

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Development & Regeneration	Development Control Committee	13/02/07

PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 25: DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To inform Members of the new Planning Policy Statement and the implications this will have on the determination of planning applications and development planning.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This matter is particularly relevant to the strategic objective to “Develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live” and resolving flood risk matters in respect of development will also assist in the objective to “Put Chorley at the heart of economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region”.

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	3	Information	
Reputation		Regulatory/Legal	3
Financial		Operational	3
People		Other	

- The risks identified may arise if the guidance is not taken into account when preparing future Local Development Documents (LDP's) and deciding planning applications.

BACKGROUND

- The new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) replaces the previous Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 (PPG 25): Development and Flood Risk, published in July 2001. A draft of the PPS was published for consultation in December 2005 and was reported to Development Control Committee in February 2006.
- The draft PPS was welcomed in its expansion of the risk-based approach first introduced in PPG 25 through proposing flood risk assessments at all levels of planning and by suggesting an extension to the Environment Agency's role.

KEY PRINCIPLES

7. The finalised PPS largely confirms the approach suggested in the draft document. It clarifies the sequential test that matches types of development to degrees of flood risk. The need for flood risk assessment at all levels is confirmed and introduced is a vulnerability classification and an exception test. There is also clearer policy on flood risk deriving from climate change.
8. Flood risk considerations will be required to be taken fully into account in plans and strategies – at the local level this means in Local Development Documents making up the Local Development Framework.
9. The overall aim of the PPS is to steer development to areas of lowest risk of flooding. Only if there are no reasonably available sites here should the vulnerability of locating development in areas of greater risk be considered. Only exceptionally will development be acceptable in high flood risk areas when all three of the following criteria are met:
 - the development meets sustainability objectives in such a way that development need outweighs flood risk;
 - the development is on brownfield land suitable for the intended use, or there is not reasonable alternative site on such land;
 - a flood risk assessment demonstrates that the development will be safe, will not increase flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, will reduce overall flood risk.
10. The aim of doing strategic flood risk assessments to inform the Local Development Framework is to reduce the prospect of sites being preferred in high risk areas, but if they are, site-specific assessments will be needed when planning applications are made.
11. The Environment Agency will in future focus its resources on strategic flood risk assessments by providing the information needed and commenting on the scope and methodology of such appraisals. The Agency will be a statutory consultee for most planning applications in flood risk areas. It will also encourage local planning authorities to pursue policies that require sustainable drainage systems (open free draining water channels and ponds rather than pipes and culverts) as the standard solution for new developments.
12. The Council is collaborating with Preston and South Ribble Councils on producing a combined strategic flood risk assessment covering the three authorities areas. There is an essential piece of work for the Local Development Framework both for the Core Strategy and in relation to allocating development sites. Substantial financial savings on consultancy fees will be achieved by collaborating in this way.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

13. There are no HR related issues associated with this report.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

14. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

15. The PPS provides a comprehensive and logical approach to considering and minimising the risk of flooding affecting or created by new development. It clearly makes sense to approach this matter in a strategic rather than an ad hoc way.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

16. That the report be noted.

JANE E MEEK
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk	December 2006	-	Gillibrand Street Offices

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Julian Jackson	5280	10 January 2007	PLAREP/1101AC04