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Isle of Man Sustainable Drainage Systems

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Isle of Man Sustainable Drainage Systems Planning Policy Statement

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Contract

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Abbreviations

CIRIA	Construction Industry Research and Information Association
DEFA	Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
DoI	Department of Infrastructure
FMD	Flood Management Division
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems

1 Introduction

This Planning Policy Statement (PPS) is issued by the Cabinet Office. It sets out the requirements for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) on development sites and specifies the manner in which the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA), Department of Infrastructure (DoI), and Manx Utilities intend to deal with SuDS and the management of surface water within planning applications for development.

Traditionally, rain falling on roads, roofs and pavements has been collected in underground pipes and transferred as quickly as possible to the nearest sewer or river. However, this has contributed to flooding and pollution within rivers and coastal environments.

SuDS are drainage components designed to mimic nature and manage rainfall close to where it falls. They slow the flow of water by allowing rain which falls on roads, roofs and pavements to be stored, soak naturally into the ground as it would do in a field or evaporate from surface water or vegetation. Using SuDS helps to manage flooding on the Isle of Man during storms and also naturally filters pollution (such as silt and petrol), preventing it from entering the Island's rivers and coastal areas. When well-designed, SuDS also provide wider benefits of creating habitats for nature and green spaces for communities within developed areas and helping urban areas on the Island adapt to a changing climate.

SuDS can be incorporated into new developments, or 'retrofitted' into existing urban areas. The Climate Change Act 2021 and Isle of Man Strategic Plan set out the requirements for consideration of SuDS within applications on the Isle of Man. Therefore, the PPS focuses on the role of the Planning Process in delivering SuDS on the Isle of Man.

This PPS should be read in conjunction with the documents set out below.

(a) The Isle of Man Strategic Plan - the Plan sets out the Island-wide planning policy framework.

(b) Flood Risk Planning Policy Statement and Flood Risk Assessment Guidance - this specifies the approach in which flood risk within planning applications for development will be assessed.

(c) Manual for Manx SuDS - technical guidance on designing SuDS within proposed developments on the Isle of Man including definitions.

(d) Building Regulations 2014 Schedule 1, Part H - sets regulations for surface water drainage from developments.

(e) Town and Country Planning (Definition of Development) Order 2024 - provides clarity around the definition of development for better understanding for building owners on what can and cannot be done without planning approval.

1.1 Drivers for SuDS on the Isle of Man

The Isle of Man has a history of fluvial and surface water flooding, which affects most settlements. The river catchments on the Island are short in length and relatively steep, and respond rapidly to rainfall and surface water runoff, resulting in flashy and short-lived flooding. SuDS provide an opportunity to manage existing flood risk on the Island, by controlling the rate and volume of surface water leaving a developed site and slowing the flow of water entering watercourses in downstream communities.

A lack of water is an equal challenge in drier months, as the Island relies on a system of dams and reservoirs to meet water demand. SuDS provide an opportunity to manage demand for surface water resources, through harvesting rainfall for re-use in homes and gardens, and by encouraging rainwater to drain into the ground, recharging rivers.

The Isle of Man has both nationally and internationally important wildlife species and habitats, including important marine habitats. Above-ground, vegetated SuDS provide opportunities to create habitats that support native species on the Island and enhance existing designations and protected sites.

The incorporation of SuDS within the planning application process is one of the measures introduced in the Climate Change Act 2021 so that developments make a positive contribution to the Island's environment.

2 Isle of Man SuDS design standards

2.1 Principles for SuDS on the Isle of Man

The following Isle of Man SuDS design standards set out the requirements for surface water drainage strategies and SuDS designs submitted within planning applications. The standards are underpinned by the following series of principles for SuDS on the Isle of Man.

