

**IN THE OF AN APPLICATION TO THE VICTORIAN GAMBLING AND CASINO  
CONTROL COMMISSION BY PJ COOK INVESTMENTS PTY LTD FOR THE  
INSTALLATION OF AN ADDITIONAL TWENTY-EIGHT (28) ELECTRONIC  
GAMING MACHINES AT THE FYANSFORD HOTEL, 67 HYLAND STREET,  
FYANSFORD**

**WITNESS STATEMENT of JAYDEN WILLIAM JACOBSON**

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Date of document:	July 2025
Filed on behalf of:	PJ Cook Investments Pty Ltd
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**Personal Background**

1. My full name is Jayden William Jacobson and my residential address is [REDACTED].
2. I've worked in hospitality for approximately 18 years, since I was [REDACTED] years old.
3. I commenced my career in hospitality with a traineeship through TAFE at the Sphinx Hotel in Geelong. This was a 12-month traineeship and I was then offered an ongoing position at that hotel where I worked front of house until I was 18 years old at which point I obtained Responsible Service of Alcohol & Gaming certifications and began working in the gaming room.  
  
Whilst at the Sphinx, I also ran the nightclub for a few years, did some shifts in the gaming room, including close shifts and continued to work in the bistro. I was employed at that hotel for approximately eight (8) years in a variety of different roles.
4. Simultaneously, I was doing a painter's apprenticeship, which I ultimately abandoned in favour of a career in hospitality. I commenced working at the Fyansford Hotel in 2015 and was working at both pubs for a time but started working full time at Fyansford in 2016. On that basis, I've now worked at the Fyansford Hotel for approximately ten (10) years.

5. As well as Fyansford, I have also assisted at Raffety's Hotel, Warrnambool, and the Robin Hood Hotel, Ballarat, which are both operated by the Beaumont Group (aside from a brief hiatus where I went to the Queenscliff Bowling Club).
6. I am currently the general manager of the Fyansford Hotel (**the Hotel**) and I work at the Hotel for between 45 and 50 hours a week. Currently, I'm also overseeing the recently acquired Railway Hotel in Bannockburn so that I generally spend a minimum of one (1) day at that hotel and four (4) days at Fyansford.
7. Approximately 70% of my time at the Hotel is 'hands on'/customer facing and the balance is in a management role. My job is to oversee the head chef, retail manager and assistant venue manager and oversee all compliance. We have a total of 22 staff who have special employees licenses at the Hotel and of those, two (2) of them have been here since the Hotel started offering gaming in 2012. Staff turnover is not very high at the Hotel and within the Group more broadly as we operate in a way that is quite different to larger hospitality groups. Staff are put first and there is significant investment in training. Staff can be moved around for different experiences in different departments and different hotels all around the state.
8. In addition, the Group encourages a strong work life balance which is unusual in hospitality. We are then able to keep a lot of part time staff with agreed hours that are set by staff for us to work around. Many staff do not want the unpredictability of hospitality hours, and we are able to provide stability and therefore attract and retain good staff.
9. I grew up in Geelong and spent some time living in the Fyansford area. The Hotel attracts a wide variety of people, from seniors, families, young people and retirees. This is largely due to our extensive offerings, such as our diverse menu and the layout of the venue. The Hotel provides a variety of areas that are attractive to different people and there is really something for everybody.
10. Not all Hotels are like this. Many other venues in Geelong are enormous, lifeless shells but the Fyansford has character with lots of little intimate and unique spaces for patrons.

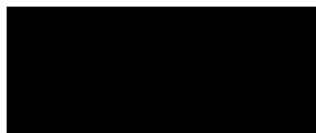
11. Compared to other venues, I feel that gaming presents as very low risk at this venue with a lot of people playing 'socially' and in groups. At other venues that I have observed, the customers have seen a bit more "down and out" and at times, I did see patrons coming in on "payday" and they would be there until their money ran out despite many, many interventions from staff. We don't get that sort of crowd at the Fyansford because the Premises does not trade very late and because gambling is used as a form of entertainment and as part of the overall experience rather than being the main activity.
12. Fyansford as a suburb is also located between some of the more well-off areas in Geelong. Corio would be the closest low socio-economic area and people from there have to travel past several other venues to get to Fyansford.
13. The most concerning issue we would have in the gaming room is ensuring that we check people's ID. We recently confiscated a fake ID and turned it into the police. That patron had accessed the gaming room and that contravention was noted in the RG Register and a meeting with all staff was then held. In that instance, other staff members had checked the ID of this particular patron three (3) times and it was only when I questioned the patron and he became nervous and he confessed that his identification was fake that the issue was detected.
14. For the last 12 to 18 months I have been assisting at Bell Park. For five (5) to six (6) years we have been sponsoring the Bell Park Cricket Club and then the Club as a whole and we got to know the Board of Belrec through that relationship. We have helped them to fundraise and made donations (even though they had their own gaming machines). Over the years a strong partnership has been established.
15. In around 2023, the President of Bell Park Football Club, Jeff Jervis asked if we could assist and asked us to take over management of the Venue and subsequently then requested whether we could take some or all of the machines as the Club had indicated that they wished to divest themselves from gaming. It was then that I put the Club in touch with Stephen Beaumont.
16. Since then there have been several meetings to work out how we will move forward together. I have provided one of our casual employees, Matthew

