

**Strategic Environmental Assessment
of the Draft Trafford Local Flood Risk
Management Strategy**

Environmental Report

Non-Technical Summary

Consultation Draft

February 2014

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	The Trafford Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	3
3.	Requirement to Undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment	4
4.	Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment	4
5.	Appraisal Results: Likely Significant Effects of the Strategy	7
6.	Difference the SEA Process has Made	8
7.	Monitoring	8
8.	How to Comment on the Environmental Report	8

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council has prepared a draft Trafford Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. This Report outlines the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft LFRMS. It forms the non-technical summary of the Environmental Report for the purposes of the SEA Regulations.
- 1.2 SEA is a systematic process used to assess the environmental impacts of implementing a plan or strategy. It also suggests ways of avoiding or reducing negative impacts.
- 1.3 This SEA appraises the potential effects on the environment of the proposed local flood risk management measures contained within the draft LFRMS and also contains an assessment of reasonable alternatives to those that have been included within the strategy.

2. THE TRAFFORD LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Trafford LFRMS provides a strategy for managing flooding in the Borough from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (those which do not form part of a main river). Specifically, the strategy:
- Identifies the flood risk management authorities in the Borough and the functions that may be exercised by those bodies;
 - Provides an assessment of local flood risk;
 - Identifies the objectives for managing local flood risk, the measures proposed to achieve those objectives, the costs and benefits of those measures and how they are expected to be implemented;
 - Outlines how the Strategy contributes towards the achievement of wider environmental objectives; and
 - Outlines how and when the Strategy will be reviewed.
- 2.2 The draft LFRMS identifies the following objectives for managing local flood risk in Trafford:
- To reduce local flood risk to existing businesses and other economic infrastructure;
 - To support the sustainable economic growth of the Borough, as part of the City Region, by ensuring that local flood risk is managed when planning new development and investment;
 - To reduce local flood risk to existing homes and social infrastructure, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation;
 - To work with local communities in improving their resilience to flooding;
 - To reduce local flood risk to existing environmental assets;
 - To enhance the landscape, townscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural heritage of the Borough.

3. REQUIREMENT TO UNDERTAKE A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 In order to ensure that new plans and strategies take into account environmental considerations, the European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a SEA of certain plans and strategies to be undertaken. The outcome of this assessment is required to be documented in an Environmental Report and made available for consultation alongside the draft plan or strategy.
- 3.2 This requirement to undertake a SEA applies to a range of plans and strategies prepared by public bodies, including the Trafford LFRMS which meets the relevant criteria in that it has the potential to have significant effects on the environment and is “prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and is required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions”.

4. OVERALL APPROACH TO STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approach adopted to undertake the SEA of the draft LFRMS was based on the process set out in the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive¹. In accordance with this guidance, the SEA comprises the following stages and tasks:

SEA Stage	Tasks
Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the Scope	A1: Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives
	A2: Collecting baseline information
	A3: Identifying environmental problems
	A4: Developing SEA objectives
	A5: Consulting on the scope of the SEA
Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects	B1: Testing the LFRMS objectives or policies against the SEA objectives
	B2: Developing strategic alternatives
	B3: Predicting the effects of the LFRMS, including alternatives
	B4: Evaluating the effects of the LFRMS, including alternatives
	B5: Mitigating adverse effects
	B6: Proposing measures to monitor the environmental effects of implementing the LFRMS
Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report	C1 : Preparing the Environmental Report
Stage D: Consulting on the draft LFRMS and the Environmental Report	D1: Consulting the public and Consultation Bodies on the LFRMS and the Environmental Report
	D2: Assessing significant changes
	D3: Making decisions and providing information
Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the LFRMS on the environment	E1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring
	E2: Responding to adverse effects

¹ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive - practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC ‘on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment’. ODPM, September 2005

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the Scope

4.2 Trafford Council undertook the first stage (Stage A) in summer 2013. As part of this process, the Council produced an SEA Scoping Report which:

- Identified and reviewed other relevant plans, programmes and strategies that may affect and influence the LFRMS;
- Set out relevant social, environmental and economic baseline information on Trafford and identified the key environmental issues or problems of relevance to the LFRMS; and
- Established an SEA Framework consisting of objectives against which the LFRMS would be appraised.

