

## WWDS-BONS 2

## Building over or near a sewer

### Guidance notes and procedure

You only need to read this guidance note and apply to us for permission to build if:

- you are building over a public sewer, or
- you are building near a public sewer, but you didn't meet all our standard criteria and we have advised you to make a formal application. To find out more visit [www.wessexwater.co.uk](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk). If you meet the criteria, then you won't need to contact us.

Wessex Water owns and maintain thousands of kilometres of public sewers. These take away sewage waste, keep the environment clean, and are an essential part of everyday life.

Many of our sewers run within private land and are usually found to the front, rear or side of a property. If you are planning a new development or home improvement project, it's important you take the appropriate steps to protect our sewer and your new building.

### What is a public sewer?

Almost all sewers that are shared by two or more properties, or serve a single property but are located outside of the property boundary, will be public.

Please refer to [www.wessexwater.co.uk](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk) for further details.

### How do I find a public sewer?

There are a number of things you can do to find a public sewer.

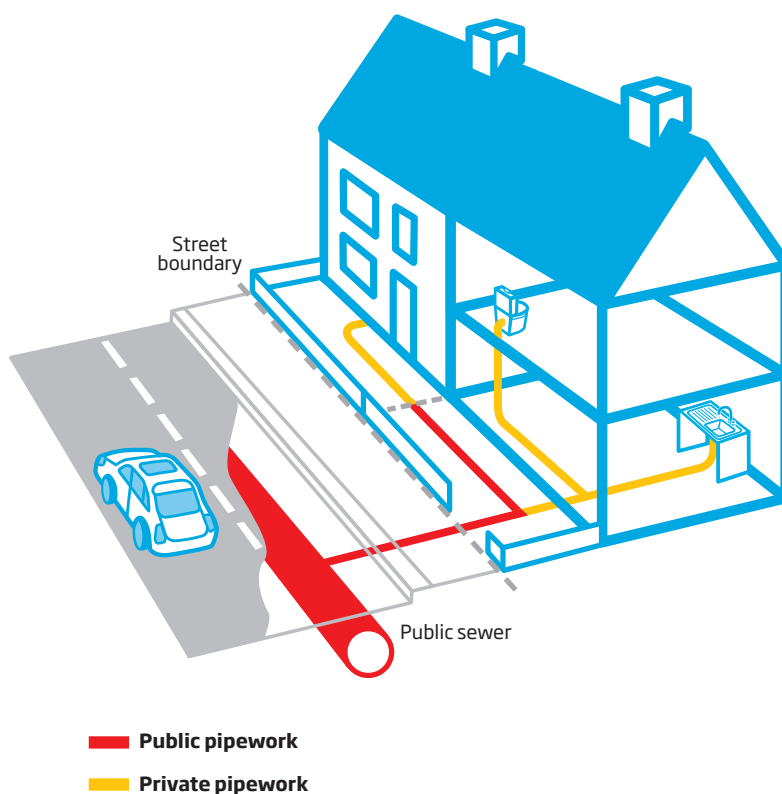
Copies of our maps (asset records) can be viewed to help establish the location of public sewers around your property and the surrounding area. You can also check the deeds of your property or enquire at your local council office.

Site surveys are the most important way to accurately locate public sewers and must always be carried out. How extensive these need to be will vary from property to property. You should consult a qualified, capable person to help advise you, such as an architect, engineer or your builder.

For more detailed help and advice please visit [wessexwater.co.uk](http://wessexwater.co.uk)

### Why is it important to get consent?

We are responsible for all public sewers in our region. We need to make sure that building work doesn't damage the sewer (and potentially your home) or make it harder for us to maintain and access the pipe. It can also make it more difficult to sell your property in the future if you don't have our consent for your project.



## When should I apply?

We recommend that you find out where the sewers are well in advance of starting any building work. Ideally, you should know where the pipes are at the design stage of your project – this will help to avoid any unnecessary delays, damage to pipes or additional costs further down the line.

## What information do I need to provide?

Foundation type	Application form	Fee	Plan drawing	Sectional drawing	Loading calculations
Strip	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Trench fill	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pad	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Raft	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Piling	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cantilever	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

You will need to supply us with detailed drawings of your extension and its proximity to the sewer.

