

## Planning Committee

14 December 2017

**Reference:**  
**APP/17/00183**

**Area Team:**  
**North Team**

**Case Officer:**  
**Mr N Williams**

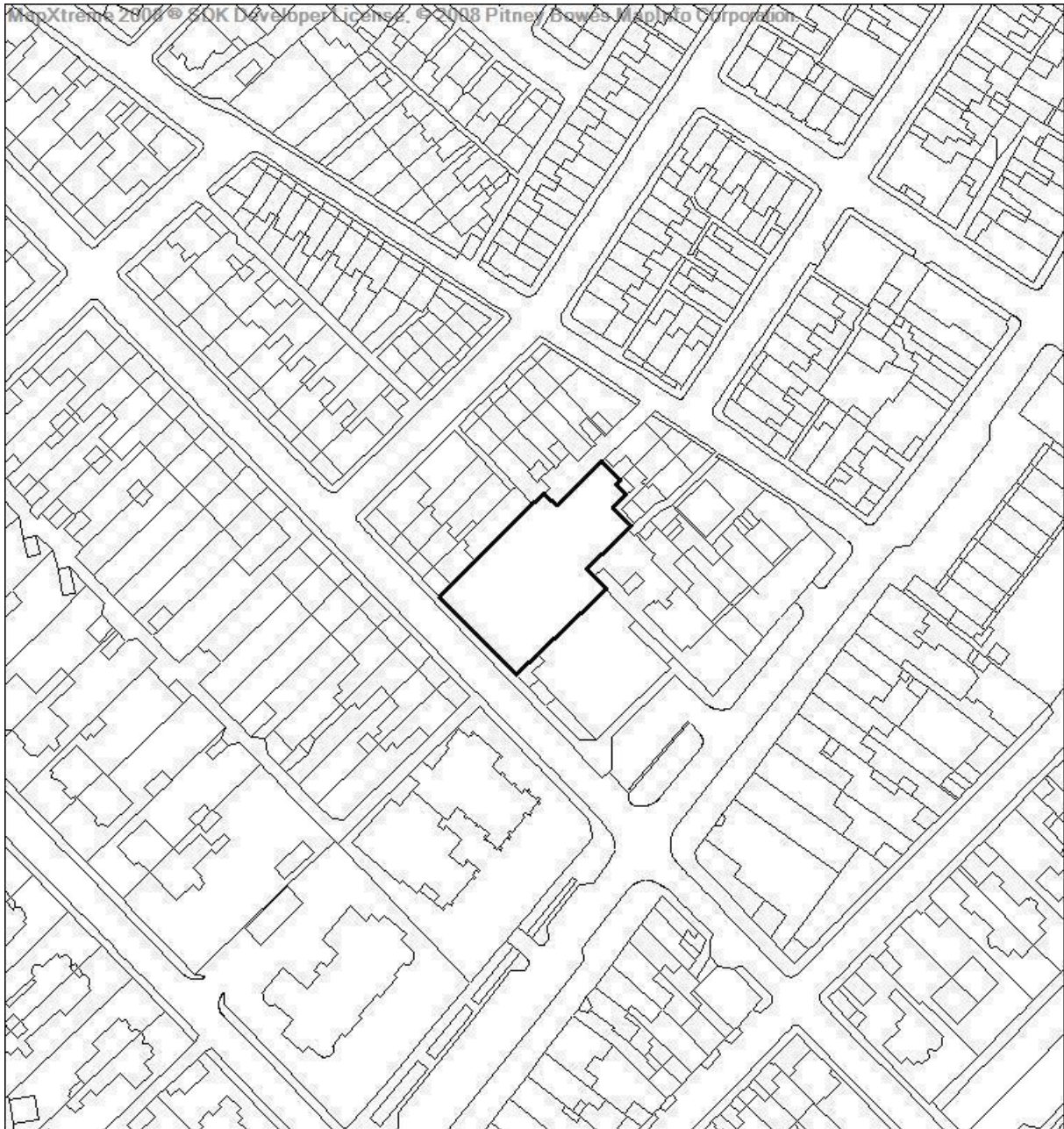
**Ward:**  
**Hoylake and Meols**

**Location:** Hoylake Presbyterian Church, ALDERLEY ROAD, HOYLAKE CH47 2AX

**Proposal:** Conversion, partial demolition and extension of existing church to form 18 No. apartments

**Applicant:** Ms S Storey  
**Agent :** LHGProjects

### Site Plan:



© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100019803 You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

**Development Plan allocation and policies:**

Primarily Residential Area

**Planning History:**

Location: Hoylake Presbyterian Church, ALDERLEY ROAD, HOYLAKÉ  
Application Type: Full Planning Permission  
Proposal: Demolition of church and erection of six dwellings  
Application No: APP/15/01502  
Decision Date: 28/04/2016  
Decision Type: Refuse

**Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:****REPRESENTATIONS**

Councillor Gerry Ellis requested that the application be taken out of delegation for the reasons of overdevelopment, traffic congestion and inadequate parking provision.

Having regard to the Council's Guidance for Publicity on Planning Applications, 60 notifications were sent to adjoining properties and a site notice was displayed near the site. At the time of writing, there had been a petition of objection containing 65 signatures and 26 individual objections received, objecting on the grounds of:

- Lack of parking, especially given close proximity to the Sainsburys store;
- Highway safety concerns;
- Overdevelopment;
- Loss of privacy and overlooking;
- Flooding concerns;
- Fire safety concerns;
- Increased noise;
- Insufficient amenity space;

Hoylake Community Planning Forum expressed a number of reservations relating to parking, boundary treatment, impact on existing residents.

