

Flooding and Stormwater

Why is regulating development in areas subject to flooding and stormwater hazards important?

The effects of flooding and stormwater hazards on the built environment and the community range from nuisance impacts to tragic and catastrophic outcomes. It is therefore critical that these risks are managed and mitigated to an acceptable level.

At a strategic level, the region's major floodplains all require careful management to perform their critical flood storage roles for our communities.

In addition to protecting our floodplains, mitigating risk through design and modification of development, including redevelopment of existing properties, is a key strategy for improving community resilience into the future.

While development may be seen to be feasible in an affected location, once constructed, it may not be insurable and/or eligible for finance if it is not undertaken in a legal, well-informed and prudent way.



Where and how development is located, designed and built is of critical importance in addressing the risks presented by flooding hazards. This will only become more important over time, with a changing climate causing increased frequency in severe weather events and rises in sea level.

What is the role of planning schemes in relation to flooding and stormwater hazards?

The *State Planning Policy 2017* (SPP) requires Council to include provisions to manage flood risk in the planning scheme to either avoid development in areas subject to flood risk or to otherwise manage the risks. The proposed planning scheme is intended to play a key role in ensuring that risks and vulnerabilities arising from flooding are managed to an acceptable level.

How does the proposed planning scheme address flooding and stormwater hazards?

The proposed planning scheme contains updated and improved overlay mapping and planning provisions to ensure development achieves appropriate immunity and risk resilience that corresponds to its risk profile.

The proposed policy responses vary depending on the extent and nature of the flooding or stormwater hazard (or combination of hazards) and whether affected areas are within urban areas or non-urban areas.

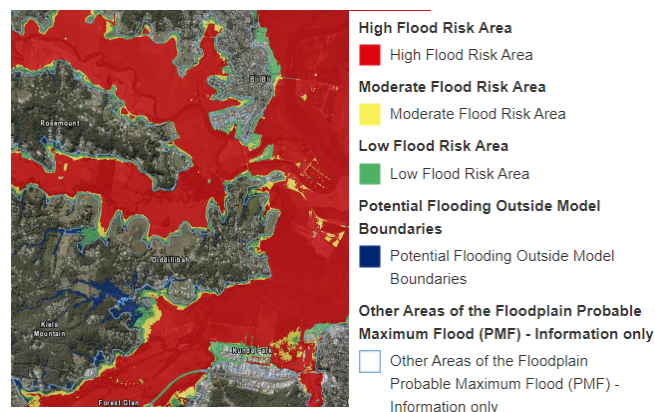
The Flood Hazard Overlay Map identify areas currently affected (or predicted to be affected) by flood risk, as well as important flood storage preservation areas. The Stormwater Risk Map identifies areas affected by stormwater risk (where modelling is available).

New assessable development proposed in areas identified in this mapping is likely to be subject to the Flood Hazard Overlay Code, and/or the Stormwater Management Code. Accepted development (such as a dwelling house) is also subject to requirements in the Flood Hazard Overlay Code. The provisions of these codes help ensure new development is appropriate and has an acceptable level of risk. Such measures may include designing for resilience and risk mitigation, avoiding loss of flood storage, as well as locating certain uses or types of development outside of risk areas.

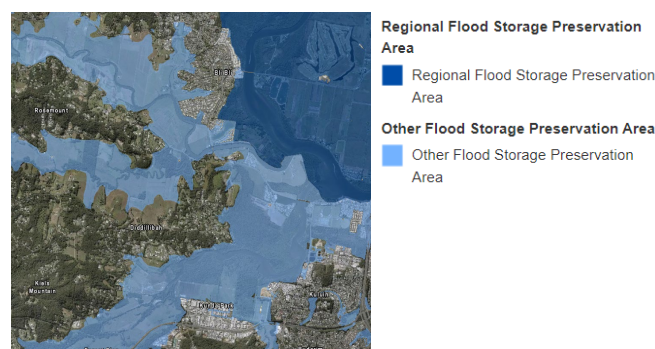
Assessment of new development proposals by Council may be required and a Council flood information search should be requested as a necessary starting point for development design. Specialist engineering assessments may be required for some development.



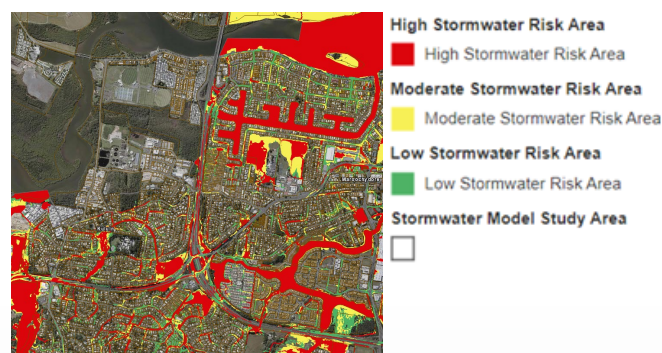
Flood Hazard Overlay Map example - Flood Risk (Bli Bli/Kuluin area)



Flood Hazard Overlay Map example - Flood Storage Preservation Areas (Bli Bli/Kuluin area)



Stormwater Risk Map example - Kuluin/Maroochydore area



Disclaimer The contents of this information sheet deals with technical matters in a summary way only and has been prepared to assist the community to understand the proposed planning scheme. Please refer to the proposed planning scheme for further detail. © Sunshine Coast Regional Council 2025

What are the implications for development proposals in areas subject to flood risk and stormwater risk?

