



Flood Guide

Lismore CBD

February 2026

History of Flooding

Be flood aware

Lismore has a long history of flooding and is one of the most flood prone areas in Australia.

Since 1850 there have been about 155 floods, ranging from low levels to destructive events. The 2022 flood peaked at 14.37m and is the highest flood on record in Lismore causing catastrophic damage across the city.

The catchment above Lismore has several major creeks that feed into the Wilsons River and Leycester Creek, which join at Lismore. The highest floods occur when both the Wilsons and Leycester are flooding, with the majority of water coming from Leycester Creek.

Every flood is different. While NSW SES can provide guidance on what may occur in future floods, it's important to remember that predictions are not guarantees.

Lismore CBD Levee

A levee was built in 2005 to protect the Lismore CBD from minor and moderate riverine flooding. However, the levee has spilled over, or 'overtopped' three times since construction, most notably during the catastrophic February 2022 flood which impacted businesses, properties and cut critical evacuation routes. Less severe floods between 10.60m and 10.82m in height have also caused overtopping.

Flooding in the Lismore CBD and Basin area can also occur before the levee overtops. Intense local rainfall can cause flooding, isolating parts of the CBD by cutting roads like Dawson and Uralba Streets and flooding car parks.

Localised rainfall and surface runoff can cause Browns Creek to rise quickly, leading to flooding in the lower CBD and the basin.



Lismore CBD flooding
Image credit: Alex Clarke



Dawson Street Lismore flooding
Image credit: Alex Clarke



Flood Information:

This information is gathered from historical flood data, local flood plans, and flood studies.

Wilsons River Rowing Club Gauge

Height at gauge	Expected consequence
14.37m	2022 record flood. Catastrophic flooding across CBD and surrounding suburbs.
12.27m	1954 and 1974 flood peak – extensive flooding, major residential and commercial losses.
12.19m	
11.59m	2017 widespread flooding.
10.85m	CBD levee overtopped – water spreads rapidly, flooding CBD streets and businesses and evacuation routes are cut.
10.60m	
9.70m	Major Flood Level. Extensive isolation. Low-lying homes start to flood and increased risk to property.
7.20m	Moderate Flood Level.
4.20m	Minor Flood Level.
3.20m	The lowest carparks alongside Wilsons River are affected.

Dawson Street Gauge

Heavy rain in the Browns Creek catchment can cause significant flooding in the Basin before the CBD levee overtops. In the 2017 flood, and the February and March floods of 2022 the water level had reached between 8m and 9m before the CBD levee was overtopped.

Height at gauge	Expected consequence
9.00m	Peak height in recent floods, the Dawson Street gauge reached between 8m and 9m before the CBD levee overtopped.
7.53m	2020 peak height, heavy consistent rainfall caused localised Basin flooding.
6.00m	Water covers Dawson Street at the Browns Creek bridge. Soon after the roundabout at the intersection with Uralba Street is affected.
5.70m	Junction Street (southern end of Keen Street in Lismore CBD) may be cut off by back-up water from Gas Works Creek.

Australian Warning System (AWS)

The Australian Warning System (AWS) is a national approach to help everyone easily identify the type of hazard and warning level. You may not always receive an official warning. If you notice the natural signs of flooding like rushing or pooling water, and heavy or prolonged rainfall - don't wait, leave low-lying areas if it's safe to do so.

Advice

There is a heightened level of threat.
Stay up to date as the situation changes.

- Action Statements
- Stay informed
- Monitor conditions
- Reduced threat - Return with caution

Watch and Act

Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.

- Action Statements
- Do not enter floodwater
- Prepare to isolate
- Prepare to evacuate
- Avoid the area

Emergency Warning

You may be in danger and need to take action immediately.

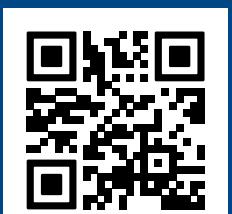
- Action Statements
- Evacuate now / Evacuate before (time)
- Shelter now
- Move to higher ground



Download the Hazards Near Me app

Hazards Near Me NSW shows current information about local emergencies, including floods, storms and tsunamis, and advice on what to do to stay safe.

