



The Development Plan Process:

A guide to considering Water and Waste Water Services

Purpose

- (1) Early experience of the emerging Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs) is that there is variation in the way in which planning authorities have engaged with Scottish Water.
- (2) The purpose of this document is to:
 - support communication between development planners and Scottish Water;
 - promote best practice; and
 - enable planning authorities to best respond to local circumstances.

Key Messages

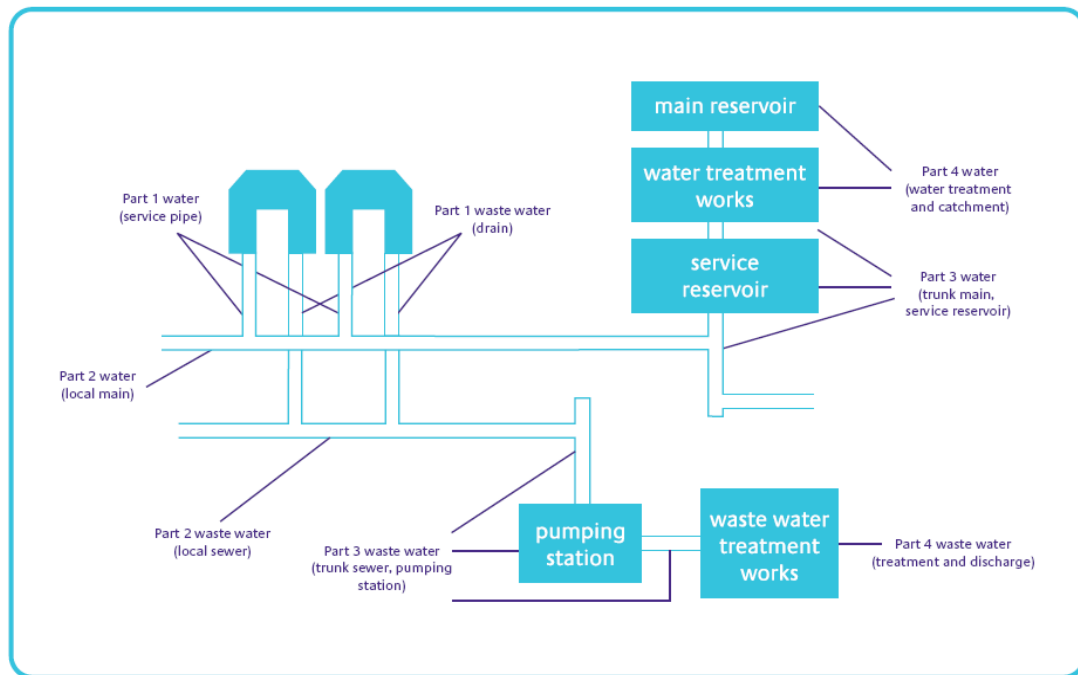
- (3) There is great benefit to be realised through engaging with Scottish Water throughout the process of drafting Development Plans, beginning at pre-Main Issues Report (MIR) stage, when all issues are being considered. The key contact at Scottish Water for this engagement with the planning authority is the Asset Strategy Development Planning team.
- (4) Rarely are issues with water or waste water services 'show stoppers', and the impact of any issues can be minimised by involving Scottish Water in discussions at the pre-MIR stage of Development Plans. The most likely issues to arise relate to the capacity of Scottish Water assets, and infrastructure funding.
- (5) Through the Development Plan process it should be possible to identify areas where, within the preferred spatial strategy, development may be most viable, or where phasing of development may enable quicker delivery of the strategy. This is most effective when all Key Agencies are engaged by the planning authority in a coordinated way.
- (6) Where water or waste water assets need to be upgraded in order to deliver allocated development Scottish Water will work with developers and planning authorities to minimise up-front costs through the design of integrated solutions and phased delivery.

Scottish Water Assets

- (7) Scottish Water's asset base is categorised into the following four parts¹ (See Figure 1).
 - Part 1 Assets: Connections from individual properties to a water main or sewer.
 - Part 2 Assets: Water mains and sewers that connect developments to trunk mains and trunk sewers, and some sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
 - Part 3 Assets: Local bulk infrastructure such as trunk mains and trunk sewers, water service reservoirs, waste water pumping stations and some SuDS.
 - Part 4 Assets: Strategic assets such as raw water intakes, water treatment works, and waste water treatment works.

¹ Further explanation is available in PAN 79 : Water and Drainage.

Figure 1: Schematic of Scottish Water’s asset base identifying Parts 1-4



- (8) When investment in an asset is required to enable development, the party responsible for financing this can be identified using the asset categorisation²:
- Part 1 assets must be funded in their entirety by developers.
 - Part 2 and Part 3 assets must be funded up-front by developers, but there is scope to recover some of these costs from Scottish Water [See also (24)].
 - Part 4 assets may be funded by Scottish Water subject to certain criteria being satisfied [See also (20), (21) & (22)]

Development Plans

- (9) Scottish Planning Policy³ sets the broad principles that should underpin a genuinely plan-led modernised system. Development Plans should be succinct and set out ambitious long term visions for their areas. All stakeholders should be engaged as early and as fully as possible, and there should be a clear focus on high quality outcomes.
- (10) Scottish Water should be proactively involved in discussions and decision-making throughout the drafting of Local and Strategic Development Plans (See Figure 2). There are particular stages at which close collaboration is most important. These are during the pre-MIR evidence gathering and in the constructing the Action Programme.

