

22.0113/06/2014
GC8**BUDGET ACCOMMODATION**

This policy applies to use of any land within the municipality for any form of higher density commercial accommodation, in particular to the following uses:

- Group Accommodation
- Residential Building
- Backpackers' Lodge
- Boarding House
- Hostel
- Residential Hotel
- Motel
- Bed and Breakfast

The policy particularly applies to applications to use land for the above uses which, in the opinion of the responsible authority propose some form of "budget accommodation".

Policy basis

The above uses have been identified as having a potential for adverse off-site impacts, especially when managed primarily to provide low cost or budget accommodation for young itinerant workers and other travellers.

All accommodation should be located, designed and operated to provide affordable, safe and pleasant environments while maintaining the amenity of the neighbourhood setting.

Budget worker accommodation is especially important to the economy of the region as it provides short to medium stay accommodation for horticultural workers. It is estimated that in the peak season, up to 10,000 visitors to Mildura are actively working in the harvest of horticultural produce. Existing accommodation types for these workers include camping on the farm site; on-site pickers' huts; caravan parks, motels, hotels, bed and breakfast and, most recently "backpackers' hostels". Hostels provide relatively cheap accommodation for young visitors who are attracted to the region for employment reasons. Typically, the occupants of these hostels are under thirty, they do not have cars and are travellers from overseas looking for seasonal employment of between two weeks and three months. They require accommodation facilities as close as possible to the central area of Mildura so that, after work, the occupants can avail themselves of nearby shopping and entertainment venues.

Recent experience in Mildura has suggested that some forms of budget accommodation, especially backpackers' premises, have had a negative impact on neighbouring properties and neighbouring amenity especially in wholly residential areas. Community concerns have been expressed, and upheld on appeal, regarding the location of such premises in wholly residential areas, their hours of operation, on site management, provision of car parking and other amenity concerns, especially noise.

Objectives

To provide for a wide variety of accommodation types to meet the diverse needs of the region's visitors and seasonal workers.

To encourage a variety of budget accommodation in appropriate locations that meet acceptable standards in terms of management and amenity.

To locate budget accommodation premises where there is convenient access to public transport, community and retail facilities.

To provide clear guidelines for operators, visitors, workers and residents about the location and likely approval conditions for budget accommodation.

Policy

It is policy to:

- Encourage budget accommodation to locate preferably within the commercial areas of the Mildura central business district, Merbein town centre, Red Cliffs town centre, Irymple town centre and Ouyen town centre.
- Encourage budget accommodation to locate within the Commercial 1 Zone and the Mixed Use Zone.
- Strongly discourage budget accommodation in the General Residential Zone unless the land meets the following criteria:
 - The site has frontage to a road in a Road Zone, Category 1.
 - The site is abutted by non residential uses.
 - The site already accommodates an existing non residential use.
 - The site is already used for another form of accommodation (other than dwelling or bed and breakfast) such as a motel, hotel, residential building, caravan park, or group accommodation.
 - No more than ten persons are to be accommodated on the site at any one time.
- Require notice to be given to adjoining and nearby property owners and occupiers and by a sign erected at the front of the property pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (whether or not the application indicates that the proposed use is to be managed as budget accommodation) of any application to use land for:
 - Backpackers' Lodge
 - Bed and Breakfast
 - Boarding House
 - Group Accommodation
 - Hostel
 - Motel
 - Residential Building
 - Residential Hotel
- Require that where the premises are located outside a commercial zone or within 30 metres of a residential zone, a resident on-site manager or supervisor is to be responsible for the management of the site at all times.
- Require:
 - The applicant to prepare a management plan that addresses safety, security, emergency procedures, alcohol limitations or ban, refuse disposal and complaints mechanisms to the satisfaction of the responsible authority; and
 - The operator to manage the premises in accordance with the management plan to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- Require that if the land is in a General Residential Zone, a part of a Township Zone used for residential purposes, or within 30 metres of a General Residential Zone or a part of a Township Zone used for residential purposes:

- The premises is to be built and managed to ensure that noise does not cause nuisance or annoyance to adjacent residents; and
- No recorded music may be played outside the building.

Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application to reduce the car parking requirements for Accommodation under Clause 52.06-3 of this scheme, the responsible authority will consider, as a relevant consideration, whether the use is proposed to be managed as budget accommodation catering primarily for travellers who are unlikely to have cars. If the responsible authority considers that this is the intention, the following parking provisions will be required:

- One space for the manager
- One space for a mini-bus
- One space for every ten beds

If the parking requirements are reduced to zero, the owner may be required to enter into an agreement with the responsible authority that if the reduced provision proves inadequate or more parking is required as a result of changes to the management of the premises, the responsible authority may require arrangements to be made for the provision of additional parking spaces to meet the demand.