



# Protections for World Surfing Reserves in Queensland

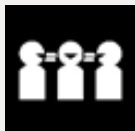
Discussion paper



**Queensland**  
Government

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The department may disclose some, or all, information (excluding personal information) gathered to inform the development of policy and legislative options for the purposes of better protecting Queensland World Surfing Reserves. The department may collate the information received through this process and publicly release or publish data and statistics in an aggregate and non-identifiable form.

The department will not publish, in full or part, any submissions in response to this discussion paper except as required under the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

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October 2020

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# Message from the Minister



Queensland is a world-renowned surfing mecca. Our sub-tropical climate, pristine sandy beaches and enviable wave breaks make it an iconic and favoured surfing destination.

Surfing is also an integral part of the coastal culture and sporting life Queenslanders love. Our stunning coastline is dotted with towns and cities synonymous with a surfside lifestyle.

The economic benefits of surfing are far-reaching for these coastal communities, generating both broad-based and niche tourism and business opportunities. As an increasingly global mainstream sport, Queensland also attracts high-profile professional surfing competitions and events every year.

For thousands of Queenslanders, surfing is an exhilarating way to stay active, be part of the community and enjoy nature-based exercise.

With just 11 World Surfing Reserves recognised worldwide, it is a privilege that locations right here in Queensland on the Gold Coast and at Noosa have been declared exceptional surfing areas of international significance.

As part of our 10-year Activate! Queensland strategy to get more Queenslanders moving, more often by investing in places and spaces that inspire an active lifestyle, the Queensland Government is committed to safeguarding and preserving these natural assets for generations to come.

I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment to the protection of Queensland's World Surfing Reserves and I invite you, through this discussion paper, to have your say on how we can most effectively ensure these reserves remain protected.

**The Honourable Mick de Brenni MP**

Minister for Housing and Public Works  
Minister for Digital Technology  
Minister for Sport





Photo credit: Tourism and Events Queensland



# Introduction

This discussion paper seeks community and broader stakeholder views on how Queensland's World Surfing Reserves can be protected for current and future generations of Queenslanders and visitors.

While the regulatory frameworks of the jurisdictions in which World Surfing Reserves are declared may provide a range of protections, concerns have been raised about the need to remove any gaps that may mean these highly prized surfing breaks and their natural surrounds are not fully protected into the future.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring our legislative frameworks provide enduring protections for its two World Surfing Reserves at the Gold Coast and at Noosa and for any future World Surfing Reserves that might be declared in the state.

Current regulatory frameworks provide a range of protections for Queensland's existing World Surfing Reserves at the southern end of the Gold Coast and at Noosa, including for water quality, foreshore vegetation, marine plants and adjacent protected areas such as the Burleigh Heads National Park and Noosa National Park.

Legislation aimed at fully protecting World Surfing Reserves would need to address any potential gaps to ensure that Queensland's World Surfing Reserves are preserved into the future. It will need to make clear broader objectives to protect a wide-ranging set of values and characteristics of World Surfing Reserves that includes, but is not limited to, the quality of the surfing breaks in those areas.

The questions in this discussion paper seek stakeholder views on the following aspects of the World Surfing Reserves at Noosa and the Gold Coast:

- ways to improve protections of World Surfing Reserves, including through legislation and creating a state-level mechanism to oversee management and protection of all World Surfing Reserves in Queensland
- the quality of the waves and importance of events such as surfing competitions held at World Surfing Reserves
- natural and broader environmental characteristics of World Surfing Reserves and their surrounds, including available facilities and services
- cultural heritage of World Surfing Reserves
- economic or commercial value of World Surfing Reserves
- existing management frameworks and local support networks for managing and protecting World Surfing Reserves
- key threats to World Surfing Reserves, including from future developments or competing uses that may affect surfing wave quality.

The results of consultation will make clear the features of World Surfing Reserves valued by local communities and visitors, and will help to inform the development of lasting legislative protections for these premier surfing destinations. Through this process, Queensland has a genuine opportunity to conserve its world-recognised surfing breaks by ensuring World Surfing Reserves are protected for all to enjoy.

## Feedback

Your views on protecting Queensland's World Surfing Reserves should be provided to Sport and Recreation, Department of Housing and Public Works by **5pm, Monday 30 November 2020**.

Feedback can be provided:

Online: **Complete the survey or upload a submission at [qld.gov.au/worldsurfingreserves](https://qld.gov.au/worldsurfingreserves)**

By email: **[sportrecpartnership@npsr.qld.gov.au](mailto:sportrecpartnership@npsr.qld.gov.au)**

By post: **PO Box 15478, City East QLD 4002**

The questions provided in this discussion paper are a guide only. For example, you can choose to provide feedback only on the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve or the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, if you prefer. You are strongly encouraged to answer the general questions about improving protections for Queensland's World Surfing Reserves and other general questions about World Surfing Reserves.

In addition to answering the consultation questions provided in this discussion paper or completing the online survey, formal submissions from stakeholders are also welcome.

When making a submission please ensure you provide your full name, mailing and email addresses, as well as details of the organisation you represent and your role in that organisation, if relevant.



## Background

Save the Waves Coalition, a non-governmental organisation, launched the initiative to dedicate World Surfing Reserves in 2009. World Surfing Reserves are globally significant surfing sites, or those with an outstanding series of surf breaks.

World Surfing Reserves have unique environmental characteristics, are rich in surf culture and history, and are highly valued by local communities and those who visit these sites for their beauty and amenity, and sport and recreation purposes.

The declaration of World Surfing Reserves works to proactively identify, designate and preserve the intrinsic environmental, cultural, heritage, sporting, recreation, economic and community value of surfing habitats around the globe.<sup>1,2</sup>

Of the 11 World Surfing Reserves currently recognised by Save the Waves Coalition, three are located in Australia, with two in Queensland: Manly Beach in New South Wales, the southern beaches of the Gold Coast and the breaks around Noosa Headland.

The Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve was approved in 2015 and dedicated a year later, while the Noosa World Surfing Reserve was approved in 2017 and dedicated in 2020.

The 11 World Surfing Reserves currently recognised are as follows:

- Noosa, Queensland, Australia
- Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia
- Manly Beach, New South Wales, Australia
- Punta Borinquen, Puerto Rico
- Guarda Do Embau, Brazil
- Punta de Lobos, Chile
- Bahia de Todos Santos, Baja, Mexico
- Huanchaco, Peru
- Santa Cruz, California, USA
- Malibu, California, USA
- Ericeira, Portugal.<sup>3</sup>

The World Surfing Reserve program serves as a global model for inspiring preservation of wave breaks and their surrounding areas with the benefits of creating and sustaining World Surfing Reserves ranging from galvanizing protection of surfing amenity (the qualities of the waves and other features that make surfing in these areas desirable) and natural environs to promotion of economic outcomes and social and community connectedness.

World Surfing Reserves are established as a partnership between local communities and Save the Waves Coalition. Following approval as a World Surfing Reserve, each location is required to establish a local stewardship committee and stewardship plan to support management of the reserve.

Local stewardship committees for the World Surfing Reserves at Noosa and the Gold Coast have been established, with members representing local, state and federal government, and a range of other stakeholders including local, state and national sport and recreation organisations and clubs, such as for surfing and surf lifesaving, local community groups, and members of regional chambers of commerce.



World Surfing Reserves  
are located in Queensland





Photo credit: Tourism and Events Queensland

## Earlier consultation

The Queensland Government has shown a long-standing commitment to protecting surfing waves. In 2014, the Surf's Up policy addressed the significance of surfing for the Gold Coast's economy as well as the potential threats to surfing on the Gold Coast from future developments. The policy also committed to ensuring any future developments in or near the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve would be assessed in terms of how they affect surf quality.

In May 2020, the Queensland Government formally approved a commitment to work with community to consider legislation to protect Queensland's World Surfing Reserves at both Noosa and the Gold Coast.

The first Ministerial Surfing Roundtable was convened on 4 March 2020 and chaired by the Honourable Mick de Brenni MP. The Roundtable was attended by marine,

surfing and environmental experts, First Nations peoples, and representatives from local councils and government agencies.

The Roundtable resolved to have a discussion paper completed by mid-2020 and agreed to leverage Roundtable member networks as a key mechanism for promoting the consultation process.

## Criteria for recognising World Surfing Reserves



Only one World Surfing Reserve site is selected each year, with selections based on the following criteria:

- **quality and consistency of the waves** including the characteristics of the waves such as their variety, the number of surf-able days per year and the existence of Pro contests at the site
- **environmental characteristics** including recognised biodiversity hotspots, existence of threatened species, undeveloped areas, providing key ecosystem services, and clear avenues for legal protection
- **culture and surf history** including areas of national cultural importance, important surf history, and sites of regional significance
- **governance capacity and local support** including sustainable financing opportunities, legal or policy frameworks available for protection and/or long-term support, clearly identified reserve ambassadors, capable community leaders and established institutions dedicated to ongoing World Surfing Reserve management and coordination.



# Surfing amenity and its benefits

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Australia is famous as one of the great surfing destinations in the world.

Since its introduction into the country in 1915<sup>4</sup>, surfing has grown to be much more than just a relaxing leisure activity. Surfing has become an integral part of the fabric of life in coastal communities, a significant, nature-based drawcard for tourism, a driver of business, for instance in surfboard and apparel manufacturing and through surfing schools, as well as an increasingly popular and mainstream sport, now recognised as a Summer Olympics sport.

Queensland's south-eastern corner offers outstanding surfing experiences and picturesque settings that attract wave riders from around the country and the rest of the world.

Surfing festivals and competitions also draw significant numbers of national and international visitors to key locations such as Noosa and the Gold Coast.

Surfing and other ways to ride the waves have become iconic of the Queensland way of life for people of all ages and backgrounds and are an integral part of community and cultural life in many Queensland coastal areas.

Surfing is also recognised as an exceptional outdoor and nature-based activity that promotes physical and mental health, wellbeing and fitness.

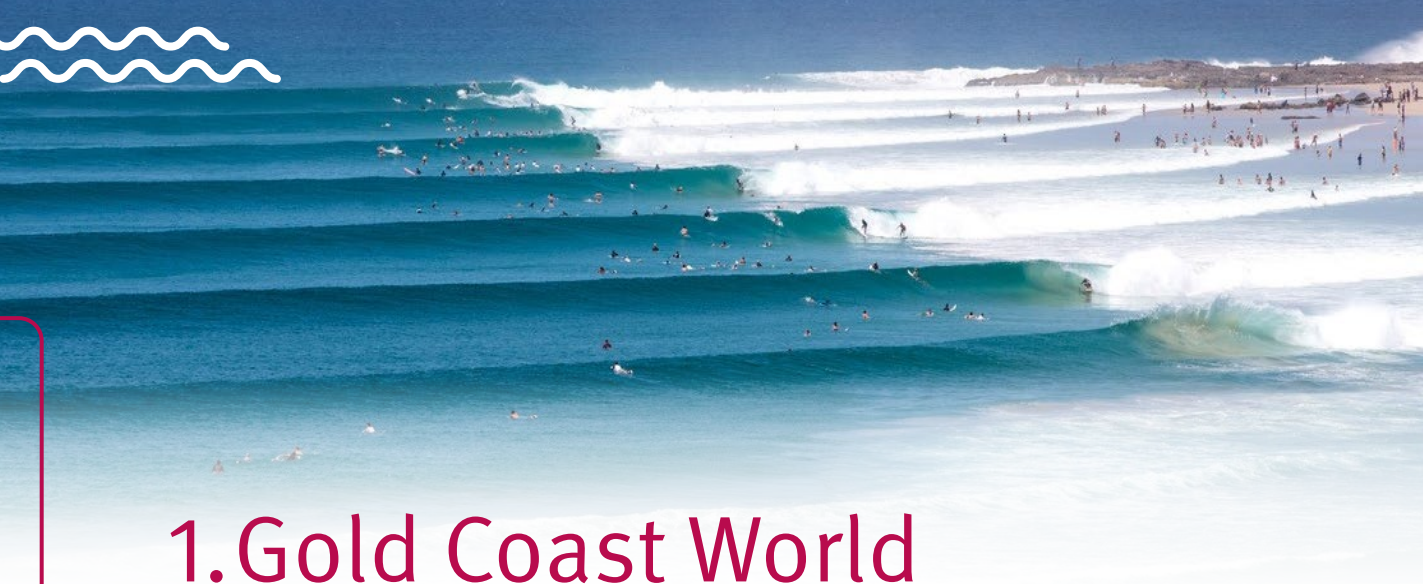
In addition, the economic benefits of surfing are increasingly being recognised worldwide. An estimate of the economic value of surfing has suggested the industry is worth \$10 billion worldwide per year<sup>5</sup>. Economic activity has also been found to increase at a greater rate near good breaks than it does in places near low-quality breaks, with the positive impacts felt largely in nearby towns and emerging economies.<sup>6</sup>