4.3 The review of plans, programmes and strategies, the analysis of the baseline data, and consultation with the public and statutory bodies enabled the following key sustainability issues to be identified:

- Life expectancy in Trafford exceeds the national average but flood risk and perceived risk of flooding can impact on physical and mental health;
- The Borough contains a number of sites that have been designated for their biodiversity value, including two Sites of Special Scientific Interest, a number of Sites of Biological Importance and several species and habitats that are protected through the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Trafford faces a considerable challenge in dealing with its legacy of contaminated land;
- Trafford contains the majority (76%) of the Grade 2 agricultural land in Greater Manchester;
- Trafford is within an area of relatively low water stress;
- Flood risk is a significant issue for the Borough;
- Trafford has levels of unemployment that are lower than the national average but there are parts of the Borough where deprivation is a serious issue;
- Trafford has a network of roads, rail, tram and bus services, which are an essential part of the infrastructure underpinning economic stability and growth;
- Overall per capita greenhouse gas emissions in Trafford exceed the national average;
- Large parts of Trafford are more vulnerable than the national average to both flood risk and risk associated with heat waves, both of which are predicted to be exacerbated by climate change;
- Trafford contains a wide number of designated heritage assets; and
- There are no designated landscapes within Trafford but the Borough does contain areas of important green infrastructure.

4.4 Drawing upon these sustainability issues, the SEA Scoping Report identified twelve SEA objectives that will form the basis for evaluating the effects of implementing the LFRMS. These objectives are listed in the table below:

OBJECTIVE NO.	SEA OBJECTIVE
1	Minimise the probability and consequences of flooding
2	Minimise the probability and consequences of climate change
3	Maintain and where possible enhance the quality of water resources, water bodies and their environment
4	Maintain and where possible enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and soils
5	Protect and where possible enhance the landscape and green infrastructure
6	Protect and where possible enhance townscapes and cultural heritage
7	Ensure the efficient use of land
8	Protect and enhance the health and well-being of the population
9	Support the sustainable growth of the City Region
10	Minimise economic and social exclusion for all
11	Protect existing and future economic and social infrastructure and assets, services and amenities and encourage economic investment and growth
12	Maintain and where possible enhance the transport network for all users

Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects

- 4.5 The projects contained within the draft LFRMS have been appraised against the twelve SEA objectives identified by the Scoping Report. This appraisal applied a scoring system to rank the effects of implementing the projects which ranged from major positive to neutral through to major negative and degrees between.
- 4.6 In accordance with Annex 1 of SEA Regulations, this appraisal also considered the timescale of impact, split by short term (0-5 years), medium term (5-10 years), and long-term (10 or more years). It predicted the certainty of impact (in terms of high, medium and low); the scale of impact (which ranged from local to national); and the permanence of the impact. The appraisal also sought to identify key secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic impacts; and suggested options for mitigation.
- 4.7 In addition to undertaking an appraisal of the projects contained within the draft LFRMS, the SEA Regulations require an assessment to be undertaken of reasonable alternatives. Given that the Section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires Trafford Council to produce a strategy for managing Local Flood Risk, the option of not producing a strategy is not considered to be a reasonable alternative and has therefore not been assessed.
- 4.8 A series of options and potential projects were developed as part of the preparation of the draft LFRMS. These options and projects were reviewed by Trafford Council's internal steering group and a number were subsequently discounted from the strategy, primarily due to concerns that it would not be feasible to implement them. These discounted projects are also not assessed in the Environmental Report as they are not considered to constitute reasonable alternatives for the purpose of the SEA Regulations due to them being either unrealistic or undeliverable.

