

# Filming in Strathfield Guidelines

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## **FILMING GUIDELINES IN STRATHFIELD LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA (LGA)**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Strathfield Council encourages and supports filming activities in Strathfield Local Government Area (LGA). The Strathfield LGA offers a variety of filming locations including:

- Historic buildings and streetscapes
- Shopping and commercial centres
- Parks and reserves
- Railway stations

Filming itself does not require Council approval. However, approval is required when activities associated with filming affect the public such as road closures, development works or use of public lands managed by Council such as parks and reserves.

If you are unsure whether your proposal requires approval, contact Council's Customer Service Centre on 9748 9999 for advice.

### **1.1 When do I need to seek approval from Council?**

Filming activities must consider the following documents:

- Local Government Filming Protocol
- Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) *Filming projects: guidelines for parking and road closures*
- *Strathfield Council's Filming in Strathfield guidelines (this document)*

Council requires that filming activities make every reasonable effort to minimise impact on local residents and businesses and that applicants abide by any conditions set out by Council in relation to the filming activity, in particular:

- that approved permits and associated documents are on site and available for inspection by public authorities for the duration of the shoot.
- Council approval is obtained in writing before filming on public land commences.

### **1.2 Approval timeframes**

Some applications to Council can be processed within ten (10) days of lodgement, provided the application is fully complete (including attachments) and does not require development works, road closures or consultations with third parties.

However, if the application requires consideration by the Strathfield Traffic Committee, closure of roads and consultations with the RMS, the timeframe for approval is much longer.

Application forms, additional documentation and fees, must be lodged to Council with a minimum of six weeks or 42 days prior to the scheduled filming commencement date, when road closures are required of Council roads.

## **2.0 Still photography**

Still photography itself does not require Council approval or payment of fees. However, approval is required when activities associated with filming affect the public such as road closures, development works or there is intention to use of public lands managed by Council such as parks and reserves.

### **2.1 Still photography on Private Property**

When you are filming or taking still photography fully within private property such as a residential home or a at business, you do not need development approval but you must comply with the conditions outlined in State Environmental Planning Policy No 4 (SEPP 4) – Development without Consent.

Even though you do not need development consent, you must still avoid major disruption and inconvenience to local residents. Still photography on private property does not generally require council approval or payment of fees unless it involves additional activities such as blocking streets, constructing a set or additional parking.

You must lodge a filming management plan to Council including your company details, a description of filming, proposed location, commencement and completion dates, length of filming, number of persons involved, details of temporary structures, and the type of equipment to be used (such as handheld or mounted camera), parking arrangements, whether there will be disruption to the location or surrounding area for example by discharging firearms (NSW Police permit for use of firearms required), any noise, vibrations, release of smells and the use of lighting or special effects. When you submit your management plan, you must include copies of any approvals that you need to obtain from public authorities (for example, from NSW Police).

If you need on-street parking for film production vehicles, you must submit an application to Council. Council considers applications case by case and will provide you with details such as: the number of parking spaces that you are permitted to use, the parking restrictions that apply and the parking locations marked in a detailed map.

You must obtain public liability insurance for productions valued over \$10,000.

You must notify residents by way of letterbox drop about the company details and contact numbers, description of filming, start and finish times, parking arrangements and the proposed daily length of filming.

You must not create significant interference with the neighbourhood in which you are filming.

You must not carry out filming for more than 30 days within a 12 month period.

### **3.0 Types of Applications**

#### **3.1 Filming: parking and commercial application**

This application is for complex filming and commercial still photography that requires parking and/or road closures and/or will affect pedestrian, residential or stakeholder access. You need to submit your application ten days (10) working days before filming. If the film requires road closures, you need to submit your application 6 weeks before filming.

#### **3.2 News crew: News crew style and minor filming application**

This application is for low impact, minor activities including non-commercial still shoots, student filming and news crew style filming that do not require parking, road closures and do not affect pedestrian, resident or stakeholder access. You need to submit your application minimum of ten (10) working days before you film. This type of application is free of charge.

