[redacted] [redacted]

Sent: 07 October 2024 16:01
To: Planning
Subject: FW: 2024-10-21 489607 DC_24_1299 COU of agricultural land to equine. Land To West of Hurston Lane Hurston Lane Storrington
Attachments: ufm2_Water_Neutrality_consult.pdf; Water Neutrality for BM.pdf; AA DC-24-1299 approve.docx; Annex A to standard letters - Jan 24 FINAL.pdf

Categories: Consultations

Our ref: 489607
Your ref: DC/24/1299

Dear Hannah Darley,

Thank you for consulting with Natural England regarding this application.

The proposed development falls within the Sussex North water supply zone; As set out in Natural England's Advice Note regarding Water Neutrality within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone, the existing water supply in the Sussex North water supply zone cannot be ruled out as contributing to the declines in wildlife within internationally protected sites in the Arun Valley SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. Achieving water neutrality is recognised as a suitable method to rule out potential adverse effects on the integrity of these sites arising from development.

Considering the supporting information provided by the applicant and your authority's appropriate assessment, our advice is as follows.

We concur with the conclusion of your authority's HRA appropriate assessment, insofar that we have no objections subject to the delivery, management and maintenance of measures identified in the water neutrality statement, and subject to relevant pre-commencement conditions identified in the appropriate assessment being put in place, to achieve water neutrality.

Further general advice on the protected species and other natural environment issues is provided in the attached Annex A.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter, please let me know.
Yours sincerely,

Ruby Musgrove-Ward
Higher Officer - Sustainable Development
Area Team 14 - Sussex & Kent
Natural England, International House, Ashford, TN23 1HU
[redacted]

[redacted]

www.gov.uk/natural-england



Please consider this a 'thanks' in advance. Every email has a carbon footprint so if you don't hear back from me, it's not because of you, it's because of the planet. #WhatWeCanDo

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From: planning@horsham.gov.uk <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 30 September 2024 16:30
[redacted]
Subject: Planning Application Water Neutrality Consultation - DC/24/1299

Please see the attached consultation letter regarding Water Neutrality from Horsham District Council Re:DC/24/1299

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Water Neutrality Statement

Land to the West of Hurston Lane
Storrington
West Sussex

On Behalf of
Mr and Mrs Robinson

Prepared by
Charlotte Catton-Giltinane
[redacted]

May 2024

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2 BACKGROUND 4
3 CALCULATING WATER USAGE 5
4 WATER USAGE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 7
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Horsham District is situated in an area of serious water stress, as identified by the Environment Agency Water Stressed Areas Classification.

1.2 Horsham District is supplied with water by Southern Water from its Sussex North Water Resource Zone. This supply is sourced from abstraction points in the Arun Valley, which includes locations such as Amberley Wild Brooks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Pulborough Brooks SSSI and Arun Valley Special Protection Area/Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site.

1.3 On 14 September 2021, Horsham District Council received a Position Statement from Natural England. Information collected by Natural England shows that water abstraction for drinking water supplies is having a negative impact on the wildlife sites in the Arun Valley. They have advised that any new development that takes place must not add to this negative impact.

1.4 One way of preventing any further negative impact is to ensure that all new development which takes place is water neutral. Water neutrality is defined as the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

1.5 The application site is located within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. This report therefore provides evidence to show that the proposed development will be water neutral.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The site is located to the west of Hurston Lane located within the village of Storrington approximately 1 mile from the village centre.

2.2 The application site extends to approximately 2.35 acres of relatively flat pasture land with a site access bordering the northern perimeter of the site. The surrounding area consists of open countryside, farm and equestrian facilities as well as residential properties.

2.3 There are no existing buildings on site.

Figure 2.1 – Site Location Plan



2.3 The applicant is undertaking a planning application for the erection of a stable block and sand school for private use.

3 CALCULATING WATER USAGE

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 In the UK every person uses approximately 150 litres of water a day, whilst consumption in our homes has steadily increased every year by around 1% since 1930 as we enjoy better standards of cleanliness and greater use of water-using appliances.

3.1.2 Increased consumption and a growing number of households has put more pressure on water supplies and it is likely that this problem will worsen as our climate changes.