As surfing is a major drawcard for recreation and tourism and a focal point for community life across many Queensland coastal locations, any decline in surfing quality in those areas would negatively affect the local surfing community, visitors to these sites, local surf businesses and the overall economy of surf coast communities.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of 'surfing amenity', often used to point to the collection of desirable qualities or values associated with exceptional surfing areas, can be described in a number of ways<sup>8</sup>, including in terms of:

- breaking wave height
- wave peel angle (the angle between the trail of broken white water and the crest of the unbroken wave as it moves towards the shore)
- wave breaking intensity
- wave section length
- the natural processes such as air pressure and wind, beach orientation and exposure, and wave climate that create and influence desirable surfing conditions<sup>9</sup>
- scenic or aesthetic qualities of the surfing breaks and surrounds
- low levels of crowding and ease of beach access
- the diversity or variety of waves and therefore surfing experiences that can enhance the lifestyle of participants.<sup>10</sup>





# 1. Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve

The Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve extends from Burleigh Beach 100 metres north of the Gold Coast City Council stormwater outlet to the Queensland border with New South Wales and 500 metres seaward from the low water line.<sup>11</sup>

The successful application for the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve outlines the combination of some of the world's most consistent and perfect wave formations in clean, unpolluted waters with the backdrop of a stunning and distinctive coastline from Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta, which have inspired numerous generations of a committed surfing community and culture as well as a history of surfing champions.<sup>12</sup>

The Gold Coast Surf Management Plan recognises the significant role that surfing plays not just for its economy but also for the city's culture, sporting life and social fabric. The Surf Management Plan seeks to maintain Gold Coast's surfing amenity with robust science, community input and sound management approaches to ensure that the quality of the Gold Coast surfing experience is protected and, where possible, improved for generations to come.<sup>13</sup>

The Yugambeh People are the traditional owners of the Gold Coast, with the Salt Water Mobs demonstrating a special relationship with the ocean as central to their spiritual, physical, social and cultural lives for more than 40,000 years. The roots of surfing are said to date back before European settlement with the traditional owners the first to have surfed the shores with canoes, wooden body boards and rafts.<sup>14</sup> Indigenous mobs from around Australia continue to celebrate this connection to country and coastal waters through cultural surfing events, such as the Banaam Indigenous Surf Titles held at Fingal Beach located just over the Queensland border in northern New South Wales.<sup>15</sup>

In 2008, expenditure by recreational surfers at the Gold Coast was conservatively estimated to range from \$126 million to \$233 million per annum.<sup>16</sup> International events such as the Quiksilver and Roxy Pros on the Gold Coast attract international exposure with one study in 2009 suggesting that spending for retail and accommodation by overnight visitors to those events yields approximately \$1.8 million.<sup>17</sup> An estimate

in 2013 placed the annual economic benefit to the Gold Coast from surfing as close to \$3.3 billion per year.<sup>18</sup>

The Gold Coast City Council's Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013–2023 is the overarching plan guiding the Gold Coast's management, protection and enhancement of this natural asset. The Ocean Beaches Strategy and Gold Coast Surf Management Plan are the key (non-regulatory) instruments used to manage the council's surfing areas. Key objectives in the Ocean Beaches Strategy include that:

- everyone can enjoy a beach experience
- beaches are healthy and clean
- there is joint stewardship of the ocean beaches.<sup>19</sup>

