



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref MA-JJ-3967-21

To
All Local Authority Chief Executives
All Local Planning Authority Heads of Planning

23 November 2021

Dear colleagues

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development, flooding and coastal erosion

Flooding is the clearest evidence of the impact of climate change on Wales. The threat is already present and will increase in both severity and frequency, with a predicted sea level rise of approximately 1.11 metres and an increase in rainfall intensity causing increased peak river flows of between 20% and 30% by 2120. In response to climate change the Welsh Government and many local authorities have declared climate change emergencies.

Given the immediate and serious challenges posed by the climate emergency, a 'business as usual' approach to delivering for our communities and economy is no longer a viable option. Taking meaningful action to address climate change will mean taking difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions. For anyone who remains unconvinced, the COP26 summit has demonstrated the severity of the worldwide situation, and the need for practical actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt to its inevitable consequences.

The planning system is at the forefront of responding to the climate emergency and ensuring the well-being of current and future generations. The decisions local planning authorities make today will have a profound effect on how we adapt to climate change now and in the future. To ensure the planning system plays a full part in adaptation to climate change a new version of TAN 15 was made available on 28 September 2021, in advance of its coming into effect and formal publication on 1 December. The new TAN 15 is accompanied by the Flood Map for Planning, which builds on the Flood Risk Assessment Wales map and includes allowances for climate change. On their publication, they will replace the 2004 version of TAN 15 and the Development Advice Map (which does not include climate change allowances), as well as Technical Advice Note 14: Coastal Planning.

TAN 15 and the Flood Map for Planning take us in the right direction, towards a more resilient society and economy. It is particularly important that we protect homes from flooding, when we know the devastating impact it can have on health and well-being. This Government is committed to protecting more than 45,000 homes at risk of flooding this term, while planning policy and decisions will determine whether or not new homes are placed in areas at risk of flooding.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Flood Map for Planning represents a markedly different context for planning decisions compared to the existing framework which must inform the planning system. The new TAN has the potential to impact on a variety of development schemes at different stages of the planning process. These include flood defence schemes whose funding is reliant on gaining planning permission this financial year, and projects that support town centres to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

To enable local planning authorities to consider fully the impact of the climate change projections on their respective areas, I am **suspending the coming into force of the new TAN 15 and Flood Map for Planning until 1st June 2023**. The existing TAN 15, published in 2004, and the Development Advice Map will continue in the meantime as the framework for assessing flood risk.

Policy 8 of *Future Wales – the national plan 2040* provides the context for local authorities to consider the impact of flooding on national and regional growth areas and devise appropriate mitigation strategies. It is imperative that local planning authorities use the suspension to develop a more detailed understanding of the consequences of flooding, and therefore **I require every local planning authority to complete work to review, within the next 12 months, the Strategic Flood Consequences Assessments (SFCAs) for their area, either individually or on a regional basis**. I also require each local authority, working in partnership with other flood risk management authorities where appropriate to identify a pipeline of priority flood risk management schemes to address flood risk and vulnerability, as well as an assessment and specific assurances on the effective delivery of SuDS Approval Body functions. This work must be informed by the Flood Map for Planning and a full range of climate change projections to provide a finer grain assessment of the consequences of flooding, identify appropriate mitigations and to refine the Flood Map through the map challenge process. I will be setting in place a mechanism by which progress on the review of SFCAs is monitored within the timeframe set out above. There will be no further extension to the coming into force date for the TAN beyond June 2023 and, to be clear the new Flood Map for Planning will form the basis of the TAN at that time.

The outcome of this work should be that every local authority considers options and identifies its preferred ways to adapt to increased flood risks caused by climate change. In addition to the potential need for flood management schemes to which I refer above, local authorities may need to consider relocation of infrastructure, site specific resilience measures or new green infrastructure

The Chief Planner and Deputy Director of Water, Flood and Coal Tip Safety will be writing to you again shortly, setting out the procedural implications of this letter in the context of development plan, development management processes, and flood risk management delivery.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change