



AIDA

September 2024 • www.aireys-inlet.org

Urquhart Bluff • Aireys Inlet • Fairhaven • Moggs Creek • Eastern View

AIDA acknowledges the traditional owners of these lands, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin nation, and the Gadubanud People of the Eastern Maar nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and future.



Council elections October 2024

For many years AIDA has sought the opinion of candidates running for local council and state government on issues pertaining specifically to Aireys Inlet and the surrounding area.

The new council will have a three-ward structure each with three councillors. The new wards will be Winchelsea, Torquay and Otway Ranges. As all nine successful candidates will be voting on issues pertaining to our area, the views of all councillors will be of significant interest to our members.

AIDA does not recommend any candidate, but rather aims at giving an even-handed opportunity for candidates to express their views, and to inform our members of these views.

The four questions that will be asked at this election are as follows:

1 What aspects of the neighbourhood character of the area from Aireys Inlet to Eastern View do you consider most important, and how should council seek to protect them?

- 2 Tourist numbers have returned to their pre-pandemic levels, which has meant a return of the multiple buses and private rental cars making the one-day dash to the Twelve Apostles and back. Is there another tourism model that might be more beneficial both to local communities and to the tourism sector?
- 3 The Painkalac Creek Valley's environment and landscape are a much-loved feature of our area. How would you ensure that this critical feature of the town is protected and maintained, and that diverse community interests are balanced?
- 4 AIDA advocates the retention of shared gravel roads, and the implementation of council's commitment to a speed limit of 40kph on local streets in Aireys Inlet. Do you agree, or would you support different policies?

AIDA proposes to send members the candidates' responses when Surf Coast Shire mails ballots to all eligible voters, around Monday 7 October.

Frieda Wachsmann

Painkalac Valley Network Community Forum

26 October at 2pm Aireys Inlet Community Hall



Have you ever driven over the Painkalac Bridge and wondered what's in there?

- What lives in Mellor's Swamp and the sand dunes?
- What fish are in the river?
- Where does the water come from?
- Do we really have bandicoots living here?
- Can you swim in the estuary?
- How can we contribute and be involved in protecting this precious ecosystem?

We are a group of locals who have asked all those questions and want to share what we've discovered with you and explore exciting opportunities for community involvement.

Come to the Aireys Inlet Community Hall at 2pm on 26 October to hear some brief presentations about:

- endangered wildlife in the Painkalac valley
- restoring vital habitat and feral pest control to restore the valley's biodiversity
- exploring the Painkalac Nature Walk
- waterway health
- what's happening at the Allen Noble Sanctuary
- long-term tracking of flora and fauna.

Don't miss this chance to meet us, share your ideas and contribute to the future of the Painkalac Valley!

We are [The Painkalac Valley Network](http://www.painkalacvalley.org).

Rod Brooks



Top shops design improvements and new pedestrian refuge

The recent Surf Coast Shire budget included funds to prepare plans to improve the entrance to the Top Shops. The need for these improvements was included in the Aireys Inlet Top and Bottom Shops Urban Design Framework 2015.

The shire says the 'project will produce a detailed design for a small-scale, relaxed and green coastal village space that is perfect for casual activities and will identify design improvements for access, parking and safety.' Additional funds will be required for the works.

The project aims to:

- Make the gateway to the Top Shops more attractive and functional.
- Develop a space that encourages foot traffic, social interaction, community gatherings, and casual activities.
- Incorporate shade trees and local plants to create a natural, coastal atmosphere.
- Optimise the area for walking, sitting, parking and access to public transport.
- Implement sustainable design practices to manage water use and enhance environmental sustainability.
- Explore the potential to widen the footpath along the full length of the retail strip and improve pedestrian priority and streetscape amenity.

The plan will also include public seating, dog hitches, and bike parking.

When completed the project will create a community space where residents and visitors can gather as well as making the entrance to the Top Shops more attractive.

For more information go to <https://yoursay.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/AireysInletTopShops>

In addition to the plans to improve the Top Shops, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is installing a pedestrian crossing on the Great Ocean Road between the Aireys Inlet Medical Centre and the chemist. The works are planned for October 2024.

