**Water pre-application checklist**

**Introduction**

This guidance checklist has been designed to:

* help applicants during the pre-application process understand how their proposal could impact on the water environment; and
* assist applicants in minimising unintended consequences and identifying and maximising opportunities to enhance the water environment.

The guidance has been produced by Eunomia Research & Consulting and Land Use Consultants (LUC) and was commissioned by the Environment Agency (EA) as part of [the Local Planning Authorities Spheres of Influence project](https://www.oxcamlncp.org/projects/integrated-water-management/phase-2).

**Pre-application checklist**

The pre-application checklist for applicants below has been developed alongside a toolkit aimed at Local Planning Authority. The toolkit aims to assist Local Planning Authorities to maximise the potential of planning for the water system (flood risk, water resources, water quality and environment and wastewater. The checklist items align with the information contained in the toolkit.

You should use the boxes below to explain how you have considered each checklist item. You should also record a summary of your findings. By completing this checklist and discussing your responses with the relevant Local Planning Authority, you will demonstrate how you have considered the water system in your development.

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| **Pre-application** | |
| **General** | |
| Identify and engage with relevant water stakeholders and document your engagement activities | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Identify all water-specific policies in the relevant Local Plan and respond to them. (You can find the Local Plan on the Local Authority website). | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| If entering into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA), consider the inclusion of water related matters as necessary. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **Pre-application** | |
| **Flood risk** | |
| Use the [Environment Agency flood map](https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/) to find if the development is:   * + in flood zone 1, 2 or 3   + within 20 metres of a main river or a flood defence   + in a water storage area | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Review the Local Authority’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to find out if the development is:   * + in flood zone 1 now but will be at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea during its lifetime   + at risk from any other sources of flooding (surface water, groundwater and reservoirs) or it will be during its lifetime   + in flood zone 3b (functional floodplain) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check the site area and development classification in conjunction with the [vulnerability classification](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-classification) and it’s [compatibility with the site’s flood zone(s)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#table2) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check if your proposal requires a Flood Risk Assessment (As per Footnote 59 of the NPPF) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check if the [sequential test](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#the-sequential-approach-to-the-location-of-development) applies | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| If the sequential test can be satisfied, check if the exception test is also needed | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check with the relevant Local Planning Authority and the Lead Local Flood Authority what information on sustainable drainage systems is required | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Seek pre-application advice from the Environment Agency, the Lead Local Flood Authority and water and sewerage company | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **Pre-application** | |
| **Water Resources** | |
| Check if water supply is an issue that may require the submission of additional information to support your application. You could check infrastructure policies/Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDPs) and the Local Plan evidence base generally (which itself should ideally be informed by a Water Cysle Study or equivalent and water company business plans, and WRMPs etc) , to understand pressures / the resilience of water infrastructure, and the need for strong water efficiency. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check if the local plan includes any policies seeking to:  - minimise water usage of new development or environmental protections linked to abstraction for water supply (e.g. chalk streams policy that seeks to ensure flows are maintained to avoid deterioration and promote enhancement, or river restoration policies that seek to improve the environmental capacity of watercourses).  - introduce requirements to retrofit (water efficiency)  - introduce requirements to provide green and blue infrastructure, nature based solutions, and other multi-beneficial improvements for the water environment. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check with the Environment Agency if water supply for new development is presenting environmental risks (this would be preliminary advice in first instance, charged after this). | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check with the water company if there are any restrictions on water supply for new development (for example in some areas Essex and Suffolk Water and Anglian Water have restrictions on supply for non household development. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Seek pre-application advice from the Environment Agency, the Lead Local Flood Authority and water and sewerage company | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **Pre-application** | |
| **Water quality and the environment** | |
| Check if water quality is an issue that may require the submission of additional information to support your application. You could check relevant local plan policies on manging water quality risks (e.g. policies promoting SuDS to minimise risk of combined sewer overflows) and environmental enhancement. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Assess the extent to which water bodies are likely to be affected by the proposed scheme:   * Identify which water bodies could be affected and their status under the WFD (and causes) * Prepare a WFD assessment if necessary | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Consider what features you could add to the scheme which would lead to improvements to the water environment. These might include:   ​   * Landscaping, reedbeds, buffer zones or GI connections (which benefit the biological quality of rivers).   ​ * Reduced physical modifications, creating more natural drainage, incorporating permeable areas, introducing water efficiency measures such as greywater systems (which benefit hydromorphology).   ​ * SuDS, drainage plans and remediation of contaminated land (which could reduce pollution to improve physico-chemical quality and chemical quality).   This should be done alongside consideration of local plan policies and Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain objectives. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Seek pre-application advice from the Environment Agency, the Lead Local Flood Authority and water and sewerage company. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **Pre-application** | |
| **Wastewater** | |
| Check if a drainage plan is required | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Check to see if a connection to a public sewage treatment plant is possible following the Environment Agency [non-mains drainage guidance.](https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/Uploads/EA_LPA_advice_non_major_dev_non_mains_drainage_2019.pdf) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| If not, prepare a justification document including supporting information to understand potential implications for the water environment and how these have been addressed following the Environment Agency [non-mains drainage guidance.](https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/Uploads/EA_LPA_advice_non_major_dev_non_mains_drainage_2019.pdf) | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Seek pre-application advice from the Environment Agency, the Lead Local Flood Authority and water and sewerage company | Click or tap here to enter text. |