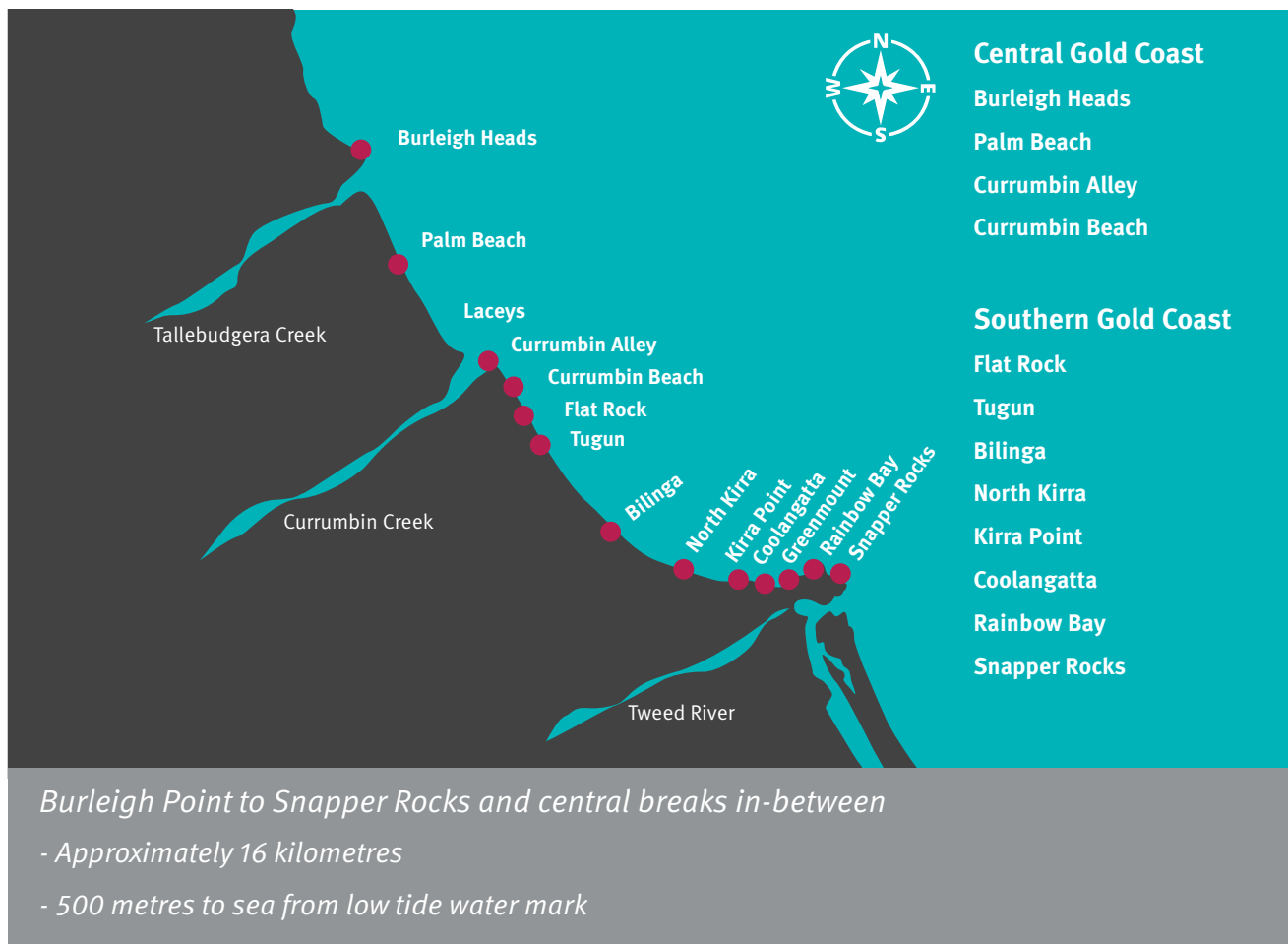
The responsibilities for managing the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve fall to the Gold Coast City Council and the Queensland Government. The Gold Coast City Council is responsible for the management, protection and regulation of bathing reserves under the *Local Government Act 2009* and local laws.

The Gold Coast Local Law No. 10 (Bathing Reserves) 2004 establishes bathing reserves on the Gold Coast which extend one kilometre from the low water mark spring tide. This local law provides the Gold Coast City Council with powers to control activities and behaviours within the World Surfing Reserve area, including prohibiting use of motorised aquatic equipment in bathing and surfing areas.<sup>20</sup>

The Gold Coast City Council undertakes a range of operational works in the coastal and tidal areas to protect its beaches and surfing amenity. This includes creating artificial reefs<sup>21</sup> and beach nourishing activities such as sand pumping.<sup>22</sup>

The local stewardship committee for the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve implements a local stewardship plan based on the Gold Coast Surf Management Plan. Representatives on the local stewardship committee include representatives from the Gold Coast City Council Surf Management Plan Advisory Committee, the Queensland Government, Gold Coast City Council and Gold Coast Waterways.<sup>23</sup>

## Map of Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve



### 1.1 Reserve awareness

#### Question for discussion

- Were you aware that the surfing breaks at the southern end of the Gold Coast were declared a World Surfing Reserve (see map above)?





## Values of the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve

### 1.2 Quality of the waves

#### Questions for discussion



- How important is the consistency or regularity of the surfing waves at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this?
- How important is the diversity or variety of the surfing waves at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this?
- How important are the surfing competitions or events held at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about these?

### 1.3 Environmental and natural characteristics

#### Questions for discussion



- How important is the water quality of the surfing breaks at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and how satisfied are you with the quality?
- How important are the natural surroundings at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about these and how satisfied are you with the surroundings?
- How important are the facilities (e.g. public amenities, public transport infrastructure, vehicle parking) near the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about them and how satisfied are you with the facilities?
- How important are the services (e.g. cafes and restaurants, accommodation, shops, pubs and clubs) near the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about them and how satisfied are you with the services?

### 1.4 Cultural, surfing and other heritage characteristics

#### Questions for discussion



- How aware are you about the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the surfing breaks at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, and what do you value about this cultural heritage?
- How aware are you about the surfing cultural heritage of the surfing breaks at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this surfing heritage?
- Are there any other types of heritage demonstrated by the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve you think are important?





## 1.5 Economic or commercial value

### Question for discussion



- How important is the economic or commercial value of the surfing breaks at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve (e.g. in attracting visitors including from interstate or overseas)? Please explain your response.

## 1.6 Existing management frameworks and local support networks

### Questions for discussion



- How satisfied are you with existing management of the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve and existing local support networks? Please explain your response.

## 1.7 Other values

### Question for discussion



- Are there any other aspects of the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve that you value or are important to you that we haven't yet talked about?



