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Environment Agency

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Householder and other minor extensions in Flood Zones 2 and 3

This guidance is for domestic extensions; and non-domestic extensions where the additional footprint created by the development does not exceed 250 square metres. It should NOT be applied if an additional dwelling is being created. If an additional dwelling is being created e.g. a granny flat or a self contained annex, consult the Environment Agency.

We recommend that:

Planning Authorities

1) Refer the applicant to the standing advice pages on the Environment Agency website or provide them with a copy of this page for them to include as part of the planning application submission.
2) Check the planning application to ensure that one or other of the mitigation measures from the table below has been incorporated.

Applicants complete the table below and include it with the planning application submission. The table, together with the supporting evidence, will form the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and will act as an assurance to the Local Planning Authority that flood risk issues have been adequately addressed.

Applicant to choose one or other of the flood mitigation measures below	**Applicant to provide the LPA with the supporting Information detailed below as part of their FRA**	**Applicant to indicate their choice in the box below. Enter 'yes' or 'no'**
Either ; Floor levels within the proposed development will be set no lower than existing levels AND, flood proofing of the proposed development has been incorporated where appropriate.	Details of any flood proofing / resilience and resistance techniques, to be included in accordance with *`Improving the flood performance of new dwellings'* CLG (2007)	YES.
Or; Floor levels within the extension will be set 300mm above the known or modelled 1 in 100 annual probability river flood (1%) or 1 in 200 annual probability sea flood (0.5%) in any year. This flood level is the extent of the Flood Zones	This must be demonstrated by a plan that shows finished floor levels relative to the known or modelled flood level. All levels should be stated in relation to Ordnance Datum[1]	

Subterranean/basement extensions

Due to the risk of rapid inundation by floodwater; basements should be avoided in areas at risk of flooding. The LPA may hold additional guidance for basement extensions.

Self-contained basement dwellings are `Highly Vulnerable' development and should not be permitted in flood zone 3. We are fundamentally opposed to these developments.

Continued...

[1] Ordnance Datum or the abbreviation 'OD' is the mean level of the sea at Newlyn in Cornwall from which heights above sea level are taken. The contour lines on Ordnance Survey maps measure heights above OD for example, though these are not accurate enough for a flood risk assessment..

Cumulative impact of minor extensions and the removal of Permitted Development rights.

PPS25 paragraph D16 highlights the potential for the cumulative impact of minor extensions to have a significant effect on flood risk. Where local knowledge (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment held by the LPA/information provided by the parish council) suggests this is the case the guidance contained in FRA guidance note 2 should be applied[2]. FRA guidance note 2 can also be applied where permitted development rights have been removed for flood risk reasons. The Environment Agency does not usually comment on minor development in this category.

Permeable paving and changes to permitted development rights for householders

On the 1st October 2008 the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) in England was amended by the Government (Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 2362).

One of the changes introduced by the GPDO amendment is the removal of permitted development rights for householders wishing to install hard surfacing in front gardens which exceeds 5 square meters (i.e. 1m x 5 m) without making provision to ensure permeability. This means that use of traditional materials, such as impermeable concrete, where there is no facility in place to ensure permeability, requires an application for planning permission.

In order to help and advise householders of the options for achieving permeability and meeting the condition for permitted development status the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has produced guidance on permeable paving which can be found on the following link http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pavingfrontgardens.

The Environment Agency support this change to the GPDO as it is in line with the recommendations of the Pitt Report regarding the need to better tackle the impact of surface water flooding. However, Local Planning Authorities should determine these applications in accordance with the CLG guidance **without** consulting the Environment Agency.

End of comment