Scan the QR code to download



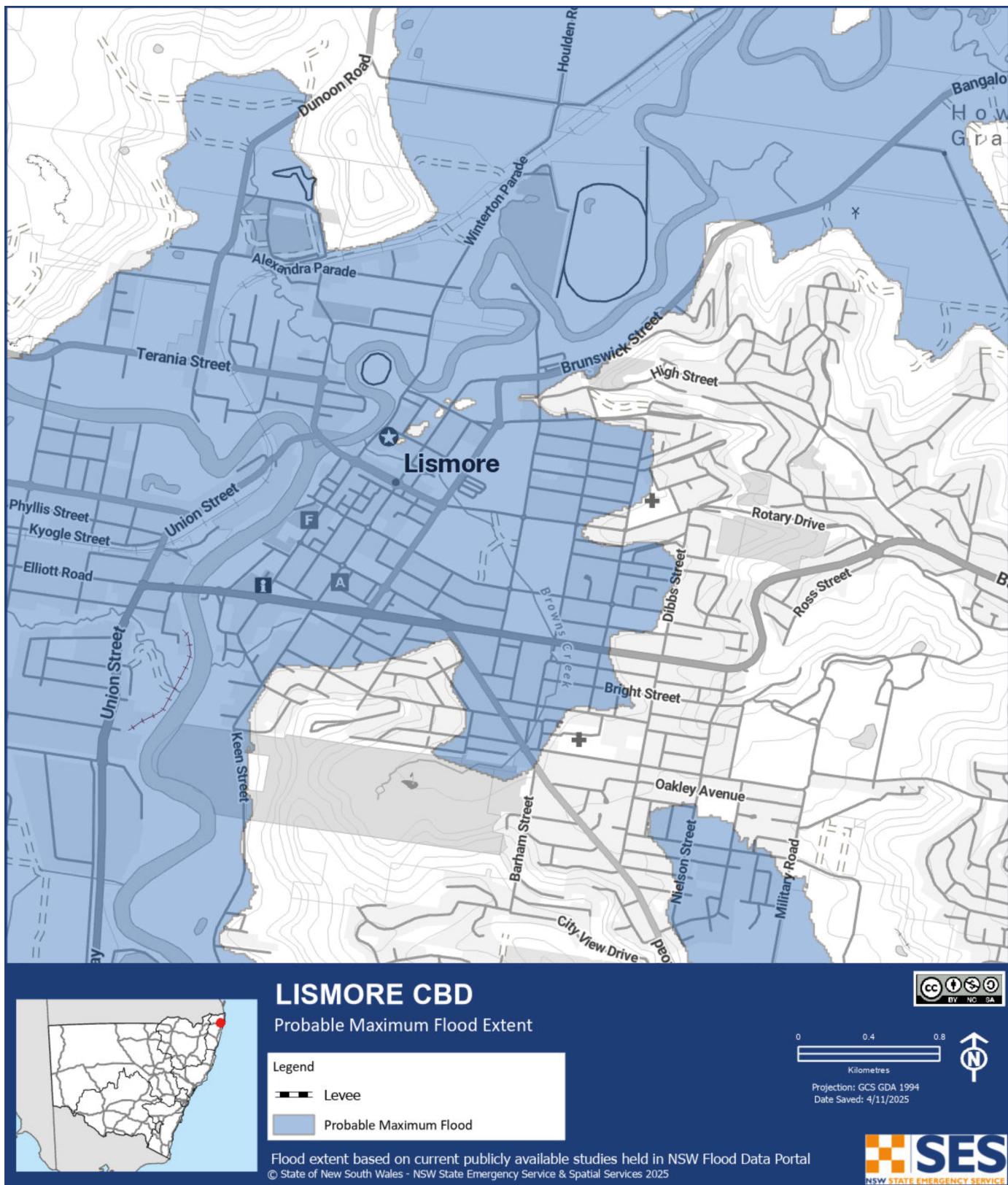
Set your **Watch Zones** and stay informed with notifications for new incidents and when information changes.

Lismore CBD Flood Risk

Probable Maximum Flood (PMF)

Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) is the largest flood that could conceivably be expected to occur at a particular location, usually estimated from probable maximum rainfall. The PMF defines the maximum extent of flood prone land, that is, the floodplain.

At the Wilsons River Rowing Club gauge, the PMF is estimated to be 16.55m.



If a flood exceeds the extent indicated on this map, NSW SES is not liable for any loss suffered as a result of reliance on this map.

Get Prepared in the Richmond Valley Floodplain

These actions will help prepare your household for floods.
Being prepared can save lives.

How to prepare for flood:

Know where to get updates and warnings

- Bureau of Meteorology: local weather updates.
- NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES): information on floods and storms.
- ABC Radio: the official emergency broadcaster.

Prepare an emergency kit

What to pack:

1. Health care items like medications and prescriptions.
2. Copies of your important documents (hard copies or stored digitally).
3. Important valuables and mementos.
4. Important phone numbers.
5. Radio, torch and batteries.
6. Clothing and personal items.

Make a plan if you need to evacuate

Know where you will go, how you will get there, what evacuation routes you can use, what you will do with your animals, and how you will manage your health.

Share your plan

Talk with your relatives, friends, and neighbours about what you will do if you need to evacuate.

What to do during a flood:

Follow NSW SES Flood Advice and Emergency Warnings

- Listen to your local ABC radio station for up to date flood information and advice.
- Follow advice from NSW SES if you are asked to evacuate, don't wait until it is too late.

Take your emergency kit

- This should include your medications, prescriptions and any assistance equipment.

Take your animals

- Put them on leads or in pet carriers.

Know where to go

- Follow advice on evacuations and check live traffic information.
- Make your way to relatives or friends if you can.
- Official evacuation centres will be announced at the time of the emergency.

Look out for each other

- Share information with family, friends, and neighbours and help each other or those who may need assistance.

Key Contact Information

Police, Fire and Ambulance

Triple Zero (000) for life-threatening emergencies.

NSW SES

132 500 for emergency assistance in a flood, storm or tsunami.

LiveTraffic

livetraffic.com for local road information

Lismore City Council

(02) 6625 0500

lismore.nsw.gov.au

Lismore City Council Disaster Dashboard

disaster.lismore.nsw.gov.au

Radio Stations

ABC North Coast – 94.5FM / 738AM
River FM – 92.9FM
2LM – 104.3FM
ZZZ FM – 100.9FM

Local Land Services

1300 795 299
lls.nsw.gov.au



To learn more visit
ses.nsw.gov.au/northernrivers