- Characteristics of the Island
  - Considering the unique topography, geology, hydrology and biodiversity on the Isle of Man within SuDS designs, at a catchment scale and a site scale.
- Managing flood risk
  - Assessing the existing flood risk at both a catchment scale and site scale and considering how the development can provide betterment to the existing situation in areas of known flood risk where possible.
  - Ensuring that runoff rates and volumes from the developed site do not exceed the rates and volumes from the site in its greenfield state (or as close as reasonably practicable for previously developed sites).
- Achieving the 'four pillars of SuDS'
  - Ensuring SuDS features meet all 'four pillars of SuDS', as set out in the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) SuDS Manual, which involve managing water quantity (flood risk), water quality (to prevent pollution), biodiversity (to create and sustain better places for nature and contribute to biodiversity net gain) and amenity (to create and sustain better places for people).
  - Above-ground vegetated SuDS can also be considered as public open space if suitably designed.
- Managing water resources
  - Treating rainfall as a valuable resource, using SuDS to capture it and either re-use it, or slowly release it, to recharge groundwater supplies and river systems.
- Climate change adaptation
  - Designing SuDS with an allowance for climate change, to ensure that they are able to accommodate expected higher rainfall intensities in the future. Also, encouraging the use of above-ground SuDS that are vegetated or store water, to provide a cooling effect in urban areas that are expected to see rising temperatures with climate change.

2.2 Design standards

Standard 1: Control the quantity of runoff to manage flood risk

- Discharge must be prioritised according to the following discharge hierarchy:
  - Rainwater re-use and recycling;
  - Shallow infiltration;
  - Discharge to surface water body (watercourse, lake, sea);
  - Discharge to surface water sewer; and
  - Discharge to combined sewer network.
- The drainage system must be designed so that, unless an area is designated to hold and/or convey water as part of the design, flooding does not occur on any part of the site for a 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) rainfall event. Any flooding within a 1% AEP plus climate change rainfall event must be retained within the site boundary, and no flooding occurs in any part to any building or utility plant within the development.
- Flows resulting from rainfall in excess of a 1% AEP plus climate change rainfall event, OR from overtopping or failure of a SuDS feature, must be managed in designated exceedance routes that minimise the risks to people and property.

Standard 2: Manage the quality of runoff to prevent pollution

- SuDS must prevent runoff from leaving the site during everyday rainfall events (up to 5mm).
- A SuDS management train approach must be followed to ensure that surface water discharged does not adversely impact the quality of receiving waters.

Standard 3: Create and sustain better places for nature

- SuDS designs should where appropriate maximise the use of vegetated SuDS features for storage and conveyance across the site.
- SuDS designs should where appropriate contribute to meeting national policy on biodiversity.

Standard 4: Create and sustain better places for people

- SuDS designs should where appropriate generate amenity benefits through the creation of multi-functional places and landscapes on the site.
- SuDS must be safe for residents and operators.

Standard 5: Climate change resilience

- SuDS designs must contribute to ensuring new developments are resilient to climate change in the future.

Standard 6: Coastal stability

- SuDS designs must not exacerbate coastal erosion or have an adverse effect upon the stability of cliffs on the Isle of Man.

Standard 7: Adoption, maintenance and construction

- SuDS must be adopted and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

- Surface water runoff must be managed during the construction phase.

Details on applying these standards within SuDS designs are provided in the Manual for Manx SuDS.

2.3 Retrofitting SuDS

One of the challenges as settlements grow and intense rainfall happens more often, is that drainage systems can become overwhelmed, and cause flooding. Pipe networks can be upgraded to increase their capacity, but this is a very costly solution. An alternative solution is to use SuDS to disconnect the existing drainage system from sewers or highway drains, and to direct it into a watercourse, or allow it to infiltrate into the ground.

Where SuDS are incorporated after the initial development of an area, or are used to improve the existing drainage situation, this process is known as 'SuDS retrofitting' and can be achieved at a range of scales, from an individual house to large sections of pavement or road.

Proposals for the retrofitting of SuDS will normally be supported, subject to appropriate design, approval, adoption, and maintenance of the SuDS scheme.

