

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that 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.

I am requesting the following information relating to the sewerage and wastewater network serving Bolton-le-Sands, Lancashire, which falls within the Keer sub-catchment of the Lune drainage area:

Information Requested

1. Current sewerage network capacity

Any information, data, modelling output, or capacity assessment which shows

- **existing hydraulic capacity**
- **current utilisation / loading**
- **existing headroom or spare capacity**
- **any constraints identified for foul or combined sewerage systems serving Bolton-le-Sands and surrounding areas.**

Sewer modelling data contains information relating to individual properties, and as such is not disclosable under the EIR. Regulation 13 of the EIR and UK GDPR prohibit public authorities from sharing personal information which could make an individual or individuals identifiable. Additionally, releasing this information could have unintended consequences, including the potential to influence future property sales in the surrounding area.

We provide a response to your bullet points relating to utilisation, headroom and constraints for the foul or combined sewerage systems, in response to point 3 below.

2. Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) capacity relevant to this drainage area

- **Current design capacity**
- **Current operational loading**
- **Any identified limitations or required upgrades**
- **Whether there is adequate treatment capacity to accommodate additional residential development.**

The flow from this drainage area is treated at Carnforth wastewater treatment works (WwTW).

Regarding the capacity aspect of your request, it is important to note that WwTW contain a number of distinct treatment processes and that the appropriate measure of "capacity" varies for



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the different stages of each treatment process. Capacities are expressed in different formats, for example volume, flow, or “load”. Not all of these directly relate to the population connected to the sewer network. Even in the case of load, which is related to population, load is calculated from the concentration of the incoming sewage flow multiplied by volume. In practice, this means two identically “sized” WwTW can have different population assessments depending upon other variables.

Therefore, the effective capacity of each works will, in practice, be based upon a series of different measures for the different process stages. The key requirement for any WwTW is that the combined capability of each process stage must be sufficient to treat the flow and load that it receives, particularly the dry weather flow, in line with its environmental permit and regulatory requirements, to ensure that it robustly meets its final effluent quality parameters.

As our focus is on managing permit compliance and final effluent quality, we do not routinely update the overall “capacity” data for our WwTW’s and we, therefore, do not hold the capacity information you have requested in the format you require, therefore in line with Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we are unable to supply it.

Whilst we do not routinely update capacity data in the format you requested, we do, analyse the ability of our WwTWs to comply with their current consents and to be able to accommodate future population growth. This process is set out within our Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMP) for the region, which are 25-year, holistic plan that covers all elements across drainage and wastewater.

The latest version of the DWMP was published in May 2023 ([Drainage and wastewater management plan](#)) and the outputs can be viewed on the DWMP customer portal ([DWMP Customer Portal Environment](#)).

The portal allows has an input box that allows you to “find and address or place” within the region. It then provides four “buttons” at the top pf the page. If you click one of the first three buttons (sewer flooding, Environment or Sewer Condition) the box, at the left of the page, provides a choice of information types (for example, if you click the Environment button, you can choose, Pollution, Use of Storm overflows or Capacity to Treat Wastewater).

If you click the Capacity to Treat Wastewater button, the box at the right hand side of the page, presents the results of the assessment that we have made of the risk that our WwTW will not have the capacity to meet its permit requirements (including volumetric requirements) as a result of forecast population or other growth within the area.

For each drainage area, the data presents risk/opportunities at the following design horizons:

- Current view for the drainage area (2020)
- Developing view for the drainage area (2030)
- Future view for the drainage area (2050)

For each design horizon, the drainage area is presented as being;

- No concern (forecast)
- Potential area of focus (forecast)
- Area of focus (forecast)

For Carnforth the level of risk to wastewater treatment capacity is classed as being a “potential area of focus” in all of 2020, 2030 and 2050.

If you click the fourth of the buttons at the top of the page; “Your Area Plan”, then the box at the right hand side of the page shows you which drainage area the chosen location sits within and provides a link to the more detailed plan that unpins the information presented on the portal.

For Carnforth WwTW this is the Lune Strategic Planning Area, which can be accessed via this link: [Lune Drainage and Wastewater Strategic Plan](#).

The Strategic Plans provide more details of the risk assessment process that has been used, the specific risks that have been identified and the proposed adaptive plans that are being followed to manage these risks.

