

Draft Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy

Engagement Summary Report

Contents

Executive Summary	2
Overview	2
Engagement Activities and Promotion	2
Submission Summary.....	4
Feedback Themes.....	4
Overall support for the Policy:	4
Regarding the proposed upgrade option:.....	4
Regarding a return to an unsealed road surface:	5
Other feedback:.....	6
Community Consultation	7
Objectives of Stage 1 Community Consultation	7
Engagement.....	8
Online Survey.....	8
Question 1. Are you an owner of a property that is on a temporary dust suppression seal?	8
Question 2. What town is your property in?.....	9
Questions 3. Where do you live?.....	10
Question 4. Please provide any feedback you have about the Draft Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy	11
Conclusion	12

Executive Summary

Overview

Between 2005 and 2007, dust suppressant seals were trialled on unsealed roads across Bass Coast as a low-cost, temporary solution to improve amenity. While these treatments initially provided short-term benefits, they have since deteriorated significantly. As a result, these roads no longer meet acceptable service standards or community expectation, resulting in safety, accessibility, and amenity impacts that are inconsistent with Bass Coast's character and pose legal liability risks.

A Long Term Management Strategy was adopted in 2013 to guide the removal of these dust suppressant seals. Under this strategy 23 roads have been reinstated back to pre-trial conditions or upgraded. Currently, 30 roads across the municipality still retain trial dust suppressant seals.

To ensure the roads remain safe and usable for our community, these seals must now be removed.

The draft Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy (Policy) aims to update Council's approach to the removal of these seals to ensure it remains aligned with current community expectations and Council practices, provide a fair and equitable opportunity for upgrade and to meet the legislative requirements of community engagement.

The draft Policy introduces a tailored upgrade option that allows property owners on a dust suppression seal to maintain a permanently sealed road.

Key changes include:

- A once off contribution of \$4,000
- No requirement for property owners to submit a petition
- The upgraded road will be added to Council's network and maintained at Council's cost
- Property owners will not need to contribute financially again for the road seal

Consultation on the draft Policy was approved at the 18 March 2026 Council meeting, with the draft Policy available for public feedback for a period of four weeks from 18 March 2026 to 15 April 2026.

Engagement Activities and Promotion

Council utilised the Engage Bass Coast online platform to capture community feedback. Written submissions were also encouraged for more detailed feedback.

- **185** submissions to online survey
- **20** written submissions
- **5** phone submissions
- **759** visitors to the Engage Bass Coast project site

Engagement methods included:

- Coastell April Newsletter sent to **1155** community members
- Engage email sent to **106** community members
- Social media post with **35,360** views across Facebook and Instagram
- Media Release on Council website and articles in local newspapers
- **538** letters sent to owners of a property on a road which currently has a dust suppression seal

Key Findings



210 responses were received



88% of survey participants reported living on a dust suppression seal road



The highest number of responses were from Rhyll (52) and Cowes (48)

Submission Summary

Feedback Themes

Feedback from the Engage Bass Coast online platform survey, emails and phone calls were combined and common themes were identified.

A copy of all submissions has been provided to Councillors in Attachment I.

The major themes identified have been summarised below:

Overall support for the Policy:

While there was no question directly asking if respondents supported the draft Policy, 29% of respondents (61) provided clear statements that indicated that they support it.

Of those;

- 11% of respondents (24) expressed their agreeance to pay the proposed contribution amount to ensure an upgrade on their street would go ahead
- 10% of respondents (21) believe the contribution amount is reasonable
- 5% of respondents (11) acknowledged that the seal was in need of improvement

Regarding the proposed upgrade option:

The requirement for 100% agreement from all property owners for an upgrade to proceed is unreasonable:

23% of respondents (49) raised concerns regarding the need for all property owners on a street to be agreeable to pay for an upgrade to occur. Respondents expressed that this requirement set streets up to fail and would ultimately lead to streets being returned to an unsealed surface, even if the majority of the street was supportive and willing to pay. Respondents requested a lower level of support be considered.

