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# **FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Provided in Respect of Land at  
Beech House, Ducklington Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire. OX28 4JF  
The Subject of an Outline Planning Application for  
The Erection of 14 Flats.**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION.**

- 1.1 The Flood Zone Map on the Environment Agency Web Site at 1:20000 scale, indicated that the edge of the flood plain coincided with the eastern boundary of the application site and a postcode enquiry confirmed that Beech House was not within the flood plain. Although Beech House itself is clear of the flood plain a more detailed flood map at 1:1250 provided by the local planning authority, also attached, confirms that the flood plain does marginally overlap the site's eastern boundary.
- 1.2 This triggers the need for a Flood Risk Assessment as advised in PPG25, "Development and Flood Risk," and this statement is provided in accordance with Environment Agency FRA Guidance Note 3 and the information set out in the Cherwell and West Oxfordshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Reference is also made to the Witney Flood Report of May 2008, which examined the flood event in July 2007.
- 1.3 This assessment supersedes the comments on land drainage made in paragraphs 3.11 – 3.13 in the evaluation section of the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application.

## **2. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE.**

- 2.1 The eastern boundary of the site runs roughly parallel to Emma's Dyke, which is part of the River Windrush main river drainage system and runs between 65 and 70 metres to the east of the site boundary with its western margin defined as Zone 3 on the attached Flood Map. The Site Location and Drainage Plan

accompanying the application, shows an existing land drain running from the south east corner of the site to an outfall where it joins Emma's Dyke. The Witney Flood Report defines this as a WODC Ditch reference 0.5 with the outfall at the side of Culvert 12. That Report also confirms that 428 metres of WODC Ditches have been cleared since the July 2007 flood event and it is evident that this section of Emma's Dyke was included.

- 2.2 A close examination of the site reveals the presence of a 5 metre wide dry ditch within the site boundary, which is now largely overgrown with trees and undergrowth. This depression together with a slight hollow in the north east corner of the site, go to explain why the flood plain overlaps this part of the application area. From this point the site slopes markedly upwards towards the frontage with Ducklington Lane.
- 2.3 By reference to the detailed flood map for the Ducklington Lane area provided by the Environment Agency on record in the planning file reference 08/0704/P/FP, involving the recent development of the adjoining Lidl Food Store, it is possible to confirm that the full extent of the modelled flood plain boundary line runs along an AOD level of 78.89 metres. It therefore follows that the remainder of the site to the west of this line is above this level and not in the flood plain.

### **3. THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.**

- 3.1 The planning proposal is an Outline Planning Application for the development of the site to provide residential accommodation in the form of 14 flats with all details of siting, design, access and landscaping details reserved for further approval by the submission of Reserved Matters applications. Nevertheless, in order to justify the form of development that can be satisfactorily accommodated on the site, especially in terms of numbers of dwellings proposed, it is necessary to provide illustrative drawings that indicate the development principles as part of a Design and Access Statement.
- 3.2 As the Design Component of the Statement makes clear, these illustrative drawings do not form part of any subsequent Outline

Approval, and to that extent are hypothetical at this stage of the planning process except as to define the development as 14 Flats on Land at Beech House. It is therefore possible to ensure that no development takes place within the flood plain part of the site by imposing a planning condition for instance that no slab levels of development shall be set any lower than 79 metres AOD. Control of the layout of the development is also retained and it will be possible to ensure that any development does not take place within the flood plain. From the form of development envisaged it is clear that the margin of the site within the flood plain can be retained as amenity open space and the existing landscaping belt as part of any subsequent development proposals.

