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From guildford-dragon Opinion: Yes, We Do Need a Masterplan

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The most important issue is flood control in the town centre and the risks are increasing due to changes in climate producing much heavier rainfall over short periods of time and causing severe flooding.

However, the relevant Environment Agency report is worrying. It states "We also investigated storing floodwater upstream of Guildford. We looked into whether this could lower the height of the flood defences in the town centre but still provide a high level of protection.

"However, delivering upstream storage is facing considerable technical, environmental and cost issues. Therefore it is unlikely to go ahead."

From <https://www.keepandshare.com/doc11/33126/possible-solutions-to-guildford-traffic-issue-rev-7-but-see-updated-version-13-june-2022>

I believe the bus station has to be vacated to secure a safe construction site. It seems logical to move it to Bedford Road site on a permanent basis and thus save the expenditure of setting up a temporary bus station on Farnham Road car park site that is currently the proposal.

[[There is concern about flooding in this area of Bedford Road. I believe Environment Agency is looking into ways of dealing with this. Barriers along the river and upstream flood alleviation schemes are being explored by the EA. It may

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be possible to create reservoirs in the flood plains and control the flow using renewable energy for pumping etc. The reservoirs could be turned into leisure areas for boating with restaurants and gardens on the islands inside them. Please have a look at Eco Park in Kolkata.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Town_Eco_Park

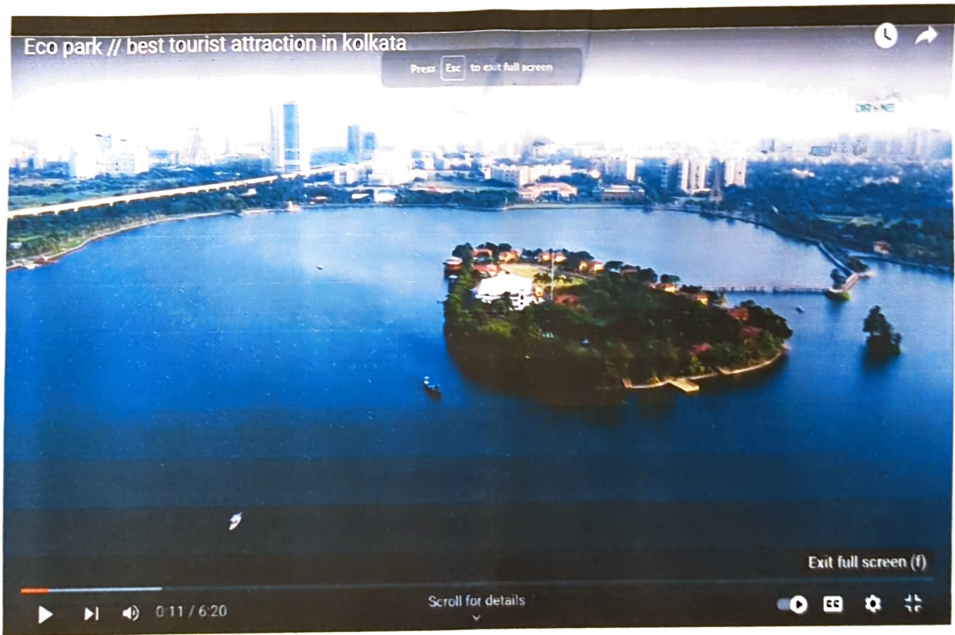
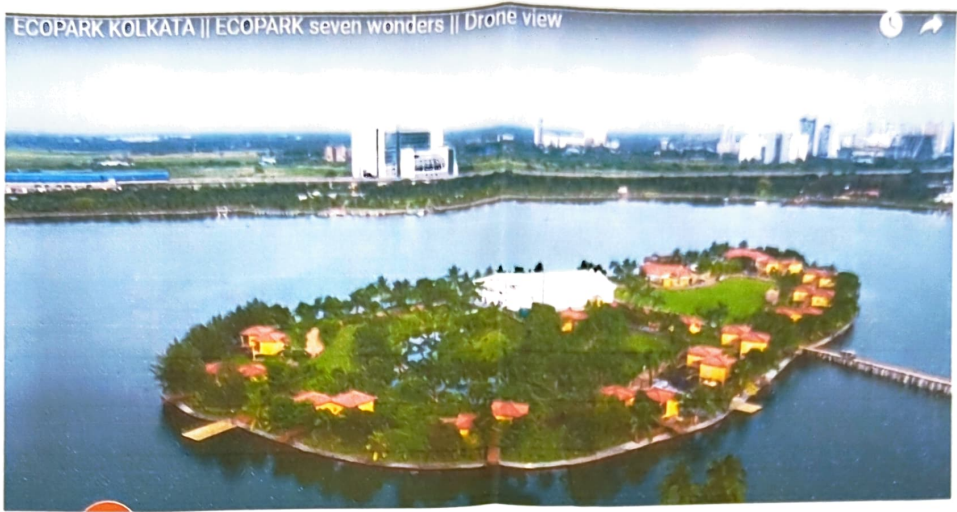
<https://tinyurl.com/Kolkata-Eco-Park>