DTP says it has been guided by the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Strategy and our Neighbourhood Character Overlay and the new crushed rock path will connect into the existing gravel pathway at the medical centre. Vegetation removal will be minimised.

AIDA was not consulted in the early stages of planning the refuge but has had a discussion about some aspects of the works. These include:

- what additional lighting is proposed
- works to the swale drain
- plans for new kerbing into the medical centre.

AIDA requested that the use of kerbing and concreting be minimised and that the new lighting be compliant with Dark Sky requirements.

The path link created on the Top Shops side will take the space of a single carpark, with the Surf Coast Shire exploring additional parking options as part of its plans.

Pedestrian refuge Lialeeta – Great Ocean Road intersection



The DTP recently installed another new pedestrian refuge at the Lialeeta – Great Ocean Road intersection.

The AIDA committee was not advised about the plans for this refuge in advance of its installation and was not able to have any discussions about the design, which is unfortunate. The completed refuge is not in keeping with the community's desire for our coastal communities to have a non-urbanised character. With its expansive paved area, bright lighting and brightly painted rails it is more suited to a city setting.

During subsequent discussions the project team said the rails are there for cyclists to hold on to when they are crossing the road. However, they would review their use and could remove them if they are not being used.

Charlotte Allen

AIDA's response to Surf Coast Shire Urban Futures Strategy

[A Draft Urban Futures Strategy](#) was prepared by the Surf Coast Shire in collaboration with consultants Spatial Economics to provide a clear policy framework to guide sustainable urban growth at the township and precinct level. It considers a range of constraints, including the need to protect natural environments and significant landscapes. AIDA's submission to the shire regarding

the draft strategy, appended below, was recently acknowledged by the shire.

Summary

AIDA has carefully reviewed the Draft Urban Futures Strategy June 2024 for the Surf Coast Shire. We support the general principles set out in this document, particularly those relating to our local area from Aireys Inlet through Fairhaven and Moggs Creek to Eastern View, including:

- 1 recognition of the landscape-level bushfire risk when planning for urban growth;
- 2 protection of land with environmental and landscape significance plus places of heritage significance;
- 3 encouragement of housing diversity within our local township areas;
- 4 ensuring that our existing urban areas are well planned to deliver sustainable communities.

We also support the township principles (11 and 12) applying to the coastal towns from Anglesea to Lorne including:

- Maintain the unique township and surrounding landscape character of the shire's coastal towns from Anglesea to Lorne.
- Provide for limited future housing growth and employment within the existing settlement boundaries that is consistent with township character.

Our response to this review has been subdivided under the document headings for *Part two: Key Drivers and Outcomes* and *Part three: Our Places* for ease of reference. Most of our comments focus upon the coastal townships from Anglesea to Lorne.

Population growth context

AIDA acknowledges the population projections of more households with older or fewer people in the coastal townships. We agree that the 'diversity of housing types and sizes is currently limited (predominantly detached larger houses)' but question the statement that these larger houses do not meet the future needs of these smaller households. These needs can vary greatly in the coastal townships depending upon the season and individual family circumstances. However, we agree that opportunities should be available for local residents to move into smaller dwellings as their housing needs change. We also agree that there is a 'lack of affordable housing (including rental accommodation)' which affects the provision of housing for essential workers and those working in the tourism sector.

Managing bushfire risks

AIDA acknowledges that the coastal townships from Anglesea to Lorne are located in areas where bushfire risk is a key consideration and that the existing settlement boundaries should not be expanded. We therefore support General Principle 1 recognising landscape level bushfire risk and its associated Direction (a) to avoid any change to the settlement boundaries of the coastal townships.

