

# Voluntary House Raising Scheme

## Fact sheet



The House Raising Scheme (VHRS) is a flood risk management initiative provided by the State Government under the Floodplain Management Program. It involves raising residential properties above the minimum design flood level or relocating them to higher ground, with the aim of improving the resilience of homes to flooding.

### WHY IS COUNCIL CONSIDERING THE VHRS?

Council is considering the VHRS as part of its responsibility for managing flood-prone land within the Hastings River and Camden Haven River catchments.

Many properties in these areas were constructed before accurate flood data was available.

The Scheme is intended to provide an option for homeowners to mitigate the risks of flooding through house raising.

At present, Council is not participating in the VHRS, as it is not listed as a priority flood mitigation measure in the Hastings River Flood Risk Management Plan. The potential inclusion of the scheme in future plans is under consideration.

### WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

Based on the current guidelines for the VHRS, only Councils are eligible to apply for funding. If PMHC participates in the scheme, an application would be submitted to request funding from a statewide pool. Council would then facilitate the process for identified eligible homeowners to access funding by applying to Council.

Guidelines for the scheme are issued by the State Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Some technical criteria in the guidelines include:

- Council must be participating in the scheme and be able to meet the administrative requirements for each application
- Raising residential properties above a minimum design level and must comply with council's relevant development control plan
- Funding is only available for properties identified in a VHRS through the Flood Risk Management process
- Costs eligible for funding are those that are essential to raise the footprint of the existing habitable floor area or relocate the existing dwelling to a location on higher ground within the same lot
- After a funding application is approved, Councils are generally able to access a funding pool at a funding ratio of \$2 State to \$1 homeowner contribution.

## WHAT ROLE DOES COUNCIL PLAY?

Council's role in the VHRS is to facilitate communication and co-ordination between homeowners and the State Government. While Council does not contribute financially to the scheme, it provides resources to assist with the delivery and administration of the program.

## HOW IS THE VHRS FUNDED?

The VHRS is funded through the State Government's Floodplain Management Program. The program covers two-thirds of the cost to raise a home, with homeowners responsible for the remaining third and any additional costs outside the scope of the grant.

## WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD HOMEOWNERS BE AWARE OF?

The following documents can be found at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/vhrs](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/vhrs) -

- **VHRS guidelines** from the State Government
- **Hastings River Flood Extension Study (2025)** which is on public exhibition between 28 February - 11 April 2025
- **PMHC Flood Policy** which defines specific flood related development controls for properties within the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) extent, and includes requirements such as minimum floor levels, site-specific flood risk assessments, flood impact assessments, evacuation requirements and consideration of flood impact on other properties  
Note: This policy is currently under review and will be placed on public exhibition in coming months.
- **Floodplain Management Port Macquarie Hastings Council** to view outputs of existing adopted flood studies
- **Camden Haven River and Lakes System Flood Study Update (2025)** - not yet available. Expected to go on public exhibition in May 2025, subject to study completion

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Council is currently undertaking flood studies of the Hastings and Camden Haven catchments to identify flood characteristics and behaviour. This data will help inform the next phase of the Flood Risk Management (FRM) Process, which involves conducting a Flood Risk Management Study and Plan that identifies priorities and actions for mitigating flood risk, which is when the VHRS could be identified as a priority or viable option.

If the VHRS is identified as an action in PMHC's Flood Risk Management Plan, and supported by the community, Council would then conduct a scoping study to identify and prioritise eligible properties.

It is important to note that these studies could take approximately two to five years, and grant funding rounds open on a three yearly cycle. The Scheme and grant funding pool is statewide, meaning there is no guarantee that funding would be granted to all councils that apply, which could extend the timeline for possible VHR funding to be accessed.

This community consultation process aims to gather feedback on the VHRS and assess the level of support within the community. Based on this feedback, Council will determine whether to further investigate the Scheme in future Floodplain Management Plans.

