

Phone 03/57271372

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Additional information to submission 18
Gambling Inquiry - Productivity Commission.

"Silverlea" R.M.B. 1320
Whorouly South,
Victoria, 3735.

April 12th 1999

Ken Jasper, MLA,
15 Murphy St.,
Wangaratta 3677.

Dear Sir,

In an interview broadcast on ABC-2CO April 5th 1999 Graeme Bechaz, Weekly Telegraph, Wangaratta referred to comment by the Minister for Planning, Rob McLellan about the failure of Shire of Delatite and the Rural City of Wangaratta to introduce planning controls to stop the introduction of Electronic Gaming Machines in strip shopping centres. Discussion of these controls is included in the Hansard record of the debate on the Alcohol Control Reform Bill, Spring Session 1998, Assembly, Victorian Parliament.

Hansard records Mr Haemeyer speaking of the direct relationship between the liquor industry and the gaming industry. He discusses changes in legislation to abolish the Liquor Licensing Commission and replace it with a Director of Liquor Licensing under the control of the Minister and an advisory panel appointed by the Minister. He explains the Bill reduces the capacity of residents to object on the grounds of local amenity or social concern. An existing operation would be able to apply for an extended license and run for 24 hours a day.

Mrs Maddigan refers to the rights of Victorians to appeal against liquor licenses, and the removal of requirement for advertising in the press of applications to inform communities and allow objections. Mr Hulls records a direct link exists in this state between liquor licenses and the ability of the holders of licenses to obtain approval for gaming machines. He refers to the Gaming Machines Control Act and the import of the decision to grant a liquor license is fundamental to the granting of gaming licenses.

The debate repeatedly records concern at the lack of public scrutiny of the Bill. Hansard records you were in the house when Mr Haemeyer related the case of the Craieburn Sporting Club which has a full liquor license and serves food and has gaming machines. It was formed from the joining of the Craieburn Football Club, Craieburn Cricket Club and a number of sporting clubs.

The Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority research report 1997 "Impact of EGMs on Small Rural Communities" records Maffra Community Sports Club has license approval for 25 gaming machines.

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I have forwarded to the Productivity Commission, Gambling Inquiry, an 80-page submission. This submission documents substantial funding by the Victorian Government through the Community Support Fund of a building which with the coordination of planning regulations, liquor and gambling licensing controls threatens the introduction of EGMs into my local community in the Rural City of Wangaratta.

Yours faithfully,

Alison G. Walpole

Alison G. Walpole.

Copy to Rob Hulls ,MLA.

Copy

Fax/Phone 03 57271372

"Silverlea"
RMB 1320,
Whorouly Sth,
Victoria 3735.

To Rural City of Wangaratta.

Re Planning Permit Application 99/098
Objection.

1/ The timing for objections is too brief.
Advertised on 16th April the Wangaratta Chronicle does not reach many country people until 19th April. To lodge an objection by 24th April does not allow time for full research.

2/ The Royal Victoria Hotel is documented as an important venue for events in Wangaratta history. Graham Jones in "There was a Time" history Wangaratta Shire gives references Pages 32, 76, 97 of the building being used for municipal events in 1863, 1866 and 1868. The meeting which established the Wangaratta hospital was held there in 1868.

3/ Although the building facade has obviously been altered it could be possible for it to be restored to original design. The demolition of the Commercial Hotel at the Corner of Reid + Murphy Sts altered the character of Wangaratta and is still a matter of deep regret to many Wangaratta district residents. In contrast the restoration of the Present Hotel gives character to the area and won a state award.

4/ If the building is being replaced by offices what is happening to the Hotel license? Is it being surrendered or relocated? Acknowledging that in Victoria there is direct relationship between a liquor license and a gaming license how could this affect the municipality?

Q10

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5/ As the Royal Victoria Hotel was listed in 1866 as one of the original businesses in Wangaratta there should be consultation with the Wangaratta Historical Society regarding the proposed demolition. The Council has considered the demolition of buildings on the riverside of Faithfull Street to open the town to the river. A historically restored Royal Victoria Hotel would form an important part of a riverside development. There is need for more information and discussion about this application.