Payment plans should be offered to encourage more property owners to participate in an upgrade:

15% of respondents (31) expressed a desire for Council to offer repayment options to allow property owners to pay off the proposed \$4,000 over time, rather than requiring an upfront payment. Some respondents reported that they would like to have their road upgraded rather than returned to an unsealed surface, however they could not afford the full payment all at once.

Council should pay for the road to remain sealed, not property owners:

11% of respondents (23) feel that Council is responsible for provision of road infrastructure and that the upgrades should be funded through Council revenue.

- 6% (13) of respondents believe the dust suppression seals have not been properly maintained by Council which has led to their poor condition.
- 5% (11) of respondents requested that another temporary dust suppression seal be used instead.

Council should offer the tailored upgrade option to streets previously impacted by the dust suppression seals:

- 2% of respondents (5) requested that the upgrade proposed in the draft Policy be also offered to roads that previously were sealed with a dust suppression seal or for funds to be used to upgrade unsealed roads with greater need.

Drainage should be included in the upgrade:

- 2% of respondents (5) requested that drainage improvements be included in the proposed upgrade.

Regarding a return to an unsealed road surface:

Returning the roads to an unsealed road will increase risk to safety:

10% of respondents (21) feel that removing the current dust suppression seals would lead to greater safety risk to both pedestrians and drivers. Many respondents expressed the view that the current dust suppression seals would be safer than a compacted gravel surface despite their current condition.

The current seal is in good condition and does not need to be removed or replaced:

10% of respondents (21) feel the existing seal on their road meets their needs and does not need to be removed.

Returning urban sealed roads to an unsealed surface is a backwards step:

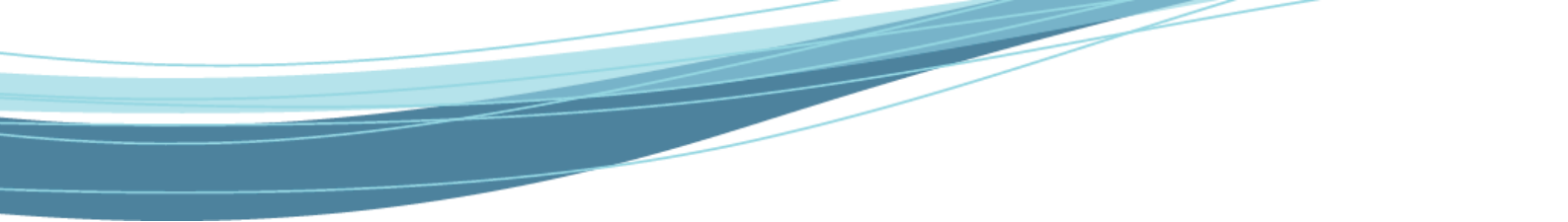
9% of respondents (18) felt that returning the road surfaces to an unsealed surface is illogical and not in line with the direction the Council should be heading in.

Return to an unsealed road will create negative impacts, particularly due to dust:

9% of respondents (18) objected to a return to an unsealed road surface due to the impacts of dust on health, amenity and leisure.

Returning the roads to an unsealed surface will reduce accessibility and make it more difficult for people with diverse accessibility needs:

4% of respondents (9) raised concerns that unsealed road surfaces would hinder use by people with diverse accessibility needs, including those using wheelchairs or pushing prams. This concern was increased by a lack of footpaths in these areas.



Concern about impact on property value:

4% of respondents (8) expressed worry that a return to an unsealed road would negatively impact their property's value.

The upgrade would mostly benefit the wider community:

3% of respondents (7) feel that an upgrade would mostly benefit individuals in the wider community rather than property owners, due to their road's proximity to major township infrastructure such as schools.

Other feedback:

There has been a lack of transparency regarding the status of roads with the dust suppression seal:

6% of respondents (13) were not aware that the road they lived on was temporary and raised concerns regarding the transparency surrounding this, particularly as the decision to purchase their property was driven by having a sealed road.

Consultation with property owners has been poor:

6% of respondents (12) expressed that the previous and current consultation with property owners has not met their expectations.

