FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Coastal Adaptation Plan

Why has the City of Onkaparinga developed a Coastal Adaptation Plan?

The City of Onkaparinga knows how special the coast is. We have taken action over many years to ensure community and visitors can continue to safely enjoy the prized coastline and beaches.

The Coastal Adaptation Plan provides a roadmap for helping Council and the community to monitor and manage change along our coastline. Having a long-term plan helps council to keep making good decisions for the future.

It is hoped the Plan will give everyone greater certainty about how we look after our coastline, including when we do and don't need to take bigger steps.

What is coastal adaptation?

Coastal adaptation is a broad term that describes the strategies and actions that help coastal communities, infrastructure and ecosystems adjust to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise.

This means identifying actions to manage our coastline that provide benefits across many sectors such as safety, tourism, health, environment, and recreation. It also means avoiding things that would make it more difficult to cope with coastal hazards and climate risk in the future.

It is an important part of how we plan for and manage our coasts.

How was the Coastal Adaptation Plan developed?

This plan is the culmination of research and investigations over a number of years, including:

- Undertaking a detailed Coastal Adaptation Study from 2018 to 2021 which provided a baseline understanding of how the coast currently operates and assessed the coastal risks and vulnerabilities from sea level rise.
- Developing a Coastal Decision-Making Framework to help ensure decision making associated with the coast considers the current and future coastal context and is repeatable and transparent.
- Undertaking an Options Analysis to identify, evaluate, and prioritise the options available to us in responding to the risks identified in the Coastal Adaptation Study.
- Engaging with our community to understand their priorities.

How did community feedback influence the plan?

Across all engagement methods many participants provided feedback that they support council's overall approach to coastal adaptation.

In particular participants supported the evidence-based approach that is based upon detailed historical investigations as well as future projections, and the pragmatic

adaptation options that will be triggered by future coastal monitoring.

This feedback has been considered in the development of the Coastal Adaptation Plan, especially in our focus on monitoring coastal change, and in the specific actions for the next seven years.

Further details of engagement outcomes including the themes of feedback relating to the adaptation options for each location, can be found in the full Engagement feedback report.

What coastal adaptation options did we consider?

There is no single solution to coastal adaptation. There are a range of options that can be considered based on the specific risks that need to be managed in a particular location. There are six main options used in coastal adaptation planning around Australia:

- Avoidance – Avoid the impacts of coastal hazards by ensuring that assets or services are not in areas that could be impacted now or in the future.
- Managed retreat – Progressively move assets or services away from areas that could be impacted by coastal hazards now or in the future.
- Accommodate – Modify how assets are built or services delivered to reduce the impact of coastal hazards.
- Hold the line – Install protection infrastructure that reduces the impact of coastal hazards or use environmental practices to strengthen natural protective forms such as dunes.
- Loss acceptance – Accept that coastal hazards will cause negative impacts on assets and services and that when this occurs, they will not be replaced.
- Defer decision making and monitor - the threat to infrastructure or services is identified but instead of taking action, closely monitor the hazard because it is likely that the threat will only be realised if seas rise as projected.

Within each of the first four categories there is a range of actions that may be taken. These can be categorised into the areas of planning, engineering, environmental management and community awareness and education.

How does the plan relate to the current coastal protection projects?

There are a range of site-specific coastal protection projects currently underway. Council will continue to consult the community whenever it is delivering projects along the coast. Current coastal protection projects include:

- Tiller Drive Car Park and Shared Path (managed retreat) – Project completed July 2023.
- Esplanade Seaford Contiguous Piling Cliff Stabilisation – Currently being constructed.
- Aldinga Beach Cliff Toe Protection – In Planning and design phase.
- Christies Beach - Seawall Renewal – In Planning and Design phase.

- Witton Bluff north – Christies Beach – seawall repair and upgrade – construction in 12 months.
- Sand Drift Fencing and Beach Sand Replenishment (nature base solutions) – In Planning phase.

Council officers are already using the learnings from the Coastal Adaptation Study in these projects to respond to current risks.

How does the plan relate to the Witton Bluff Base Trail project?

The City of Onkaparinga is continuing to work with the local community, including local Kaurna community members, and all levels of government to progress the Witton Bluff Base Trail project.

You can read more about this project here: https://yoursay.onkaparinga.sa.gov.au/witton-buff-base-trail

The Coastal Adaptation Plan will consider the long-term options for managing the impacts of sea level rise and other coastal changes at Witton Bluff, as it is for all parts of the coast.

The proposed Base Trail project does not change how we approach the long-term coastal adaptation options for this site, and in fact, the Coastal Adaptation Study has informed the planning and design for the trail.