

**From:** [Swain, Chris](#)  
**To:** [Michael Burton](#); [Swindale, Rhiannon](#)  
**Cc:** ["Josie Bateman"](#); ["Tara-Leigh McVey"](#)  
**Subject:** RE: East Northants Level 2 SFRA  
**Date:** 14 December 2012 17:23:50

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Michael,

Thank you for inviting comments on the proposed amended text on 23 November.

I can confirm that on the whole this addresses our substantive concerns, but some further clarification would be helpful to take forward the Oundle sites.

Our comments on section 6 were suggestions so we are not overly concerned that the section remains as it was.

For Oundle Marina, Barnwell Road and Dairy Farm (Oundle) we support the inclusion of our advice on completion of a level 2 study. This should inform the sites redevelopment and the weight that can be applied to the recently adopted RNOTP policies 21 and OUN3(3) respectively.

We think that to avoid any reasonable doubt by developers, new text should clarify that the RNOTP was prepared and examined before the Level 1 and Level 2 FRAs conception, to make it more obvious that the SFRA was not a material consideration in its adoption (some years after the plans examination).

We look forward to working with ENC on a bespoke level 2 study that could make recommendations on what parts of policy 21 are deliverable, or suggest any other potential options as could inform future masterplans or development plans. We hope that this makes the sites regeneration a more certain process for investors and partners to work together on a suitable scheme. Have you got a timescale or budget for this work on the horizon?

The Environment Agency is not yet able to view the final document on project space, so I have asked Tara to refresh me with the link and password. We should be able to provide confirmation (or a position statement) on the final document in January.

As an illustration of a sequential test process for the AAPs / site allocations plans, I can suggest that the Peterborough CC Site Allocations DPD contains an example that I found to be well laid out and clear to understand.

With regards

Chris

Chris Swain MRTPI | Principal Planning Adviser | Environment Agency  
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Awarded to the Environment Planning and Engagement Department, Northern Area, Anglian Region

Have your say on how we can work together to improve the water environment through our Working Together consultation. You can view and respond to the consultation here <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/ho/wfd/working/together2012>.

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**From:** Michael Burton [mailto:mburton@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 23 November 2012 14:28  
**To:** Swain, Chris; Swindale, Rhiannon

**Cc:** 'Josie Bateman'; 'Tara-Leigh McVey'  
**Subject:** FW: East Northants Level 2 SFRA

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Hi Chris/ Rhiannon

Just to let you know, I have been in discussion with Tara (URS) regarding the slightly tricky matter regarding the outstanding issues around the Level 2 SFRA; namely the document's approach to the Sequential Test and Oundle Marina.

I have redrafted the relevant sections, which (hopefully) address your concerns as to the scope of the document etc.

Also, URS have placed the final draft version of the document on their "Project Space" site.

As we discussed, if you need your password resetting, please let Tara know.

Please let me know if you have any further queries in respect of my draft text.

Best wishes.

Mike Burton  
Senior Planning Policy Officer  
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**From:** Michael Burton  
**Sent:** 13 November 2012 13:58  
**To:** 'Tara-Leigh McVey'  
**Cc:** Michael Timmins  
**Subject:** RE: East Northants Level 2 SFRA  
**Importance:** High

Hi Tara

I hope you are good this morning.

I write with reference to your email below and our discussions yesterday. I have now considered the EA comments in detail and examined how the draft Level 2 SFRA may be revised in order to address these concerns.

I have used the EA's comments in order to revise and expand upon the draft in order to clarify matters re the scope of the Level 2 SFRA. The attachment contains my suggestions for text revisions which I feel would address the EA's concerns.

As discussed, it would be useful for you to incorporate my suggested text revisions

into the final draft version of the document (I have reviewed the text myself and consider that it does, indeed, fit into the draft document). I hope that these are clearly set out and explained in the attachment. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me further so that we can address/ overcome these between ourselves.

I have not, as yet, circulated this suggested text revision to the wider audience (specifically the EA) at this stage. I am confident that it addresses their concerns and provides sufficient clarification as to the purpose of the Level 2 SFRA and how this integrates with the Sequential Test/ Exception Test requirements.

That way we can (hopefully) ensure that the report can now be signed off and published on the website, along with any subsequent feedback from the EA. Meanwhile, in the new year I can look to prepare a more systematic Sequential Test in order to address the specific NPPF/ PPS25 requirements.

Best wishes.

