

Environmental impact assessment of Smiths Beach proposal complete

A proposed tourism development in the South West has been recommended for approval by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), subject to strict conditions that include limiting building heights, protecting native vegetation and fauna habitat, and maintaining water quality.

The [Smiths Beach Project, Yallingup – Coastal Tourism Village](#), located 10km south-west of Dunsborough, proposes hotel accommodation, wellness facility, campground, holiday homes, shops, surf lifesaving club and Cape to Cape Track welcome centre.

The project also includes a 16.83ha conservation area and 2.43ha of public open space that will retain native vegetation.

An EPA spokesperson said the environmental impact assessment had considered the protection of the western ringtail possum and its habitat in significant detail.

“Maintaining habitat connectivity between vegetation in the development envelope and the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park is front and centre of the EPA’s conditions,” the spokesperson said. “Other measures in the proponent’s Conservation Significant Fauna Management Plan and Offset Strategy address feral animal control, nearby offset areas, and a community-based revegetation program.

“And conditions relating to secondary foraging and dispersal habitat for the western ringtail possum contain a requirement for a conservation covenant. This includes establishment costs and long-term management and maintenance costs.”

Additionally, the EPA report recommends conditions to minimize and mitigate the extent of visual impact. These include building height restrictions consistent with Local Planning Scheme limits, and further height limitations in more sensitive parts of the development envelope.

“These height limits are aimed at protecting the Leeuwin-Naturaliste ridgeline as well as the views enjoyed by those using the Cape to Cape Track,” the spokesperson said.

“During this assessment the EPA was also very aware of the proposal’s proximity

to the Ngari Capes Marine Park and the high social amenity associated with the local marine environment. As a result we have recommended conditions for shoreline water quality monitoring to ensure marine environmental water quality and coastal processes are protected.”

After the EPA’s eight-week public consultation last year, the proponent (Smiths 2014 Pty Ltd) took into account community concerns relating to coastal erosion, visual amenity, and potential impacts on coastal processes, and as a result removed the universal beach access ramp from the proposal.

The EPA report, [published today](#), acknowledged the concerns raised during the public review, however noted that the matters raised in relation to traffic congestion, ablation facilities, bushfire risk, pressure on emergency services and economic benefits, were not within the Authority’s remit under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Other key issues highlighted during this consultation were considered in the assessment, as well as concerns raised during a visit to the site with members of the Save Smiths Beach Action Group.

Several members of the EPA, including the Chair, declared a conflict (or perceived conflict) of interest regarding the Smiths Beach assessment and have not been involved in any related discussions and/or decisions.

The EPA’s report to the Minister for the Environment is now open for a three-week public appeal period, closing 3 March 2026. Appeals should be directed to the [Office of the Appeals Convenor](#). The Minister for the Environment will make the final decision on the proposal. EPA Report 1802 can be found on the [EPA website](#).

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