United Utilities Water Limited
Haweswater House
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Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000

unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR-947
Date: September 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 and our response to your individual questions are outlined below:

I am a resident of Ainsdale, Southport.

For the avoidance of doubt as to jurisdiction, United Utilities is a public authority for the purposes of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, as determined by the Upper Tribunal in Fish Legal v Information Commissioner [2015] UKUT 52 (AAC).

This request relates to the site of the former Ainsdale Hope Church of England High School, Sandringham Road, Ainsdale, Southport, being approximately 9.17 hectares registered at HM Land Registry under title number MS560719, allocated in the Sefton Local Plan as MN2.08, and declared surplus to requirements by Sefton Council's Cabinet on 23 July 2026.

The information sought concerns water, soil and land, discharges and other releases into the environment, and measures and activities affecting or likely to affect those elements. It is therefore environmental information within regulation 2(1)(a), (b) and (c).

Please supply the following.

1. Developer enquiries relating to this site

(a) Any pre-development enquiry, developer services enquiry, pre-planning enquiry or capacity enquiry received since 1 January 2024 relating to this site, from whatever source, including from Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, The Sovini Group, One Vision Housing, any Sovini group company, or any consultant, agent or engineer acting for them. –

Since 1 January 2024, both the Planning team and Developer services teams at United Utilities have not received any enquiries concerning this development. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this documentation, as it is not held.

(b) Any application for a point of connection, or for a determination of the point of connection, for foul water, surface water or clean water in respect of this site.

Since 1 January 2024, no application for a point of connection has been received by United Utilities. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this documentation, as it is not held.

(c) Any application or enquiry under section 98, section 104 or section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991 relating to this site.

Since 1 January 2024, no application for a point of connection has been received by United Utilities. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this documentation, as it is not held.

(d) United Utilities' response to any enquiry or application within (a) to (c), including any capacity assessment, modelling output, conditions imposed, or statement of the works required to accommodate the development.

As no applications have been received, no associated response documentation can be provided. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this documentation, as it is not held.

(e) For each such enquiry or application, please state the date received and the number of dwellings or population equivalent stated in it.

As no applications have been received, no associated dates or dwelling numbers can be provided. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

2. Capacity of the receiving network

(a) Any assessment, model or study held of the capacity of the foul sewer network, the surface water sewer network and the receiving wastewater treatment works for the catchment serving this site, including any assessment of headroom available for new development.

This site is in the drainage catchment of Ainsdale Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW). We do not hold any capacity assessment, model or study relating to this treatment WwTW or its associated drainage network. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

Likewise, we do not undertake or hold any ‘headroom’ assessments. Instead, we undertake annual Dry Weather Flow (DWF) assessments based on the flow limit stated within each sites’ environmental permit (see section 2b below).

(b) Any record of the wastewater treatment works to which foul flows from this site would drain, and of its consented flow and current loading.

As mentioned above, this site is in the drainage catchment of Ainsdale Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW). Ainsdale WwTW has a Dry Weather Flow (DWF) permitted value of 3,300 m^3, as set by the Environment Agency.

We do not undertake or hold any 'headroom' assessments for our WwTWs. Instead, we undertake annual Dry Weather Flow (DWF) assessments based on the flow limit stated within each sites' environmental permit. These assessments help us understand environmental impact, plant capacity and regulatory compliance risks. This is known as a 'Q90' assessment.

The Q90 is a statistical flow metric representing the daily volume of wastewater treated at the works that is exceeded 90% of the time so the lowest 10% will be the flows received by the works under 'dry' conditions, and therefore the representation of the domestic/commercial flows alone, without the impact of rainfall.

The Q90 is typically calculated by gathering a full year (365 days) of total daily volume (TDV) data from a site, then sorting the 365 individual values from lowest to highest. The Q90 is then the 10th percentile value within that list of ascending data. This means that this is the flow rate, over a year, that is exceeded 90% of the time. For the 2025 calendar year we have calculated the Q90 at Ainsdale WwTW as 3,317 m^3.

(c) Any record of hydraulic overload, sewer flooding incidents, or storm overflow spill events within the catchment serving this site in the last five years.