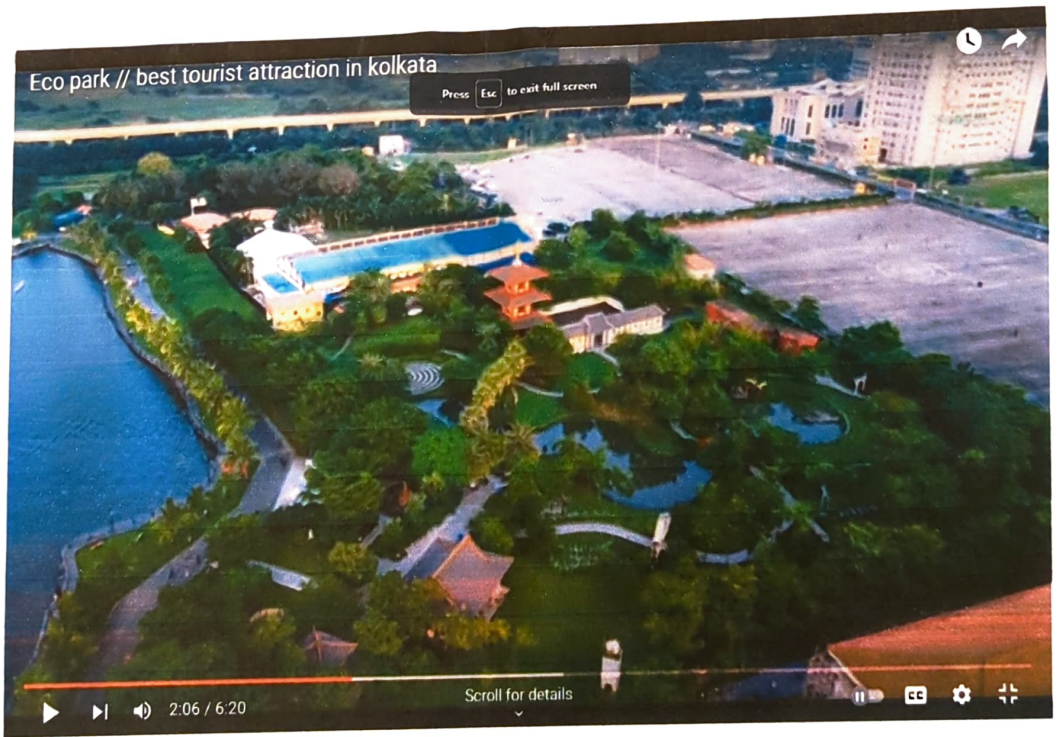
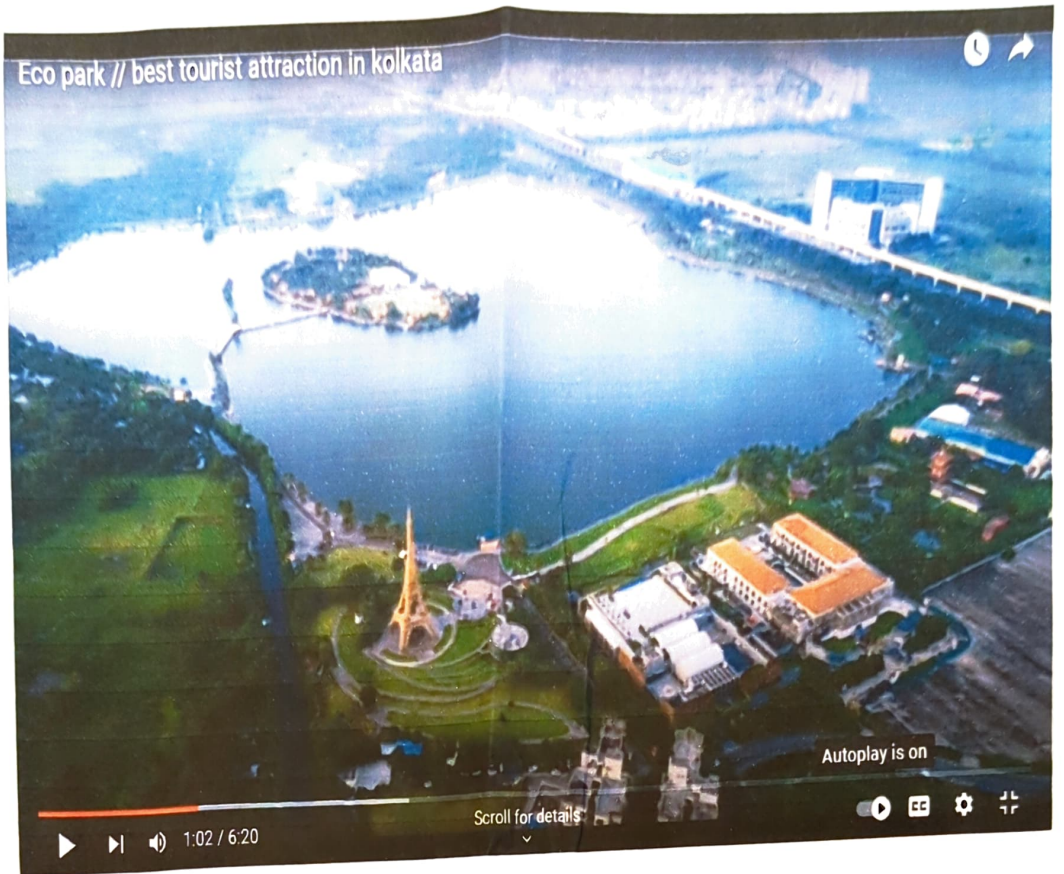
Maybe there are businesses out there that would explore the possibilities

