

EPSOM & EWELL STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT UPDATE 2018

Head of Service/Contact: Viv Evans, Interim Head of Planning

Urgent Decision?(yes/no)

If yes, reason urgent decision required: No

Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annex 1: Map of flood zone
Annexe 2: Map of critical drainage areas
Annexe 3: Floor Risk Assessment

Other available papers (not attached):

Report summary

This report provides an overview of the Epsom and Ewell Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update 2018 (SFRA 2018). The SFRA update is an important evidence base document that informs the allocation of sites in the Local Plan, future policy formation and planning applications and decisions.

Recommendation (s)	<i>Notes</i>
(1) That the Committee receives and notes the summary report of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update 2018 (SFRA 2018)	

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The delivery and implementation of the Epsom & Ewell Local Plan contributes towards all of the Council's Key Priorities. The partial review of the Core Strategy is a critical part of the Local Plan review process as it will set out how sustainable growth will be delivered during the plan period.
- 1.2 Providing an assessment of flood risk across the Borough will have an impact upon our Service Plan; particularly in terms of how we plan for future growth, community infrastructure and service improvements.

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2 Background

- 2.1 National Policy requires that local planning authorities prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) in consultation with the Environment Agency. The primary objective of the SFRA is to support the Local Plan in policy preparation related to flood risk management and policies for allocation of land for future development. The broader role of the SFRA includes:
- To inform the development of EEBC policy that will underpin decision making within the borough, particularly within areas that are affected by (and/or may adversely impact upon) flooding;
 - To assist the development management process by providing a more informed response to development proposals which may be affected by flooding, influencing the acceptability and design of future development within the borough;
 - To identify and implement strategic solutions to flood risk, providing the basis for possible future flood attenuation works by a range of agencies with responsibility for flood risk management;
 - To support Surrey County Council (SCC) in their role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA); and
 - To support and inform the Council's emergency planning response to flooding.
- 2.2 A level 1 SFRA was prepared for the Borough in 2008. Since then new flood risk data has become available and national policy and guidance has been amended. During a previous consultation the Environment Agency stated that the Borough Council is required to update their Flood Risk Assessment before allocating sites in the Local Plan. The Council therefore commissioned Jacobs to prepare an update to the original SFRA to ensure Flood Risk is adequately considered alongside the Local Plan Review.
- 2.3 The Environment Agency and Surrey County Council have been heavily involved in the preparation of the Assessment and have confirmed that they are happy with the assessment.

3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Overview and Key Outcomes

- 3.1 The SFRA 2018 reviews and updates the flood zones within the Borough. The Borough is delineated into zones of low, medium and high probability of fluvial, or watercourse flooding. These 'flood zones' are shown on figure 102 attached. This mapping indicates that a relatively small proportion of the borough is susceptible to river flooding, with the extents of Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b being largely confined to the areas adjoining the river corridors.

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3.2 The flood zones have delineated in the following manner:

Flood Zone 3B (functional floodplain): Areas subject to a 5% probability of flooding occurring in any one year. This is the highest risk flood zone and very careful consideration needs to be given to safety issues within this area when considering planning applications. Development in this area should be avoided. Table 1 of the NPPG defines these as areas in which 'water has to flow or be stored in times of flood'.

Flood Zone 3A (High Probability): Areas subject to a 1% probability of flooding occurring in any one year. Development within these areas may only be considered following application of the Sequential Test and more vulnerable development should be avoided wherever possible.

Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability): Areas subject to between a 1% and 0.1% probability of flooding in any one year. Highly vulnerable Development for example emergency services should be avoided in these areas.

3.3 Aside from small changes to the extents of the modelled Flood Zones, there is only one significant alteration to the prediction of fluvial flood risk from the 2008 SFRA. In the 2008 SFRA Flood Zones were not present in the upper reaches of the Green Lanes Stream. In the current SFRA updated modelling now includes land adjacent to much of the Green Lanes Stream and to the south east of the stream along Pound Lane.

