

**From:** [NSW Government](#)  
**To:** [Flood Inquiry](#)  
**Subject:** Floods Inquiry  
**Date:** Wednesday, 18 May 2022 8:21:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [IMG\\_8441.PNG](#)

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## Your details

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<b>Title</b>	Miss
<b>First name</b>	Leesa
<b>Last name</b>	Hallahan
<b>Email</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Postcode</b>	2484

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## Submission details

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<b>I am making this submission as</b>	A resident in a flood-affected area
<b>Submission type</b>	I am making a personal submission
<b>Consent to make submission public</b>	I give my consent for this submission to be made public

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## Share your experience or tell your story

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<b>Your story</b>	<p>I am a 47 year old female &amp; live in Railway Street South Murwillumbah.</p> <p>I have lost every possession I hold dear &amp; have worked my whole life for the second time in 5 years.</p> <p>I have had to rip out the interior of my whole house.</p>
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I may yet loose my street as well.  
I am in limbo.

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## **Terms of Reference (optional)**

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

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### **1.1 Causes and contributing factors**

Murwillumbah has a wall that protects one side, but does absolutely nothing good for the other, in particular our street.

I live in Railway Street Sth Murwillumbah & we are feeling literally like the people from the wrong side of the tracks. The water flows from both the river, streets & from the fields behind our houses causing it to pool & basically form a lake that takes days to get away, the new industrial estate the other side of us seems to also stop the flow of the water out from our area.

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### **1.2 Preparation and planning**

All our houses are raised, if we are to be allowed to stay they NEED to be raised higher.

In the last flood, in 2017, the whole street didn't evacuate as it had never been dangerously flooded in our street. In the middle of the night we had to escape to the railway station (which is across the street from our houses), the whole street, adults, kids & animals all huddled where we could for warmth & shelter. Most of us had to be moved by boat or guided by a few of the stronger male neighbours that came to help those that needed it. Thankfully my neighbours & their friend came to get me and my pets as the water was too high for me to walk through by myself. I had one back pack & my pets in cages being carried above our heads. We had NO evacuation order and no way to get to safety or leave as all roads were cuted, and do cut us off early.

This time we left earlier. I had already lifted all my possessions as high as I could, electrical etc on kitchen bench or higher, but the water came into the living area to my arm pits (approx 3.8m through my yard). So besides the things I could fit in a few suitcases I lost everything, again. And

my house was ruined. I did all the prep I could, but it was just too high.

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**1.3 Response to floods**

Having been through it all once before I knew better what to do. I was back in as soon as I could cross the bridge and started cleaning, we canoed down the street and into the top level. The house was wet and muddy to my arm pits, so we started clearing furniture & floated it over to the dry area over the street. Starting the sad, muddy, stinky pile that was now my life. Everything I treasured or owned was ruined & covered in oily, stinky mud.

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**1.4 Transition from incident response to recovery**

The community was amazing and jumped in to help as soon as they could. The volunteers and community groups are what saved us. The hub set up under the cinema was astounding, & those people need to be recognised for what they did.

It was weeks before we got any outside help at all in any physical way.

The army needed to be here right away.

The recovery centre that was set up was a wonderful help. They knew our brains were not functioning from the trauma & lack of sleep.

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**1.5 Recovery from floods**

We are not recovering. We are suffering. We are loosing the will do do anything, too exhausted, too confused. We are stuck.

Stuck between applying for gov help, insurance issues, wet weather, physical exhaustion, mental health issues & in our case the council & the future of our street. We have been put on the Voluntary House Raising List & the Buy Back List..... but we have no idea of when or what will happen.

We were put on lists etc in 2017, we were told it could be a few years, then told maybe 20, so we repaired our homes, bit by bit. Only to loose it all again 5 years later.

So we sit in ruined houses (those that can) & wait wait wait to know what our future as a street is. Why fix something only to loose it again.

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## Supporting documents or images

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### Attach files

- [IMG\\_9720\\_1000.jpg](#)
  - [IMG\\_9721\\_1000.jpg](#)
  - [IMG\\_8441.PNG](#)
-

7:46

5G



1 March  
8:30 am

Edit





2 March

9:10 am

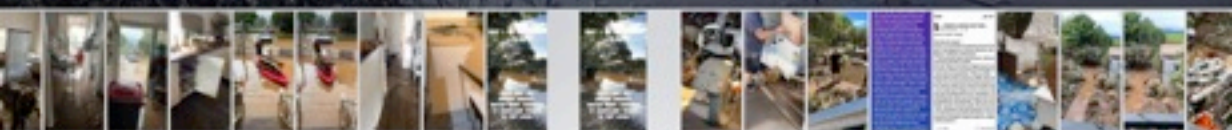
Edit

**DAY 1 OF CLEAN UP  
1/3/22**

**MY HOUSE**



**THESE ARE ALL  
RAISED HOUSES!  
WATER WENT THROUGH  
AT SHOULDER HEIGHT  
IN TOP LEVEL**





2 March

9:10 am

Edit

# MY PILE STARTS



# ONLY WAY TO GET STUFF OUT THROUGH DEEP BIT AT STEPS BOTTOM

