

Media Release



1 May 2025

Council withdrawal from floodplain authority

Adelaide Hills Council is in the process of seeking withdrawal from the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority (GRFMA).

The GRFMA coordinates flood mitigation for the Gawler River and is comprised of six Constituent Councils: Adelaide Hills, Adelaide Plains, Barossa, Gawler, Light Regional, and Playford.

Constituent Councils can withdraw from the GRFMA with Ministerial approval.

Adelaide Hills Council's involvement in the GRFMA is unique and minimal, both in (relative) financial contribution and operational impact. The Council contributes only 1.73 per cent towards both capital works and asset maintenance, making it the smallest contributor among all the councils.

While operational costs are shared equally across all councils at 16.66 per cent each, the council's overall financial contribution remains lower than other councils due to the minor capital and maintenance shares. In contrast, the City of Playford and Adelaide Plains Council contribute significantly more to both capital works and asset maintenance (34.68 per cent and 28.91 per cent, respectively).

Moreover, the Gawler River catchment, primarily fed by the North and South Para Rivers, has limited relevance to the Adelaide Hills. Only a small section of the catchment lies within our Council boundaries (less than 10%), with most of this land managed by Forestry SA and SA Water. Water from this section flows into the South Para Reservoir, with SA Water solely managing releases. Adelaide Hills Council has no operational control over the catchment, and downstream flooding does not affect our district.

Lastly, recent developments within the GRFMA, including a Charter review, significant planned capital projects, and a new Stormwater Management Plan, introduce financial commitments that offer no benefit to our community. These initiatives are in the realm of \$200 million, which would have a substantial financial impact on Council despite its smaller contributions. These initiatives primarily address issues downstream, making it difficult to justify the associated costs to our residents and ratepayers.

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