You must notify residents and stakeholders by letterbox drop if there is any possibility that the amenity of the neighbourhood will be affected, for example through the use of parking spaces, noise, large amounts of equipment and high numbers of production crew present when businesses and residents are active in the vicinity.

You do not need to notify residents and stakeholders if your production meets the following conditions:

- Production is on a small scale and will be produced with a small crew
- There will be no loss of parking for residents and stakeholders
- The filming will be in a low density area where there are no active businesses and residents in the vicinity.

In all other instances you must notify residents and stakeholder in a 50 metre vicinity of the location. If you are required to notify residents and stakeholders about your film production, please note the following:

You must implement a letterbox drop as soon as the production has confirmed the location.

You must notify residents and stakeholders within a 50m radius of the location used for filming.

If you have not confirmed the exact filming dates less than 4 working days prior to commencement, notification must still be undertaken, advising of the tentative arrangements. Once the exact arrangements are confirmed, a second round of notification is required.

If you have already notified residents and stakeholders about arrangements for filming and your arrangements change (for example due to wet weather or postponement of filming) then you must undertake additional notification about the changes to affected residents and stakeholders.

Council will not issue a permit unless you can provide evidence that the notification has been completed. Your evidence must include a copy of the letter, and a summary of the distribution you have undertaken. If there is evidence that you have not notified residents and stakeholders as required, your permit for filming will be cancelled immediately.

Your notification must contain complete information for residents and stakeholders including:

- contact phone numbers
- a description of filming
- the proposed location for filming
- the commencement and completion dates
- the expected length of filming (in days)
- the number of production persons involved
- details of temporary structures you may erect
- the types of equipment you will use (such as handheld or mounted camera)
- parking arrangements
- whether there will be disruption to the location or surrounding area (such as through discharge of firearms with the permission of the NSW Police)
- any noise, vibrations, release of smells, use of lighting or special effects.

A sample notification is available in Appendix 1.

#### **4.0 Production Companies**

Make every reasonable effort to accommodate the requirements of residents and business proprietors affected by the production.

Abide by any conditions that Strathfield Council stipulates with respect to the application; and

Ensure that approved permits and associated documents are on site and available for inspection by public authorities for the duration of the shoot.

Council approval must be given in writing before filming on public land commences. Application forms, additional documentation and fees, must be lodged to council with a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled filming commencement date and/ or prior to the 3rd Tuesday of the month, when road closures are required of Council Roads.

#### **4.1 Large scale filming involving production companies**

##### ***Submission requirements***

- Lodgment of Application Form
- Additional documentation required with application form
- A copy of the Certificate of Currency for a public liability policy minimum cover of \$10M, naming Strathfield Council as an interested party;
- Written consent from statutory authorities such as NSW Police Service, RMS, NSW Fire Brigade.

- A copy of the notification letter, (which is to be sent to residents in the affected area providing details of the proposed filming and a map showing the extent of the proposed letterbox drop for the notification letter
- Traffic Management Plan
- Parking plan including a map of the proposed vehicular parking arrangements indicating the proposed location(s) for make-up / wardrobe, catering and / or technical equipment trucks and other staff vehicles. All vehicles must be parked legally at all times.
- Environmental Plan.
- List of cast/crew production vehicles.
- Copy of Work Health and Safety Policy
- If applicable a map of the park where filming is proposed indicating the extent of intended use, proposed props, effects etc.

If an application form is incomplete, incorrect or requires additional information then the applicant will be required to re-submit the application. If this is the case then an application fee is applicable for each application form.

## **5.0 Parking, Road Closures, Access and Traffic Control**

If a filming activity involves road closures, an application must be made for approval.

1. If filming is to take place on an RMS Road, written consent from the Roads & Traffic Authority (RMS) - is required with the application to Council. RMS Roads:

- Parramatta Road
- Raw Square
- Redmyre Road – from Raw Square to The Boulevard
- The Boulevard – from Redmyre Road to Liverpool road
- Liverpool road
- Centenary Drive
- Roberts Road
- Juno Parade
- Punchbowl Road
- Homebush Bay Drive

2. If filming is to take place on a Council road:

- A Traffic Management Plan is required, and
- A map of the road where filming is proposed indicating the extent of intended use, proposed props, effects etc.

