

Policy CS34 – Flood Risk and Coast Protection

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The Council will follow a risk-based approach to the location of new development, both in terms of the allocation of sites in a site-specific Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications. In determining planning applications and allocating land for development the Council will apply the national sequential approach drawing on the latest available Environment Agency mapping data, strategic and site-specific flood risk assessments and other local strategies and advice from the Environment Agency. Development will not be permitted or land allocated where it would:

1. be subject to an unacceptable risk of flooding, which will be assessed having regard to the impact of climate change and:

- the likely frequency of a flood event;
- the likely depth and velocity of any flood waters;
- the vulnerability of the use;
- the potential impacts on any users of the development, including any vulnerable users or occupiers; and
- the potential impacts on any buildings and other structures.

2. increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;

3. result in an unacceptable maintenance liability in terms of dealing with flood-related issues or obstruct land adjacent to water courses or flood defences required for access and/or maintenance purposes; or

4. require unduly complicated or burdensome emergency planning procedures.

Applicants should provide schemes to reduce flood risk on individual sites through flood resilient design and on site flood risk management measures. Structures and other features that help to reduce the risk of flooding or mitigate its impacts will be protected. Their loss, alteration or replacement will only be permitted where there would be no increase in flood risk.

Where the national exception test is to be applied, the consideration of wider sustainability benefits will include the extent to which development contributes to the Broad Spatial Strategy (Policy CS2). A site specific flood risk assessment will need to demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime, will not increase flood risk elsewhere and where possible reduces overall flood risk.

Proposals for new coastal protection and sea defence works will be permitted where they are in line with the recommendations of the adopted Shoreline Management Plan and emerging Wirral Coastal Strategy and where sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that there will be no adverse effects on coastal processes or designated biodiversity or geodiversity assets.

Areas identified for specific protection for flood defence or coast protection will be identified in a site-specific Local Plan.

- 23.7 A review of the North Wales and North West England Shoreline Management Plan, completed in 2011, divides the coastline into fourteen units, based on land use and coastal processes. Ten of the units have a policy of hold-the-line, where coastal defences shall be maintained and upgraded as necessary over the next 20 years. The remaining four units, which include the coast from Gayton to Thurstaston Cliffs, between West Kirby and Hoylake and at Eastham, have a policy of no active intervention, which will involve no

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investment in coastal defences or operations. The Shoreline Management Plan does, however, allow for some existing defences to be retained in these areas where economically justifiable and environmentally acceptable. Proposals for coastal defence works must therefore be supported by sufficient evidence to determine their wider impact on the coastline and on designated biodiversity and geodiversity assets.