

**From:** Ruth Hall [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 June 2017 12:28  
**To:** Neighbourhood Planning  
**Subject:** Wessex Water Consultation Response Whitchurch Village Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for consulting Wessex Water on the Whitchurch Village Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Wessex Water provide sewerage services to the Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan area. We have existing operational assets within the area. It is likely that within the plan period we will need to undertake maintenance and improvements works to our existing assets and to deliver new infrastructure to serve future planned development. Such works are essential to deliver a reliable service and meet environmental requirements. As a statutory undertaker, some works are permitted development but certain works will require us to seek express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority.

*Policy WV 2.1- Positive green buffer management between Whitchurch Village and Bristol Development will not be permitted outside the housing development boundary, as defined on Fig.13 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between Whitchurch Village and Bristol or reducing their separate identity by:*

- a) Reducing the gap between Whitchurch Village and Bristol or,*
- b) Increasing the density of development within existing curtilages*

Policy WV 2.1 should distinguish between new housing development and infrastructure development when establishing locational restrictions. There are often constraints on location associated with siting new sewerage infrastructure due to the need to take account of existing assets (which may be below ground) and topography. The policy should incorporate greater flexibility to permit the delivery of infrastructure development within the gap between Whitchurch Village and Bristol.

*Policy WV2.3- The Visual impact of new development on views into and from the countryside must be minimised.*

*An assessment of views to and from the proposed development must be included in a supporting Visual Impact Statement. Visual impact should be minimised through the design of the site layout, buildings and landscape. The approach to minimising visual impact must be fully explained in the visual impact statement.*

The design requirements under Policy WV2.3 should recognise that infrastructure development and maintenance by utility companies by its nature needs to be functional and considerations such as security and health and safety must take precedence over appearance. While we seek to ensure design is as sensitive to its location as possible, there are often constraints on location, materials (for example requirements to meet national security standards) and size/form (driven by operational requirements). We are concerned that Policy WV2.3 may be overly restrictive when we are seeking consent to undertake maintenance/improvement works to our existing infrastructure. In response to development requirements, we may also need to construct new above ground infrastructure during the plan period. At present Policy WV2.3 requires all development to provide a visual impact assessment. Many of the planning applications we make are for small-scale proposals. We are concerned that the requirement under Policy WV2.3 will add to the cost and administration involved with seeking planning consent. The requirement should be proportional to the scale and nature of the development proposed.

I trust that you find the above of use, however please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information or clarification.

Regards

Ruth

**Ruth Hall**  
Wessex Water  
Planning Liaison