3.1.3 From April 2010 Part G of the Building Regulations requires new dwellings to limit maximum water usage to 125 litres per person per day, whilst dwellings assessed under The Code for Sustainable Homes are required to achieve a lower maximum water usage level. Water efficiency has now become an issue that must be embraced by designers, specifiers and house builders.

3.2 What is needed for a water usage calculation

3.2.1 Whilst the application does not propose a permanent residential dwelling, given the identified supply issues in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone the methodology for calculating water usage below is considered to be most applicable to a holiday let.

3.2.2 The calculation method requires the use of water consumption figures provided from manufacturer's product details. In order to calculate predicted water usage of a dwelling the following information is collected to determine the consumption of each fitting:

- Whether the dwelling has a low or high water pressure system.
- Kitchen, utility and other taps – the quantity of taps as well as the flow rates in litres per minute for each tap. Where separate hot and cold taps are provided the flow rate of each is taken to determine the average.

- Baths – the quantity of baths and the capacity to overflow in litres. The flow rates of the bath taps are not required. Jacuzzis are not included in the water efficiency calculations.

- Showers – the quantity of showers and the cold-water flow rate.

- WCs – the quantity of toilets and flush capacity in litres of both single and dual flushes (part and full flush)

- Dishwashers – the water usage in litres per place setting. If no dishwasher is present in the development then a generic figure of 1.25 litres per place setting is used. This will allow for any future installations.

- Washing machines – the water usage in the litres per kilogram of dry load. If no washing machine is present in the development, then a generic figure of 8.17 litres per kilogram of dry load is used. This will allow for any future installations.

3.2.3 External taps are included in Building Regulations calculations at a fixed rate of 5 litres per person per day. External water use is not included in the target consumption rates for Code for Sustainable Homes.

4 WATER USAGE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The proposed development relates to the erection of a three bay stable block, tack room, WC and sand school. Based on the land size and British Horse Society recommendation of 1 to 1.5 acres per horse the application site could therefore accommodate up to a maximum of 3 horses.

4.2 The size of the proposed stable block and tack room will be approximately 141 sqm.

Figure 4.1 – Proposed Site Plan

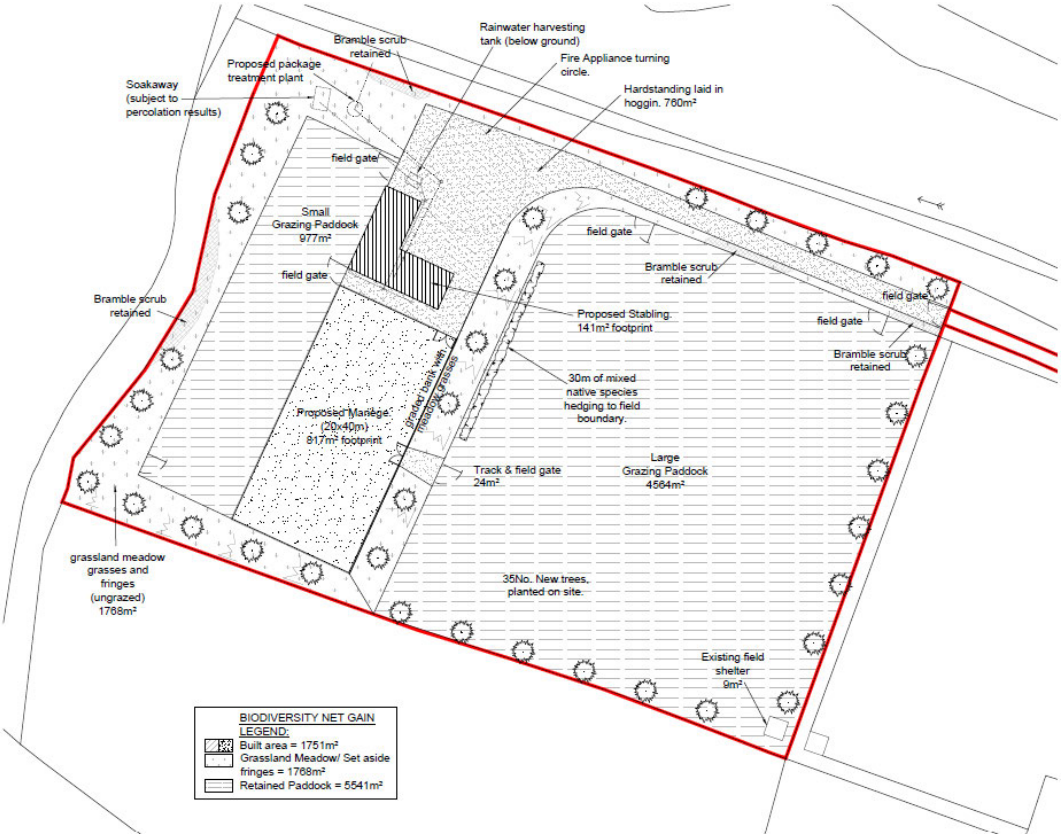
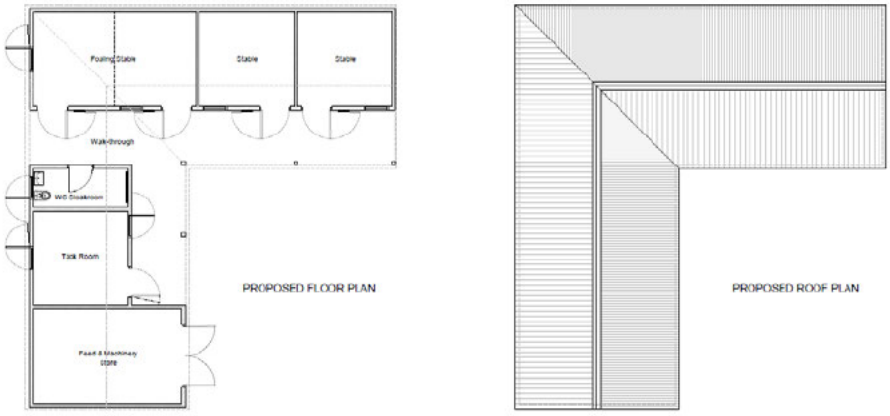