Note: the data used within this portal is from 2020 and was used to support the publication of the DWMP in May 2023. It is not a present day (2025) forecast. We are currently developing the next DWMP which is due to be published in November 2027. These assessments inform our future business plan submissions for growth related expenditure which must then be approved by Ofwat.

- 3. Any modelling undertaken in relation to proposed or expected housing growth including but not limited to developments in Bolton-le-Sands or Slyne (e.g., the area west of Slyne Road), and**
 - **modelling results**
 - **impact assessments**
 - **conclusions regarding wastewater capacity**
 - **any network upgrades recommended or required.**

Although the location of specific new development proposals is a matter for the local planning authority, and United Utilities is not a statutory consultee on these applications, we do work closely with local authorities to provide comments on applications for planning permission, where we think it is necessary to protect the impact on our assets and on customers.

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.

Our comments must, however, reflect our statutory obligations as a regulated water company, one of which is that we must allow new connections to our network. Whilst we cannot stop development from occurring, we do review applications for planning permission and provide comments where necessary. These comments include recommending planning conditions to control the approach to drainage and seeking to secure foul only connections to the public sewer wherever

possible. Foul only connections are important as they help to keep the impact on our wastewater network assets to a minimum, as surface water flows can be much larger than foul flows.

The local authority is ultimately the decision maker for planning applications, and it does not have to reflect UU's comments or recommended conditions in its determinations. In almost all cases, any UU responses will be published to the local authority's planning portal. In this case, information would be made available via [View planning applications and decisions - Lancaster City Council](#).

Our approach to managing any remaining impacts from growth is based on an agreed Developer Impact Assessment process. This process requires the exact location of the development, the proposed point of connection, and the scale and phasing of flows. Only once this information is provided can we undertake a capacity assessment and determine whether any deterioration or impact on the wastewater network or storm overflow performance would occur. Any network upgrades or mitigation measures are therefore identified on a site specific basis and are not pre-determined for wider areas of potential growth.

I can confirm that as the development in the area west of Slyne Road was recently rejected, no Developer Impact Assessment has yet been completed and as such, we do not hold modelling outputs in the form requested and we are therefore, unable to share any information relating to this with you. This approach is in line with Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR.

- 4. DWMP sub-catchment-level data - Any non-redacted information used in the DWMP 2023 relevant to the Keer sub-catchment, including:**
- **capacity assessments**
 - **foul and surface-water risk ratings**
 - **network performance indicators**
 - **growth impact assessments**
 - **risk-of-capacity-exceedance modelling.**

As set out in response to point 2 above, information relating to the DWMP is publicly available and can be viewed online via [DWMP Publication May 2023](#).

Within this webpage, there are individual reports for each of the Strategic Planning Areas. For information relating to Bolton-le-Sands, or the Keer catchment, we would recommend reviewing the [Lune DWMP](#). This contains a range of information including strategic context and drivers, catchment characterisation, risk assessments, future needs and investment gaps, options for development and appraisal, preferred strategies and long-term programmes, and stakeholder engagement.

Any information that has been redacted from the public DWMP documents is either commercially sensitive (Regulation 12(5)(e)), could pose a national security or public safety threat (Reg 12(5)(a)), contains internal modelling assumptions or data that cannot be shared publicly (Reg 12(4)(e)), or third-party intellectual property (Reg 12(5)(c)) and as such, would not be disclosable under the EIR either.

We are currently in the process of developing our next DWMP (DWMP28), and this will be published on our corporate website in November 2027.

5. Details of any planned or committed capital projects

- **sewer network improvements**
- **WTW upgrades**
- **stormwater capacity enhancements serving the Bolton-le-Sands / Keer sub-catchment area.**

Information relating to our planned or committed capital projects is available in our AMP8 (2025 – 2030) business plan, which can be viewed via [United Utilities Group Plc - Business Plan 24](#).

We have three specific AMP8 schemes to upgrade combined sewer overflows that are planned within this catchment, which are currently in the very early stages of design. These schemes are at:

- St Nicholas Lane Wastewater Pumping Station
- Larburnum Park Wastewater Pumping Station
- Hest Bank Wastewater Pumping Station

In addition to these three enhancement schemes, we will also be undertaking routine planned and reactive maintenance of our assets within the area, where and when required.

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.