

Flood Risk in Development: Overview of Information Sources for Applicants

As well as tidal flooding from the Borough's 48 km of coastline, there are areas that are subject to flooding from streams, and others that are at risk from surface water run-off. The existing drainage infrastructure across the Borough is under significant pressure. Managing flood risk is therefore a key issue both in planning for new development and in considering the safety of the existing population and their property.

Applicants for planning permission will need to demonstrate how flood risk from all sources has been avoided, or where this is not possible, how it has been assessed and mitigated to ensure development is safe for its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

All applicants are encouraged to discuss their flood risk and drainage strategy and information needs at the earliest opportunity through pre-application discussions. In some cases, it is also advisable to seek pre-application advice from the Environment Agency, as well as the Local Planning Authority.

The information in this note is designed to signpost sources of information for applicants in Havant Borough.

What assessments are required?

Depending on the size, location and nature of the development, and the nature of the flood risk, there may be a need for one or both of the following assessments:

- Sequential Test (and Exception Test)
- Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) or Flood Risk Statement

All required assessments may be presented as a single report or separately.

These requirements arise from the following frameworks:

- National Planning Policy Framework (Chapter 14) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2]
- National Planning Guidance: [www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change]
- Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy [www.havant.gov.uk/local-plan]
- The Havant Local Requirements List [www.havant.gov.uk/local-requirements-list]

Further information on what each type of assessment is designed to do, and where guidance may be found for completing them is summarised in the remainder of this note.

Is my site at risk?

Tidal and Fluvial Flood Risk

Mapping by the Environment Agency and a Sub-Regional Strategic Level Flood Risk Assessment provide information on the extent of the areas at risk of tidal and fluvial flooding in the present day and in the future (to 2115). Areas at risk from tidal or fluvial flooding are often referred to as Flood Zones 2 and 3. Mapping of these areas is found at:

- National Flood Map for Planning: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>
- Partnership for South Hampshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, hosted by Portsmouth City Council at <https://pcc.dynamicmaps.co.uk/MapThatPublic/Default.aspx>.

NB the national flood map for planning shows only the present day risk, whereas the SFRA maps both present day risk and future risk to 2115, taking into account climate change.

Both these map sets can also be viewed directly on Havant's public interactive mapping, accessible via the 'where I live' link from our homepage www.havant.gov.uk, or directly via <http://maps.havant.gov.uk/>.

- Expand the map category 'Local Plan', then
- select 'Flood Zone 2 - CS15' and 'Flood Zone 3 – CS15' for the present day extent of the flood zone, or
- 'Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Expected future flooding @ 2115' for the climate change extent.

For the present day extent of the flood zones, applicants are advised always to consult the National Flood Map for Planning, as there can sometimes be delays in updates being reflected on the Council's mapping.

Surface Water Risk

In addition to tidal and fluvial flooding, there are areas that have been identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk of surface water flooding. These can be checked via a national web based tool: <https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk>. It shows high, medium and low risk areas (as well as areas not at risk) for the present day scenario. The emerging PFSH SFRA indicates that it is possible to use with caution the 0.1% (low risk) outline as a substitute dataset (in the absence of detailed modelling) to provide an indication of the implications of climate change.

The Sequential & Exception Tests

The first aim of national planning policy and guidance and of local policy is to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding. The Sequential Test is a key tool to achieve this. Through this test, applicants for development (subject to a few exceptions) in areas at risk of flooding are required to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available sites with a lower probability of flooding that would be appropriate to accommodate the development proposed.

Since the acceptability of the sequential test is assessed by the Local Planning Authority, and national guidance leaves a number of matters open to local interpretation, the Council has put together its own guide to the Sequential Test, which clarifies what development is subject to the test and how the test will be applied to development proposals in Havant:

- www.havant.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents

If the sequential test is passed, applicants will also need to demonstrate that the Exception Test can be passed. This is covered in the same guidance as the Sequential Test, linked above.

Flood Risk Assessments

A flood risk assessment (FRA) is a document that reviews a proposed development to assess it against the risk of flooding from all sources. It should be site specific, and should also take the surrounding area into account and whether the development poses a flood risk to areas nearby. In doing so, it is the key tool to demonstrate that development will be safe for its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.

When applicants submit a flood risk assessment as part of their planning application, the Council in most cases seeks Environment Agency advice on its acceptability.

National guidance on how to undertake Flood Risk Assessments is available at:

- Environment Agency Standing advice on Flood Risk Assessments for Applicants: www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice
- Flood Risk Assessment Section of National Guidance on Flood risk and Coastal Change: www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#ssfra
- The National Guidance also includes a FRA checklist: www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Site-Specific-Flood-Risk-Assessment-checklist-section

Flood Risk Statements

The surface water drainage system is an important factor in management of local flood risk. Development in areas at lowest risk (Zone 1) can still affect flood risk, in relation to surface water. Therefore, a Flood Risk Statement is required for new buildings and engineering works in Flood Zone 1. It is not required for extensions to houses and changes of use where no building or engineering works are proposed.

A Flood Risk Statement should describe in outline terms the existing and proposed surface water drainage system associated with a proposal and should include consideration of using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) techniques where these are practical. The Statement should be proportionate in scale and detail to the size of the development

proposed (i.e. is not intended to be a full FRA) and should demonstrate that development will not increase, and wherever possible, will reduce run-off rates and volumes.

Guidance on Sustainable Drainage can be found at

- [www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Memberships/The SuDS Manual C753 Chapters.aspx](http://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Memberships/The_SuDS_Manual_C753_Chapters.aspx)
- The SuDS section of National Planning Guidance on Flood risk:
www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#sustainable-drainage-systems
- From Hampshire County Council as Local Lead Flood Authority:
www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding/planning