

## **Minutes of the Floodplain Management Committee Meeting held Friday 14 June 2019**

### **Venue:**

Canvas and Kettle Meeting Room, Murwillumbah Civic Centre

### **Time:**

9.00am

### **Present:**

Cr James Owen, David Oxenham, Danny Rose, Leon McLean, Doreen Harwood, Robyn Eisermann, Daniel Moubayed (TSC), David Tetley (Catchment Simulation Solutions), Toong Chin, Caroline Ortel (OEH), Peter Mair (SES), Felicia Cecil, Robert Quirk, Max Boyd, Samuel Dawson, Mike Allen, Steven Smith

### **Apologies:**

Martin Rose (OEH), Chad Ellis (SES), Brenda Hannigan, Stuart Russell (TSC), Dion Andrews

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

**Moved: Max Boyd**

**Seconded: Steve Smith**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Floodplain Management Committee meeting held Friday 2 November 2018 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

### **Business Arising:**

#### **From Meeting held 2 November 2018:**

#### **2. High Hazard Flood Areas Policy and Development Controls**

Danny Rose provided an update on the recently close public exhibition of the two Voluntary House Purchase Schemes and associated Policy.

Robyn Eisermann of Council's Strategic Planning Unit provided an update on the status of urban land release areas in the Murwillumbah and Mooball areas.

In Murwillumbah, the Tweed Urban Land Release Strategy (TULRS) identifies significant urban land releases in the West Murwillumbah and Kielvale areas. However, these have not yet commenced the Planning Proposal process and therefore are a long way off. The Wardrop Valley mixed Industrial/Residential land release area has commenced preparation of documentation required for a Planning Proposal but incorporates only minor residential components. While Robyn agreed that the TULRS was due for review, her Unit has higher priorities in their work program as determined by Council.

Danny explained that Council has limited capacity to "push" development outside of the landowner's interest in proceeding. Robyn noted that there will often be a value difference between newly released land and existing highly flood prone properties. It was also highlighted that servicing (e.g. provision of water and waste water services) is a major constraint on many future development areas.

Max Boyd suggested that, due to the limited residential land available in the Murwillumbah area, the Committee supports bringing forward the Wardrop Valley development planning process.

Cr James Owen explained that Council has recently passed a motion in support of the Wardrop Valley proposal.

Mike Allen suggested that Max's motion be amended to be non-specific to the Wardrop Valley development.

**Moved: Max Boyd**  
**Seconded: Robert Quirk**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That, given the limited availability of development land to offset Council's Voluntary House Purchase Schemes, the Committee supports the expedient progress of the Wardrop Valley mixed use development and any other proposals on alternate flood free land.**

**FOR VOTE: Unanimous**

**Agenda Items:**

**1. South Murwillumbah Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan – Draft for Public Exhibition**

Consultant David Tetley from Catchment Simulation Solutions presented the work performed to date on the South Murwillumbah Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan.

The study is now at the draft for public exhibition stage and the Committee's support was sought to proceed.

Various discussion took place on the recommendations of the study. No objections were raised by committee members.

A copy of David's presentation is attached to the minutes.

**Moved: Robert Quirk**  
**Seconded: Felicia Cecil**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the South Murwillumbah Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan be reported to Council with a recommendation to be placed on public exhibition.**

**FOR VOTE: Unanimous**

## 2. Community Flood Markers Project

Daniel Moubayed presented concept plans for the proposed upgraded Community Flood Markers project.

It was suggested some reference to the local Bureau of Meteorology gauge be included so that people can reference the signs to forecast gauge measurements and records.

Steve Smith reported some opposition to any additional “power pole” markers in Tumbulgum village. Steve also asked if the Tweed and Fingal signs would be upgraded. Danny Rose explained that these levels have not changed, but the signs will at least be given a ‘freshen up’, subject to budget.

Doreen Harwood suggested an additional location be included for Burringbar/Mooball due to the recent major flooding in the area. There was general agreement for this.

Danny enquired as to the committee’s opinions on incorporating Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) levels into the markers. Leon McLean noted the practical difficulties achieving this height in many locations. Whilst there were some differing opinions, it was generally agreed that a simple approach is best to effectively get the intended message across and that PMF levels not be included.

