Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Mapping Deliverables

London Borough of Croydon
London Borough of Merton
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Wandsworth
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Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Mapping Deliverables

As Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) for their respective administrative areas, the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth have responsibility for the planning of future development across a large part of central and south west London. One of the key considerations for delivering sustainable development is the early consideration of the risk of flooding (both now and in the future) in the plan-making process, and seeking where possible to steer new development away from areas of high flood risk. This approach is called the sequential approach and is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change (PPG).

A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is being prepared for the four London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth. The purpose of this document is to collate and analyse the most up to date and readily available flood risk information for the study area for all sources of flooding including tidal flooding, flooding from rivers, surface water, groundwater, sewers and reservoirs and artificial sources. As part of this study, data has been requested from other risk management authorities (RMAs) and partner organisations including the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth, the Environment Agency, Thames Water Utilities Ltd (TWUL), Network Rail, Transport for London (TfL), South East Rivers Trust and Sutton and East Surrey Water.

This data has been gathered and presented in mapping deliverables to provide the LPAs with an overview of flood risk issues across the study area and to enable the completion of the Sequential Test.

The Level 1 SFRA Report is currently being finalised. In the meantime, the mapping deliverables have been made available for use by the LPAs for the purpose of public consultation where required, and to ensure that developers have access to the best available information to support their planning applications, as described in the following sections.

Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea) and Updated River Wandle Modelling (2015)

The Environment Agency ‘Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)’ is the main reference for planning purposes as it contains Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 which are referred to in the NPPF. The ‘Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)’ is routinely updated and revised using the results from the Environment Agency’s programme of catchment studies, entailing topographic surveys and hydrological and/or hydraulic modelling as well as previous flood events.

In 2015 an updated modelling study for the River Wandle Catchment was completed and outputs have been provided for use within this Level 1 SFRA. The outputs deliver some amendments to the extent of flooding throughout the study area and are therefore different to the flood zones currently available on the Environment Agency ‘Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)’ available online.

The Environment Agency anticipates incorporating the outputs of the updated River Wandle Modelling Study into the ‘Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)’ in January 2016. This will include outlines for Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3.

In the meantime, LPAs require developers to use the best available information to support their planning applications and are responsible for providing appropriate justification of a flood zone reclassification (if necessary) in the evidence base for their sequential tests. As a result, these maps have been published as interim deliverables.

Furthermore, these maps also include the delineation of Flood Zone 3b Functional Floodplain for each Borough. The Functional Floodplain is defined in the NPPF as ‘land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood’. The Functional Floodplain is not separately distinguished from Flood Zone 3a on the Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea). Rather the SFRA is the place where LPAs should identify areas of Functional Floodplain in discussion with the Environment Agency.

Developers can obtain the most up to date outputs from the River Wandle Modelling Study by submitting a formal data request to the Environment Agency using the email address: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Tidal Thames Breach Modelling (2015)

In March 2015, the Thames Tidal Breach Modelling Study was completed for the Environment Agency. The purpose of this Study was to simulate a series of breach scenarios along the Thames frontage, to quantify the residual risk of tidal flooding. In total, 113 breach locations were modelled as part of this study. The results from 12 of these breach locations are of relevance to London Borough of Wandsworth and have been used to inform the assessment of tidal flood hazard.

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1 CH2M Hill, River Wandle Modelling Study, 2015.
2 CH2M Hill, March 2015, Thames Tidal Breach Modelling Study.
Interim Mapping Deliverables

The mapping deliverables are summarised below and have been grouped by borough.

These maps have been published as interim deliverables of the Level 1 SFRA. Some details of the datasets that have been used are included on the map legends. The Final Level 1 SFRA Report is due to be finalised in December 2015 / January 2016 and should be consulted for full details of the limitations and licences for the data presented in the maps.

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