The table below shows the number of sewer flooding incidents that have occurred in the Ainsdale catchment over the past five years. Please note that this assessment is undertaken in a financial year format, in line with regulatory reporting requirements. None of these events have been caused by hydraulic overloading of the sewer network. They are all associated with flooding other causes (FOC), such as blockages and sewer collapses.

	Flooding root cause	Number of External flooding incidents	Number of Internal flooding incidents
2021/22	Blockage	27	0
2022/23	Blockage	30	0
	Collapse	6	0
2023/24	Blockage	33	0
	Collapse	6	0
	Jetting Operations	0	3
2024/25	Blockage	9	0
	Collapse	9	0
2025/26	Blockage	15	0
	Collapse	9	0
		144	**3**

The table below shows the number of storm overflow spills that have occurred in the Ainsdale catchment over the past five years. Please note that this assessment is undertaken in a calendar year format, in line with regulatory reporting requirements.

	Number of storm overflow spills
2021	45
2022	1
2023	4

2024	1
2025	4

These spill numbers all relate to the storm overflow (SO) located at Ainsdale WwTW. There are no Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in this catchment.

(d) Any assessment of the ability of the network to accommodate the development of approximately 120 dwellings on this site.

United Utilities does not hold an assessment regarding the ability of the network to accommodate 120 additional dwellings. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

3. Groundwater and the adjoining dune system

(a) Any information held on groundwater levels, groundwater quality or the local aquifer beneath or adjoining this site.

The Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England are the regulators of Groundwater and its effects on the natural environment, and they would be the correct authorities to contact regarding groundwater levels and groundwater quality information. As such, under Regulation 10 of the EIR we do not hold the information to answer this request but believe that another public authority does. EIR requests can be made to the EA via this website:
Environment Agency: make a request for information under FOI or EIR - GOV.UK

(b) Any abstraction, borehole or well operated by United Utilities within 2 kilometres of this site, and any record of its effect on local groundwater levels.

Our GIS records do not show any abstraction borehole or source protection zone (SPZ) within two kilometres of the site. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

United Utilities groundwater abstractions do not abstract from the rock formation which underlies the site (Singleton Mudstone).

(c) Any assessment held of the effect of development in this locality on groundwater levels in the adjoining Sefton Coast dune system, including any consideration of groundwater dependent habitats such as dune slacks.

As described above, the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England are the regulators of Groundwater and its effects on the natural environment. As such, United Utilities does not hold any relevant assessments on groundwater dependant habitats and the potential impact on these from this development. Therefore, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

4. Assets on or crossing the site

(a) Records of any public sewer, water main, rising main or other United Utilities apparatus on, under or crossing the site, or within 20 metres of its boundary, including asset plans and any easement or wayleave.

Our records do not show any United Utilities assets crossing this site. Within 20 meters of the southern boundary of the site there are combined and surface water sewer and water mains.

The public water and sewer records can be viewed via our online viewing facility for free. Viewings are by appointment only. You can book an appointment by emailing: propertysearches@uuplc.co.uk or by calling 0370 751 010. Alternatively, a number of providers offer a paid for mapping service, including United Utilities. To purchase a sewer and water plan from United Utilities, visit https://www.unitedutilities.com/property-searches/

(b) Any record relating to the reservation, contained in a conveyance of 1928 affecting this land, of free passage of water, sewage and waste through existing and future sewers on or under the land.

We do not hold any record relating to the reservation contained in the conveyance of 1928. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

5. Correspondence and consultation

(a) Any correspondence between United Utilities and Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council relating to this site since 1 January 2024, in any capacity.

There has been no correspondence between the planning team and Sefton Council in relation to any planning application proposals for this site. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

(b) Any representation or consultation response made by United Utilities to Sefton Council in respect of Local Plan allocation MN2.08, at any date, including during the examination of the adopted Local Plan and in respect of the new Local Plan 2029 to 2044 now being prepared.

United Utilities was consulted on the local plan and had no specific comments relating to this site. Our only advisory note related to the utilisation of the existing separate system infrastructure for any potential foul and surface water connections.

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

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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.