## 3. Update on Current Flood Mitigation Projects

Leon McLean provided an update on the various, current flood mitigation projects underway, including:

- South Murwillumbah Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (Item 1)
- Burringbar/Mooball Flash Flood Warning System
- Incorporate Tumbulgum Gauge into Flood Warning System (complete)
- Two Voluntary House Purchase Schemes
- Two Voluntary House Raising Schemes
- Automated Flood Reports (internal project)

## 4. Update on South Murwillumbah Levee Restoration

Danny Rose provided an update on the March 2017 Flood recovery project which is funded under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

After some early delays the design is now complete and procurement of a contractor is imminent.

The project is for restoration of the levee only. The levee is not being raised.

Danny noted some of the land tenure issues that have been encountered and flagged an intention to address these once the project is complete.

## **5. 2019/20 Flood Grant Applications**

Leon McLean outlined the applications made to the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Floodplain Management Grant 2019/20 program. These include:

- Update and Expansion of the Tweed Valley Flood Study
- Design of Murwillumbah CBD Levee Spillway

Mike Allen asked if there is a Flood Frequency Analysis available for Chinderah. Leon to review existing studies and provide, if available.

Caroline Ortel noted that successful/not successful notifications are expected by November 2019

## **6. NRMA Insurance Floodplain Risk Management Project of the Year Award - Tumbulgum Flood Warning Project**

Danny Rose informed the committee of the award of the NRMA Insurance Floodplain Risk Management Project of the Year Award to the Tumbulgum Flood Warning Project and commended all parties involved in the project.

The award has also been the subject of recent media coverage.

The award comes with a prize of \$10,000 to be spent on further flood mitigation projects.

Leon McLean emphasised the Tumbulgum Community Association involvement and the value added to the projects outputs.

### **General Business:**

## **7. Insurance Industry and Climate Change**

Robert Quirk enquired into any updates out of the recent Floodplain Management Australia conference from the insurance industry related to climate change.

Danny Rose outlined his understanding that whilst residential flood insurance uptake is high, business uptake is low, which is of concern to the Tweed where many of the commercial and industrial areas are located on the floodplain.

Steve Smith asked if the insurance industry is still using land parcel centroid to assess flood risk. Leon McLean was unable to answer for the insurance industry but noted that enquiries related to flood insurance at Council are far less frequent than 5 years ago.

## **8. Coronial Inquest - Dulguigan Road**

Max Boyd noted surveyor's activity on Dulguigan Road. Danny Rose explain that his is associated with a heavy vehicle route assessment, not the post Cyclone Debbie fatalities.

Danny went on to brief the committee on the recent Coronial Inquest into the fatalities on Dulguigan Road, opposite Tumbulgum Village, shortly after the Cyclone Debbie flooding.

Danny outlined the implications of the Coroner's Report for Council and various measures already taken to improve Council practices.

**ACTION: The Coroner's report to be circulated to the committee.**

## **9. Council's Emergency Dashboard**

Danny Rose demonstrated Council's recently developed Emergency Dashboard webpage.

The dashboard incorporates links to relevant emergency information such as the Bureau of Meteorology, SES, Police, Fire, etc. It is intended as a central point of information for the community during an emergency (such as flooding).

## **10. Catastrophic Flood Classification**

Steve Smith explained the need for an additional "Catastrophic" or "Extreme" flood classification in the Tumbulgum village. Peter Mair noted a national review of disaster terminology that may address this. Danny Rose mentioned that this is an issue Floodplain Management Australia have raised regularly at a national level.

## **11. SES Dissemination of Evacuation Warnings**

Steve Smith enquired into changes to the way the SES disseminates its flood evacuation warning and notifications (SMS alerts). Peter Mair noted changes implemented during the Cyclone Oma response. Danny Rose mentioned post Cyclone Debbie review and various lessons learned.

Discussion was had on the limitations on the automatic SMS system. Some improved European technology is being trialled.

SES has learned a lot from recent experiences and are making improvements. However, there are limitations that must be considered.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Floodplain Management Committee will be held around October 2019.

The meeting closed at 12:00pm.