

**21 July 2015**

## **Planning and Licensing Committee**

### **Sustainable Drainage System Design Guide**

**Report of:** *Gordon Glenday, Head of Planning*

**Wards Affected:** *All Wards*

**This report is:** *Public*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Government adopted a new approach to implementing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) on 6 April 2015. These changes to the SuDS regime impact upon how flood risk and surface water run-off is managed.
- 1.2 This report outlines these changes to the planning system and asks Members to acknowledge the Sustainable Drainage System Design Guide (2014) produced by Essex County Council, as a material consideration.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Sustainable Drainage System Design Guide, as attached at Appendix A, be acknowledged as a material consideration for the purposes of determining planning applications where relevant to the particular application.**

#### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government laid a Written Ministerial Statement in the House of Commons on 18 December 2014 requiring all new major developments to include provision for sustainable drainage systems as a mechanism for managing surface water flooding. This change came into effect on 6 April 2015.
- 3.2 Under this new approach Essex County Council in their role as Lead Local Flood Authority is now the statutory consultee for sustainable drainage. The Environment Agency is no longer the statutory consultee for surface water management issues, but they retain their strategic

overview role for all flood (main rivers and sea) and coastal erosion management issues.

- 3.3 In preparation for the changes to delivering Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) through the planning system, Essex County Council as the statutory consultee for SuDS schemes on major applications of 10 or more dwellings, have produced a validation checklist and a SuDS design guide.
- 3.4 The aim of delivering SuDS is to reduce flood risk for communities by slowing the rate of surface water run-off and increasing infiltration, particularly at times of heavy rainfall.
- 3.5 The SuDS Design Guide is divided into 8 sections, each of which is summarised below:
- *Section 1* - Includes background information about the shift towards the increased use of sustainable drainage to manage surface water including the multiple benefits that they can deliver as part of sustainable development.
  - *Section 2* - Provides an overview of the design considerations specific to Essex that need to be considered when sustainable drainage systems are being designed such as topography, geology, soils and hydrology.
  - *Section 3* - Explains the twelve principles and two local standards for water quantity and quality that should be followed when planning and designing SuDS, not just in terms of flood prevention but also in terms of amenity, ecology and water management. The principles cover issues such as managing rainfall at the surface and at source, mimicking natural drainage, designing SuDS that are maintainable, and enhancing biodiversity. The local principles and standards are intended to supplement national standards when sustainable drainage systems are being designed.
  - *Section 4* - Provides an introduction to the main types of sustainable drainage systems that can be built and the circumstances where they are most appropriate. Sustainable drainage systems are varied and can include green roofs, swales, ponds, pervious paving, rainwater gardens or even large wetlands.

- Sections 5 to 8 – Include appendices, a glossary of terms, references and a figures table respectively.

3.6 Brentwood Borough Council already promotes the use of sustainable drainage in new developments through the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan policy IR5 (Energy and Water Conservation in New Development). However, there is a need to further consider SuDS within the emerging Local Development Plan.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

4.1 The SuDS Design Guide was formally adopted by Essex County Council on 31 March 2015. The document forms the local standards for Essex and, together with the National Standards, strongly promotes the use of SuDS.

4.2 The guide is primarily intended for use by developers, designers and consultants who are seeking guidance on the County Council's requirements for the design of sustainable surface water drainage in Essex. It provides information on the planning, design and delivery of attractive and high quality SuDS schemes which should offer multiple benefits to the environment and community.

4.3 Essex County Council's Flood Team will use the guide in their new role to assess planning applications requiring sustainable drainage schemes. The guide provides a steer as to what is expected and should complement national requirements whilst prioritising local needs.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

5.1 Formal acknowledging the SuDS Design Guide as a material consideration when determining planning applications will help the Borough meet its Local Plan policy objectives and assist the Council in negotiating good quality sustainable drainage schemes as part of new major developments.

5.2 Acknowledgement of the guide will help ensure that sustainable drainage schemes coming forward in the Borough are fit for purpose in terms of helping reduce and manage the risk of surface water flooding as well as delivering wider amenity, ecological and landscape benefits.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The SuDS Design Guide was produced by Essex County Council's Flood Management Team in conjunction with a range of stakeholders. The Guide was completed in 2014 and has been subject to consultation with the public and key stakeholders on two separate six week periods. The first consultation was held between December 2011 and January 2012 and this was followed by another round of consultation between August and September 2012. The Guide was formally adopted by Essex County Council on 31 March 2015.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 The SuDS Design Guide maximises opportunities to mitigate flood risk in order to enhance and protect the Borough's environment while supporting the Brentwood Local Development Plan. The Local Development Plan is a key priority in the Council's Corporate Plan as part of 'A Prosperous Borough'.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

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- 8.1 None directly arising from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

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- 8.2 None directly arising from this report.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 None.

## **9. Background Papers**

- 9.1 None.

## 10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A - 'Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide' (Essex County Council), December 2014 -  
[http://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Environmental-Issues/local-environment/flooding/Documents/suds\\_design\\_guide.pdf](http://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Environmental-Issues/local-environment/flooding/Documents/suds_design_guide.pdf)  
[pdf](http://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Environmental-Issues/local-environment/flooding/Documents/suds_design_guide.pdf)

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