

LISMORE PRECINCT PLANNING

Future Use of Buyback land in Lismore FAQs

About this project

What is this project about?

This NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) and Lismore City Council (LCC) initiative will explore future uses for land purchased under the \$880 million Resilient Homes Program (RHP). These areas are no longer suitable for residential use due to extreme flood risk. Planning will begin in early 2026, with community input guiding decisions on zoning, ownership and land use.

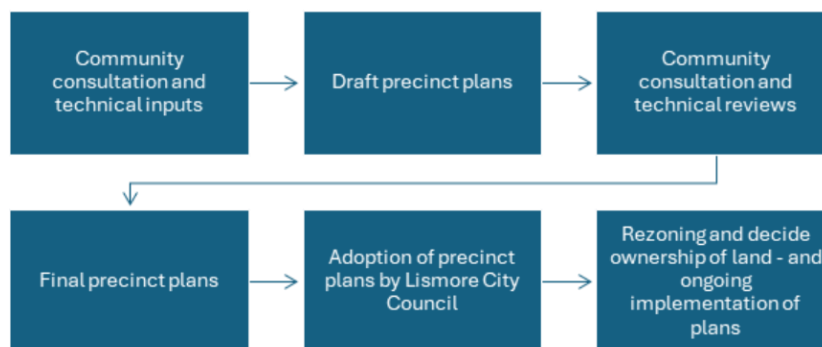
The RA is funding this project through the Resilient Lands Program (RLP).

What is the project timeline?

The project will start in early 2026 with the support of specialist consultants from a range of fields to ensure the planning is balanced and considers community needs alongside environmental and economic opportunities. We will be engaging the consultant team before the end of the year.

What is the engagement and decision-making process?

Consultants will develop draft plans with RA and LCC. These will be reviewed by the community before final adoption by Council.



Why do we need consultants for this work?

Specialist consultants will bring expertise in urban planning, engineering, environmental science, and community engagement. Their role is to put together detailed reports to ensure decisions are technically sound, community-informed, and future-proofed. Their independent advice will help balance safety, sustainability, and community benefit.

How much will the consultants cost and how long will it take?

Consultants will be engaged by the end of 2025. The planning process will run from early 2026 to early 2027. Costs are covered by RA as part of the broader Resilient Lands Program. The investment ensures robust planning that avoids future risks and maximises long-term value for Lismore.

Importantly, technical reports, generally prepared by suitably qualified professionals are required to support the rezoning application under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (EP&A Act) and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) guidelines for rezoning and determining future land use, ownership and management. This ensures the process meets statutory obligations and reflects best-practice planning standards.

About buyback land

What is buyback land?

Initiated after the devastating 2022 floods in the Northern Rivers, RA's Resilient Homes Program (RHP) involves buying back homes in locations where there is a severe risk of future flood damage and a high risk to life and safety for households. Eligible homeowners receive payment for the purchase of their house and land. After buyback homes are purchased, they are progressively removed (relocated, recycled and/or demolished). This leaves vacant buyback land.

How much buyback land is there?

More than 500 properties in Lismore have been bought back, covering more than 50 hectares. This may grow as more buybacks are completed.

Where is the land located?

Buyback land is spread across Lismore Centre, North Lismore, South Lismore and East Lismore. Some areas are clustered, and others are dispersed. This is partly because the buyback process is voluntary and some residents have decided to continue living in their homes.

What about buyback land that is outside the four precincts?

Other areas in the Lismore LGA like Wyrallah will be considered separately in consultation with stakeholders throughout 2026. Planning is also underway in other Northern Rivers LGAs.

Planning process

Why is a process needed?

Planning will support future land uses that are safe and suitable for flood-prone land. It is important that any decisions made benefit the Lismore community now and in future.

We will listen to all ideas, interests and concerns, and all of the community will be invited to have their say. RA will also engage closely with homeowners who remain living near buyback land.

What could the land be used for?

Provided the land use is suitable for flood-prone land, ideas could consider additional parkland, natural areas, commercial use, light industry, parking areas and community and recreation facilities.

We will listen to all ideas, interests and concerns from the Lismore community.

Will there be one plan for all buyback land?

No. Planning will be done by precinct. These are the areas where homes have been purchased – Lismore Centre first, followed by North Lismore, South Lismore and East Lismore.

What does precinct planning consider?

Precinct planning considers flood risk, accessibility, social and cultural values, connectivity to services, transport and other parts of Lismore, land contamination, environmental values, zoning, and economic potential.

Who is responsible for the process?

This is an RA-funded project being delivered in a partnership between RA and LCC. Both organisations are working side-by-side to guide the precinct planning and ensure the best outcomes for the Lismore community. Strong collaboration between the two agencies has already been established, and this partnership will remain central to the way the project is managed from start to finish.

When will you know what the buyback land will be used for?

Precinct planning is expected to take at least 12 months. After this, the final use and ownership of the buyback land will be determined. We will keep the community informed throughout the process.

Community Engagement

How can I have my say?

Engagement starts in early 2026. There will be in-person events, online platforms and other ways to contribute. There will be plenty of ways to stay informed and get involved once the project begins. For now, you can:

- [Subscribe for newsletters](#) on Lismore City Council's website for updates (tick the 'Future of Buyback land' option).

- Contact Lismore City Council on 02 6625 0500 for enquiries regarding the project.
- [Subscribe](#) to RA's newsletter to receive updates about Northern Rivers programs and projects, new initiatives, and information to help you prepare or recover from a disaster.

When will you ask for feedback?

The precinct planning process is expected to commence in early 2026 and be completed by mid-2027. The community will be invited to contribute ideas about possible future uses of buyback land throughout the process.

Will you consult with residents near buyback land?

Yes. RA and LCC will work respectfully with nearby residents to ensure their views are heard and considered.

Will you consider feedback on all precincts?

Yes. While each precinct will be planned separately, all will be integrated into a broader vision for Lismore.