Figure 4.2 – Proposed Stable Block Plan



4.3 A water calculation has been undertaken to confirm the proposed water usage of the washroom facilities which can be found in Appendix A.

4.4 This confirms the water usage of the washroom as being 21.19 litres per day or 7,732.89 litres per annum. To err on the side of caution we have assumed that two people are on site full time to care for the horses welfare however this is not possible due to no residential buildings being within the application site so this is a worst case scenario from a water consumption aspect.

16.05 litres per day x 1.32 occupancy rate = 21.19 litres per day

21.19 x 365 days = 7,732.89 litres per annum

4.5 In order to calculate how much water the horses will use we have sourced information from a number of animal welfare organisations on the drinking water requirements of horses. This information is detailed below:

- RSPCA – 30-50 litres of water per day, more in hot weather

- Blue Cross – 25-55 litres of water per day

- Equine Nutritionist – 30 litres of water per day

- British Horse Society – up to 50 litres of water per day

- DEFRA - 25-50 litres of water per day, more in hot weather

- Penn State University (USA) – 40 litres per day

4.6 Taking the average drinking water requirements of a horse (39.5 litres per day) we can calculate the water usage for the horses to be as follows:

39.5 litres x 365 days x 3 horses = 43,252.50 litres per year

4.7 The total combined water usage of the proposal per annum is therefore 50,985.39 litres.

43,252.50 litres (Horses) + 7,732.89 litres (WC) = 50,985.39 litres per annum

5 BASELINE WATER USAGE OF THE APPLICATION SITE

5.1 Introduction

5.2 The site comprises an area of pasture land with no existing buildings or water usage being evidenced on site. Therefore, the site has no baseline water usage and offsetting is required to ensure the proposal is water neutral details of which can be found in Section 6 of this report.

6 PROPOSED OFFSETTING MEASURES

6.1 The Proposal

6.1.1 As mentioned previously the applicants are proposing the erection of a stable block, tack room, WC and sand school for private use. The site has no baseline water usage and therefore offsetting is required to ensure the site is water neutral.

6.1.2 To provide water to the site and ensure water neutrality is achieved rainwater harvesting is proposed for the drinking water, hygiene care and cleaning of the stables, store and tack room. Rainwater harvesting is also proposed for use in the WC with foaming antibacterial hand sanitiser being provided for handwashing.

