

Gladstone Regional Council Mount Maria Bushfires Local Recovery Plan



About our community

The Gladstone area is located on the Central Queensland coast bounded by the Coral Sea in the north-east and east, the Bundaberg Regional Council area and the North Burnett Regional Council area in the south, the Banana Shire in the west, and the Rockhampton Regional Council area in the northwest.

The Traditional Owners of the Gladstone area are the Port Curtis Coral Coast People which comprise of four groups; the Gurang, the Gooreng, the Bailai and the Taribelang Bunda.

The Gladstone Regional Council area covers 10,506km². In 2018, the total population of Gladstone was recorded at approximately 63,000 people with a population density of 0.06 persons per hectare.

Gladstone's \$5.26 billion economy supports more than 29,072 jobs and 3635 small businesses, with the main industry being manufacturing.

Council vision statement

The Gladstone Region is back in business and will rapidly rebuild as a stronger, more resilient community.

Gladstone Regional Council values:

- Safe – We are uncompromising in our commitment to safety, which is reflected in our attitude, our decisions and our actions.
- Ethical – We operate with transparency, openness and accountability at the fore.
- Responsive – We respond by being present, proactive and solutions-focused, and we deliver on our commitments.
- Visionary – We plan as futures-thinkers and opportunity seekers and we have the courage to shape a better future for our community.
- Inclusive – We create and value diversity and we actively demonstrate our commitment to equality and inclusivity.
- Community – We care about each other and our environment and we recognise that community is the core of our business.
- Efficient – We deliver; we challenge the status quo and we continually find better ways to reduce cost and improve services.

About the disaster event

In April 2019, the Gladstone area was fully drought declared. The Eastern Queensland Bushfires impacted Gladstone through the Mount Maria bushfires which occurred from 15 December 2019. These fires impacted communities at Rosedale, Lowmead, Mount Maria, and Berajondo. Places of refuge were established at Miriam Vale Community Centre and temporary accommodation in Rosedale Hotel and Miriam Vale Hotel for displaced residents.

Council and the community are grateful for the support provided by emergency services.

Local Recovery Group

Stood up 23 December 2019

Chaired by: Cr Matt Burnett, Mayor

The Human & Social Recovery Group was stood up to support the recovery efforts.

The LDMG was in an Alert state as emergency services were in control of the bushfires, however recovery required support of the LDMG hence the stand-up of the Human and Social Recovery Group.

Lines of Recovery

Community, Economic, Environment (including Building), Infrastructure (including Roads and Transport).

Key stakeholders

Lead state government agencies and community groups.

- 1 Ensure refuse management is available for impacted residences and provide increased availability of services.
- 2 Structure safety assessments are conducted to ensure buildings are safe.
- 3 Affected residents are supported with building and financial support information to be able to rebuild their place of residence.
- 4 All impacted residents have access to potable water.
- 5 All displaced residents are supported in seeking access to temporary accommodation.
- 6 Enhance community resilience by delivering community development activities and education strategies.
- 7 Rural property boundary fences are rebuilt to define property lines.
- 8 Financial assistance options are identified and widely communicated to all impacted residents.
- 9 Local businesses and primary producers are empowered to improve their resilience to disasters.

Measures of success

Community

- Displaced residents have been provided temporary accommodation in a timely manner.
- Financial assistance options have been identified and communicated.
- Eligible applicants have successfully accessed funding support.
- Community development and education strategies have been delivered to increase community resilience.

Economic

- Local businesses and primary producers have reported an improvement in their resilience to disasters.

Environment

- The waste services implemented have addressed waste disposal needs in an effective and efficient manner.
- Building structure safety assessments have been conducted and outcomes have been provided to impacted residents and owners.
- Affected residents have been supported while their homes are rebuilt.