Protecting the Surf Coast's environment, landscapes and built heritage

AIDA strongly supports the statement that the 'physical landscapes of the shire contribute significantly to the amenity of the Surf Coast enhancing the lifestyle of residents and adding value to the tourism economy'. In particular we recognise the importance of our unique coastal landscapes and the marine environments and the role the shire plays in supporting GORCAPA with their management responsibilities. We also agree that the protection of environmental and landscape assets across the shire should be a priority in determining the suitability of future urban development. We note the statement that this development (including stormwater runoff) should not affect waterways and other receiving waters and believe that there is much remedial work to be done by the shire and other relevant authorities to achieve that goal. Nevertheless we support Principle 2 for the protection of land with environmental, landscape and heritage significance and its associated Direction (6) to maintain non-urban breaks between each of the coastal townships between Anglesea and Lorne.

Providing for diverse and changing housing needs

AIDA acknowledges the statement that 'increasing diversity through a mix of housing types and a variety of dwelling sizes will also require an increase in housing density in selected locations'. We understand that these locations could include activity centres and public transport nodes. We agree with the assertion that 'for increased densities to be supported by the community it needs to be done well' and note the list of important factors provided in the document against which this goal might be judged. However, we believe that all housing types (including small second dwellings) should comply with all local planning scheme overlays. We therefore conditionally support Principle 3 for the encouragement of housing diversity within our existing communities and its associated Directions (a) to (e) including social and affordable housing options.

Developing sustainable communities

AIDA strongly supports the statement that any 'growth will be informed by the valued attributes and character of the existing townships.' To that end we note that future growth planning would be based upon a 'placemaking approach with community participation at its core.' We strongly support this approach even if such community involvement has not always taken place in the past. We also believe that the incorporation of Environmentally Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience Principles should include existing townships as well as new urban areas. We therefore support Principle 4 ensuring that new and existing urban areas are well planned to deliver sustainable communities and its associated Directions (a) to (j), in particular item (g) to protect heritage and identified township character.

Other coastal towns (Anglesea to Lorne)

AIDA supports the statement that 'the existing settlement boundaries (of the coastal townships) will be retained and further housing development will be restricted to the conversion of sites from other uses or from small-scale increases in density in suitable locations.' We therefore support Principle 11 aimed at maintaining the unique township and surrounding landscape character of the coastal towns and its associated Directions (a) and (b). We also support Principle 12 providing for limited future housing growth within the existing settlement boundaries that is consistent with township character.

AIDA is currently seeking accreditation from Dark Sky International for our local area to become a Dark Sky Community. The aim of this organisation is to 'preserve and protect the night time environment and our heritage of dark skies through quality outdoor lighting.' (Dark Sky International) The municipal lighting policy currently being prepared by the Surf Coast Shire should form an important part of achieving protection from light pollution of the night sky and the wildlife that depend upon it.

Conclusion

AIDA generally supports the Draft Urban Futures Strategy June 2024 including the majority of the principles and directions contained within the document pertaining to the coastal townships from Anglesea to Lorne. Whilst this document contains a vast amount of supporting information we found that its structure and format make it easy to review. We look forward to participating in any future community meetings to finalise what is a well-presented and thoughtful document.

Ian Laging

AIDA's website

AIDA's website was redesigned and updated recently by Torquay Web Design. The new website has a fresh new look and updated content. Access it on <https://aireys-inlet.org/>

It will be regularly maintained to ensure all information relevant to AIDA's activities are available to AIDA members and the wider community.

The committee is very grateful to Rod Brooks who has offered to look after the website for us.

Charlotte Allen

Shire unsealed road review



The Surf Coast Shire received the reports on the Unsealed Road Review at its meeting on 27 August. (The reports are included in the agenda for the meeting, which is available on the council website.)

Community expectations and dissatisfaction with the council's maintenance of its unsealed road network led to the review by external consultants. The shire-wide review was done between January and July 2024 and included community engagement. The Surf Coast Shire's road network covers approximately 1,089 kilometres, of which about 44 per cent (477 km) are unsealed. Most unsealed roads are in rural areas, with 8 per cent (32km) in urban areas. The consultants were asked to

- evaluate the road management framework
- identify and analyse gaps between service provision and community expectations
- assess the condition and performance of the unsealed road network and maintenance and renewal scheduling and delivery practices
- identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in policy and procedures
- propose practical and actionable options and costs to enhance the council's approach to managing, maintaining, and renewing the unsealed road network

- develop decision-making recommendations, guidance and criteria to inform the prioritisation of future works.

