

## DESIGN AND SUPPORTING STATEMENT

*Application Site:* **The Bakehouse, 91-92 Findhorn IV36 3YG**

*Application Description:* **Installation of Flood Mitigation Barrier**

*Date:* **March 2024**

---

### Background

Bell Ingram is applying for planning application on behalf of Scottish Water for the installation of a flood mitigation barrier. Scottish Water has a duty to remove foul and surface water from within the curtilage of properties, and also to protect them from sewer flooding.

In some areas however sewer flooding occurs during periods of heavy rainfall, causing significant damage to building fabric and contents when it enters a property. Scottish Water can install flood mitigation measures, including floor doors and barriers, for customers in these locations. These measures can provide immediate protection against repeat events, significantly reducing potential for damage to buildings and the contents.

The flood barriers that Scottish Water install and maintain for their customers are designed and manufactured in the UK by Stormeister, a company which specialises in flood protection devices. Scottish Water has been successfully installing Stormeister uPVC flood mitigation measures in high-risk areas for over a decade, including properties that are located within conservation areas and listed buildings (including Limekilns in Fife, Union Street Conservation Area in Aberdeen, Greenhill Place in Edinburgh and Inverleith Row in Edinburgh).

When sewer flooding occurs during heavy rainfall events in Findhorn, sewage surcharges from drains and breaches the door thresholds, flooding the interiors. Properties in this area have been flooded internally on multiple occasions since 2021. Ongoing investigations are therefore being carried out to establish and resolved the cause of the flooding and Scottish Water has also agreed to install flood mitigation measures to the properties affected, with the customer agreement, to help protect against future flood events.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The proposal is to install a rapid assembly flood barrier in front of the existing timber door to the rear (northeast) of The Bakehouse. There would be two aluminium side tracks attached to the building permanently, into which three aluminium barrier sections would be deployed as required.

## **PLANNING JUSTIFICATION**

National and local planning policy principles seek to protect and enhance historic environment assets and places, and to enable positive changes. NPF4 requires the historic environment to be valued, protected and enhanced, both supporting the transition to net zero and ensuring assets are resilient to current and future impacts of climate change. NPF4 states that where adverse impacts cannot be avoided, they should be minimised.

Alterations to historic buildings should seek to preserve their special architectural, historic character and interest, and appearance. NPF4 requires the quality of design and suitable materials to be relevant considerations to alterations proposed to historic buildings and environments.

NPF4 however also places significant weight on tackling the climate change emergency, and seeks to encourage, promote and facilitate development which adapts to current and future impacts of climate change, to make places more resilient to climate change impacts. Development proposals to retrofit measures to existing developments that support adaptation to climate change should therefore be permitted.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed flood barrier is required to mitigate against sewer flood water entering the property from the garden via external doors, which has repeatedly caused extensive damage to the internal fabric and contents of the building. These flood events have become more frequent in recent years and are directly associated with the climate change emergency.

NPF4 supports the use of retrofit adaptations that are necessary in vulnerable areas such as this to address climate change. NPF4 also requires the quality of design and suitable materials to be relevant considerations to alterations proposed to historic buildings and environments. The proposed barrier is good quality design and the material suitable for the purposes of mitigating against flooding.

Scottish Water acknowledges however that the use of modern materials can alter the character and appearance of historic buildings. The only permanent change would however be the installation of the aluminium tracks and any impact on the character and appearance of the area would therefore be kept to the minimum possible, and on balance outweighed by the benefits of providing essential and effective flood mitigation at this time.

The granting of planning permission to install the Stormeister flood mitigation barrier would help to ensure that this historic building in the Conservation Area continues to be occupied/used and maintained, with a sustainable viable long-term future and valid insurance cover for the owners/occupiers.