

# Community Garden Site Assessment Checklist

## Community mapping

### What community and business groups and facilities are nearby?

- Churches, mosques, etc
- Schools
- Kindergartens
- Childcare centres
- Community and neighbourhood houses and centres
- Aged care facilities
- Neighbourhood watch groups
- Local environment groups
- Other community organisations.....
- Restaurants
- Business councils
- Garden stores
- Other businesses

### Who lives nearby?

- What are the age groups of people?
- What are employment and unemployment levels?

## Landuse

### What are the main landuses surrounding the garden site?

- Businesses (what?).....
- Industry
- Parkland
- Major roads
- High density housing
- Medium density housing
- Low density housing
- Car parking

### What is the history of the land?

- Is housing public, community, private rental, owned?
- What are people's cultural and linguistic backgrounds?
- What is the crime rate in the area?
- What are other special characteristics of the people in the area?

Tip: Use local councils and Census data.

### Safety and security

- Is the site near community facilities (school, community centre, etc)?
- Is the site in view of houses, roads, shopping areas, etc?
- Is there graffiti or vandalism visible?
- Is there any lighting?
- Is there a neighbourhood watch group in the area?
- Is the site fenced?

### Current land use

- Who currently uses the land?
- Do people walk through or use it as a shortcut?
- Rubbish dumped
- Illegal activities
- Children's play
- Sleep
- Other uses

### Plant knowledge

- What plants grow well in the area?
- Who are the experienced gardeners and seed savers in the neighbourhood?

## Things to look for at the garden site

### Size

- How big is the land?
- How much of the land is suitable for gardens?

### Land tenure

- Who owns the land?
- How is it owned?
- Are there zoning regulations in place? What do they allow and restrict?
- What are/ would be the leasing agreements, how long, cost etc?

### Sun, wind, soil

- What's the current ground cover? (grass, gravel...)
- What is the slope of the land?
- What plants (including weeds and trees) are already on site?
- What is the soil type?
- How many hours of sun does the land get in a day?
- Are there any large trees, buildings, etc blocking solar access?
- Is there a water source on site? (bore, tap...)
- How does water move through the site?
- What direction does wind come from?
- What do you notice about the wind? (strong etc)

Tip: Visit the site during or just after heavy rain to observe how water moves through the site, where it gathers, and how quickly it soaks into the soil.

### Structures

- Are there any buildings on site?
- Seating
- Shedding
- Walls
- Fences
- Paved areas
- Other structures

### Gardens

- What gardens, etc are already established?

### Services

- Is there electricity on site or easy to access?
- Phone
- Sewers, stormwater drains
- Is there public transport nearby?
- Is a place for bicycle parking
- Car parking space
- Are there major roads nearby?
- Are there barriers to pollution from traffic?

## What other features does the site have?