

### Recovery narrative

#### About Noosa

Noosa is situated at the northern tip of Queensland's Sunshine Coast and covers an area of 871km<sup>2</sup>. Noosa Shire has an economy that is diversifying beyond a thriving tourism industry. It is recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere and has a proud history of preserving its natural environment. Thirty-five per cent of the Shire is protected as either national park, reserve, or conservation area. The mean annual rainfall for the region is 1707mm, with March traditionally the wettest month of the year.

#### About our community

Noosa is home to more than 54,000 people, comprising of an aging community, with more than 23% of the population over the age of 65. This compares to the Queensland average of 14%.

#### About the disaster event

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, a surface and upper trough combined with a humid airmass to produce slow moving thunderstorms across inland and southeast parts of the state. Intense rainfall was experienced over the next 13 days. Cooran, in the Noosa Hinterland, received 1160mm of rain in this period, which equates to 68% of its mean annual rainfall. Intense, persistent rainfall resulted in flash and riverine flooding in an already saturated catchment. Flooded road infrastructure resulted in numerous communities being isolated at different times during the event. Catchment inflows resulted in Major flood conditions along the Noosa River. These floods impacted properties, public assets, critical infrastructure, small businesses, the local environment, and the community.

#### Local Recovery Group

Chaired by: Cr Joe Jurisevic	Local Recovery Coordinator: Kerri Contini	Economic: Carolyn Bullen
Human Social: Alison Hamblin	Infrastructure: Adam Britton	
Environment: Shaun Walsh	Waste and Env Health: Kyrone Dodd	

#### Key stakeholders

Noosa Shire Council	Queensland Police Service	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
State Emergency Service	Australian Red Cross	Department Environment & Science
Lifeline	Maritime Safety Qld	Surf Life Saving Queensland
Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy		Queensland Reconstruction Authority

### Recovery objectives

- 1 Restoration of essential services - Power, water, waste, and telecommunications.
- 2 Undertake impact assessments of damaged properties and infrastructure.
- 3 All evacuated residents are returned to their homes safely.
- 4 Support and assist people to access emergency hardship grants and funding approvals.
- 5 Utilise community events to engage with the community & provide further mental health and well-being support
- 6 Restoration of community facilities.
- 7 Build community resilience for future disasters (all hazards).
- 8 Undertake economic impact assessment.
- 9 Support small business and empower them to improve their resilience to disasters.
- 10 Undertake impact assessment of road transport network.
- 11 Improved resilience to the road transport network.
- 12 Restore and build confidence in the tourism market in effected areas e.g., camping, retreats etc.
- 13 Empower local tourism operators to improve their resilience to disasters.
- 14 Undertake environmental impact assessment.
- 15 Build in resilience measures to impacted creeks, waterways, estuaries and coastal environments
- 16 Flood resilience - develop and implement strategies for greater flood resilience.
- 17 Flood response - develop and implement systems for improved flood forecasting and response.
- 18 Build resilience through amplifying sustainability and climate adaptation.
- 19 Undertake impact assessment of stormwater network.
- 20 Coordinated restoration and betterment planning for the stormwater network.

### Measures of success

#### Human and social

- Evacuation and refuge centres established quickly to provide safe refuge.
- Immediate post-disaster community support provided to impacted people including assistance with emergency hardship payments, housing and counselling.
- Follow-up community activities implemented to monitor mental health implications and provide support where required e.g., Connecting Noosa, Ageing Well Noosa, Mental Health First Aid Course.
- The community are kept up to date with key information during the recovery process.
- Community resilience and preparedness increased for future disasters.

#### Economic

- Impact assessment for businesses undertaken.
- Support provided for affected businesses.
- Media campaigns to build on confidence in the tourism sector particularly those businesses that were impacted developed and delivered.
- Restore confidence in the tourism market

#### Environment

- Environmental impact assessment for flora and fauna has been completed.
- Environmental impact assessment for wildlife has been completed.
- Debris, rubbish and pollutant remediation completed.

- Review of Council's flood management plan has been completed
- Restoration of scouring and erosion completed.
- Resource developed informing community about Council's flood management plan and disaster dashboard.