The draft Policy conflicts with other Council Policies and Council's legislative responsibilities:

1% of respondents (3) raised concern that the draft Policy, particularly the proposal to return roads to an unsealed surface, were not in line with Council strategic documents such as the Council Plan 2025-2029 and Disability Action Plan, and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Community Consultation

Between 18 March and 15 April 2026, Council engaged community members from across the shire to seek feedback on a draft Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy. This feedback will be used to inform the final Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy to be presented to Council at the 17 June 2026 meeting.

Objectives of Stage I Community Consultation

Table 1: objectives of the engagement and measures/actions for success

Objectives	Measures and actions for success
Comply with Local Gov Act 2020 requirements	Ensure all correct processes are followed, Engagement Plan and delivery is thorough and detailed, and engagement approach is inclusive and fair. IAP2 spectrum framework is applied. Approach aligns with Bass Coast Engagement Policy and principles.
Open and transparent community engagement.	Provide community with specific and clear information on what they can and can't influence. Publish a summary report of engagement findings after each stage, outlining what Council heard from community and how the feedback was used in the final decision-making.
Ensure a diverse cohort of community members are notified of the consultation opportunity	Engagement information is mailed directly to those most affected but also promoted to the wider community through usual channels such as media release, Engage Bass Coast, Coastell e-Newsletter and social media channels.

Engagement

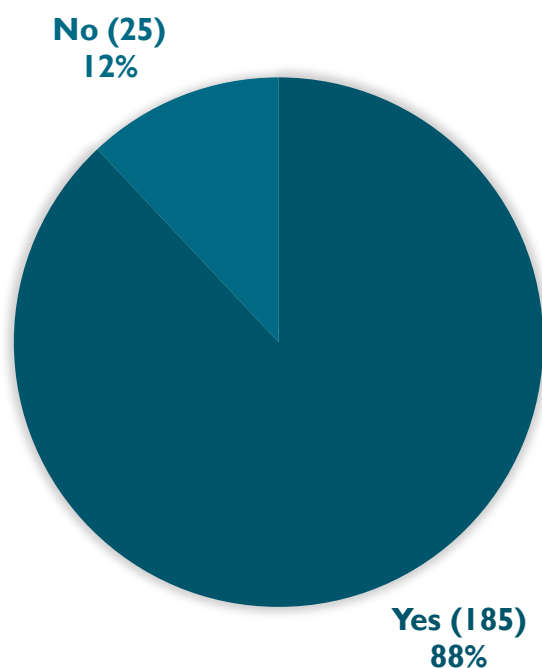
Online Survey

The following questions were provided to individuals completing the survey on the Engage Bass Coast online platform. Responses from the 25 email and phone submissions have been added, with a total of 210 submissions informing the below data.

Question 1. Are you an owner of a property that is on a temporary dust suppression seal?