Graffiti Walls	The wall along the South Parking has been rejuvenated by colourful paintings. The two sides of the wall had been taken up by two eminent artists of our era - Jogen Chowdhury and Subhaprasanna and transformed into canvases of artwork.
Butterfly Garden	The garden is poised to consist of a large dome to enclose a plant habitat consisting of different species of flowering annuals and perennials that support a large range of butterflies organised around a circular body of water.
Play Area	Right next to the Butterfly Garden, the Play Area offer learner's golf courses amidst a green landscape.
Bamboo Garden	The Bamboo Garden is a specialised garden showcasing multiple varieties of bamboo. The planting effects is designed to create a variety of experiences through imaginative bamboo plant mixes with species ranging from giant varieties to short grasses.
Fruits Garden	A thematic zone dedicated to the Bengal delicacy of fruits, to showcase the bountiful nature of this part of earth and to encourage nature learning through identification of fruit bearing trees.
Food Court	The Food Court will provide more affordable dining options to the visitors. Around 20 food stalls are being arranged in a cluster around a square courtyard that also has four dining pavilions.
Adda Zone	Placed opposite to the Artist's Cottage, the Adda Zone consists of simple seating arrangements overlooking the lake and the musical fountains.
Musical Fountain	As the name suggests, fountains, music and laser shows have been prepared on the Northern banks of the lake. The view is visible from all around the Park when the fountains start showering in the evenings and laser shows tell stories on the water screen.
Tea Garden	A touch and feel of Darjeeling has come up near Gate No. 1. This zone includes winding pathways through a tea plantation area – complete with a composting plant.
Mask Garden	Near the Northern parking lot and adjacent to the tea garden, this new zone has masks from various districts of West Bengal, then various states of India and finally from various countries of the world.
Eco Island	<p>A vast area of 480 acres of green terrain surrounding a water body is being developed in Eco Park which has been opened by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, West Bengal on 29 December 2012 for the public. Within Eco Park there is an island named 'SabujSathi'. The island is in centre of the huge lake of Eco Park comprising an area of 7 acres which is accessible only by boat. This is an uninhabited island. On this SabujSathi Island an amazing glass house has been built. All four sides of this 2,800 square feet building is made of glass. There are three open-air viewing galleries, green lawn and paved pathways in the island. Apart from the magnificent Glass House, there are also 22 well-furnished double bedded cottages along with one Cafeteria named CAFE EKANTE (a unit of WBHIDCO) in the island.</p> <p>A great number of persons can be assembled in SabujSathi Island having the facilities as</p>

