

Minutes



Minutes of the Floodplain Management Committee Meeting held Friday 2 June 2023

Venue:

Murwillumbah Council Chambers

Time:

9:15 am

In Attendance:

Voting Members:

Cr Chris Cherry (Mayor, Tweed Shire Council)
Felicia Cecil (Community Representative)
Samuel Dawson (Community Representative)
Jenna Ford (Community Representative)
Thomas Rehfeld (Community Representative)
Robert Quirk (Community Representative) (Chair)
Jennifer Kidd (Community Representative)
Peter Mair (Local Commander, NSW SES) – ONLINE
Martin Rose (Department of Planning and Environment) - ONLINE

Alternates:

David Bartlett (for Robert Quirk)
Belinda Devine (NSW SES) - ONLINE

Council Officers:

Danny Rose (Manager Roads and Stormwater)
Leon McLean (Engineer Flooding and Stormwater)
Angie Cousens (Engineer Infrastructure)
Doreen Harwood (Enterprise Risk & Emergency Management Officer) ONLINE
Michelle Bernabe Salazer (Community Liaison Officer)

Guests:

For Agenda Item 2:
Daniel Wood (WMA Water)

Apologies:

Max Boyd (Community Representative)
David Oxenham (Director Engineering)
Stuart Russell (Senior Strategic Planner)
Lindsay McGavin (Manager Development Assessment & Compliance)

Acknowledgement of Country (read by the Chair, Robert Quirk)

Minutes of Previous Meeting 3 March 2023 – both Ordinary and Confidential

Moved: Felicia Cecil

Seconded: Thomas Rehfeld

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Floodplain Management Committee meeting held Friday 3 March 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

The motion was unanimously **Carried**.

Business Arising:

1. Code of Conduct Returns (DR)

Steve Smith has declined to sign the code of conduct and is no longer a committee member. This was formally changed at the last Council meeting and Steve's alternate, Jenny Kidd of Tumbulgum Community Association, was nominated and accepted as Steve's replacement. We thank Steve for his prior involvement in the FMC.

JK suggested a formal letter be sent to Steve, recognising his attention to detail and thanking him for his contributions to the committee thus far. The Mayor noted she has had verbal discussions with Steve but agreed a letter would be a nice gesture.

ACTION: A thankyou letter is to be sent to Steve Smith acknowledging his contribution to the floodplain management committee.

2. NRRC Resilient Homes Program (DR)

Danny Rose shared an online dashboard giving status updates on the NRRC Resilient Homes Fund. The dashboard is for all of the Northern Rivers and is not Tweed specific. The dashboard is updated fortnightly. DR noted that there will soon be a shopfront in Murwillumbah for people to access information regarding the NRRC programs.

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/northern-rivers-reconstruction-corporation/resilient-homes-fund>

ACTION: For future FMC meetings, a standing invitation is to be made for Mike Rayner and/or NRRC Staff to attend

JK outlined the current confusion in the Tumbulgum community with regards to the Resilient Homes Program. She also flagged TCA's efforts to determine what information NRRC is using to inform their programs. DR confirmed that Council has provided access to its flood mapping and VHP/VHR schemes.

DH advised that a recent meeting with NRRC suggested further community consultation, by them, is imminent.

MR noted that DPE have been assisting NRRC with flood mapping and data. LM stated that NRRC had indicated in a past meeting that by the end of June 2023 mapping and associated information would be released that provided clarity to all property owners on the NRRC classifications of each property.

CC informed the committee that the NRRC Resilient Lands Strategy was placed on public exhibition yesterday and is available for review. She encouraged everybody to make a submission and outlined concerns around caravan park homeowners slipping through the cracks and an absence of areas identified in the Burringbar/Mooball locality.

CC requested a Council planning representative be available to discuss land reforms at the next meeting. DR advised that this would need to be led by NRRC as it is their program. At this stage, we do not know if NRRC will focus on buybacks or raising/resilience programs in the Tweed.

JK suggested that Council take a proactive approach and initiate conversations with the community around planning for community/social change induced by NRRC programs

CC said that until we know what the NRRC programs entail, it is difficult to plan. By next meeting all considerations of eligibility may be more profound, and we hopefully have many more answers. Can the NRRC be invited to the next meeting to give an indication?

