

## FLOOD PLANNING LEVELS FOR THE LOWER SHOALHAVEN RIVER FLOODPLAIN

**Policy Number:** POL16/239 • **Adopted:** 28/1/2003 • **Reaffirmed:** 20/09/2005, 26/03/2013 • **Amended:** 21/02/2017 • **Minute Number:** MIN03.10, MIN05.1247, MIN13.264, MIN17.95 • **File:** 12966E • **Produced By:** Planning, Environment & Development Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

### 1. PURPOSE

To set standard design modelling conditions for the determination of Flood Planning Levels for development on the Lower Shoalhaven River Floodplain.

### 2. STATEMENT

#### Background information:

- The Lower Shoalhaven River Flood Study (April 1990) determined 1% AEP flood levels for two different scenarios at Shoalhaven Heads Entrance – initially closed and initially open. The initially closed scenario produced higher levels than the initially open scenario. The impact of the different entrance conditions extends from Shoalhaven Heads upstream to Pig Island. The difference in 1% flood levels in the vicinity of Shoalhaven Heads can be up to 0.7m.
- The Lower Shoalhaven River Flood Study recommended the **closed** scenario as the design standard to set Flood Planning Levels (see Lower Shoalhaven River Flood Study page 25 first paragraph)
- In the **open** scenario, 499 buildings are flood affected in a 1% AEP flood event. In the **closed** scenario, 683 buildings would be flood affected during the same recurrence event. Adopting the **closed** scenario thus recognises the potential flood liability of an additional 184 buildings.
- The Shoalhaven River Entrance Management Plan for Flood Mitigation (November 2006) sets out detailed procedures of how to maintain a dry notch at Shoalhaven Heads entrance, how to breach the entrance if necessary during an event and how to monitor the entrance conditions.
- Even with the provision of a dry notch however, there is a high possibility of failure to mitigate flooding of low lying areas, as sand conditions can change rapidly and the dry notch may not exist or not be able to be accessed at the time of a flood.

- There is potential danger to operators while opening the entrance during a flood, which must be addressed under Council's WHS obligations.

### **3. PROVISIONS**

Council has adopted the following recommendations in relation to the Lower Shoalhaven Floodplain:

- a) A dry notch weir for easier opening of the entrance be maintained for a period of approximately 20 years to assist in the protection of existing development at low levels.
- b) All future development only be approved at the higher Flood Planning Levels derived from the Shoalhaven Heads Entrance closed scenario, thereby assisting Council in satisfying its obligations under the NSW Floodplain Development Manual 2005.

### **4. IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy is to be implemented by the Planning, Environment & Development Group. Flood Planning Levels (= minimum floor levels) for individual areas are set by Council during the Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan processes.

Enquiries in relation to determining minimum floor levels for development on individual properties within the affected area should be referred to the Natural Resources and Floodplain Section of Council's Planning and Development Services Group. An on-line flood certificate request can be made from Council's website

[www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)

### **5. REVIEW**

This Policy will be reviewed by the Shoalhaven City Council Planning, Environment & Development Group (Natural Resources and Floodplain Unit) within one year of the election of every new Council or following the adoption of a new floodplain risk management study and plan for the Shoalhaven River. All information contained in the policy will be verified against the most current flood information available from Flood Studies, Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans.

### **6. APPLICATION OF ESD PRINCIPLES**

This policy supports the NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy's main objective "to reduce the impact of flooding and flood liability on individual owners and occupiers of flood prone property, and to reduce private and public losses resulting from floods, utilising ecologically positive methods wherever possible."