

# NSW Coastal Design Guidelines 2023



## Appendix 1: Assessment checklist for planning proposals

Hierarchy of coastal management areas:

1. CWLRA = coastal wetlands and littoral rainforests area
2. CVA = coastal vulnerability area
3. CEA = coastal environment area
4. CUA = coastal use area

**Note:** Requirements relating to coastal hazards must be considered for all coastal hazard and risk areas, regardless of which relevant coastal management area(s) these fall within. 'Coastal hazard and risk areas' mean any mapped coastal vulnerability areas and/or areas affected by (or projected to be affected by) coastal hazards that have been identified in a state environmental planning policy, local environmental plan, development control plan, coastal management program, coastal hazard policy or study adopted by council.

Outcome A. Protect and enhance coastal environmental values			
Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
Outcome A.1 Protect coastal ecosystems			
<b>A.1a</b> Avoid development on undeveloped headlands and significant coastal landforms.	CVA, CEA	n	
<b>A.1b</b> Do not increase development or intensify land uses where there is existing development on headlands and significant coastal landforms.	CVA, CEA	n	
<b>A.1c</b> Identify, protect and enhance sensitive coastal ecosystems including coastal wetlands, littoral rainforests and other coastal threatened ecological communities that may be affected by development.	CWLRA, CEA	n	
<b>A.1d</b> Maintain and protect the presence of beaches, rock platforms, coastal dunes, riparian vegetation and the natural features of foreshores, including along estuaries and coastal lakes.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA	n	
<b>A.1e</b> Use environmental buffers and limit the number of access points and pathways to protect coastal ecosystems. In some cases, it may not be appropriate to allow public access to areas with highly sensitive ecosystems or animal populations.	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	

## Outcome A. Protect and enhance coastal environmental values

Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>A.1f</b> Consider if the planning proposal is needed or if development zones could be better located to minimise effects on biodiversity.	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>A.1g</b> Avoid development that may disturb, expose or drain areas of Class 1 and Class 2 acid sulfate soils.	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>A.1h</b> Consider direct and indirect effects of development, including any necessary infrastructure, on water quality, water quantity and hydrological flows of waterways and groundwater.	CEA, CUA	n	

## Outcome A.2 Protect coastal wetlands and littoral rainforests

<b>A.2a</b> Identify coastal wetlands and littoral rainforests, including areas that could be rehabilitated or restored in the future, and do not increase development or intensify land uses in these areas.	CWLRA	n	
<b>A.2b</b> Allow for the adaptive management of stormwater run-off so that the quality of water leaving the site is better than pre-development quality to lessen effects on coastal wetlands or other sensitive receiving environments.	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>A.2c</b> Provide environmental buffers and riparian corridors that enable the long-term management and protection of areas of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>A.2d</b> Identify and protect areas that allow for landward migration pathways for coastal wetlands to respond to climate change.	CWLRA, CEA	n	
<b>A.2e</b> Exclude land uses that affect the natural state of coastal wetlands and littoral rainforests or that will make it harder to rehabilitate these ecosystems in the future.	CWLRA	n	

## Outcome A.3 Protect marine parks and aquatic reserves

<b>A.3a</b> Avoid development and land uses that affect the environmental, economic, social and cultural values of marine parks and aquatic reserves.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>A.3b</b> Protect the ecological health of marine parks and aquatic reserves, including providing for riparian vegetation and buffers in their catchments.	CEA, CUA	n	