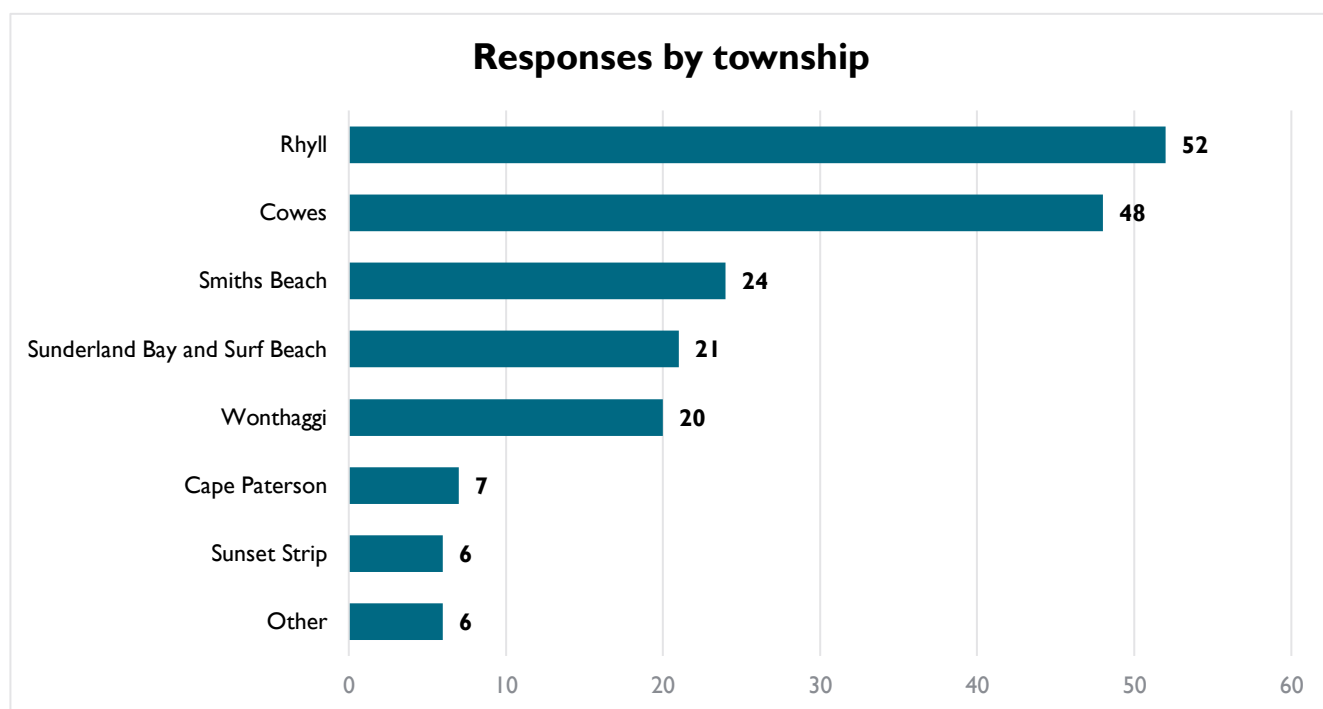
The question was mandatory and provided two options 'Yes' and 'No'. 25 written and phone submissions were also included in the graph below.

88% reported being on a dust suppression seal road. 12% reported that they didn't live on a dust suppression seal road.



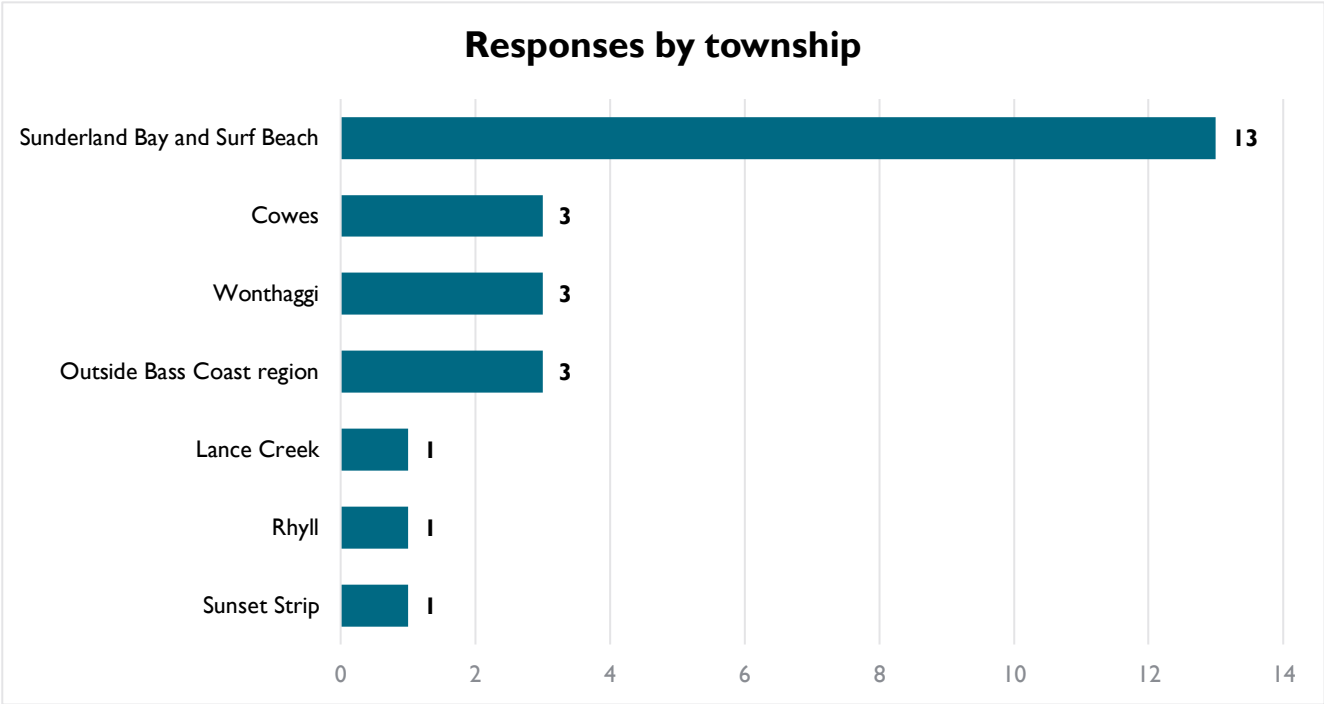
Question 2. What town is your property in?

