



Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

30 November 2018

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DELWP Ref: 15L10.8127

Dear Tim

RE: GREAT SOUTHERN RAIL TRAIL

Thank you for the opportunity to present to South Gippsland Shire Council regarding the strategic vision for the Great Southern Rail Trail, including the management model for the existing trail and proposed extension and options for sustainable community participation.

As you are aware, the Great Southern Rail Trail is Crown land temporarily reserved for Public Purposes (Rail Trail). The proposed extension area between Welshpool and Alberton is directly managed by DELWP. The remaining reserve is managed by volunteers who form a committee of management, appointed for a three-year term on behalf of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

DELWP supports the proposed extension and acknowledges the tourism potential and economic benefits this reserve will provide local and regional communities.

As presented, successful implementation of this project requires careful consideration of ongoing management of this significant community asset. Both DELWP and Council officers have expressed concern that the current volunteer model is not sustainable, and this matter was followed up with the committee of management who also acknowledged the challenges in managing such a long linear reserve.

DELWP believes Council is best placed to manage this reserve and recommends Council be appointed as committee of management. This would provide consistent management standards, marketing and maintenance across this significant community asset. Council working in partnership with DELWP and the community asset committees and/or friend networks could assist in providing local community ownership and contribute to delivery of on-ground projects.

Appointment over the proposed extension area could occur prior to commencement of works. Appointment over the remaining trail could occur at the end of the committee's term (September 2020) or earlier if it is negotiated with the current committee.

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Please accept this letter as a formal request for council to be appointed as committee of management and confirm in writing council's intentions.

Your sincerely



Stephen Chapple
Regional Director
Gippsland

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