## Outcome B. Ensure the built environment is appropriate for the coast and local context

Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>Outcome B.1 Respond to and protect elements that make the place special</b>			
<b>B.1a</b> Integrate development within the natural topography of the site and ensure land use, building scale and height respond sympathetically to coastal landforms.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.1b</b> Ensure the intended form and footprint of development does not dominate coastal elements, including foreshores, public spaces and other areas of natural beauty.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.1c</b> Incorporate adaptive, water-sensitive urban design into the development footprint to reduce run-off and manage water quality within receiving environments.	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>B.1d</b> Ensure that lot sizes, building heights and density are appropriate for the coastal settlement, and complement the existing or desired local character, supported by place-based strategies.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.1e</b> Avoid development that would harm geological features and geoheritage.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>Outcome B.2 Ensure urban development complements coastal scenic values</b>			
<b>B.2a</b> Limit ribbon development and urban sprawl wherever possible. In certain locations, place-based strategies may support increased development density and building heights as a better response to urban growth.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.2b</b> Use greenbelts to create, maintain and mark out separation between settlements.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.2c</b> Consider effects on scenic values and maintain publicly accessible views to significant landmarks.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.2d</b> Ensure that building heights consider the effect on views from different vantage points.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.2e</b> Retain or create views from public spaces. Prioritise this over creating views from private property.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>B.2f</b> Provide for active transport links along foreshores, including along estuaries and coastal lakes, and between settlements to increase public access and amenity.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	

## Outcome C. Protect and enhance the social and cultural values of the coastal zone

Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>Outcome C.1 Protect and promote heritage values</b>			
<b>C.1a</b> Ensure development does not harm heritage values or sites.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>C.1b</b> Work collaboratively with local Aboriginal people before and throughout the planning proposal process.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>C.1c</b> With permission and guidance from local Traditional Custodians, identify and emphasise significant features of coastal land and sea Country.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.1d</b> With permission and guidance from local Traditional Custodians, identify and protect sacred and significant areas through the appropriate siting of development.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.1e</b> Ensure land use, building type, scale and height respond to heritage items and areas.	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>Outcome C.2 Provide public access to significant coastal assets</b>			
<b>C.2a</b> Protect and, where practical, improve, public amenity, access to and use of beaches, foreshores, rock platforms, geoheritage sites and headlands, unless you must restrict access for public safety or for environmental or cultural protection. In doing so, consider both current and projected future coastal hazards.	CVA, CEA	n	
<b>C.2b</b> Identify opportunities to maintain and improve existing public access to beaches, foreshores, coastal waters and coastal lakes that support active and passive recreation activities, where this does not interfere with existing coastal industries.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.2c</b> Consolidate access points and consider alternative access to protect sacred and significant Aboriginal cultural areas.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.2d</b> Maintain and improve foreshore access and connections to existing or proposed networks of public open spaces. This includes waterways, riparian areas, bushland and parks for active and passive recreation.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.2e</b> Consider opportunities to protect and improve habitat connectivity through settlements, such as those described in the <i>Greener Places Design Guide</i> .	CWLRA, CEA, CUA	n	

## Outcome C. Protect and enhance the social and cultural values of the coastal zone

Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>C.2f</b> Avoid development on coastal dunes and foreshore reserves unless it is for essential public purposes, such as surf life-saving club buildings. Any building or structure located on dunes must be of lightweight construction and relocatable.	CVA, CEA	n	
<b>C.2g</b> Define the boundaries of development sites with a public edge—for example, a pedestrian pathway or public laneway.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>C.2h</b> Prevent the privatisation of coastal open space by ensuring development next to foreshores is set back, maintains public access and accessibility, and provides links and connections to other public accessways.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>Outcome C.3 Protect public amenity</b>			
<b>C.3a</b> Avoid development that will overshadow the beach, foreshore or public domain. Apply the standard that there must be no overshadowing before 4 pm (midwinter) and 7 pm (Eastern Daylight Saving Time).	CEA, CUA	y	Y
<b>C.3b</b> Protect the amenity of public spaces from buildings, structures or land uses that may be visually and/or acoustically intrusive or create wind funnels.	CEA, CUA	y	Y

## Outcome D. Support sustainable coastal economies

Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>Outcome D.1 Support sustainable industries and recreational activities that depend on the coast</b>			
<b>D.1a</b> Ensure that development will not harm sustainable coastal industries needing waterfront access, or recreational use of the coastal environment.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>D.1b</b> Protect and improve essential facilities such as access ramps and jetties for sustainable coastal industries needing waterfront access.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>D.1c</b> Ensure access ramps, jetties, pontoons, groynes and other structures do not impede navigation on the water or harm coastal landforms or impair processes such as surf breaks.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>D.1d</b> Ensure that the proposal considers how development in a waterway may affect the land.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>Outcome D.2 Promote green infrastructure</b>			
<b>D.2a</b> Do not allow development that is likely to significantly reduce connectivity of existing green infrastructure.	CEA, CUA	n	
<b>D.2b</b> Provide for diverse green infrastructure that can support the changing needs of current and future communities, and provide tourism and recreational opportunities.	CEA, CUA	n	

