



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited
Haweswater House
Lingley Mere Business Park
Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000

unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR-461

Date: 27/08/2025

Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that as United Utilities are not subject to the Freedom of Information Act, your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).

As your request contained a number of specific questions, this response restates each part of the request (in bold) and then follows this with our response:

Your request:

We are aware that you have had involvement with the proposed development of the site of the (now demolished) [REDACTED] (postcode [REDACTED]), as your correspondence to [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] dated 23/4/25, reference UUPS-ORD-645652- describes "Wastewater & water distribution plan... including sewer records...", appears in the Planning Application FULL/2024/0237. The author of this letter has been redacted.

A further document within the Planning application is titled "Proposed Drainage Strategy" dated April 25 by MDesign. [REDACTED] Drawing No MD1828/100 "Adopted Soakaway... into Local Sewer Network". This document in the summary refers to the property being within a flood zone, percolation tests & percolation rates and "the existing combines sewer section to be either diverted or abandoned depending on use".

1. All unredacted correspondence, emails, minutes of meetings between United Utilities with [REDACTED] MDesign under the above references.

I can confirm that there are two emails which have been sent by United Utilities to MDesign and I have attached these for reference. Please note, some elements have been redacted in line with Regulation 13 of the EIR to remove any personal information, such as names and personal email addresses.

I can confirm that there have been no meetings between United Utilities and MDesign, and so therefore there are no copies of minutes to provide.

2. Re: Wastewater Treatment works / Wastewater Treatment Centre as currently exists: How would you describe the current capacity of the system : eg moderate use, nearly at full capacity overload? On a scale of 1-10 might be appropriate 10 representing overloaded.

Water companies review potential capacity risks every five years as part of Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs). The DWMPs are technical reports, which allow early warning and identification of treatment works that will require future investment to continue operating within the environmental permits set by the Environment Agency. The investment need is then included within our 5-yearly Business Plan submission to Ofwat.

Our DWMP for Silloth WwTW, which receives the flow from Skinburness, was last completed in 2023. This document is available on our website: [spa_02-derwent-dwmp.pdf](#) and showed that there was no identified capacity risk in either 2020, 2030 or 2050 (see page 19).

As a result of assessment, we do not currently have any concerns about the capacity of the receiving treatment works.

3. How many more dwellings would overload the sewage and foul water system?

Please see our response to question 2 and note that the assessment within the DWMP will have taken into account anticipated future growth within the catchment.

4. In the year 2024, how many hours of untreated sewage and foul water was discharged/released into the Solway or onto the Marsh from this specific area? This year 2025 to date, how many hours of untreated sewage and foul water were discharged/released into the Solway or onto the Marsh? In each year, how many litres of sewage and foul water did this amount to? Please also state the reasons for such discharges/releases.

Information including hours and locations of spills is available on our website: [Storm overflow performance | United Utilities](#).

This page also provides details of the 5-step process that water companies use to review and validate the raw data that is received from Event Duration Monitors (EDMs) located at each overflow. Underneath this 5-step process, there is a pull-down box that allows you to download the data. Whilst the 2024 data has been through the full 5-step process, the 2025 data has not yet been through this process, therefore, please note the following important points about the 2025 data:

- This data is raw sensor signal data which has not been analysed to remove anomalies or errors. Therefore, any analysis conducted using these raw, unvalidated signals could give rise to misleading conclusions if treated as validated EDM sensor data.
- The raw sensor signals are those referred to in step 1 of our 5-step process to report on spills from storm overflows. This process is described [here](#). During the subsequent steps, quality checks and data validation is carried out to convert the raw signals into our annual EDM data return which is available on the same webpage.
- These raw sensor signals cannot be used as an accurate basis for how many actual discharges there were. This is because some of the raw unvalidated sensor signals are subsequently found to be inaccurate or unreliable once inspected and assessed as a result of water motion in storm tanks, fluvial flooding, abnormal weather conditions, animal interference or sensor failure.
- The raw signals are subject to an auditable process of data validation and analysis before the regulatory EDM return is produced, which is the only source of data from which conclusions about storm overflow operation can accurately be made.

Additionally, there is no requirement to measure volume of discharge under the environmental

permits. We therefore do not hold this data and are unable to provide it in accordance with Regulation 12(4)(a) EIR.

5. When (if at all) were United Utilities made aware of the extent of the Planning Permission? (ie for 13 – 4 bedroom dwellings.)

United Utilities is not a statutory consultee in the planning application process, however, our planning team proactively reviews local authority websites to identify planning applications that may impact UU assets and/or services. We identified this application through our proactive review of Cumberland Council's weekly list of planning applications on 11th June 2025.

Where risk is identified, planning applications are reviewed by the relevant UU expert to assess the risk to UU's assets and/or services and to provide advice on how to mitigate the risk through the planning application process. Based on this, UU's planning team prepares a formal response letter which is sent to the local planning authority for its consideration as part of the determination of the planning application. Where necessary, UU may require that additional information is submitted to address the risk which has been identified and/or may request that conditions are attached to any subsequent Decision Notice, should the local authority decide that the planning application can be approved.

The local authority is ultimately the decision maker of the planning application and it does not have to reflect UU's comments or recommended conditions in its determination of a planning application.

6. Is any reappraisal or further assessment of the adequacy & capacity of the wastewater & sewage treatment works going to be carried out?

As stated in response to question 2, an assessment of the impact of forecasted population and business growth and the impact of climate change on our treatment and network assets across the North West is completed every five years as part of our Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs), which will next be published on our corporate website on 1st November 2028.

7. Re : surface water and Storm Water Overflow: have United Utilities carried out any assessment in the last year concerning the efficiency of the current drains for the area surrounding the site?

There have been no proactive assessments or requirement to survey the drains surrounding the site within the last 12 months.

8. If Planning Permission is granted (in its current form or reduced) what, if any works would be proposed by United Utilities to sewage and foul water treatment and to surface water soakaway and storm overflow?

Our comments relating to this particular Planning Application are included here on the [planning portal](#).

9. What consultations (this word should read broadly, to include any conversations, meetings, exchange of letters, memos etc), (if any) have United Utilities had with the Environment Agency concerning Planning Application? Please provide all documents relating to any consultation.

Please see our response to point 5.

10. Have United Utilities ever been asked to make representations to the Council Planning department in respect of this Planning Application? If yes, please provide all documents thereto.

Please see our response to point 5.

11. If Planning permission is granted as sought, is it the view of United Utilities that the water pressure for the dwellings properties and the Chichester Nursing Home in Postal areas CA7 4QY and CA7 4RA would be adversely affected ie reduced?

For awareness, developers must submit a formal application for water in order for our Developer Services Team to submit a Service Inspection Request (SIR). Once this is submitted, the local Water Network Team will assess the proposed point of connection, and then advise whether or not this is suitable, taking into account the pressure and any other mitigating factors. Having liaised with our Developer Services Team, I can confirm that we're yet to receive a formal application for water, therefore a Service Inspection Request (SIR) hasn't yet been raised or completed.

We hope that this response answers your request. However, if you're not satisfied with how we've handled it, you can request an internal review. To do this, please write to us at Environmental Information Office, Haweswater House, Lingley Mere, Warrington, WA5 3LP or email us at EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk, addressing your request to [REDACTED], and explaining why you're unhappy with our response. We'll be very happy to review your request and ensure we've done everything we can to assist you.

Any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this response, and we will reply within 40 working days from receipt of the request for internal review.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

We'd love to hear your feedback on how we handled your request! If you have a moment, please complete our short survey [here](#) – your input helps us improve our service.