



AIREYS INLET AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION INC

PO BOX 359 AIREYS INLET VICTORIA 3231

<http://www.aireys-inlet.org>

(Reg. No. A000710V)

3 March 2015

Cr Margot Smith – Mayor
Surf Coast Shire
TORQUAY

Dear Margot,

Re: Further Proposal for Oval/Recreational Space Painkalac Valley.

I am writing to put AIDA's view on this subject which has been raised again in the context of the recent Consultant's brief for the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan.

The environmental impacts of positioning an oval in the Painkalac Valley have been put forward many times: the impact of importing soil and seed; fertilisers polluting the river and the consequences of allowing lighting, buildings and gravel car spaces and people into this highly valued and one of the few and fragile river-valley ecological systems along this stretch of coastline. Whether 'low profile' or with 'small scale amenities' as the Structure Plan consultants have advised the community, these adverse impacts will not be able to be overcome.

This issue has been raised many times over the past 30 or so years and it is surprising to see it again proposed in the 2015 Structure Plan. The results of a 1991 Painkalac Creek and Floodplain Environmental Study commissioned by the then GRC, Barrabool Shire, Department of Conservation and Lands and AIDA and carried out by a professional team, recommended against development of the river flat for an oval or residential development citing the environmental value of Mellors Swamp and the regional significance of the Painkalac Creek wetlands, and set the tone for the 1993 Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Master Plan which rezoned Mellors Swamp as Public Open Space – Flora and Fauna Reserve, and recommended retention as an open valley landscape of the freehold river flats alongside Bambra Road.

Indeed, a recent survey of members undertaken by AIDA show a majority of respondents still wish to conserve the valley, an outcome which showed no appreciable difference in opinion from the wider surveys of all residents carried out in 1990 and 1999.

As importantly, AIDA would seek economic justification for what would be an investment by Council of millions of dollars for the establishment of an oval/public open space with continuing upkeep and maintenance costs additional to that. We would seek response to the following issues:

- What capital investment rate of return would Council need to see to justify this outlay of money – estimated previously by Council at around \$3 million for the initial facility? What business case could be presented and shouldn't this have been made public prior to seeking community views as part of the Structure Plan process? AIDA would be very interested in seeing these figures.

AIREYS INLET AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

- Aireys Inlet has, according to the Council commissioned Ross Planning Report Discussion Paper ('Open Space Strategy 2015 – 2025'), 2.8% of the Shire's total population, but 12% of the Shire's total land area classified as open space excluding GORCC, Parks Victoria and DEPI lands. This area has also been nominated by this report as likely to experience limited population growth on current population trends and would therefore seem to be an unlikely place for such a large investment of Council funds.
- Council has already made significant capital investment in sports ovals 10 minutes either side of Aireys Inlet and pays to maintain these facilities. Is it justifiable for Council to be considering the installation and maintenance of yet another oval for the limited number of Aireys Inlet residents who may benefit from this?
- Is Council to make known to ratepayers of the Surf Coast Shire the proposed plans for this infrastructure, the initial capital expenditure required and ongoing maintenance costs?

The question of an oval/public space has been raised on and off over the past 35 years and neither an economic or demand-based case has ever been established. AIDA would be interested to hear the current Council view on this.

We would be pleased to meet to discuss this issue. I may be contacted on my mobile on 0419 656 655.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Fletcher

President

Cc: Keith Baillie – CEO Surf Coast Shire

Cr. Libby Coker

Sunil Bhalla – Director Infrastructure

Chris Pike – Director Community

Kate Sullivan – Director Planning and Environment.