

**Ribble Valley Borough Council**  
**Core Strategy (2008-2028) A Local Plan for Ribble**  
**Valley**

**Examination in Public**

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF UNITED UTILITIES WATER PLC**

**May 2014**

## Introduction

Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) has submitted the core strategy for the period 2008-2028 for examination. In accordance with national planning policy (specifically paragraph 162 of the National Planning Policy Framework and its predecessor PPS12), as well as, the status of United Utilities Water PLC (UUW) as a statutory consultee in the preparation of development plans, UUW has worked closely with the local planning authority on the preparation of a new local plan. This statement is provided in response to the examination hearings in January 2014. As a result of these hearings, a position statement on infrastructure has been requested. RVBC and UUW have engaged in meaningful discussion regarding the practical issues associated with most appropriately managing the impact of the development proposed during the plan period on water and wastewater infrastructure.

### 1) United Utilities Water PLC

UUW is the statutory water and wastewater undertaker for the north west of England and its area of operation includes Ribble Valley Borough (RVB). As the statutory water and wastewater undertaker for the North West of England, UUW has a duty to ensure that an area is "effectually drained" and that there is "an efficient and economical system of water supply". This includes working with planning authorities on planning policies and developers on detailed proposals to most appropriately manage the impact on infrastructure.

### 2) The Determination of Investment Decisions by Water and Sewerage Companies

Every five years Ofwat, the economic regulator of the water industry, carries out a review of the prices that the appointed water and sewerage companies can charge their customers. This includes taking decisions on the services customers receive and the investment companies need to carry out. Ofwat determine these charges on the basis of best value for customers. The most recent price review by Ofwat occurred in 2009. The next review is scheduled for 2014 and is ongoing.

The preparation of local authority development plans provides strategic co-ordination between development planning and infrastructure planning. Water and sewerage companies are a statutory consultee through the development plan process. The planning process provides details on where growth may occur and is one factor which helps to inform the five yearly investment submission to Ofwat and infrastructure investment forecasts. The degree of confidence is improved where our investment decisions are based on up to date development plans and planning permissions as opposed to unforeseen, unallocated sites. This is often not the case due to a lack of up to date development plans and a disconnect between the timing for the preparation of development plans and the timing for the five yearly price review investment submissions to Ofwat. It is also important to note that development plans cover 15 year periods. In contrast the price reviews of water and sewerage companies cover 5 year periods.

There are practical issues associated with the time that it takes to respond to the delivery of new infrastructure to meet the needs of new development. Notwithstanding the fact that water and sewerage companies are not a statutory consultee on the determination of applications for planning permission, the planning process offers an opportunity for water and sewerage undertakers to minimise the impact of growth on the well-being of the community and the environment. The

planning system affords a water and sewage company an opportunity to work with a developer to minimise the impact of development and to understand the detail of the development and the timing for the delivery of new development so that the impact can be managed and coordinated with the delivery of any infrastructure upgrades that may be necessary. Alongside other intelligence, the development plan system offers an opportunity to take a holistic view of where and when development will occur. In contrast to ad hoc windfall applications, a plan led system allows a better understanding of the cumulative impacts of development to be considered over the longer term so that the infrastructure investment response is also long term and holistic rather than short term and piecemeal. This is important as Ofwat expect water and sewerage companies to operate efficiently.

For both water and wastewater, the impact of growth on infrastructure is dependent on location. It is very relevant to note that this document is a core strategy and not a site allocations development plan document. Different sites will have different impacts. It is not possible to simply look at the overall growth for the borough or region and make long term investment decisions. The impact of growth is also informed by the detail of the drainage proposals, the connection points for water and wastewater, the rates of discharge, the nature of the occupier and the size of sites. It is particularly important to have regard to whether both foul and surface water will discharge to the public sewerage system. The flows that arise from a surface water discharge are significantly greater than the flows that arise from a foul water discharge. Surface water connections therefore have potential to put a significant strain on wastewater infrastructure.

### 3) U UW Position

In the full spirit of the plan making process and in accordance with paragraph 162 of the NPPF, U UW has engaged in meaningful discussion with RVBC regarding development. U UW has advised RVBC that a fuller understanding of the impact on water and wastewater infrastructure can only be understood once more details are known, such as, the timescales for development, the approach to surface water management and the chosen points of connection for water and wastewater infrastructure. Once more information is available, which unfortunately is often only made available at the planning application stage, we will be able to better understand the impact on infrastructure and as a result it may be necessary to coordinate the delivery of development with the timing for the delivery of infrastructure improvements. Paragraph 8.3 and the penultimate bullet point of Policy DMG1 of the Submission Draft Core Strategy reflect this position.

