

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>SuDS Strategy</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2016
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Heather Thwaites, Director for Environment

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

This guidance document sets out the long term vision for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) within the Borough with a focus on managing flood risk and improving the water environment. The use of properly designed and constructed SuDS will promote strong, resilient, sustainable communities and improve flood risk across the Borough.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the SuDS Strategy.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The SuDS Strategy sets out the long term vision for the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the Borough with a focus on managing flood risk and improving the water environment. The guidance document is designed to be used by planning officers and developers including their design teams when master planning all major developments, from the Strategic Development Location (SDL) scale, through to a ten dwelling development, to ensure surface water runoff within the development is sustainably discharged. The Strategy also provides advice to help mitigate flood risk, water quality and biodiversity concerns in the wider catchment. Within the Appendix of the Strategy is a technical guide which establishes the requirements of planning applications and discharge of condition applications in light of Wokingham Borough Council's statutory responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to comment on major developments with drainage. Together, the Strategy and Appendix include advice to developers ensuring SuDS systems are provided that can be maintained in perpetuity with minimal costs, and appropriate maintenance regimes, enforced through the planning system.

The consultation documents will be hosted on the Council's website at the following link: <http://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=129>

*[Due to the size of the Strategy a copy is not included in the agenda but is available on the Council's website or on request from Democratic Services.]*

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. Government consulted on the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) between December 2012 and March 2013. Prior to the consultation, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) was expecting to become a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approving Body (SAB) which would have placed responsibility on the Council for the approval, adoption, and maintenance of SuDS on new developments. However, as a result of the consultation, in September 2014 Government proposed making better use of the planning system to secure SuDS in new development.
- 1.2. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government laid a Written Ministerial Statement in the House of Commons on 18 December 2014 requiring all new developments to include provision for SuDS as a mechanism for managing surface water flooding. This change came into effect on 6 April 2015.
- 1.3. Under this new approach WBC, in its role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is now the statutory consultee for sustainable drainage. This means that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must be satisfied that the advice from the LLFA is incorporated into development, ensuring there is a robust flood management strategy and SUDS regime designed into the development that satisfactorily mitigates any flood risk, including clear arrangements in place for the lifetime maintenance of SuDS. This may include the use of planning conditions where appropriate.
- 1.4. The Environment Agency (EA) is no longer the statutory consultee for surface water management issues, but they retain their strategic overview role for all flood and coastal erosion management issues.
- 1.5. The aim of delivering SuDS is to reduce flood risk for communities by slowing the rate of surface water run-off and increasing infiltration, particularly at times of heavy rainfall.

## **2. Wokingham Specific SuDS Strategy**

- 2.1. Following the changes to delivering Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) through the planning system, WBC as statutory consultee for SuDS schemes on major planning applications of 10 or more dwellings, currently provides developers with a standard Pre-Application Drainage Advice Note which sets out the requirements at the Pre Application stage.
- 2.2. WBC has had a long standing commitment to consider adopting SuDS within the Borough and for this reason has drafted a Wokingham specific SuDS Strategy with attached SuDS Technical Guidance to ensure that the SuDS are designed appropriately to the local conditions found within the borough.
- 2.3. This guidance document aims to set out WBC's local requirements for sustainable drainage in the Borough and provide guidance on the suitability of the various SuDS options in different areas of the Borough. It also encourages developers to use the most appropriate options and to provide detailed maintenance regimes for these to ensure the effectiveness of the SuDS over their lifetime.
- 2.4. The SuDS Strategy is divided into 5 sections, each of which is summarised below:
  - Section 1 – includes background information about the guidance document as well as how the strategy will help to achieve the overall

vision for the Borough. It gives a description of who the document is aimed at, and an overview of what SuDS are and their benefits.

- Section 2 – provides an overview of the characteristics of Wokingham Borough that must be considered when designing, constructing and implementing SuDS, including geology, topography, hydrology, historic environment, landscape and townscape character and nature conservation.
  - Section 3 – is designed to assist with the master planning of new and re-developments within the borough. This section includes information on why particular SuDS features are needed in certain locations, where they should be used and why there is a benefit in using different types of SuDS features.
  - Section 4 – summarises the SuDS Strategy and highlights that WBC is not only looking to address flood risk and water quality issues, but also to improve the natural environment for the benefit of those that live, work, and visit the borough.
  - Appendix A – includes the Wokingham Technical Guidance which establishes the local standards to be considered by developers when submitting planning applications. This section includes requirements for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of SuDS in the borough.
- 2.5. The Strategy is primarily intended for use by developers and their consultants who are seeking guidance on the Borough Council's requirements for the design of sustainable surface water drainage in Wokingham.
- 2.6. Once the SuDS Strategy is adopted, planning applications will need to show that their proposed developments meet the requirements laid out in the document.

### **3. Benefits**

- 3.1. The SuDS Strategy helps support WBC's vision for the implementation of SuDS throughout the borough to achieve the following:
- Facilitate the regeneration of our towns and increase the vibrancy of our communities.
  - The use of well-designed SuDS in redevelopment to provide many of the aspects that create better places to live, work and play, creating better, cleaner and greener urban environments.
  - Create an environment that allows businesses to grow and thrive.
  - Sustainable management of surface water run off to ensure that flood risk to business and transport links are minimised during periods of heavy rainfall and flooding.
  - Deliver well designed development and strong communities.
- 3.2. The Strategy provides information on the planning, design and delivery of attractive and high quality SuDS schemes which should offer multiple benefits to the environment and community.
- 3.3. The Strategy will help to improve developers and their consultants understanding of the local characteristics of Wokingham Borough that must be considered when designing, constructing and implementing SuDS.
- 3.4. The guidance document directs developers towards the most suitable SuDS options for different locations across the Borough that will result in low cost

- maintenance regimes but remain effective over their life cycle.
- 3.5. The Strategy will also ensure a consistent approach is taken when providing pre-application advice, assessing proposals, developing drainage solutions for development and granting approval.

#### 4. Conclusion

- 4.1. The Strategy will ensure development is delivered in accordance with best practice relating to SuDS, and that the systems will be designed and constructed to the specific needs of the borough, leading to a reduction in flood risk.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.*

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	N/A	N/A

#### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Production of Strategy and consultation are delivered from existing service budgets

#### Cross-Council Implications

N/A

#### List of Background Papers

Flood and Water Management Act 2010  
 Wokingham Borough Council Pre Application Drainage Advice Note  
 Wokingham SuDS Strategy

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