
PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE: SEWAGE PUMPING STATIONS

WATER MANAGEMENT UNIT

**A Guidance Note for Planning Officers and
Applicants for Planning Permission. June 2010**



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1. Scope

- 1.1 This document is intended to be a quick reference guide for Planning Officers dealing with, and for potential planning applicants intending to make, a planning application for a sewage pumping station.
- 1.2 More detailed information on how Water Management Unit interacts with the Planning System can be found in the document titled 'Water Management Unit General Planning Guidance Note – A Guidance Note for Planning Officers and Applicants for Planning Permission', which can be found on the NIEA website at <http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/> .

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Water Management Unit (WMU) is the unit within the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) with responsibility for the protection of the aquatic environment.

3. What Is WMU's Role In The Planning System?

- 3.1 WMU's role in the planning system is to act as a consultee to Planning Service, an Agency within the Department of the Environment.
- 3.2 Once an applicant makes a planning application Planning Service will forward consultees a copy of the application form, all relevant plans and any other supporting documents that are submitted with the planning application. WMUs role is thus to advise Planning Service of the likely or potential impacts of the proposed development on the aquatic environment during its construction, operation and eventual decommission, if applicable.

4. How Does WMU Respond To Planning Consultations For Sewage Pumping Stations?

- 4.1 WMU will assess all the information submitted to it as part of the application from Planning Service. WMU will then identify any potential impacts on the aquatic environment and advise Planning Service accordingly.
- 4.2 WMU may request further information from the applicant through Planning Service. This may delay a planning decision. It is therefore important that the applicant has included all relevant information (see section 7), in the application, in relation to the proposed development's potential impact on the aquatic environment.

- 4.3 It is important to note that WMU only advises Planning Service, it can not make a decision on whether or not a planning application receives planning permission. Planning Service is responsible for deciding whether or not planning permission will be granted.
- 4.4 WMU is committed to working with applicants, through Planning Service, where a risk to the aquatic environment has been identified.

5. WMU Will Highlight Any Statutory Water Quality Requirements For A Sewage Pumping Station.

- 5.1 WMU has a responsibility to ensure that sewage pumping stations, which have a potential impact on the aquatic environment, comply with a number of statutory permissions.
- 5.2 Although it is not a statutory requirement to have the relevant permissions in place prior to applying for planning permission, it is desirable and will help WMU make an informed and timely response to Planning Service. If all the relevant permissions have been granted it is extremely unlikely that WMU would object to planning permission.
- 5.3 Developers should therefore consider if their proposed sewage pumping station requires any of the following statutory permissions:

- **A Discharge Consent**

If your proposed sewage pumping station has an emergency overflow, or a storm overflow function, you will require a discharge consent issued under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999¹.

You may also require discharge consents for site drainage during the construction phase and the operational phase. These will be stand alone consents, and will therefore require separate applications.

- **A FEPA Licence**

If your proposed sewage pumping station will involve any construction works that will occur within 50 metres of the Mean High Water Spring Tide mark you may require a licence issued under Part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985² (A FEPA Licence). This also applies to proposed pipeline outfalls terminating in the sea. You should therefore notify WMU's Marine Assessment

¹ Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, SI 1999 No. 662 (N.I) 6

² Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, (c.48)

and Licensing Team if you plan any work close to the coast so that they can determine if you will require a FEPA Licence.

- **An Abstraction/Impoundment Licence**

If your proposed sewage pumping station includes the excavation of a storage structure, depending on the geological setting, the potential exists for the water table to be encountered during these works. If water is encountered, an appropriate abstraction/impoundment licence issued under the Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006³ may be required.

6. WMU Will Also Offer Advice On Pollution Prevention

6.1 WMU will recommend that the developer strictly follows the guidance provided by the relevant Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs) during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of a development. PPGs can be downloaded at <http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/links/107968.aspx> . PPGs are targeted at a particular industrial sector or activity, they outline statutory responsibilities and provide guidance on good practice to reduce pollution risk.

6.2 The most relevant PPGs for the construction and operation of a sewage pumping station are:

PPG 1 –	General guide to the prevention of pollution;
PPG 2 –	Above ground oil storage tanks;
PPG 5 –	Works and maintenance in or near water;
PPG 6 –	Working at construction and demolition sites;
PPG 20 –	Dewatering of underground ducts and chambers;
PPG 21 –	Pollution incident response planning;
PPG 27 –	Installation, decommissioning and removal of underground storage tanks;

This list is not exhaustive; advice offered by other PPG's may be relevant for certain projects.

6.3 WMU may also offer site specific advice on a case by case basis.

7. What Should I Include In My Planning Application?

7.1 WMU has no statutory authority to require particular information to be included in a planning application. It is Planning Service's duty to inform applicants as to what information they are required to include.

³ Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, SR 2006, No. 482

- 7.2 However, it is in the interest of the applicant to provide enough information in their planning application to enable WMU to make an informed and timely response to Planning Service.
- 7.3 WMU would recommend that the following information be included, where appropriate, in a planning application:
- A copy of any statutory permissions granted by WMU for the proposed site;
 - Details of how site drainage from the site will be dealt with during both the construction and operational phases. WMU would recommend the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to deal with surface water runoff. Construction of SuDS should comply with the design and construction standards as set out in the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) manual C697. A separate site handbook (C698) for the construction of SuDS has also been produced by CIRIA.
 - Maps of the site indicating the location of any waterways;
 - A Method of Works Statement which identifies the work processes that may potentially impact on the aquatic environment, and proposed mitigation measures, during the construction phase of the proposed sewage pumping station. The Statement should also identify relevant PPG's and how they will be applied.
 - Where the proposed development of a sewage pumping station has the potential to alter surface or groundwater flow/quality, a hydrological or hydrogeological risk assessment may be required.
 - It may also be a requirement of The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999⁴, that an environmental impact assessment be conducted and included.
- 7.4 Not all of the information detailed will be appropriate for every planning application. However, every effort should be made by the applicant to include all relevant information, as failure to do so may result in WMU requested missing information. This may delay the issue of a planning decision.
- 7.5 You should contact WMU if you require any further information on WMU's requirements.

⁴ The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999, SR 1999 No. 73.

8. How Do I Contact The Water Management Unit?

- 8.1 In the first instance you can find a raft of useful information on our website at <http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/> , including application forms and guidance notes for applying for the relevant permissions.
- 8.2 Alternatively you can request information through our Information Management Team via email: waterinfo@doeni.gov.uk
- 8.3 You may wish to write to us at:
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Water Management Unit
17 Antrim Road
Lisburn
BT28 3AL
- 8.4 Or you can contact us by telephone on the following number: 028 92 623 100.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Klondyke Building
Cromac Avenue
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast BT7 2JA
T. 0845 302 0008

Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote
the natural environment and built heritage for
the benefit of present and future generations.

www.ni-environment.gov.uk



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Environment

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