

► FILM POLICY

POLICY NUMBER:	32 (C)
NAME OF POLICY:	FILM POLICY
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	November 2019
DATE APPROVED:	17 November 2015
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Events Coordinator & Film Liaison
REFERENCES:	<i>Filming Approval Act 2014</i> <i>Local Law No 2 – Community Amenity and Municipal Places</i> <i>Local Government Act 1989, Part 1A (sections 3c,3d,3e)</i> Council Plan 2013-2017 <i>Filming Approval Act 2014, Victorian Film Friendly Guidelines</i>

Best Value Principles

Hepburn Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

To achieve the best over life outcome for Council's expenditures, which meets quality and service expectations, there will be periodic review of services against best on offer in both the public and private sectors.

All Council staff members are responsible for supporting best value principles in their normal day to day actions to ensure services are recognised by the community as delivering best value.

INTRODUCTION

Victoria is internationally recognised as a world-class screen production destination with excellent crews, stunning locations, film friendly location providers and exceptional production facilities.

In turn, screen production has a profoundly positive impact on the state and its residents - economically, culturally and socially. Hepburn Shire is proud to be supporting the screen industry and the opportunities it brings to businesses and the broader community.

This policy has been produced as a resource for filmmakers seeking permits or approvals to film on public land within the jurisdiction of Hepburn Shire Council and will provide certainty and consistency when dealing with film location enquiries.

SCOPE

This policy covers all areas of the municipality of the Hepburn Shire; to coordinate filming activity occurring on land under its care and management.

POLICY

1. Applications

A wide range of filming will require a film permit, including;

- Commercial filming
- Television
- Feature films
- Advertising and television commercials
- Documentaries

- Music videos
- Student films
- Commercial stills photography (e.g. magazine fashion shoot)

A film permit ensures public space is used safely and in accordance with all applicable legislation, local laws and regulations. At the same time, it ensures any disruption is minimal, public land and facilities are managed effectively and that anyone who may potentially be impacted is notified.

2. Approvals

A public agency (including Hepburn Shire Council) that receives an application for a film permit must not unreasonably withhold the approval of that application, subject to the Filming Approval Act 2014.

This principle creates an expectation that public agencies will grant film permits unless a clear reason exists not to do so. It creates obligations that make the granting of film permits standard practice, and refusal the exception.

This principle provides front-line staff with a workable balance between meeting the needs of filmmakers and the necessary safeguards to protect public amenity and public land.

Film permit applications will be processed in a prompt and timely manner, within 5 working days of receipt of application.

Councils Events Coordinator & Film Liaison will assess an application and contact other relevant internal and/or external stakeholders where required.

Where a film application is considered to be complex, approval may take more than 5 working days.

A film permit will be provided once Council is satisfied and will include details of terms and conditions that apply.

3. Single Point of Contact

Assessing a film permit application will often require consultation with different departments within Council. Council is committed to providing a single-point of contact for all film enquiries. This principle ensures that the responsibility for managing these internal communications is taken by Council itself and is not placed on the applicant.

A single point of contact within Council will provide the applicant with a seamless customer experience throughout the application process. Having a consistent channel of communication to the applicant will also enable the agency to understand and manage the impact of the filming activity on its jurisdiction.

Duplication, gaps in information and response times will be reduced, creating a more efficient process and enabling decisions to be made in a timely manner.

4. Fees

Hepburn Shire Council wishes to ensure greater access to its locations and encourage filming activity by providing a “no fees policy” for film permit processing. However, in lieu of a Fee to Council, and to demonstrate support of the local community in which you are working, a donation can be made to a local community group, relative to the film location.

Unless existing fees apply to exclusive use of a particular area (e.g. parks, gardens), the “no fees policy” to Council will apply to filming activity that occurs on council-owned or managed land or property. However, costs to council in providing supervisory personnel (if required), expenses associated with advertising, traffic control, road closures and any other costs incurred in the facilitation of the application will be borne by the applicant. These costs will not exceed cost recovery.

A bond may be required for filming activity in buildings and on or around property owned by council. A bond is refundable and will act as a security deposit to be

paid to Hepburn Shire Council subject to the conditions of the "Film Permit". A bond may be applied based on an assessment of risk to, or adverse impact on council property, or the environment and to ensure that the production company follows the conditions of the film permit.

The bond (if applicable) will be negotiated before filming begins and will be returned within 14 days of its conclusion, subject to any claim for damages.

If a location is not cleaned-up appropriately and returned back to its original state, Council may apply charges to the applicant. This will not exceed cost recovery for the clean-up.

The fees mentioned above do not cover private arrangements entered into by the applicant with private land or property owners.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are referred to in the policy.

Term	Definition
Council	Hepburn Shire Council
Council officers	Includes permanent and temporary full-time and part-time council employees, and contractors and consultants while engaged by Council.
Film liaison	Is a common description used for staff responsible for managing filming requests.
Filmmaker/Applicant	The person or company responsible for the film permit application.
Film permit	Is a permit, licence, approval or other authority issued by a public agency to conduct commercial filming on public land.
Public agency	Means a committee of management, Council, Court Services Victoria, a Department Head, Minister, public entity, the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, a trust established by legislation to manage Crown land or the Victoria Racing Club Limited.

Term	Definition
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FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries about the Film Policy should be directed to Council's Events Coordinator & Film Liaison.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented in accordance with Victoria's Film Friendly Guidelines by Council's Events Coordinator & Film Liaison and the Community and Economic Development department.

The policy will be made available on Council's website, alongside 'A Guide to Filming in Hepburn Shire' and Filming Approval Act 2014.

A standard film permit application form will be made available on request to Council's Event Coordinator & Film Liaison and will also be made available on Council's website.

REVIEW

The Film Policy will be reviewed every four years or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes.

The officer responsible for the review of this policy is the Events Coordinator & Film Liaison.