MOTION: At the next FMC meeting to be held in September 2023, an agenda item and appropriate invites be extended for Council planning staff and NRRC representatives to attend and discuss community/social and planning matters associated with the NRRC Resilient Homes Fund programs

Moved: Cr Chris Cherry

Seconded: Jenny Kidd

MOTION: Council to write to NRRC to enquire about NRRC's position on caravan park residents' situation in terms of resilience and relocation.

Moved: Cr Chris Cherry

Seconded: Felicia Cecil

These motions were unanimously **Carried**.

3. Council Report – Minimising Current and Future Flood Risk in the Tweed Shire

DR advised that a Council workshop is scheduled to discuss in detail the “Minimising Current and Future Flood Risk in the Tweed Shire” report which was tabled at the previous FMC meeting. The workshop was scheduled for late June but has been deferred to September 2023. The FMC Committee will be invited to attend.

4. CSIRO Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative

DR explained that, shortly after our last FMC meeting and in response to a public meeting at Condong, Council resolved that a request be made to NEMA/CSIRO to extent their NRRI flood study (currently only for the Richmond catchment) to the Tweed. This request has now been formally made. CSIRO have stated that, if funding was allocated, they would not have the resources to immediately commence with a Tweed study. However, they may be able to perform a Tweed study once they are finished with the Richmond area which is likely to be at least 2 years away.

It was further noted that the committee's previous recommendation to continue with the current Tweed Valley Flood Study and seek CSIRO's assistance to peer review and test floodplain scenarios was also supported by Council and this has also been sent to NEMA and CSIRO.

JK asked if all future similar meetings/correspondence please include Member for Tweed Geoff Provest and any information from these meetings be communicated directly if he cannot attend.

5. Identified non-flood prone land for future development

DR explained that this item relates to Max Boyd's submission to the previous FMC meeting with respect to land identified in Keilvale and Duranbah for urban release in a previous council strategy. Council's resolution highlights to the committee that the current Growth Management and Housing Strategy will review these sites, and many more in a strategic manner.

TR suggested that Council look at "lifestyle" land, large parcels of land which will be low cost, medium density housing, be more affordable, can be built quickly.

CC clarified the Council is definitely looking at all types of housing, not just single dwellings. DR suggested that once the GMHS is exhibited committee members may like to make submissions.

6. Response to North-West Caldera Community Requests

Letter sent after last meeting to Tyalgum Community Association on 21 April. The letter was received, and JF indicated that the association was generally satisfied.

DR provided an update regarding Tyalgum Road and the single lane access opening up before Christmas 2023.

JK and JF mentioned that their organisations are exploring communication solutions such as amateur radio and hand-held radio licences with grant funding from various sources

Morning Tea Break (10 mins)

Outstanding Actions/Resolutions:

1. Cudgen Lake Drawdown (TR) (From 3 March 2022)

LM presented a detailed analysis of gauge data associated with major flood events in the Cudgen Creek catchment going back to the mid-1980s. At face value, the data validates anecdotal reports of a decline in drawdown rate of the lake. However, once rainfall is considered, this trend is significantly reduced. The opposite trend is evident when tidal/ocean levels are considered, which explains the observed behaviour. LM noted that there were/are many other factors and considerations, and this analysis should not be considered comprehensive.

TR emphasised that a more thorough study is required. CC agreed and suggested that a proper modelling exercise and discussion is needed as data shows a strong influence from the ocean and rainfall

LM suggested that the next level of analysis would be a flood modelling exercise such as a flood risk management study

TR flagged a request for a flood study. LM suggested this be deferred to the next agenda item

2. Coastal Creeks Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan Update (TR) (From 24 November 2022)

The November 2022 FMC meeting included a resolution to move towards updating the Coastal Creeks flood study and risk management study and plan. LM informed the committee that earlier this year an application was submitted to the NSW Floodplain Management Grants program to perform an updated a Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan for the Coastal Creeks area. This would include an update to the underlying flood study and models.

TR submitted a document from CBBRA (Refer Request for Coastal Creeks Flood Study attached) summarising the group's requests and suggestions regarding a future study.

TR summarised the submission as follows:

- Request both flood study and risk management study/plan be done together. Not with a 6-year gap like the previous studies.
- To prioritise 'Flood Mitigation'.
- Referenced the "North Byron Flood Study" (Byron Shire) as a preferred style/approach and way of documenting the work performed, relative to the 2015 Coastal Creeks documents.

