WONDERFUL ON TAP

SEVERN TRENT

BUILDING OVER OR NEAR SEWERS

Frequently asked questions



Type of building work

Question	Answer
Can I build over or near a sewer with an extension to an existing domestic property?	Yes, providing you follow the guidance within this leaflet, our policy guidance notes, and comply with Building Regulations 2010 Part H4.
Can I construct a cellar or basement, with the sewer pipe running through it?	You can't have a sewer running through your basement or cellar. This includes plans where the sewer is to be suspended, encased or in a channel.
Can I build a new development over sewer?	You can't build new properties over sewers. You will need to divert the sewer, under section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (please refer to our website), and provide our full protection/no build zones.
Can I build a new development near a sewer?	You can't build new properties near our sewers. You will need to divert the sewer, under section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (please refer to our website), and provide our full protection/no build zones.
I have already built without obtaining permission from you, can I get retrospective approval?	We do not issue retrospective approvals. To build an extension without prior approval from STW is illegal, and your works will not comply with Building Regulations 2010 Part H4. Not obtaining our approval could jeopardise the future sale of the property.

Key:

Yes you can

Sadly you cannot



Pipe diameter and location

Question	Answer	
Can I build over or near a sewer that is up to 225mm in diameter?	You'll need to apply to us for permission before you start works.	
A neighbours, connection enters my land, before joining the public sewer. Does this form part of the public sewer network?	Yes. In this case the connection will be classed as part of the public sewer network. That means it has the same protection as all our public sewers, so you will need our permission if you want to build over or near the connection.	
If I have/propose a change of direction on the sewer, can this still be within the footprint of the extension of foundations?	No. The changed direction of the sewer can't be within the footprint of the extension or its foundations.	
Can I build over or near a sewer with the following diameter: 450mm, 525mm, 600mm or 900mm	You can't build over sewers of this size. We need you to have a no-build zone of 5m, either side of the pipe and measured from the centreline of our asset.	
Can I build over or near a sewer greater than 900mm diameter?	You can't build over sewers of this size. We need you to have a no-build zone of 7.5m, either side of the pipe and measured from the centreline of our asset.	
Can I build over or near a 300mm diameter sewer?	We might consider a slight encroachment in some cases. But this depends on a number of things and we'll look at it on a case-by-case basis. Please talk to us about this before you incur expense for drawings, planning applications or starting work.	You can't build over sewers of this size. We need you to have a no-build zone of 5m, either side of the pipe and measured from the centreline of our asset.

Key:

Yes you can

Sadly you cannot

Type of sewer

Question	Answer
Can I build over or near a gravity sewer?	Yes, as long as the sewer pipe is not more than 225mm in diameter.
Can I build over or near a pressurised pumped sewer (all diameters)?	You can't build over or near a pressurised pumped sewer of any size. We need a 5m clearance either side of the pipe.

Sewer pipe material

Question	Answer
Can I build over or near a vitrified clay sewer pipe?	Yes, providing you follow the guidance within this leaflet, our policy guidance notes, and comply with Building Regulations 2010 Part H4.
Can I build over or near a plastic sewer pipe?	Yes, providing you follow the guidance within this leaflet, our policy guidance notes, and comply with Building Regulations 2010 Part H4.
Can I build over or near a sewer constructed using pitch fibre?	No, you can't build over sewers built from pitch fibre. If we approve your plans, you will need to replace the entire section - where it falls in the footprint of the extension - with either clay or plastic pipe of the same size.

Access points

Question	Answer
How close can I build to a manhole or rodding eye?	You will need at least 500mm clearance, measured from the outside of the manhole chamber.
Can I have a manhole or rodding eye within the footprint of an extension or the foundations?	You cannot have a manhole or rodding eye within the footprint of an extension or foundations.

Foundation types

Question	Answer
Can I use piled foundations?	Yes, but the piled foundations must be at least three times the pile diameter away from the public sewer and of auger construction (not drive). You will need to send us a CCTV survey of the sewer pipe as part of your initial application, include a piling plan showing the sewer in relation to the piles. As part of our conditions, the sewer will require CCTV surveying once work has been completed.
Can I use raft foundations?	You can only use raft foundations in mining areas or at the request of Building Control. You must fully replace any pipe within the footprint of the extension.
Can I use traditional concrete strip foundations?	Yes, as long as the proposed extension meets the rules in this document. ***Please note extensions within 1m or constructed over the sewer, must be taken down to the invert line (bottom) of the sewer.**
How close to a manhole can I construct the foundations?	In most cases, we need at least 500mm clearance from the edge of the foundation, and the outer manhole wall. At times, we may need a greater clearance, so our Operations Team can safely maintain the sewer in the future.
Can I use cantilever style foundations?	No. We don't allow the use of cantilever foundations.

Key:

Yes you can

Sadly you cannot

Other protection zones

Question	Answer
Can I build within an Easement (legal document) that protects a sewer?	The Easement document will tell you what you can and can't do. We're not able to change these requirements. You'll normally be able to find a copy of this in the Deeds to the property.

CCTV surveys

Question	Answer
What needs to be included with a CCTV survey?	The CCTV survey must include: Location plan showing: the property, boundary, sewer location, manholes, use of sewer depth and direction of flow. Structural report confirming: material, structural grading (either numerical or alphabetical), connections, manholes, depth, use (surface water, foul or combined).
Is there a specific standard required?	Yes, all CCTV surveys must meet the criteria set out by the Water Research Centre (WRc) www.wrcgroup.com.
Are you able to recommend or supply a list of CCTV contractors?	Unfortunately, we are not able to recommend any contractors, or supply of list of contractors.
Can you complete the CCTV survey for me?	Unfortunately we cannot, as our teams are normally carrying out other works elsewhere.

Working within other land not within your ownership

Question	Answer
Can I work within 3rd Party Land, to relocate a manhole, sewer connection or the public sewer?	You cannot work on the public sewer on land that you do not own. This includes relocating connections and manholes.

Reimbursement of costs

Question	Answer
If you reject my application, will you reimburse me for any abortive costs, such as surveys, architect plans or associated fees?	We understand you will have incurred costs if we can't allow your building works. However, we cannot pay any of the costs that have come about from applying to us (such as architect plans, CCTV surveys or application fees).

Key:

Yes you can

Sadly you cannot