Sea Level Rise Guidelines

Interim Development Assessment Principles

February 2023

Context

We are currently reviewing and updating Melbourne Water's 'Planning for Sea Level Rise Guidelines' (2017). We have removed the Guidelines from our website while this review takes place.

The Minister for Planning approved Amendment VC171 in October, 2021. The amendment revised the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs) to strengthen coastal hazard planning, implement the Marine and Coastal Policy 2020 and make minor administrative updates.

One of these changes was to Clause 13.01-2S 'Coastal inundation and erosion' to remove planning for a sea level rise of 0.2 metres by 2040 for 'infill development'. The VPPs now require land use and development to 'plan for sea level rise of not less than 0.8 metres by 2100 and allow for the combined effects of tides, storm surges, coastal processes and local conditions such as topography and geology when assessing risks and coastal impacts associated with climate change.'

The following assessment principles are provided to assist your consideration of sea level rise while we update the guidelines. Also refer to the Assessment Principles below and to the Guidelines for Development in Flood Affected Areas (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2019) for information regarding the requirements that apply to development proposals in areas affected by coastal inundation.

Flood level information can be obtained via an application on our website.

Assessment Principles

General

- The 2100 planning horizon will be used as the benchmark for the assessment of the impacts of coastal inundation for new development proposals, including subdivisions, in greenfield and urban infill areas.
- Where there are multiple sources of flooding, the highest 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood level will be considered the Design Flood Event, with all types of flooding conditions considered to assess overall risk.

- The 'Planning for Sea Level Rise Guidelines' (Melbourne Water, 2017) remain a reference document in Clause 13.01-2S of the VPPs. However, the 2040 planning horizon will no longer be used in development assessments following its removal from Clause 13.01-2S.
- The 'Guidelines for Development in Flood Affected Areas' (DELWP, 2019) will be used to assess areas affected by coastal inundation. This includes the following objectives:

Objective - Flood Protection

- New development should incorporate flood protection to mitigate tangible damage (e.g. structural building damage, economic losses) and intangible damage (e.g. emotional trauma, health impacts).
- Where new development must achieve the nominal flood protection level (NFPL), as per the DELWP Guidelines, the relevant NFPL for coastal inundation will be defined as the 2100 1% AEP flood level, plus 600mm freeboard.
- Greenfield and residential infill development and subdivisions will be assessed against the 2100 planning horizon for coastal inundation.
- Basement entries must be protected to the NFPL. For constrained sites in areas affected by sea level rise, self-closing barriers may be considered to provide the freeboard protection (minimum apex to 2100 1% AEP flood level), with supporting documentation and legal agreements.
- For multi-storey development, practical discretion will be exercised as appropriate for setting floor levels for lower risk service areas such as bin rooms, bike storage and transition zones.
- Temporary buildings or structures with a limited life span may be permitted with floor levels below the 2100 NFPL at the discretion of the floodplain manager.

Objective - Flood Safety

- New development should be designed to minimise exposure of people to dangerous floodwaters.
- The 'Flood Safety' principles and assessment criteria in the DELWP Guidelines will be considered for the 2100 1% AEP flood event in the assessment of coastal inundation.
- Where flood depths for the 2100 1% AEP exceed the safety criteria in the DELWP Guidelines, development may not be supported. Consideration must be given to the Planning Policy Framework, including the relevant 'flood risk factors' in any applicable overlays.