

## SWMPs and other Local Authority Plans

A Surface Water Management Plan is one of many affecting different aspects of the built environment. There are some obvious synergies with the other plans and aspirations of Local Authorities and others, and some less obvious.

<p>Local authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>Environment Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment Flood Management Plans</li> </ul> <p>Water companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DG5 reduction</li> </ul>	<p>Local authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Emergency planning</li> </ul> <p>Environment Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WFD implementation</li> </ul> <p>Water companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced demand for water</li> </ul>
--	--

All the bodies involved in our environment have overlapping aims and plans, all are after a range of benefits, and with different methods of measuring those, and different people and funding streams involved. Looking specifically at Birmingham, it's a big city, with lots of needs and lots of plans. Can they make them mesh together? And how is the SWMP fitting in?

As far as spatial planning is concerned, one of the drivers of the SWMP that prioritised areas for detailed study was the potential for re-development. This applied to existing risk and any alleviation options – the Council would see it as an important benefit to free up land where it is currently hampered by EA flood zones. In Hockley, this was achieved, but in the Digbeth area, EA are more cautious because of uncertainties in the modelling and the consequences of any errors.

The concern is that overly conservative modelling may in effect be forcing much needed housing onto greenfield sites, if it stops brownfield sites being used. BCC are considering whether to fund a flow survey in the river to improve calibration and confidence, in support of an updated SFRA, which would be likely to go to enquiry.

Moving on to health, BCC are concerned about the health impacts of a range of environmental factors, with the worst affected areas overlapping with areas of deprivation. They are planning Natural Health Improvement Zones, with improvements to the environment and walking/ cycling routes seen as the way to reduce pollution and encourage exercise. Trees and exercising opportunities are entirely compatible with SUDS and flood storage areas, for example, and linkages could easily be formed as overland flow paths for exceedance flows.

Their Blue Network plan is already in hand and includes the SWMP and a range of water-related actions. The greenways plan for cycling and walking is liable to cover some of the same areas and routes, and already specifically acknowledges the linkage with flood risk management.

The point of all this is that partnership funding is becoming the only game in town, for flood relief and other schemes. The obligatory Partnership Funding Calculator spells it out. Brutally honest! But a spur to seeing the bigger picture. In this example, it's telling you that unless you can find additional funding (i.e. benefits to someone else, or other benefits of some sort), your scheme is doomed.

<b>SUMMARY: prospect of FCRM GiA funding</b>	
Raw Partnership Funding Score	90% (1)
External Contribution or saving required to achieve an Adjusted Score of 100%	32 (2)
Adjusted Partnership Funding Score (PF)	92% (3)
PV FCRM GiA towards the up-front costs of this scheme (Cost for Approval)	- (4)

The trick will be to pool sources of public (and private) funding to create a scheme that fulfils several plans at once and meets the contributions (or savings) required. You could end up with a scheme that's slightly more expensive than a flooding-only one, but cheaper than doing three separate schemes all in the same area. Of course there's the perennial problem of getting agreement, and co-ordinating funding cycles and end of year spending! Who said life was meant to be easy?