

GUIDANCE NOTE: THE EXCEPTION TEST

1. Acceptance of the Risk

The Level 1 SFRA has identified the potential flood risk to each of the proposed development sites put forward by the Council. The Sequential Test would direct all development away from areas of flood risk. When allocating or approving land for development in flood risk areas, Councils are expected to demonstrate there are no suitable alternative development sites located in lower flood risk areas.

If it is necessary to apply the Exception Test, there is an underlying acceptance of an existing degree of flood risk. However, it is essential that this risk is not ignored, but rather mitigated against in the planning process and design of new developments.

2. Planning and Design

Maintenance

Relatively few defences exist with Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough. In most cases the design standard and condition of these structures was not available for inclusion within the SFRA. However, the responsibility for the maintenance of the structures is included and it is important that they are maintained to ensure the safety of the people and property behind.

Access and Egress

In the event of a severe flood, either by overtopping or defence breach, consideration must be given to the safe evacuation of people of different levels of mobility. (Reference: PPS25 Practice Guide, 5.46 to 5.51)

Flood Resilience

A fundamental level of flood resistance and/or resilience should be achieved in all flood risk areas, following good building practice and complying with the requirements of the Building Regulations 2000 should reach these standards.

Flood resistance can be described as 'dry proofing' where floodwater is prevented from entering the building. This may be achieved by raising floor levels or placing flood barriers across doorways.

Flood resilience may be described as 'wet proofing' where it is acknowledged that floodwater can easily enter and exit the property and all internal features are designed appropriately to take this into account, such as raising electrical sockets and fitting tiled floors.

Further guidance for homeowners and developers, can be downloaded from www.ciria.org/flooding/reducing_the_impact.htm

