Frequently Asked Questions

Draft Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan

June 2026

What is the Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan project?

This project is about understanding how Bancoora Beach and Breamlea foreshore might be impacted by future erosion and inundation (from rising seas and greater storms in coming years), what impact these changes might have on the important cultural, environmental and social values on the foreshore, and how we can adapt and plan for these impacts.

Which area does the draft Plan cover?

The Plan covers the coastal Crown land of Bancoora Beach and Breamlea foreshore managed by Barwon Coast (see above).

These foreshore reserves stretch from the Thompson Creek estuary in the southwest to Bancoora Beach to the east and include beaches, dune systems, wetlands, as well as the Breamlea Caravan Park and Bancoora Surf Lifesaving Club area.

The Plan is primarily focused on the areas of coastal Crown land under Barwon Coast's jurisdiction. The Plan also considers the interconnected coastal system and adjoining land uses and access to these areas.

How has the community been involved in the project?

Community input was sought between August and October 2025 to understand what is valued in the area. This included a public online survey which received 55 responses and six targeted interviews with residents and a member of the Bancoora Surf Life Saving Club.

The consultation period aiming to get public feedback on draft Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan was open from Thursday, 26 March to Sunday, 3 May, 2026, and included a community drop-in session on Saturday 18 April, a survey, email submissions and a pop-up information session at the One Planet festival. More detail can be found in the Closing the Loop report, which can be found on our dedicated project page..

Who had input into the draft Bancoora CAP?

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, government agencies/authorities, stakeholders, community groups, community members, and adjoining land managers were involved in developing the Plan. A Project Steering Group (PSG) was created to engage with Traditional Owners and stakeholders.

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Local groups and the community were involved through online and in-person engagement activities including surveys and interviews.

How was the draft plan developed?

Barwon Coast engaged Alluvium Consulting to develop the plan which was developed in partnership with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. The project followed the statewide, *Victoria's Resilient Coast: Adapting to 2100+* 'Framework and Guidelines', which sets out the best practice approaches to coastal adaptation planning.

The plan was developed over five stages:

- Stage 1 – Project scoping and preparation.
- Stage 2 – Understanding the values and aspirations for the area.
- Stage 3 – Identifying the extent of coastal hazard (erosion and inundation) in the study area.
- Stage 4 – Considering the impact of the coastal hazards on the values of the area
- Stage 5 – Developing a plan for how we adapt to the impacts of the coastal hazard on the values.

The project was supported by a Project Steering Group which had representatives from Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action, City of Greater Geelong, Parks Victoria, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Bancoora Surf Life Saving Club.

What are coastal hazards?

Natural coastal processes work to shift sediment and shape the coastline. When these processes negatively impact on use of the coast, they become coastal hazards. These impacts could be environmental, social, cultural or economic impacts. Coastal hazards include coastal erosion, and inundation.

What is 'coastal adaptation planning' and a 'coastal adaption plan'?

Coastal adaption planning is about understanding the potential impacts of erosion and inundation on important cultural, environmental, social and economic values in an area, and developing a plan that sets out how and when we respond and adapt to these hazards over time.

Why did we do it here?

Bancoora Beach has significant cultural, environmental and social values that might be impacted by coastal hazards. There is a need to understand what these impacts might be now and into the future. This is particularly relevant with increasing population growth in the region, more pressure on the using the coast and the need to plan for this appropriately.

Is coastal adaptation planning happening in other parts of the Barwon Coast reserve?

This is the first coastal adaption plan that Barwon Coast has prepared. This has been enabled through a grant as part of *Victoria's Resilient Coast – adapting to 2100+* program.

Future adaptation planning will be informed by the findings of the Coastal Hazard Exposure Report. Barwon Coast engaged Water Technology to assess predicted coastal hazard impact across the foreshore reserves. Further information on this project can be found here: https://barwoncoast.com.au/project/coastalhazardreport/.

Why is the Bancoora SLSC tower proposed for removal?