Outcome E. Respond to coastal hazards			
Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>Outcome E.1 Respond to coastal processes</b>			
<b>E.1a</b> Planning proposals that affect land within a coastal hazard and risk area must not alter coastal processes in a way that harms the natural environment or other land.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA		
<b>E.1b</b> Exclude development in areas affected by a current or projected future coastal hazard that is likely to increase the risk of coastal hazards on that land or other land.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>E.1c</b> Locate or consolidate development in areas with little or no exposure to current and projected future coastal hazards, to ensure public safety and prevent risks to life.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>E.1d</b> Do not increase development potential or intensify land uses in a coastal hazard or risk area.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>Outcome E.2 Account for natural hazard risks</b>			
<b>E.2a</b> Identify areas on and near the proposal that are affected by current or projected future coastal hazards. Ensure that the proposal is compatible with any identified threat or risk.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>E.2b</b> Account for potential interaction between coastal hazards and other current and future natural hazards. This includes flooding, bushfires, landslip, heatwaves, severe storms, east coast lows and cyclones. Refer to the <i>Strategic Guide to Planning for Natural Hazards</i> .	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>E.2c</b> Manage natural hazard risk within the development site. Avoid using public space or adjoining land to lessen risk.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>Outcome E.3 Account for climate change</b>			
<b>E.3a</b> Demonstrate that the proposal applies a 100-year planning horizon for the full range of climate change projections for coastal hazards. This approach recognises that sea level is projected to continue to rise for centuries because of climate change.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	
<b>E.3b</b> Consider how climate change could affect the risk profile of existing natural hazards and create new vulnerabilities and exposure for the proposal in the future.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	<sup>n</sup>	

Outcome E. Respond to coastal hazards			
Requirement	Relevant coastal management area(s)	Applicable to planning proposal (Y/N)	Planning proposal is consistent with guidelines (Y/N) If 'No', justify this
<b>Outcome E.4 Provide sustainable defences to coastal hazards</b>			
<b>E.4a</b> Reduce exposure to coastal hazards by protecting, restoring or improving natural defences. This includes coastal dunes, vegetation, coastal floodplains and coastal wetlands, where suitable.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>E.4b</b> If natural defences are not possible, reduce exposure to coastal hazards without significantly degrading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>biological diversity and ecosystem integrity</b></li> <li>• <b>ecological, biophysical, geological and geomorphological coastal processes</b></li> <li>• <b>beach and foreshore amenity, or the social and cultural value of these areas</b></li> <li>• <b>public safety and access to, or use of, beaches or headlands.</b></li> </ul>	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>Outcome E.5 Protect essential infrastructure</b>			
<b>E.5a</b> Locate and design essential infrastructure to reduce vulnerability to current and projected future coastal hazards. Consider the effects of climate change over at least a 100-year planning horizon.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>E.5b</b> Where exposure to coastal hazards cannot be avoided, prepare adaptation plans for essential service infrastructure. These plans should be consistent with any applicable coastal management program.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>E.5c</b> Consult local Aboriginal land management experts and emergency management agencies on how to strategically locate access routes and other essential infrastructure.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>Outcome E.6 Change land uses to manage legacy issues and avoid creating new ones</b>			
<b>E.6a</b> Ensure the proposal will not require coastal management interventions to remain viable over its expected lifespan.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>E.6b</b> Consider the potential legacy effects of the proposal and if the proposed land uses or development will create a social, environmental, economic or cultural burden for future generations.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	
<b>E.6c</b> Consider if the proposed change of land use could remove redundant legacy infrastructure or reduce existing legacy effects.	CWLRA, CVA, CEA, CUA	n	