complied with.
- C2 Applicants are to submit a development application to Council for development of a Community Garden on private land or land owned by or control vested in Council. The development application is to demonstrate to Council that:

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- a. there is wide community support for a community garden in a particular neighbourhood and that such needs cannot currently be met locally;
- b. where parkland is proposed to be utilised, the open space values of the park as a whole are not adversely affected and the potential for conflict with existing users and neighbours is minimised;
- c. the garden group has established an agreed framework for governance and self-management of the proposed community garden e.g. a “Code of Conduct”;
- d. the design and function of the proposed community garden is one which will have long term benefits for the community as a whole;
- e. where the garden is to be located on community land, the proposed community garden is in keeping with any adopted plan of management or master plan for the site;
- f. there has been robust community consultation on the development of the garden; and
- g. the group has a level of match funding to assist in the establishment of the community garden (through a successful grant application, voluntary contributions, fundraising or otherwise).