#### **4. THE LIKELIHOOD OF FLOOD EVENTS ON THE SITE'S EASTERN MARGIN.**

- 4.1 The July 2007 flood event in Witney is well documented in the above mentioned report. It resulted following 5 inches of rainfall in 12 hours recorded in RAF Brize Norton on 20th July followed by further torrential rainfall on the next day. It was the wettest summer recorded since 1903 and caused extensive flooding not only in Witney. The locations where some properties were flooded are shown on the second extract from the Witney Flood Report attached to this assessment. It shows that some flooding took place at Area 11 in the Emma's Dyke housing estate to the north of the application site, reported as being due to insufficient storage in the up-stream catchment. There is no evidence to suggest that the application site was affected by flooding.
- 4.2 Due to the sensitivity of the issue a great deal of attention was paid to drainage issues when the development of the Lidl Food Store was being considered to the land immediately to the south of the current application site. Whilst the prospect of future flooding was not an issue, because the development involved 100% coverage with a large area of roof and car park hardstanding this could result in a great increase in the rate of surface water run off from the site into the existing drainage ditch which flows into Emma's Dyke.

- 4.3 In that case it was concluded that surface water flows could be controlled in a sustainable manner and a planning Condition No.13 was attached to the subsequent permission 08/1629/P/FP that required the submission of a detailed scheme before the commencement of development.

**5. ASSESSMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN ANNEX D OF PPS 25.**

- 5.1 Annex D defines the flood zone characteristics of Zone 3 flood plains. Only uses that i) remain operational and safe for users in times of flood; ii) result in no net loss of flood plain storage; iii) do not impede water flows and iv) do not increase flood risk elsewhere, should be permitted.
- 5.2 By applying these criteria to the application site it has already been demonstrated that the site area is only marginally affected by the flood plain. This represents some 4.5% of the total site area along its eastern margin leaving 95.5% of the site available for development clear of the flood plain. This is ample space in which to satisfactorily accommodate the scale and form of development proposed in this outline application.
- 5.3 With regard to Criterion i) as the development footprint can be kept clear of the flood plain it can remain operational and safe for residents on the site in times of flood. It follows that in respect of Criterion ii) there will be no loss of flood plain storage and as that area of the site will remain open it will not impede water flows. (Criterion iii). The remaining issue under Criterion iv) relates to the possible contribution to flood risk elsewhere due to an increased rate of surface water run off.
- 5.4 It has been seen how this issues has been resolved on the adjoining development site. The point has to be made that the footprint of development likely to result on this site will mean that an appreciable part of the site will remain undisturbed and the trees will remain to play a part in the hydrology of the site. Furthermore, a sustainable surface water drainage scheme could be provided to mimic the surface water flows from the existing site prior to the

development as by Condition 13 on the Lidl approval.. It is also possible that the existing ditch on the eastern boundary could be utilised in this respect.

**6. CONCLUSION.**

6.1 It is possible to conclude therefore, that with the imposition of suitable planning conditions at this outline stage as referred to above, it can be ensured that development can be kept clear of the flood plain and that the site can be satisfactorily drained.