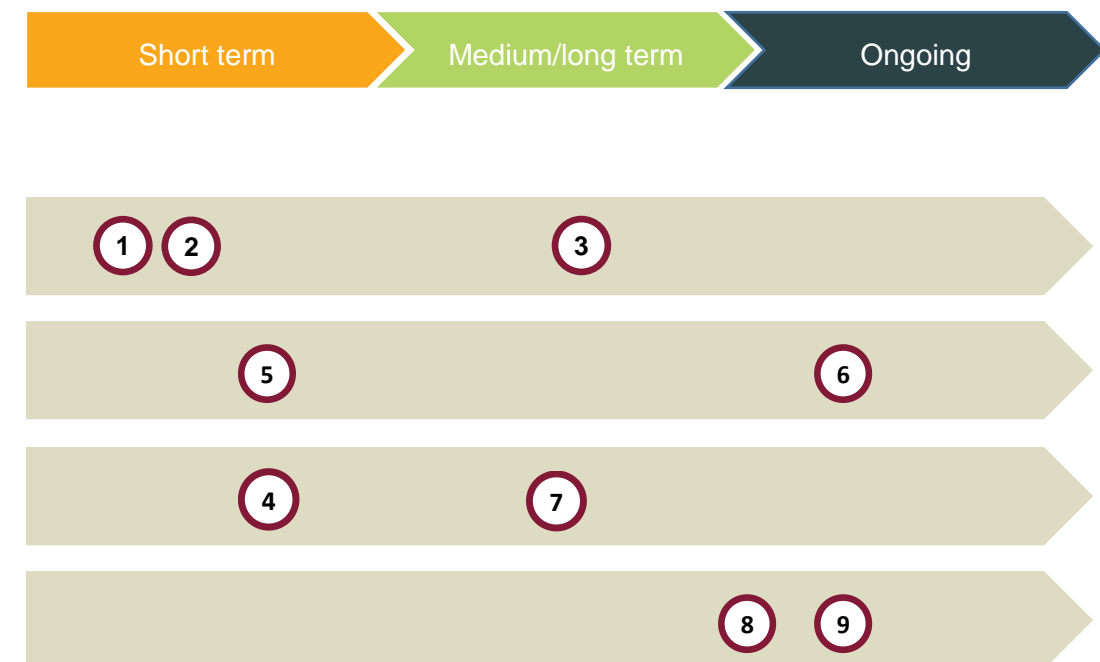
Infrastructure

- All roads have been reopened.
- Rural property boundary fences have been reinstated where required.
- Water supply systems have been cleaned, tested and deemed safe.
- Clean tank water has been provided to all impacted residents.

Recovery narrative

Recovery objectives

Recovery timeframes



Gladstone Regional Council

Damage and impacts

Community

- Increased risk to public health through potential contamination of household water tanks.
- Community wellbeing impacted due to the stress of evacuations.
- Community wellbeing impacted because of evacuations that took place during the Central Queensland Bushfires 2018.
- Community wellbeing impacted due to residents having to leave their animals behind.

Economic

- Full economic impacts to be further understood and site visits to be undertaken.

Environment

- In total 32,425ha of land was burnt.
- Impacts to land utilised by primary producers, such as fencing and stock welfare.
- Concern regarding condition of building materials impacted by fire e.g. asbestos.
- Possible impact to domestic animal welfare on inaccessible properties, in lieu of usual care.
- Vastly increased waste created, requiring timely disposal.
- Forecast impact of animal based nuisance as a result of property damage e.g. roaming stock, dogs etc.
- Eight dwellings were destroyed/uninhabitable.
- 23 other structures (sheds/mobile property).

Infrastructure

- A number of roads were closed by QPS due to fire threat during the event.
- Roads impacted by fallen vegetation.

Recovery tasks

Community

- Link community members to temporary accommodation.
 - Provide displaced residents temporary accommodation.
- Identify and communicate available financial assistance options.
- Provide access to psychosocial support for impacted community members through community services.
- Increase community resilience through community development activities and education strategies.

