‘Links Street Road and Drainage Upgrade’

Feedback summary

Property owners were asked to provide submissions and/or objections for the proposed road and drainage improvement project for Links Street in Surf Beach. Other stakeholders also had the opportunity to provide a submission.

A summary of the submissions and objections received from property owners has been provided below. There were no submissions from other stakeholders.

Summary:

- 2 objections (17%)
- 5 submissions of support (41.5%)
- 5 property owners did not provide a formal response (41.5%)
- 1 verbal submission of support (counted as ‘no submission’)

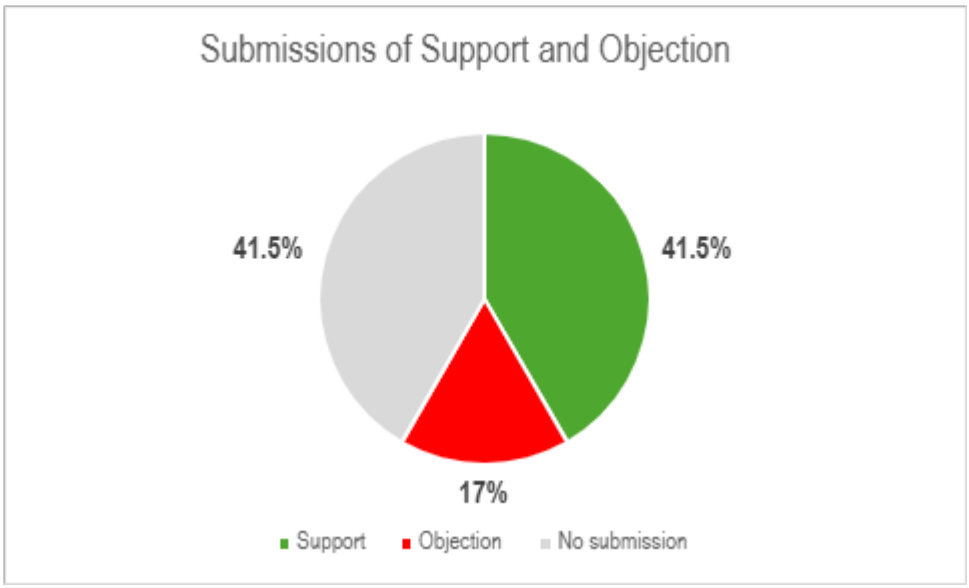


Figure 1: percentage breakdown of submissions of support and objection received from property owners

The main feedback received in the submissions and objections, by way of summary, were;

Feedback	**Number**
Upgrade all streets in area	1
Loss of natural/semi-rural character	1
Illogical to upgrade only Links Street	1
Lack of transparency	1
Council should fully fund upgrade	1
Current road/drainage condition doesn't justify upgrade	1
Increased traffic speeds	1
Negative impact on property views	1
Increased rates	1
Reduced property value	1
Increased on-street parking	1
Doesn't reflect majority view	1
Financial burden outweighs benefits	1
Negative impact on environment	1

Table 1: summary of written feedback received from submissions and objections

Responses to common community feedback can be found on the following pages.

The upgrade will negatively impact the natural, semi-rural character of Links Street.

While some people like the area the way it is, property owners, through the submission of a petition, have recognised that there is the need for road and drainage improvements along Links Street.

The existing amenity and feel of the area does not have to be adversely impacted because roads are upgraded. Improving roads and drainage, whilst maintaining the existing amenity of the area, can be achieved through good streetscape design.

It is illogical to upgrade only Links Street.

The upgrade of Links Street is in line with Council's Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy, which uses a road-by-road approach. This ensures Council is responsive to the specific needs and preferences of property owners on each street.

The Links Street upgrade is a direct result of a community petition requesting upgrades. Surrounding streets have also submitted petitions, with some having already been approved for upgrades, while others are still being considered.

Nearby streets who have not submitted a petition will also have the opportunity to support or oppose upgrades through Council's Priority List process.

Council has not been transparent in the process.

All elements of the current project have been completed in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989 and 2020* and Council's Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy 2024 (URDI).

Council has undertaken extensive engagement with the local community to ensure the preferred treatment option has been developed and is supported.

Council should fully fund the upgrade, not property owners.

Council do not have a legislated responsibility to upgrade or maintain a road to a higher standard than which it was constructed.