6.1.3 As noted in Section 4 of this report the required amount of water needing to be offset on a worst case scenario is 50,985.39 litres per annum to ensure no mains water is required.

6.1.4 Rainwater Harvesting Systems

Application Site

6.1.5 The roof area of the application building is 141 sqm.

5.2.2 The application site is located within the Rother at Hardham Catchment area and details of the average rainfall within this area for the last 3 years has been recorded as 1070.918 mm per annum.

Rainfall data for Rother at Hardham Catchment Area

	July 2019 - June 2020	July 2020 - June 2021	July 2021 - June 2022	July 2022 - June 2023	July 2923 - June 2024	Average
July	39.333	26.84	96.973	3.227	92.095	51.288
August	56.387	78.593	63.067	45.887	77.179	68.094
September	112.173	28.627	58.647	101.373	78.071	115.384
October	119.593	212.727	185.907	104.027	216.08	137.498
November	129.393	78.247	13.993	256.093	165.191	127.518
December	156.827	147.707	93.8	144.08	153.859	113.962
January	96.467	106.153	35.813	130.847	105.118	103.488
February	177.9	67.073	79.873	133.779	186.932	94.668
March	55.847	30.7	49.7	162.469	122.858	59.897
April	60.06	5.027	17.5	97.875	96.365	46.819
May	3.34	101.667	44.66	44.421		50.030
June	38.8	108.353	35.013	23.986		533.375
ANNUAL TOTAL	1046.12	991.714	774.946	1248.064	1293.748	1070.918

6.1.6 To calculate how much rainwater can be collected by a harvesting system per year the rainfall (mm) is multiplied by the roof surface area (sqm) as follows:

1070.918mm x 141sqm = 150,999.438 litres per annum

6.1.7 To account for a coefficient yield rate of 1% for rainwater that could be lost during collection would bring this figure down to **149,489.44 litres per year.**

6.1.8 50,985.39 litres of rainwater is required to be captured per annum to serve the WC and for the drinking water for the horses and up keep of the stable yard.

6.1.9 A 5,000 litre tank will be required to provide adequate storage to cover a 35 day drought period. This will be below ground and has been shown on the site location plan within figure 4.1.

6.1.10 The rainwater will be used for drinking water, cleaning and washing down. The rainwater harvesting tank will be fitted with ultra violet light filters to ensure that the water is safe for horses to drink as shown in Appendix B.

6.1.11 The proposed water usage of the application site is 50,985.39 litres per annum which will be provided solely by rainwater harvesting and therefore deeming the proposal water neutral.

Water Consumption	Litres Per Annum
Baseline Water Consumption of Application Site	0
Proposed Water Consumption of Application Site	50,985.39
Net Water Demand	50,985.39
Offsetting via Rainwater Harvesting	50,985.39
Net Water Demand post Offsetting	**Nil**

Appendix A

Installation Type	Unit of Measure	Capacity/Flow rate (1)	Use Factor (2)	Fixed use (litres/person/day) (3)	Litres/person/day = [(1)x(2)] + (3) (4)
WC (single flush)	Flush Volume (litres)		4.42	0.00	0
WC (dual flush)	Full flush Volume (litres)	6	1.46	0.00	8.76
	Part flush Volume (litres)	3	2.96	0.00	8.88
WC (multiple fittings)	Average effective flushing Volume (litres)		4.42	0.00	0
Taps (excluding kitchen/utility room taps)	Flow rate (litres/min)				0
Bath (where shower also present)	Capacity to overflow(litres)		0.11	0.00	0
Shower (where bath also present)	Flow Rate(litres / minute)		4.37	0.00	0
Bath Only	Capacity to overflow(litres)		0.50	0.00	0
Shower Only	Flow Rate (litres/minute)		5.60	0.00	0
Kitchen/Utility room sink taps	Flow rate (litres/minute)		0.44	10.36	0
Washing Machine	(Litres/kg dry load)	8.17	2.1	0.00	0
Dishwasher	(Litres/place setting)	1.25	3.6	0.00	0
Waste disposal unit	(Litres/use)	☐ Present	3.08	0.00	0
Water Softener	(Litres/person/day)		1.00	0.00	0
	(5)	Total Calculated use (litres/person/day) =SUM(column 4)			17.64
	(6)	Contribution from greywater (litres/person/day)			0
	(7)	Contribution from rainwater (litres/person/day)			0
	(8)	Normalisation factor			0.91
	(9)	Total internal water consumption = [(5)-(6)-(7)]x(8) (litres/person/day)			16.05
	(10)	External water use			0
	(11)	Total water consumption (Building Regulation 17.K) =(9)+(10)(litres/person/day)			16.05