3 SuDS approval and the planning process

3.1 Introduction

This section sets out the manner in which it is envisaged that surface water drainage matters will be dealt with in the planning application process.

Further technical guidance on designing SuDS within the Isle of Man is provided within the Manual for Manx SuDS.

3.2 When are SuDS required?

SuDS can be incorporated in many developments, regardless of its size. The impact of smaller development sites on flood risk and surface water drainage issues is often underestimated. However, the successive growth of small developments within a catchment can have a large cumulative impact on surface water runoff rates and volumes, as well as flood risk on downstream communities.

The Development Plan (Strategic Plan and Area Plans) provide the policy context for assessing planning applications. The Town and Country Planning (Development Procedure) Order 2019 (From 1 August 2024) (gov.im) sets out the need for all planning applications to consider 'the need for sustainable drainage systems' in light of these policies.

An exception is made only for the following application types:

(a) change of use [only];

(b) [approval of] reserved matters;

(c) replacement windows and doors in conservation areas;

(d) extensions or alterations of existing buildings;

(e) erection or demolition of outbuildings within a domestic curtilage;

(f) minor changes applications; or

(g) approval of information required by condition.

The following development types will be required to provide detailed SuDS information in accordance with the Manual for Manx SuDS Technical Guidance.

- Mineral extraction or waste development;
- Residential development of 10 or more dwellings;
- Residential development on a site area of 0.5Ha or more;
- Development with a floorspace of 1,000sq m or more;
- Development on sites over 1Ha; and
- Change of use of 1,000sq m or more that incorporates new built development.

Developments below the above thresholds which are required to consider SuDS should provide appropriate information relative to the size, nature, and location of the proposal. In

doing so, they should consider the potential for SuDS and refer to the drainage hierarchy as set out in Standard 1 of the Design Standards (Section 2.2). It is expected that such small developments will focus on the incorporation of SuDS features within the site some of which (for example green roofs and water butts) may be maintained by the building's owners. Where SuDS are proposed which are to be adopted or maintained by a third party, details of this should be provided and some elements of the Manual for Manx SuDS Technical Guidance may be relevant.

3.3 SuDS requirements for planning applications

For applications requiring SuDS, applicants are expected to provide a surface water drainage strategy which evidences the approach to managing surface water drainage on the site using SuDS. A surface water drainage strategy is defined as a document which demonstrates how surface water will be managed within a site so that the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The strategy will also evidence how the proposed SuDS design meets each of the Isle of Man SuDS Standards (see Section 2.2), in managing flood risk and delivering wider benefits (water quality, biodiversity and amenity). The surface water drainage strategy must detail how the SuDS system will be adopted and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Section 6 of the Manual for Manx SuDS provides further guidance on the type of evidence required within a surface water drainage strategy.

3.4 SuDS adoption

For SuDS to be effectively managed and maintained, clear arrangements need to be in place to specify which organisation is responsible. SuDS schemes submitted for adoption will need to meet the specific design requirements of the adopting organisation. Before SuDS are adopted, documentation must be submitted to the adopting authority to confirm that the features have been constructed as designed. Discharge rates and volumes will need to be detailed in the application.

See Section 7 of the Manual for Manx SuDS for the potential routes for adoption of SuDS in the Isle of Man.