In our discussions with RVBC, we have highlighted the importance of ensuring development is undertaken in accordance with the most sustainable approach to surface water management. The flows that arise from a surface water discharge are significantly greater than the flows that arise from a foul water discharge. Surface water connections therefore have potential to put a significant strain on wastewater infrastructure. U UW notes Policy DME6 and other policy references which reflect the fact that the treatment and processing of surface water is a not a sustainable solution. U UW has highlighted the importance of the surface water hierarchy in line with Government guidance to ensure SUDs (sustainable urban drainage systems) are explored fully in advance of any connection to sewers. Justification will be required for any development seeking to connect surface water to the sewer network. In addition, any surface water connection must be at an agreed attenuated rate. SuDS will be expected in all new developments where technically feasible in order

to minimise the impact of surface water run-off. Justification must be provided for any development seeking to connect to the sewer network to demonstrate that all other options have been explored with reasoning for why alternative solutions are not practicable.

At the larger development sites where development will take place on a phased basis and potentially by more than one developer, we have highlighted the importance of coordination between phases of development and developers as part of a wider and holistic strategy in the interest of securing sustainable drainage systems. This approach was reflected in our recent response to the application for planning permission at the strategic site known as Standen. A copy of our response to this application is included with this statement.

In our discussions with RVB we have also encouraged a policy on water efficiency. We believe this to be a valuable part of the delivery of sustainable development and this is reflected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to last bullet point of Policy DMG1 which states the Code for Sustainable Homes should be incorporated into schemes. Level 3 and 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes set water efficiency targets above and beyond that required by current building regulations.

Finally, given the volumes of development it is likely that there will be a need to undertake infrastructure upgrades and we request support through the planning process for any future capital investment programme that may be required. United Utilities is committed to supporting the delivery of development and economic growth in the North West and a key element of this is a planning system which is supportive of our capital investment needs. At the current time, we believe it may be necessary to invest at Whalley and Clitheroe Wastewater Treatment Works and in water and wastewater networks throughout the borough.

UUW notes that there remains discussion regarding the quantum of development to come forward. This discussion is concurrent with the continued submission and determination of ad hoc windfall applications in RVB. UUW notes the discussion in respect of the overall housing requirement and therefore the Inspector may conclude there is a need for additional housing. The advice of UUW is that any additional housing development should be focused in Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley in accordance with Key Statement DS1 Development Strategy rather than other smaller settlements. These are the key settlements in the borough. Focusing development in these locations would facilitate appropriate management of UUW's assets and the delivery of sustainable development.

As noted above, if a decision is taken to allocate additional housing to these settlements, UUW would wish to better understand the actual location of the proposed housing, the approach to surface water disposal, the timescales for commencement of development and the rate of delivery to determine the impact of the proposal on water and wastewater infrastructure. It may be necessary to co-ordinate the delivery of development with the delivery of infrastructure in accordance with paragraph 8.3 and Policy DMG1.

Mr J Macholc  
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Your ref: 3/2012/0942  
Our ref: DC/12/4502

1 September 2013

Dear Mr Macholc

**Location: Land at Higher Standen Farm**

**Proposal: Application Reference 3/2012/0942**

*Outline application for planning permission comprising:*

- 1,040 residential dwellings:
  - 728 market homes;
  - 312 affordable homes;
  - 156 of the total (1040) would be for elderly people (i.e. over 55 years of age) of which 78 would be affordable;
  - 0.8 ha to be reserved for retirement living within the total of 1040 homes.
- 0.5 ha for local retail, service and community facilities (Classes A1 to A4, B1 and D1);
- 2.25 ha for employment (Class B1) accommodating up to a maximum gross floorspace of 5,575 m<sup>2</sup>;
- 2.1 ha of land for a primary school site;
- public open space including green corridors and areas for tree planting and landscaping;
- an improved (roundabout) junction between Pendle Road the A59;
- new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses onto Pendle Road and Littlemoor;
- new pedestrian and cycle accesses onto Worston Old Road;
- temporary vehicular access onto Worston Old Road;
- new pedestrian and cycle access from the end of Shays Drive;
- roads, sewers, footpaths, cycleways, services and infrastructure including:
  - a Sustainable Urban Drainage System;
  - new services such as gas, electricity, water and telecommunications.

This letter sets out United Utilities updated comments following our letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013, Ref: DC/12/4502.

