Executive Summary – Dorset Gardens Hotel E&S report

**Introduction**

DG Hotel Pty Ltd’s (**Dorset Gardens Hotel**) application for a +8 EGM increase (currently approved for 97 EGMs) would bring the total number of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) in the City of Maroondah (LGA) to 648, which is within the municipal limit of 759 EGMs.

Located in Croydon, Dorset Gardens Hotel is in close proximity to community services like the Croydon Men’s Shed, Swinburne University of Technology, and residential properties and retail businesses. As at the 2021 Census, the median age of people living in the LGA was 39 years; 71.8% of residents were born in Australia; and 44.4% of families were 2-person families.

VGCCC data indicates that the LGA is a moderate socioeconomic area compared to other metropolitan areas. The indicators are mixed overall – with 1 positive indicator, 3 negative indicators and 7 moderate indicators.

**Density – EGM numbers and expenditure on EGMs**

* The LGA is the 3rd highest of 31 metropolitan LGAs for EGM density per 1,000 adults (6.79 EGMs per 1,000 adults) compared to the metropolitan (4.39) and the state (4.70) average. The LGA also ranks 8th highest for expenditure per adult ($683.38 per annum) compared to the metropolitan ($578.70) and state ($564.88) average. This demonstrates that gambling harm could be elevated in the LGA.
* However, the LGA is ranked 23rd of 31 metropolitan LGAs for indexed real adult expenditure. The 2024–25 financial year index value of 57.67 indicated that gaming expenditure per adult has decreased by 42.33 in real terms since the 2010–11 financial year.
* In terms of real adult expenditure, the LGA experienced a general decreasing trend from 2010–11 to 2020–21, before experiencing a rapid increase from 2020–21 to 2022–23. This is consistent with a decrease in spending during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2022–23, real adult expenditure has resumed its downward trajectory witnessed prior to the pandemic.

**Population statistics**

* Relatively low/moderate equivalised household income (EHI), moderate housing stress and a high number of pensions and allowances suggests that the LGA and the immediate surrounding area (ISA) may be at risk of gambling harm. However, unemployment and homelessness are lower in the LGA compared to metropolitan areas and the state.
* Rapid population growth, stagnant wages and the rising cost of living may lead to higher levels of disadvantage and may also explain the link to moderate levels of unemployment and homelessness in the LGA.

**Recommendations**

The data summarised above indicates that there are likely vulnerable persons in the LGA. The Commission may wish to query how Dorset Gardens Hotel will manage the risk of additional harm to vulnerable persons in the LGA.