

## **GUIDELINES ON PLOT STRUCTURES**

A **Plot Structure** is an enclosed structure or stand-alone structure on a plot at the Knox Community Gardens (**KCG**) **above** one metre in height (above 1.4 metres in the VAHR area).

Rules relating to Plot Structures, including how enclosed structures fitted with insect exclusion netting may be used by members as a strategy to manage Queensland Fruit Fly (**QFF**) are described in the Society's Rules, (Rule 2(f)(i) – (iv) – Managing your Plot).

These Guidelines supplement Rule 2(f) and explain:

- **Background** to the Committee's adoption of Rule 2(f)(ii) favoring temporary enclosed structures
- **Description** of:
  - what the Committee considers to be acceptable / not acceptable enclosed structures
  - what the Committee considers to be acceptable / not acceptable stand-alone structures
- **Process** for members to approach the Committee when contemplating the erection of an enclosed structure or stand-alone structure on their plot

### ***Why the Committee has adopted an approach preferring temporary plot structures***

In 2014 the Committee determined all plot structures should be prohibited, unless they were already existing and compliant with rules in place before 2014. This rule was intended to protect the amenity of the gardens and ensure a safe, enjoyable aesthetic for all.

In 2022 – 2023, Rule 2(f) was changed in response to the threat of QFF. Temporary structures above one metre were allowed for the 2022 – 2023 QFF Season, which was then extended to further QFF seasons, until a decision was taken by the Committee.

The Committee is aware that a number of plot structures above one metre have remained in place since 2022 – 2023 and have not been removed, despite the rules stating, "Any enclosure higher than one metre must be temporary in nature."

The Committee consulted with members at a General Meeting and as many members having Plot Structures as possible, concerning the making of changes to clarify the existing Rule. From these consultations, the Committee is aware of the priority which is placed by members on maintaining a positive aesthetic at the gardens, while balancing this against protection from pests, in particular the QFF.

To maintain this balance, the Committee has decided to prefer an approach to enclosed structures (with insect exclusion netting) that favours these structures being **temporary**, safe and capable of being used by members as a key strategy to manage and prevent QFF.

The Committee has also decided to adopt more specific guidance on the use of other stand-alone structures on plots (such as trellises, arches or climbing frames) which prioritises safety and good amenity, particularly where these are used between plots.

These guidelines are made by the Committee to ensure that their intentions are clearly understood by members and that other key objectives relating to the use of Plot Structures, such as safety issues, maintaining a positive garden aesthetic are considered by members in the use of Plot Structures.

***What the Committee considers acceptable / not acceptable: enclosed plot structures***

1. **Safety:** any enclosed structure must be kept in a safe condition
2. Enclosed structures are encouraged which are:
  - a. capable of being moved around (on different parts of the member's plot) to adapt to different areas of growing;
  - b. dismantable.
3. The Committee will prefer structures which have a minimal impact on the aesthetics of the gardens, ideally which are narrow and which allow visibility horizontally between plots.
4. Acceptable building materials for enclosed structures include poly pipes, stakes or similar lightweight materials.
5. For the ease of mowing and whipper-snipping, any mesh or cladding must be attached inside the plot, no posts or pegs are allowed outside the plot.
6. **Removal of netting in the off season**
  - a. Netting must be compliant with Victorian legislation.
  - b. Rolling netting off the underlying structure (so that sides are not covered) is an acceptable approach to managing netting during the off season.
  - c. Netting does not need to be completely removed off the frame, provided it can be safely secured in this way.

***Guideline examples – preferred types of enclosed structures, with explanation as to why preferred***



Compliant: 2m height, legal netting, netting removable from horizontal view, movable timber frame.



Compliant: Posts inside edging, 2m height, removable netting, star-picket caps.



Frame inside edging, 2m height, netting above 1m removable in off-season.



Permanent sides to 1m, removable netting up to 2m.

*Guideline examples – not preferred / permitted types of enclosed structures, with explanation as to why*





Roof is taller than 2m.



Sides above 1m must be removable.

***What the Committee considers acceptable / not acceptable – stand-alone plot structures***

1. **Safety:** any stand-alone structure must be kept in a safe condition at all times.
2. It is a general requirement of gardening at KCG that members should ensure that all of their gardening activity occurs within their plot boundaries.
3. For the use of trellises, arches of climbing frames between plots, it is the Committee's expectation that these structures:
  - a. will only be very rarely used
  - b. will only be used where there is a cooperative activity (an agreed arrangement) between two plot members
  - c. cannot be used on common grass areas.
4. Any trellis or arched climbing frames used between plots must allow clear and safe access for all garden members walking between plots. This may mean that:
  - a. all gardening activity will need to be appropriate for the height of the structure
  - b. if safe passage is a concern, it may not be permitted by the Committee or the Committee may request that it be removed.
5. The erection of all such structures must be discussed and agreed with the Committee before it is erected.
6. While Rule 2(f) specifies that the height of Plot Structures must not exceed 2 meters (or 2.4 meters in the VAHR Site), where a standalone structure covers a common walkway area, clearance of at least 2.4 meters from the ground level will be required to ensure that safe passage is available through the walkway area.

***Process for members to approach the Committee when contemplating erecting a plot structure and how the Committee will consider these requests***

1. Members will provide the Committee with a proposal as to what they intend to do, ideally with an image which shows a similar structure (already in use at the gardens) or a drawing of what is proposed.
2. The proposal will be assessed by the Committee (or relevant sub-Committee appointed to carry out these assessments) in accordance with Rule 2(f) and these Guidelines.
3. The Committee (or relevant sub-Committee) will provide an answer within 2 weeks regarding the proposed structure, including any suggestions on how the design can be improved.
4. Approval by the Committee / sub-Committee is required in writing before the Plot Structure is erected.
5. If approval is denied, suggestions should be made by the Committee for alternative designs or approaches to the structure, with the aim of assisting the member to address any safety or other concerns.