As can be seen from the description of the proposal set out on the application form, this is a significant application for major development which has been the subject of detailed discussions between the applicant and United Utilities PLC. In particular, United Utilities PLC notes the reference to the proposed use of a sustainable urban drainage system which is inherent within the description of the development submitted by the applicant on the application form. United Utilities PLC encourages the council to retain this full description in any permission which may be granted to avoid the potential for any ambiguity in any decision notice.

United Utilities PLC has no objection to the planning application, subject to the inclusion of all the following conditions. Please note that these conditions have been the subject of detailed discussions with the applicant and are included to reflect the strategic nature of the proposal. The size and strategic nature of this proposal is clearly reflected in the description of the development and the identification of the site in the emerging local plan. The conditions have been drafted to reflect the fact that this site will be constructed in a phased manner over a number of years and, most likely, by numerous developers. In such circumstances, it is imperative that the delivery of the site is undertaken in accordance with a strategic and coordinated approach to the delivery of all infrastructure, including water and wastewater. We consider this necessary and reasonable.

If the council chooses to amend the conditions which we have advised for attachment to any planning permission that may be granted, United Utilities PLC would be grateful to be re-consulted on their exact form so that they can be fully reviewed by United Utilities PLC and its legal advisers.

It is imperative that the site is drained on a separate system, with only foul drainage connected into the public sewer. Surface water should discharge to the most sustainable form in accordance with the details submitted as part of the application submission. Discharges to watercourse may require the consent of the local authority. Surface water should not be allowed to drain to the public sewer as there are alternatives to the public sewer available.

Whilst high level drainage strategies have been lodged to inform the outline application for planning permission, we advise the attachment of the following conditions to any approval to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to water and wastewater infrastructure is secured and inherent within any permission granted.

### **Phasing**

1. At the same time or prior to the submission of the First Reserved Matters application for the development hereby permitted, a Phasing Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Phasing Plan shall include details of the maximum number of dwellings and other development to be implemented within each phase of the development. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved Phasing Plan.

[The Phasing Plan may be amended from time to time with the written approval of the Local Planning Authority provided that if the proposed phasing is likely to give rise to any significant environmental effects which have not been assessed under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 then such amended Phasing Plan shall be accompanied by an Environmental Statement prepared in accordance with the said 2011 Regulations.]

*Reason: To ensure the satisfactory phasing of the development and to ensure that the development, including affordable housing, open space, employment, community uses and utility infrastructure is delivered in a coordinated, planned way.*

### **Drainage General**

2.
  - 2.1. At the same time as the submission of the First Reserved Matters application for a phase or part of a phase of the development hereby permitted a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval (in consultation with United Utilities PLC) such strategy to include the following details as a minimum:
    - a. the proposed foul connection points to existing public sewerage infrastructure for the entire site. This shall clearly show the points of connection for the foul flows into the existing public sewerage network from all phases of development defined under condition 1;

- b. the details of any additional off-site drainage infrastructure required as a result of the entire development; and
  - c. any drainage infrastructure connections (foul and surface water) between the different phases of the development defined by condition 1. Where drainage infrastructure connects development from different phases, it will be necessary to show how much development will be served by the connecting drainage infrastructure.
- 2.2. At the same time as the submission of each subsequent Reserved Matters application for a phase or part of a phase, an updated Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval (in consultation with United Utilities PLC), such Strategy to include as a minimum the details listed above at condition 2.1.
- 2.3. Unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority (in consultation with United Utilities PLC), there shall be no foul and surface water connections between phases of development defined (and as may be amended from time to time) by condition 1 other than in accordance with the connections identified and approved under item 2.1.c. The detailed drainage schemes for each phase of development required by conditions 4, 5 and 6 shall be submitted for approval in accordance with the foul and surface water drainage details approved under this condition.
- 2.4. No development shall be commenced on any phase or part of any phase of the development hereby permitted unless and until the Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted with the relevant Reserved Matters application has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with United Utilities PLC.

*Reason: To ensure a holistic approach to the construction of the detailed drainage infrastructure for the site so that the drainage infrastructure which is constructed is able to cope with the foul and surface water discharges from the entire development site. This condition is imposed in light of policies set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Ribble Valley Borough Local Plan Policy G1.*

3) For the avoidance of doubt, surface water shall drain separately from the foul. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, no surface water shall discharge directly or indirectly into the public foul, combined or surface water sewerage systems in accordance with the Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted and approved pursuant to condition [2] above and with the details contained in the submitted application form, flood risk assessment prepared by Amec Environment and Infrastructure dated October 2012, and the Foul Water and Surface Water Management Strategies for the whole site produced by Amec in January 2013.