The SLSC tower and the viewing platform are currently at risk of open coastal erosion (p34). Both these assets will be increasingly exposed to erosion as time progresses. Adaptation actions must retain essential SLSC services while also seeking to address emerging risk to values and assets. In response, the adaptation pathways include an action to consider SLSC observation needs at the end of design life for the current SLSC tower and viewing platform, including the potential use of relocatable towers or trailers.

Community members, stakeholders and land managers will be consulted as adaptation actions are planned and implemented.

How does the Bancoora CAP interact with the Coastal Hazard Exposure Report (CHER) and Foreshore Master Plan?

The Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan is part of Barwon Coast's whole-of-coast management approach that includes the Coastal Hazard Exposure Report (CHER) and Foreshore Master Plan.

The CHER maps current and future coastal erosion and inundation from Breamlea to Collendina. Results from this Plan have been incorporated into the CHER to create a consistent set of hazard maps across Barwon Coast's management area. Unlike this Plan, the CHER does not assess impacts on coastal values and assets or identify adaptation actions. However, its mapping has informed the draft Foreshore Master Plan and will support future risk-informed adaptation planning for other coastal areas.

The Foreshore Master Plan is a 15-year plan for protecting, accessing, and improving the coast from Breamlea to Collendina. Its scope extends beyond coastal adaptation, setting Barwon Coast's strategic direction, investment priorities and works program. It will help balance the protection and enhancement of the natural environment with pressures such as population growth and ageing infrastructure, as well as coastal hazards.

Is there enough of a focus on protecting the natural environment?

Protecting the natural environment is a central focus of the Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan and was identified as a key priority and value by the community throughout the engagement process.

The Plan is built around six key values themes (page 18 of the Summary Plan), many of which directly relate to the importance of healthy coastal ecosystems and natural landscapes that make Bancoora and Breamlea a special place on the coast. These values have directly shaped both the adaptation objectives and the adaptation actions included in the Plan.

The majority of the adaptation objectives (page 20, Bancoora CAP) are closely linked to protecting and enhancing natural values, including maintaining the function of beaches, dunes and coastal ecosystems, supporting biodiversity, and allowing natural coastal processes to continue where possible. These objectives were a key consideration when assessing and selecting adaptation pathways and actions.

The risk assessment (page 27, Bancoora CAP) also highlights the importance of natural assets, particularly within the Breamlea beach and dunes sub-area, where coastal habitats and natural systems are identified as important values potentially affected by future coastal change. The risk assessment process also specifically considered the spectrum of consequences of hazard impacts on the natural environment, defining these ratings in detail.

The Plan recognises that healthy coastal ecosystems are often one of the most effective ways to build long-term coastal resilience. As a result, many of the proposed adaptation actions seek to protect natural coastal processes, support ecosystem health, and avoid or minimise interventions

that could adversely affect the natural functioning of the coastline, in particular the extensive dune system of Bancoora Beach.

What legislation, policies and frameworks inform the Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan?

The Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan has been developed in accordance with Victoria's coastal and marine management framework, which guides how coastal hazards and climate change are managed across the state.

Key documents informing the Plan include the Marine and Coastal Act 2018, the Marine and Coastal Policy, the Marine and Coastal Strategy, and Victoria's Resilient Coast – Adapting for 2100+ (2023). Together, these provide the legislative and policy basis for coastal hazard risk management and adaptation planning.

For more information on the legislation, policies and frameworks that inform the Plan, please refer to Section 1.2 of the Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan Technical Report.

Why is the Bancoora SLSC tower proposed for removal?

The SLSC tower / viewing platform is at immediate risk of open coastal erosion (page 34 of the Bancoora CAP), this will increase to a significant risk as time progresses. Adaptation actions must retain essential SLSC services and address emerging risk across these assets. In response, an action included in the adaptation pathways includes that at the end of the life of the current SLSC tower and viewing platform, that we consider SLSC observation needs and moveable towers / trailers.

Community members, stakeholders and land managers will be consulted as adaptation actions are planned and implemented.

Why doesn't the Plan address broader issues such as impacts on waterways, rural lands, roads, private property or other areas outside Barwon Coast-managed land?

The Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan focuses on managing coastal hazard risks on land managed by Barwon Coast within the Bancoora Beach and Breamlea foreshore area. As a result, broader catchment and land-use issues are outside the scope of this Plan and are managed through separate processes and agencies.

That said, the Plan recognises that coastal change does not stop at management boundaries. Some impacts will affect areas outside Barwon Coast-managed land, including local roads, access routes, utilities, rural lands, the Thompson Estuary and surrounding township areas. For this reason, the Plan includes a landscape-scale approach and identifies priorities that will require collaboration with other land managers, agencies and stakeholders.

Further information on these landscape-scale priorities is provided in Table 12 (page 51) of the Plan. Foundational adaptation action F2.2 is specifically focussed on promoting advocacy for and collaboration with land managers in landscape-scale adaptation planning for Breamlea/Bancoora, including:

- Township adaptation planning and road access (City of Greater Geelong)
- Natural system adaptation and Thompson Creek estuary management (Corangamite CMA, Parks Victoria, Surf Coast Shire).
- Other utilities and servicing of Barwon Coast land and assets (Barwon Water, other utility providers)

What happens next?

The Bancoora Coastal Adaptation Plan follows Victoria's Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning Framework and covers Stages 1–5 of the process. These stages focus on understanding coastal hazards, identifying the values that may be affected, assessing risks, and developing adaptation pathways and actions to respond to future coastal change.

Barwon Coast will complete stages Stage 6 (Plan and implement) and Stage 7 (Ongoing monitoring and review) in a separate process.

Detailed decisions about priorities, timing, funding, design, approvals and delivery of adaptation options will be considered during these later stages. Community members, stakeholders and land managers will be consulted as adaptation actions are planned and implemented.

Implementation will also be guided by Barwon Coast's broader planning framework, including the Corporate Plan, annual operational plans, the Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) and other relevant strategies. Progress, coastal conditions and emerging information will continue to be monitored over time to ensure management approaches remain appropriate and effective.

Key definition and terms

Term	Definition
Adaptation	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. This includes disturbance such as coastal hazards. In human systems, adaptation seeks to proactively manage/avoid harm, and make use of beneficial opportunities
Adaptive capacity	The ability of systems, institutions, humans and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to consequences.
CAP	Coastal Adaptation Plan
Coastal erosion	The process of winds, waves and coastal currents shifting sediment away from a localised area of the shoreline. Coastal erosion can include short term (storm event) erosion and long-term erosion from both historic change and future changes due to sea level rise.
Coastal hazards	Natural coastal processes that may negatively impact on the marine and coastal environment, including impacts on human use, values, property or infrastructure. Hazards include coastal erosion and inundation (flooding) due to storm tide and sea level rise.
Event	Where weather conditions affecting a place are notably different from typical, day-to-day conditions experienced at that location (e.g. a storm event). An event might include high winds, high tides and/or rainfall leading to high catchment (river) flow and can cause inundation (flooding) and/or erosion. Events vary in magnitude (size) and duration (time). They may last from hours up to several days.
Exposure	The degree to which a system is exposed to a given hazard.
Permanent inundation	Regular inundation (flooding) from tides, increasing with sea level rise.
Planning horizon	An indicative timeframe by which a projected sea level rise scenario is anticipated to occur. While each sea level rise projection has been linked to a time period, the stated time is indicative and may need to be revised as more localised sea level projections are developed and/or updated.
Resilience	The capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event/trend, reorganising in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. In an operational context, risk is the likelihood of an event occurring, combined with its potential consequence.
Sand scraping	The mechanical movement or 'pushing' of sand from the lower part of the beach to the upper beach / dune or redistributing sand build-up from undesirable areas. This mimics natural beach recovery and helps accelerate dune rebuilding after storm-based erosion.
Sea level rise (SLR)	An increase in the mean level of the ocean. Relative sea level rise occurs where there is a local increase in the ocean level relative to the land, which might be due to ocean rise and/or land subsidence.
Storm tide inundation	Inundation (flooding) resulting from storm activity, combining storm surge and the predicted tide height.
VRC	Victoria's Resilient Coast - Adapting for 2100+. Victorian Government guidance for coastal adaptation planning.