## How can we better protect the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve?

While the Queensland Government and the Gold Coast City Council work effectively to manage surfing amenity at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, consultation has identified the risk from potential future developments that may have significant impacts on its surfing amenity and therefore the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve status as a globally recognised, premier surfing destination.

Existing Queensland legislation currently balances a number of competing environmental, planning and development

interests that have the potential to affect surfing amenity at the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve. There may be a need to consider how well these protections are working.

There may also be issues around managing competing uses including recreation uses (e.g. surfing, jet skis, motorised boats), commercial uses and transport.

We would also like you to think about any other current or future threats to the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve.

### 1.8 Potential current or future threats to the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve

#### Question for discussion



- What do you see as the potential current or future threats to the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve? Please consider development in or near the World Surfing Reserve that would affect the surfing waves or broader surfing amenity (e.g. cruise ship terminals, incompatible sea walls), issues around conduct or behaviour in or near the World Surfing Reserve including competing recreational uses (e.g. surfing, jet skis, motorised boats), and other competing uses such as commercial uses or transport, environmental threats or any other threats you are concerned about.

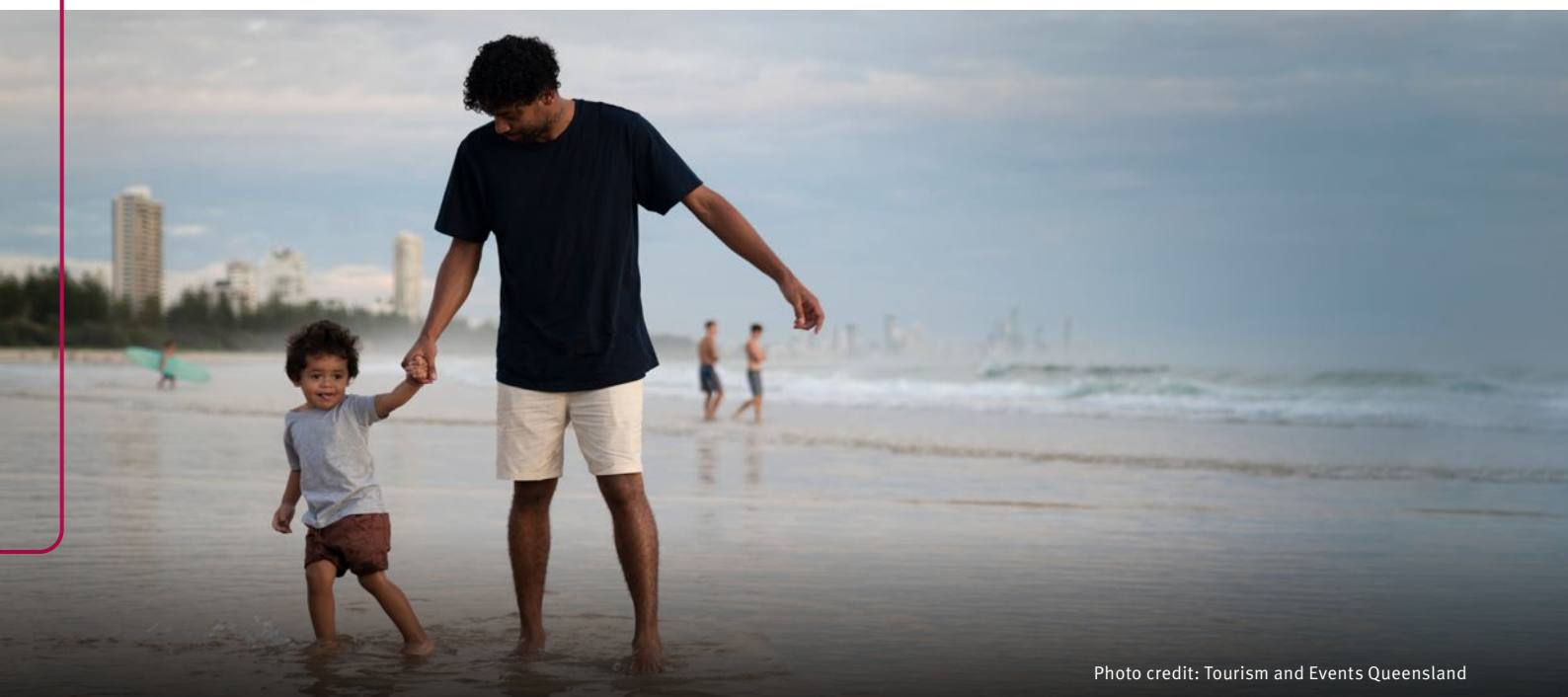


Photo credit: Tourism and Events Queensland





## 2. Noosa World Surfing Reserve

The Noosa World Surfing Reserve area covers the world-class point breaks from Laguna Bay on Noosa Main Beach to the beach break at North Sunshine Beach.

The recognition of Noosa as a World Surfing Reserve has been linked to the combination of diverse point breaks near picturesque protected natural areas, including Noosa National Park, as well as the importance of surfing to the contemporary cultural fabric of the town and for its significant role in European surfing history in both Queensland and Australia from the 1950s onwards.<sup>24</sup>

Noosa's environmental values and the approach to sustainability in the area saw the recognition of Noosa Shire and its coastal waters in 2007 as a Noosa Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) under the auspices of the Man and the Biosphere Program.<sup>25</sup>

The Kabi Kabi First Nations people are the traditional custodians of the land located in Noosa, Sunshine Coast, parts of Moreton Bay and Gympie, with their traditional lands including the beaches as well as lakes, rivers, creeks, mountains and rainforests in the region.<sup>26,27</sup>

While the direct and indirect economic benefits from surfing to the Noosa and surrounding communities have not yet been fully quantified, the economic value of surfing to the Sunshine Coast region is being increasingly recognised. The Noosa World Surfing Reserve Committee, for instance, is working with academics at the University of the Sunshine Coast to support research on the tourism benefits of surfing as well as surfing wave science offered through a Geography of Surfing subject at the university.<sup>28</sup>