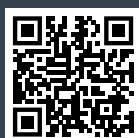
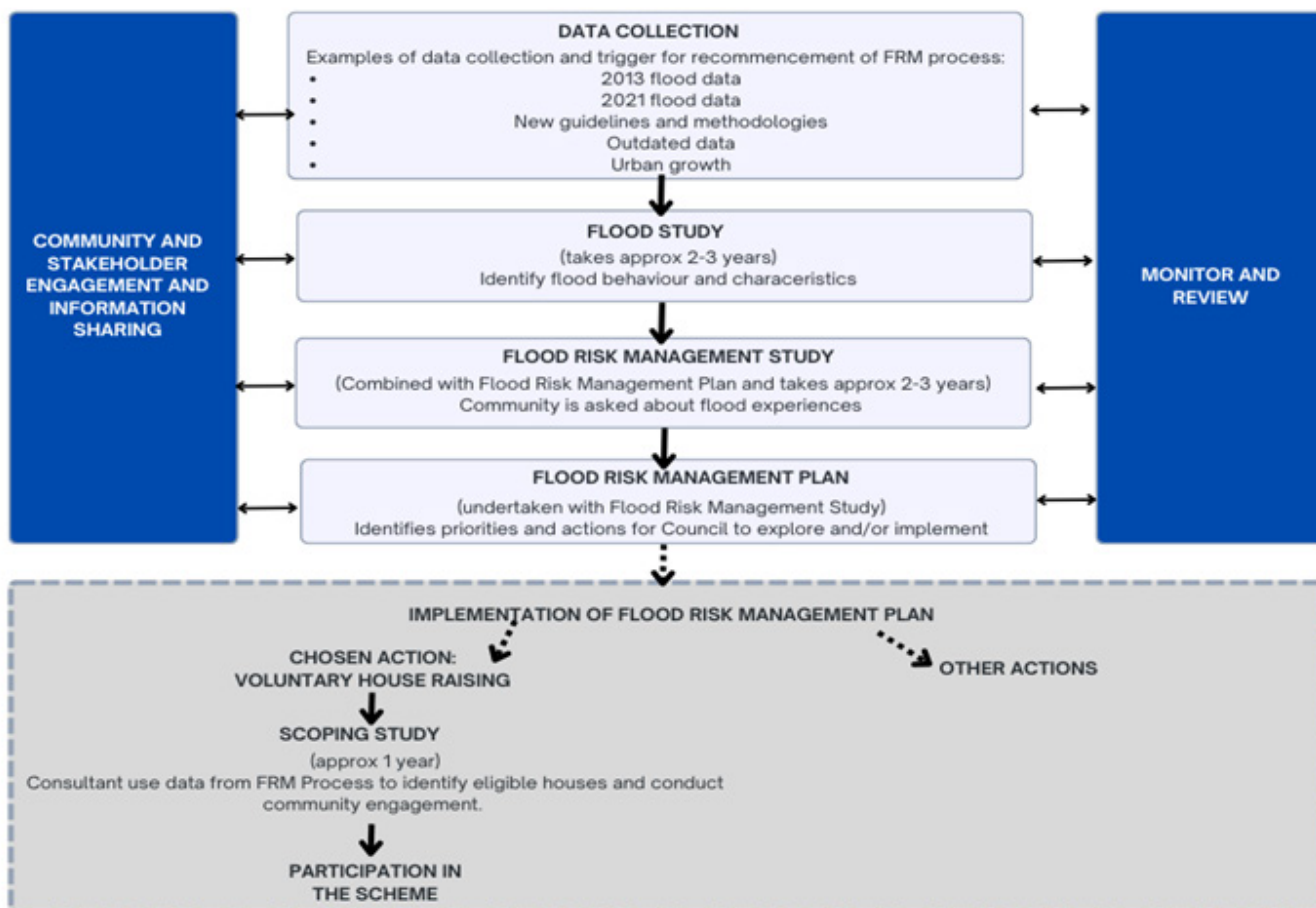


### HAVE YOUR SAY

Community members are invited to review the VHRS information online at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/vhrs](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/vhrs)

We'd love to know whether you support Council exploring the VHRS as an option to be considered in future Floodplain Risk Management Plans and Studies.

## FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH VOLUNTARY HOUSE RAISING SCHEME



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