

Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay

What is an overlay?

Overlay mapping and overlay codes within planning schemes identify specific matters that must be considered when undertaking development (e.g. flooding, building height limits, heritage sites). Overlays must be considered alongside other relevant provisions (e.g. zone codes, use codes). Some overlays can change the level of assessment for development and require a planning application.

What is the role of planning in protecting the natural environment?

Our Sunshine Coast community places an especially high value on our natural environment. The wellbeing of our community is intimately linked to, and dependent upon, the preservation of the region's terrestrial, aquatic and coastal environments and biodiversity. Healthy ecosystems provide us with a range of ecosystem services including productive soils, clean air and water, economic activity, resilience, community and cultural identity, health and recreation. They provide critical support to allow our community and economy to function and thrive, just like other forms of 'built' infrastructure.

The proposed planning scheme works in conjunction with State and Commonwealth Government legislation to advance the protection of our natural environment and its values.

What is the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetland Overlay?

The Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay ensures new development protects, and where necessary rehabilitates and enhances, the Sunshine Coast's biodiversity network.

The Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay Map identifies Matters of National, State and Local Environmental Significance, including areas of biodiversity significance, regional ecological linkages, waterways, waterbodies, wetlands, riparian protection areas and priority species areas for koalas and sea turtles.



Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) are specific environmental values that are protected under Australia's [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (EPBC Act). The EPBC Act relates to a range of interests, such as World Heritage properties, National Heritage Places, and Wetlands of International Importance. Examples of MNES layers included in the proposed planning scheme mapping include Ramsar Wetlands and Commonwealth Threatened Ecological Communities.

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Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES) are State-significant environmental values that are identified by the State Government. These include areas such as national parks, important wetlands and waterways and protected species habitats. Examples of MSES layers in the mapping include Koala Priority Areas and Sea Turtle Nesting Areas

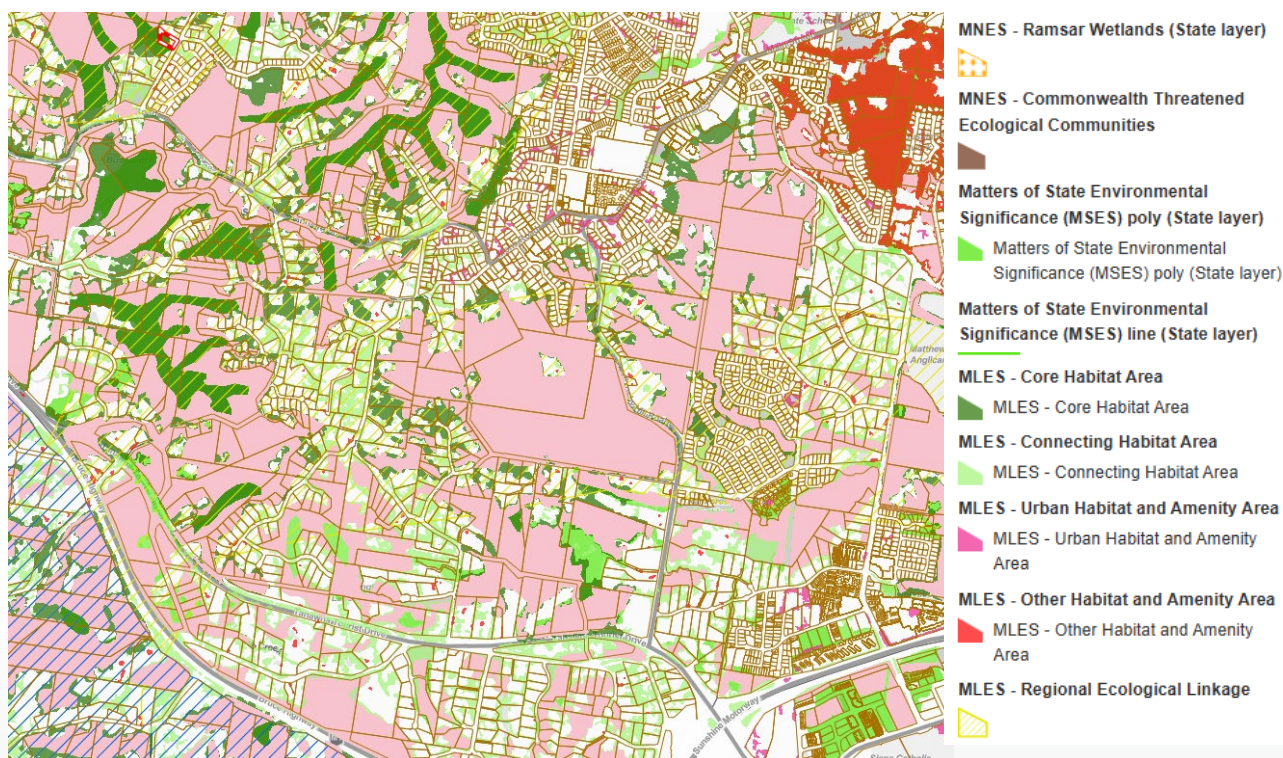
Matters of Local Environmental Significance (MLES) are environmental values identified by local government to protect and manage biodiversity within their jurisdictions. Examples of MLES layers in the mapping include Core Habitat Areas, Waterways and Riparian Protection Areas.

New development on land identified in the overlay mapping is likely to be subject to the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay Code. The code contains provisions that seek to protect the integrity and values of mapped areas.

