

## *Our Vision*

Nambucca Valley ~ Living at its best

## *Our Mission Statement*

'The Nambucca Valley will value and protect its natural environment, maintain its assets and infrastructure and develop opportunities for its people.'

### **1.0 Policy objective**

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance in the management of a Voluntary House Raising Scheme.

House raising was recommended as a floodplain risk management measure in the Nambucca Floodplain Risk Management Plan adopted by Council in 2017.

Council's Community Strategic Plan identifies the following related aspirations:

- Risk Management - Council will identify and manage risks likely to have a material impact on the organisation's ability to achieve its mission and objectives.
- Community Safety - Council shall foster communities where people feel safe and secure

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement indicates that Council will implement the requirements of Council's Flood Risk Management Plan 2017.

### **2.0 Related legislation**

The following legislation and adopted plans/strategies are relevant to this Policy.

- Local Government Act 1993
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020
- Nambucca Local Environmental Plan 2010
- Nambucca Development Control Plan 2010
- Nambucca Flood Risk Management Plan 2017
- Nambucca Climate Risk Adaption Strategy 2011

### **3.0 Definitions**

**Habitable floor level** - as per the Building Code of Australia means the level containing habitable rooms, meaning a room used for normal domestic activities including a bedroom, living room, lounge room, kitchen, dining room, study, etc. but excluding rooms such as a bathroom, laundry, water closet, pantry, walk-in wardrobe, and other spaces of a specialised nature occupied neither frequently nor for extended periods.

**1 in 100 year flood** - refers to a flood height that has a long term likelihood of occurring once in every 100 years (also called a 1% annual exceedance probability flood or 1% AEP).

**1 in 20 year flood** - refers to a flood height that has a long term likelihood of occurring once in every 20 years (also called a 5% annual exceedance probability flood or 5% AEP).

## 4.0 Policy Content

### 4.1 Background

The Nambucca Floodplain Risk Management Plan recommends the establishment of a Voluntary House Raising (VHR) scheme. This policy aims to define the Nambucca Valleys VHR scheme and outline a process for property owners to access support and implement house raising activities.

The Nambucca Valley has many properties subject to over-floor flooding in minor and moderate flood events. A total of 47 properties are flooded in events of a 5% AEP or more frequent and a total of 358 houses flooded during 1% AEP event.

The economic and social burden of flooding on the community can be reduced by raising these dwellings to improve their flood proofing.

This VHR scheme is part of an overall floodplain risk management strategy for the Nambucca Valley. VHR is aimed at reducing the flood damage to dwellings by raising the habitable floor level to 500mm above the flood planning level.

---

*Note: VHR schemes can actually increase residual risk (risk left after mitigation) if the occupants of a raised dwelling incorrectly assume that raising has eliminated all flood risk. In most cases the dwelling will still be susceptible to over floor flooding in extreme events. Occupants are still advised to evacuate when advised to do so by emergency services.*

---

### 4.2 Principles

In addition to the requirements outlined in the NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment "Guidelines for voluntary house raising schemes", the following criteria shall apply to dwellings that are to be included in the VHR.

- a) Dwellings may be in any locality addressed in the Nambucca Flood Risk Management Plan including but not limited to the major centres of Bowraville, Macksville and Nambucca Heads.
- b) Dwellings may also be located in other areas where justification in the form of localised flood modelling is provided to Council to support an expression of interest (EOI).
- c) To be eligible for inclusion the dwelling must have been legally constructed prior to 1986 and the main habitable floor level must be at or below the present 1 in 100 year flood level, and constructed of a material that is suitable for raising (i.e. timber, not brick).
- d) Priority will be given to dwellings that are at most risk of over-floor flooding.
- e) Dwellings will be raised to a minimum height of the 1 in 100 year flood plus 500mm freeboard.
- f) Commercial buildings will not be included in this scheme.

- g) Successful Expressions of Interest will be offered a subsidy based on the project value which is capped at a maximum of \$80,000 ex GST and applied as follows:
- i) For properties receiving a pensioner rebate a ratio of 2:1 wherein the Scheme contributes at a rate of \$2.00 and the owner contributes at a rate of \$1.00 of the lowest quotation up to a maximum project value of \$80,000 ex GST. This means the Scheme will contribute a maximum of \$53,333 ex GST towards the project.
  - ii) For properties which do not receive a pensioner rebate a ratio of 1:1 wherein the Scheme contributes at a rate of \$1.00 and the owner contributes at a rate of \$1.00 of the lowest quotation up to a maximum project value of \$80,000 ex GST. This means the Scheme will contribute a maximum of \$40,000 ex GST towards the project.

