

# Guideline

## Coastal Development

### Removing or interfering with coastal dunes

*This document provides guidance to applicants on the information required to support the assessment of a development application to carry out operational work that involves the removal or interference with coastal dunes, completely or partly within a coastal management district, under the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995.*

#### Introduction

Coastal sand dunes provide a buffer against sea erosion, wave overtopping and tidal inundation during storm events, and provide a source of sand to replenish the beach during periods of erosion. To effectively continue to provide this role, dunal areas need to be managed to ensure:

- sand volume and dune crest height are maintained;
- that the plant cover which stabilises the sand and rebuilds the dunes following erosion is retained;
- that any development is set back as far as is practical to minimise the risk of loss or damage from erosion, and the need for future property protection works is provided for;
- use of or practices on the land are sustainable; and
- coastal resources are protected.

Thus, the need for any operational work in these areas, as well as the extent and nature of any potential adverse impacts on coastal processes/resources and their values, need to be examined carefully.

#### Assessment for the purposes of coastal management

This guideline is relevant to operational work that removes or interferes with coastal dunes<sup>1</sup> on land that is:

- above high water mark; and
- completely or partly within a coastal management district; and
- within an erosion prone area; and
- within any one of the following:
  - freehold land,
  - land subject to a lease or licence granted by the State, or
  - land in a State forest or timber reserve.

Operational work that removes or interferes with coastal dunes on land as described above is assessable development under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA), schedule 8, part 1, table 4, item 5(b)(ix).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The IPA (schedule 10) defines coastal dune as "a ridge or hillock of sand or other material on the coast and built up by the wind".

## Removing or interfering with coastal dunes

Subject to the planning scheme<sup>3</sup>, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acts as assessment manager or concurrence agency for the development application and assesses proposals against the *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995* (Coastal Act) and the provisions in the *State Coastal Management Plan – Queensland's Coastal Policy* (2001) (State Coastal Plan) and relevant regional coastal management plans.<sup>4</sup>

### Excluded works

No development approval is required for excluded works, which are minor activities that have no impact on coastal management. Refer to the EPA guideline – *Excluded works* and to the EPA operational policy – *Removing or interfering with coastal dunes in an erosion prone area on land other than State coastal land*.

### Information to accompany your application

To ensure your application can be processed quickly, the following key information should accompany your application for a development permit to remove or interfere with coastal dunes. The application must also include the assessment fee prescribed under the *Coastal Protection and Management Regulation 2003*. The fee is payable to the EPA as either the assessment manager receiving the application or the fee is included with the referral material and referred to the EPA as a concurrence agency.

### Information about the land/activity

- 1) A description of the land on which the proposed works or activities are to be carried out. This description should include the property address, tenure and real property description of the land.
- 2) Two copies of a general plan of the works drawn to a scale of not less than 1:1500 showing the following information.
  - Real property boundaries of the land and adjacent lots.
  - The location of mean high water springs tide<sup>5</sup> in relation to the area of work.
  - The location of the coastal management district<sup>6</sup> in relation to the area of work.
  - The location of the erosion prone area in relation to the work (if different to the coastal management district).
  - Description of existing vegetation and works on the land.
  - Description of the proposed works including general design, surface level changes, volume and type of material to be removed.
  - Area to be cleared and/or requiring rehabilitation after the works are completed.

<sup>2</sup> Note that if the works are below the high water mark they are either tidal works or prescribed tidal works and require a separate approval. Refer to the guideline on *Constructing tidal works and the guideline for assessment against the Prescribed Tidal Work Code*.

<sup>3</sup> The works may require an approval under a local government planning scheme. If this is the case, the EPA will have a concurrence role.

<sup>4</sup> The Coastal Act and coastal plans can be viewed online at [http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/environmental\\_management/coast\\_and\\_oceans/coastal\\_management/](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/coast_and_oceans/coastal_management/).

<sup>5</sup> Predictions of tidal heights for various ports and differences for some other locations may be found in the official Queensland Tide Tables published by the Queensland Transport, but the time and height at locations other than those listed must be adjusted by observation or local knowledge.

