

EA Guidance on 'Safe Access'

Provided the EA on 18/07/08

Safe' access and egress is to be designed to meet the following strict criteria:

Developments within Zone 3a High Probability and Zone 2 Medium Probability that **ARE NOT** offered protection from flood defences:

- Dry escape, above the 100 year flood level taking into account climate change, should be provided for all 'more vulnerable' (including residential) and 'highly vulnerable' development;
- 'Safe' should preferably be dry¹ for all other uses such as educational establishments, hotels and 'less vulnerable' land use classifications.

Developments within Zone 3a High Probability and Zone 2 Medium Probability that **ARE** offered protection from flood defences:

- 'Safe' access should preferably be dry² for 'highly vulnerable' uses;
- 'Safe' access should incorporate the ability to escape to levels above the breach water level² and ³.

For *major 'highly vulnerable' development*, 'safety' will also need to be ensured through the development of a robust evacuation plan. This should clearly define routes to dry (i.e. 'unflooded') land. This may include routes through flood waters, providing the depth and speed of flow across the evacuation route are below the risk defined by the "some" threshold in 'Flood Risk to People' (Defra, FD2320)³.

For *infrastructure development*, 'safety' will also need to be ensured through the development of a robust evacuation plan. This should clearly define dry escape routes (above the 100 year plus climate change flood level) to dry (i.e. 'unflooded') land. In exceptional circumstances, dry access (above the 100 year plus climate change flood level) for 'more vulnerable' and/or 'highly vulnerable' development may not be achievable. In these exceptional circumstances, liaison must be sought with the Environment Agency and the councils Emergency Planning Team to ensure that the safety of site tenants can be satisfactorily resolved.

¹ Above the 100 year, plus climate change, flood level

² Defined assuming the full hydrostatic loading of the flood defence upon collapse (as a worst case scenario)

³ Refer Defra Research Paper FD2320 'Flood Risks to People'