

Strategic Land Review Project Update

Council's Special Committee for the Strategic Land Review Project met on Tuesday 9 February to hear submissions on the 23 parcels of land proposed for sale in the 2015/16 financial year.

By the time the Special Committee concluded its proceedings a determination had been made on 20 of the 23 parcels, with the remaining three lots to be referred to Council for a decision at its meeting on 24 February.

Details of how the 20 parcels are proceeding – either to sell or not to sell – are available in the Council Meeting Agenda papers on [Council's website](#).

Council's Manager of Sustainable Communities, Chris Van Der Ark, was conscious that land sales are always a contentious matter to deal with. "There will be some in the community who may not understand why Council is opting to sell some of its land holdings," said Ms Van Der Ark. "It is important that our community recognise that this process commenced in 2010 and has continued throughout the term of the current Council. Over the past five years Council has consulted extensively with its community, as evidenced by various media releases, information on its website, letters to stakeholders and adjoining landowners, and attendance by Council officers at community meetings.

"Council has a legacy issue from the time preceding Council amalgamations. There are small blocks right across our Shire, many of which serve no purpose to our community. In fact there is a risk that they become the sort of nooks and crannies that attract unwanted behaviour such as dumping of rubbish or improper use by adjoining landowners. This project is our opportunity to take the capital locked up in those legacy assets and to re-allocate it to projects and services that are priorities for our community now and into the future."

In 2014 Council completed its study into Social and Community Infrastructure – *The Blueprint for Social Community Infrastructure*. This study assists Council and the community to plan for and manage social community infrastructure, optimising utilisation of facilities and reflecting future growth of the Shire. The capital from land sales can be used to support projects derived from the Blueprint, which is available on Council's website.

“The submissions that were heard on Tuesday were part of the process that Council is bound to follow when selling its land assets, as articulated under Section 223 of the Local Government Act. Built into the process is public advertisement of Council’s intent and a call for public submissions. This is the process we have followed for these 23 lots and the process we will be bound to follow for all future lots proposed for sale under Council’s strategic land review,” concluded Ms Van Der Ark.

NB: the formal notice of the Special Committee read:

Notice is hereby given that the Special Committee of South Gippsland Shire Council to hear, consider and determine Strategic Land Review sales will be held on Tuesday 9 February 2016 in Memorial Hall, Meeting Room 2, Michael Place, Leongatha commencing at 9am.

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