Mike Burton  
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**From:** Tara-Leigh McVey [<mailto:Tara-Leigh.McVey@Urs.com>]  
**Sent:** 22 October 2012 08:22  
**To:** Michael Burton  
**Cc:** Sarah Littlewood  
**Subject:** East Northants Level 2 SFRA

Dear Michael,

I have a note in my diary to touch base with you this week to confirm how we are going to close out the four outstanding questions on the East Northants Level 2 SFRA (see below):

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**EA Comments**

***1. "As an overall observation, we are unable to find evidence that the sequential test has been carried out for the sites in the Level SFRA. To its credit, the Level 2 SFRA gives pages of guidance on the importance of carrying out a sequential and exception test, but stops short of doing it or referring to where this has been done. We advise that the sequential test data is provided or this reference removed and the SFRA makes it very clear in all relevant sections that the sequential tests are still to be carried out and that the inclusion of the sites in no way infers their acceptability in principle. The level 1 SFRA recommended (in 9.1) that a list of sites are looked at further in a Level 2 assessment if they pass a sequential test. The Level 1 did not include the test. It would be irregular to go to the effort and expense of assessing Level 2 sites without first having demonstrated whether, in principle, development could be located elsewhere. The site assessments in section 6 go straight into the sequential approach which misses out a key stage of the hierarchy: the test itself. We advise that it is absolutely critical to carry out this stage to progress any of the sites".***

***URS: We were under the impression that the Sequential Test has been carried out prior to the commissioning of the Level 2 SFRA. Can Michael Burton provide clarification (and if necessary***

**provide evidence of the ST process).**

**2. "Please correct this. The Oundle Marina site has not been assessed with a FRA because an interested developer decided not to progress with a scheme on the site. The EA has recommended that the site be included within a Level 2 SFRA given the flood risks and policy conflicts. ENC has decided that the site is outside the scope of the Level 2 SFRA. The EA has advised ENC to carefully consider whether it is reasonable to continue to indirectly promote the site through the adopted development plan in view of flood risks and policy conflicts with PPS25 [and now the NPPF]. We are concerned that there is a risk manifest that developers and others promoting development could generate abortive and inappropriate effort working up a scheme compatible with the RNOT plan but that conflicts in principle with a government policy that is more up to date than the adopted development plan. To help off-set this risk, we recommend that a level 2 study is carried out for the Marina and Dairy Farm site. In the interim, we recommend that this SFRA sign posts developers to have early pre-application discussions with ENC and EA to address policy and delivery issues. The SFRA report is in an excellent position to recommend that a level 2 SFRA of the site is carried out for the site, given that site specific FRA information did not materialise".**

**Michael Burton's comment on this same paragraph was: Final sentence - replace as follows: "However, these sites are already allocated for development through the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP), the site specific development plan document covering the area of the District north of the A14. Accordingly, ENC and the Environment Agency (EA) agreed that it was not necessary to undertake a Level 2 SFRA for these sites, although these would still require site specific FRAs to accompany any planning application."**

**URS Response: There seems to be some disagreement between the EA and ENC - we will need clarification on how to refer to this site in the Level 2 SFRA.**

**3. "This is quite a technical report. We suggest that the methodology sections are moved to the appendices. The main body of the report should concentrate on results and appropriate uses for sites".**

**URS Response: Michael Burton to confirm whether his is satisfied with the current format of the report. Keeping the document as it is prevents unnecessary repetition. If a full reformat is requested this will additional fees to rework the document?**

**4. "Section 6 is very wordy and we feel it would be beneficial to tabulate the modelling results to show the risk of flooding for each site during the modelled events as well as the residual risk. For example, some of the report discusses the 1% event for sites and for others, the 0.1% event is discussed, which can be confusing. Tabulating the information would particularly be useful it highlighting 'at a glance' this risk to each site and would enable a comparison between sites to be made.**

**All the figures in this section (Section 6) would benefit from showing flood extents or flood hazards".**

**URS Response: Michael Burton to confirm whether his is satisfied with the current format of Section 6. Additional fees will be required for document re-working as recommended by the EA? The figures in this section are just to locate the site; the whole suite of figures in Appendix A should be referred to when reading Section 6.**

We need to take a decision hopefully this week as our main modeller on the project, Sarah

Littlewood, is leaving on maternity leave next week and she would like to close it out before her last day. She has undertaken all the other edits and it is ready for issue once these are addressed.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards, Tara

***Please note the new contact details below.***

**Tara-Leigh (Eggiman) McVey** BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIWEM C.WEM CEnv CSci  
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