



Guidance Note: Flood Risk Planning for Harwich Town

Introduction

This planning guidance has been developed by INTend representing Tendring District Council [TDC] and the Environment Agency [EA]. It has been produced to inform assist and support Land Owners, Applicants, Developers and Agents that are looking to bring forward development proposals within the area of Harwich Town as identified on the plan below.

Harwich Town



This guidance covers the Harwich Masterplan area (as shown on plan above and link shown at foot of this page¹) which has been identified within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as a priority area for Regeneration. It has also been identified as a growth node point within the Haven Gateway sub-region and is an area identified as a key delivery area

¹ www.in-tend.org/Regeneration+Projects/Harwich+Masterplan/

by EEDA for regeneration of the town as well as the provision of new container facilities (Bathside Bay).

The Masterplan promotes the sustainable development of Old Harwich. Sustainable development is defined internationally as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The plan consists of two strands which are embraced in two core policies:

- Identifying Old Harwich's development needs where it will do most to assist urban regeneration
- Restraining development in locations where it would cause harm to the environment or regeneration.

The plan was formally adopted by the District Council in September 2006 and has subsequently been incorporated into Tendring District Local Plan 2007.

This guidance is intended not only to provide awareness of the local studies and national government guidance on flood risk but also to inform you as to the requirements you need to consider when proposing development in Old Harwich Town.

It is important that you contact Tendring District Council in the first instant (Appendix 1) as early as possible if your site is at risk of flooding. This really needs to be at the pre-application stage. We can then tell you the steps you can take to manage the flood risk. Our job is to help you avoid or manage the risk of flooding and Appendix 2 of this document outlines an agreed process between Tendring District Council and the Environment Agency to assess at the pre-application stage the proposal, the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and if required a Flood Evacuation Plan (FEP).

Note: TDC as the Planning Authority have the responsibility of determining the application. However, the EA are an important consultee and should ideally be approached simultaneously.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

To assist in developing proposals a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 3) has been undertaken for the Harwich peninsula including the Masterplan area as well as Dovercourt. The study provides a strategic overview of potential sources of flooding and considers potential development areas, some of which are allocated in the Tendring District Local Plan 2007. It highlights the likely requirements for satisfaction of the 'Exception Test', where applicable under PPS25 and indicates that Old Harwich Town falls primarily into Flood Zone 3a an area with a high probability of flooding (a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea in any year).

Requirements

Managing flood risk is a major issue for any development. We want you to consider these important issues at this stage to help you understand it. The location, layout and design of developments - in that order - are the most vital factors determining both the likelihood and consequences of flooding (we have included links to good design principles in Appendix 4 below).

Your development must be safe from flooding and must not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Together we will want to see you demonstrate in your flood risk assessment that you have considered all forms of flooding, its consequences and reduced the overall flood risk for the lifetime of the development.

It will never be possible to eliminate flood risk altogether. Even if the local planning authority accepts the flood risks associated with your development, you must include methods of reducing the risk, and have appropriate flood resilience or resistance measures. A safe development will require good emergency planning procedures to be in place. This should be part of the flood risk assessment.

It is useful to remember the issues surrounding people's safety in flood events and particularly the advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25) and the Practice Guide Companion to PPS25.

It is recognised that in order to satisfy the requirements of PPS 25 there are a number of needs to be satisfied by planning applications for developments in this area which can be demonstrated through the production of a Flood Risk Assessment.

In order to support your application (all developments in the prescribed area are within a flood risk zone) you will need one or more of the following:

1. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).
2. Good building design.
3. A Safe Access & Egress Plan.
4. A Flood Evacuation Plan (FEP).

1. Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

A FRA must demonstrate that the development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible, will reduce flood risk overall. The FRA must consider the risks throughout the design life of the development, and the PPS25 Practice Guide recommends that for residential development a minimum of 100 years is specified, unless there is specific justification for considering a shorter period.

The PPS25 Practice Guide provides details on the definition of 'safe' in Chapter 6 – Risk Management by Design, Chapter 7 – Residual Risk.

PPS25 requires consideration of the following issues when preparing site specific FRA's for sites subject to the Exception Test, in order to demonstrate safety:

- Actual flood risk throughout development lifetime i.e. defence overtopping
- Residual flood risk throughout development lifetime i.e. defence/pumping station failure
- Access and egress routes
- Flood warning and evacuation procedures.