Installation Type	Make/Model (mandatory)	Litres/Person/Day
WC (dual flush)	Proposed Flow Rate	17.64

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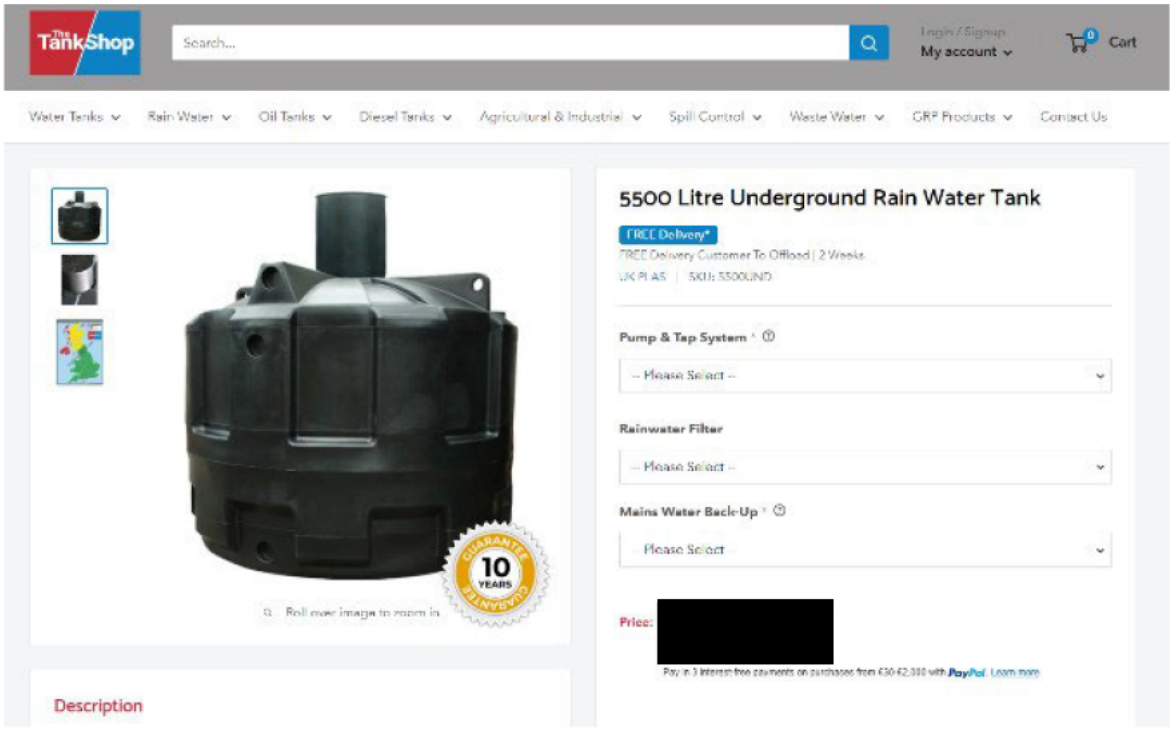
Terms and Conditions
System Requirements

Appendix B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UK PLAS | SKU: 5500UND
Pump & Tap System *
-- Please Select --
Rainwater Filter
-- Please Select --
Mains Water Back-Up *
Please Select
Price:
10 YEARS
GUARANTEE
Description

RAINHARVESTING SYSTEMS DATA SHEET RAINHARVESTING SYSTEMS DATA SHEET

Saphir UV DISINFECTION UNITS

- Suitable for a range of domestic and commercial applications.
- Available in various sizes to suit required flow rates.
- Effective microbiological protection.
- Uses no chemicals & produces no by-products.
- Economical, safe & reliable
- Lamp operation indicator.
- Does not affect taste or odour.
- Long life lamps require only annual replacement.
- Simple to install & maintain.
- *Saphir+* version now available with additional telemetry.



