

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET - CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION**Issue 2 Bath Spatial Area – Bath Flood Compensation Scheme**

The prospects for the delivery of the upstream Bath Flood Compensation Scheme are due to be discussed at the hearing session on Day 3. Detailed technical evidence submitted on behalf of the Duchy of Cornwall (Rep 222) by HR Wallingford (included in the Statement on Issue 2 by Wolf Bond Planning) and on behalf of the Hignett Family Trust (Rep 256) by Robson Liddle (2 late addendum statements) question various matters in the Council's Bath Compensatory Storage Study Phase 1 Report (WYG Engineering, November 2011, CD4 /FR35) and the Council's subsequent explanatory Note on the Reviewed Flood Storage Volume (CD4/FR36).

There is unlikely to be sufficient time on Day 3 to discuss these detailed technical matters and any discussion would benefit from being informed by a Statement for Common Ground (SCG) between the parties providing technical evidence, the Council and the Environment Agency (EA). I have therefore decided to postpone discussion of the technical/engineering aspects of the Bath Flood Compensation Scheme to the end of the current hearing programme and to request a SCG involving the Council, the EA, HR Wallingford and Robson Liddle. I will confirm the date for the hearing on this matter when a timetable to prepare a SCG is known. A SCG would need to be available about 3-5 days before the resumed hearing and would be put on the Examination webpage. I would want the resumed hearing to be within the current reserved week (w/c 30 January). On Day 3 discussion of the Flood Compensation Scheme would be confined to the availability of funding for this and related implementation projects and the implications if such a scheme could not proceed.

It is clear that if the Core Strategy is found sound and the Flood Compensation Scheme proceeds then there would need to be considerable further work to identify an appropriate site and design and implement the scheme. I am not inviting the submission of more detailed work now but seeking clarification of the evidence already submitted.

The SCG should grapple with the main questions raised by the technical submissions and establish as far as possible an agreed overall approach to the provision of compensatory storage (eg the issue of the equivalent volume at the varying levels of flood events and how this can be achieved upstream on land that already floods). A broad brush approach can be taken to the calculation of volumes at this stage. I seek clarification as to whether all development sites (without planning permission) which would be in Flood Zone 3 with climate change are included in the compensation scheme. The SCG should identify (in bullet format) the range of further work that needs to be undertaken to progress the scheme. Where there remains significant disagreement between the parties please identify these and provide a brief explanation of the reasons for the disagreement.

Simon Emerson
Inspector
4 January 2012