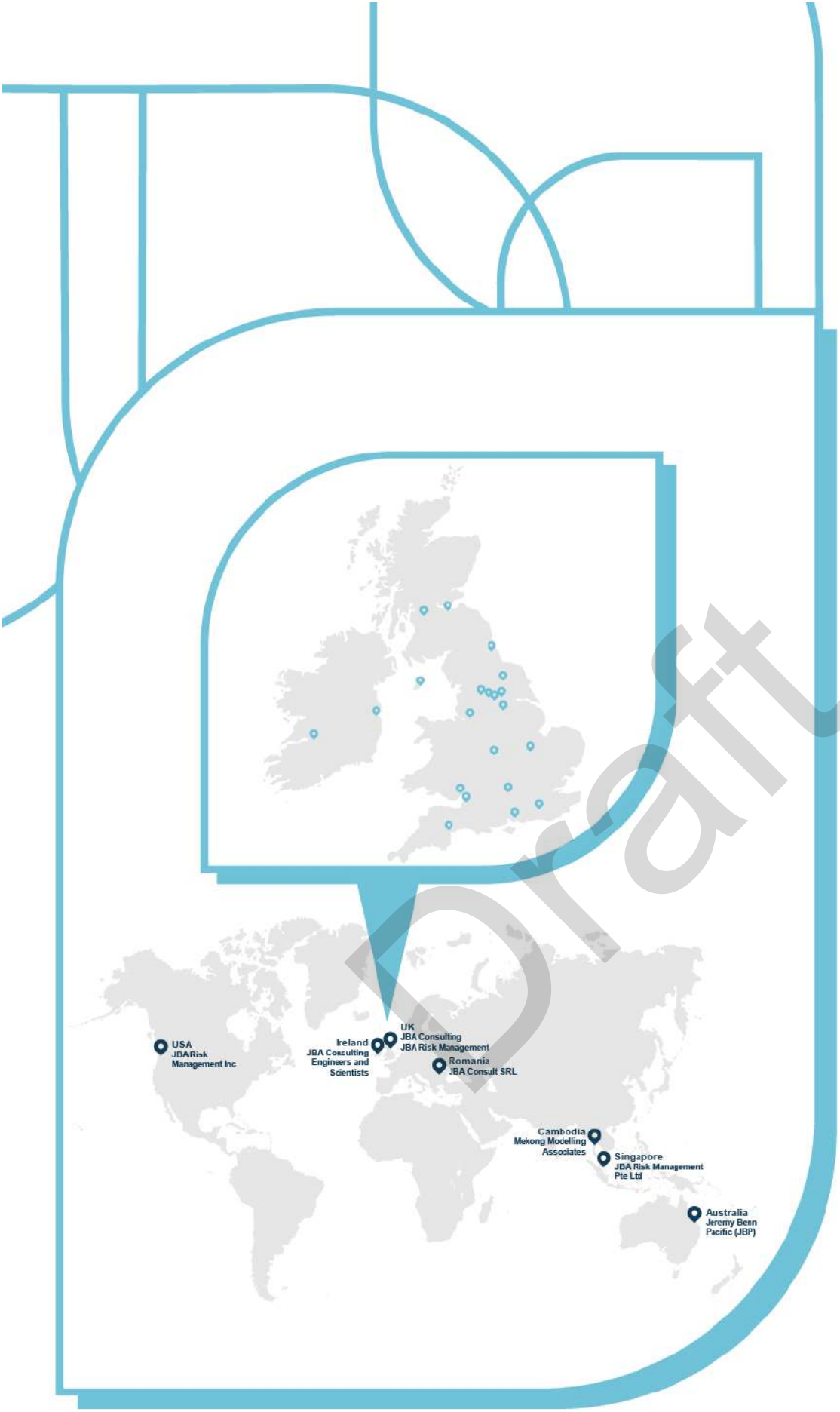
3.5 Other consents required

Surface water drainage systems may require a series of other consents that are separate to the planning process and should be considered at an early stage. The requirement for consent from the relevant authority applies even if planning approval has been granted.

Flood Risk Management Act 2013 consent must be sought from the DoI FMD for works that may affect any watercourse. For new connections into the public sewer network, or proposed sewer diversions, written consent must be obtained from Manx Utilities, under the Sewerage Act 1999.

In addition to development proposals being reviewed as part of a planning application, plans will need to be submitted to Building Control to confirm that they are appropriate and

meet regulations (Building Regulations 2014 Schedule 1, Part H for surface water drainage). Building regulations approval is a separate process to planning approval. There are three Building Control authorities on the Isle of Man: Douglas, Onchan, and for all other settlements, DEFA.



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