

GAMING

This policy applies to all applications which require a permit to install or use a gaming machine, or use land for the purpose of gaming.

Policy basis

This policy supports the broad planning objectives of the Municipal Strategic Statement, in particular the social, activity centre and amenity objectives, by setting out how and where gaming machines should be located.

It is recognised that whilst gaming is a legal form of recreational activity, for some it leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others and for the community. Research has concluded that there are links between social disadvantage, problem gambling and proximity to gaming venues. Gaming machines should reasonably be accessible to the community as a form of entertainment, but not be convenient.

The need for a fair and equitable distribution of gaming machines throughout metropolitan Melbourne and Hume City is recognised. This ensures an average gaming machine density for the City being comparable to that of metropolitan Melbourne.

Objectives

- To discourage the location of gaming machines in disadvantaged areas.
- To ensure the location of gaming machines and the design and operation of facilities containing gaming machines minimise opportunities for convenience gaming and the incidence of problem gambling.
- To ensure that gaming machines are located where the community has a choice of non-gaming entertainment and recreation facilities and activities within the gaming venue and in the local area.
- To protect the operations and amenity of existing uses surrounding gaming venues.

Policy

It is policy to:

- Plan the location of gaming machines as part of the overall range of entertainment and recreation facilities and activities on offer in Hume City.

It is policy that gaming machines should not be located:

- In areas of high socio-economic disadvantage as defined in the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index of relative disadvantage.
- In areas where the average gaming machine density is higher than the average gaming machine density for metropolitan Melbourne.
- In new venues on Council or Crown owned land within the municipality or within existing venues on Council or Crown land as from 9 December 2013 onwards.
- Where they are convenient to shops, community facilities and services or key public transport nodes where large numbers of pedestrians are likely to pass in the course of their daily activities.
- In the core of activity centres where there is the highest intensity of activity, including the main shopping areas, and other widely visited civic, transport and community functions.
- Where the gaming machines and associated uses will be incompatible with the predominant surrounding land uses on the basis of their:
 - ability to achieve safe pedestrian and vehicle access;

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- proposed design, location and operations detrimentally affecting the amenity of the surrounding area;
- potential to compromise the ongoing operations of surrounding businesses and industry.

It is policy that gaming machines should be located:

- On the periphery of, or within walking distance of, major and principal activity centres as listed in the Hume Activity Centre Hierarchy Study. This does not apply to a sports or recreation club with a land holding of more than 2 hectares.
- In areas where residents within 5km radius of the proposed location of the gaming machines have a reasonable choice of alternative non-gambling entertainment and recreation facilities and activities.
- In areas where the total density of gaming machines, is lower than the average gaming machine density for metropolitan Melbourne. The average gaming densities of neighbouring suburbs where their densities are higher than the metropolitan average should be considered.
- Where the location could reasonably be perceived as a destination in its own right. This would be achieved through the separation of the location of gaming machines from areas where there are high concentrations of people undertaking daily activities,
- In venues which:
 - Have a range of non-gambling entertainment and leisure options;
 - Offer social and recreational opportunities other than gambling as the primary purpose of the venue;
 - Have gaming floor area of less than 25% of the total floor area of the venue; and
 - Do not allow for 24 hour a day operation.

Application requirements

It is policy to require applications to include the following information:

- Details about the existing and proposed distribution and densities of gaming machines in the municipality.
- Evidence of the need for additional gaming machines in the municipality broadly and more specifically at the proposed location.
- A robust assessment of the social and economic benefits and costs of the proposal to the local area (minimum 5km radius from the location of the proposed gaming machines).
- Evidence of community attitudes towards the gaming proposal and its various aspects.
- Details of the nature and extent of community benefits expected from the proposal and how the benefits are to be secured and distributed to the local community (community benefits derived from existing contractual agreements that the applicant is obliged to undertake are to be detailed separately).
- Details of existing and proposed gaming and non-gambling related entertainment and recreation facilities within the local area of the proposed machines. If those facilities are not satisfying the current or future needs of the community, provide details of why those needs are not being, or will not be, satisfied.
- If the gaming machines are to be relocated from other venues, provide reasons why the gaming machines are being relocated and the likely social and economic impact of the proposal on those venues and the local areas from which those machines were taken.
- Details of the design and layout of the premises, including all proposed and existing signage

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- Evidence of compliance with any relevant gaming regulations concerning premises layout, design and operation of the gaming venue.
- Distances of the proposed gaming machines from shopping complexes, shopping strips, community facilities and services, and public transport.

Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The net community benefit to be derived from the application.
- Whether approval is likely to increase the social disadvantage or financial vulnerability of the local community.
- Whether the location of the gaming machines or gaming premises will facilitate or discourage convenience gaming.
- Whether the approval is likely to detract from the overall uses and amenities of the surrounding area.
- Whether the venue is accessible by a variety of transport modes.
- Whether residents will have a choice between entertainment and recreation facilities and services with and without gaming in the local area.
- The views of the community surrounding the venue.

Reference:

Hume Responsible Gaming Policy (2013)

Strategic Reference Document for Gaming in Hume City (2007)

Hume City Council Prohibited Gaming Areas (2007)

Hume Activity Centre Hierarchy Study (2004)