The Noosa Shire Local Economic Plan also recognises the importance of tourism to the region and the role that events such as the Noosa Festival of Surfing play in this, as well as in supporting health and wellbeing in the region.<sup>29</sup>

The Noosa Festival of Surfing was established in 1992 by members of the Noosa Malibu Club, as an amateur surfing competition called the Noosa Malibu Classic and is thought to be one of the longest running surfing festivals in the world. A professional division introduced in 1996 prompted the change of title to Noosa Festival of Surfing in 1998. The Noosa Festival of Surfing now also includes events for stand-up paddling.<sup>30</sup>

Noosa also hosts annual events that showcase the beachfront and drive tourism, such as the Noosa Marathon and Triathlon, Ultraman, Noosa Eat and Drink Festival, Coastrek Fundraiser and Noosa Beach Classic Car.<sup>31</sup>

Noosa has a strong history of working to protect its surrounding beaches, with the native forest area, Noosa National Park, gazetted in 1930.

While Noosa Shire does not have a specific management plan for its surf breaks, the Noosa Environment Strategy 2019<sup>32</sup> outlines key strategies for its waterways, wetlands and coastal areas including to:

- maintain and improve the health of waterways
- protect and enhance coastal environments and vegetated buffers to coastal foreshores
- ensure waterways and coasts are managed to protect environmental values while enabling sustainable public access, recreation and commercial use of those areas.

The responsibilities for managing the Noosa World Surfing Reserve fall to the Noosa Shire Council and the Queensland Government. Noosa Shire is responsible for the management, protection and regulation of bathing reserves under the *Local Government Act 2009* and local laws.

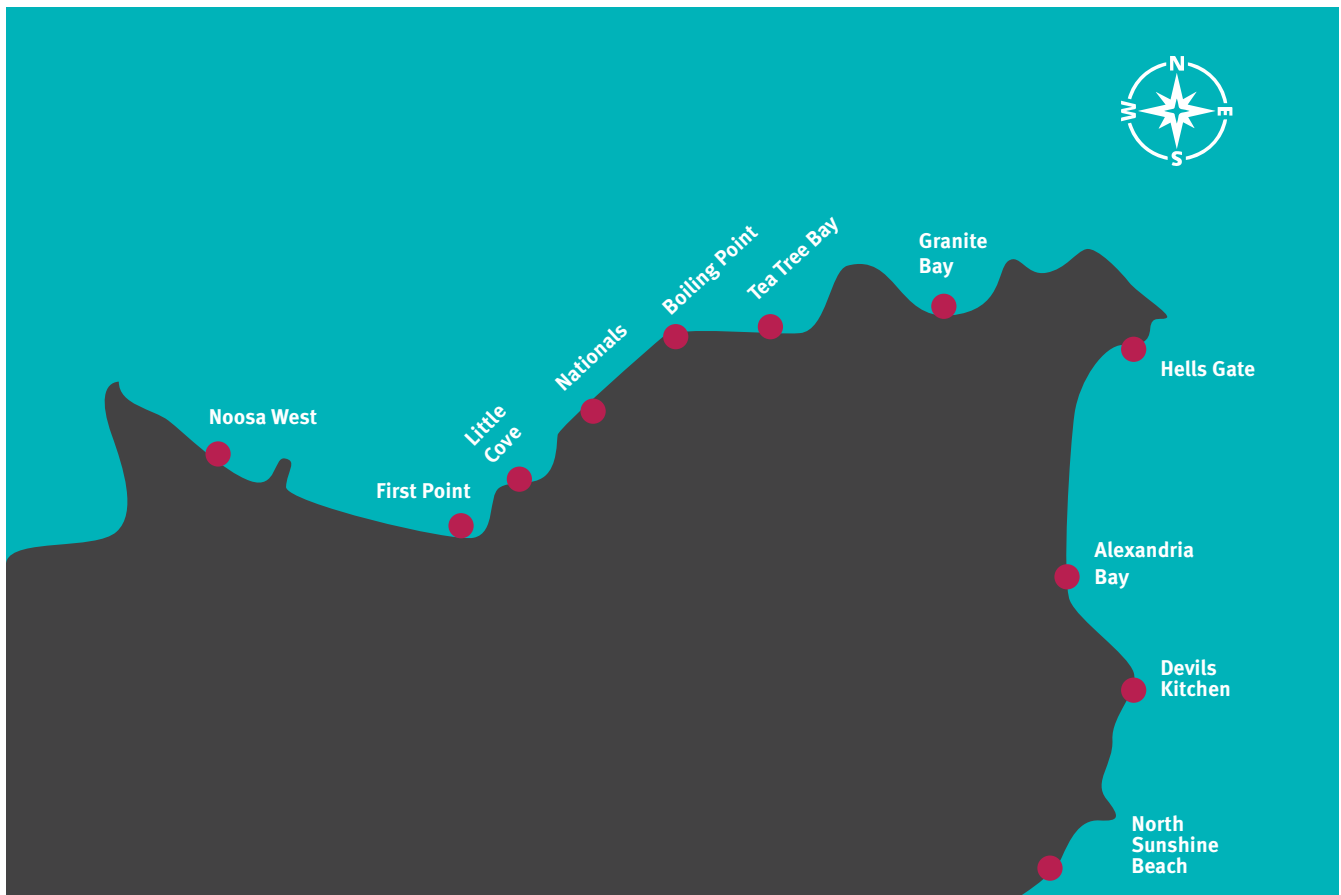


Noosa Shire Council Local Law No. 6 (Bathing Reserves) 2015 establishes Noosa's bathing reserve areas and provides council with powers to designate bathing areas within the reserves and manage behaviours in the bathing reserves.<sup>33</sup>

The local stewardship committee for the Noosa World Surfing Reserve will implement a local stewardship plan, currently in development. The plan aims to unite all relevant community groups with the local surfing community with the objective of preserving and protecting the surfing assets of Noosa.

