

GREAT GLEN FLOOD COMMITTEE: RESPONSE TO LOCAL PLAN: REQUESTS FOR THE FUTURE

General Overview

Great Glen Flood Committee (GGFC) was set up in January 2025, following the flood which devastated more than 55 houses and four businesses, and left more than 100 cars written off.

As you can imagine, this is not an event which any resident of Great Glen wants to see repeated.

Given that the village has endured three similar events in as many years, it is no longer useful or accurate for anyone to refer to the “1 in 50”, “1 in 100” or any other such erroneous, misleading description.

Equally, we are sat on the blade of double-edged sword; on the one hand, the near-unanimous opinion of residents is that the vast number of houses which have been built around the village’s periphery during the last decade is the major contributing factor to this increasing problem, just as it is elsewhere. On the other hand, flood prevention measures included in planning conditions and Section 106 agreements in all

future developments would appear to be the only hope the village has of securing efficient, updated defences any time soon.

The primary parts of the village which flooded comprise the original part of the village which sits in a basin, at a considerably lower level to the areas where new estates have been built. As a result, these parts of the village are especially vulnerable and we feel that it is the responsibility of the LLFA and the district council to enforce the execution of flood prevention and defence on future developers; in the past, small measures in line with this have been taken, but only to protect the estates being built. Given recent events starting from 2023, this is surely a lesson for the future.

It is vital – and only right – that any developer increasing the size of the village is mindful of the potential impact that their construction is having on the village as a whole, not just the estate it is concerned with. Most importantly, that the developer is building in a village which has flooded three times in as many years, and from this, agreeing and **actually implementing** measures to protect the community beyond the estate boundary.

We are therefore asking – in whatever guise it may be – that flood prevention and defence is at the TOP of the

agenda when reaching agreements with future developers.

Shockingly, we have been informed by LLFA and Harborough District Council that there are no Section 106 agreements in place relating to flood risk management for any of the estates built in the last decade and perhaps beyond. This cannot continue.

As a committee, we are in the process of commissioning a village-and-beyond survey by an independent flood analyst in order to establish the likely causes of the floods which have blighted Great Glen since October 2023, as well as seeking professional, independent guidance on the best solutions. We would hope that once this report is completed that all authorities involved in decisions about future developments will take necessary heed; a copy will be provided to all relevant parties.

The following comments are being made well in advance, before we know how many houses are going to be built in the Great Glen vicinity. Nevertheless, we would ask that – in the event that any further development does indeed go ahead - these comments be taken note of and referred back to by each authority which has been sent this response, not least

Harborough District Council, as the planning authority, and equally Leicestershire County Council, as the LLFA.

Great Glen Capital programme for flooding

We have been told that there are no plans in the pipeline for new flood defences, because Great Glen fails the cost-to-benefit ratio for such measures. This is in spite of existing defences being 30+ years old in a village which has expanded approximately threefold in that time.

All infrastructures are inadequate for the current size of the village, let alone allowing for further developments.

We are therefore looking to the planning authorities to use developers' Section 106 funds and planning conditions to fund such a project.

Sewage and Drainage

We understand that Severn Trent is to assess the current capacity of its sewage and drainage systems in the light of any such future development; it is clear to the residents of the 55 houses which flooded with sewage as well as surface water that the only factually correct answer to such an assessment is that the

system is already beyond capacity and needs investment and improvement before another brick is laid.

Whereas the “means test” which has deemed Great Glen falling short of the criteria for flood improvements at any point in the near future, we would suggest that the ever-expanding size of the village certainly deems it so when making future agreements with developers.

Maintenance and repair of gulleys, drains, sewers, the River Sence and Burton Brook

In response to a report compiled by GGFC following a walkabout round the village in early February (responses from EA, county council and district council), the intention is to continue a “RE-active” response to maintenance and repair of the above. This is clearly not adequate. We would request that a fund be given by any future developers to enable a “PRO-active”, regular maintenance programme.

