Sustainable Drainage

Policy WA2: Sustainable Drainage – Surface and Foul Water

A. All major developments must be supported by a site-specific drainage strategy or statement. Surface water must be discharged in the following order of the surface water hierarchy:

i. into the ground (infiltration), then

ii. to a surface water body, then

iii. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; and only then

iv. to a combined sewer.

B. Proposals must be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on-site and minimise the volume, and rate of, surface water discharge off-site. Such designs will be required to be integrated with the landscaped environment and the strategy for biodiversity net gain.

C. Developments on greenfield sites will be required to achieve greenfield run off rates.

D. Developments on brownfield sites must achieve greenfield run off rates wherever possible, particularly within Critical Drainage Areas. A relaxation on outflow controls and/or the extent of attenuation storage will only be permitted with the written agreement of the LLFA and the LPA at an early stage of an application/proposal. The rate of discharge will not be permitted to exceed the rate of discharge for the development prior to the redevelopment for that event. Applicants must submit clear evidence of existing operational connections from the site with associated calculations on rates of discharge to demonstrate any reduction that deviate from achieving greenfield runoff rates.

E. Applicants must consider site topography, naturally occurring flow paths, ephemeral watercourses (where watercourses may only flow temporarily) and any low-lying areas where water naturally accumulates. Applications will be required to consider exceedance / overland flow paths from existing and proposed drainage features and confirm ground levels, finished floor levels and drainage details. Resultant layouts must take account of such circumstances to ensure a flood resilient design is achieved and water is not deflected or constricted.

F. For any development proposal which is part of a wider development or allocation, a site-specific drainage strategy or statement must be part of a holistic site-wide drainage strategy. Pumped drainage systems must be avoided wherever possible. The proliferation of pumping stations on a phased development, will not be acceptable.

G. The Council also supports retrofitting SuDS in existing developments to improve water management.

H. Impermeable surfaces in gardens or landscaped areas will not be allowed unless they contribute to managing surface water runoff effectively.

I. Applicants for major development must engage with United Utilities or relevant water authorities early in the planning process to assess the need for infrastructure upgrades or improvements. New developments should make provisions for connection to the mains foul water network where available.

J. Proposals which are likely to result in contaminants entering formal surface or foul water drainage systems will not be permitted, without the express consent of the asset owner.

Places for Everyone Links

Policy JP-S2; and JP-S4.

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO3 and SO7

10.16. The Council is committed to ensuring that all development within the borough is supported by adequate surface and foul water drainage systems, which protect public health, safeguard the environment, and contribute to sustainable growth. This policy aims to regulate and manage foul water infrastructure, minimise flooding risks, and encourage environmentally responsible practices in all new developments.

10.17. The application of the hierarchy for managing surface water is a key requirement for development sites to reduce flood risk and the impact on the environment. Clear evidence must be submitted by applicants to demonstrate why alternative and more preferable options in the surface water hierarchy are not available.

10.18. The preference of the Council is that all new developments and major redevelopments, incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff. This can include measures such as rainwater harvesting, permeable surfaces, green roofs, and other natural SuDS features that enhance biodiversity and water quality simultaneously. Only where these options are not feasible should discharge to public surface water or combined sewers be considered.

10.19. Foul and surface water must be considered early in the design process. Sustainable drainage should be integrated with the landscaped environment and designed in accordance with the four pillars of sustainable drainage (water quantity, water quality, amenity and biodiversity). It should identify SuDS opportunities, including retrofit SuDS opportunities, such as green roofs; permeable surfacing; soakaways; filter drainage; swales; bioretention tree pits; rain gardens; basins; ponds; reedbeds and wetlands. Any drainage should be designed in accordance with ‘Ciria C753 The SuDS Manual’, sewerage sector guidance, or any subsequent replacement guidance.

10.20. Drainage details, ground levels and finished floor levels are critical to ensure that proposals are resilient to flood risk and climate change. It is good practice to ensure the external levels fall away from the ground floor

level of the proposed buildings (following any regrade), to allow for safe overland flow routes within the development and minimise any associated flood risk from overland flows. In addition, where the ground level of the site is below the ground level at the point where the drainage connects to the public sewer, care must be taken to ensure that the proposed development is not at an increased risk of sewer surcharge. It is good practice for the finished floor levels and manhole cover levels (including those that serve private drainage runs) to be higher than the manhole cover level at the point of connections to the receiving sewer.

10.21. Holistic site-wide drainage strategies will be required to ensure a coordinated approach to drainage between phases and developers, particularly where this is likely to occur over several years. Applicants must demonstrate how the approach to drainage on any phase or parcel of development within a larger site will connect into and support the site-wide strategy and/or infrastructure to enable and accommodate interconnecting phases. Where necessary, the holistic drainage strategy must be updated to reflect any changing circumstances between each phase(s). The strategy shall demonstrate communication with infrastructure providers and outline how each phase interacts with other phases.

10.22. Applicants are expected to provide information on their sustainable drainage proposals in the following documents:

a) Completed SuDS Pro-forma which assists in confirming approach;

b) Drainage strategy or statement which takes account of the recommendations from the site-specific flood risk assessment where applicable; and where necessary

c) A site-specific flood risk assessment

10.23. Where a site-specific flood risk assessment is required, this can be combined with the drainage strategy or statement.

Consultation Question 10-2

Do you support Policy WA2? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.