Thematic Areas	Details
Glass House on Sabuj Sathi	"Sabuj Sathi" is the name of an Island. This island is in centre of the huge lake of Eco Park. Its area is 7 acres. It can be accessed only by boat. This is an uninhabited island. On this Sabuj Sathi Island a glass house has been built. All four sides of this 2,800 square feet building is made of glass. The 360° view of the Eco Park across the lake through the glass walls is extensive. There are three open-air viewing galleries, green lawn and paved pathways in the island. More than 100 persons can assemble in Sabuj Sathi island and glass house and its surroundings for official, corporate or family programmes. Wedding / Birthday parties, product launches and brand promotion can be done in a tranquil environment that is possible only on the zero populated island like Sabuj Sathi in Eco Park.
Amphitheatre	Artfully conceived, the semi-circular open gallery can hold up to 2,000 people. The stage-greenroom complex is, as if, 'floating' on water. The adjoining food gallery has interesting brick-twisted pillars that I have not seen elsewhere. The whole construction has been done by KMDA. The amphitheatre was inaugurated by Minister Firhad Hakim on 22 September 2014 at 5 pm.
Lake Front Promenade	Spine of the Eco Park, the Promenade is a paved, coconut-tree lined pathway designed for the visitors to enjoy the 112 Acre water body that defines the Park.
Seven Wonders Replica	Egyptian Pyramids of Giza, Brazil's Christ the Redeemer, Great Wall of China, India's Taj Mahal, Great Sphinx of Giza, Petra in Jordan, Eiffel Tower in France, Colosseum of Rome in Italy, Moai Statues of Easter Island.
Rabi Aranya	With reference to the spirit and ambience of Santiniketan Ashram, Rabi Aranya features trees and plants mentioned by Tagore in his literary works. Other elements of the garden include, among others, a commemorative pavilion, walkways, seating area, lotus pond, etc.
Tropical Tree Garden	As the name suggests, this zone caters specifically to tropical trees. Even with the recently planted trees, one can get the aura of a tropical forest, especially a Bengal one, in the middle of New Town.
Wild Flower Meadow and Formal Garden	A flower lover's zone, these two areas will have varieties of both garden and wild flowers to enjoy. Near to one of the food kiosks and overlooking the lakefront promenade, a walk among the meadow and the garden are highly solicited.
Rose Garden	This space is a long stretch of walk with varieties of roses planted along, colourful fountains sprinkling by, sculptures to feast the eye and occasional benches to rest a little.
Artist's Cottage	Overlooking the flower lake and breathing fresh air from the rose garden behind, this cottage is poised to be a dream destination to any poet, singer or painters to instigate their creative urges
Eco Children's Park	With fountains, play areas, sculptures and elevated platforms connected by causeways, this area is a dynamic space intended to stimulate play and learning experiences in a garden setting.

