



Water Resource Management Plan 2029

SEA Scoping Appendix E - SEA Screening Note

Thames Water
September 2026

Appendix E. SEA Screening Note

The purpose of this note is to set out the screening assessment to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in respect of the Thames Water's WRMP29. SEA is undertaken in the UK under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The regulations apply to a variety of plans and programmes including water management.

Thames Water under the Regulations must carry out screening to determine whether the proposed WRMP29 is likely to have significant environmental effects, and hence whether SEA is required. Schedule 1 of the Regulations lists the criteria for determining the likely significance of the environmental effects of plans or programmes. The criteria cover the characteristics of the plans and programmes and the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected. Thames Water must make its conclusions on a determination available to the public (this SEA Screening Note).

The proposed WRMP29 has been screened based the decision tree in Section 3.2.1 of the UK Water Industry Research (UKWIR) report 'Environmental Assessment Guidance for Water Resources Management Plans and Drought Plans'. The results are as follows:

Thames Water WRMP 29 SEA Screening Checklist

Checklist question	Response
Is the Plan subject to preparation or adoption by a national, regional or local authority?	Yes – The duty for us (as a water undertaker) to prepare and maintain a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) is set out in sections 37A to 37D of the Water Industry Act 1991. A WRMP shall address in particular— Our estimate of the quantities of water required to meet those obligations; the measures which we intend to take or continue; the likely sequence and timing for implementing those measures; and such other matters as the Secretary of State may specify in directions.
Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	Yes – as noted we must produce and maintain a WRMP under sections 37A to 37D of the Water Industry Act 1991.
Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use?	Yes – the WRMP is being prepared for the purposes of water management (potable water).
Does the Plan set a framework for future development likely to require EIA?	Yes- The Plan could result in future projects which would also require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under both Schedule 1 and 2 of the Town and Country Planning EIA Regulations 2017 such as: Groundwater abstraction or artificial groundwater recharge schemes where the annual volume of water abstracted or

	recharged is equivalent to or exceeds 10 million cubic metres; Works for the transfer of water resources, other than piped drinking water, between river basins where the transfer aims at preventing possible shortages of water and where the amount of water transferred exceeds 100 million cubic metres per year; Dams and other installations designed for the holding back or permanent storage of water, where a new or additional amount of water held back or stored exceeds 10 million cubic metres; groundwater abstraction if the area of the works exceeds 1 hectare; Dams and other installations designed to hold water or store it on a long term basis.
Does the Plan determine use of small areas at a local level or is it a minor modification of a Plan?	No – the WRMP is related to regional water management over a long term planning horizon and may lead to impacts on areas greater than the local scale. WRMP is a new plan required on a cyclical basis and not a minor modification of a Plan.
Is the Plan's sole purpose to serve national defence, civil emergency or purely financial?	No – the WRMP is to set how we intend to achieve a secure supply of water for its customers and a protected and enhanced environment.

The responses to the questions above determine that a SEA of the proposed Thames Water WRMP29 is required because:

- It will be prepared and adopted by Thames Water, under the SEA Regulations, who will be considered the “authority”.
- It is required by legislative provision, being a statutory document under the Water Act 2003, amending the Water Industry Act 1991.
- Its area of jurisdiction is greater than ‘local level’.
- It is a new plan that is required on a cyclical basis to provide for updated supply-demand forecasts over a long-term planning horizon; it is therefore not considered to be ‘a minor modification’.
- It sets the framework for future development of projects at both local and regional scales likely to require EIA.

