



What is Our Role in Planning?

As a business, we encourage engagement and consultation with the developer community and the planning process. The earlier we know about new development coming forward – either as a future housing allocation or as a planning application right now – the more time we have to consider the suitability of our own infrastructure and plan investment.

Our duty as a statutory undertaker is to take away domestic wastewater, however we are not automatically required to accept surface water into our public network. Surface Water is the rainwater which runs from roofs and hard standing areas. To make sure that our network and our treatment works can accommodate future new residential and commercial development in the region we need to remove unnecessary surface water flows from our network and minimise further flows from being connected. So, it's really important that developers address the Preference of Hierarchy for surface water drainage (taken from the Building Regulations 2010):

- 1) Ideally it should flow to ground infiltration or a soak away system**
- 2) Or alternatively, an open or closed watercourse**
- 3) Next, if the first two options aren't available it should be directed to a surface water sewer**

- 4) and only if the above options aren't feasible, as a last resort it should enter the combined sewer network**

If disposal to a sewer is the only option, then our Pre-Planning Enquiry team will advise on suitable flow rates and connection points to maintain stable flow in the network and avoid the risk of downstream flooding. At the planning application stage we can influence what connects (the flows) where (the location) and when (timescale). If we miss this opportunity the potential implications could be sewer flooding and environmental pollution.

For all foul flows that enter our network we are required to maintain adequate provision and allow for growth through network reinforcement and treatment works upgrades. We create a "shopping list" of actions every five years (known to us as AMPs or Asset Management Plan cycles) and in the course of those five yearly cycles if investment is required our Tactical and Strategic Planning and Asset Delivery teams look to deliver it.

Who are the Other Key Drainage Bodies in The Planning Process?

The relevant Lead Local Flood Authority for an area and the Environment Agency are the statutory consultees for all drainage and environmental matters so they have the final say regarding proposed new development and how it will operate.

The Environment Agency (the EA)	Represents national government agenda and is responsible for strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion, as well as operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea. The EA sets out and controls the environmental compliance licences and permits that we must adhere to.
The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	Sits within the Local Authority of a given area. It is a statutory consultee responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management. It is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The LLFA also oversees the Highways department of a Local Authority which is responsible for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches.

The LLFA takes a lead role on being consulted for all matters relevant to drainage but will take on board the opinions and recommendations of the Environment Agency and the relevant Wastewater Authority.