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**Mark Chattoe Dip T P, MRTPI.**  
**19<sup>th</sup> November 2010.**  
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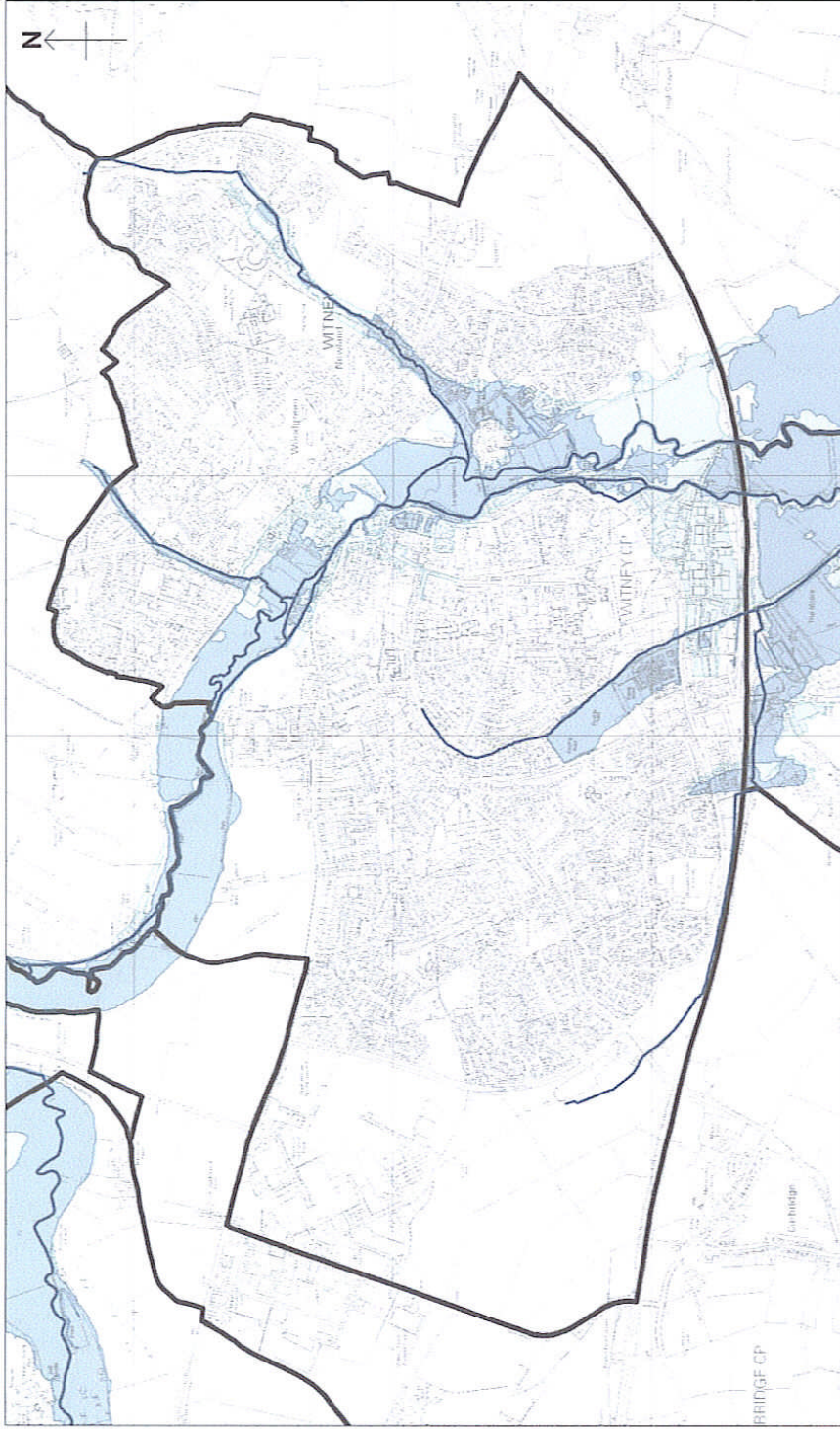
**Application No:**  
**10/1865/T/NEW**  
**Outline Planning**  
**Permission**  
**Grid Ref:**  
**435034,209076**

**Beech House Ducklington**  
**Lane Witney**





**Scale:**  
**1:1250**  
**Date:**  
**4-Nov-10**



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**Map Title:** Environment Agency Flood Zones January 2008

