
FLOODPLAIN ADVISORY PANEL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The Floodplain Advisory Panel (the Panel) has been established to assist Council in the delivery of their obligations under the New South Wales (NSW) Flood risk management manual 2023. Specifically, the Panel enables local community groups and individuals to provide input into the Floodplain Risk Management process by effectively communicating their aspirations around the management of flooding.
- 1.2 Panel objectives include:
 - Provide a link between Council and the local Community for flooding issues.
 - Assist in the collection of necessary information.
 - Identify objectives and strategies related to the improvement of the management of the floodplain.
 - Provide input into known flood behaviour as part of the flood study process.
 - Co-ordinate with water management boards, emergency management boards and other advisory bodies.
 - Provide a forum for discussion of issues (technical, social, environmental and cultural) relevant to the development and implementation of Flood Studies and Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans.
 - Ensure that Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans are undertaken in accordance with the State Government's Flood Risk Management Manual.

2. CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 The Panel complies with provisions of the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 for the purposes of section 733 of the Local Government Act 1993.
- 2.2 The Core Floodplain Advisory Panel was formed after the terms of reference were adopted. Expressions of interest were advertised in the local newspaper for the nomination of Community Members. Advisory bodies/agencies included in the Core Floodplain Advisory Panel will nominate their respective representatives.
- 2.3 Local Representatives will be determined at the commencement of the floodplain risk management process for each catchment. Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be selected following the advertisement of expressions of interest in the local newspaper. It is intended that Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be consistent throughout all stages of the floodplain risk management process (ie flood study and floodplain risk management study and plan) for the catchment they have nominated to represent.
- 2.4 For catchments in which the floodplain risk management process has begun, Local Representatives will be selected at the commencement of the next stage of the floodplain risk management process. Following determination of the Local Representatives, the Floodplain Advisory Panel for the relating catchment will be formed.

3. SCOPE:

- 3.1 The scope of the Panel includes the provision of input and advice to Council in the flood risk management process through the discussion of technical, social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues associated with floodplain management.
- 3.2 The scope of the Panel does not include decision making, policy direction of delegating work to be carried out by Council.

4. DEFINITIONS:

- 4.1 Key flood related terminology and definitions relevant to this document are contained in the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual 2023.

5. AUTHORITY:

- 5.1 The Panel has an advisory role and will not have a formal role in decision making, policy direction or delegating additional work to be carried out by Council as part of the Floodplain Risk Management Process. The Panel reports to the Director of Facilities and Infrastructure.

6. TERM:

- 6.1 The Core Floodplain Advisory Panel will be reformed every 4 years (in line with Council general elections).

7. MEMBERSHIP:

- 7.1 The Floodplain Advisory Panel will consist of the Core Members and Local Representatives. The Core Members will provide an advisory role for all flood studies and floodplain risk management studies (and plans) conducted across Council's Local Government Area (LGA). The Local Representatives are additional members who have specific knowledge of the subject catchment.

Figure 1 depicts the composition of the Floodplain Advisory Panel.

FLOODPLAIN ADVISORY PANEL	
<p>Core Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Staff (Drainage and Flooding Engineers and Strategic Planner) • 1 x Councillor • 2 x Community Members • 1 x Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEEW) • 1 x Hunter Water Representative • 1 x State Emergency Services Representative 	<p>Local Representatives</p> <p>(For each catchment currently being studied under the Floodplain Risk Management Process)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 – 5 x Catchment Specific Community Representatives (including interest groups, community members, other government departments) • 2 x Consultant Representatives (the consultant that has been selected to complete the flood study)

Figure 1 – Composition of the Floodplain Advisory Panel

7.2 The number of Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be determined on an 'as needs' basis by Council Staff at the commencement of each floodplain management study.

7.3 Selection of Panel Members

Selection of community representatives will be based on the following:

- a. A broad interest and knowledge of floodplain management issues across the LGA (for Core Panel members).
- b. A specific interest and knowledge of floodplain management of the subject catchment (for Catchment Specific Community Representatives).
- c. Demonstrated ability to represent broad community interests.
- d. Demonstrated commitment /availability to attend meetings.

7.4 Community Members of the Core Panel and the Catchment Specific Community Representatives will be determined following review of the received nominations. The Assets Section Manager (or their delegate) will review the submissions and recommend the most appropriate Panel members to the General Manager.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

8.1 A Technical Sub-Panel will be established in parallel with the Floodplain Advisory Panel for each studies catchment. The purpose of the Technical Sub-Panel is to provide technical assistance to enable the panel to fulfil its advisory role to council efficiently, confident that studies and option assessments are technically adequate and the options proposed are practical and feasible. Members of the Technical Sub-Panel include Council Staff, a DCCEEW Representative and Consultant Representatives.

