

# Flood Risk Management

## How to positively engage in planning and development

New developments can often cause concerns for local residents, particularly where there are existing issues such as traffic, safety, and flooding.

This leaflet gives some basic advice on what you can do to try to have a positive influence on new development, and how best to share your local knowledge.



## The Role of Warwickshire County Council Flood Team as Statutory Consultee

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), are statutory consultees on the surface water drainage aspects of major developments. For residential developments, 'major' normally means that the development has ten or more houses.

We do not currently complete a detailed review for minor applications. However, in high risk areas we may be able to provide advice to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)(Districts and Boroughs) who are responsible for surface water considerations on minor applications.

The Flood team at WCC do not determine the applications on behalf of the LPA; we make an assessment of the information submitted in

relation to the surface water drainage, and make recommendations to the case officer which they will take into consideration when recommending a decision to the Planning Committee.

In addition to the information submitted, we will also liaise with our drainage engineers. However, if flooding in an area has not been reported to the Flood Team, we may not know about it, therefore it will not be considered in our response. Further information on what types of information you should collect can be found below.

Enforcement of planning applications is the responsibility of the relevant LPA, as is oversight for building control checks.

## Other key consultees

- 1. The Environment Agency** is a statutory consultee for applications that are shown to be in Flood Zones 2 or 3, and for sites within 20m of a main river.
- 2. Local Water Company** - Although not a statutory consultee, they are a key consultee on planning applications since their sewers are often used to dispose of surface water and foul discharges from the site.
- 3. Natural England** - Planners should consider if there are any protected species – both flora and fauna (e.g. Badgers, Great Crested Newts) and sites when considering planning applications.
- 4. Parish and Town Councils** - Tier 3 of local government can provide a wealth of knowledge on *in situ* issues (e.g. surface water flow paths, or depths of past events).



## Developers' requirements

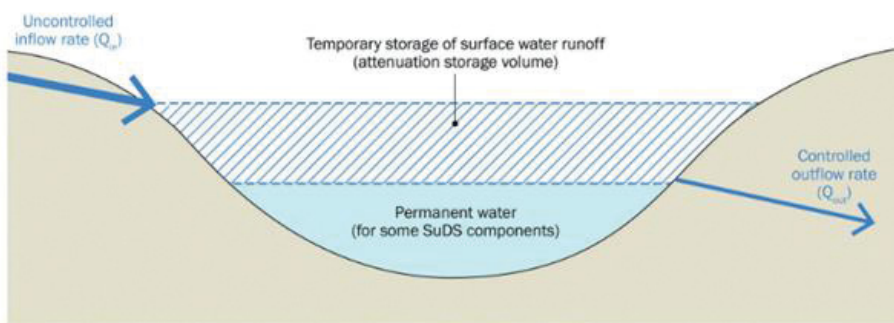
Under current planning legislation, new developments must not increase the flood risk to the development site or elsewhere. Developers must mitigate the effect of their development, but there is no requirement to resolve existing flooding issues. However, where existing flooding occurs from, or very close to, the development site we would expect a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) proportionate to the risk.

Any additional run-off from new developments, created by reducing the permeability of the site, is typically managed by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These work by storing this water on site in features such as ponds, before releasing it back into watercourses or surface water sewers at a controlled rate, typically no more than the run-off from the undeveloped site.

## What are SuDS & how do they work?



SuDS, or Sustainable Drainage Systems, are drainage systems which mimic natural processes. SuDS can avoid increases in flooding downstream, as well as providing water quality, amenity and wildlife benefits. In relation to flood risk, SuDS are able to reduce runoff through storage and infiltration into the ground, and reintroduce natural evapotranspiration.



# What can I do?

## Understanding your flood risk

A key aspect of being able to provide a useful and relevant input to a consultation response is to understand your flood risk. There are multiple resources available to gain more information, including the following.

- Local experience and knowledge.
- Free online Environment Agency (EA) flood maps.
- Free online information from WCC (see <http://maps.warwickshire.gov.uk/swmp/>).
- Commission a Flood Risk Assessment from a reputable consultant
- Speak to other flood groups to understand what they have done.
- Seek advice from the WCC Flood Team and other organisations such as EA and Severn Trent Water (STW).

