

BALTIK ARCHITECTURE

Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

Shoetime, 180 Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge

Change of use from C3 dwelling to day nursery (adjoining existing nursery)

Approximate total site area (incl. existing nursery): 559 m²

LPA: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council | LLFA: Staffordshire County Council

Prepared: 14 October 2025

1. Executive Summary

This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) supports a planning application for change of use from a C3 dwelling to a day nursery at the above site, immediately adjoining an existing nursery. The site lies within mapped Flood Zones 2 and 3 (fluvial) associated with the River Blithe catchment. A conservative package of mitigation and management measures is proposed to ensure the development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Subject to confirmation of Flood Zone extents using the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Map for Planning and application of the measures herein, the proposal can satisfy the Sequential and, where applicable, the Exception Test.

2. Site & Proposal

Address: Shoetime, 180 Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge

Change of use from C3 dwelling to day nursery (adjoining existing nursery)

Approximate total site area (incl. existing nursery): 559 m²

LPA: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council | LLFA: Staffordshire County Council

Existing use: C3 dwelling. The existing nursery is located within the same site and directly adjoins the property.

Existing ground floor threshold: approx. +300 mm above street level (provided by client)

3. Planning Policy & Vulnerability Classification

The proposal is located in England and is therefore assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and relevant Environment Agency guidance. A nursery falls within the 'More Vulnerable' category under NPPF vulnerability classifications (Annex 3). More Vulnerable development in Flood Zone 2 is appropriate subject to the Sequential Test; in Flood Zone 3a it is only appropriate if the Exception Test is passed; it is not appropriate in Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain).

4. Flood Risk Baseline

Available national datasets indicate fluvial flood risk from the River Blithe / Blythe Bridge area. The EA 'Flood Map for Planning' (rivers and sea) should be used to delineate Flood Zones across the red-line boundary (Zones 2, 3a, and any areas of 3b if present). The EA 'Long-term flood risk' service should be consulted for surface water, reservoir and groundwater mapping. The existing building threshold sits approximately +300 mm above street level (as advised by the client).

Insert Map A: EA Flood Map for Planning (rivers & sea) — Site red line and Zone extents

Insert Map B: EA Long-term flood risk (surface water / reservoirs / groundwater) — annotated for the site

5. Sources of Flood Risk

- Fluvial (River Blithe): Relevant and likely dominant mechanism. Assess design condition at 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) plus climate change (CC).
- Surface water: Review depth/velocity mapping and route exceedance flows away from entrances/critical areas.
- Reservoir/groundwater: Typically low in this location but should be confirmed and any residual risk managed through resilient design and emergency planning.

6. Climate Change Allowances (Design Basis)

Apply Environment Agency climate change allowances. For peak river flows, adopt the appropriate allowance for the management catchment and vulnerability (central/upper end as required by the LLFA/LPA). For drainage design, use peak rainfall intensity allowances (typically +20% to +40%, subject to latest EA guidance). The FRA adopts a precautionary approach where detailed modelling levels are not yet available.

7. Making the Development Safe for its Lifetime

Finished Floor Levels & Resilience

- Set internal Finished Floor Level (FFL) to a minimum freeboard above the modelled 1% AEP + CC flood level. Where site-specific flood levels are not available at this stage, provide property-level flood resilience to at least 600 mm flood depth (flood-resistant materials, sacrificial finishes, raised services).
- Maintain/improve the current threshold (approx. +300 mm above street). Raise critical electrics/IT/plant ≥ 450 mm above FFL.

Safe Access/Egress & Flood Plan

- Prepare a Site-specific Flood Emergency Plan (separate document) including triggers (EA Flood Warnings), roles, evacuation/refuge arrangements, parent communication, and a closure procedure.
- Register for EA Flood Warnings for the River Blithe/Blythe Bridge area and display procedures on site.

Overland Flow/Exceedance

- Keep exceedance routes clear; use low bunds/kerbs to deflect shallow flows; install non-return valves/backflow protection on drainage where appropriate.

8. Sustainable Drainage (Outline Strategy)

Coordinate with Staffordshire County Council (LLFA) requirements. Favour infiltration where feasible; otherwise, attenuate discharge to agreed rates (often greenfield QBAR or as advised). Provide a simple SuDS train, e.g., water butts → permeable paving → below-ground attenuation with flow control. Define exceedance routing to safe areas and provide an Operation & Maintenance (O&M;) Plan for lifetime management.

9. Sequential & Exception Tests — Response

Sequential Test: The proposal is a change of use within an existing building directly adjoining an established nursery, serving the same catchment. Reasonably available alternative sites at lower flood risk would not deliver the specific co-location and reuse of this premises.

Exception Test: (i) Sustainability benefits — reuse of existing building in a sustainable location, co-location of early-years provision; (ii) Safety — with the mitigation herein (levels/resilience, emergency planning, SuDS, exceedance routing), the use can be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

10. Construction & Management Commitments

- Finalise FRA with EA map extracts and, where available, site-specific design flood levels.
- Implement property flood resilience measures (including demountable door barriers where appropriate).
- Install and maintain SuDS per the O&M; Plan.
- Adopt and train staff on the Flood Emergency Plan prior to first use and refresh annually.

11. Conclusions

Subject to confirmation of Flood Zone extents on the EA Flood Map for Planning and implementation of the measures described, the proposed change of use to a nursery (More Vulnerable) can be made appropriately safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. The proposal therefore accords with the NPPF, PPG and Environment Agency guidance.