### **4.3 Funding**

Funding for VHR is provided by the NSW State Government, via the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). Council manages and administers the VHR program. Funding is available as per the formulae set out in Section 4.2. The owner of the dwelling is responsible for all additional costs.

Council will donate its development application, construction certificate and relate fees relative to the cost of raising a dwelling. Any fees imposed by other agencies such as the Long Service Leave Levy and Plan First Levy will have to be paid by the owner of the dwelling.

Compliance with the requirements of this policy is not necessarily confirmation that the property will be eligible for access to State Government funding. Further checks against the DPIE VHR Guidelines will be undertaken at the EOI stage for each property.

VHR grant funding is paid to the landowner upon evidence of completed milestones.

Milestones will be established for each successful applicant subject to individual project circumstances. The following is a typical arrangement of milestone payments:

- i) Fifty percent (50%) when the house raising has been completed and the property owner can provide evidence of invoices which equate to at least half of the funding agreed to be provided by the VHR program
- ii) Fifty percent (50%) when an occupation certificate has been issued being the completion of the work.

---

*Note: Funding will be made available on receipt of a tax invoice for the works, accompanied with evidence of costs (such as receipts) presented at the completion of each milestone.*

---

### **4.4 Ineligible costs**

Only costs directly related to raising the dwelling are eligible for grant funding. Costs directly related to raising the dwelling include the reconnection of services (water, sewerage, electricity, telecommunications); stormwater drainage; and the provision of stairs. Ancillary building work not associated with the raising of the dwelling is ineligible for funding. These activities can occur in parallel to house raising but quotes for the raising of a dwelling will need to be itemised separately from other costs.

Costs which are not eligible for funding are:

- a) Additional features, improvements, renovations and substitution of services requested by the homeowner, such as landscaping and concrete floor to the understorey, which must be undertaken at the owner's expense
- b) Any relocation costs incurred during the work
- c) Remedial works to the house if the house needs to be brought up to a standard to allow it to be raised
- d) Retrospective works

---

*Council may require further information to be satisfied that only eligible activities are being funded.*

---

#### **4.5 Procedure**

Council will provide oversight, guidance and administration of the VHR scheme.

The owner of the property is responsible for managing the various activities associated with the raising of the dwelling including:

- Gaining the relevant approvals
- Seeking quotes for raising works
- Engaging a suitable contractor
- Monitoring the works
- Organising certification of the works
- Submission of grant funding claims to Council

To access grant funding under the VHR scheme a property owner must:

- a) Submit an Expression of Interest to the VHR scheme to Council during the advertised period

If an EOI is successful, then the following will apply:

- b) A grant funding agreement and liability waiver is signed by all parties. This will identify project milestones. It will also indemnify Council and the State Government from or against all claims, expenses and damages for loss or damage to the house or personal injury (including death) arising out of the house raising work.
- c) If owners do not have the capability to commence house raising within 6 months then funding may be withdrawn.
- d) The owner must acquire all relevant building approvals for the house raising.
- e) The owner must seek three quotes for the house raising (or evidence that three quotes have been sought). Each quote must be from appropriately licenced and skilled tradespersons.
- f) The owner must submit the quotes to Council.
- g) The owner must ensure the house raising works are completed.
- h) The owner must obtain an Occupation Certificate for the raised dwelling.

- i) The owner must provide certification of the structural integrity of the raised dwelling by a suitably qualified (NER Registered) structural engineer registered under the Design & Building Practitioners Act, 2020.
- j) The owner must provide a statement from the builder or a qualified surveyor verifying the height the home was raised to for the grant acquittal.
- k) The owner must submit signed claim forms, invoices, and receipts at each milestone and for the final claim.

---

*Note: It will also be a condition of approval for all raised dwellings that the areas below design flood level are not to be used for habitable purposes (i.e. enclosed as bedrooms or similar).*

*Council will inspect raised dwellings periodically to ensure compliance with consent conditions.*

---

## 5.0 Related Procedures or Documents

Nambucca LEP 2010  
 Nambucca DCP 2010  
 Nambucca Flood Risk Management Study  
 Nambucca Flood Risk Management Plan  
 Expression of Interest Form for Voluntary House Raising  
 Funding Agreement for Voluntary House Raising  
 Claim Form for Voluntary House Raising  
 Final Report Form for Voluntary House Raising

## 6.0 History

Version 1 September 2021

Department:	Development and Environment	Last Reviewed	Resolution Number
<b>Policy Category</b>	Council		
<b>Endorsed By:</b>	Council		
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Council		
<b>Policy Owner</b>	MD&E		
<b>Contact Officer</b>	MD&E		
<b>Document No.</b>	53872/2021		
<b>First Adopted</b>	27 January 2022		
<b>Resolution No:</b>	29/22		
<b>Review Date:</b>	October 2024		