Gold Coast seawalls

On the Gold Coast we have 52 kilometres of coastline, extending from Point Danger at the New South Wales border to Jumpinpin on South Stradbroke Island.

Our beaches are always changing due to natural coastal processes and weather patterns. Erosion can impact beachfront properties, and where relocation of infrastructure is not possible, engineered seawalls are used. Our seawalls are made of large boulders buried under the sand and are used to protect properties and infrastructure.

Seawall construction requirements

The standard seawall design was developed by the Queensland Government’s Department of State Development and was adopted as the minimum standard for Gold Coast seawalls in 1973.

A standard seawall design

8.1m minimum

7.35m minimum

2.75m

1.7m

3.7m

4.9m minimum crest height

A-Line

Filter layer
clay shale or geotextile

Secondary armour
180kg – 360kg rock

Primary armour
1.5 tonne rock
There are 18 kilometres of public urban shoreline (adjacent to roads, reserves and parks) and nine kilometres of private urban property that require seawall protection.

The City of Gold Coast’s (City) Land Development Guidelines and City Plan ensure that seawalls are constructed to a standard design. Guidelines are available from the City Plan Schedule 6.9.7.6 - Foreshore seawalls and dune fencing.

Seawall construction and certification program

We have an ongoing seawall construction and certification program that prioritises public seawalls for construction, renewal and recertification. The seawall program ensures our infrastructure is protected from coastal hazards. The program includes:

- renewal and recertification of existing seawalls from previous decades
- construction of new seawalls to join individual seawalls together
- investigation of older seawalls known as “peel backs” to check their condition (saving $18.9 million in renewal costs).

Recent seawall projects

Recent works include:

- 2015-16 Reconstruction at Palm Beach (27th Avenue)
- 2015-16 Reconstruction at Main Beach (John Kemp Street)
- 2015-16 Investigation and Certification at Surfers Paradise
- 2016-17 Kurrawa Park Seawall, Broadbeach
- 2016-17 Stage 1 Narrowneck, Main Beach

Private seawall requirements

Triggers for the construction or recertification of private seawalls are contained within the City’s development processes. This includes the development or redevelopment of beachfront property, including material change of use. Seawall construction for private properties remains the responsibility of the property owner.

A fact sheet called “How to build a private seawall” is available at cityofgoldcoast.com.au

For more information

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