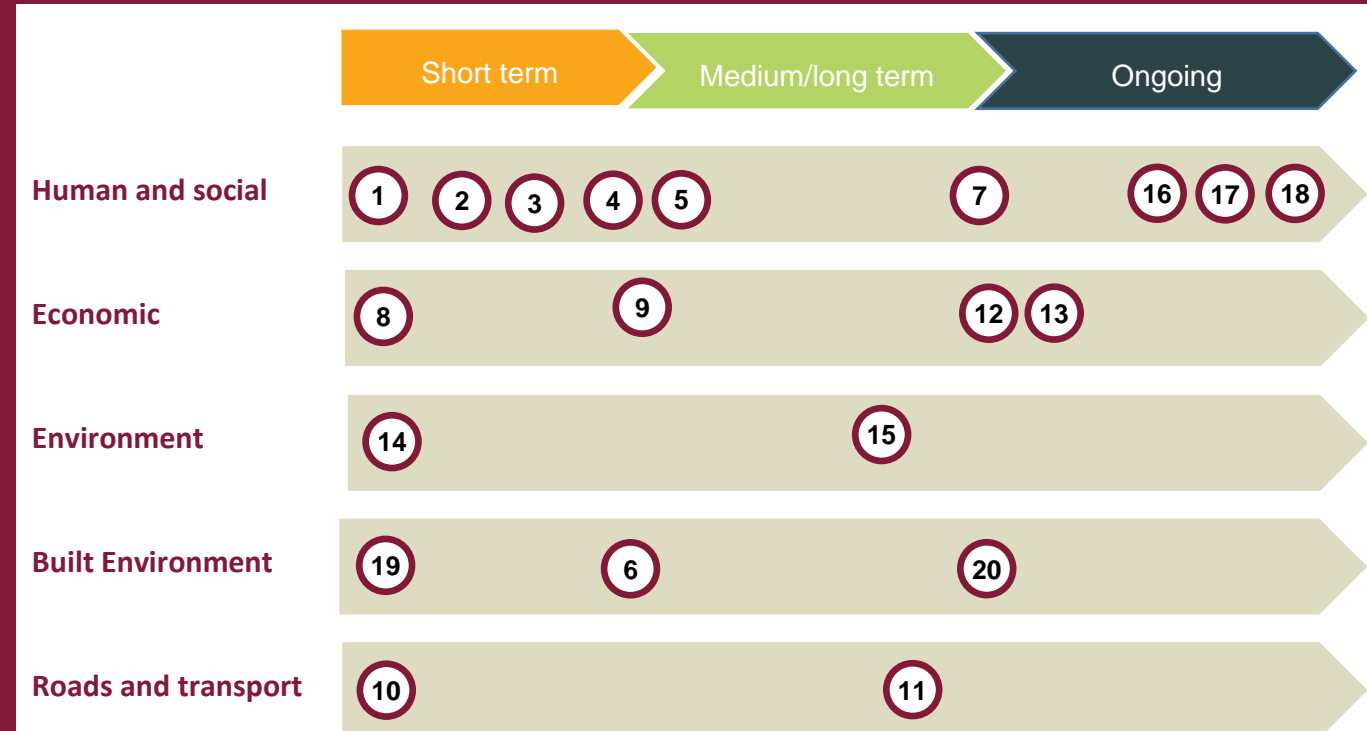
#### Built Environment

- An impact assessment to understand damage to properties has been completed.
- The community has been supported with the facilitation of the reconstruction of homes where necessary.
- An impact assessment to understand damage to community facilities has been completed.
- Damage to community facilities has been repaired.
- Flood assessments have been completed for inundation areas

#### Roads and transport

- Impact assessment of the road transport network has been completed.
- All roads have been reopened.
- Flood gauge network has been improved.
- A Flood camera network has been implemented.