Applications must be made six weeks (42 days) prior notice for temporary road closures so that Council may refer the application to the Strathfield Traffic Committee for consideration.

You should include a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan (TMP) with your application to avoid the Traffic Committee's refusing or deferring its decision.

If a Traffic Management Plan needs to be completed questions regarding Traffic Management Plans may be requested from Council's Traffic Officers.

- RMS permission must be granted for all road closures on RMS roads. Assessment of the application requires at least four weeks
- Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade must be notified in writing of any road closures
- Authorised traffic controllers or user pay Police must be used to manage traffic where required by the consent authority
- If road closure of major road and/or some car action is to be filmed, then a Safety Officer must be in attendance at all times during filming
- The Film Company must notify all residents at least one week in advance, once permission is gained from the consent authority.

You must ensure that all traffic controllers used in the production are accredited by the RMS and that they are covered by NSW WorkCover and other statutory requirements.

You should also keep in mind that road closures may require User Pays Police to be on site. Please consult with the Flemington Local Area Command for advice.

## **5.1 Access for Motorists and Pedestrians**

You must maintain normal access for motorists and pedestrians through the filming site, except for the times when you are actually filming.

At all times, you must maintain a four-metre wide emergency vehicle lane through the filming site. The emergency vehicle lane must be clear of any obstruction. A pedestrian management plan may be requested at the time the application is lodged.

## **5.2 Parking for Production Vehicles**

You must apply to the Council for all parking requirements. Applications are assessed case by case. You should keep in mind that you are permitted to use on-street parking spaces for filming and still photography purposes only with the Council's approval.

You should be aware that in areas with a high demand for parking, such as residential or business areas, the Council may not approve your parking application. If your parking application is not approved, you will need to re-locate your base to another location (such as a car park, off-street or in an alternative on-street area) and transport equipment to the film site.

To facilitate your application for the use of kerbside parking, you must submit accurate information showing the number of parking spaces required, the parking restrictions and the locations of the parking together with a detailed map. You must include the registration details of all vehicles and information about how they will be used. This information will be included in the Parking Permit(s) that the Council issues. You will be required to display the Parking Permits on the vehicles parked at the approved locations.



Once parking is approved by Council, film crews must adhere to the following guidelines:

- You are permitted to park only in the areas nominated in an approved parking permit.
- You must abide by the requirements of the Council and the NSW Police Service regarding the location and parking of production vehicles.
- You must make sure that production vehicles do not arrive at or near a residential location earlier than the time stipulated in the Council's approved permit.
- You must legally park all non-essential production and crew vehicles. You are not allowed to park these vehicles in a residential area for an extended time.
- You are not allowed to remove, move or tow away any private vehicle from the filming site.

## **6.0 General Conditions**

These general conditions apply to all filming approvals.

### **6.1 Discharge and Use of Firearms in Film Productions**

You must obtain a NSW Police permit for the use of firearms for all film productions, whether or not you are filming on private property or on Council controlled land, roads and footways.

You must notify Council about your intention to use firearms either in your application or before the commencement date of filming.

### **6.2 Noise and Other Disruptions**

You must comply with the Council's criteria for generated noise levels.

You must make sure that any lighting or other special effect associated with the production is not directed at motorists or nearby residential properties

You must not remove, trim or cut any vegetation or trees on the public way unless Council has provided you with permission.

### **6.3 Fees and Charges**

- All fees are in accordance in Council's schedule of Fees and Charges
- Application fees are to be paid upon submission of application;
- Additional fees along with Bond Payments are required, upon Council Approval;
- Payment of all fees and any bond determined by Council shall be made before filming commences. A bond is required in the event of heavy equipment being used in the shoot. The cost of repairs for any damage done to the Council road, kerb, footpath, park or landscaping, will be deducted from the bond and should the bond be insufficient for this purpose, that the council be entitled to recover the difference from the applicant; and
- Council reserves the right to recover any direct costs relating to filming approvals and the services provided.

## **6.4 Public Liability Insurance Requirements**

When you submit an application to Council, you must provide a copy of a relevant Public liability insurance certificate of currency.