8.2 The Technical Sub-Panel will meet independent of the Floodplain Advisory Panel to discuss technical aspects of the studies.

Delegate	Roles/Responsibilities
Council staff	Technical advice
Councillor representative	Local knowledge
DCCEEW	Technical advice industry resources
State Emergency Service	Emergency management
Hunter Water Corporation	Water management
Community members	Local knowledge
Subcommittee	
Consultant representatives	Subject matter expert
Catchment specific community representative	Catchment specific knowledge

9. ADMINISTRATION ARRANGEMENTS:

9.1 Meeting practices and cycles

- a. Members of the Floodplain Advisory Panel must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct in their capacity as a Panel member. Members must act lawfully, professionally, ethically and with integrity.
- b. The quorum of a meeting of the panel will be at least 5 attendees, comprising of the Chair and at least 4 members. No business of the Floodplain Advisory Panel will be considered unless a quorum is present.
- c. The Floodplain Advisory Panel will meet as necessary to provide input into the floodplain risk management process. It is anticipated that meetings will be held approximately every 6 months (ie 2 meetings per year). Additional meetings may be called to discuss catchment specific issues in which the Core Floodplain Advisory Panel and the relevant Local Floodplain Advisory Representatives will attend.
- d. The Floodplain Advisory Panel is to meet at Port Stephens Council Administration Building in Raymond Terrace or via on-line platforms where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

9.2 Secretariat and Recordkeeping

Asset Section Manager (or delegate).

9.3 Agenda and minutes

- a. The Asset Section Manager (or delegate) is responsible for the coordination and distribution of the agenda and minutes.
- b. The agenda will generally be distributed 1 week prior to the meeting.
- c. The Minutes will generally be distributed within 2 weeks of the meeting.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY:

- 10.1 Members listed in this Terms of Reference may become acquainted with or have access to confidential and/or sensitive information. Members should not disclose such information to any other party unless specifically authorised to do so and should not make improper use of any information.

11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

Terms of Reference

- 11.1 The Floodplain Advisory Panel acknowledges and agrees:
- It is important for Council to develop, maintain, protect and manage the organisation's intellectual property including copyrights, trademarks, registered designs, patents and databases.
 - The Floodplain Advisory Panel has a duty to observe and help protect Council's intellectual property by not copying or supplying such property without the express permission of Council or the copyright owner.
 - Council retains ownership of all intellectual property created by Members in the course of their Floodplain Advisory Panel work.
 - Council will acknowledge the Floodplain Advisory Panel if publishing or reproducing copy of a Floodplain Advisory Panel research, including images and historical data.
- 11.2 The Floodplain Advisory Panel refers to the Secretariat any questions relating to intellectual property rights or the use of another organisation's document.

12. MEDIA:

- 12.1 Any media liaison associated with the activities of the Floodplain Advisory Panel shall be undertaken in accordance with Port Stephens Council protocols and with the approval of the Floodplain Advisory Panel.

13. REVIEW:

- 13.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the first meeting in the calendar year.

14. MEETING CODE OF COOPERATION

- We start on time and finish on time.
- We focus on the strategic intent of the item.
- We ensure that people attending meetings are provided with guidance and support.
- We consider the risks and opportunities of each item.
- We are prepared to have open and honest conversations about an issue even if it is uncomfortable.
- We all participate fully and are prepared to challenge each other.
- We use improvement tools that enhance meeting efficiency and effectiveness.
- We actively listen to what others have to say, seeking first to understand then to be understood.
- We consider the deployment of actions and programs through appropriate frameworks and communicate the consensus view through appropriate channels.
- We follow up on the actions we are assigned responsibility for and complete them on time.
- We give and receive open and honest feedback in a constructive manner.
- We use data to make decisions (whenever possible).
- We determine issues arising by consensus or refer to the Chair for consideration.
- We strive to continually improve our meeting process and build time into each agenda for reflection and learning.
- We will promote best practice, keeping open minds, combining our experiences and shared learnings to inform our deliberations.

15. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 15.1 Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).
- 15.2 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW).
- 15.3 Water Management Act 2000 (NSW).
- 15.4 Hunter Water Act 1991 (NSW).
- 15.5 State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW).
- 15.6 Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 (NSW)
- 15.7 Shelter-in-Place Guideline for Flash Flooding 2024 (NSW)
- 15.8 Port Stephens Council Local Environment Plan 2013.
- 15.9 Port Stephens Council Development Control Plan 2025.
- 15.10 Port Stephens Council Flood Risk Management Policy.

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

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EDRMS container No	PSC2006-2097	EDRMS record No	26/67612
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Author	ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER		
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Adoption date			

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1.0	This is the date of adoption by group or committee 02.03.2026	ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER	Endorsed by the Floodplan Advisory Panel 02.03.2026