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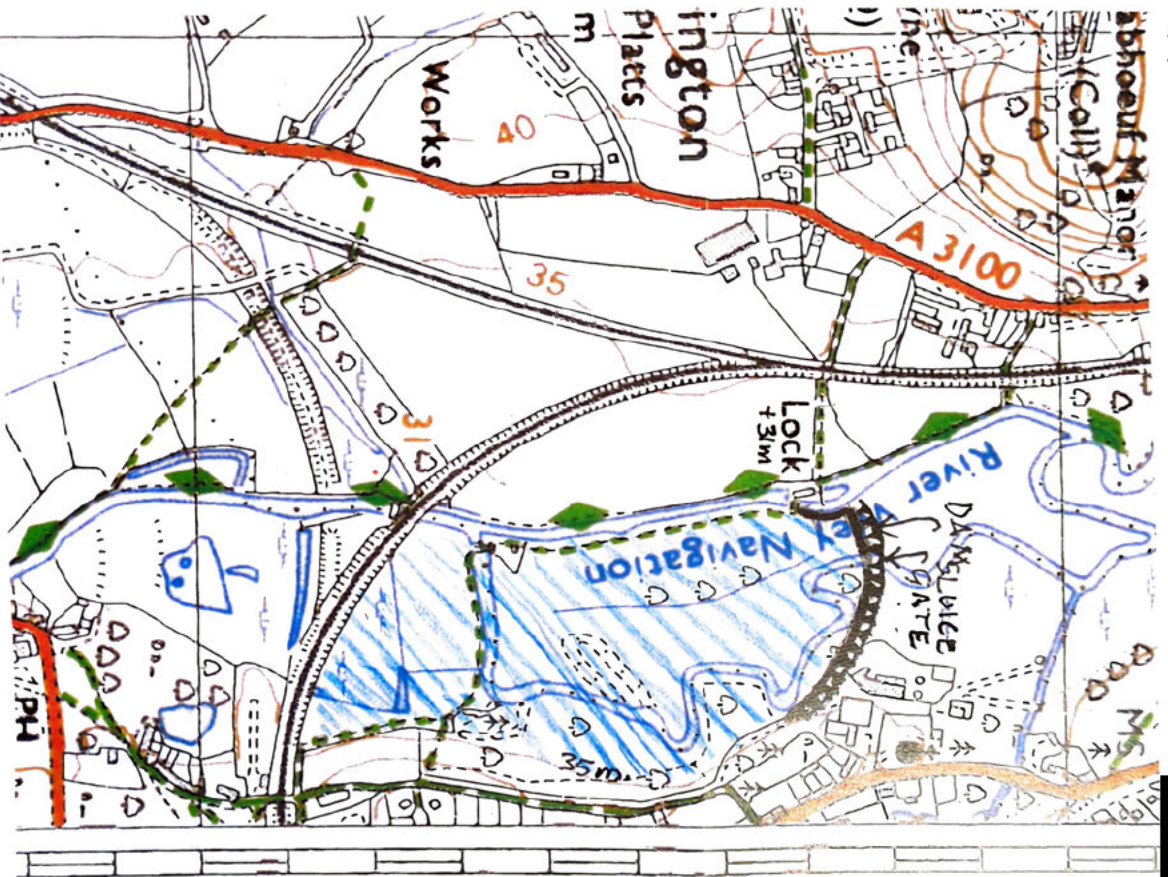




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PROPOSED RIVER WEY GUILDFORD
FLOOD PROTECTION SWALE.
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SCALE 1:625
19.04.2024

In my view building embankments each side of the river through Guildford is negative thinking.