### Recovery timeframes



## Human and social

- Social impacts including mental, emotional and physical issues associated with the event.
- Lack of basic needs, physical displacement, psychosocial issues, financial stress and health risks
- Damage to social infrastructure (hard and soft), family and community disruption, decline in physical and mental health, decline in community capacity, threat to community cohesion, connectivity and confidence, damage to shire's visual amenity.
- Emerging and Ongoing Needs in the Shire:
  - Services to support increased community disclosure of mental health issues and domestic violence.
  - There is rising psychological distress in young people but long wait lists and travel (by Noosa residents) to access free youth services, and lack of variety / scope means many YP are not accessing the help they need.
  - Anecdotal evidence from our agencies indicates increased rates of domestic violence, forcing some people into homelessness. This is consistent with evidence from previous disasters.
  - Our aged and rural residents may be experiencing financial hardship and who are too proud or stoic to ask for financial and/or psychological support.
- Our local data indicates that:
  - Around 150 residents have low - high Human Welfare Needs
  - Around 300 residents have had low- high structural damage to their residential property
- Grant Applications relating to the event (as of 6 May).
  - Emergency Hardship Assistance – 421
  - Essential Services Hardship Assistance – 113
  - Essential Household Contents Grant – 179
  - Essential Services & Reconnection Scheme - 27
  - Structural Assistance - 90
- Insurance Council of Australia data:
  - Noosa claims total – 1076
  - Alleged Losses\* - 9
  - Alleged total cost - \$11,155,520

## Economic

- Impacts to the operation of businesses, including private accommodation providers and tourism operators.
- Food loss to retail and hospitality businesses.

\* not broken down to dwelling, commercial or vehicle

## Environment

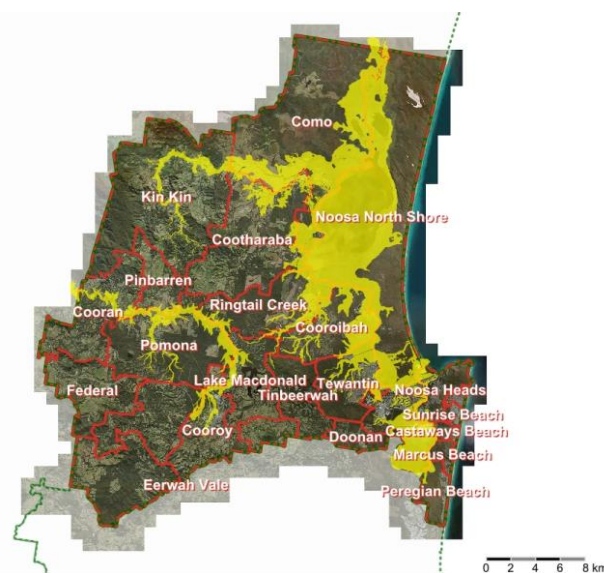
- Scouring and Erosion impacts on the Noosa trails Network
- Water quality issues (debris/pollution and fish kills) across creek systems and Noosa River.
- Environmental impacts of erosion of Noosa Riverbank and loss of instream/riparian vegetation.
- Significant coastal erosion, deposition on beaches (both organic and inorganic), marine and estuary ecosystem damage and contamination.
- Scouring and Erosion impacts in Council reserve Network
- Erosion impacts to Beach accesses on Eastern Beaches and Noosa Northshore.
- Major Landslide on the Noosa trails Network

## Built Environment

- Flood Impacts to numerous residential properties
- Impact to Unitywater water and sewerage infrastructure leading to overflows of sewage

## Roads and transport

- Closure of the Bruce Highway south and north of Noosa for several days.
- Major Landslide on Black Mountain Rd, Black Mountain.
- Impacts to Council and DTMR road infrastructure
- Major culvert and pipe failures
- Extensive outlet erosion in numerous areas
- Impacts to Councils stormwater infrastructure
- Impacts to Councils open space and parks



Note: Major Flood Impact Model. Indicative only and subject to further analysis

## Human and social

- Establish 11 x community recovery pop up hubs for people who require support including assistance with emergency hardship payments, welfare support, housing, insurance etc.
- Conduct community outreach for those people who are not in a position to access recovery pop ups
- Establish and activate a Noosa Care Army (Mud Army)
- Utilise community events and networks to check in with the community to monitor mental health implications and provide support as required.
- Keep the community up to date with key milestones during recovery.
- Develop a community messaging campaign focusing on building resilience for future disasters from an all-hazards approach.
- Support the resilience of the community in understanding and responding to increasing threat of floods.
- Support community organisations in their recovery efforts.
- Disposal of flood impacted household items

