

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Sunday, 1 May 2022 8:36:43 PM

Your details

Title

First name

Last name

Email

Postcode

Submission details

Submission type I am making a personal submission

Consent to make submission public I would like this submission to remain anonymous

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

I'm from Goonellabah so I wasn't directly impacted by the floods as I am lucky to be on high ground.

But I have been affected in other ways.

I'm a disability pensioner. So for me, money is tight. One of my multiple disabilities is General Anxiety Disorder.

Because of the roads being flooded, I missed travelling to see my friend in Sydney the

weekend after, but also, the trucks couldn't get in to stock coles and woolies etc. The empty shelves left me in a very bad position of not being able to access necessary food or supplies, and what I could access, I often had to get more expensive options. This meant I had to do without some necessities, but I saw them being offered at donation centres that I didn't feel I was entitled to.

Because all the shops down town being destroyed, it also means that the roads up here are so busy! I get Anxiety when driving so all the extra traffic, full car parks, extra people when in the shops... it's all taking a toll on my mental health which was already something I was really struggling with.

It's also meant having to travel to Ballina for kmart and big w. With fuel prices and everyone else in the area having to do the same thing, it's so busy all the time, and then trying to navigate unfamiliar car parks, to find shops I've never been to... it's all so stressful!

And now, I've been sick for weeks (possibly mold related, I go to the doctor tomorrow. Not my usual doctor because now everyone has to use doctors in Goonellabah and I can't breathe well enough to wait 3 weeks) so I've been getting even more behind on my housework than I already was. So I promised myself I'd catch up on housework and get delivery to eat. But nobody is delivering! I wound up having a 4 hour breakdown crying and starving because I couldn't access food. I'm not in the flood zone, but it's still costing me both financially and in my mental health.

I feel like Lismore "put all the eggs in one basket" then sat that basket in a flood zone to wash away. We desperately need more and a bigger variety of shops in Goonellabah! I'm also seeing all the waste: how much got swept downstream polluting the environment? How much got pulled out of homes and businesses, and sent to landfill? How much stuff is now being brought to replace what was lost?

As far as I'm concerned, all homes and businesses (anything that flooded in 2017 or round 2 this year) need to be relocated out of flood zone with the main CBD area being turned into sporting fields, market space, BBQ area, amphitheatre etc and the other areas (north Lismore, south Lismore, etc) turned into national Park/wildlife areas with native plants replanted. This reduces loss and pollution during a flood, and would also help to absorb more water, reducing flood height and severity for Lismore area and downstream.

Every time there is a flood, everyone suffers

The environment suffers

People's physical health suffers

People's mental health suffers

People's financial health suffers

People die.

If Lismore doesn't get out of the way of the floods, then it doesn't DESERVE to survive as a town.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

I feel that a combination of climate change and land clearing in catchment areas and flood planes are the main contributors to floods getting more severe and more often.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Things like the levee are useless and causes more damage when it overtops. Relocation and replanting in catchment areas and flood areas are the only true fixes that don't make things worse for those down stream or the environment.

1.5 Recovery from floods

We need to relocate everything to higher ground. People need support for homes and businesses. I suggest assessing all the businesses in the flood zones (retail stores, hairdressers and beauticians, groceries, hospitality, dance studios etc) and establish their needs. Look at how can we rebuild a CBD, out of flood zone, that caters

to all these businesses and get them moved at no cost to themselves.

Home owners should be funded for landswap, relocate house (saves on supplies and materials) at no cost to themselves. Housing was already such an issue. We need to salvage and save what's left.

It would all be very expensive in the short term, but each flood costs millions in clean up and recovery. Would it not be better in the long run to not NEED a recovery every time we get extra rain?

1.6 Any other matters

HOUSING. There was already a housing crisis. There's just not enough housing to go around. What's left is completely unaffordable to most people. We need the government to step up and supply enough housing to go around. There were already families homeless and now they are competing with flood victims to get a roof over their heads.

If we had enough housing to go around, at affordable prices, there wouldn't be as much strain after a disaster because there wouldn't be as many homeless couch surfing beforehand already desperate for homes. It means more people would be able to offer temporary accommodation to friends and family who do lose their homes.

Supporting documents or images