- 3.4 A relatively small percentage of properties within the borough are at risk of flooding from rivers. However, the urbanised areas, steep topography and potential rainfall runoff from the Epsom Downs introduces a relatively high susceptibility to surface water, groundwater and localised flooding in certain parts of the Borough. The risk of flooding posed to properties arises from a number of sources including river flooding, surface water, localised runoff, and sewer flooding. However, the most significant of these is surface water runoff on a large scale. The watercourses in the Borough that pose significant flood risk to buildings and infrastructure are the Hogsmill River and its tributaries, which include the Bonesgate Stream, the Horton Stream, Green Lanes Stream and Ewell Court Stream. Most of the Ewell Court Stream and lengths of Green Lanes Stream are culverted. Given the proximity of development to the watercourses, it might be expected that a considerable amount of buildings and infrastructure would be at risk. The flood risk mapping actually shows that a relatively small proportion of the Borough is susceptible to river flooding, with the extents of Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b being largely confined to the areas adjoining the river corridors. However, it is important to note that even though a relatively small proportion of the Borough is at risk of fluvial flooding, the consequence of flooding to homes and businesses can be severe. 95% of the damage sustained by residential property as a result of flooding occurs in the first 200mm (depth) of water above the threshold of the building. Even if flooding is shallow, it can cause substantial damage.

Epsom & Ewell Critical Drainage Areas

- 3.5 The NPPF requires a site-specific flood risk assessment for all development proposals *"in an area within Zone 1 which has critical drainage problems (as notified to the local planning authority by the Environment Agency)"*. The EA has not specified any Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) in the Borough. However, areas which are likely to be most at risk of flooding from local sources have been identified as part of this SFRA. They have been termed 'Epsom and Ewell Critical Drainage Areas' (EECDAs) to differentiate them from those areas which could potentially be notified by the EA. These EECDAs are based on areas predicted to flood from a 1% annual chance surface water event. This is principally surface water runoff generated by intense rainfall, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The Critical Drainage Areas are shown on figure 107 attached (Annexe 2).
- 3.6 Policy DM19 of the Development Management Policies Document 2015 includes a requirement for an FRA for sites 'at medium or high risk from other sources of flooding as identified by the Borough Council'. Therefore any development proposals within the EECDAs will now be required to include a proportionate Flood Risk Assessment that demonstrates that the proposal would 'where practicable, reduce risk both to and from the development or at least be risk neutral.'

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- 3.7 It is important to note that this requirement will not stifle development in any way or stop development coming forward in these areas. It will however ensure that the cumulative impact of development within the areas at risk of surface water flooding identified will not increase the risk of flooding to or from the Borough.
- 3.8 The SFRA 2018 also includes a summary of flood risk by character area which will be a useful tool for both the Council and prospective developers.

Next Steps

- 3.9 The NPPF stipulates the application of a sequential approach to site allocation- seeking development sites within areas of lowest flood risk in the first instance. Only if it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable sites within these areas should alternative sites within the areas that may potentially be at risk from flooding be contemplated.
- 3.10 Officers will be carrying out a formal 'sequential test' of the development sites emerging through the Development Plan.
- 3.11 The SFRA 2018 will be published on the Councils website and added to the Public GIS and made available for Developers/ Residents/ Officers.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 ***Chief Finance Officer's comments: None for the purposes of this report***

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 ***Monitoring Officer's comments: None for the purposes of this report***

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 Securing sustainable future growth is a key objective of this document because it seeks to identify flood risk and the necessary mitigation measures.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 The Council has engaged with Surrey County Council, Thames Water and the Environment Agency in the preparation of this document. These partnerships will continue to evolve as the measures outlined in the SFRA are brought forward through the delivery of the Local Plan.

8 Risk Assessment

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- 8.1 The Environment Agency (a Statutory Consultee) have underpinned the importance of an up to date SFRA being in place before the Development Plan progresses to the formal allocation of sites. Without this document we would be at risk of the Environment Agency objecting to our plan at the examination stage.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 This SFRA update is a necessary technical document required to inform the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 9.2 It will also provide useful information for both Development Management in determining applications and applicants when submitting proposals.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);