

SWDP 30: Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment

- A. All development proposals must demonstrate⁽⁶⁵⁾ that there are or will be adequate water supply and water treatment facilities in place to serve the whole development. For phased development proposals, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and water treatment capacity.**
- B. Development proposals in areas where there is no mains foul drainage provision should consider the hierarchy of drainage options set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance⁽⁶⁶⁾.**
- C. For housing proposals, it must be demonstrated that the daily non-recycled⁽⁶⁷⁾ water use per person will not exceed 110 litres per day.**
- D. For business / commercial proposals up to 1 April 2016, it must be demonstrated that the water use meets the British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) “very good” standard. Beyond 1 April 2016 the BREEAM “excellent” standard must be achieved.**
- E. Proposals that would result in an unacceptable risk to the quality and / or quantity of a water body or water bodies will not be permitted.**

Reasoned Justification

1. Policies SWDP 28, 29 and 30 are central to the South Worcestershire Councils’ (SWC) response to the Framework, which advocates that local plans incorporate strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008 over the longer term. This includes factors such as flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity.
2. Without effective local planning and risk management, the consequences of climate change may also have a significant detrimental impact on budgets and service delivery. It may also compromise the Government’s ability to meet the statutory requirements under the Climate Change Act 2008.
3. Local planning authorities have a general responsibility not to compromise the achievement of United Kingdom compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD⁽⁶⁸⁾) (Directive 2000/60/EC). More specifically, the SWDP has to take into account the River Severn Basin Management Plan, which in itself is a requirement of the WFD. All surface water bodies need to achieve “good ecological status” by 2015. The Localism Act 2011 enables the UK government to require local authorities to pay if their inaction results in a failure to meet WFD requirements. The Localism Act 2011 also requires local planning authorities to co-operate on strategic cross-boundary matters, for example the provision of water supply infrastructure, water quality, water supply and enhancement

65 Confirmation from Severn Trent Water is required.

66 Water Supply, Wastewater and Water Quality, sub-section 2, paragraph 20.

67 Mains water supply.

68 [Introduction to Water Framework Directive; Details of Water Framework Directive in England](#)

of the natural environment. Consequently, there is a need for developers to engage positively with Severn Trent Water (STW) to ensure that all the necessary infrastructure (including that identified in the South Worcestershire Water Cycle Study 2010 and its Addendum Reports 2012 and 2014) is secured, so as to ensure that there is no deterioration in the quality or quantity of water of the receiving water body(ies) and to avoid delays in the delivery of development.

4. The 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities to have regard to conserving biodiversity in carrying out all of their functions.
5. Recent flooding and storm events, most notably in July 2007, caused a significant amount of damage to property and service infrastructure. Many communities suffered psychological stress. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs forecast a significant increase in annual damage to properties, infrastructure and higher casualties. It is therefore of paramount importance that the SWDP sets out robust policies that provide protection of floodplains from inappropriate development and which minimise the impacts of future flooding and storm events. For the urban areas, where flooding is likely to have the greatest impact on buildings and local communities, the SFRA maps out three zones for which the associated restrictive policy on development will help minimise flood risk within and beyond the zones.
6. Most forms of development reduce the amount of rainfall that is intercepted by vegetation on the ground. Culverted watercourses have the potential to become blocked by debris during periods of heavy or sustained rainfall. They also offer little biodiversity or recreational interest relative to more natural watercourses. Even very small scale development can have detrimental implications for surface water run-off. In such cases, environmental and water quality benefits can be secured at minimal cost.
7. There are many areas that are served by small, localised waste water treatment works and non-mains drainage systems such as cesspools and septic tanks. These, if poorly designed or maintained, have the potential to cause significant detrimental impacts on the water environment and consequently to biodiversity and human health.
8. The South Worcestershire Water Cycle Study (2010, 2012, 2014) looks at the level of planned growth and the ability of the infrastructure (i.e. water supply and waste water treatment) to accommodate it without adversely affecting the natural water cycle. It identifies an overall shortage in future water supplies that necessitates the delivery of minimum water efficiency targets in advance of the Government's proposals.
9. The effective management of water is considered critical in the pursuit of sustainable development and communities. It reduces the impact flooding can have on the community, maintains water quality and quantity and helps to enhance local amenity / property value and biodiversity through the provision of Green Infrastructure. Effective water management also reduces the movement of water and sewage, thereby reducing energy requirements. Development proposals incorporating grey water recycling will therefore

be supported and opportunities for the retrofitting of water efficiency measures will be encouraged.

10. In implementing this suite of policies, i.e. SWDP 29, 30 and 31, the SWC will liaise and work with the EA, STW and the South Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership (as the Lead Local Flood Authority).