The stewardship committee plays a leading role in fostering discussion, planning and action to make sure that the perspectives of all beach users are considered when setting the future of surfing points and beach breaks. The plan will focus primarily on education and awareness-raising about the values and fragility of the Noosa coastline, promoting surf etiquette and surfer code as well as supporting research on the tourism benefits of surfing to Noosa.<sup>34</sup>

## Map of Noosa World Surfing Reserve



### 2.1 Reserve awareness

#### Question for discussion

- Were you aware that the surfing breaks at Noosa were declared a World Surfing Reserve (see map above)?



# Values of the Noosa World Surfing Reserve

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## 2.2 Quality of the waves

### Questions for discussion



- How important is the consistency or regularity of the surfing waves at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this?
- How important is the diversity or variety of the surfing waves at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this?
- How important are the surfing competitions or events held at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about these?

## 2.3 Environmental and natural characteristics

### Questions for discussion



- How important is the water quality of the surfing breaks at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and how satisfied are you with the quality?
- How important are the natural surroundings at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about these and how satisfied are you with the surroundings?
- How important are the facilities (e.g. public amenities, public transport infrastructure, vehicle parking) near the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about them and how satisfied are you with the facilities?
- How important are the services (e.g. cafes and restaurants, accommodation, shops, pubs and clubs) near the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, what do you value about them and how satisfied are you with the services?

## 2.4 Cultural, surfing and other heritage

### Questions for discussion



- How aware are you about the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the surfing breaks at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, and what do you value about this cultural heritage?
- How aware are you about the surfing cultural heritage of the surfing breaks at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and what do you value about this surfing heritage?
- Are there any other types of heritage demonstrated by the Noosa World Surfing Reserve you think are important?

## 2.5 Economic or commercial value

### Question for discussion



- How important is the economic or commercial value of the surfing breaks at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve (e.g. in attracting visitors including from interstate or overseas)? Please explain your response.

## 2.6 Existing management frameworks and local support networks

### Question for discussion



- How satisfied are you with existing management of the Noosa World Surfing Reserve and existing local support networks? Please explain your response.

## 2.7 Other values

### Question for discussion



- Are there any other aspects of the Noosa World Surfing Reserve that you value or are important to you that we haven't yet talked about?





## How can we better protect the Noosa World Surfing Reserve?

While the Queensland Government and the Noosa Shire Council work effectively to manage surfing amenity at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve, consultation has identified the risk of potential future developments that may have significant impacts on its surfing amenity and therefore the Noosa World Surfing Reserve status as a globally recognised, premier surfing destination.

Existing Queensland legislation currently balances a number of competing environmental, planning and development interests that have the potential to affect surfing amenity at the Noosa World Surfing Reserve. There may be a need to consider how well these protections are working.

An additional issue identified for the Noosa World Surfing Reserve related to the regulation of conduct in surfing

areas. This could include regulating activities such as swimming and the operation of motorised vessels. The current bathing reserve areas established under the Noosa Local Law No. 6 (Bathing Reserves) 2015 do not cover all of the surfing breaks within the Noosa World Surfing Reserve.<sup>35</sup> The Noosa Council therefore is not currently empowered to regulate conduct across all of the surfing breaks within the Noosa World Surfing Reserve making it difficult to ensure appropriate and safe behaviour is enforced across the World Surfing Reserve, such as managing competing recreational uses (e.g. surfing, jet skis, motorised boats).

There may also be issues around managing other competing uses such as commercial uses and transport.

We would also like you to think about any other current or future threats to the Noosa World Surfing Reserve.

## 2.8 Potential current or future threats to the Noosa World Surfing Reserve

### Question for discussion



- What do you see as the potential current or future threats to the Noosa World Surfing Reserve? Please consider development in or near the World Surfing Reserve that would affect the surfing waves or broader surfing amenity (e.g. cruise ship terminals, incompatible sea walls), issues around conduct or behaviour in or near the World Surfing Reserve including competing recreational uses (e.g. surfing, jet skis, motorised boats), and other competing uses such as commercial uses or transport, environmental threats or any other threats you are concerned about.



## 3. Improving protections for Queensland's World Surfing Reserves

### 3.1 Legislation to protect World Surfing Reserves in Queensland

While governments can use a number of different approaches, including non-regulatory means, for communicating and implementing their objectives, the Queensland Government has committed to exploring legislation to both communicate and implement its objectives to protect World Surfing Reserves in a way that will be enduring.

Multiple aspects of surfing amenity at Queensland's World Surfing Reserves, such as water quality, protection of foreshore vegetation, preventing erosion and responding to climate change, are already addressed through a range of existing regulatory instruments. This includes Australian Government legislation such as the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, Queensland Government legislation such as the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995*, *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Fisheries Act 1994*, the State Planning Policy and *Planning Act 2016*, as well as through local planning schemes established under Queensland's planning framework.

In seeking to enhance the protection of the values demonstrated by World Surfing Reserves, government may decide to establish new, standalone legislation specifically set up to make clear its objectives for protecting World Surfing Reserves, while outlining how those objectives will be implemented, including through related existing legislation or regulation.

Government may also decide to amend existing legislation to make clear its objectives for the protection of World Surfing Reserves as well as how those objectives will be implemented, including in any related pieces of legislation or regulation.

Both approaches would need to address any protection gaps, for instance, by strengthening the way development proposals are assessed for areas in or near World Surfing Reserves (such as a requirement for development proposals to establish wave impact) and enhancing land use planning in these surfing areas. Such planning measures could encourage surfing-friendly accommodation, active transport and parking, temporary event relaxations and other outcomes that would enhance the quality of the World Surfing Reserve.