*Reasons: To prevent flooding and pollution.*

#### **Foul Drainage**

4. Prior to commencement of any phase or part of any phase of the development hereby permitted, full details of the foul drainage scheme for that phase including full details of any connections to the foul sewer network and any necessary infrastructure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (in consultation with United Utilities PLC). The details for each part or phase must be consistent with the Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted and approved pursuant to condition [2] above and with the principles of the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Amec Environment and Infrastructure dated October 2012 and the Foul Water and Surface Water Management Strategies for the whole site produced by Amec in January 2013. No housing or other development shall be occupied for that phase until the approved foul drainage scheme for that phase has been completed in accordance with the approved details and written notice of this fact has been sent to the Local Planning Authority.

*Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to reduce the risk of flooding and pollution. This condition is imposed in light of policies set out within the NPPF and Ribble Valley Borough Local Plan Policy G1.*

### **Surface Water Drainage**

5. Prior to the commencement of each phase or part of the development hereby permitted, full details for a surface water regulation system and means of disposal for that phase or part phase, based wholly on sustainable drainage principles and evidence of an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development for that phase (inclusive of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion and any necessary infrastructure) shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority (in consultation with United Utilities PLC) in writing. The drainage scheme shall demonstrate that the surface water run off generated up to and including the 1 in 100 year critical storm will not exceed the run-off from the existing undeveloped site and following the corresponding rainfall event. The details for each phase must be consistent with the Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted and approved pursuant to condition [2] above and with the principles of the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Amec Environment and Infrastructure dated October 2012 and the Foul Water and Surface Water Management Strategies for the whole site produced by Amec in January 2013. The development shall be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to reduce the risk of flooding and pollution. This condition is imposed in light of policies set out within the NPPF and Ribble Valley Borough Local Plan Policy G1.*

6. No part of phase of the development shall begin until full details of the method to delay and control surface water discharged from that part or phase of the development; and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving ground waters have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with United Utilities PLC) in writing.

*Reason: To prevent pollution.*

7. Prior to the commencement of each phase or part phase of the development hereby permitted, a sustainable drainage, construction, maintenance and management plan (CMP) for the lifetime of that phase or part phase of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with United Utilities PLC). The plan shall include arrangements for permanent adoption by a SuDs approving body (SAB), Statutory Authority or other relevant party of any sustainable drainage features including any outfalls into local water courses, structures, ponds and bridges. Each phase shall be completed maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details.

*Reason: To prevent flooding and pollution.*

8. The discharge of surface water into Pendleton Brook and its tributary within the site shall not exceed 10 litres per second per hectare.

*Reason: To prevent flooding and pollution.*

9. The development hereby permitted shall conform in its entirety to the Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted and approved pursuant to condition [2] above and to the recommendations in the Flood Risk Assessment produced by Amec in October 2012 as updated by the Foul Water and Surface Water Management Strategies for the whole site produced by Amec in January 2013. More particularly where not referred to elsewhere in this decision notice:



- In submitting the full details of the sustainable surface water drainage systems for each phase of the development they shall include some re-profiling of the site to remove local low points and ensure that all run-off from the site enters the proposed SuDS drainage system and does not concentrate temporarily along overland flow paths.
- All finished floor levels (FFLs) shall be at least 150mm above the local ground level at each development plot.
- A 10 metre wide access corridor shall be kept clear at all times along the lower 800 metres of the unnamed on site water course from its confluence with Pendleton Brook.
- All surface water run-offs from the entire development shall be managed and attenuated on site using a combination of underground surface water storage devices and sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) structures such as geocellular structures beneath roads, attenuation ponds, swales and filter drains.

*Reason: To prevent flooding.*

#### General Advice

A separate metered supply to each unit will be required at the applicant's expense and all internal pipework must comply with current water supply (water fittings) regulations 1999.

Should this planning application be approved, the applicant should contact our Service Enquiries on 0845 746 2200 regarding connection to the water mains/public sewers. The provision of a mains water supply could be expensive.

Our water mains will need extending to serve any development on this site. The applicant, who may be required to pay a capital contribution, will need to sign an Agreement under Sections 41, 42 & 43 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

United Utilities offer a fully supported mapping service at a modest cost for our water mains and sewerage assets. This is a service, which is constantly updated by our Property Searches Team (Tel No: 0870 7510101). It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate the exact relationship between any assets that may cross the site and any proposed development. Please note, due to the public sewer transfer, not all sewers are currently shown on the statutory sewer records, if a sewer is discovered during construction, please contact a Building Control Body to discuss the matter further.

I would be grateful if you could keep United Utilities PLC updated on the outcome of this application for planning permission for strategic development.

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Leyssens**  
**Planning Manager**  
**United Utilities**