<sup>6</sup> The interim coastal management district includes all land under tidal water, all land contained within erosion prone areas and land contained within coastal management control districts under the *Beach Protection Act 1968*.



## Removing or interfering with coastal dunes

- 3) Materials involved in the development, and in particular quantities and sources of materials for fill and a sieve analysis (particular size distribution).

### Information addressing key coastal plan policies

4) Policy 2.2.2 *Erosion prone areas*

- Justification for operational works to be undertaken in the erosion prone area.
- Report on the measures proposed to safeguard the stability of frontal dune areas against wind erosion.
- Impacts the works may have on increasing the risk of tidal inundation or wave overtopping.
- Impacts the works may have on coastal processes (e.g. longshore drift, dune building etc).
- Provide information on measures to protect associated or local development from sea erosion or coastal hazards if the works decrease the current level of protection provided by the dunes.

5) Policy 2.2.4 *Coastal Hazards*

- The location of the storm tide natural hazard management area adopted by local government or if local government have not adopted a storm tide natural hazard management area, the plan should illustrate an alternative area subject to storm tide inundation<sup>7</sup>.
- Details of the severity of the storm tide inundation hazard.
- Details of how the proposal is compatible with the nature and relative severity of the storm tide hazard.
- Details of how the development achieves outcomes 1 and 2 of the guideline [Mitigating the adverse impacts of storm tide inundation](#).

6) Policy 2.4.4 *Stormwater management*

- Details of proposed site drainage particularly with regard to any stormwater runoff across State coastal land or coastal dune areas.

7) Policy 2.8.1 *Areas of state significance (natural resources)*

- Details of potential impacts on areas of State significance (natural resources).

8) Policy 2.8.3 *Biodiversity*

- Details of potential impacts on ecosystems and habitats including the following in regional and local context including:
  - availability and quality of migratory and resident shorebird roosting and feeding habitats;
  - whether vegetation communities at the site are listed as 'of concern' or 'endangered' regional ecosystems in the *Vegetation Management Regulations 2000*; and
  - degradation or loss of native plant or animal populations including marine ecosystems.

<sup>7</sup> Where local government have not adopted a storm tide natural hazard management area, the designed storm tide event should be indicated on the plans. However, where local government have not undertaken detailed studies to provide information about the areas subject to storm tide inundation, the plans should indicate the default area which is below highest astronomical tide + 1.5m. For more information refer to the guideline [Mitigating the adverse impacts of storm tide inundation](#) and the information sheet [Development applications within the Storm Tide Natural Hazard Management Area](#)

## Removing or interfering with coastal dunes

Please note that other coastal plan policies, or further information on key policies, may be relevant to an assessment of your development application. If so, the EPA may request further information in order to decide the application.

### Other matters to consider

#### Information request

When considering the application, the EPA may issue an information request or seek, or require the applicant to seek, the views of other authorities /entities in particular circumstances as follows.

- Environment Australia, if the works are triggered under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 2000* (e.g. Ramsar sites), for views on any matters of national environmental significance.
- Department of Natural Resources and Mines, if the works involve native vegetation clearing.
- Consulting archaeologist if the area is of cultural heritage significance.

#### Referral agencies

The Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries is a concurrence agency if the development involves removal, destruction or damage to a marine plant and/or constructing or raising waterway barrier works. They will also be an advice agency when the development adjoins a declared fish habitat area.

An applicant has up to three months from the receipt of the acknowledgment notice to refer a copy of the application, the notice and any applicable fee(s) to each referral agency for assessment.

#### Other approvals

An approval under the IPA does not remove the need to obtain any further approval(s) for the work that may be required pursuant to other legislation, both State and Commonwealth. Applicants are advised to check with all relevant statutory authorities for such approvals as may be required.

## Removing or interfering with coastal dunes

**Disclaimer:**

While this document has been prepared with care, it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Environmental Protection Agency should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action.

**Approved by**

Signature

Date

Director, Systems and Support  
Environmental Protection Agency

**Enquiries:**  
Ecoaccess Customer Service Unit  
Ph. 1300 368 326  
Fax. (07) 3115 9600