FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE INFORMATION CHECK LIST – APPLICATION STAGE

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This checklist should be submitted to support all planning applications in Mid Sussex District where flood risk or drainage issues are relevant. It reflects national policy, Environment Agency Standing Advice, the National standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) (Defra, June 2025), and the Mid Sussex District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2024 or as updated).

This checklist is designed to support applicants within the planning process provide the information required by the flood risk and drainage team for them to provide a consultation response. This is not the complete planning validation list, however much of the information is also included with the validation list.

The level of detail provided to address each information point should reflect the scale and complexity of the development.

Receipt of this information does not guarantee the flood risk and drainage team will support an application or does it prevent a request for further information. It does, however, ensure the team has sufficient information to undertake a full review and provide detailed consultation response.

Applicants should complete this checklist to confirm whether the required information has been provided to support validation. If applicants are unsure what information or level of detail is required, we strongly encourage early engagement with the flood risk and drainage team through a pre-application enquiry.

This checklist should be completed by the applicant or their consultant and submitted in support of the planning application. In the right-hand column, you should cross-reference where in your submission each item is addressed (e.g. report name, page number, or drawing reference). Failure to address mandatory items may result in your application being or delayed.

All Flood Risk Assessments and Drainage Strategies should be prepared and signed off by a suitably qualified and experienced professional, such as a qualified flood risk consultant, drainage engineer, or practitioner with demonstrable experience, with appropriate knowledge of current national policy and local SFRA requirements.

SECTION A: SITE AND APPLICATION DETAILS

Requirement	**Stated Value (if applicable)**	**Reference (Drawing / Report Section)**
Application reference number		
Site address		
Easting/Northing coordinates		
Site area (hectares) / number of units		
Description of existing development		
Description of proposed development		
Existing and proposed site plans / elevation plans		

Block plan (to scale)		
Evidence demonstrating that the Sequential Test, and where applicable the Exception Test, have been applied, and successfully met, in the selection of the site (See section E below).		
Information on the expected lifetime of the proposed development and how that figure was estimated.		
Existing and proposed vulnerability classification (as per Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification)		

SECTION B: FLOOD RISK SCREENING

All sites must be screened against flood risk datasets to determine whether a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Sequential and/or Exception Test are required.

Applicants must use the Mid Sussex District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2024 or as updated), the latest Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, and the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) dataset to determine the site's flood zone, surface water risk, and any mapped functional floodplain or climate change overlays. This includes identifying whether any part of the site, access and escape route lies in:

- Flood Zone 2, 3a, or 3b (as defined by SFRA and EA data);
- High surface water flood risk areas (>3.3% AEP);
- Locations affected by future flood zones under climate change scenarios.

The SFRA mapping and guidance must be used as the primary evidence base when screening the site.

Useful data sources include:

- Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk
- Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map: https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk
- MSDC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024 or as updated): https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/flood-risk-and-drainage-for-planning/ and SFRA Interactive Web Maps
- Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-classification

Requirement	**Stated Value (if applicable)**	**Reference (Drawing / Report Section)**
Fluvial Flood Zone (EA flood map for planning)		
Surface water flood risk (EA risk mapping & SFRA Interactive Web Maps)		
Site located in SFRA Interactive Web Maps-defined Flood Zone 3b or future Flood Zone?		
Historic flooding at the site (also refer to SFRA Interactive Web Maps)		
Climate change allowances for fluvial and surface water flood risk (2023 EA uplift)		
Information on the predicted depth and level for the design flood level for all relevant sources of flood risk		
Design plans showing floor levels relative to predicted flood depths (fluvial and / or surface water) with appropriate freeboard levels.		
Groundwater flood risk		

Sewer flood risk		
Reservoir flood risk		
Evidence demonstrating that the proposed development and flood mitigation measures will not increase flood risk outside of the development site		
Evidence demonstrating that the proposed methods will reduce flood risk at the site		
Information on the proposed resistance and / or resilience method(s) to address predicted flood depths (fluvial and / or surface water).		
Full information on the flood warning / alert and emergency plan designed for the proposed site, including egress and access, evacuation plans, and mitigation measures		
Details of how the risks will be managed over the development's lifetime, providing information on flood resilient / resistant designs and emergency planning.		

SECTION C: SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

Applicants should provide a basic drainage strategy demonstrating that surface water drainage is achievable in principle, including the proposed discharge destination, outline SuDS layout, and confirmation of site constraints. All attenuation features are required to be located within the application boundary, whilst conveyance of surface water may be permissible outside of the application boundary.

The surface water drainage strategy must follow the drainage hierarchy set out in national guidance and the West Sussex LLFA Policy:

1. Infiltration (to ground)
2. Discharge to a watercourse
3. Discharge to a surface water sewer
4. Discharge to a combined sewer

Applicants should provide evidence that each higher-tier option has been properly assessed and, if not feasible, ruled out with justification.

BRE 365 infiltration testing is not required at this stage unless infiltration is proposed as the sole method of surface water disposal, with no secondary discharge route (e.g. to watercourse or sewer). In such cases, site-specific infiltration testing must be undertaken and submitted to justify the proposed drainage strategy.

Applicants who wish to avoid pre-commencement drainage conditions altogether are strongly encouraged to follow this checklist and the Detailed Drainage Design Technical Summary and Detailed Drainage Design Checklist at planning application stage.