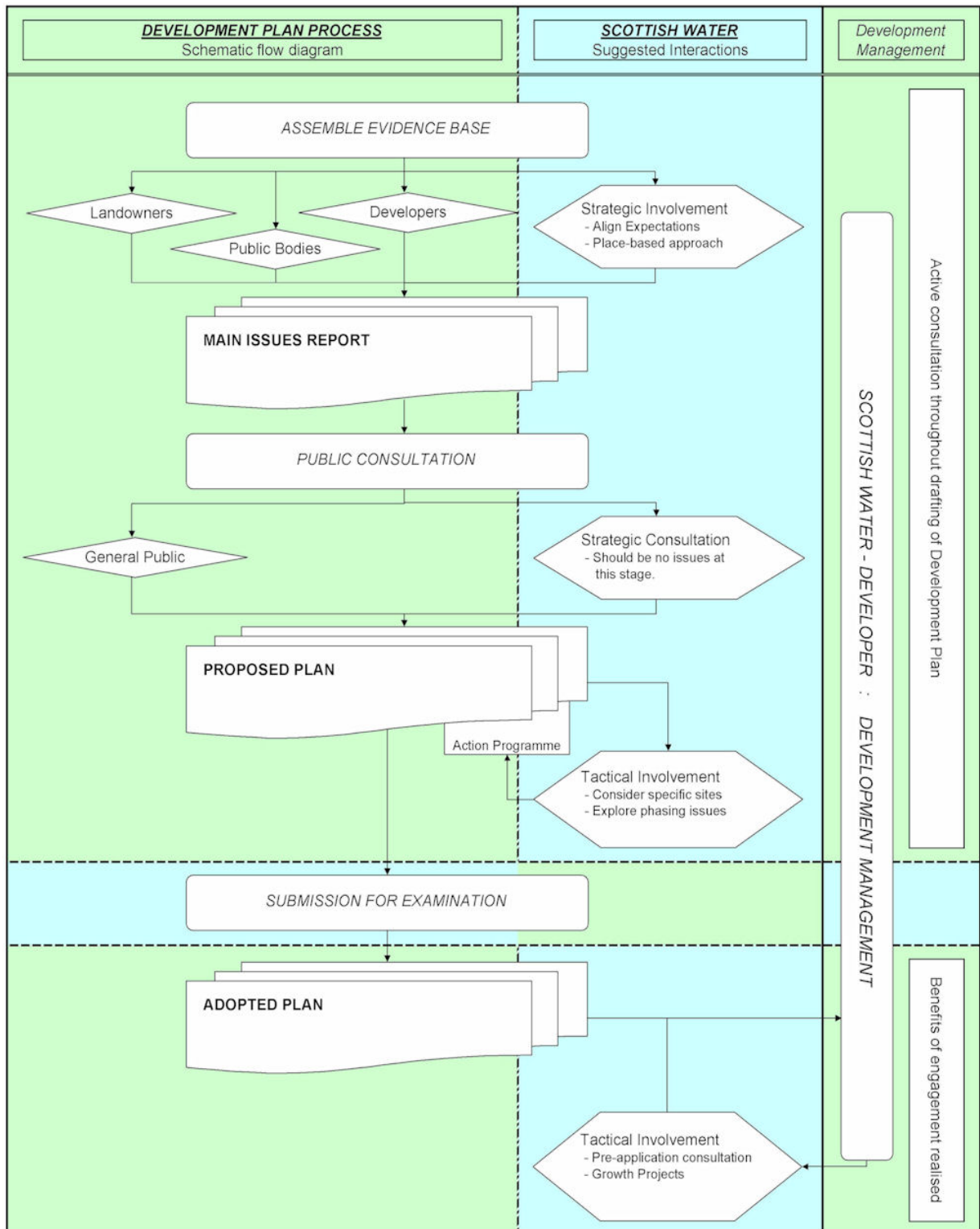
² Section 3.4 of Scottish Water’s “Strategic Asset Capacity and Development Plan 2010” available at Scottish Water’s [Asset Capacity Search web page](#).