2. Building Design.

As a general principle for new residential development in a 1:200 year flood event people should remain safe inside the building. The inside of the new buildings should not flood, internal services should remain capable of operation and people should remain safe (dry carpets). In a 1:1000 year flood event new residential development on a single floor level should remain dry. Where there is a lower floor of any multi storey buildings there should be a safe route to a floor level or safety refuge above flooding for all people, including those with restricted mobility, accessible and acceptable to the emergency services. Where people are unable to reach a higher floor or safety refuge, the lower floor should remain dry. There is a range of guidance to assist you with building design and the links are detailed in Appendix 4.

3. Safe Access & Egress.

Unaided safe access to, and egress from, buildings should remain available to occupants and visitors (including those of restricted mobility) in the majority of development types. Any flooding between the development and local facilities including shops, schools, doctors' surgeries and buildings likely to be used as places of assembly during flooding should only present a low flood hazard (as defined by DEFRA in FD2320).

4. Flood Evacuation Plan (FEP).

Where safe access and egress cannot be demonstrated it may be acceptable for less vulnerable development to prepare a flood evacuation plan provided that the development also incorporates an area of safe refuge from an extreme flood event. A FEP can typically contain the following sections:

- Scope of report
- Aims and objectives
- Flood warning codes
- Flood Watch
- Hierarchy of flood warnings
- Flood warnings Direct (FWD)

- Provision of a 3 stage FEP
 - i. heightened awareness
 - ii. Initiate
 - iii. Evacuation
- safe exit routes
- flood warning notices
- reoccupation of the site
- Major Incident Reporting flood warning codes.

Further information on the preparation of a FEP that satisfies the Government guidance in PPS25 is contained in Chapter 7 of the accompanying Practice Guide and in Appendix 5. It is recommended that applicants and developers address this issue at an early stage.

Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25)

PPS25 represents national government policy on development and flood risk and must be applied by TDC, who are required to consult the EA on flood risk aspects of planning applications and site allocations. Notwithstanding the role of the EA under PPS25, the degree of weight to be given to flood risk, when considering all the material planning considerations in relation to planning applications and site allocations, is a matter for TDC.

However, in certain cases (involving Major applications – the definition of major developments is contained in appendix 6) an application may ultimately be determined by the Government office.

Although TDC is generally reliant on advice given by the EA on the flood risk aspects of development, it is the former body that is the decision-maker. The role of the TDC as decision-maker is central to the consideration of the degree of flood risk and therefore its toleration as a factor in granting permission. The consideration of safety is dealt with under a number of paragraphs within PPS25.

