

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

25 November 2020

DRAFT FLOOD STUDY FOR COOTAMUNDRA ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION

At Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) we know some parts of the Local Government Area (LGA) are more prone to flooding than others and we're committed to finding ways to reduce the social and economic damages of flooding in these areas. Council is working through the NSW Government Floodplain Risk Management Process which will ultimately help us consider the consequences of living on flood prone land.

Council has been working with the Floodplain Risk Management Committee and specialist flood and hydrology consultants, WMAwater to undertake the first stage of the Floodplain Risk Management Process, a Flood Study for Cootamundra. The study identifies flood risk to people, property, infrastructure and assets across the study area, resulting from localised overland flow and large rainfall events over the broader catchment. The study has established a suite of tools and outputs that can assist Council and the community to understand and manage flood risk. The outcomes of the Flood Study support many Council functions including planning and development, community education and designing flood risk mitigation works. Property owners can also use this information to assist them in preparing development applications, ensuring the compatibility of future development with the flood risk.

The Flood Study has been prepared based on a mix of first-hand accounts from residents, historic flood marks, rainfall records and current modelling techniques and industry guidance. Council and WMAwater met with the community early in the study prior to starting their work; with residents taking the opportunity to provide very valuable historic information. Your responses help us to understand the local flooding problems and are an invaluable source of data. Council and WMAwater are now eager to meet with the community again to hear feedback on the draft Flood Study outputs and to look at ways to manage the flooding problems identified by the community and confirmed in the Flood Study outputs. They are asking for input through a survey or in person at a community information session on 1st December 2020 at the Alby Schultz Meeting Centre in Wallendoon Street Cootamundra.

Council will shortly commence a Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan to look at various options to reduce the risks and damages caused by flooding. Feedback on what flood risks the community are most concerned about and how they would like to see these flooding problems managed, will provide a great starting point for the next stage of the Floodplain Risk Management Process. Some key discussion points include:

What are the main issues regarding flooding?

What should be done about flooding?

How can Cootamundra better prepare for and respond to floods?

Information about the project is available on Council's website. Council would like to hear from you by email, by filling in a brief online survey or in person at the information session. Community participation is critical to the study's success.

Council is holding a drop-in information session for the community Alby Schultz Meeting Centre in Wallendoon Street Cootamundra on Tuesday 1st December 2020 from 3pm – 6pm. The community can drop in at any time between these hours to meet with Council staff and WMAwater. Please Note a COVID-19 management plan will be in place.

Submissions/feedback should be forwarded to the General Manager CGRC and submitted by 4 January 2021 by post to Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, PO Box 420, Cootamundra NSW 2590, delivered to Council's offices at Cootamundra or Gundagai or by email to mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au

The Draft Flood Study documents can be found on Council's website: <https://www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au/connect-with-us/have-your-say/documents-on-public-exhibition/>

Some typical FAQ's

What can I do to prepare for a flood event?

Visit the State Emergency Service www.floodsafe.com.au to get advice on simple things you can do to prepare for a flood.

What are the risks associated with flooding?

Flooding can cause significant damage to property and risk to life. It may also result in the loss of valuables and disruption to essential services. Flood waters can become dangerous at relatively low depths, and it is very dangerous to enter floodwaters (either on foot or in a vehicle). Floodwaters can contain hidden debris or snags, become electrified if powerlines are down, and contain sewage and bugs that can cause illness.

Will the value of my property be affected if it has been identified as flood affected?

Prospective buyers are able to find out if a property is flood affected because Council has a duty to disclose this information. If you are concerned that the flood classification may affect the value of your property you should seek valuation advice.

Will I be able to get insurance if my property is flood affected?

Council is not in a position to advise you on this matter. The methods and information used by insurance companies to set their policies varies between individual companies. You will need to speak to your insurer to find out how this will affect your premium. General information is available here: https://www.floods.org.au/client_images/1787680.pdf

How are flood risks managed?

Flood risk mitigation options fall into three broad categories:

- Response Modification - changes to the community's response to flooding, such as flood awareness and education, flood warning, response planning.
- Property Modification - changes to properties including management of future development, such as development controls, voluntary house raising or purchase.
- Flood Modification - changes to the flood behaviour through constructed works, such as drainage upgrades, detention basins, levees

Council will be identifying potential options with the input from the community and will then assess the options as part of the future Floodplain Risk Management Study; with the aim of identifying what actions Council, SES and the community can undertake to improve flood risk.

What is the difference between a Flood Study, a Flood Risk Management Study, and a Flood Risk Management Plan?

- The ***Draft Cootamundra Flood Study (Current Study)*** is a technical project that identifies flood behaviour such as depth, velocity and extent across the floodplain. The study is undertaken using current techniques and industry guidance. The study outputs provide a representation of the expected flood behaviour for a range of past and future flood events.
- A ***Floodplain Risk Management Study*** examines the options available to potentially manage flood risk.
- A ***Floodplain Risk Management Plan*** presents specific mitigation options which are recommended for further consideration.

Preparing a Flood Study is the first step in the Floodplain Risk Management Process outlined in the *NSW Floodplain Development Manual 2005* which encompasses the *NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy*. A Flood Study does not propose any actions to manage flood behaviour. This occurs in the Flood Risk Management Study and Flood Risk Management Plan stages of the process. Learn more about the NSW floodplain management process on the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Website:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/floodplains/floodplain-management-program

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Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
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