The consultants developed four options for council to consider, each containing several initiatives. The costs for these ranged from no cost to an estimated \$92.8 million over ten years.

Council officers recommended the 'no cost' option be accepted as this will achieve some improvements in the condition of unsealed roads through service efficiencies and other measures without having an impact on council's annual budget.

The range of possible improvements include:

- Increasing grader utilisation by reducing non-productive time which could result in a greater than 20 per cent productivity improvement.
- Identifying improvements to crew and plant productivity.
- Increasing grader productivity through changes to the nine-day RDO roster.
- Ensuring that maintenance grading is programmed such that jobs are grouped in similar locations to avoid excessive travel between jobs. This is already happening but it isn't always a priority
- Re-evaluating the importance/weighting of gravel, determined through date of last re-sheet.

This option was adopted by council

Community engagement was part of the review and this included drop-in sessions, an on-line community survey linked to council's 'Your Say' page, and written submissions.

The four drop-in locations had 244 visits, 56 per cent of whom attended the Aireys Inlet Market session with 43 per cent of all survey results coming from Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek, Eastern View and Big Hill.

Council received seven written submissions, which included a detailed summary from AIDA's longitudinal community opinion surveys dating from the 1980s.

The results indicated that there is stronger support in Aireys Inlet and surrounds for roads to remain unsealed but noted 'there may be a shift in the importance of unsealed roads.' The contributors preferring unsealed roads were concerned that sealing would result in lost rural/coastal character, more motorists, and higher car speeds, which would increase the risk to pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife.

The consultants' report concluded, 'There is a strong preference in the Aireys Inlet community to retain the nature (colour and rustic appeal) provided by Gherang gravels. The brownish-yellow colour appeals to the residents and tourists alike. There has traditionally been a strong desire to keep township roads unsealed for this reason, but this conviction is not prevalent in all responders and more residents are indicating that they would like more roads to be sealed.'

Charlotte Allen

Hang-gliding over our beautiful coast



John Langmead

Have you ever looked up and wondered what it would be like to swap places with the hang-glider pilot soaring above you? Click the link to John Langmead's marvellous 2021 post '[Hang gliding over the Great](#)

[Ocean Road coast](#)' and you can access wonderful descriptions and photographs of hang gliding from Spion Kop, a well-established launch site for hang gliders and paragliders located at the low end of a

ridge (160 feet above sea level) near where Moggs Creek flows across the beach into the sea. Videos from a camera viewpoint just behind and above the pilot let you experience the sights and sounds of taking off and soaring along the ridge between the Split Point Lighthouse and Eastern View.

Mary-Jane Gething

GORCN Tourism Seminars

Great Ocean Road Communities Network (GORCN) is developing a webinar series that will focus on tourism along the Great Ocean Road. It will be a five-part series each with expert speakers from Australia and overseas.

It is planned to run the series in late February and early March 2025. We will advertise when registrations are open. The sessions will be free and it is anticipated that there will be a high level of interest from local communities around Australia and overseas as well as tourism operators and government agencies.

The series will explore the argument for tourism's transition from an unsustainable, growth-centric, demand-based model, which will not advance the liveability of the Great Ocean Road region, to a regenerative and resilient model suited to the unique character of our region.

Practitioners from Australia and overseas will share their experience of the transition to regenerative tourism, providing insights, experiences and thinking valuable for the realisation of such a transition for the Great Ocean Road.

Session 1

The first session will explore and explain the current Great Ocean Road tourism model. The session will start with the global forecasts for explosive in growth tourism within our environment.

The session will look at the benefits of tourism as an agent of positive transformation and opportunity. But tourism is not benign and there will be a review of the recent explosive summer season in Europe which was a result of poorly designed and managed tourism systems; the environmental degradation of ecosystems, the pressures on heritage and local character, the heightened precariousness of local economies and on the quality of life and cohesion of communities. Our experiences on the Great Ocean Road will be reviewed to explain how the current model is no longer fit for purpose as it regards the environment as a free resource to be exploited. It is focused on product, and driven by supply and demand to optimise profit and growth.