Why use UV treatment?

The quality of untreated rainwater is such that it cannot be classified as potable or 'wholesome' and therefore is not fit for drinking. Even though it is widely used for drinking, bathing etc. in various parts of the world, it is not deemed acceptable practice for the UK.

Untreated rainwater is not considered safe for personal use due to the contamination risk, particularly from bird droppings. To be sure that any 'unwholesome' water is fit to drink it should therefore be treated, and the simplest and most reliable way of doing this on a small scale is to use Ultra-Violet (UV) sterilisation. The water to be treated must first be free of even microscopic particles, so it is usually necessary to fit sediment pre-filters prior to the water entering the UV unit.

How does it work?

UV disinfection works by destroying the DNA of potentially damaging micro-organisms, thus rendering them harmless. This process is instant, effective and reliable. No chemicals are involved and the process does not affect the taste of the water in any way. UV radiation is part of natural sunlight, and a UV lamp emits a particular wavelength at high concentration to destroy bacteria, viruses and cysts.



Saphir UV unit

UV treatment is safe, reliable and simple to maintain. It is generally deemed to be ecologically preferable to chlorination and reverse osmosis (RO). However, please note that UV treatment alone will not remove discolouration or bad taste.

Several models available to suit most applications

Model	flow rate @ 40mJ/cm²	flow rate @ 25mJ/cm²	inlet / outlet size	Power consumption	Length mm
Saphir 1	13.5 l/min.	20 l/min.	¾" bsp	15w	405
Saphir 2	22.5 l/min.	36.5 l/min	¾" bsp	25w	554
Saphir 3	40 l/min.	63 l/min	¾" bsp	40w	554
Saphir 4	46.5 l/min.	73 l/min	1" bsp	36w	962
Saphir 7	89 l/min.	140 l/min	1" bsp	36w	962
Saphir 10	120 l/min.	193 l/min	1 ½" bsp	75w	962

** mJ/cm² = millijoules per cm² at end of lamp life*

Saphir UV

Standard units have:
- Stainless steel chamber
- High-output low-pressure UV lamp
- Lamp on indicator
- IP55 rated controls
- Control module can be chamber or wall mounted
- Chamber can be mounted vertically or horizontally
- Up to 10 bar pressure
- UK manufactured
-

Saphir+

The + version of the Saphir unit has several additional features:
- Micro processor control
- Lamp status indicator to show when the lamp needs changing
- Alarm & processer reset button
- volt-free contacts for remote alarm output.

Data Sheet UV/17/01

SEDIMENT PRE-FILTERS FOR USE WITH UV UNITS

- For use with pressurised water supplies.
- Sediment removal down to 5 microns.
- Available in a range of sizes to suit different flow rates.
- Replaceable polypropylene cartridges or bags.
- Simple cartridge changing.
- Nitrate and Carbon filters also available.

When using *Saphir* UV units to disinfect rainwater we recommend that additional filtration is added prior to the water passing through the UV chamber. It is important that the water to be treated is as clean as possbile, otherwise small particles can create a 'shadow' which the UV light cannot penetrate. We recommend that water is cleaned down to 5 microns prior to UV treatment.

The filters require pressure in order to work effectively so are suitable only for pumped supplies. The cartridges require regular replacement, frequency of which will vary according to the nature of the water they are treating.

Water is normally pumped through 25-micron and 5-micron wound sediment filters to ensure that sufficient material is removed. These are available in a range of sizes to suit different flow rates. For larger UV units where a higher flow rate is required, a single 5-micron 'bag' filter is sufficient.