It will obstruct opening up the riverside.

It will channel the flood down stream from Weyside Village all the way to Weybridge and the Thames.

In the event of heavy rain in Guildford rain will run down the hillsides and be trapped by the riverside embankments causing flooding.

It would be far better if the flood could be controlled upstream by a series of swales and remotely operated sluices.

The flood water could then sink in to the aquifer below Guildford from which water is drawn.

I attach an example of what I have in mind see attached sketch.

St. Catherine's lock on the Wey and Arun canal is at 31m elevation the surrounding land is about 1m lower.

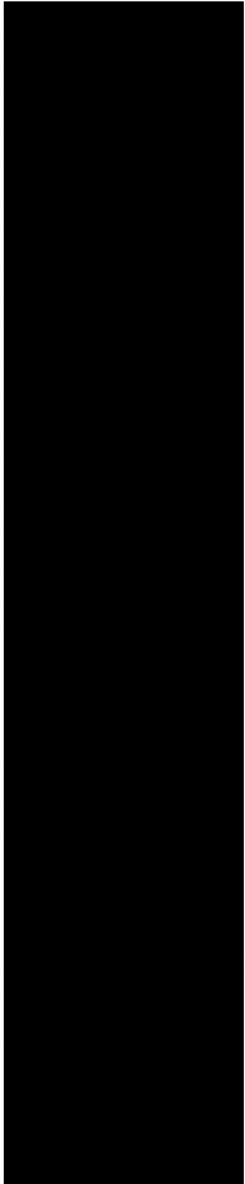
A 1m earth embankment from the lock to the hillside to the east could hold approximately 5 million litres in time of flood.

The sluice gate would be remotely controlled from the Environment Agency HQ.

When the flood had abated the sluice could be opened in stages to release the flood water back into the river.

Similar schemes all the way up river could control future flooding.

Best wishes



Guilford Flood Alleviation Team
Environment Agency

Dear Team Members

Consultation on the Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme

On behalf of [REDACTED] I am providing feedback on your current proposals for the Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme. Many thanks for consulting on your latest thoughts on a vital issue for Guildford.

(Terminology - **SGF** is Shaping Guildford's Future, which produced a flood report as part of it's latest outputs; **EA** is Environment Agency.)

a) Urgency.

Guilford has suffered with inadequate flood for years with consequent risks to:

- Life
- Current Property and Livelihood
- Potential development in the riverside area of the town, this also has an economic impact.

It is vital that an agreed flood alleviation program is agreed and funded as soon as is practical.

b) Upstream Storage

[REDACTED] notes that after consideration the EA considered upstream storage facilities for the Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme. The EA have now *"identified significant challenges in providing the required scale of upstream storage that would be needed to reduce flood risk in Guildford during large flood events. There were environmental and practical challenges, as well as economic considerations, which meant we were unable to take this option forward"*. (Source [REDACTED])

We also note that the EA are concerned about the life of the current Thames barrier which will need revision sooner than previously planned. Julie Foley, the Environment Agency's FCRM Strategy & National Adaptation Director, said: *"Sea levels are rising at an accelerated rate across the Thames Estuary, and it is therefore essential that we act now to respond to the changing climate. Our updated plan recognises that defence raising needs to start earlier than originally thought - by some 15 years. Alongside, the plan also requires greater investment in habitats and natural flood management to support nature recovery."* (Source BBC News Item May 2023)

Although this relates to flooding from the sea it does impact on the ability of the Thames to drain flood water into the sea with potentially longer periods when the Thames is in effect dammed by the barrier.

The EA already have a management challenge storing/letting water down the Thames and its tributaries in a controlled manner to avoid overtopping flood walls.

At the event an EA representative mentioned that the aim of the Flood Scheme in Guildford Town was to enable water to flow through the town at a faster rate and drain upstream of Guildford more effectively.

The proposed upstream storage was about 1.5 miles upstream, the river Wey is 87 miles long with a catchment area of 394 sq. miles.