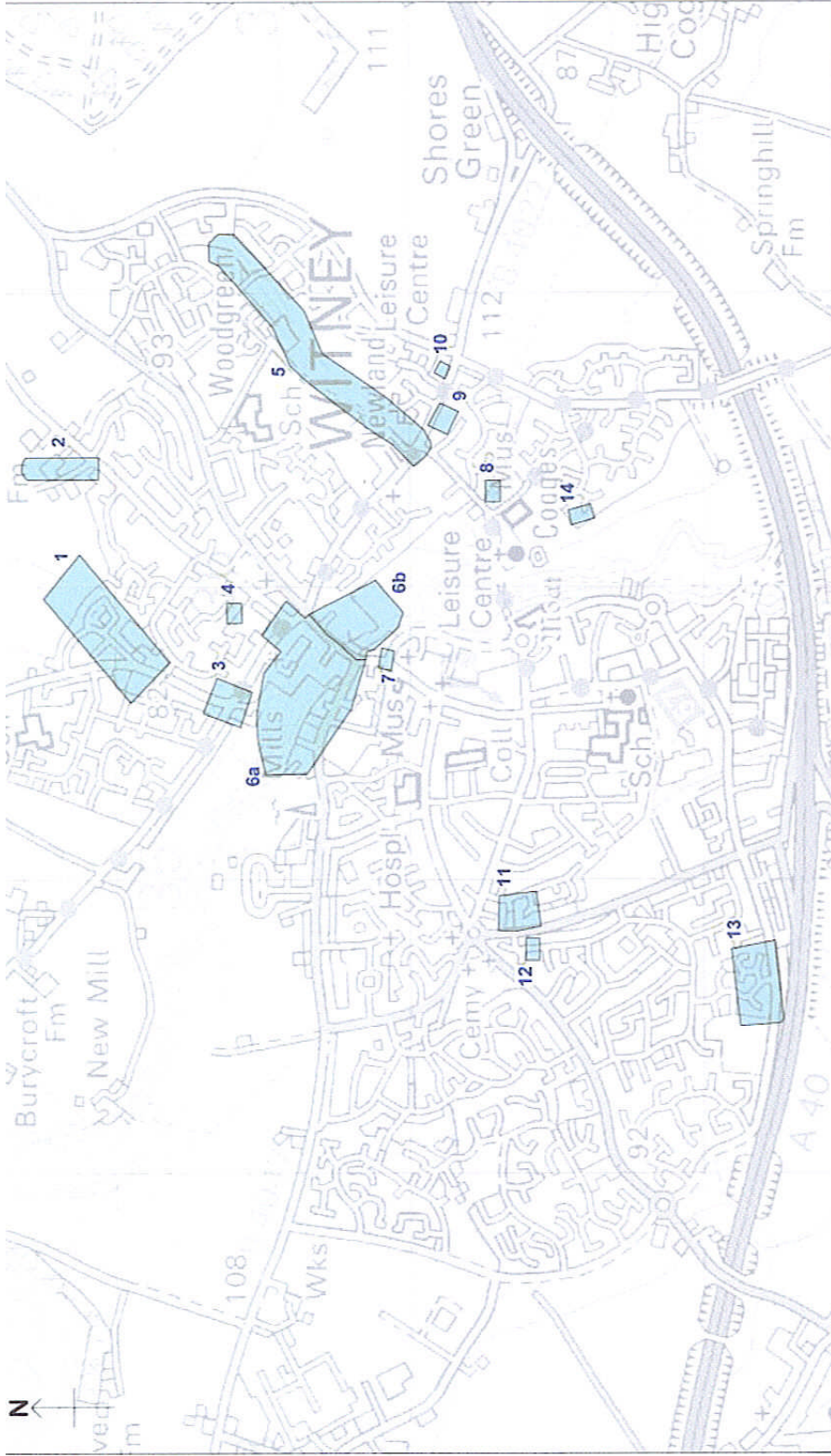
	Flood Zone 2 - 0.1% probability of flooding occurring or low to medium risk. Previously referred to as 1:1,000 year flooding		Parish Boundary
	Flood Zone 3 - 1% probability of flooding occurring or high risk. Previously referred to as 1:100 year flooding		Environment Agency Main Rivers

**Scale:** 1:20000

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**WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
 DISTRICT COUNCIL**



Map Title:	Witney - Location of House Flooding
Department:	
Map No:	Figure 1
Date:	10/05/08
Scale:	1:18000

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 Woodgreen  
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Key  
 1 Locations where some properties have flooded

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