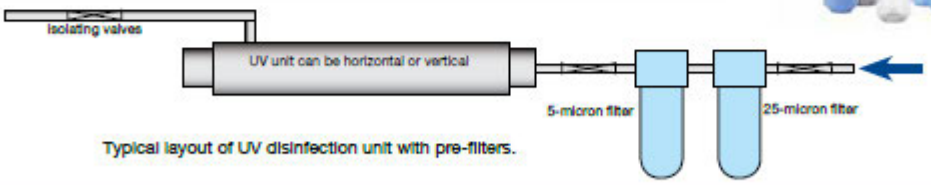






Filters are selected to match the flow rate of the UV unit

UV Unit	25-micron pre-filter	5-micron pre-filter	Connection size
Saphir 1	10" standard wound cartridge	10" standard wound cartridge	¾" bsp
Saphir 2	20" standard wound cartridge	20" standard wound cartridge	¾" bsp
Saphir 3	10" 'Big Blue' wound cartridge	10" 'Big Blue' wound cartridge	¾" bsp
Saphir 4	10" 'Big Blue' wound cartridge	10" 'Big Blue' wound cartridge	1" bsp
Saphir 7	N/A	10" 'Big Blue' bag filter	1" bsp
Saphir 10	N/A	10" 'Big Blue' bag filter	1½" bsp



Typical layout of UV disinfection unit with pre-filters.

Distributor:

Rainharvesting Systems Ltd.

The Green Shop
Calf Way, Bisley,
Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 7BX
Tel: 0845 223 5430
Fax: 01452 772008
E-mail: sales@rainharvesting.co.uk
Website: www.rainharvesting.co.uk

NB continuous development may necessitate change in these details without notice E&OE. *Data Sheet UV/17/01*

Annex A –Natural England general advice

Annex A –Natural England general advice

Protected Landscapes
Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (known as National Landscapes), National Parks, and the Broads and states that the scale and extent of development within all these areas should be limited. Paragraph 183 requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated to justify major development within a designated landscape and sets out criteria which should be applied in considering relevant development proposals. Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 places a duty on relevant authorities (including local planning authorities) to seek to further the statutory purposes of a National Park, the Broads or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England in exercising their functions. This duty also applies to proposals outside the designated area but impacting on its natural beauty.

The local planning authority should carefully consider any impacts on the statutory purposes of protected landscapes and their settings in line with the NPPF, relevant development plan policies and the Section 245 duty. The relevant National Landscape Partnership or Conservation Board may be able to offer advice on the impacts of the proposal on the natural beauty of the area and the aims and objectives of the statutory management plan, as well as environmental enhancement opportunities. Where available, a local Landscape Character Assessment can also be a helpful guide to the landscape's sensitivity to development and its capacity to accommodate proposed development.

Wider landscapes
Paragraph 180 of the NPPF highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes through the planning system. This application may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes, including any local landscape designations. You may want to consider whether any local landscape features or characteristics (such as ponds, woodland, or dry-stone walls) could be incorporated into the development to respond to and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness, in line with any local landscape character assessments. Where the impacts of development are likely to be significant, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with the proposal to inform decision making. We refer you to the Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for further guidance.

Biodiversity duty
The local planning authority has a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity as part of its decision making. Further information is available here.

Designated nature conservation sites
Paragraphs 186-188 of the NPPF set out the principles for determining applications impacting on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and habitats sites. Both the direct and indirect impacts of the development should be considered. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is needed where there is a likely significant effect on a habitats site and Natural England must be consulted on 'appropriate assessments'. Natural England must also be consulted where development is in or likely to affect a SSSI and provides advice on potential impacts on SSSIs either via Impact Risk Zones or as standard or bespoke consultation responses.

Protected Species
Natural England has produced standing advice to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on protected species where they form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or in exceptional circumstances. A protected species licence may be required in certain cases.

Local sites and priority habitats and species
The local planning authority should consider the impacts of the proposed development on any local wildlife or geodiversity site, in line with paragraphs 180, 181 and 185 of the NPPF and any relevant development plan policy. There may also be opportunities to enhance local sites and improve their connectivity to help

nature's recovery. Natural England does not hold locally specific information on local sites and recommends further information is obtained from appropriate bodies such as the local records centre, wildlife trust, geoconservation groups or recording societies. Emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies may also provide further useful information.

Priority habitats and species are of particular importance for nature conservation and are included in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Most priority habitats will be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites. A list of priority habitats and species can be found on Gov.uk.

Natural England does not routinely hold species data. Such data should be collected when impacts on priority habitats or species are considered likely. Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land, further information including links to the open mosaic habitats inventory can be found here.

