

From:
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Flood recovery submission
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I live in Coraki and have a house that was flood free in both 28th of February 2022 floods and the subsequent following flood in March. However approximately only 6 streets in our town did not flood so the majority of the town flooded and flooded to a very high level. I have already done a submission about the terrible crime that has plagued the community, a situation which is almost permanent but which has deteriorated vastly since the floods and is still continuing to this day with a volunteer worker's car being torched, burning it to a wreck in Adams Street Coraki because the keys had been stolen, the owner had then disabled the car so it couldn't be stolen. So the thieves burnt it. The thieves are young children. This incident happened on the morning of 18th of May 2022. The evening before one house was broken into and keys and money stolen and a car was also broken into and keys and money stolen. This occurs in a town with only 6 untouched streets which did not flood and happens almost every night. The children are also on drugs.

Hence, the recovery is slow and the town also has insufficient leadership to affect a resilient recovery. Both the mayor of the shire and our local councillor who is very new to the job had their houses and properties badly flooded. They are not in a position to offer leadership.

However, I have some suggestions for permanent recovery. There is vacant land at height to the rear of the town away from the Richmond River which is owned by New South Wales Department of Health. This area had the previous Coraki Campbell hospital and Coraki Conference Centre removed from it by New South Wales Department of Health in 2018. This land would suit both an Evacuation Centre. The land is also suitable land for house removal or house erection. It is flood free but would require a small bridge over the Coraki town drain. At the rear of the health department land there is also a nine hole golf course, Coraki Golf Club at a flood free height occupying the most favourable land in the town precinct.

This land should be purchased and houses in low-lying areas and businesses in low-lying areas should be relocated to this flood free land. The land that has existing houses removed from it could be rehabilitated to be the town's golf course down near the river. This would be voluntary, as not all people would wish to move, though there is a considerable vacant low lying land in Coraki. The golf course is not as significant to the town as proper housing land. The Coraki Golf Club could receive financial compensation and have further low-lying land rehabilitated as a golf course.

Concerning the businesses in the main street which is adjacent to the Richmond River, there are businesses which should be offered the opportunity to move to higher land and the historic buildings retained but used in a market type situation where temporary stallholders can sell goods in safety from the climate, but not have fixed shop features which are the ones that are always damaged during floods. This would allow a dual business opportunity for the town. This opportunity could also be extended to the people in the lower lying areas of the small towns of Woodburn and Broadwater who also need relocating out of the flood zone but do not have sufficient land in their locations because of topography. They could also relocate to the Coraki flood free land. Many of their houses could be relocated to the Coraki Golf Course land if suited to the owners.

The other major point I would like to make is that some houses will need demolition as people will never return to inhabit them. A timeframe and plan for demolition should be placed post these major floods. Derelict buildings increase crime in an already crime riddled town which suffers considerable racial tension. The racial tension exists between indigenous Australians and non-indigenous Australians and is fuelled by crime and theft and unresolved land rights claims. There is a necessity for the expansion of Indigenous housing as the population is increasing with many small children having been born in the

past 10 years. And the town also requires the introduction of specific secondary culturally appropriate indigenous education as there is a high dropout rate amongst high school students and this creates lack of opportunity and an inclination towards theft as and crime as a career. It would be a great benefit to the town if an education institution for teenagers could be introduced into the town on the golf club land.

I doubt if any of the ideas would eventuate as there is insufficient leadership in the town to drive it and it is highly likely that the town will never recover and certainly won't without outside aid. There are brave young people and people of middle-age here but there were many, many old people who do not have the stamina to reclaim their houses and will essentially move on. A consultation process with the town's property owners should be organised for the smaller towns of Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater and Wardell as well as Lismore. The focus on Lismore is not the only focus as there are plenty of people downriver. I'm sure Ballina has sufficient voice and population to take care of its own concerns but I feel the small River towns are being completely neglected as far as recovery leadership is concerned and that this needs to be introduced as an outside phenomenon and give people a chance to make suggestions and formulate plans for the more successful revival of their towns and districts. There are many peculiar problems associated with the farms and with the people who dwell on bush acreage at Bungawalbin . Bungawalbin residents needs immediate attention particularly as people cannot drive into their properties because they have insufficient gravel driveways to drive on, cannot afford the gravel and have no internet or phones and no way of asking for flood relief. I'm told there are at least 100 families in this position in the Bungawalbin area South of Coraki. This needs to be rectified immediately. Best regards

Coraki 2471