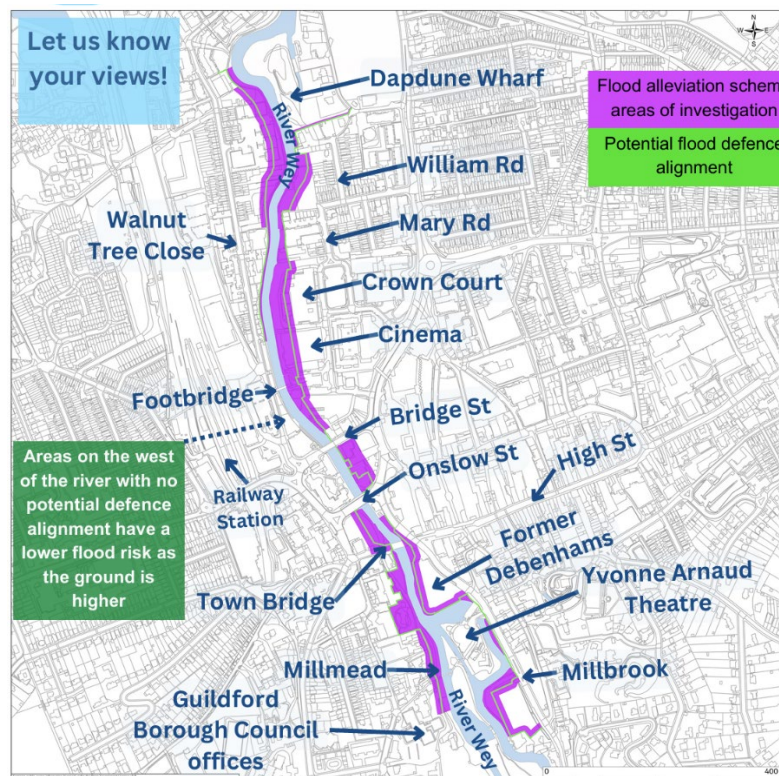
Two Questions:

- Are there other upstream storage options further upstream that are being considered?
- Is the EA planning to provide Storage Facilities below Guildford to avoid issues further down the Wey or Thames at times of flood?

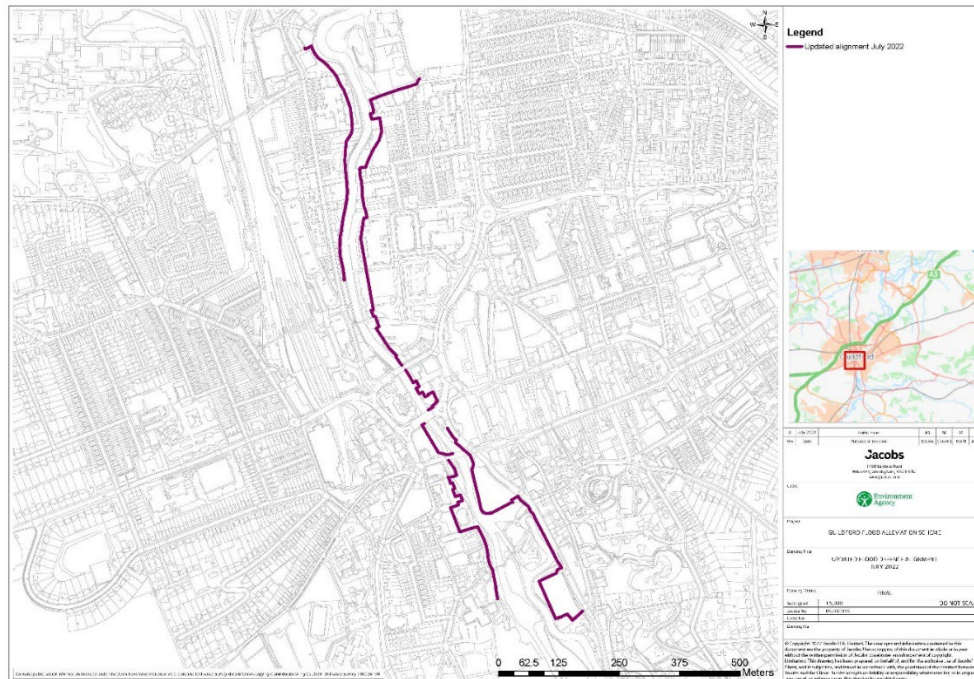
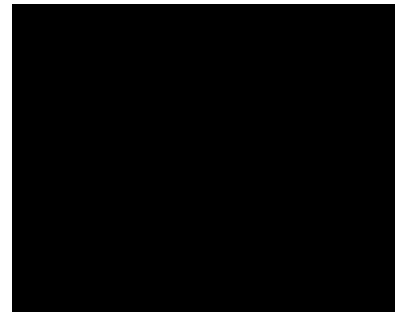
c) Flood Scheme for the centre of Guildford.

