



## **AIREYS INLET AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION INC**

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

(Reg. No. A000710V)

10 August 2015

Cr Margot Smith  
Mayor  
Surf Coast Shire  
PO Box 350  
Torquay 3228

Dear Mayor

### **Road sealing – Aireys Inlet and district**

The Aireys Inlet and District Association (AIDA) is aware of current proposals to seal sections of Aireys and Hopkins Streets, Aireys Inlet, as a result of petitions from small groups of residents. We are also aware of counter-petitions and of the lively interest such proposals provoke.

We are writing to Surf Coast Shire Councillors and senior officers to express our opposition to these proposals and to suggest alternative measures to address the concerns of those advocating sealing as a solution to problems of traffic and dust. There are several general and specific points we wish to make:

1. The Surf Coast Shire has repeatedly recognized the particular neighbourhood character of Aireys Inlet and its district, noting the strong community desire for it to remain 'rural', for example, through the retention of unsealed roads. This is well expressed in the Victorian Coastal Strategy, the Shire's Neighbourhood Character Study and the current iteration of the Shire's new Structure Plan for Aireys Inlet. Selective street sealing fundamentally contradicts Council's overarching policy.
2. As part of the Citizens Jury process, Precinct 1 voted strongly in favour of unsealed roads, and both the current proposals are in Precinct 1.
3. The sealing of roads marks an irrevocable change in general neighbourhood character – sealed roads are not subsequently made unsealed – and should not occur as the result of a petition of a small number of residents of an individual street at a

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particular point in time. Street surfaces are not the exclusive concern of those who reside along them. We regard this as an important point of policy.

4. The most recent survey of AIDA members in February 2015, representing the views of 290 respondents, explicitly posed the question of whether there should be more sealed roads in Aireys Inlet and its district. Almost 74% of respondents to the question were opposed and fewer than 5% were in favour (other responses were mixed).
5. AIDA's submission to the Structure Plan, reflecting the views of members, places a high priority on Aireys Inlet and its districts as neighbourhoods which facilitate 'walking communities' and low traffic speeds and roads that are shared by cars, pedestrians and cyclists. Road sealing can only encourage higher speeds by vehicles and consequent risks to pedestrian safety and enjoyment. This is particularly the case for Aireys Street, already a gravel road with a surface of high quality.
6. AIDA recognizes that there are residents incommoded by levels of traffic and dust, particularly in summer. It notes, however, that there are practical, low-expense solutions which are commonly used. These include traffic 'calming' measures such as street plantings creating 'chicanes' (as currently used in parts of Fairhaven) and dust-reduction sprays (as used in Inlet Crescent, Aireys Inlet).
7. Hopkins Street, specifically, cuts across a small creek bed (Sandy Gully Creek) and is subject to occasional minor flooding. A sealed surface will be more prone to pot-holes and far more expensive to maintain in such circumstances.

Two of the AIDA committee attended an information session about the petition to seal part of Aireys Street on Saturday 8 August. Most of the residents attending were not AIDA members but strongly reflected AIDA's position that the Aireys district retain its unsealed roads and rural village atmosphere.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss this issue with me or require any more information about AIDA's position.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Allen

*President*