#### Questions for discussion



- Do you think Queensland should introduce new, standalone legislation to protect the values of World Surfing Reserves? Please explain your response.
- Do you think Queensland should amend existing legislation to protect the values of World Surfing Reserves? Please explain your response.
- Are there any other points you would like to make about using legislation to protect the values of World Surfing Reserves?



## 3.2 Establishing an oversight mechanism for all Queensland World Surfing Reserves

World Surfing Reserves are established as a partnership between local communities and Save the Waves Coalition. Following approval as a World Surfing Reserve, each location is required to establish a local stewardship committee and stewardship plan to support management of the reserve.

Local stewardship committees for the World Surfing Reserves at Noosa and the Gold Coast have been established, with members representing local, state and federal government, and a range of other stakeholders

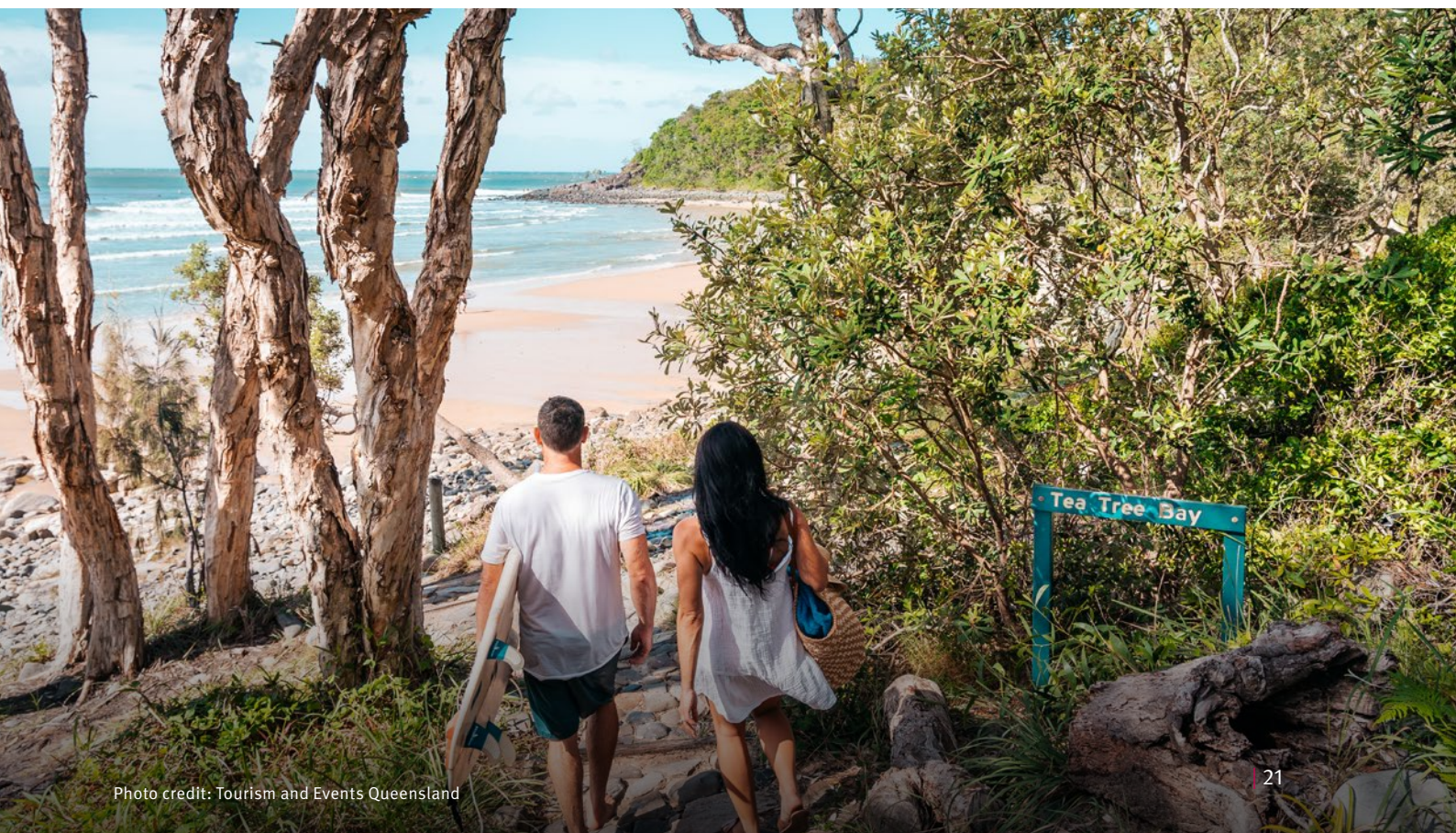
including local, state and national sport and recreation organisations and clubs such as for surfing and surf lifesaving, local community groups and members of regional chambers of commerce.

The Queensland Government is seeking feedback on establishing an oversight mechanism that strengthens management and protection of all current and future World Surfing Reserves across the state.

### Questions for discussion



- Do you think a statewide mechanism should be established to strengthen management and protection of all current and future World Surfing Reserves across Queensland? Please explain your response.
- Please indicate which stakeholders you think should be represented in the design or administration of a statewide mechanism for strengthening protection of Queensland's World Surfing Reserves? Please consider representatives from local government, local World Surfing Reserve stewardship committees, state government, federal government or any others you think should be represented.







## 4. World Surfing Reserves in the future

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### Questions for discussion



- Are there any other surfing breaks in Queensland you think should become World Surfing Reserves and be protected? Please explain your response.
- Are there any other comments you would like to make?



### Where to from here?

Your feedback will help guide the development of options for the lasting protections of the Noosa and Gold Coast World Surfing Reserves.

The protections will ensure these natural assets are safeguarded and preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your input.

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## More information



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