

APPENDIX 7-draft planning principles

Water UK

Principles governing the provision of water and drainage infrastructure for new development.

Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance on how water companies, Developers and other stakeholders should work to help enable the timely provision of infrastructure that is needed to allow housing development.

Under statute, water companies have duties to provide water and sewerage networks. When considering how to fulfil those duties, they also need to be mindful of the need to protect their customers by investing efficiently in new assets.

These duties need to be balanced but if all parties follow the principles outlined in this memorandum, this will help ensure that the right infrastructure, particularly sewerage infrastructure, is in place in advance of new developments being occupied.

As a starting point, reference can be made to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This states that 'the preparation of Local Plans should be the focus for ensuring that investment plans of water and sewerage companies align with development needs'.

Principles

- 1 Water companies understand the national priority to increase the rate of housebuilding and are committed to working constructively with Developers of all sizes and local planning authorities to enable new development.
- 2 Partnership working between water companies, local planning authorities and other local bodies, Developers and other infrastructure providers is vital to help water companies effectively plan for growth, particularly for strategic and/or large developments. A key requirement for effective partnership working is timely, regular and transparent communication between these parties and in particular between Developers and water companies.
- 3 For their part, water companies will positively engage in the local plan process and, where requested, provide assistance to local planning authorities in assessing the capacity of water and wastewater infrastructure to support development. They

will actively seek other available evidence to help understand where development is likely to occur and its timing.

- 4 Water companies are committed to increasing the public availability of the criteria they use for such capacity assessments.
- 5 Developers are in turn expected to signal future demands on the sewerage system by making pre-development enquiries to water companies and by using companies' pre-planning services. Developers will need to keep this information up-to-date as their development plans may change over time.
- 6 Water companies will provide information in response to such enquiries and approaches within a period agreed with the Developer and in any event within a reasonable period. They will also work to improve their ability to provide relevant information about overall treatment and network capacity and constraints.
- 7 Where these approaches have given water companies adequate information for planning purposes, they will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the infrastructure required for new development within a timescale that meets the Developer's requirements. This will help to minimise the imposition by planning authorities of pre-commencement/Grampian foul drainage conditions.
- 8 As set out in the PPG, it is for Developers to provide information about how the proposed development will be drained and wastewater dealt with if there are concerns arising from a planning application about the capacity of wastewater infrastructure. They are therefore encouraged to work with water companies and local planning authorities to provide sufficient information with their planning submission. This could be in the form of a drainage strategy which, where appropriate, identifies the scope for phased implementation of drainage for new developments
- 9 Where it is requested to do so, the water company will give the local planning authority and Developer adequate information to allow them to understand why the water company considers that a Grampian foul drainage condition is needed. The water company will also indicate the scope of information it considers necessary to aid the discharge of the condition.
- 10 Water companies will use all reasonable endeavours to work with the Developer to expedite the discharge of any such conditions.