

Local Plan Panel Meeting	
Meeting Date	11 June 2020
Report Title	Sequential Test
Cabinet Member	Cllr Mike Baldock, Cabinet Member for Planning
SMT Lead	James Freeman
Head of Service	James Freeman
Lead Officer	Aaron Wilkinson
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	It is recommended that Members note the content of the Sequential Test and recommend to the Cabinet that it be published and used as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Local Plan Review (LPR), additional land will need to be allocated to meet the Borough's future development needs. A crucial topic area when selecting sites is flood risk and its mitigation and management. A sequential test has been prepared to demonstrate the flood risk on the sites that could be considered, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2 Background

- 2.1 The NPPF is clear that local plans should take full account of long-term flood risk and at paragraph 155, states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. One of the ways in which this is done is by carrying out a sequential test on the sites that have been promoted for development and which need to be considered as part of the LPR process.
- 2.2 The aim of the sequential test is to assess, in fine grain detail, the sites that have been promoted for development and to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding. It should be based upon data provided by an up-to-date Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). A Level 1 SFRA was completed and reported to the Local Plan Panel in November 2019 and this has been used as the basis for applying the sequential test.
- 2.3 The Council held 'Call for Sites' exercises in 2017 and 2018. These have provided a pool of sites from which the Council can select land allocations for development. Using the Level 1 SFRA, the Sequential Test appended to this report demonstrates the proportion of each site which falls within each flood zone.

- 2.4 This information is then cross checked with the table of flood risk vulnerability classification which is set out within the planning practice guidance and reproduced within the Sequential Test for reference. This table shows which types of development are appropriate in which flood zones and therefore pass the sequential test. The Sequential Test appended to this report provides the assessment results for each individual site. When selecting sites for allocation, the sites which pass should be considered first.
- 2.5 Sites which do not pass the sequential test would, in an ideal world, be discounted as potential development sites. However, if the Council's development needs cannot be met from the sites that pass the sequential test, for example due to wider sustainability issues, then sites which do not pass are applicable to the exception test (unless the proposed use is entirely incompatible with the flood zone present). The sites which would be applicable to the exception test have been shown in the Sequential Test appended to this report.
- 2.6 The exception test seeks evidence that demonstrates these sites would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk and that any development on them would be safe for its lifetime by evidencing that any risks could be mitigated. If the Council needs to consider these sites, the exception test will need to be informed by a further Level 2 SFRA which looks at the flood risk in more detail.
- 2.7 It should be noted that sequential tests are based upon flood zones which only take into account the existing risk of fluvial and tidal flooding. However, the Council will need to consider surface water flooding, and the impact of climate change on the flood zones in the future which may alter the frequency of flood events.
- 2.8 As such, and for reference, the Sequential Test appended to this report also shows the proportion of each site at risk from the 30, 100 and 1000 year surface water flooding events. If sites are selected which show such a risk, a Level 2 SFRA will again be needed to look at this risk in more detail.
- 2.9 The impacts of climate change on the flood zones in the future is already available at Appendix K of the Level 1 SFRA (link in the Background Papers section of this report). When selecting sites in the initial instance, the Sequential Test appended to this report and the existing Level 1 SFRA will need to be considered together.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposal, therefore, is that Members note the content of the Sequential Test and recommend to the Cabinet that it be published and used as part of the evidence base for the LPR.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 A sequential test is required by the NPPF and has been completed in accordance with this and the accompanying guidance set out within the planning practice

guidance. A local plan cannot proceed without it and, as such, there are no reasonable alternatives to that proposed in paragraph 3.1 above.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 No consultation has been undertaken or is proposed as this is a technical piece of evidence based on data extracted from the already published Level 1 SFRA. However, when the LPR is consulted on at the Regulation 19 stage, consultees will be able to make comments on this document if they wish to.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposals would align with: Priority 1: Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all. Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified at this stage – the work has been carried out within the Planning Policy budget.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Sustainability	The new Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Sequential Test

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 The Sequential Test has been prepared using data extracted from the Level 1 SFRA which was reported to Local Plan Panel on 27 November 2019. Links to some of the key information and maps from it can be found below.

Site Screening (Appendix K) -

https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning%20Policy%202019/Appendix_K.pdf

Flood Zones - [https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Flood%20Zones%20and%20Surface%20Water%20Functional%20Flood%20Zones-%20District%20-%20A2%20-%20\(v3\).pdf](https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Flood%20Zones%20and%20Surface%20Water%20Functional%20Flood%20Zones-%20District%20-%20A2%20-%20(v3).pdf)

Climate Change - [https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20D%20-%20Climate%20Change%20-%20District%20\(v3\).pdf%20Feb%202020.pdf](https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20D%20-%20Climate%20Change%20-%20District%20(v3).pdf%20Feb%202020.pdf)

Surface Water Flood Risk - [https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20E%20-%20Risk%20of%20Flooding%20from%20Surface%20Water%20-%20District%20\(v2\).pdf](https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20E%20-%20Risk%20of%20Flooding%20from%20Surface%20Water%20-%20District%20(v2).pdf)

Historic Flooding - [https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20A%20-%20Historic%20Flooding%20-%20District%20\(v2\).pdf](https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/SFRA%202020/2019s0345%20-%20Appendix%20A%20-%20Historic%20Flooding%20-%20District%20(v2).pdf)