- 4.9 In order to ensure that reasonable alternatives were considered in the SEA process, the Environmental Report does however include an appraisal of the projects contained within the draft LFRMS and also the alternative option of not including the project within the strategy.
- 4.10 A summary of the likely significant effects of implementing the draft LFRMS and the reasonable alternatives considered is provided in Section 5 below.

Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report

- 4.11 This report is the non-technical summary of the Environmental Report, which is the output of Stage C of the SEA process.

Stage D: Consulting on the draft LFRMS and the Environmental Report

- 4.12 The Environmental Report is being published alongside the draft LFRMS to provide the public, statutory consultees and other stakeholders with an opportunity to express opinions on the findings of the SEA and to use it as a reference point whilst commenting on the LFRMS. This period of public consultation will commence in February 2014. Details on how to comment on the Environmental Report are provided in Section 8.

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the LFRMS on the environment

- 4.13 Proposals for monitoring the significant effects of the LFRMS are detailed in Section 7 of this report.

5. APPRAISAL RESULTS: LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The SEA process concluded that the draft LFRMS has the potential to deliver a wide range of environmental benefits. Specifically, it has highlighted that each of the proposed projects could have a major positive effect on the objectives that relate to minimising the probability and consequences of flooding and minimising the probability and consequences of climate change; and some positive impact on the objective of protecting and enhancing the health and well-being of the population.
- 5.2 The SEA process also indicated that none of the projects are likely to have a negative impact on any of the SEA objectives and that implementing the proposed projects would have a more positive impact on the SEA objectives than the alternative option of not including the project within the strategy.
- 5.3 The SEA has however highlighted that the proposed project which seeks to improve the resilience of local communities to flooding would have an uncertain impact on the objective that relates to protecting townscapes and cultural heritage. This is due to the fact that although the proposed project could reduce the impacts of flooding on heritage assets and townscapes, the implementation of certain flood resilience measures could potentially detract from townscapes and the setting of heritage assets. As such, the proposed project would have an uncertain impact on the objective of protecting townscapes and cultural heritage.

6. DIFFERENCE THE SEA PROCESS HAS MADE

- 6.1 The SEA has informed the decision about the inclusion of schemes in the draft LFRMS. In particular, it has indicated that none of the projects are likely to have a negative impact on any of the SEA objectives and has demonstrated that implementing the proposed projects would have a more positive impact on the SEA objectives than the alternative option of not including the project within the strategy.
- 6.2 The SEA has however highlighted that the proposed project which seeks to improve the resilience of local communities to flooding would have an uncertain impact that relates to protecting townscapes and cultural heritage. This is due to the fact that although the proposed project could reduce the impacts of flooding on heritage assets and townscapes, the implementation of certain flood resilience measures could potentially detract from townscapes and the setting of heritage assets. The SEA has therefore highlighted that it will be important to consider the impact of flood resilience measures on townscapes and cultural heritage when implementing this project.

7. MONITORING

- 7.1 There is a statutory requirement under the SEA Directive to monitor the significant environmental impacts of implementing the LFRMS. A series of indicators for monitoring the effects of implementing the LFRMS are presented in the Environmental Report.
- 7.2 The monitoring of the environmental effects of implementing the LFRMS will be undertaken by Trafford Council and a report published as necessary. This monitoring will utilise data collated for the Council's Annual Monitoring Report together with information provided by other agencies. If any adverse effects are identified during the monitoring of the LFRMS it is recommended that a review of the strategy should follow.

8. HOW TO COMMENT ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

- 8.1 The Environmental Report will be subject to public consultation alongside the Trafford LFRMS commencing in February 2014. Comments are invited on the contents of the report, in terms of the appraisal methodology and the accuracy of the assessment of the likely significant effects of the strategy.
- 8.2 Comments should be submitted either by post or email to:

Strategic Planning & Developments
Trafford Town Hall
Talbot Road
Stretford
Greater Manchester
M32 0TH

E-mail: strategic.planning@trafford.gov.uk.

- 8.3 All responses received will be reviewed and taken into consideration for the next stage of appraisal process. This will involve a SEA being undertaken on the final version of the Trafford LFRMS.