For roads that need new infrastructure, such as sealing, kerb and channel, or drainage, Council uses the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy (URDI). This policy is guided by the *Local Government Act 1989*, which allows the cost of such upgrades to be

shared between property owners who directly benefit from the improvements. Council also contributes financially to reflect the broader benefit to the community.

Across the Bass Coast Shire, there are more than 100 kilometres of unmade roads, limited footpaths, and a high demand for drainage upgrades. While Council recognises the need for these improvements, it does not have the financial capacity to fund all projects through rates or general revenue alone.

The condition of the road and drains on Links Street doesn't justify the need for an upgrade.

While some property owners find the current road and drainage suitable, most property owners, through the submission of a petition, have recognised that there is a need for road and drainage improvements along Links Street.

Sealing the road will increase traffic speeds and increase safety risk to pedestrian and bike users.

Sealing roads can lead to changes in road user behavior, including an increase in speed. Due to the short distance of Links Street, traffic speeds expected are considered to be safe.

Property owners did not raise excessive speed as an issue on Links Street and elected not to include traffic calming treatments, such as speed humps or slow points, in the design for the project.

My rates will increase.

The intention of the proposed works is not to increase property values, and subsequently rates. However, this may occur as a result of the benefits the proposed improvement works provide to the adjacent properties.

While individual circumstances vary, it's important to note that Council rates are based on property valuations set by the Victorian Valuer-General. Rates are adjusted based on independent valuations and applied consistently across the Shire.

My property value will decrease.

The intention of the proposed works is not to decrease property values. There is no evidence that property values will decrease as a result of the road upgrade.

The removal of drainage and wider road carriageway will encourage more on-street parking and impact sight lights, visual amenity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

There is no evidence to suggest that there will be additional vehicles parking on a street or adjacent nature strip if it is sealed and has underground drainage installed.

The upgrade will negatively impact the view from my property.

The concept plan approved by Council includes a modest widening of the road to a trafficable width of 5m. This increase in road width is not predicted to have meaningful impact on views from properties.

I don't believe that residents of Links Street are supportive of the upgrade.

The current project is in response to a community led petition requesting a road and drainage upgrade along Links Street. The petition received indicated that 75% of property owners were supportive of the project.

As per the requirements of the Act, all property owners had the opportunity to provide a submission and/or objection to the project following the Intent to Declare at the June 18 2025 Council Meeting.

Council received a total of 7 formal submissions from 12 property owners. There were 2 (17%) objections and 5 (41.5%) submissions of support from property owners to the proposed upgrade project. One verbal response of support was received; however, it was not counted in the tallied results as submissions are required to be in writing. A total of 5 (41.5%) property owners did not provide any response (this includes the 1 property owner that verbally responded).

The cost to property owners is a considerable financial burden.

Council have provided 4 repayment options for property owners, including the repayment of charges over 10 years, and up to 20 years for individuals experiencing financial hardship. The inclusion of a Hardship Payment Plan will allow individuals experiencing financial hardship to work with Council to tailor a repayment plan to their individual needs.

Affected property owners will be contacted with details concerning payment and are encouraged to contact Council's Revenue Services Team to discuss their options.

Sealing the road and adding drainage will increase runoff pollutants and volumes which will harm the coastal reserve.

Sealing roads provides for cleaner downstream stormwater flows at is collects less gravel and dirt from the unsealed roads.

Careful consideration has been given to ensure flow paths minimise erosion and protect sensitive environments. The drainage from Links Street will connect to The Esplanade, which will have a Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT) installed to reduce the likelihood of rubbish flowing into these environments.

Why isn't the entire Estate being upgraded? The dust, potholes and drainage are terrible. Why can't Council just upgrade all streets?

In 2024, Bass Coast Shire Council completed a review of the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy. Based on community feedback, the Council introduced a road-by-road approach. This means streets with strong support from property owners can be considered for upgrades, even if surrounding streets are not in favour of improvements to their own road.

Each street is affected differently by the challenges of unsealed roads; busier roads may generate more dust than a quiet backstreet court, while lower lying areas may be more prone to flooding compared to those situated on higher ground.

This tailored approach recognises that not all streets require or want upgrades, while still allowing those with strong property owner support to move forward with improvements to road and drainage infrastructure.