

Temporary accommodation sites

Station St, Mullumbimby

The Mullumbimby temporary accommodation site has been leased to host housing for local people who cannot return home because of flood damage.

The site can host up to 60 self-contained housing units which will be home to approximately 180 people.

These housing units will be located at the site for up to two years, depending on housing needs, to ensure flood-affected residents have time to finalise their long-term housing solutions.

Who will live at the Mullumbimby temporary accommodation site

- The Mullumbimby temporary accommodation site is on Transport Asset Holding Entity (TAHE) owned land that has been leased to provide temporary housing for local people who are unable to return home due to damage caused by the February and March floods.
- The people who move into the Mullumbimby site will all be Northern Rivers region residents and will have been through an assessment and eligibility process prior to moving in.
- People will be allocated to the Mullumbimby site according to a prioritisation process that works to place people as close to their original homes as possible – the people who move into the Mullumbimby site will be from the Byron Shire local government area or have lived close to it.

Managing the site

- All site residents will sign an occupancy agreement before moving in. This sets out appropriate behaviour and conduct for living in the temporary accommodation.
- If someone is unable to comply with the terms of occupancy agreement, they may be required to leave the site.
- A Community Housing Provider will be based on-site, and will work to ensure there is appropriate security on-site and ensure residents adhere to the occupancy agreement.
- All housing units will be cleaned before residents move in and then the residents are responsible for all ongoing clean-up of the housing unit, as it is their private home.
- The site will be supported with all utilities such as power, water, sewage, garbage collection.

Construction

- Construction is expected to commence from mid July and is expected to take around 35 days, subject to weather and construction planning. These works are designed to prepare the land to safely host the housing units, manage access routes for cars, and provide for utilities. Initial works will include fence installation, site set up and geotechnical investigations.
- Works may operate from Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm and Saturday from 8 am to 1pm, unless otherwise agreed by Council. Works will be arranged to minimise noise and disruption where possible.

Site selection

- Maintaining community connectedness is an important part of flood recovery, and where possible temporary housing sites are intended to enable people to continue to access their homes, places of work and study and community support networks.
- Given the flood prone nature of many areas of Mullumbimby, suitable land is limited. The proposed site was identified following a comprehensive review of suitable land in the area.
- Modular homes at the Mullumbimby site will be raised above flood levels.

Parking

- The site includes parking for residents to ensure the new residents do not take up local parking spots.

Pets

- Domestic pets will be permitted on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to the type of animal, if they are suitable to the housing unit and the need to maintain a safe and well-functioning living environment for all residents.

Byron Shire Council

- The NSW Government is working closely with council to establish the temporary housing site and ensure it provides safe and secure accommodation to flood affected residents with minimal disruption to the local community.
- If you have questions or concerns regarding the temporary housing site, you can contact Resilience NSW at HousingTaskforce@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

Accommodation support for flood-affected residents in the Northern Rivers

The NSW Government is working to ensure anyone impacted by the Northern Rivers region floods who needs temporary housing can access it.

Temporary accommodation sites will host groups of temporary modular homes (also called pods) and caravans. There are a number of these sites being established across the Northern Rivers region.

The sites will include supporting infrastructure and amenities. They will vary in size, depending on the land and the available amenities.

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The temporary homes are stand-alone accommodation units that can house between 1 and 4 people. Some temporary homes will include their own internal facilities. Some sites will have communal bathrooms and kitchen facilities.

Flood-affected community members seeking housing support should register their need as soon as possible by calling Service NSW on 13 77 88, visit nsw.gov.au/floods or speak to recovery centre staff.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the temporary housing site, you can contact Resilience NSW at HousingTaskforce@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

Map of licenced area



Legend

- Rail Corridor
- Licensed Area (25,792.67m²) (898.230km to 898.280km) and (898.440km to 898.930km) and (898.700km to 898.930km)
- Kilometrage

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Frequently Asked Questions - Station & Prince St, Mullumbimby

Further information on the site is also available in the [Site Factsheet](#).

Site Selection and Assessment

How was the site identified/assessed/what is the review process?

All temporary housing sites are identified through a comprehensive review of suitable, available land.

Following the flood event in March 2022, each Council was asked for advice on available land within the LGA to determine possible housing sites for consideration by the government Housing Taskforce. A total of eight sites in the LGA, five located in Mullumbimby were put forward by Council which included the Station St site. The Government also examined its own land holdings to find suitable sites for assessment by the Taskforce. Sites were then evaluated by the Department of Planning and Environment, with final recommended sites reviewed and endorsed by the Housing Taskforce, local councils and Minister for Planning.

The site review process considers:

- Site availability for multi-year projects, with preference given to Council and government sites (Crown Land and surplus government sites).
- Desktop analysis of constructability, including existing services connections, site slope, access and other considerations that may impact construction such as easements,
- Safety, including flood and bushfire risk, site contamination
- Access and proximity to where people were living before
- Other considerations, such as biodiversity restrictions and Native Title claims.

What is the planning legislation under which this work is occurring, and what community consultation is required?

Due to the urgent need to provide housing to those displaced by the floods, the establishment of temporary housing sites is occurring under emergency exemptions to planning legislation under Part 10 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 and section 169 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation, which differ from the usual consultation and assessment process that would occur with a new development.

Why couldn't other sites be used?

Temporary housing sites are intended to provide a medium-term housing solution within close proximity to people's local communities. Keeping communities together is an important part of flood recovery to allow people to continue to access their homes, schools and places of work. For this reason, it is important to provide a housing option for the severely impacted community of Mullumbimby.

