FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (PROPORTIONATE)

Pinchbeck Baptist Church, Pinchbeck, South Holland
Proposed internal alterations, new side entrance and small rear store extension

1. Introduction

This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) accompanies a full planning application for works at Pinchbeck Baptist Church, Pinchbeck. The proposals comprise predominantly internal alterations, the formation of a new external entrance on the side elevation (opposite the Manse), and the construction of a small attached single-storey store to the rear of the church hall.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 (high probability of flooding). This FRA has been prepared as a proportionate assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposed development, in accordance with national planning policy and Environment Agency standing advice.

2. Description of development

The only increase in built footprint proposed as part of the development is a small attached store measuring approximately 2.4 metres by 5.7 metres, equating to a footprint of approximately 13.68 square metres.

All other works are internal in nature or relate to minor alterations to existing external openings. No additional land take is proposed elsewhere within the site.

The proposed store is to be constructed on an area of existing gravel and block paving and will be set at the same finished floor level as the existing church hall.

3. Flood risk vulnerability classification

The existing and proposed use of the building is a church/community assembly use. In accordance with national flood risk vulnerability classifications, this use falls within the “less vulnerable” category.

The proposed store is ancillary to the existing use and does not introduce any residential accommodation, sleeping accommodation, or more vulnerable uses. The proposal does not increase the vulnerability classification of the site.

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4. Policy and guidance context

National planning policy requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment for development proposed within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Environment Agency standing advice confirms that minor non-residential extensions (up to 250 square metres) may be supported by a proportionate FRA.
The proposed development represents a very small-scale non-residential extension well below this threshold and is therefore appropriate for a proportionate, qualitative assessment.

5. Sources of flooding

The following potential sources of flooding have been considered:
• Fluvial and tidal flooding (Flood Zone 3 designation)
• Surface water flooding
• Groundwater flooding
• Reservoir flooding
• Sewer flooding (screened)
The proposal does not involve works to any watercourse, flood defence, or drainage channel. No changes are proposed that would alter existing flood flow routes or flood defence infrastructure.

6. Assessment of flood risk impacts

6.1 Floodplain storage and conveyance

The increase in footprint is limited to approximately 13.68 square metres and is located immediately adjacent to the existing church hall within an already developed part of the site. Given the very limited scale of the extension and its position, the proposal will not materially affect floodplain storage or flood conveyance, nor will it increase flood risk elsewhere.

6.2 Surface water runoff

The proposed store will be constructed on land that is currently hard surfaced with gravel and block paving. As such, the development does not result in a significant increase in impermeable area.
Any minor changes in surface water runoff will be managed locally through appropriate detailing and connection to existing drainage arrangements, ensuring there is no increase in surface water flood risk off-site.

6.3 Finished floor levels

The finished floor level of the proposed store will be set to match the existing church hall floor level. This avoids the creation of a lower, more vulnerable internal area and ensures continuity with the existing building during flood conditions.

7. Making the development safe

The development is an extension to an existing community building that has an established use within Flood Zone 3. Given the minor scale of the extension, the approach is to ensure the development is safe for its lifetime through proportionate flood resistance, resilience, and management measures.

7.1 Flood resistance and resilience measures

The following measures will be incorporated as part of the development or can be secured by condition if required:

• Use of water-resistant and durable materials to lower wall and floor areas within the store to allow easier cleaning and recovery following a flood event.

• Electrical fittings and services within the store positioned at raised levels where practicable.

These measures are proportionate to the scale of the development and consistent with national guidance for development in areas of residual flood risk.

7.2 Safe access, egress and flood warning

The proposal does not intensify the use of the site and does not introduce sleeping accommodation. Occupation of the building can be managed during periods of flood risk through operational procedures, including:

• Registration for the Environment Agency flood warning service where available.

• Avoiding use of the building during periods of flood alert or warning.

• Moving contents to higher levels where practicable during flood risk events.

• Management of the building by a responsible keyholder familiar with flood procedures.

8. Sequential approach

The development relates to alterations and a small extension to an existing community facility. The proposal is inherently linked to the existing building and site and cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

The scale of the extension is minimal and does not increase flood risk vulnerability.

The proposal represents a reasonable and proportionate improvement to an established use within Flood Zone 3.

9. Conclusion

This Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development:

• Constitutes minor non-residential development appropriate for a proportionate FRA.

• Will not materially increase flood risk elsewhere due to its limited footprint and location on developed land.

• Will be made safe for its lifetime through maintaining existing floor levels, incorporating proportionate flood-resilient construction measures, and implementing simple flood management procedures.

The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in flood risk terms and complies with national planning policy and Environment Agency standing advice.

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