Providing full drainage details with the initial submission increases the likelihood that conditions can be avoided, and allows drainage issues to be resolved earlier in the design process. This proactive approach promotes confidence in the deliverability of the drainage strategy and minimises delays later in the planning process. Applications that do not include full detailed design will be expected to discharge this matter post-permission via condition.

Requirement	**Stated Value (if applicable)**	**Reference (Drawing / Report Section)**
Details on the site's existing surface water drainage arrangements		
Proposed method of surface water drainage		

Evidence all attenuation features are inside the application boundary		
Evidence of infiltration feasibility (mapping/tests) — e.g. BGS mapping or BRE365 site-specific tests		
Groundwater levels		
Contaminated Land		
Surface water drainage constraints plan (e.g. RPZs, buffers, utilities, topography, sufficient offsets)		
Drainage strategy plan showing SuDS layout and discharge points (including above- and below-ground features)		
Drainage calculations provided that demonstrate design standard met (1 in 100-year + climate change) — include storm duration and EA uplift applied. A CV value of 1.0 and an Urban Creep allowance, where applicable.		
Outfall agreed in principle by water/sewer authority (if relevant)		
Management & Maintenance Plan		

SECTION D: FOUL WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

At application stage, the applicant should demonstrate that foul water drainage can be achieved in principle, including the intended disposal method (e.g. mains sewer or non-mains system) and confirmation of relevant constraints.

Where a non-mains system is proposed, applicants must state how the proposal complies with the Environment Agency's General Binding Rules.

Full technical evidence — such as pump design, capacity checks, or foul infiltration field testing — will be required at the condition discharge stage and must meet the criteria set out in the Detailed Drainage Design Technical Summary and Detailed Drainage Design Checklist.

Requirement	**Stated Value (if applicable)**	**Reference (Drawing / Report Section)**
Details on the site's existing foul water drainage arrangements		
Proposed foul drainage method		
Public sewer records included		
Drainage constraints plan		
Drainage strategy plan		
Management & Maintenance Plan		
If using non-mains drainage, EA General Binding Rules compliance statement		

SECTION E: SEQUENTIAL AND EXCEPTION TEST EVIDENCE

The Sequential Test is required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024, paragraph 172), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, updated August 2022), and the Mid Sussex District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2024 or as updated). It must be applied to all planning applications for any proposed building, access and escape route, land-raising or other vulnerable element for:

- Development in Flood Zones 2 or 3, including residential, commercial, and mixed-use proposals, unless explicitly exempt;
- Development in Flood Zone 1 where the SFRA or other datasets identify increased flood risk from any source — including surface water, groundwater, sewer or reservoir flooding;
- Development within Flood Zone 1 and the flood map for planning shows it is at risk of flooding from surface water;
- Any part of a site falling within or adjacent to Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) and development is not incompatible, as defined by the SFRA;
- Development within Flood Zone 1 and the flood map for planning shows it is at increased risk of flooding from rivers or sea during its lifetime.

Important: In accordance with the Mid Sussex District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2024 or as updated), all land within Flood Zone 3 should be treated as Zone 3b unless robust fluvial modelling or other site-specific evidence demonstrates otherwise. However, areas identified as 'high risk' in the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping — i.e. those with >3.3% annual probability — do not automatically fall within Zone 3b. These are based on different datasets and assumptions and should be assessed separately in the Flood Risk Assessment.

Applicants must consider both present-day and future flood risk, incorporating climate change allowances across all sources.

The applicant must demonstrate whether the Sequential Test applies and provide a supporting assessment if so.

If required, the Sequential Test must include a defined search area as agreed with the Local Planning Authority, a table of alternative sites, and justification for the site's selection based on flood risk and policy compatibility, in line with Mid Sussex District Council guidance.

If the Exception Test is triggered, both parts must be addressed:

- Wider sustainability benefits aligned with local policy

- Demonstration that the development will be safe for its lifetime and not increase flood risk elsewhere, supported by the Flood Risk Assessment

See Mid Sussex District Council's "Applicant Guidance Note: Applying the Sequential and Exception Tests for Windfall Sites" for full submission expectations.

Exemptions from the Sequential Test apply only to:

- Householder development (no new dwellings);
- Minor non-domestic extensions (<250m^2);
- Changes of use (except to highly vulnerable uses like caravan parks);
- Sites allocated through the adopted or submission District Plan, where flood risk has not materially changed.

Requirement	Stated Value (if applicable)	Reference (Drawing / Report Section)
Sequential Test required		
Sequential Test evidence submitted		
Exception Test required		
Exception Test evidence submitted		

SECTION F: SUPPORTING TECHNICAL EVIDENCE

Requirement	Stated Value (if applicable)	Reference (Drawing / Report Section)
Topographic survey with ground and finished floor levels		
Flood modelling outputs (if FRA uses bespoke modelling)		
Maps of flood hazard, depth, and velocity		
SuDS design summary (for major developments — WSCC LLFA SuDS Proforma should be completed where applicable)		
Drainage calculations		
Management and maintenance plan		
Contaminated Land report		

SECTION G: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Requirement	Stated Value (if applicable)	Reference (Drawing / Report Section)
Evidence of flood risk permit / consent for proposed development, if applicable (from the EA (Flood Risk Activity Permit) or an Ordinary Watercourse Consent from the LLFA)		
Outfall and discharge rate agreed in principle by water/sewer authority (if relevant)		