Policy values and requirements for Public Liability Insurance are listed in the table below:

- Small scale stills and filming of low impact budget under \$10,000. – Public Liability Insurance of at least \$10 Million required.
- Stills Shoots, News Crew style shoots, Documentaries, Short films. Student Films, Children's Productions budget of over \$10,000 to \$10M – Public Liability Insurance of at least \$20 Million required.
- Television Commercials, Dramas and Miniseries and Films budgeted to \$50 Million - Public Liability Insurance of at least \$50 Million required.
- Films valued over \$50m – Public Liability Insurance of at least \$50 Million required.

If the amount of Public Liability is greater than \$10M, then Council must be specifically noted on the certificate of currency. The following information must be shown:

- The name of the insured
- The policy number
- The dates for which the policy is in effect, including both the start and expiry dates
- The name of the insurance company and of the broker, with the broker's phone number
- That Strathfield Council is noted as an interested party as shown in the certificate of currency
- That the policy provides at least the amount specified by Strathfield Council in Australian dollars for any one loss.

## **6.5 Damage Bonds**

Council may request payment of a damage bond depending on the nature of the filming/ photography activities. The Bond will be used to return the site to the same condition prior to the activities conducted. If any damage occurs, Council is to be notified immediately. A site inspection may be done with a Council officer and an agreement to modify or make good must be advised in writing.

## **6.6 Changes to Approved Applications**

Once you have been issued with a permit for a production, you must discuss any major changes affecting production with nominated Council officers.

Before you implement any major changes to a production, you must obtain approval from the Council.

Please be aware that 75% of the application fee may apply if you submit changes that will affect a previously issued permit (except for requests for alternative days due to wet weather).

## **6.7 Failing to Comply with the Council's Requirements and/or Reasonable Complaints**

Please be aware that if you fail to comply with the Council's requirements or if there are a significant number of reasonable complaints regarding your filming activities then Council may take some or all of the following actions:

- Cancel any approval that has been issued to you.
- Instruct you to cease your activities immediately and remove all personnel and equipment from the site.
- Require you to forfeit any and all fees paid to Council and any security bond held by the Council to offset losses, damages or outstanding amounts.
- Require you to show cause with respect to any future applications that you may submit.
- Restrict the use of the particular location for further filming and still photography activities.
- Notify Screen NSW of the issue for further action.

### **6.8 Wet Weather Cancellation or Postponement of Filming and Photography Activities**

If there is wet weather that prevents filming or still photography, you may lodge an application for an alternative day. Council may issue a permit provided that the alternative day is available.

If you use an alternative day, then you must use a letterbox drop to inform residents or stakeholders who may be affected by the change.

### **6.9 Cancellation of Filming and Photography by Production Companies**

If the Council has not issued a permit and if filming is cancelled, no fees and charges apply.

However, if the Council has issued a permit and the film production company cancels the filming activity, then the application fees are payable.

### **6.10 Filming on Council land ie parks and reserves**

Contact Council directly to organise permission to film in Strathfield Council's parks and reserves. Some parks may not be available for filming activities as prior hire agreements may be in place or the site is unsuitable for filming (eg sensitive environment area).

## Appendix 1 – Sample Template Letter – Notification to Residents

NAME PRODUCTION COMPANY  
ADDRESS

Date

Dear Resident/Tenant

This letter is to inform you that on (insert day/date), (insert name of production company) will be filming scenes at locations in this area from approximately (start time) to (finish time).

(Name of project) is produced by (name of production company).

(Provide a brief description of filming)

In order to facilitate filming, we will need to hold parking for our production vehicles beginning at (start time and date). The streets affected include:

(add names of streets affected)

(add information on where vehicles will be parked)

We are aware that inconvenience may be caused by our activity and apologise in advance. Rest assured that we will do everything possible to minimise the impact of our activities on your neighbourhood. If you have particular concerns (scheduled deliveries, construction, accessibility needs etc) that must be addressed, please call (phone number). We will do everything possible to find a mutually agreeable solution.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Should you have any queries on the day of filming, please contact our onsite location/production manager, (name) and (mobile phone number).

Regards

NAME  
POSITION TITLE