The code contains provisions that apply to both accepted development subject to requirements (e.g. new dwelling houses and some rural uses), and assessable development.

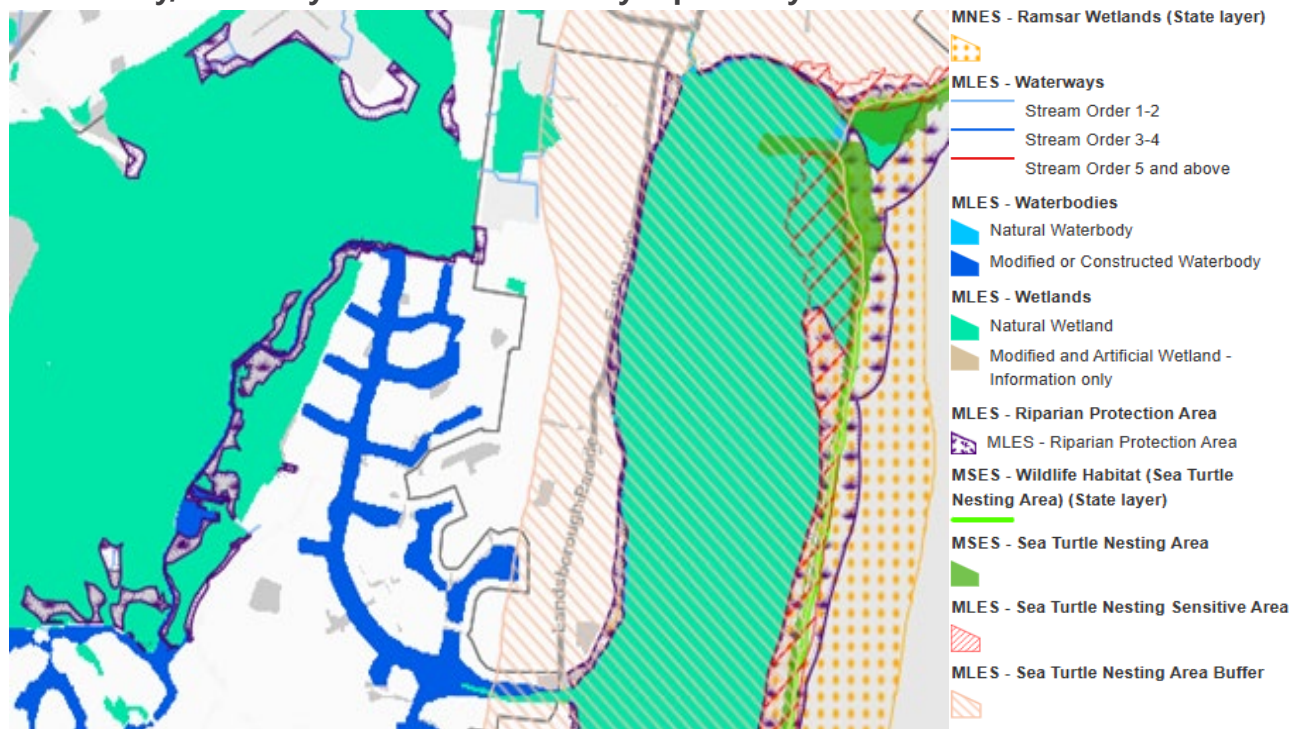
The overlay generally does not change the level of assessment for development, however some development that is typically accepted development may be elevated to code assessment, requiring a planning application to Council (refer to Table 3.7D in Part 3 Tables of Assessment of the proposed planning scheme for details). Accepted development subject to requirements that does not meet the requirements in the code would also be elevated to code assessment. It is important to note that certain development proposals may also be subject to other State and Commonwealth environmental laws.

Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetland Overlay Terrestrial Layers



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Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetland Overlay Aquatic Layers



How could the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay affect my property or development proposal?

Planning scheme overlays do not have any impact on a property unless new development is proposed. New development in areas affected by the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay is likely to require design and construction approaches that prevent any direct impacts on environmental areas. This might include, for example, locating buildings, structures or works away from these areas.

Environmental offsets, such as revegetation or habitat restoration works may need to be provided in some circumstances. Other matters such as water quality, lighting, noise and vibration impacts may also need to be considered.

What changes are proposed for the Biodiversity Waterways and Wetlands Overlay?

While the proposed planning scheme provisions reflect a similar approach to the current planning scheme in general terms, both the mapping and code provisions relating to the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay have seen significant updates. The new overlay mapping more clearly identifies and delineates matters of National, State and Local environmental significance, and specific habitat area functions and values.

New provisions are included relating to development design to avoid impacts on sea turtles, and Aboriginal cultural heritage. The proposed environmental offsets framework has also been updated to align with legislative requirements.

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A new concept of 'essential environmental infrastructure' is proposed to replace the current 'Ecologically important areas'. This is to reflect that these areas provide essential support and ecosystem functions to our community and economy that are broader than their pure ecological values.

How can I find out more?

- Go to the following [information sheets](#):
 - Vegetation clearing
- Go to the following parts of the [proposed planning scheme](#):
 - Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay Code
 - Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay Planning Scheme Policy
 - Table of Assessment for the Biodiversity, Waterways and Wetlands Overlay Code
 - Find out the zoning and overlay mapping that is [proposed for your property](#)
- If you have a question, contact Council's planning scheme team:
 - Email: newplanningscheme@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
 - Phone: 07 5409 0570



To explore the proposed planning scheme or make a submission, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://haveyoursay.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/newplanningscheme>



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