

## **BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Cllr Gordon Bambridge - Executive Member for Growth  
**To:** Local Plan Working Group – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017  
**Author:** Sarah Robertson - Senior Planning Policy Officer (Capita)  
**Subject:** Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test  
**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the content of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test assessment

### **Recommendation(s):**

- 1) It is recommended that Members endorse the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test as evidence base to support the Local Plan. Furthermore it is also recommended that Members agree the publication of the studies on the Council's website as part of the Local Plan documents library.

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 The Council commissioned consultants AECOM to prepare a Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to support the Local Plan. The studies have been undertaken to ensure that:

- Water Supply (resource and supply)
- Water quality
- Sewerage (network, resource and water recycling centres)
- Flood risk management, and
- Drainage issues (incorporating surface water sewers)

can be addressed in the Breckland area to enable growth planned to 2036 in accordance with the Council's emerging Local Plan.

1.2 Both the studies have been prepared with a stakeholder working group which incorporated the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and Norfolk Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The Water Cycle Study is still being finalised by AECOM and it is expected that this will be reported at a subsequent Local Plan Working Group.

1.3 The sequential test assessment has been undertaken by the planning policy team having regard to the findings of the strategic flood risk assessment. The following sections highlight the key findings of each of the studies:

#### **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

1.4 The strategic flood risk assessment is attached at Appendix A of this report. The last district wide strategic flood risk assessment was prepared in 2007 as an update to the 2005 assessment. Since this time the national guidance for flood risk assessments has been updated through the planning practice guidance. Furthermore the Environment Agency flood risk mapping has been revised for the river watercourses in Breckland and the national surface water flood risk mapping has also been updated.

1.5 The strategic flood risk assessment assesses flood risk within the key settlements, market towns and local service centre villages in Breckland. The assessment looks at flood risk

from all sources of flooding including rivers, surface water, groundwater, sewers and artificial water courses.

- 1.6 In addition to looking at sources of flood risk, the assessment has also provided guidance on the requirements of a sequential assessment for sites, managing and mitigating, guidance for the application of sustainable drainage systems, guidance for preparing site specific flood risk assessments and flood risk management policy considerations. This is a level 1 flood risk assessment which is a desk-based study using existing datasets to enable the application of the sequential test. The flood risk management policy considerations will be used to help guide the Local Plan policies. The assessment has provided a new set of maps for each of the growth locations and also a more detailed settlement appraisal, which have both been used for the sequential test.
- 1.7 **Conclusion** – It is recommended that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is accepted to form part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan.

### **Sequential Test**

- 1.8 The sequential test is attached at Appendix B of this report. The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding.
- 1.9 The sequential test assessed all the sites within the Local Plan that are currently identified as preferred sites or reasonable alternative sites. Sites that were submitted during the Preferred Sites and Settlement Boundaries Consultation where a targeted call for sites was conducted were also assessed in the same manner.
- 1.10 The test looked at which of these sites are subject to any fluvial flooding (Zone 2a & 3a) and also sites that are subject to surface water flooding. Further detail was then provided on these sites that were subject to any amount of fluvial flooding or where more than 10% of the site area was subject to incidences surface water flooding.
- 1.11 Following the assessment it is proposed that the following preferred sites are not allocated for development in the Local Plan:
- Banham LP[003]003
  - Necton LP[067]007
- 1.12 In addition to the preferred sites, alternative sites LP003]004, LP[044]004A, LP[061]022, LP[067]004 and LP[067]005a have also been identified as being at risk of surface water flooding. Therefore it is proposed to review the alternative status of these sites and consider them as unreasonable options
- 1.13 The report then assesses the need for an exception test and found that subject to the removal of sites following the sequential test, an exception test would not be required; however, If the sites are not removed from the Local Plan then site LP[003]004 and LP[067]007 would need to be subject to an exception test. For an exception test to be passed it must be demonstrated that there are wider sustainability benefits to the community which outweigh the flood risk and also the site specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime.
- 1.14 **Conclusion** – It is recommended that the findings of the Sequential Test are supported and that the study is adopted to form part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan.

## **2.0 OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Two options are presented for this report
- Option1 – Members endorse the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test as evidence base for the Local Plan and for publication on the Councils website.
  - Option 2 – Members do not endorse the studies.

### 3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members endorse option 1. The three studies form an important part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, including demonstrating that there is sufficient capacity within the water network, and that there are sufficient sites within the District which are not at risk of flooding.

### 4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

- 4.1 The NPPF requires Local Authorities to prepare Local Plans. The studies form an essential part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. The studies help the Council to demonstrate that full account has been taken to the implications of flood risk and water supply through the Local Plan.

### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

#### **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

- 5.1.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

#### **5.2 Constitution & Legal**

- 5.2.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

#### **5.3 Contracts**

- 5.3.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

#### **5.4 Corporate Priorities**

- 5.4.1 The Local Plan aligns with corporate priorities: Supporting Breckland to develop and thrive; providing the right services at the right time and in the right way; developing the local economy to be vibrant with continued growth and enabling stronger, more independent communities. The production also aligns with the priority of enabling effective planning and delivery of housing solutions to meet local needs.

#### **5.5 Crime and Disorder**

- 5.5.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

#### **5.6 Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

- 5.6.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

#### **5.7 Financial**

5.7.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.8.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.9 **Risk Management**

5.9.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.10 **Safeguarding**

5.10.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.11 **Staffing**

5.11.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 5.12 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.12.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

## 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All wards in Breckland will be affected by the Local Plan

## 7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework

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Background papers:- [See The Committee Report Guide](#)

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### **Lead Contact Officer**

Name and Post: Steve Ottewell,  
Email: stephen.ottewell@urbanvision.org.uk

**Key Decision:** Yes

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to a Mandatory Service**

### **Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2017  
Appendix B Sequential Test 2017