## What do we require?

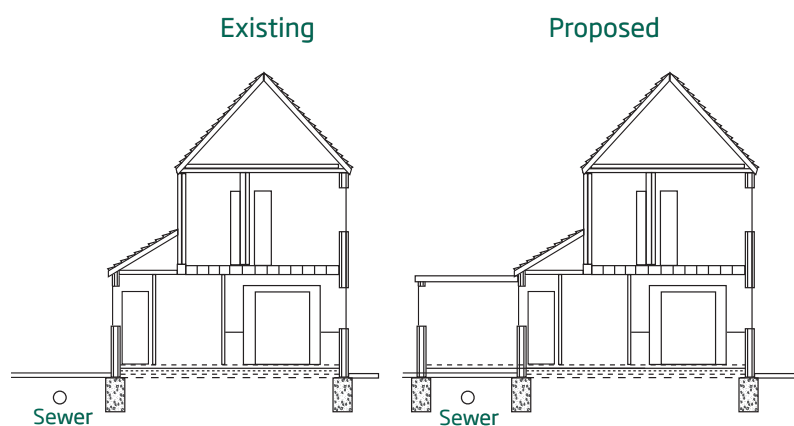
A plan drawing – both existing and proposed.

A sectional drawing showing the type and depth of the foundations you propose.

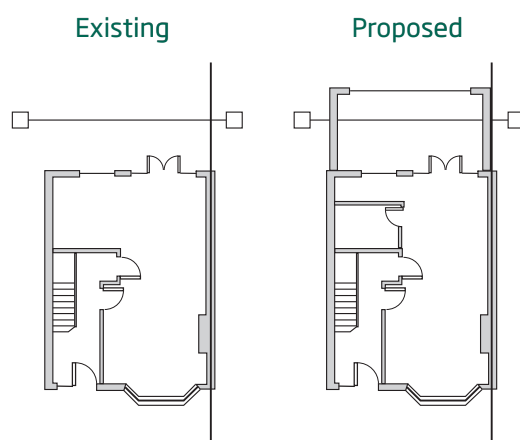
Please note: The public sewer must be accurately plotted on both drawings, so we can assess the proposed works in relation to the public sewer. See below examples showing both a sectional drawing and an existing and proposed plan.

## What are plan and sectional drawings?

### Sectional drawing example



### Plan example

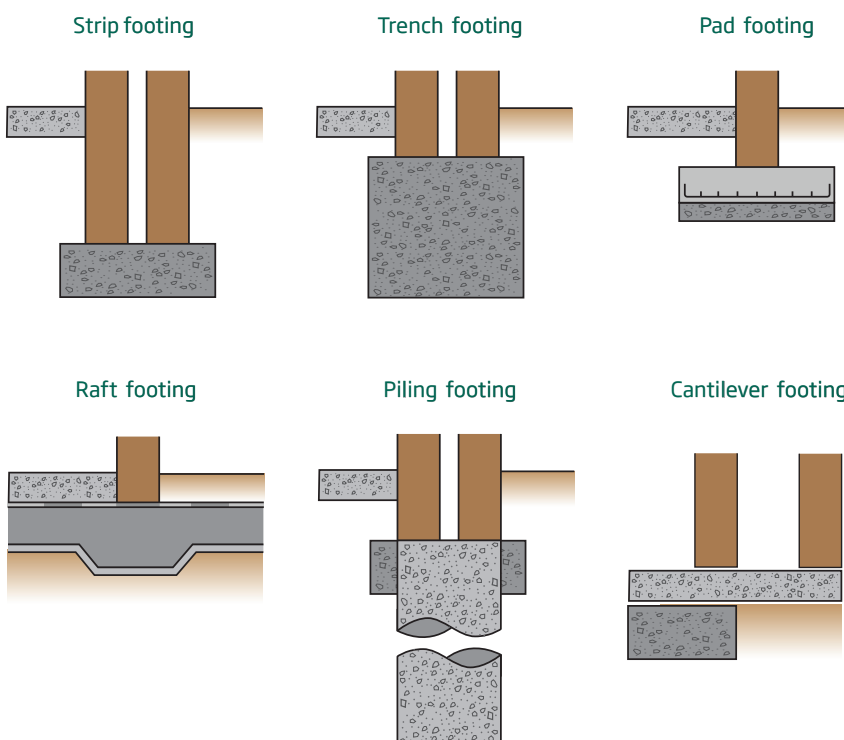


The Process
<b>Step 1 - Application &amp; Payment</b>
Please complete the application form and send it to us with your design drawings (please see below for further information).
You should also provide us with calculations if your chosen foundation type requires it (see figure 1 below).
Payment must be made online or via BACS.
<b>Step 2 - CCTV Survey (for building over and piling works only)</b>
We will carry out a CCTV camera survey to check the structural condition of our sewer.
<b>Step 3 - Assessment and Outcome</b>
If your proposal is acceptable we will issue an approval letter.
If any drainage works are necessary (eg, sewer replacement or manhole relocation), our approval will be conditional, pending completion of these works
<b>Step 4 - Drainage Works (if any)</b>
The drainage works should be carried out. We will discuss the technical requirements and specification with you before any work begins on site. If the work is being delivered by your qualified drainage contractor, we will arrange an inspection.
<b>Step 5 - Completion letter (if applicable)</b>
Once the drainage work has been carried out to our satisfaction, we will send you a completion letter as confirmation, to keep with your property deeds.
<b>Step 6 - Construction</b>
Your works can commence and any further inspections will be undertaken by the Council's Building Control department or your private inspector.
If you used piling foundations, we will also carry out a post-works CCTV survey.