Appendix 1 - Useful Contacts

IN Tend

Thorpe Road
Weeley
Clacton on Sea
Essex
CO16 9JH

Phone & E-Mail

Tel: 01255 686181

Email: info@in-tend.org

Tendring District Council

Planning Department
Thorpe Road
Weeley
Clacton on Sea
Essex
CO16 9JH

Phone & E-Mail

Tel: 01255 686161

Email: planning.services@tendringdc.gov.uk

Environment Agency

Cobham Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP3 9JD

Phone & E-Mail

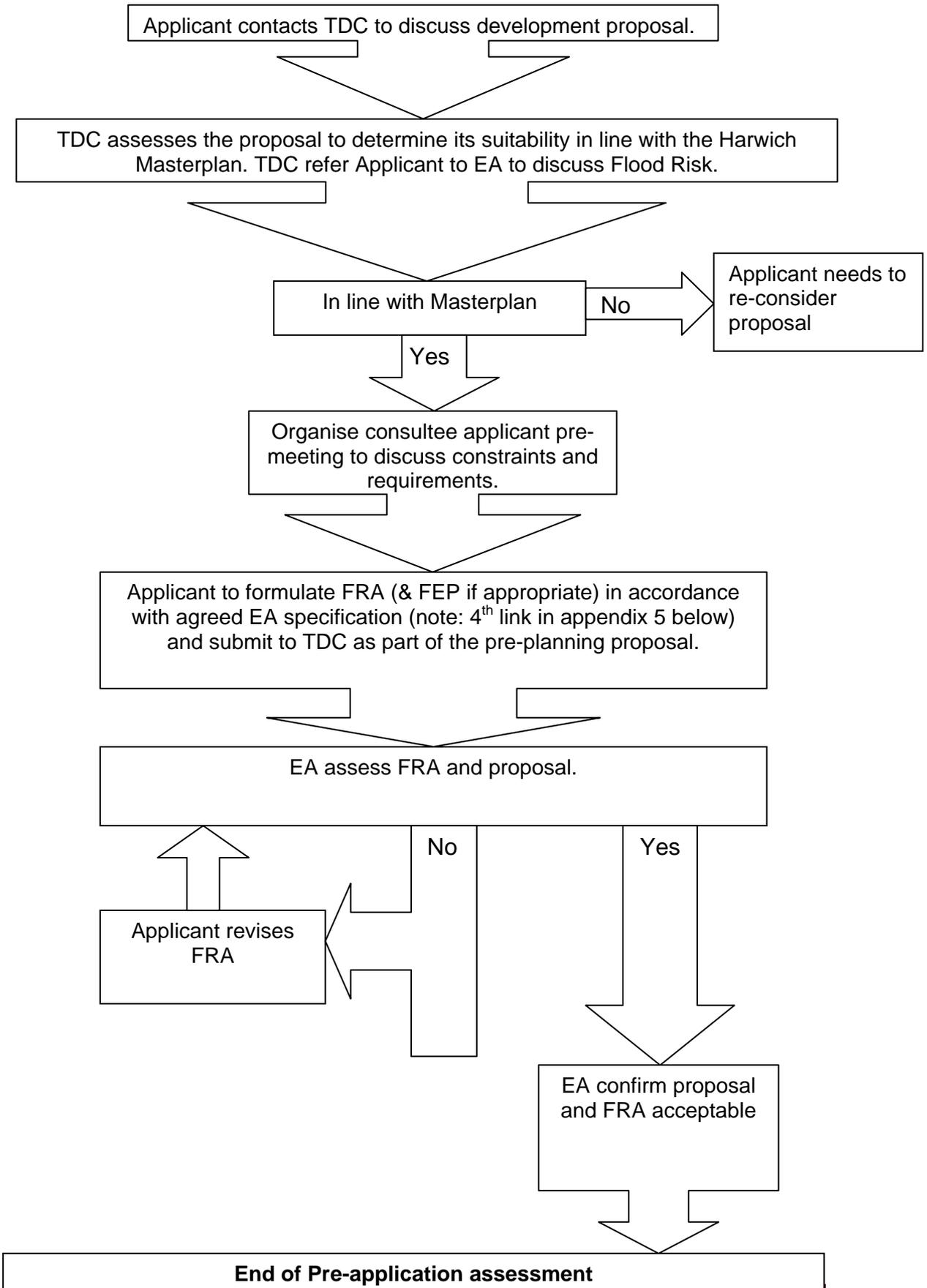
Tel: 01473 706749

Fax: 01473 724205

Email: planning.ipswich@environment-agency.gov.uk

Appendix 2

Pre-application assessment of FRA & FEP



Appendix 3 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Links

SFRA Stage 1 - <http://www.intend.org/filelibrary/uploaded/Harwich+SFRA+Level+1+Report-+Final+-+17th+April+2008.pdf/>

SFRA Stage 2 - <http://www.intend.org/filelibrary/uploaded/Harwich+Level+2+SFRA+Final.pdf/>

Appendix 4 - Design & Construction of Buildings in the Flood Zone

The following are the links for advice on the design and construction of buildings located within a flood zone and as such should be used as a source of information when designing buildings within a flood risk zone.;

Improving the flood performance of new buildings: flood resilient construction.

[Communities and Local Government]

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/improvingflood>

Improving the flood resistance of your home - advice sheets

[CIRIA]

http://www.ciria.org.uk/flooding/advice_sheets.html

Preparing for a Flood Practical advice on what to do to protect you and your property [Environment Agency]

<http://publications.environment-EA.gov.uk/pdf/FLHO1007BNET-e-e.pdf>

During a Flood Practical advice on what to do to stay safe in a flood [Environment Agency]

<http://publications.environment-EA.gov.uk/pdf/FLHO1007BNEV-e-e.pdf>

After a Flood Practical advice on recovering from a flood [Environment Agency]

<http://publications.environment-EA.gov.uk/pdf/FLHO1007BNER-e-e.pdf>

Flood Protection Association

(Promote the interests of manufacturers and installers of flood protection equipment and requirements)

<http://www.floodprotectionassoc.co.uk/>

Appendix 5

Flood Evacuation Plans

Preparing for a Flood [Environment Agency]

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31640.aspx>

Make an Emergency Flood Plan

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/38329.aspx>

Temporary Flood Protection Equipment

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31644.aspx>

How to Prepare a Flood Plan [Environment Agency]

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/flooding/32362.aspx>

Your Risk of Flooding [Environment Agency]

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/flooding/32366.aspx>

Preparing a Flood [Environment Agency]

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/flooding/32364.aspx>

Appendix 6 - Definition of a Major Development

(source footnote 9 PPS25: Development & Flood Risk)

Major development is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Flooding) (England) Direction 2007 as:

- (a) in respect of residential development where the number of dwellings to be provided is 10 or more, or the site area is 0.5 hectares or more; or
- (b) in respect of non-residential development, a development where the new floorspace to be provided is 1000 square metres or more, or the site area is 1 hectare or more