³ Scottish Planning Policy, paragraph 8

Pre-MIR evidence gathering to Proposed Plan

- (11) All infrastructure providers can provide valuable input as evidence is gathered for the Main Issues Report (MIR). For Scottish Water, this is coordinated by the Development Planning team.
- (12) When planning authorities adopt a place-based approach, Scottish Water can contribute most productively to a wide range of issue-driven focus-groups not limited solely to water and waste water services. Early engagement allows the expectations of the planning and development communities to be aligned with those of infrastructure providers.
- (13) In the interest of sustainability, Scottish Water encourages development to be planned in locations where there is existing capacity in the water and waste water systems. However, in some instances it is necessary to invest in new or upgraded facilities to enable planned development.
- (14) When gathering evidence for the MIR, direct dialogue with Scottish Water's Development Planning team is recommended. Additional to this, Scottish Water publishes the Strategic Asset Capacity Development Plan (SACDP) annually. This document, available on the [Asset Capacity Search](#) page of www.scottishwater.co.uk, tabulates the available capacity of Part 4 assets and provides a commentary to these tables. The SACDP is augmented by the [Asset Capacity Finder](#). This is an online tool that returns the available Part 4 asset capacity in response to either a postcode or an Ordnance Survey grid reference search request. This data is updated more frequently than the SACDP.
- (15) By planning authorities working together with Scottish Water at this stage in the development plan process to understand Part 4 asset capacity, it becomes possible to begin to identify not only feasible but also more cost-effective locations for development.
- (16) The added benefit to this approach is that only feasible options will have been discussed in the MIR, therefore no significant infrastructure issues should arise during consultation.

Figure 2 - Schematic Flow diagram to illustrate relevant engagement with Scottish Water, and the benefits that can be realised through doing this well.



Main Issues Report

- (17) Following effective engagement prior to the MIR being published, during the public consultation period, Scottish Water will be looking to highlight significant or new issues around preferred and alternative strategies that should be addressed in the Proposed Plan and Action Programme.

Proposed Plan & Action Programme Implementation

- (18) Further input from Scottish Water is required to inform the Action Programme and Supplementary Planning Guidance that supports the Proposed Plan. Here the issue is not capacity, but timing.
- (19) At the proposed plan stage, it may be possible to identify significant work that would be required to address water and waste water capacity issues at Part 4 assets. Engagement with Scottish Water, through the Development Planning team is crucial to begin to understand the potential programme implications of this work. These may then be allowed for in the Action Programme. Ideally, Action Programmes should provide a degree of certainty around commitments for the following 2 year period, with an indication of the general direction of travel beyond that.

Scottish Water's Funding Mechanism

- (20) Scottish Water is able to release money to fund a growth project to enable planned new development. A growth project is where Scottish Water provides additional Part 4 asset capacity either by expanding capacity at an existing facility or by building a new one.
- (21) Scottish Water's responsibility to provide capacity at Part 4 assets to service new developments stem from the Ministerial Directions which form part of Scottish Water's regulatory contract. The Ministerial Directions specify that funding for any identified work can only be committed (and hence Scottish Water can only begin work to deliver a growth project) when a development resulting in a capacity issue is sufficiently progressed to satisfy the '5 Criteria'⁴, which relate to the deliverability of a development proposal.
- (22) The '5 Criteria' cannot be satisfied by the evidence in a development plan alone. However, in scoping a growth project, Scottish Water may consider the potential demand from other planned developments not yet satisfying the '5 Criteria'. This discussion is led by Scottish Water's Development Planning team in consultation with the relevant Local Authority, and may consider anything from Plan Allocations to those developments close to satisfying the '5 Criteria'.

⁴ The Scottish Water (Objectives for 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2015) Directions 2009, Paragraphs 3(b) and 4.

Further down the line

- (23) Scottish Planning Policy encourages pre-application discussions by developers. This aims to identify potential issues with developments prior to a planning application being made. Planning authorities should communicate to developers the relevant outcomes of engagement with Scottish Water during the development plan process. This will enable more meaningful pre-application discussions, reducing the likelihood of significant issues delaying development at a later stage.
- (24) The requirements incumbent upon developers seeking connection to Scottish Water networks are set out in Scottish Water's Customer Guide⁵. Shared infrastructure local to developments (Part 2 & 3 assets) must be funded up-front by developers. When built to an adequate specification⁶, these can be handed over for adoption by Scottish Water, and a Reasonable Cost Contribution⁷ recovered.

⁵ The latest revision of the Customer Guide is available from the [Customer Connections web-page](#)

⁶ Standards specified within Sewers for Scotland 2nd Edition and Water for Scotland

⁷ The Provision of Water and Sewerage Services (Reasonable Cost) (Scotland) Regulations 2006

References

Scottish Water Documents & Guidance

[Strategic Asset Capacity and Development Plan 2010](#) (SW Reference: SWSACDP/1 01/10)

[Customer Connections Guide](#) (August 2008)

[The Provision of Water and Sewerage Services \(Reasonable Cost\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2006](#)

[Sewers for Scotland 2nd Edition](#) (November 2007)

[Water for Scotland](#) (November 2007)

Scottish Government Policy References

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Planning Advice Note (PAN) 79 – Water and Drainage

The Scottish Government's planning policies are set out in the National Planning Framework, the SPP, Designing Places, Designing Streets and Circulars.

For further information on Scottish Water and our services please visit www.scottishwater.co.uk⁸ or contact the Customer Helpline on 0845 601 8855 and ask to speak to a member of our Development Planning team.

⁸http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/portal/page/portal/SWE_PGP_CONNECTIONS/SWE_CORP_CONNECTIONS/PROD_SERV_CONN