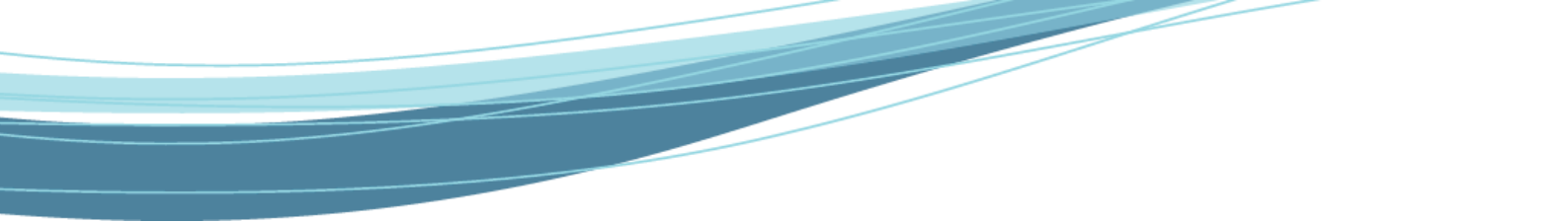
This question was displayed for those who reported living on a dust suppression seal road. It was not mandatory and 1 respondent elected to skip the question. 24 written and phone submissions were also included in the table below.



Questions 3. Where do you live?

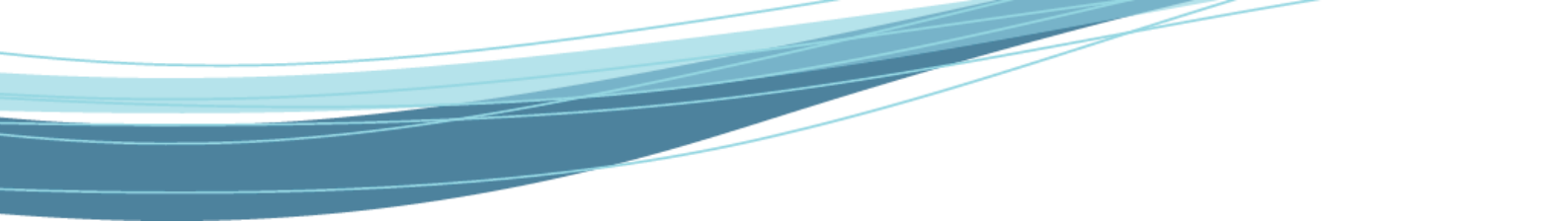
This question was displayed for those who reported not living on a dust suppression seal road. It was not mandatory and no respondents elected to skip the question. 1 written submission was also included in the table below.





Question 4. Please provide any feedback you have about the Draft Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy

This was a required question. Feedback has been summarised into themes which have been collated with email and phone submissions and summarised above.



Conclusion

Summary

Council thanks all who contributed and participated in the community engagement activities during this consultation period. A report will be presented at the June 2026 Council meeting to adopt the final Dust Suppression Seal Removal Policy.