## Economic

- Determine impact to businesses
- Determine and support DRFA funding eligibility
- Work closely with State agencies and collect impact data for rural residential properties.
- Develop media campaigns to build on confidence in the tourism sector particularly businesses that were impacted.
- Develop effective communications through economic community
- Determine and deliver business support needs
- Financial counselling/business support programs
- Maximise use of local supply
- Stimulate the economy

## Environment

- Immediate response:
  - a. Debris, rubbish and pollutant remediation
  - b. Treatment and environmental amelioration of waterways, wetlands and beaches
  - c. Environmental management plans and permits

- Impact assessment:
  - a. Environmental assessment of river floodplain
  - b. Waterways and wetlands impact assessments
  - c. Coastal environment
  - d. Debris, rubbish and pollutants
  - e. Pest plant and feral animal assessment
- Environmental resilience and adaptation
  - a. Long term ecological restoration, resilience and adaptation activities and projects
  - b. Sustainability resilience planning
  - c. River recovery and restoration (including wildlife and pest management)
  - d. Coastal areas and beach restoration
- Disposal of environmental waste, including marine debris from other council areas, that deposited on Eastern Beaches and the Noosa Northshore

## Built Environment

- Conduct an impact assessment to understand damage to properties.
- Facilitate property washouts
- Address flood waste management
- Support the community with facilitating their reconstruction of homes where necessary.
- Conduct an impact assessment to understand damage to community facilities.
- Repair any damage to community facilities.
- Undertake audit of evacuation centre operations and improve capability
- Restore essential public infrastructure
- Recovery and resilience of NSC assets
- Undertake flood assessments of impacted areas and improve resilience to future floods.

## Roads and transport

- Conduct an impact assessment of the road transport network.
- Reopen roads that were closed during the events.
- Long term road network restoration, resilience and adaptation activities and projects
- Investigate opportunities for a flood camera network
- Investigate opportunities for a flood gauge network

## Economic Recovery and Resilience Projects to Achieve (Subject to DRFA Funding)

### Initiatives

- Lake Entrance Blvd, Noosaville – Flood Assessment
- Pomona Catchment – Flood Assessment
- Pump system for Peregrin Beach
- Flood Camera Network Program
- Flood Gauge Enhancement Program
- Flood Signage Enhancement Program
- Coastal Stormwater Outlet Enhancement Program
- Hinterland Festival of Arts with a focus on First Nations engagement but includes live musical events and cultural activities
- CDO Recovery Officer
- Targeted Hinterland Recovery and Resilience community champions skills development and training. Creating local community connectors and providing them with CD skills
- Volunteer upskilling Program
- Continuation of the Connecting Noosa Program (aka Living Well Noosa post 30 June)
- Mental health improvement program for the region
- Environment workshops – e.g. understanding a changing climate and what that means to me
- Interactive reporting platform
- Cooran – precinct plan with the focus on community spaces/activities/recreation (incorporating skate park, refurbished clubhouse and proposal for bike/skate infrastructure/public toilets etc)
- Cooroy – storm water infrastructure assessment/audit upgrades (impact on community & community facility recovery)
- Noosa District Sports Complex Master plan implementation
- Cooroy Sports Complex Master Plan implementation
- ReGen – detailed design (including town planning) – proposed new evacuation centre and community wellbeing hub
- Noosa netball clubhouse redevelopment
- Pirate Park upgrade - or a broader NYRC precinct upgrade (as a result of the feasibility study outcomes) design required
- Not powered water sports facility (subject to feasibility study completion)
- Upgrade of Apex Park Cooroy – currently closed due to flood damage (original upgrade was taken out of hinterland playground scope)
- Fencing around Sel Bonnell oval at Cooroy Sports Complex – needs to specifically allow for flood water to flow through site
- Fencing around Cooroy Horse and Pony Club & holding yard upgrade – some minor flood damage to fencing – yard could accommodate stock in evacuation – but need renewal
- Girraween – field upgrades – given the land slip is there some flood mitigation work we could cover and sure up the other potential slip areas around the site?
- Girraween – Cycling track lighting renewal – would increase functionality and use of site
- Cooroy gymnastics hall expansion (stage 1 of Complex redevelopment?) – old plans are sitting there, DA approved 2019
- Community resilience grant program