

Bath and North East Somerset

Core Strategy Topic Paper 4 Flood Risk Management

May 2011



**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

The logo for Bath & North East Somerset Council features the text "Bath & North East Somerset Council" in a green, sans-serif font. The text is centered between two horizontal blue bars of equal length.

Bath and North East Somerset
Local Development Framework

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines how a risk-based sequential approach in relation to flood risk management was followed in preparing the Draft Core Strategy and lists the key evidence work prepared to support the Core Strategy. It also summarises how the Council is working towards the implementation of the new roles and responsibilities as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. (CD1/13)

2. Key evidence

Appraising risk

- 2.1 In preparing the B&NES Local Development Framework (LDF), the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) level 1 for Bath and North East Somerset (April 2008) (CD4/FR6-FR9) was prepared by Capita Symonds on behalf of the Council to provide flood risk information across the whole district. The B&NES Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies land at risk and the degree of risk of flooding from river, sea and other sources and provides the information needed to apply the sequential approach.
- 2.2 PPS 25 (CD2/20) states that where the Level 1 SFRA demonstrates that land in Flood Zone 1 cannot accommodate the necessary development then the Exception Test needs to be applied. A more detailed Level 2 SFRA will need to be carried out, including further data collection and/or analysis.
- 2.3 The Level 2 SFRA corresponds to the 'increased scope' SFRA referred to in paragraph E6 of PPS25. The level 2 SFRA's were prepared for Bath (July 2009), Keynsham (May 2009) and Midsomer Norton and Radstock (July 2009). The latest Flood Zone boundaries for the key policy areas for Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock are captured in the Core Strategy Information Paper 2 November 2010 Flood Risk Sequential and Exception Tests (CD6/D2-D4).

Key documents:

- [The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment \(SFRA\) level 1 for Bath and North East Somerset \(April 2008\) \(CD4/FR6-9\)](#)
- [The level 2 SFRA for Bath \(July 2009\) \(CD4/FR10\)](#)
- [The level 2 SFRA for Keynsham \(May 2009\) \(CD4/FR11\)](#)
- [The level 2 SFRA for Midsomer Norton and Radstock \(July 2009\) \(CD4/FR12\)](#)
- [The level 2 SFRA for Midsomer Norton and Radstock Update \(due May 2011\) CD4/FR14](#)

Managing and reducing risk

- 2.4 Following the SFRA's (CD4/FR6-FR12) and the Sequential and Exceptions tests (CD6/D2-D4), the Council has identified the need for a district wide Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRMS), particularly to ensure that the regeneration ambitions of the district are met. Before commencing the FRMS, the Council

commissioned Capita Symonds to undertake a **Scoping Study (May 2009)** (CD4/FR1) to capture the key outcomes and management options from various studies previously prepared. The Scoping Study also provided the basis for the preparation of the full Strategy.

- 2.5 The Flood Risk Management Strategy was commissioned to identify where strategic and site based flood risk management measures can be implemented, to make sites at risk of flooding developable without increasing the flood risk elsewhere. **The Flood Risk Management Strategy (June 2010)** (CD4/FR2-FR5) has tested various flood risk management options discussed in the Scoping Study as well as other potential options. The FRMS has concluded that there is no strategic solution to reducing peak flow through Bath which is either technically or economically viable. As such the Strategy proposes the provision of compensatory storage upstream combined with on site flood defences. New development must provide storage to offset the volume of water that would be displaced in a flood event by the defences on site.
- 2.6 The Council has commissioned an engineering report (Bath Compensatory Storage Study: CD4/FR15) to identify appropriate locations and capacity needed upstream. The Study is to be undertaken in four phases as described below:
 - Phase 1 Identification of technically feasible upstream sites to identify preferred sites;
 - Phase 2 Assessment of preferred site(s), based on deliverability;
 - Phase 3 Detailed design and costing of the preferred site(s);
 - Phase 4 Preparation of a costed maintenance regime for the preferred site(s).
- 2.7 The first phase has commenced with a target date of the 4th May for completion.
- 2.8 Given the limited impact of flooding on new development proposed in Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock, the Strategy concludes that there isn't a business case for off-site storage in these areas. The FRMS recommends that these sites proceed on a site-by-site basis with on-site flood defences as necessary.
- 2.9 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (CD1/13) provides for better, more comprehensive understanding and management of flood risk for people, homes and businesses. It also helps safeguard community groups from unavoidable rises in surface water drainage charges and protects water supplies to the consumer. This Act is central to reducing the flood risk associated with extreme weather. The Act creates clearer roles and responsibilities and instils a more risk-based approach. This includes a new lead role for local authorities in managing local flood risk.
- 2.10 Under the Act the Lead Local Flood Authority will have several new roles and responsibilities including:
 - act consistently with the National Flood Risk Management Strategy (when one will become available)
 - duty to prepare local flood risk management strategy
 - power to request information
 - local point of contact: duty to investigate, maintain asset register
 - works powers: surface run-off, groundwater runoff

- Local authorities must aim to make a contribution towards the achievement of sustainable development therefore the Act creates a SUDS Approval Body (SAB) role.
- SAB will set up and administrate the requirements for approval of drainage systems before development/redevelopment will take place
- In addition SAB will be responsible for checking, adopting and maintaining developers SUDS systems.