A nuanced and locally-specific approach to regulating development is required for areas affected by flood risk and stormwater risk, which can occur in combination with other hazards, including coastal hazards.

Measures required to achieve an appropriate development outcome on land with flood risk and/or stormwater risk can vary greatly based on the type of development proposed, the risk categories identified and whether the land is within an existing urban area or otherwise intended for urban development.

Limits on the range of permissible land uses and detailed engineering provisions are proposed to apply to development in areas with high or moderate risk. More permissive provisions are proposed for land with low risk.

Examples of site design measures that may be required include the setting of minimum floor levels, incorporating flood protection for on-site infrastructure, providing flood resilient access and parking, and designing buildings to withstand severe flooding events.



On-site stormwater for new development will need to be managed to avoid increasing the potential for stormwater damage or nuisance either on site or on neighbouring properties. Refer to the Table of Assessment for the Flood Hazard Overlay, the Flood Hazard Overlay Code and Stormwater Management Code in the proposed planning scheme for further details.

What are flood storage preservation areas?

The Flood Hazard Overlay Map identifies new 'regional flood storage preservation areas' and 'other flood storage preservation areas'.

Areas mapped as 'regional flood storage preservation areas' represent those areas of the floodplain that perform the most critical flood storage functions. These areas include parts of the lower Maroochy River Floodplain (including the 'Blue Heart'), Mooloolah River Floodplain and Bells Creek floodplain west of Pelican Waters. The protection of these areas for flood storage is of critical importance to the integrity of the Sunshine Coast settlement pattern. These areas are also typically subject to high flood risk.

New development is to avoid regional flood storage preservation areas generally, with these areas proposed to be protected from the cumulative impacts of development (e.g. filling) that may compromise vital flood storage. Development that remains permissible in these areas is proposed to be subject to stringent planning provisions.

On development sites that are located in 'other flood storage preservation areas', the design of new development will need to prioritise flood storage.

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Where is filling for flooding and inundation immunity appropriate?

In most coastal urban areas located in lower parts of a flood catchment, filling is intended as one of a range of measures to help achieve flood immunity.

In specific cases, development will need to achieve flood immunity by being located on structure (e.g. a pole home) as opposed to being located on fill. Examples include sites in identified flood storage preservation areas, areas subject to stormwater risk/overland flow, and storm tide wave action areas (refer to the 'Coastal hazards' information sheet for further details).



What are the key changes proposed to the flooding and stormwater management provisions?

Flood Hazard Overlay

The Flood Hazard Overlay Map introduces new mapping categories and layers which correspond to Council's latest published flood mapping.

The new Flood Risk mapping reflects an updated methodology that considers a range of flood event frequencies and flood behaviour information such as depth, velocity and hazard,

combined with storm tide related impacts to produce a map with three categories of risk: low, moderate and high.

The new Flood Storage Preservation Area mapping has been prepared in response to actions in Council's Environment and Liveability Strategy 2023 (ELS) and shows where critical flood storage preservation and additional earthworks controls are required.

The requirements and assessment benchmarks in the Flood Hazard Overlay Code have been updated and revised to correspond with the new mapping and SPP requirements. In contrast to the current planning scheme, which applies generalised policy positions for flood prone land across the region, the proposed new code reflects a more locally specific regulatory approach depending on the type of development proposed, its urban or non-urban context, and identified flood risk categories.

Stormwater management

The new Stormwater Risk Map is accompanied by significant changes to provisions regulating stormwater management, including the Stormwater Management Code and Development Works Planning Scheme Policy. New allotment drainage and inter-allotment drainage standards are also proposed for accepted development such as dwelling houses and dual occupancies (refer to the Dwelling House Code and Dual Occupancy Code). The stormwater management section of the Development Works Planning Scheme Policy has also been extensively revised to reflect contemporary practices.

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How can I find out more?

Proposed planning scheme

- Go to the following [information sheets](#) and parts of the [proposed planning scheme](#)
 - Flood Hazard Overlay
 - Stormwater Management Code
 - Development Works Planning Scheme Policy
 - Flood Hazard Overlay Planning Scheme Policy.

Other information resources

- [Draft Sunshine Coast Flooding and Coastal Resilience Design Guide](#)
- Council's [Flooding and Stormwater Management Guidelines](#)
- Council's [Flood Mapping and Information](#) and [Floodplain management webpages](#)
- 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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