## Gathering and maintaining records of flooding

During a flood event, we appreciate that your first thoughts are not on gathering information on the type and extent of flooding should you need to respond to a future planning consultation. However, if you have the opportunity, you should try to gather as much information as possible. It is likely that this information would also be of use for your insurers and if the Flood Team were to try to develop a flood alleviation scheme for your area.

Some things that you should consider are as follows:

- photos (preferably with the date & time);
- videos (preferably with the date & time);
- locations (be as specific as possible);
- flood depths (be as specific as possible);
- source(s) (river, surface runoff, groundwater, sewer, etc.);
- timing (how long after the rain starts does it flood?);
- flood extents and sequencing (timeline of events) of flooding.



When reporting a flood to the LLFA, the above information will greatly assist our drainage engineers to conduct a thorough investigation and prioritise the flood location appropriately and, where viable, put together a business case to seek funding for a future flood alleviation scheme.

# How can communities influence local development?

## Responding to consultations

When consulted on an application, submit your flooding information to the case officer at the LPA and highlight that you feel that this has not been considered fully in the application. You should aim to show that the information is relevant to the application and highlight how the new development will impact the existing flooding issues. This will help the case officer to consider whether or not the existing Flood Risk Assessment submitted for the application is adequate and from this, the case officer may choose to re-consult us on the application with the new information.



## Neighbourhood Development Plans

Under the Localism Act 2011, communities have the right to shape development in their area through the construction of 'Neighbourhood Development Plans' (NDPs), 'Neighbourhood Development Orders' (NDOs), and 'Community right to build orders'.

NDPs can be formed through the Parish or Town Council, or other community group, subject to national policy (i.e. the National Planning Policy Framework, or NPPF), enabling the local community to influence the local planning vision and helping to shape future land development. NDPs cannot be used to object to future development in the area, but can for example specify protected green spaces, or highlight appropriate sites for future development. Moreover, these plans can help to guide design standards in the area, ensuring high standards in build quality, such as sites where certain Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) would be suitable to help attenuate surface water run-off.

These plans, upon formal adoption by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), will often form part of the District or Borough Local Plan.

## Community Infrastructure Levy

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tool for Local Authorities in England and Wales, to help deliver infrastructure support in communities with new developments. In some areas for some types of development these have replaced what are known as Section 106 contributions. Communities who have a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place and identified required infrastructure improvements (e.g. flood defences or improved drainage) are more likely to get funding for these.

# Contact Details

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For information which relates to our planning role, or the types of developments we comment on, please see the following link to our website:

**<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/floodriskandplanning>**

Our email addresses, and use for each, can be found below:

- **Flood Risk Management Planning Inbox:**

**[frmplanning@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:frmplanning@warwickshire.gov.uk)** - For planning related queries.

- **Flood Risk Management Drainage Inbox:**

**[flooding@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:flooding@warwickshire.gov.uk)** - Report a Flood/Drainage Issue, or for scheme queries.

For other flood information, please see:

**<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/frm>**

For information on specific ongoing planning applications, please contact your relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA):

- **Warwick District Council:** [planningenquiries@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:planningenquiries@warwickdc.gov.uk)

- **Rugby Borough Council:** [planning@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:planning@rugby.gov.uk)

- **Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council:** [planning@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk](mailto:planning@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk)

- **North Warwickshire Borough Council:** [planningcontrol@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:planningcontrol@northwarks.gov.uk)

- **Stratford District Council:** [planning.applications@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.applications@stratford-dc.gov.uk)

# Summary of Acronyms

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**SUDS** - Sustainable Drainage Systems

**WCC** - Warwickshire County Council

**LLFA** - Lead Local Flood Authority

**LPA** - Local Planning Authority (District and Borough Councils)

**NDP** - Neighbourhood Development Plan

**NPPF** - National Planning Policy Framework

**CIL** - Community Infrastructure Levy