

ZONING IN ON ENVIRONMENT

Our environment is as diverse as the people who make up the MidCoast community. The MidCoast offers ready access to many of the regions high-quality natural areas.

Development in the MidCoast is currently guided by three different planning frameworks, which is why we're working to develop a consistent, region-wide framework. The Rural Strategy is one of the key elements required in developing the new Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.

The draft Rural Strategy proposes a new framework for our waterways, rural and environmental lands, which cover around 95% of the MidCoast. These areas contain a diverse range of resources and amenities that underpin our lifestyle and livelihoods and are increasingly sought out for business, recreational and tourism uses.

LOOKING AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

The MidCoast is rich in natural treasures, from stunning beaches and sea-cliffs, the peaks of the Great Dividing Range, pristine lakes and estuaries to unique and diverse plants and wildlife.

Protection of our natural environment has been identified as one of five core values in the MidCoast Community Strategic Plan. In recognition of this, placing the region's biodiversity and ecological health at the forefront of our planning practices is crucial.

Everyone has a role to play in protecting our environment and Council is committed to leading the way through the development of the Biodiversity Framework that provides a road map for the management and protection of our biodiversity. The draft Rural Strategy builds on this work by providing one set of clear consistent planning rules that address the competing needs of development and conservation across the MidCoast.

Due to the desirable lifestyle our region offers we will continue to experience pressures to rezone and intensify development in our rural areas, which are home to many of the natural features we enjoy and that our region is known for. A land use planning framework that facilitates the appropriate balance of development and environmental protection across the MidCoast has been proposed.

For this reason, the draft Rural Strategy has used Environmental zones to protect land that has been identified as contributing important environmental value. Environmental zones will be used where there is clear, robust data to support their use. A full explanation of the Environmental zones is provided overleaf.

Find out more about the Biodiversity Framework at: www.haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/biodiversity-framework



LOOKING AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

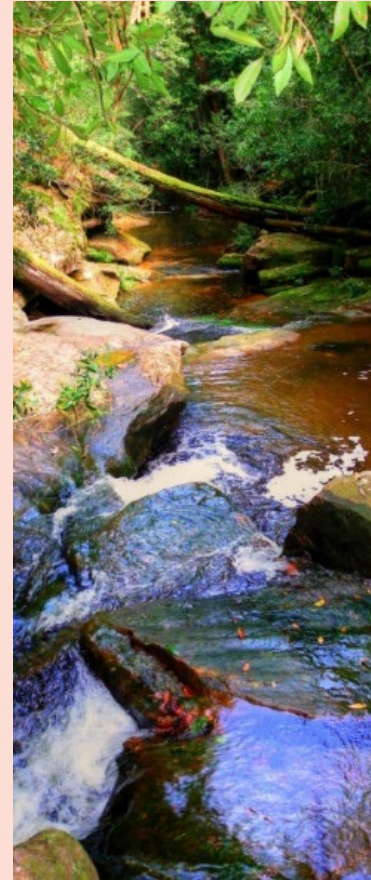
What are the environmental zones and how are they used?

E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves: This zone is used for the management and use of land within National Parks, nature reserves and conservation areas.

E2 Environmental Conservation: This zone is used to protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values. It will be applied to littoral rainforests, coastal wetlands, vegetation listed as an endangered ecological community, biodiversity conservation areas and areas legally required to be restored and protected.

E3 Environmental Management: This zone is used to manage and restore areas with special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values and allows for a limited range of development. It will be applied to rural land in sensitive coastal environments; land protected by property vegetation plans and conservation agreements; riverfront land affected by high risk flooding; and land within aquifer catchments.

E4 Environmental Living: This zone will be applied to rural lifestyle properties not used for agriculture and to land located near a national park, sensitive vegetation or waterways. This zone will also replace the rural zone in urban areas, where intensive agriculture and rural industries would not be supported.



Key changes:

Some lands will change from a rural to an environmental zone. This has been proposed to protect important natural features and resources from potentially damaging land use activities.

For example, the Environmental Management Zone will be applied to areas within aquifer catchments to protect them from intensive agricultural activities which could impact the quality of these important water sources. In this instance, existing land uses can continue under 'existing use rights'.

Careful consideration has been given when placing land in an environmental zone and proposed changes are supported by robust data, legislation, State and regional planning policies and regional strategies.



Zoning in on our future

We're zoning in on the zones used across the MidCoast to develop a clear, consistent planning framework. It will guide the way we manage land use across the entire region.

The Rural Strategy is part of this overarching project and reviews our waterways, rural and environmental lands, which cover around 95% of the MidCoast. Find out more: haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au