- 2.11 Currently Bath and North East Somerset Council is working towards the implementation of the new roles and responsibilities as required by the Act. The Flood Risk Regulations transpose the EU Floods Directive into UK law and were introduced on 10 December 2009. These confirm the lead local flood authority role for unitary and county councils and require specific tasks to be undertaken within stipulated timescales. The first stage comprised of the completion of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments and identification of Flood Risk Areas is due by June 2011.
- 2.12 The Council prepared its Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report in March 2011 (CD4/FR13). This report has been approved by the Enterprise and Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel and will be submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) for their approval.
- 2.13 The further stages include preparation of detailed flood risk and flood hazards maps by 2013 and site specific flood risk management plans by 2015.

Key documents:

- [Flood Risk Management Strategy Scoping Report \(May 2009\) \(CD4/FR1\)](#)
- [Flood Risk Management Strategy Report \(June 2010\) \(CD4/FR2-5\)](#)
- [Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment \(March 2011\) \(CD4/FR13\)](#)
- [Bath Compensatory Storage Study \(Phase 1 due May 2011\) \(CD4/FR15\)](#)

A partnership approach

- 2.14 The LDF Flood Risk Management approach has been developed in partnership with key stakeholders especially with the EA. The presence of EA experts as members of the Steering Group for the SFRA's and FRMS has helped to produce up to date assessments and an effective and realistic strategy. The EA has supported the Council's approach towards dealing with flood risk including the sequential approach to locating new development and Policy CP5 which will ensure that national legislation is adequately applied, while taking into account the local flood risk issues across the district. (Respondent Number: 245 Environment Agency)
- 2.15 Regular meetings with the West of England Partnership authorities (Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils) and the EA Technical Advisory Group also ensures cross boundary issues are addressed, particularly dealing with infrastructure needed to facilitate regeneration along the River Corridor in Bath.

2.16 The Council also established the Natural Hazard Steering Group which is a coordination group to identify, prioritise, coordinate and implement actions to mitigate natural hazard risks in terms of both impact and probability. The group will oversee the development and maintenance of response capabilities and recovery plans required should a hazard occur. The purpose of the natural hazards Steering Group will be to coordinate cross community resources to mitigate the long term risk from natural hazards in Bath & North East Somerset; and enable an effective response and recovery should a natural hazard occur.

Key documents:

- [Single Conversation: West of England Delivery and infrastructure investment plan \(CD4/I4\)](#)
- [B&NES Infrastructure Delivery Plan \(December 2010\) \(CD4/I1\)](#)
- [B&NES Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update \(April 2011\) \(CD4/I2\)](#)

3. Core Strategy policy

Core Strategy Policy Approach

- 3.1 The Core Strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for B&NES up to 2026 and provides the context for other development plan documents in the LDF. Policy CP5 is the Flood Risk Management policy applicable to all new development. It also sets out the broad locations for new housing, employment and other strategic developments.
- 3.2 The Core Strategy makes provision for around 11,000 new homes and around 8,700 new jobs. The Strategy locates new development in the most sustainable locations on brownfield land and in urban areas of Bath, Keynsham and settlements in the Somer Valley.

	Homes	Jobs
Bath	6,000	5,700
Keynsham	1,500	1,500
Somer Valley	2,700	1,000
Rural	800	500
Total	11,000	8,700

3.3 Whilst the Core Strategy does not allocate any specific sites, it does set out place based policies and identifies broad locations for new development. The Sequential Test was applied to the development within these placed based policy areas and detailed site and development information are included in **the Sequential and Exception Tests report (Nov 2010)** (CD6/D2-4) which was checked and endorsed by the EA. Place based policy areas include;

- Policy BA2 Central Area Strategic Policy
- Policy BA3 Twerton and Newbridge Riverside Strategic Policy
- Policy KE2 Keynsham Town Centre / Somerdale Strategic Policy
- Policy SV2 Midsomer Norton Town Centre Strategic Policy
- Policy SV3 Radstock Town Centre Strategic Policy

- 3.4 The sequential approach should be taken at all stages of planning, therefore a site specific Sequential /Exception Test should be applied when determining future site allocations in the Placemaking Plan or a planning application where necessary.

Key documents:

- [The Interim Sequential and Exception Test Report \(December 2009\) \(CD6/O6\)](#)
- [The Sequential and Exception Tests Report \(November 2010\) \(CD6/D2-D4\)](#)