Questions will be raised such as how did we arrive here? What are the forces that drove us to the 'extractive' model? If 'here' is not where we want to be, where in the world *do* we want to be?

Session 2

This session will concentrate on emerging tourism models and will explore the principles and practise of resilient, sustainable tourism. The session will include some overseas and local examples where the transition to this sustainable model is already happening.

Many places around the world have already started their transformational journey, adopting a changed mindset and creating the conditions needed for people and places to flourish and thrive.

We'll visit places such as Scotland, Copenhagen, Flinders Island and the Bay of Plenty in NZ, and talk about their approach and progress.

Session 3

The third session will revisit the systematic flaws of the current tourism model and look at the values, culture and what is important for the twenty-one communities along the Great Ocean Road. Speakers from these communities will explore the current problems along the Great Ocean Road, such as traffic congestion and parking issues, degraded visitor experiences, heightened seasonal safety risks, housing pressure, threats to local character, environmental impacts, reduced liveability and economic leakage.

The session will also develop an argument for the Great Ocean Road's new sustainable, regenerative tourism model to be developed collaboratively with the local community.

A regenerative model would involve understanding the interconnection and interdependence of tourism with the community in which it exists, conserving and restoring our habitats, helping support a viable economy, developing local capacity and establishing stronger tourism governance. The transformation of Great Ocean Road tourism would help facilitate a healthier, more equitable future for communities.

During the session, some of our key tourism organisations will outline how they are working with the community and with nature to create a healthy and resilient GOR and at the same time, helping to realise the potential of our places.

What would it take for the Great Ocean Road to become a rich nature-based region, where sustainability is the default and where the focus is on actively revitalising and regenerating the region socially, economically and always in concert with nature?

Session 4

In session 4 the various government and tourist agencies will explain their views, plans and vision for tourism along the Great Ocean Road. How can the community become involved so that tourism along the Great Ocean Road enhances and strengthens local communities and the environment?

Session 5

Session 5 will be a hybrid session with an on-line audience as well as face to face with the various agencies. This session will seek to expose the barriers and blockages for tourism along the Great Ocean Road to move to a more sustainable and resilient model. The session will demonstrate the gaps between rhetoric, plans and action. Understanding the barriers is essential if there is to be a shift to a new tourist model along the Great Ocean Road. The intention is to create awareness of common blockages to progress, to understand them and to discuss possible pathways and actions to overcome or reduce their impact

The session will explore issues such as:

- free use of natural resource

- power structures – tourism imposed top down on residents rather than co-designed with and for communities and nature from the bottom up
- who owns tourism – governments, tourism operators, local communities?
- growth and dependency model – relying on visitor growth to survive; government over-dependency on tourism revenue and where nature doesn't have a 'seat at the table' during decision-making
- how might we apply greater emphasis and skilled resources to tourism management, governance and transparency
- From silos and misalignment to co-design and collaboration – how do we more effectively partner in the community?

Suzanne Cavanagh

Unstable cliff – Anglesea Beach



Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) rangers have observed a large crack in a moderately sized section of cliff above the Anglesea beach between Anglesea SLSC and Point Roadknight (see photo above). A cliff section of approximately 15m³ will fall at some stage in the future. This section of beach is not used much and is not accessible at high tides.

GORCAPA has assessed the risk as moderate under their Trigger Action Response Plan and are:

- checking warning signage at nearby access points
- notifying staff and community
- investigating exclusion and warning signs on the beach below the hazard, which are not feasible due to high tides reaching the cliff base
- starting twice-weekly monitoring.

GORCAPA has asked the community to beware of the hazard and to follow signage and be guided by these simple messages when around cliffs:

- **Stay away** – from cliffs and caves
- **Stick to** – established tracks
- **See the signs** – and follow official guidance
- **Share** the word – warn others

GORCAPA also wants to remind the community that the section of beach around Demons Bluff to the north-east of Anglesea Caravan Park is permanently closed. If you have questions contact

info@greatoceanroadauthority.vic.gov.au

GORCAPA

