

22.06

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES POLICY

Where the policy applies

This policy applies to all land, in accordance with the provisions of Clause 52.19 of the planning scheme.

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Policy basis

Telecommunications have, and will continue to, become an increasingly significant part of daily life. It is an industry that is experiencing major advances in technology, facilitating a revolution in mobile phone and Internet use, and assisting in breaking down global barriers to business and communications.

The provision of telecommunications facilities and infrastructure, however, can be a cause for community concern and conflict, as they have the potential for visual and environmental impacts. These impacts can relate to visual intrusion, lack of compatibility with surrounding land uses, and concerns about long-term health effects.

Casey City Council has an important responsibility to manage the location and design of new telecommunications facilities to protect the visual and environmental amenity of sensitive areas, and to recognise the health and safety concerns of local communities.

Council is committed to consulting with local communities and telecommunications carriers to identify appropriate locations for telecommunications facilities in the municipality.

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Policy objectives

- To facilitate the effective and efficient provision of telecommunications services throughout the municipality.
- To coordinate the location of new telecommunications facilities based on the strategic rollout plans of the telecommunications carriers.
- To minimise the visual and environmental impacts of new telecommunications facilities.
- To minimise any potential health risks associated with the provision of telecommunications facilities.

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Policy

It is policy that:

- New telecommunications facilities be provided in the following order of preference:
 - Co-location with existing telecommunications infrastructure.
 - Utilisation of existing structures, such as roof-top locations, or integration with existing buildings, electricity towers or lighting poles.
 - A new structure/tower.
- New telecommunications facilities be preferably located in commercial and industrial areas, and not in existing or future residential areas or in the vicinity of existing or proposed schools, hospitals and child care facilities.
- Residential, heritage and/or environmentally sensitive areas only be considered for the location of facilities where the siting of that facility is likely to better achieve the objectives of this policy.
- The location and design of telecommunications facilities minimise visual impacts through sensitive siting, use of non-reflective finishes and appropriate landscaping.

CASEY PLANNING SCHEME

- New telecommunications facilities be designed to accommodate co-location with the infrastructure of other carriers.
- An application for a new telecommunications facility be accompanied by:
 - A detailed assessment of at least three other feasible sites for the establishment of the facility and the rationale for the preferred site.
 - A demonstration that the preferred site accords with the strategic rollout plan of the carrier that has been previously discussed with the responsible authority.
 - Photographic imaging and/or other means to demonstrate that any adverse visual impacts have been minimised.
 - Details on the radial coverage area for the facility and any existing facilities located within that area.
 - An assessment of electromagnetic radiation generated by the facility and any adverse effects on surrounding residents.

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Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application, it is policy that the responsible authority considers:

- Whether all possible options for the co-location and/or integration of the facility with existing structures have been exhausted.
- Whether the applicant has undertaken meaningful consultation with the responsible authority in identifying an appropriate location for the facility, based on the carrier's strategic rollout plan.
- Whether techniques to minimise visual impacts have been incorporated into the design of the facility.
- Whether potential adverse health impacts have been addressed.

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Policy references

A Code of Practice for Telecommunications Facilities in Victoria, 2004.

Draft Telecommunications Facility Policy, City of Casey, 2004.