

WATER NEUTRALITY STATEMENT GUIDANCE

What should a Water Neutrality Statement include?

A Water Neutrality Statement should include the following:

Introduction

Explaining the purpose of the statement and the reason for its submission.

Background

Outlining the background to the statement. This should include details of the site, including its existing or most recent use, any extant permissions, and details of the current proposal.

Baseline Calculations

It is important that the statement clearly establishes what the baseline water consumption rate is for the existing or most recent use. Where historic water bills for the site are not available, alternative data using the Building Regulations Part G or BREEM water calculators should be used, along with appropriate occupancy rates and consumption data for any industrial processes being undertaken at the site. The data should be presented in litres per person per day. Further information is set out separately below. It is critical that existing baseline consumption is fully evidenced to give certainty of the actual mains water being used at a site. Metered water bills are the best way to achieve this certainty.

Proposal Demand

This section should calculate what the water demands will be from the proposed development. The data should be presented in litres per person per day and reflect the average occupancy of the development. For business uses, the proposed consumption data must include consumption used for any proposed industrial processes.

Water Reduction Measures

Where the proposed water consumption is higher than the baseline consumption, you must first consider reducing water consumption in the proposed development through installing more water efficient fixtures and appliances. Completion of the Part G or BREEM water calculators will help demonstrate the savings to be made. Where highly efficient appliances are to be installed, details of an appliance that meets that high standard of water consumption should be submitted to demonstrate that the efficiencies are achievable.

Once all efficiency opportunities have been exhausted, water re-use through rainwater harvesting and/or greywater/blackwater recycling should be then considered. Further details below.

Offsetting measures

The use of efficiencies and rain/grey water harvesting technologies alone will be unlikely to make some developments water neutral. In most such cases, such as new build on greenfield sites, offsetting measures to reduce water consumption on other land and property will be required in order to achieve water neutrality. Where offsetting on third party land, full details and evidence of the third party landowner's existing water consumption must be submitted,

along with the full details of the efficiencies to be implemented and how the efficiencies will be maintained in future (this could be through a maintenance contribution to the landowner for instance). This can include existing water bills and evidence of the efficiency of the existing fixtures and appliances. Where offsetting is to be carried out on third party land, that landowner will be required to enter into a legal agreement to install and retain the measures in perpetuity.

Conclusion

It is important the conclusion summarises the water figures in a clear manner and sets out clearly the detail of any mitigation strategy necessary to achieve neutrality.