Economic

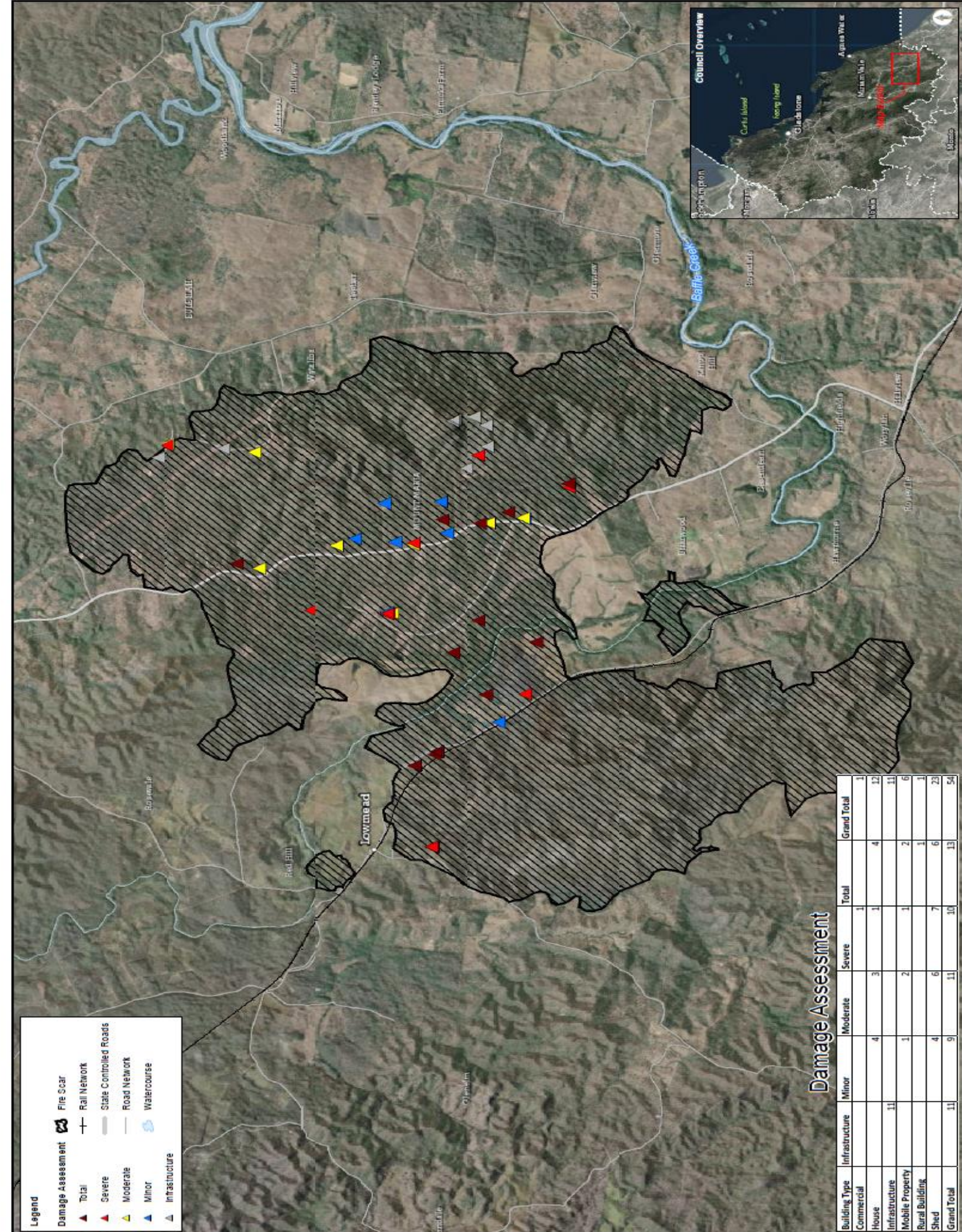
- Empower local businesses and primary producers
 - Provide education and training programs.

Environment

- Provide additional refuse services for affected residents including increased availability for essential services.
 - Refuse services – increase collection schedule.
 - Refuse services – waiving of fees at facilities.
 - Refuse services – safe removal of hazardous material e.g. asbestos.
 - Refuse services – removal of non-hazardous damaged material.
- Conduct building structure safety assessments.
- Provide support to affected residents during the rebuilding of their homes.
 - Provide information about the Queensland Building and Construction Commission building codes.
 - Prioritise building applications for impacted residents.
- Re-build rural property boundary fences.
 - Utilise volunteer groups to provide support to affected residents e.g. assistance with labour and access to fencing material.

Infrastructure

- Reopen roads that were closed during the event.
 - Council to remove vegetation debris from impacted roads.
 - Council to remove fallen trees from impacted roads.
- Provide clean tank water for all impacted residents.
 - Clean tank water – hose down roofs, clean guttering and replace water.



Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Assistance

Local Government Area	Counter Disaster Operations	Essential Services Safety Reconnection Scheme	Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme	Extraordinary Bushfire Assistance (Small Business) Loans	Extraordinary Bushfire Assistance (Primary Producer) Loans	Freight Subsidies for primary producers	Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants for Primary Producers
Gladstone Regional Council	Activated 19/12/19	Activated 19/12/19	Activated 19/12/19	Activated 31/01/20	Activated 31/01/20	Activated 31/01/20	Activated 21/02/20