Prevention for every new house

There are perhaps other measures which the proposed flood analyst report will reveal, but EVERY house

should have soak away /SUDS and PERMEABLE materials on hard-standing areas.

SUDS should also be included wherever possible.

Please see section below for more SUDS suggestions.

Loopholes and “taking on trust”

Referring again to the previously-mentioned walkabout report and the responses received, one of the responses from the LLFA and Harborough District Council states that development sites of more than 400 houses or more are required to prepare a masterplan to include flood risk.

We all know that developers are extremely adept at ducking out of things they would rather not spend money and time on – so what would happen if the development is for 399 houses? Are they no longer required to consider flood risk?

There are way too many incidences where developers are “trusted” to follow through on planning conditions and resultantly, no follow-ups are carried out. Again, in the report, a response from LLFA and Harborough District Council, it is admitted that “there is no routine

inspection of sustainable drainage features once a development is complete”.

This cannot continue.

Likewise, we hear reports that because of existing problems with roads and drains on the Miller estate, Highways and Severn Trent have still not adopted these elements of infrastructure. This is because Miller Homes have still not made the necessary repairs after a number of years.

Developers in the future need to be held accountable. At present, it would appear they have little or no incentive to comply to anything agreed at the planning stage.

Similarly, in a response included in the report, it is mentioned that the Local Plan Vision includes measures to minimise climate change, and, supposedly, flood risk. Specifically, a 20 per cent reduction in run-off rates compared to pre-development conditions. In line with the lack of enforcement which appears to be the norm, we would ask if there are any post-implementation checks to confirm any measures taken are achieving this. And if not, are there any consequences or penalties for the developer if the betterment is not achieved?

It is also debatable whether the retention basins, on the Miller estate, for example, are at all effective. Several residents on that estate reported that the level in the one next to Oaks Road did not change during the January 2025 event. Equally, an EA employee told me during a visit to the village in 2024 that in many instances, when these basins are actually checked, many have not been built to the capacity requested as a planning condition.

SUDS suggestions

How SUDS Can Be Included in a Housing Estate Development:

1. Permeable Surfaces

Replace traditional impermeable materials with permeable paving on driveways, roads, and footpaths, allowing water to soak into the ground.

2. Swales

Shallow, vegetated channels that convey and treat runoff. They can be integrated along roadsides or open spaces.

3. Retention or Detention Basins

Basins that hold runoff during heavy rain and release it slowly to reduce peak flows. These can

double as landscaped parks or play areas when dry.

4. Green Roofs

Roofs covered with vegetation that absorb rainwater, reduce runoff, and provide insulation and wildlife habitat.

5. Rain Gardens

Shallow planted areas that collect and filter water from roofs or paved areas. They can be installed in front gardens or communal areas.

6. Bioretention Systems (Tree Pits/Planters)

Landscaped features like tree pits with engineered soils that filter and absorb water.

7. Ponds and Wetlands

Can be designed as attractive landscape features that store water and support biodiversity.

8. Underground Storage

Where space is limited, underground tanks or crates can be used to store excess water temporarily.

9.

A new estate could therefore feature...

- Permeable driveways for each home

- Swales running alongside roads
- A central park with a detention basin that serves as a community green space
- Rain gardens in front of select homes
- A wetland area at the lowest point of the site to improve biodiversity and manage runoff

Summary

- Updates to infrastructures, including sewage and drainage **BEFORE** actual housing construction can take place.
- Thorough inspections of agreed flood prevention measures, with penalties for failure to comply. And from there, annual inspections of planning conditions, again with sanctions/penalties for failure to comply
- Flood prevention measures to protect the **WHOLE** village, not just the estate in question
- Incentive for developers to rectify problems which could potentially prevent authorities from adopting infrastructure

- A fund to pay for regular, quarterly inspections of River Sence, Burton Brook, sewers, drains and gulleys. PRO-active, not RE-active.
- Review/inspection of existing, historic estates in relation to flood prevention and infrastructure issues (e.g. Miller Homes adoption stalemate)