

## **Rushcliffe Borough Council**

### **POLICY STATEMENT ON FLOOD DEFENCE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### Purpose

1. This policy statement has been prepared by Rushcliffe Borough Council to provide a public statement of the Council's approach to flood defence in its area.

##### Background

2. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has policy responsibility for flood defence in England. However, delivery is the responsibility of a number of flood defence "operating authorities" ie the Environment Agency, local authorities and internal drainage boards.
3. The Government has published a policy aim and three objectives for flood defence <sup>1</sup>. To ensure a more certain delivery of the aim and objectives by the individual operating authorities the Government has published a series of high level targets <sup>2</sup>. The first target requires each operating authority to publish a policy statement setting out their plans for delivering the Government's policy aim and objectives in their area. This will include their assessment of flooding risk in their area, and the plans for reducing or managing that risk.
4. This policy statement fulfils that requirement. Copies are available from the Council's offices at the Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5FE and on the Internet at [www.rushcliffe.gov.uk](http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk). The Council are also providing a copy to:
  - a) the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;
  - b) the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions;
  - c) the Environment Agency.
  - d) The Newark Area Internal Drainage Board, the Kingston Brook Internal Drainage Board and the Fairham Brook Internal Drainage Board.

#### **THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

5. Rushcliffe Borough Council acknowledges and supports the Government's aim and objectives for flood defence (as set out below).

*Government's policy aim: To reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding and coastal erosion by encouraging the provision of technically, environmentally and economically sound and sustainable defence measures.*

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE RISK OF FLOODING IN OUR AREA AND WHAT THE COUNCIL WILL DO TO REDUCE OR MANAGE THAT RISK**

### Flood Warning System

*Government Objective (a): To encourage the provision of adequate and cost effective flood warning systems.*

6. The provision of flood warning systems is the responsibility of the Environment Agency. However, Rushcliffe Borough Council recognises its related and important role in emergency planning and response.

### Flood defence responsibilities

*Government Objective (b): To encourage the provision of adequate, economically, technically and environmentally sound and sustainable flood defence measures.*

7. Apart from certain obligations to protect internationally important habitats under the EU Habitats Directive, all flood defence works are undertaken under permissive powers. This means that operating authorities, such as Rushcliffe Borough Council, are not obliged to carry out flood defence works. It is also important to note that the Council **does not** normally accept responsibility for maintenance of flood defences on private land; this is the responsibility of the landowner.
8. Rushcliffe Borough Council is the relevant operating authority for flood defences on ordinary watercourses, which are not within the area of an internal drainage board.
9. The flood defences that are owned or managed by the Council are detailed in Appendix A.
10. The Environment Agency is the relevant operating authority for flood defences on designated main rivers. Culverts under roads are generally the responsibility of the relevant Highways Authority (County Council or Highways Agency).

### Assessment of flood risk

11. Within the Rushcliffe Borough Council area there are numerous ordinary watercourses for which the Council is the relevant operating authority. Also within the Council's area are the River Trent, River Soar and The Greythorn Dyke between Wilford Lane and The River Trent, all of which are designated as main river and thus the responsibility of the Environment Agency. There are three internal drainage boards operating in the Council's area; Newark Area Internal Drainage Board, Kingston Brook Internal Drainage Board and the Fairham Brook Internal Drainage Board. Also running through the Council's area is the Grantham Canal, which is under the control of the British Waterways Board.

12. The Council has agreed with the Environment Agency that within the Council's area there are 2 km of "critical ordinary watercourses" (ie watercourses which are not classified as "main river" but which the Council has agreed with the Environment Agency to be "critical" because they have the potential to put at risk from flooding, large numbers of people and property). The watercourse concerned is the non-main river sections of the Greythorn Dyke through Compton Acres.
13. Based on historical flooding information, coupled with the Environment Agency's indicative flood plain maps, the Council in conjunction with the Environment Agency has carried out an assessment of the risk of flooding from the ordinary watercourses in the area. The Council is satisfied that there are minimal risks to human life created by the flood risks from ordinary watercourses, but emphasises the need for the Environment Agency's flood warnings to be heeded, where these are provided (see below).

#### Action to reduce or manage flood risks

14. The main means by which flood risks will be managed is through the Environment Agency's flood warning dissemination plan. This makes arrangements for warnings to be provided within this Council's area, including individual warnings to high-risk properties. Rushcliffe Borough Council has included plans for responding to both major and minor flooding in its emergency planning procedures and has arrangements for cascading warnings received from the Environment Agency to relevant Council services.
15. The Council has a programme in place to inspect the state of flood defences (owned by the Council) on ordinary watercourses and all critical ordinary watercourses and related culverts.
16. The Council will ensure that regular maintenance is carried out on the flood defences and channels which the Council own, or for which the Council accept responsibility, so that they operate at optimum efficiency. Where the responsibility for maintenance rests with a landowner, the Council will aim to secure co-operation in ensuring appropriate maintenance takes place, drawing on enforcement powers if necessary.

#### Development

*Government Objective (c): To discourage inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding.*

17. As the local planning authority, Rushcliffe Borough Council will take account of flooding risks in all matters relating to development, in consultation with the Environment Agency

18. By following Government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 on development in flood risk areas, the Council, acting as a local planning authority, will ensure that risks are further minimised. This includes measures for ensuring sustainable urban drainage systems to control surface water run off.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT**

19. The Council has set out its policy and approach to flood defence. The Council recognise the need to work in partnership with central Government and other operating authorities. The local population also has an important part to play, in recognising the vital importance of watercourses in controlling flood risk and the need to avoid blockages, whether by dumping rubbish or obstructing flows in other ways.
20. Rushcliffe Borough Council intends to review this policy statement in three years' time, when it will be revised and reissued as necessary. Meanwhile, the Council welcomes any comments on the approach and policies set out in this statement.

### References

Strategy for Flood and Coastal Defence in England and Wales MAFF and Welsh Office, September 1993

High Level Targets for Flood and Coastal Defence Operating Authorities and Elaboration of the Environment Agency's Flood Defence Supervisory Duty MAFF, November 1999

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **To Policy Statement on Flood Defense**

Schedule of flood storage balancing areas, flood defense embankments and critical watercourses

| <b>Location</b>                       | <b>Type</b>          | <b>Land Ownership</b>      | <b>Technical Inspection</b> | <b>Maintenance Works</b>                | <b>Comments</b>  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Broadstone Close, West Bridgford      | Wet pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills 3 monthly                  |  |
| Lyme Park, West Bridgford             | Wet pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills monthly                    |  |
| Killerton Park Drive, West Bridgford  | Dry pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills 6 monthly<br>Grass cutting |  |
| Worwood Drive, West Bridgford         | Wet pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills 3 monthly                  |  |
| Finsbury Park Close, West Bridgford   | Wet pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills 3 monthly                  |  |
| Saxondale Drive, Saxondale,           | Dry pond             | Developer                  | N/A                         | N/A                                     | May be adopted by Rushcliffe Borough Council as public open space. |
| Gotham Road, East Leake               | Dry pond             | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean grills 3 monthly                  |  |
| Boundary Road West Bridgford          | Flood bank           | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean catchpits annual                  |  |
| South of Peveril Drive West Bridgford | Flood Bank           | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean catchpits and manholes annual     |  |
|                                       |                      |                            |                             |   |  |
| Greythorn Dyke West Bridgford         | Critical Watercourse | Rushcliffe Borough Council | Annual April                | Clean 6 monthly                         |  |