



Guidance

How we engage in the planning process

How we work with Local Planning Authorities, Parish Councils and Developers

Local and Neighbourhood Plans

We are a specific consultation body in relation to Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. We look for policies that;

- Support the provision of new water and/or wastewater infrastructure,
- Seek to phase the occupation of development on individual housing allocation sites where we have identified that network reinforcement is required,
- Do not adversely impact the continued efficient operation of existing water and wastewater facilities,
- Prevent development that would lead to unacceptable deterioration in the quality and potential yield of groundwater and surface water sources, and
- Set water efficiency targets of 110l/p/d or lower in new development.

Responding to Planning Applications

Water companies are not statutory consultees on planning applications however, we encourage planning authorities to consult with us on major development proposals (>10 dwellings).

- We respond to planning applications on which we are consulted and will request planning conditions if necessary.
- Planning conditions, if implemented by the planning authority, facilitate the delivery of necessary infrastructure in parallel with the development.
- In some cases, new infrastructure such as new sewers and pumping stations will need to be built in order to make a connection – the majority of this cost would be covered by the developer through the New Infrastructure and site specific charges.
- We expect new development to apply the drainage hierarchy – surface water should not be allowed to drain to a foul or combined sewerage system, except as a last resort.
- If an application is approved without drainage conditions, we cannot subsequently delay a connection on the grounds of inadequate capacity.

When consulted on planning application we will assess:

- Adequacy of infrastructure capacity – water mains, sewers,
- Separation of foul and surface water disposal,
- Adequacy of nearby Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) capacity,
- Protection of Southern Water assets,
- Encroachment of development to WWTW and pumping stations – Odour issues,
- Protection of any existing water and sewerage mains,
- Trade Effluent/Prohibited discharges,
- Basements,
- Grease Traps – Restaurants etc.
- Adoption/Site layout.

Why should Developers consult with us?

To ensure that:

- Water mains, water treatment works and sewerage infrastructures all have sufficient capacity to meet the demands of the proposed development.
- An adequate supply of mains water can be provided for the proposed development to meet domestic and trade requirements.
- Public sewers with adequate capacity both foul and surface water are available or can be provided to serve the development correctly, or for alternative arrangements to be made.
- Development proposals in close proximity to Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) are avoided or appropriately mitigated otherwise odour impacts would be likely to arise.

Investment to accommodate growth

Our role in the development process

We are committed to providing the right infrastructure in the right place, at the right time, in collaboration with the planning authorities and developers

- Water companies have statutory obligations to provide water and wastewater services, we cannot refuse new connections and we are unable to object to new developments.
- We have a duty to ensure that the service we provide our existing customers does not deteriorate as a result of new homes being built.
- We are a statutory consultee on Local and Neighbourhood Plans, but not on individual planning applications.

Funding new wastewater infrastructure

There are two main mechanisms for funding new wastewater infrastructure, depending on what purpose that infrastructure is intended to serve. These two mechanisms cover:

Local Infrastructure – Developer funded

- Serves individual development
- New connection pipework (site specific charge)
- Network reinforcement (new infrastructure charge)

Strategic infrastructure – Business Plan funded

- Serves the wider community / catchment
- Wastewater treatment works
- Larger pumping stations
- Water quality improvement schemes

Strategic infrastructure

Two main drivers for investment in strategic infrastructure are to meet the demands of higher water quality objectives and population growth.

To effectively plan for growth Southern Water monitors population forecasts, as well as seeking to understand, through our engagement with local planning authorities, the likely location and timing of new development.

- Collation of population forecasts from sources such as ONS and DCLG.
- Maintain a database of housing developments of 10 or more units based on data produced by Local Authorities:
 - Allocations in adopted Local and Neighbourhood Plans
 - Five year supply of housing
 - Authority Monitoring Reports

Planning certainty is key to support our investment proposals. If a site is not in an adopted local plan we will be unlikely to gain funding from Ofwat