



Technical specifications:
Building over, or near
sewers or drains

Build over agreement specifications

Build over agreements will only be approved if the application meets the following specifications:

Specifications

1. The application is not regarding a new dwelling*
2. The proposed structure will not require building over more than 6 metres of the sewer (unless a suitable external manhole is available for operational access)
3. All new works are completed in like-for-like materials, and comply with the requirements of [Water UK's Design and Construction Guide](#)
4. The position and invert levels of the sewer or drain are verified prior to construction
5. Any sewers up to 1.1 metres deep, from ground level to invert, are to run a minimum of 150 mm away from the foundations
6. Proposed foundations will be at least 1.2 metres from the sewer where they run parallel (the same principal applies as per Figure B 1 of the [Water UK's Design and Construction Guide](#))
7. If plastic pipes and manholes are to be installed, they must have replaced existing plastic assets. New plastic pipes must be installed to the specification in clauses E2.21 to E2.23 and E2.31 of [Water UK's Design and Construction Guide](#)
8. No manholes or inspection chambers will be built over (or are located inside proposed structures). This includes new double-sealed bolt down covers
9. The new structure will be a minimum of 500mm away from a public manhole (unless it can be demonstrated that any settlement will not cause any damage or issues)
10. Any new manholes added to our existing sewer network will be constructed in accordance with the [Water UK's Design and Construction Guide](#)
11. Connections into manholes will be made using soffit to soffit and enter 'with the flow'
12. Continuous flight augured piled foundations will be at least 1.5 metres from the public sewer (other types of piling foundations are not permitted)

Other considerations:

1. Build over specifications are subject to any conditions that may be imposed through the Building Regulation process
2. All surveys required as part of the application process will be at the applicant's expense
3. Occasionally, sewers are found to have minor defects such as misaligned joints (often since new) or hairline cracking. In such cases, we will accept the sewer as being in a serviceable condition, however it's possible to replace the pipework (at the applicant's expense) to extend the life of that asset to help reduce the risk of us having to excavate the property in the future
4. If the sewer is of a poor structural grade, but operating, we may refuse your application until the sewer has been upgraded by Thames Water
5. New connections to our existing sewer network must be constructed in like-for-like materials and should be via a manhole, inspection chamber (or in some cases a pre-formed junction). [A sewer connection application](#) must be submitted at least 21 days prior to the works taking place.
6. Misconnected kitchen appliances can easily lead to pollutions therefore we recommend that installers read the advice provided by [ConnectRight](#)

* New dwellings are not permitted to be constructed over the public sewer. However, you may ask us to [divert the sewer](#), at your cost, using our powers under S185 of the Water Industry Act 1991. Based on the perceived risk, we may allow you to use your own competent contractors to do the work once an agreement has been signed by all parties.