### How much does an application cost?

We have a set charge of £325 (non-refundable). This covers our administrative costs, technical review, and any site visits that may be required. Please note that making a full application to us is only necessary in certain circumstances, and you may be able to self-certify (free of charge). You can find out more about that process on our website. We recommend that you fully explore this option before applying to us, in order to avoid incurring unnecessary costs.

**Figure 1**



### Foundation Requirements

Whilst we will consider a number of different foundation designs, we normally expect strip or trench fill foundations to be used wherever possible. Foundations will normally need to be taken down to a specified depth to avoid loading on the sewer pipe, and to provide a stable environment should we ever need to access the sewer in the future.

## Load Bearing Walls

Where you are building directly over a sewer, at least two load-bearing walls will extend over the pipe. In most circumstances, there will be a requirement to bridge over the pipe using pre-stressed concrete lintels in accordance with our standard detail. Our requirements will vary on a site to site basis and we will advise you of these if we give consent for your project to proceed.



## When can't you build over or near a pipe?

Under no circumstances should you be building over or near to a pressurised pumping (rising main) or water supply main.

We also do not allow any manholes or inspection chambers to be located within a building, as this would increase the risk of internal sewer flooding and odour issues. However, we will consider proposals that involve the removal and relocation of a chamber, where technically viable (please note this won't always be possible, and you may need to amend your plans or divert the pipe instead).

## Strategic sewers

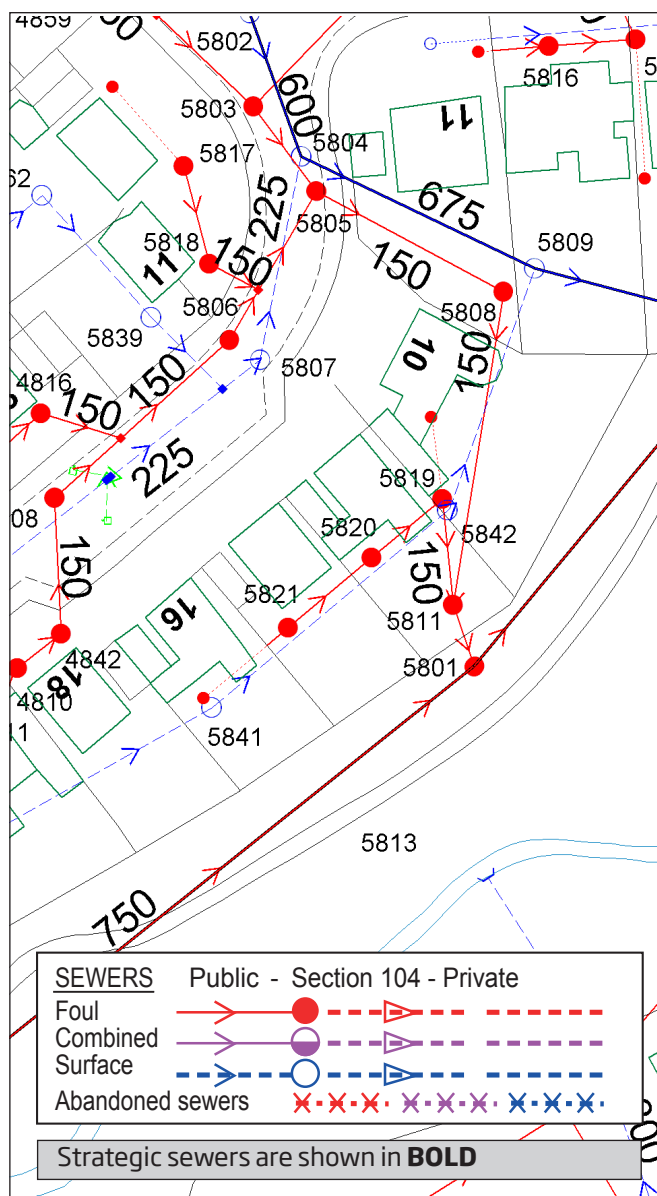
For development proposed over, or within 6m of, a strategic public sewer (these are clearly marked on our sewer records) you must contact us prior to making an application. We are generally unable to permit new development over or close to strategic sewers, however there are exceptions. We will review each proposed development on a case by case basis and work with you where possible to find a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

Send your application to:

Sewer Protection  
Developer Services  
Wessex Water  
Claverton Down  
Bath  
BA2 7WW

Call 01225 526 333

Email [sewer.buildover@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:sewer.buildover@wessexwater.co.uk)



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