The availability of suitable sites in the area is extremely limited. Other sites in the area, including the Old Hospital site in Mullumbimby were reviewed in line with the above site identification process, however, could not be progressed due to a range of site-specific issues, including contamination, services connections, local heritage, accessibility and constructability issues.

Why can't caravans or pods be installed on private properties instead of establishing a temporary housing site?

The 'At Home Caravan Program' provides caravans for a short period (up to 4 months) in select suburbs. Eligible areas are agreed in consultation with Council. The program currently includes Ocean Shores, New Brighton and South Golden Beach. Noting that the finalisation of sites and commencement of construction of temporary housing sites in Brunswick Heads has not yet commenced.

There are also numerous site and logistical constraints that prevent pods being installed on private properties in urban areas including block size, landowner consent, the ability to crane in and install a pod safely, the ability to connect utilities and pods restricting site access for necessary repair/rebuild works.

The At Home Caravans Program provides an immediate, interim housing option for people while housing sites are established. However, not all properties can accommodate a caravan or a pod on site and the temporary housing sites ensure that all displaced residents have an option for safe housing and that wrap around support services can be provided on site as needed for residents.

The caravan program will also not replace the need for a medium-term housing solution in the form of a temporary housing site, with the site offering a housing option for the next two years.

Was the site assessed for flood risk?

Yes. The site was reviewed with consideration to flood risk and flood planning, including under the North Byron Floodplain Risk Management Plan.

Design amendments to mitigate the flood risk and other construction restrictions at the site include:

- A reduction in the number of modular homes proposed for the site, including no residential building on areas of the site worst affected in a 1% flood.
- Raising of modular home bearing level to 1% flood levels, with an overall cap at 1m. This will ensure all pods are raised above the 1% flood mark.
- Stormwater and overland flow construction planning.

Was the site assessed for contamination risks?

Yes. A detailed site investigation report has been previously completed by a qualified, external contamination expert to outline contamination risk on the site, with contamination areas excluded from the site licence area.

Site Design and Construction

What is the design and construction plan for the site?

Site design and construction is managed by qualified engineers and construction experts experienced in design for flood mitigation and stormwater management. Johns Lyng Group is managing site design and construction, on behalf of the NSW Government, with oversight by Public Works.

Post finalisation of the lease agreement, detailed site investigation and design work has been undertaken by Johns Lyng Group to determine the most appropriate way of constructing and accommodating homes on the site and to ensure temporary housing units at the Mullumbimby

temporary house site are installed above flood levels. Appropriate erosion and sediment controls will be put in place as construction proper progresses.

Will the site include construction over the high voltage power line?

Public Works and Johns Lyng Group is working closely with APA (owner of the high voltage power line) to ensure that the site design and construction work appropriately considers the high voltage power line on the site, including ensuring that the line can be appropriately accessed in the event of any faults.

Why are you using fill? What has been done to ensure the site won't increase flood risk to neighbours?

The use of fill has been carefully considered and has been recommended by qualified civil engineers as the most effective site construction technique to minimise flood risk to both residents of the housing site and surrounding properties.

The current design caters for and reduces the risk of flooding to surrounding properties. The construction methodology is based on filling the site to between 0.8m – 1.5m with a network of swales and drainage pit and pipe to manage stormwater. The contractor has reviewed the existing stormwater network to ensure the infrastructure can handle the additional load from the facility. Ongoing stormwater infrastructure management is the responsibility of Council.

Were the site to use stub columns or structural steel framing to elevate the pods, fill would also be required in order to safely install this infrastructure.

Has the design incorporated the information contained in the North Byron Flood Management Plan? Will a full flood study be done and if not why not?

Decisions on the location, height and flood risk of the housing units were made through ongoing discussions with Council and on the basis of Council's flood study. As the housing site is a temporary installation, compliance with the 30 year predicted flood line would be impractical.

The establishment of the temporary housing site has sought to balance the urgent need for accommodation, the legislatively created time limitation on the villages and the protection of already vulnerable communities from flooding, including through the mitigation measures outlined above and on the advice of civil engineering experts.

Due to the urgent nature of housing needed in the area, under emergency planning measures a full flood study is not required for this development and will not be undertaken. However, local flood management consultants that work with Byron Shire Council have been engaged in the design for this site.

Why is fill being brought in now if design and planning is still underway?

Due to the nature of the site and ongoing high levels of rainfall, some fill is required to allow machinery to operate on the site as part of initial site works. For example, some fill has been brought in to allow for the placement of generators and to create temporary access roads for machinery. This machinery is required for geotechnical investigations and other critical design and construction planning work.

What is being done to ensure residents on and around the site can safely evacuate in the event of another flood?

All sites, including Mullumbimby, will have emergency management plans in place.

Site Conclusion

What will happen at the conclusion of the site? What will the site be used for?

The emergency legislation for temporary housing sites limits the amount of time a site can be used for temporary accommodation. The lease of the site between Resilience NSW and the landowner (the Transport Asset Holding Entity) further limits the use for a period of two years.

The long-term use of the site is at the discretion of the landowner in consultation with Council, and subject to normal planning and regulatory mechanisms.

Will the pods be used for long term housing?

The temporary housing site will be used for medium term housing for up to two years.

Will fill be removed at the conclusion of the site?

At the conclusion of the site being used for temporary housing it is a condition of the licence that make good works are performed, the housing units are removed from the site and the site is returned to the landowner.