

Commission of Inquiry into South Gippsland Shire Council

southgippsland.inquiry@delwp.vic.gov.au

Template for submissions

Members of the public are welcome to make written submissions to the Inquiry which address one or more of the Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry are:

1. To conduct an inquiry into matters relating to the affairs of the South Gippsland Shire Council, including through an examination of:
 - a. The final report from the municipal monitor and any responses from the Council or Councillors to the Minister's letter dated 2 April 2019;
 - b. The conduct of individual councillors during the term of the current Council;
 - c. Processes and decisions in the lead up to the conclusion of the current Chief Executive Officer contract, including the appointment of an Acting Chief Executive Officer;
 - d. Any other decisions made, or actions taken, by the Council after the Minister's letter dated 2 April 2019 to the Council;
 - e. The efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements in delivering services to its constituents; and
 - f. Any other matters identified by the Commission that have an impact on the Council's ability to function.
2. To report to the Minister for Local Government in writing on the matters outlined above by 13 June 2019.

Authors of submissions can also indicate if they would like to speak about their submission with Commissioners, either privately or publicly.

All submissions will be made public on the website unless:

- The author requests that their submission is not made public; and/or
- They are considered to contain content which could be defamatory.

Name:	Mr Robert Reid
Name made public on the website?	Yes

Please outline any matters relating to the Terms of Reference for the inquiry:

After purchasing 80 vacant acres at 20 Singletons Rd, Toora North my partner and I (both experienced farmers) sought a planning permit from SGSC. The area is zoned 'Farming'. We were advised to employ a consultant before submitting our farm plan and building application.

submitted our application to SGSC in October 2016 on condition 15

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We were hoping to improve and develop the land into a small sustainable, biodiverse working farm.

Including some livestock, free range chickens and a commercial orchard.

However, we were happy to be guided by the Council as to what would be acceptable.

In the meantime we set about removing all blackberry, weeds and general rubbish on the property.

Before organically improving the viability of the soil for native animals and our livestock

The interactions that followed with SGSC were totally unreasonable.

It felt like our land was actually owned by the council as we were made to address endless (costly) requirements with little or no feedback or guidance from them.

Despite meeting and passing all their criteria as requested, it still took more than 17 months to eventually receive our 'permit' from Council.

The conditions were totally unworkable, at a huge extra expense to us to implement as well as rendering half our land unusable.

We now own an unsellable (with current permit) Block Of Perfectly productive land.

We are forced to rent, it has also taken a huge financial, physical and emotional toll on us both.

If we were able to discuss our grievances with a commissioner, we would be happy to provide

All documentation regarding our PP

Thankyou

Robert Reid

Patricia Morrissey-Brown