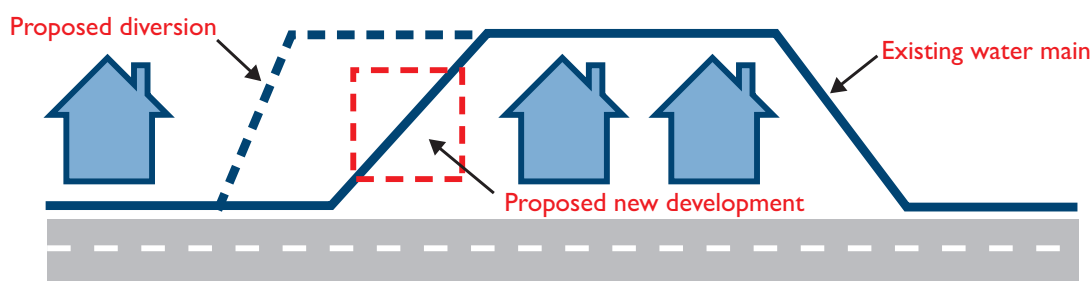


Diverting a public water main

These guidance notes are provided to help you fill in an application form to divert an existing water main. The notes should be read in conjunction with the Water Industry Act 1991. The relevant section is Section 185 – alteration and removal of pipes in certain cases.

Why do I need a water main diversion?

Your development works are within an easement area over our water supply main. This strip is normally 3m on either side of the pipeline, but is sometimes wider depending on the pipeline’s diameter, material or strategic nature. We require unrestricted access at all times to carry out maintenance and repairs.



Can I build over a water main?

Building over a water supply main is not allowed under any circumstance, or anywhere near to it within the easement strip. Water mains are pressurised and carry large volumes of water. Additional load close to or above our pipeline, or an excavation nearby causing ground instability, can lead to either damage or a burst. This can result in potential risk to life, property and financial loss, along with impacting on our customers in the surrounding area.

Any new development must be located at a safe distance from our water mains. Our preference is that your plans are designed to avoid our public system. If your works cannot be altered we will consider diversion options.

It is vital that you discuss proposals with us at an early stage. Failure to do so may result in expensive changes to your layout, or construction being stopped whilst a solution is agreed.

How close can I build to a water main?

This table shows our ‘stand-off distances’ required between any new structure and our water main. The easement strip is the minimum width necessary to repair, maintain or renew our asset. It varies with the size, depth and pressure of the water main, and we also consider pipe material and ground conditions. Wessex Water reserves the right to change the requirements for specific sites or strategic mains. If you are in any doubt please ask.

No structure or other obstruction is allowed over or within the stand-off distance. Building foundations must be taken down to a lower depth or be designed in such a way that they do not place additional loading onto a water main. Piling proposals are reviewed on a case by case basis – auger bored is preferred rather than driven methods.

Water main diameter (mm)	Not exceeding 180mm	181mm to 399mm	400mm and above
Minimum stand-off distance (m) each side of pipe	3m	5m	6m

Measurements are given for a pipeline depth of between 900-2,000mm.

The stand-off distance may increase for a strategic water main due to material, size, depth and pressure.

What information do I need to provide?

The exact location of the water main should be established (using ground penetration surveys or trial holes). We will advise you if this needs to be done under our supervision. You are liable for costs if you damage our asset.

In order for Wessex Water to assess the scheme’s options, you need to provide the following information:

- Location plan
- Layout plan, showing position of building work relative to the existing water main (AutoCad format).
- Third party details (if affected).
- Ground investigation report confirming soil conditions or contamination.
- Any other relevant information.

What do I need to do?

Step 1 Application
Please complete the application form and send it with a set of drawings and £2,000 deposit to Developer Services. All relevant sections should be completed on the form, as insufficient information can result in the application being delayed or returned. Contact details are at the end of these notes.
Step 2 Estimate
Wessex Water will determine the suitability of the case, and advise on an appropriate engineering solution. We will provide an estimated offer to carry out the works including appraisal, design and construction. On acceptance, you will return a signed agreement and commit to the cost of the works.
Step 3 Making payment
You will be required to deposit the full estimated cost of the works when you return your acceptance of the offer. Payment can be by cheque made payable to Wessex Water Services Ltd, or we can invoice you so you can pay by BACS. You can also pay by credit card.
Step 4 Detailed design and construction
Detailed design and planning of construction works cannot start before your written acceptance and payment. It will take at least six weeks, however if third party land entry or streetworks are involved it may take more. We will agree a site programme with you, and then carry out the construction.
Step 5 Completion
When we confirm the diversion is complete, the water main will be added to our records and maintained in the future as public.

How much will it cost?

Wessex Water will provide an estimate to carry out the works, including appraisal, design and construction. The minimum up-front fee to produce this estimate is £2,000 (we may need you to increase this for large or complex sites). If you accept our offer, the appraisal fee will be deducted from the final cost.

VAT is zero rated for new residential development. Standard rate and lower rate applies in some circumstances.

Construction is carried out on a rechargeable basis. Should the final cost of the works be more than the original estimate you will be liable for the additional costs. We will notify you during the course of the works of any potential cost increase. If the works are completed for less than the original estimate, we will normally refund you.

Who can carry out the work?

Wessex Water will undertake water mains diversions. The works must be carried out to regulatory standard to ensure a long asset life and to safeguard public health.

We can consider the use of suitably qualified accredited third party contractors (self lay organisations) to undertake some of the diversion work. Unlike self lay mains for serving new development, diversion works does not attract an asset value payment, ie, the developer is responsible for fully funding the diversion. We will consider your request, and if accepted, we will price our offer letter accordingly to reflect the use of a third party contractor. More information about our self lay policy is on our website.

What happens if I carry on without permission?

In some circumstances, we may have to use our statutory powers to stop your works. It is in your interest to contact us at an early stage to avoid abortive costs, delays or other problems.

What happens if the diversion application is refused?

We have a duty of care to our existing customers. If we consider your diversion is unfeasible we may formally reject the application and provide reasons. Examples of this are technical difficulties or affecting a strategic trunk main.

What can I do if I disagree with the decision?

If you are not satisfied with our decision then you should first discuss it with Developer Services. If a solution cannot be agreed you may use the formal Wessex Water complaint system or contact OFWAT for a ruling.

Send your application to:

Developer Services Wessex Water, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7WW

Tel: 01225 526 222

Email: main.diversion@wessexwater.co.uk