Biodiversity and wider environmental gains
Development should provide net gains for biodiversity in line with the NPPF paragraphs 180(d), 185 and 186. Major development (defined in the NPPF glossary) is required by law to deliver a biodiversity gain of at least 10% from 12 February 2024 and this requirement is expected to be extended to smaller scale development in spring 2024. For nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs), it is anticipated that the requirement for biodiversity net gain will be implemented from 2025.

Further information on the timetable for mandatory biodiversity net gain can be found here. Further information on biodiversity net gain, including draft Planning Practice Guidance, can be found here.

The statutory Biodiversity Metric should be used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for terrestrial and intertidal habitats and can be used to inform any development project. For small development sites, the Small Sites Metric may be used. This is a simplified version of the Biodiversity Metric and is designed for use where certain criteria are met.

The mitigation hierarchy as set out in paragraph 186 of the NPPF should be followed to firstly consider what existing habitats within the site can be retained or enhanced. Where on-site measures are not possible, provision off-site will need to be considered.

Development also provides opportunities to secure wider biodiversity enhancements and environmental gains, as outlined in the NPPF (paragraphs 8, 74, 108, 124, 180, 181 and 186). Opportunities for enhancement might include incorporating features to support specific species within the design of new buildings such as swift or bat boxes or designing lighting to encourage wildlife.

Natural England's Environmental Benefits from Nature tool may be used to identify opportunities to enhance wider benefits from nature and to avoid and minimise any negative impacts. It is designed to work alongside the Biodiversity Metric and is available as a beta test version.

Further information on biodiversity net gain, the mitigation hierarchy and wider environmental net gain can be found in government Planning Practice Guidance for the natural environment.

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees
The local planning authority should consider any impacts on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees in line with paragraph 186 of the NPPF. Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland Inventory which can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forestry Commission have produced standing advice for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees. It should be taken into account when determining relevant planning applications. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees where they form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or in exceptional circumstances.

Best and most versatile agricultural land and soils

Annex A –Natural England general advice

Local planning authorities are responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient detailed agricultural land classification (ALC) information to apply NPPF policies (Paragraphs 180 and 181). This is the case regardless of whether the proposed development is sufficiently large to consult Natural England. Further information is contained in GOV.UK guidance Agricultural Land Classification information is available on the Magic website and the Data.Gov.uk website

Guidance on soil protection is available in the Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites, and we recommend its use in the design and construction of development, including any planning conditions. For mineral working and landfilling, separate guidance on soil protection for site restoration and aftercare is available on Gov.uk website. Detailed guidance on soil handling for mineral sites is contained in the Institute of Quarrying *Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings*.

Should the development proceed, we advise that the developer uses an appropriately experienced soil specialist to advise on, and supervise soil handling, including identifying when soils are dry enough to be handled and how to make the best use of soils on site.

Green Infrastructure
Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework provides evidence-based advice and tools on how to design, deliver and manage green and blue infrastructure (GI). GI should create and maintain green liveable places that enable people to experience and connect with nature, and that offer everyone, wherever they live, access to good quality parks, greenspaces, recreational, walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed and accessible for all. GI provision should enhance ecological networks, support ecosystems services and connect as a living network at local, regional and national scales.

Development should be designed to meet the 15 Green Infrastructure Principles. The GI Standards can be used to inform the quality, quantity and type of GI to be provided. Major development should have a GI plan including a long-term delivery and management plan. Relevant aspects of local authority GI strategies should be delivered where appropriate.

GI mapping resources are available here and here. These can be used to help assess deficiencies in greenspace provision and identify priority locations for new GI provision.

Access and Recreation
Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help improve people's access to the natural environment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths, together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways should be considered. Links to urban fringe areas should also be explored to strengthen access networks, reduce fragmentation, and promote wider green infrastructure.

Rights of Way, Access land, Coastal access and National Trails
Paragraphs 104 and 180 of the NPPF highlight the important of public rights of way and access. Development should consider potential impacts on access land, common land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on the any nearby National Trails. The National Trails website www.nationaltrail.co.uk provides information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts.

Further information is set out in Planning Practice Guidance on the natural environment

Annex A –Natural England general advice