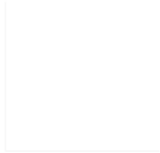


From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 4 May 2022 1:11:31 PM



Your details

Title	Ms
First name	Meg
Last name	Houghton
Email	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	2487

Submission details

I am making this submission as	A member of the general public
Submission type	I am making a personal submission
Consent to make submission public	I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story	Where I live I do not flood but do get flooded in. This submission is largely about the housing crisis which has worsened due to the floods.
-------------------	--

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

There is an ongoing housing shortage in the area which flooding has increase. Contributing factors include -

1. Social housing supplied by the government has dropped from around 7% to 4% over the past decade or two at a time when an increase in social housing is required. Both state and federal governments are the culprits.

2. Whilst our Mayor, Cris Cherry, constantly blames AirBNB for the housing shortage the following facts contribute -

Ms Cherry and her cohorts constantly vote against development forcing developers to go to court. This cost is then added to the cost of buying land in a development making it unaffordable for many locals.

AirBNB provides accommodation for tourists who are essential to this area. It is NOT the responsibility of individuals to provide social housing, that is the governments responsibility.

This council has a utopian agenda which disallows detracted secondary dwellings on all rural land under 40 ha. Ms Cherry constantly states in the media they do allow secondary dwellings but fails to disclose these must be attached to the wall of the existing house and be under 60 sq m. Read on to see why this is an issue, no other council surrounding Tweed has this ridiculous "rule" They think they are protecting agriculture but in fact DO NOT listen to those who are in the sector, myself included. Most farmers in Tweed are over 60. In the majority of cases at least one family member must work off the farm to provide some income security. Now many of us would love one of our children to succeed us. They cannot afford to live off farm (look at cost of housing and rents, if you can find a rent). I don't want to move to an attached Granny flat (I'm not that old yet) and neither does my sons family. This means they can't move here and take over in the next few years. The result is I will sell to a person from Sydney or Melbourne who might run a couple of horses, so when I leave in 10 to 15 years this

very productive land will never be used again for horticulture production as no actual farmer can afford to buy it. This is where the Flood Enquiry Commission need to force this council to make changes NOW.

This Council have decommissioned a number of perfectly livable dwellings in the last 15 years. They are sitting vacant on land often out of flood zones. There is an immediate response that could be made to the housing crisis, recommission them. There are a further 65 I believe they have issued decommission notices too. These folk have been given a reprieve for a short time. Change the councils regulations and these dwellings remain in play housing actual people.

1.2 Preparation and planning

This council needs to start granting DAs more readily. Our neighbors building a new dwelling and pool, 18 plus months to approve. The Town Planning department seems understaffed mostly because they can't sort DA's into three piles - straight forward, quick check, - more complex needs time, - large or very complex, needs dedicated staff to assess.

It seems that even the straight forward have their lives made very difficult by the most amazingly inept objections.

One example, No DA until you address the decontamination of the area of the in ground pool removed - except it was an above ground pool (no concrete) the council had issued a non compliance notice for not 6 months earlier. The owners had to provide council with Stat Decs from neighbors!!!!

1.3 Response to floods

Someone needs to ask questions about South Murwillumbah canal/drain and it's "design to fail"! I don't have sufficient detail on this but a number of people in todays meeting alluded to issues
++++

1.4 Transition

Council treat us like mushrooms. Councils are

**from incident
response to
recovery**

supposed to make transparent their decisions.
There can be no proper recovery without
transparency.

**1.6 Any other
matters**

Please have council allow recommissioning of
homes that are livable as accommodation is
urgently needed. After cyclone Debbie we had
one family living in our house for 10 months,
another living in a van for 12. Start thinking about
land swaps so they don't flood again.

Supporting documents or images
