



Surface Water Drainage Verification Condition Guidance Note

As part of the planning process for major applications, applicants are often required to submit a verification report for appraisal by the Local Planning Authority's (LPA's) Drainage Engineers. The verification condition is typically required to be discharged prior to occupation/use. This 'Surface Water Drainage Verification Condition Guidance Note' sets out to clearly define the minimum expectations and requirements that verification reports, submitted to LPAs within West Sussex, need to satisfy. You will be informed about the need for a verification report as part of any Conditions applied to a Planning Application approval.

Applicants should be aware that:

- It is in an applicant's interest to provide all the information requested by the guidance note, to enable the LPA's Engineers to quickly and efficiently appraise their submission.
- The omission of information may lead to delays in the planning process.
- **The verification/completion report refers to the SuDS scheme which must consider all components of the surface water drainage system ie. pipes, manholes, gullies, channel drains, ponds, basins, soakaways, headwalls, culverts, ditches, swales, flow controls, permeable pavements, storage tanks, land drains, etc. As constructed floor levels should also be verified/considered to ensure no increase in flood risk.**

However, if this guidance note requests information that an applicant does not consider to be relevant to their application:

- In the first instance the applicant should discuss this with the LPA's Drainage Engineer. (The Planning Officer dealing with the application will be able to provide applicants with the appraising Engineer's contact details).

It is recommended that applicants take time, at the outset of the planning process, to familiarise themselves with the requirements set out in this guidance note. It is particularly important that the Applicant engages the services of an independent Engineer at the earliest opportunity and that inspections are undertaken by the independent engineer from the start of, and throughout construction, in order that sufficient evidence of the detailed construction is gathered.

Verification Report Author

The verification report must be completed by a suitably qualified civil engineer. The individual completing the report should be covered by a suitable professional indemnity insurance and **must be independent of the contractor/subcontractor** to ensure there is no conflict of interest. Where a developer uses 'in-house' engineers, impartial reporting must be provided.

A suitably qualified person or company means an individual or company who has relevant training and experience, e.g. Civil Engineer experienced in surface water drainage design/construction.



Verification Report Contents

The verification report should include details of all key drainage components, evidencing that the construction of these elements has been completed fully in accordance with the approved design (as cited in the Planning Decision Notice).

As a minimum, the verification report should contain the following information:

- Details of author, including independence, qualifications, and experience.
- Clear statement on whether the author believes the constructed surface water drainage is adequate and whether any identified issues will affect the operation, maintenance and performance of the drainage system, now or in the future.
- Dates and appropriate records of inspections undertaken by the report author. Photographs and details of components inspected. e.g. excavations, grate installations, sub base construction, etc
- Confirmation of how key materials were verified, e.g. inspection of goods receipts for key components such as tanks, geomembranes, sub-base materials, flow control devices; inspections and tests of welded membrane joints; etc.
- Commentary on 'As Built' survey, and details of any variations from approved design. This includes any discrepancies in ground levels and pipe/structure levels.
- Provide CCTV survey video footage (including reports) of pipelines.
- Confirmation that no trees have been located in areas which would be detrimental to the drainage infrastructure.
- Confirmation that there has been no unauthorised land raising or watercourse infilling/culverting/alterations.
- Where variations have occurred the report shall include supporting evidence to show that the as constructed drainage will meet policy requirements and that these variations have been reviewed and approved by the designer. This may require new calculations to be completed and be provided with the verification report. Any significant deviation from the approved design may require a 'Discharge of Condition' application to be re-submitted.
- Details of remedial works that are required or have been carried out.

We would strongly recommend that the; independent inspecting engineer, the applicant, and their groundworker all keep clear records of their inspections and verification of each surface water drainage element during construction in case further detail is required to support the verification report condition.

'As Built' Drawings

The verification condition requires the supply of 'As Built' Survey Drawings. These should be referenced within the verification report and supplied with it in pdf format. Autocad .dwg (or similar approved) files should be supplied to the LPA engineer upon request.

The 'as built' drawings may be based upon the Applicant's drawings but all relevant levels, dimensions, etc, should be confirmed or revised to the 'as built' information and clearly noted and certified as such.

The 'As Built' Survey shall include:

- Surface water drainage piped network, including pipe diameters, pipe material, pipe gradient, cover levels and invert levels.



- Roads, footpaths, driveways and parking areas with finished levels, including details of surfacing type, noting whether permeable or impermeable
- Soakaway (where applicable) base level, height of soakaway, cover level and plan dimensions.
- Attenuation crate (where applicable) base level, height of crate, cover level and plan dimensions.
- Ponds/ basins (where applicable) incoming pipe invert levels, outgoing pipe invert levels, base level, crest level, embankment (where applicable) height and width, side slope.
- Swale (where applicable) incoming pipe invert levels, outgoing pipe invert levels, base levels, crest level, side slope.
- Permeable Paving (where applicable) base levels, finished surface levels, depth of sub base material.
- Flow control device (where applicable) invert levels, cover level, overflow (where applicable) level.
- Any other surface water drainage elements, e.g. land drains, filter trenches, rain gardens, gullies, channel drains, etc. (where applicable).
- Finished floor levels

This information shall be reviewed against the original approved design and any variations must be explained within the verification report.

Certification

The report author must provide a statement clearly confirming their name, company, experience and qualifications. They must also confirm that the contents of the report are correct and a true reflection of what happened on site. This statement should also be signed and dated by the author.