Nillumbik Shire Council

Planter Box Guidelines

September 2015

Contents

[Introduction 3](#_Toc420572775)

[Procedure for initiating a Planter Box project 3](#_Toc420572776)

[Planter Box Guidelines 4](#_Toc420572777)

[Insurance 4](#_Toc420572778)

[Location 4](#_Toc420572779)

[Design 4](#_Toc420572780)

[Maintenance 5](#_Toc420572781)

[Council position 5](#_Toc420572782)

[Nillumbik Shire Council Planter Box Permit Application Form 6](#_Toc420572783)

## Introduction

Nillumbik Shire Council values community gardens as a unique form of open space which is managed by the community for the production of food. They are places for developing practical knowledge of sustainable living practices, as well as building community connection and resilience.

Nillumbik Shire Council supports and encourages the local community to initiate and establish community gardens with support from Council.

A Planter Box is defined as a garden constructed above ground on an unused area of streetscape where produce grown can be shared by the community.

Council’s Planter Box Guidelines and Permit application process will assist in making community gardening in planter boxes effective, enjoyable and safe for all.

## Procedure for initiating a Planter Box project

**Step 1: Consider the Planter Box Guidelines**

Read the Planter Box Guidelines and consider any potential barriers that may arise.

**Step 2: Secure a site**

Community gardeners are encouraged to meet with Council at the potential planter box location to ascertain any site or design constraints in relation to the Guidelines and to identify whether approvals from Council or other relevant government agencies are required.

**Step 3: Secure support**

It is essential that you discuss your idea to establish planter boxes with people and businesses in the area that may be affected by the project. As a guide, it is a good idea to consult neighbours/businesses within 25 metres of your proposed planter box site. You should explain your initiative to people who frequent the space and give them an opportunity to comment. This could be done via a community gathering, social media or other means.

Applicants are required to provide Council with evidence of local consultation.

**Step 4: Complete the Planter Box Permit application form**

Complete and submit the application form including the requested attachments.

## Planter Box Guidelines

### Insurance

* Public liability insurance must be obtained to the minimum value of $10 million. A copy must be provided to Council.

### Location

* The planter boxes should be positioned to receive sufficient sunlight.
* The garden boxes are not to create any access barriers or hazards for pedestrians, road users, neighbouring properties, public utilities, trees or services.
* Garden boxes are to be located at least 0.5m from the kerb and 1.8m from the property line.
* They must have a minimum height of 0.4m, to avoid creating a trip hazard to pedestrians, and a maximum height of 1.0m, to maintain clear sight lines for pedestrians and road users.
* They must have a maximum length of 1.5m, to avoid creating an access barrier to pedestrians and road users and a maximum width of 1.2m. This includes any seat attached to the box. Longer lengths and wider widths may be agreed to for boxes not adjacent to car spaces but these would be assessed on a case by case basis.
* Must be placed at least 1.5m from street furniture, including seats, bicycle rails, telephones, rubbish bins, services and utilities (such as poles, pits) and other garden boxes.
* Boxes should not damage the footpath or any property and any damage must be repaired to Council satisfaction. Garden boxes cannot be fixed to the footpath.
* Occupants of the neighbouring property must agree to the garden box location and evidence of this provided to Council.
* They can’t be placed over existing garden beds, unless approval is granted by Council.

### Design

* Boxes are to be made of materials that comply with the ‘Local Design Guidelines’ (available on Council’s website) and be generally visible during the day and night. Consider attaching fluorescent strips to all sides of the box in order for your planter box to be visible at night.
* Geo-fabric or similar product must be installed and fixed to the inside of the garden boxes to prevent soil and silt from washing out of the boxes.
* They must be stable, durable, and free of protrusions, stakes, guide wires, protruding nails, sharp edges, tall vegetation and spikey vegetation.
* Advertising of any type is not permitted to be attached in any way to the garden boxes. The name of the group, family or person who has installed or is maintaining the boxes is considered acceptable. The maximum size of this plaque is to be the equivalent of an A4 piece of paper. A plain font and neutral colour text must be used. Small (maximum size A4) informative and educational signage may be erected explaining the garden or inviting people to “help themselves”.
* No CCA treated wood is to be used.

### Maintenance

* It is important to consider the visual impact of your planter box on the streetscape and to maintain your garden. The boxes must be well maintained to ensure they remain safe, clean, healthy, tidy and attractive.
* When you work on your planter box, health and safety precautions are your responsibility. Consider the following basic safety precautions: appropriate clothing, appropriate and safe use of tools, being sun smart, careful handling of materials and soils.
* Suitable plants should be used; however, environmental weeds of any kind and genetically modified products are not permitted.
* Organic principles should be applied to the use of herbicides and pesticides and the management of pests and disease.
* Gardening activities must not disturb the users of the footpath. Tools, materials and equipment must not encroach or be left on the footpath.

### Council position

* Council is not responsible for the upkeep, repair or replacement of the garden boxes installed as part of this project. Council reserves the right to issue clean up and removal notices to non-conforming garden planter boxes which must be complied with.
* Council reserves the right to cancel this authorisation or alter the requirements at any time in consultation with the applicant if there has been a failure to comply with the conditions of the letter.
* In granting permission, Council indemnifies itself against any actions or claims that may arise.
* This permit is valid for 12 months at which time it will be the subject of a review.

## Nillumbik Shire Council Planter Box Permit Application Form

**Nominated Primary Contact:**

Surname:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Given Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mobile:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location of Planter Box garden:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Have you consulted with a Council representative? Yes □ No □

Have you secured a suitable and safe site for your planter box? Yes □ No □

Have you secured neighbourhood support? Yes □ No □

Details of any support:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Do you agree to adopt Council’s Planter Box Guidelines and

associated conditions as appropriate, including following all

applicable health and safety precautions? Yes □ No □

Do you agree to implement and maintain the conditions,

required that are attached to this Permit? Yes □ No □

**Attach:**

1. Evidence of community support
2. Evidence of Public Liability Insurance valued to $10 million
3. A plan detailing where the planter boxes will be located, specific measurements of the garden and any council infrastructure such as trees, bins or signage
4. A list of materials to be used in constructing your garden e.g. timbers, soil.

**Declaration**

I/we apply for a permit to construct and maintain a Planter Box produce garden at the location nominated in this form. I/we have read and fully understand and agree to comply with the items and conditions of the Permit application form. I/we understand that my/our Permit may be revoked by Council for any breach of these conditions.

I/we have attached the required documents as stated in this application.

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_