Robertson, to be a full time venue manager over at Bell Park. Some of our casual staff also work across at Bell Park and when they have functions we assist with staff, catering and provision of kitchen staff. We also assist in the canteen on all home game days.

17. At the Fyansford Hotel, we currently do not have enough seats and space, the Hotel is extremely limited, therefore, works are desperately needed.
18. For example, on Mother's Day we served 1,100 meals and could have done 2,000 with the demand that we had – the Hotel simply wasn't big enough.
19. We were booked solid 10 days out for breakfast, lunch and dinner on Mother's Day. Space is always the issue at the Hotel and for a long time we have had to be creative on our utilisation of space. We have separate seating sessions for bookings and we train staff on how to maximise bookings and move people in and out and around within the Hotel as fast as possible without being too detrimental to the hospitality experience.
20. We have also introduced an all day menu so that there are meals available between 11:30 AM and 8:30 PM to extend those meal hours and reduce the pressure and ensure people don't miss out. After 8:30 PM there is a reasonable 'all hours' food offering available in accordance with the **attached** menu.
21. The Venue currently has three (3) dedicated function areas but each space also operates as dining overflow which means we have a minimum spend on functions based on per head spend for that room that is generally calculated for the amount of people we could have otherwise seated in the space. Given our space constraints, we have to think very carefully about taking those bookings as it then reduces our bistro trade.
22. In the summer months, even the footpath trading is fully utilised even though it is on a busy road because demand is simply so high.
23. I hold RSA, RSG, Special Employees License, all four (4) modules of RSG and the 3/4 refresher. I have undertaken Leigh Barrett and Associates Code of Conduct Training, Your Play Training with IGS and I undertake annual High Level AML/CTF (Accountability and Obligatons) training in addition to AML/CTF self-paced training for Gaming Room Employees.

24. Our venue support worker is Mandy Suckling and I meet with her four (4) times every year. She has not raised any specific RG issue in our meetings. We generally set the agenda for those meetings and at the most recent meeting I organised a guest speaker, being a person impacted by gambling with all the RGO's from the Hotel to understand the impact of gambling related harm.
25. Currently, we have one (1) staff member in the room as our minimum but if we obtained approval for this top-up, there will be a minimum of two (2) staff at all times. That would increase to three (3) during peak times. I've been encouraging all staff to obtain gaming licences so that I have more flexibility when I need to staff that room.
26. The gaming room is busiest after dinner between 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM and more broadly after meals. On Friday and Saturday nights up until 10:00 PM the gaming room can get extremely busy. Sometimes Sunday during the day is busy with the lunch trade.
27. I see significant benefits for the wider community in the arrangement to move all of the gaming machines to the Fyansford Hotel. As a member of the community, I fully agree with what is being proposed. The pub needs more space and functioning facilities for our local community and we would like to be in a position where we are not turning people away. On the flip side, the football club would like to be more focused on its sporting operations.

*Signed:*



*Dated:* 09/06/2025

# ALL HOURS FOOD & BEVERAGE MENU



## COMPLIMENTARY

### HOT DRINKS

CAPPUCCINO

LATTE

MOCHA

ESPRESSO

CHAI LATTE

HOT  
CHOCOLATE

### TOASTED FOCCACIAS

SALAMI, ROASTED RED  
CAPSICUM, ROCKET &  
CHEESE 5.9

PULLED PORK, CHEESE,  
AVOCADO 5.9

HAM, CHEESE  
& TOMATO 5.9

CHICKEN,  
CHEESE &  
MAYO 5.9

## COMPLIMENTARY

### COLD DRINKS

ICED LATTE

ASSORTED  
SOFT DRINKS

LEMON LIME  
& BITTERS

ASSORTED  
JUICES

### HOT BASKETS

MOZZARELLA STICKS  
W' SRIRACHA AIOLI 8.9

SWEET CHILLI  
CHICKEN TENDERS W'  
SWEET CHILLI SAUCE 8.9

VEGE SPRING ROLLS  
(4) W' SOY SAUCE 8.9