The plans proposed look to be a minor modification on the plans produced for SGF.

Plan as displayed (Jacobs Maps also displayed at the recent public consultation)



Map as shown in SGF Study.



We have the following concerns over the proposed route of the flood walls.

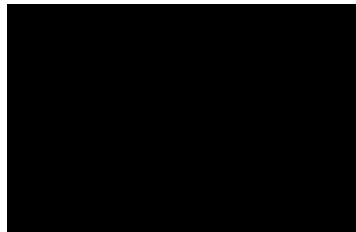
- I. The Town Bridge is a low bridge and in practice can get perilously close to being flooded, and also if blocked by branches etc can form a major blocker to the flow of a flooding river. Any flood prevention scheme should consider if the bridge needs to be raised (The bridge is a simple girder bridge with applied arches so feasible to reconfigure).
- II. Although some areas on the west side of the river have a lower flood risk it will still be worth evaluating the area for weaknesses e.g. drain covers placed at a lower level.
- III. The Thames Water Facility next to the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre is in a flood area, is it planned to flood proof this as a separate exercise, it is vital infrastructure. (it may be already protected?)
- IV. Similarly, no proposals are made for the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre and Mill Theatre are these to be considered?

d) Walls and Bunds.

The SGF study proposed various options on how walls and or bunds might be accommodated in the existing or planned built environment. Development is continuing apace in Guildford. It is understood that the EA has already discussed flood protection for the Riverside site. The developers appear to be proposing a substantial flood wall within the undercroft area of the proposed buildings on the advice of the agency.

In contrast, an application has come forward for an application for the Guildford Bus Garage has been submitted (23/P/02138) which makes no allowance for building a flood wall thus 'breaking' the proposed line of the flood prevention and limiting containment capacity.





It is important to provide clarity on desired heights as it will enable key sites in the Town Centre to be unlocked for development.

Should there be a simple statement of intent to guide Guildford Borough Council and Developers?

e) Pluvial Flooding



Implementing flood walls in the Town Centre risks trapping Pluvial flooding unless there is capacity to either store Pluvial Flows or pump the flow away. This a complex issue as Guildford like most to the UK has Drainage (Foul Water) mixed with Pluvial Flows. The increase in density of building in the town centre, plus loss of green areas, has exacerbated these issues over the decades. A robust strategy will be needed to address Pluvial **and** Fluvial flooding.

f) Downstream of Guildford.

The River Wey flows past significant sites as it goes downstream. Although the Slyfield (Weyside Urban Village) site is not directly in a Flood Zone the desire to have a faster flow through the town centre should be evaluated to ensure Slyfield remains a safe site, and that the flood meadows opposite the site have adequate capacity and inflow capability to cope with flood events.

The bridge on Ladymead which crosses the river at a low level, this may need evaluation to ensure it doesn't back up flood water.

We look forward to seeing more as your work advances. We have be awaiting proposals for several years we ask for a conclusion to be proposed soon.

I have copied this letter to GBC Officers 
 for information.

Yours Faithfully