I lodge an objection to Planning Permit

99/098

Alison G. Walpole

20th April 1999

Liquor Licensing Victoria
03 96556100

Laloraine Regional Development
Group Pty Ltd - Tarcagon

Copy Alison Walpole
11/5/99
Weekly Telegraph

Wangaratta
Council 16.4.99

66 Ovens Street, Wangaratta
Telephone: (03) 57220888
Green: F. Conson, C.E.O.

Land affected by the application is located at: 25 Faithfull Street, Wangaratta (Royal Victoria Hotel).
The application is for approval to: Demolish existing hotel and erect entrance building.
The applicant for the permit is: Laloraine Regional Development Group.
The application reference number is: 99/098.

You may look at the application and any documents that support the application at the office of the responsible authority Rural City of Wangaratta, 66 Ovens Street, Wangaratta, 3677.
This can be done during office hours and is free of charge.
Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to the responsible authority.
An objection must be sent to the Responsible Authority in writing, include the reasons for the objection, and state how the objector would be affected.
The Responsible Authority will decide on the application before 24/4/99.
If you object, the Responsible Authority will tell you the decision.

Age 19-4-99

Ceiling on pokies may be changed

Minister signals moves to protect small clubs and country hotels.

By **CANDRA MCKAY**
STATE POLITICAL REPORTER

The cap on gaming machines may be changed to protect small clubs and country hotels from losing their machines to bigger players.

The Gaming Minister, Mr Roger Hallam, said the ceiling of 27,500 machines was putting pressure on the two operators, TabCorp and Tattersalls, to increase the yield from individual machines. This meant some small clubs were losing their machines to other venues because their profits were not big enough.

Mr Hallam was responding to a resolution carried at the National Party's state conference at the weekend, expressing "dissatisfaction" with the distribution of machines, which was disadvantaging country venues.

While many believed a ceiling was the best way to ensure responsible gaming, Mr Hallam said he was looking for a more subtle solution.

"There is one out there, but it's going to mean that we're going to have to go back and look at the ceiling," he said. "We've got to find a response that is much more subtle than that, and we have to sell it."

Mr Hallam acknowledged that voters and people in his own party would be in favour of the need for a change to the cap on pokies.

But he said that while the cap on machines and the limit of two operators was introduced "for the very best of reasons" by the former

commercial pressure on TabCorp and Tattersalls which was not always consistent with responsible gaming.

"We can't complain when the operators decide that they will increase their yield per machine," he said. "If they've got no chance to increase the aggregate number, then they're going to look at individual machines."

Under current legislation, the 27,500 machines are split 50-50 between TabCorp and Tattersalls, 50-50 between hotels and clubs and 80-20 between metropolitan and country areas.

Labor's gaming spokesman, Mr Rob Hulls, said it was clear the Government intended lifting the cap in response to lobbying from TabCorp, Tattersalls and the hotel industry. He said abolishing or lifting the cap would lead to more dumping of gaming machines in poor areas of the state and would not help small operators at all.

He urged Mr Hallam to "steal" Labor's policy and introduce regional and municipal caps to achieve a more equal distribution of machines without lifting the overall number.

Mr Hallam said there would be an extensive review of all areas next year, most likely after the next election.

The Casino and Gaming Authority is still considering a submission from Crown Casino for more poker machines, although the final decision will rest with the Government.

The authority rejected an earlier request from Crown for an extra 1000 machines, but the Premier, Mr Jeff Kennett, indicated in January that the latest submission would probably be approved.

What are your ideas?

Wangaratta Chronicle 16-4-99

A NEW entertainment centre and an artificial lake are among the suggestions already received as part of the Rural City of Wangaratta's call for major project ideas.

Rural city chief executive officer Graeme Emonson said council has been pleased with the response to the invitation extended to residents to identify community enhancement projects they believe could be developed over the next 15 years.

By **Simone Hill**

"We have been getting several project submissions, including an arts/entertainment centre, lake, and opening the waterways to the urban area," Mr Emonson said.

"Council is obviously anxious to ensure it receives a broad range of input, and we

look forward to receiving more ideas before the end of April."

Suggestions about projects which could be implemented in the municipality over the next 15 years will be received until Friday, April 30.

Expressions of interest are also sought from people interested in participating as a member of the working group which will oversee the selection of major projects to be pursued.