



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited

Haweswater House
Lingley Mere Business Park
Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000

unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR/ID836

Date: 29/05/2026

Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

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).

Your request:

United Utilities have applied to Environment Agency for a Water Abstraction Permit at a vacant site located at Wallasey Village CH45 3LG. The application states that 6 million cubic metres of water will be abstracted annually. United Utilities have previously informed Councillor Ian Lewis that they plan to construct a Combined Sewer Overflow installation on the site. UU have stated that the 6million cubic metres of water abstracted will be disposed of via the sewer system. The abstraction and disposal of this volume of water has significant environmental impact implications. Therefore I request full information of United Utilities plan for the site and full disclosure of environmental impacts assessments

Our response:

The Storm Reduction Overflow Plan (SODRP) is a UK government policy designed to significantly reduce the amount of untreated sewage released into rivers and coastal waters during heavy rainfall via combined sewer overflows. It is a statutory plan mandated by the Environment Act 2021. The plan sets legally binding targets for water companies to reduce storm overflow discharges. It also requires the largest infrastructure upgrade in the history of England's water industry. Close to the site identified on Sandy Lane, United Utilities has a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), which in heavy rainfall discharges under an Environment Agency (EA) permit to the 'Bidston Stream' and on to the 'River Birket'. To achieve the SODRP and Environment Act requirements, United Utilities is building a below ground storage tank that captures storm flows therefore reducing discharges in line with the new requirements. Stored storm flows will then return to the network when rainfall reduces and passed forward for full treatment at Birkenhead Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW).

As you may know parts of the Wirral have a very high-water table, United Utilities are installing a temporary de-watering system via deep wells bored into the low lying 'Wilmslow Sandstone' to enable the construction of this combined sewer storage tank. As we plan to take more than 20 m3 / day as part of this de-watering system, we require an abstraction license from the EA. This is explained further on the EA website:- [Check if you need a licence to abstract water - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/check-if-you-need-a-licence-to-abSTRACT-water)

The abstracted water will be allowed to settle at site and then will be returned to the local watercourse via the surface water network into the 'Bidston Stream', a tributary of the 'River Birket', south of Southbourne Road (adjacent to the railway line – CH45 8QA). . Based off the calculated permeabilities from the investigative pumping test results (part of the application requirements), a flow rate of 115 l/s has been determined to sufficiently reduce the groundwater level for the shaft

excavation to take place safely. The systems will be temporarily required 24/7 for the duration of the dewatering programme, which will be approximately eight months. Once construction has been completed, this will return to normal. An estimate of how much water will be abstracted throughout this eight-month period is set out below:

- $115\text{l/s} \times 60 \text{ seconds} \times 60 \text{ minutes} = 414\text{m}^3 \text{ per hour}$
- $414 \times 24 \text{ hours} = 9,936\text{m}^3 \text{ per day}$
- $9936 \times 365 \text{ days} = 3,626,640\text{m}^3 \text{ per year (or 3.6million m}^3\text{)}$
- $3,626,640\text{m}^3 / 12 \times 8 \text{ months} = 2,417,760\text{m}^3 \text{ (or 2.4million m}^3\text{)}$

The abstracted volume of water is removed purely to support construction activities and is returned to Bidston Stream via the surface water system. In line with the abstraction licence application process the EA complete a conservation assessment. This EA assessment is not yet complete; we are therefore unable to provide you with a copy of this in line with Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR.

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