DR stated that all feedback will be taken onboard, and the community and committee will have opportunity to contribute to the future studies. He noted that "Flood Modification" is only one category of flood risk management and Council is required by the NSW Floodplain Development Manual, and best practice, to consider property and response modifications (e.g. house raising, flood warning) as well.

MR reinforced that under the NSW Flood Mitigation program risk management studies are required to look at all options holistically

MOTION: TR moved that TSC seek to update the Coastal Creeks flood study, risk management study and plan.

Moved: Thomas Rehfeld

Seconded: Jenna Ford

The motion was unanimously **Carried**.

3. Mooball Designated Flood Levels (From 28 October 2022)

LM reminded the committee of an item at the October 2022 FMC meeting seeking to revise the Designated Flood Level for the Mooball village and subsequent committee recommendation to hold a workshop to discuss the matter further.

LM advised that this workshop had been scheduled for the end of June but has now been postponed to September. Committee members will be invited to attend.

DR noted that this workshop will include a site visit and has been scheduled with the “Minimising Current and Future Flood Risk in the Tweed Shire” workshop. Committee members are to be invited to both

Agenda Items:

1. Flood Mitigation Project Updates (LM)

a. South Tweed levee and Drainage

LM provided a briefing on a local risk management study that recently commenced – the Tweed Heads South Levee and Drainage Study. This project is a result of a recommendation out of the 2014 Tweed Valley Floodplain Risk Management Plan and will be similar in nature to local, high-resolution studies conducted in Murwillumbah in 2018 and 2019.

Council has engaged flood modelling specialists Catchment Simulation Solutions (David Tetley) to perform the study analyses.

DR noted that initial community information and surveys will be sent out soon seeking local residents’ experiences and feedback.

2. Tweed Valley Flood Study Update and Expansion (DW)

Guest speaker Daniel Wood from WMA Water proved a detailed update on the Tweed Valley Flood Study Update and Expansion project.

The previous Tweed Valley Flood Study was completed in 2009. Since then, we have had 2 x record major floods, updated industry guidance (AR&R 2019) and advancements in flood modelling software. The updated and expanded study will be of a far higher resolution, consider the 2017 and 2022 flood events, and will cover the entire Tweed valley, not just the populated areas.

DR explained that a draft report is imminent and that a briefer summary / public facing report will be provided to the FMC (as a draft) for review and feedback prior to going through Council and on to public exhibition.

3. Addendum to CBD Levee and Drainage Study (LM)

LM reminded the committee of the purpose of this study which is to revisit the “Murwillumbah CBD Levee and Drainage Study 2018” and take a closer look at pump station upgrades.

Catchment Simulation Solutions, who conducted the 2018 study has been engaged again to perform this additional analysis. The addendum will evaluate the effectiveness of various pump station upgrade scenarios at Lavender Creek, Wharf Street, King Street and East Murwillumbah.

A draft report has recently been received and is being reviewed. The next version will include a summary document which will be provided to the Committee for review and feedback before going to Council and onto public exhibition.

DR noted that the first tranche of NEMA/CSIRO funding announced recently included roughly \$4 million for pump upgrades, and other projects, in Murwillumbah. This addendum will inform the implementation of those projects

General Business:

1. Floodplain Management Australia National Conference 2023 – Sydney

CC asked DR for a report on the recent FMA National Conference. Both DR and LM attended for 4 days which included presentations, workshops and field trips. LM went on a tour to the Hawkesbury River and Warragamba Dam. There were over 500 delegates in attendance. DPE (major sponsors) and SES were also there. A lot of consultants and innovations with case studies and papers on show. DR presented a paper contrasting the 2017 and 2022 Tweed floods in the context of the other disasters, social and political changes that also occurred in that period. Great conference and very rewarding.

Various discussions ensued including climate change and stormwater standards, nature-based solutions, riparian vegetation, legacy DAs and rezoning matters.

CC asked if DR could provide a copy of his conference presentation to the committee. DR advised he would prefer to show the presentation at the next FMC meeting – to be placed onto the next agenda.

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2. Acid Sulphate Soils

RQ provided a summary of his recent attendance at a World Conference in Adelaide 'Managing the soil from hell'. RQ said that Tweed leads the world in Acid Sulphate Soil management and remediation, with great examples of universities and farmers coming together.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Floodplain Management Committee will be held on 1 September 2023.

The meeting closed at 12pm.

Attachment 1 – Request for a Coastal Creeks Flood Study

Attachment 2 – WMA Water - Tweed Valley Flood Study Update and Extension