**CONSULTATIONS**

Head of Environment & Regulation (Pollution Control Division) - No objection

Head of Environment & Regulation (Traffic and Transportation Division) - No objection

Natural England - No objection

**DIRECTORS COMMENTS:****REASON FOR REFERRAL**

Councillor Gerry Ellis requested that the application be taken out of delegation. In addition, a qualifying petition of objection containing 65 signatures was received.

The application was deferred from the 16th November Planning Committee to allow Members to visit the site.

**INTRODUCTION**

The application is for the conversion, partial demolition and extension of an existing church to form 18 No. apartments.

This scheme follows the refusal of a previous application for the demolition of the church and erection of 6 houses. The main church building is now to be retained, with the church hall/annexe buildings to

the side and rear being replaced with a new extension partly in its place.

### **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site contains Hoylake Presbyterian Church and hall/annex, predominantly built in red stock brick with sandstone detailing to window surrounds, cappings and copings. The square tower has stepped buttresses and a decorative castellated crown. It was built in the early 1900's. The Church closed in 2014 and has been empty since. The church fronts onto Alderley Road, with access to the annexe also provided from Lake Place to the rear. The annexe is a predominantly two-storey building built from common brick and Welsh slate.

The site is designated as being within a Primarily Residential Area, and is characterised by close-knit terraced dwellings of various design, character and scale - both on the Alderley Road and Lake Place frontages. The site borders the Key Town Centre of Hoylake, with the rear of properties fronting Market Street adjoining the southern boundary of the site, including the Sainsburys Local store.

### **POLICY CONTEXT**

UDP Policy HS13: Self-Contained Flat Conversions along with Supplementary Planning Document 2: Designing for Self Contained Flat Development and Conversions permits the conversion of existing buildings into self-contained flats subject to criteria that protects the privacy and amenity of the neighbours and future occupants.

UDP Policies TR9 and TR12, Supplementary Planning Document SPD 4: Parking Standards and SPG 42 Providing for Cyclists set out the considerations and standards for dealing with off street parking for cars and cycles. Policy TR9 is designed to reduce reliance on the car in areas well served by public transport and Policy TR12 & SPG 42 requires secure cycle parking at a rate of one stand per flat with provision for visitors.

UDP Policy HSG2: 'Affordable Housing' enables negotiations to place for securing affordable housing. There is currently a requirement in Draft Policy CS22 in the emerging Core Strategy, adopted by the Council as a material consideration, for 20% affordable housing provision for residential schemes of 11 or more units in this area. However, the applicant has provided a financial viability assessment which demonstrates that the scheme would not be economically viable should this requirement be met. This has been independently verified and the scheme will therefore not provide any affordable housing. This assessment has therefore also provided evidence that the number of units is required in order to retain the existing building.

UDP Policy CHO1 provides protection for buildings of recognised architectural or historic importance. The setting of non-designated heritage assets would also be protected through the emerging Core Strategy through Draft Policy CS9 'Priorities for Hoylake & West Kirby' and Draft Policy CH43 'Design, Heritage and Amenity' which will expect design solutions to preserve existing building of local character.

Development Management Policies in the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton are also applicable. Policy WM8 requires development to incorporate measures for achieving efficient use of resources; Policy WM9 also requires development to provide measures for waste collection and recycling, including home composting, which can be secured through planning conditions.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Hoylake, which was adopted in December 2016, also forms part of the Statutory Development Plan. Policies H1 and H2 support conversion or changes of use for residential purposes that accord with Policies D2 and D3, where there is no significant impact the character of the area and the living conditions of surrounding occupants and housing needs of the wider community would be addressed. The tower of the Welsh Presbyterian Church has been identified as a key contributor to the street scene in Appendix 1 [30] of the NDP. Policies DI1 'Character Buildings' and DI2 'Scale and Design of New Development' require proposals to show how the character of the building would be preserved or enhanced.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration. NPPF paragraph 135 states that 'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account ..... a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'. The NPPF also states at Paragraph 58 that

policies should optimise the potential of sites to accommodate development.

## **APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES**

### Impact on Hoylake Presbyterian Church

Hoylake Presbyterian Church is not listed and is not within a conservation area. However, given that it has a strong, positive impact upon the character of the surrounding area, and has significant design and interest, it can be considered to have enough heritage interest for its significance to be a material consideration in the planning process. The previous application proposed to completely demolish the church and this was considered to be unacceptable in the light of the pending Neighbourhood Development Plan. The current proposal retains the main church building, which includes the tower which is the focal point of the building on Alderley Road, and this is therefore to be thoroughly welcomed. The church is within a Primarily Residential Area and therefore the principle of converting it into apartments is considered to be an acceptable use. The principle of a high-density scheme is considered to be acceptable given the location of the site on the edge of Hoylake Key Town Centre, and it is important to note that each of the units has separate bedrooms and living areas, ensuring that each unit will offer an acceptable living standard.

The conversion of the church requires a series of alterations in order to provide sufficient windows for the proposed residential use. The most substantial alterations will be to the side (south-east) elevation, where a number of windows will be created. To make best use of the building, including the large roof space, three dormer windows will also be constructed on this elevation. Whilst these alterations will be partially visible on the street scene, the simplistic and uniform appearance of the new windows will not harm the overall integrity of the church building. Importantly, the front (Alderley Road) elevation of the church and the tower itself will not be altered, with all existing openings being utilised, and no new openings. The primary character of the building will therefore be retained and will continue to have a positive impact upon the character of the area.

Whilst the main church building will be retained, the annexe buildings will be demolished and a new extension to the church built in its place. The annexe buildings refers to the large, two-storey brick building to the rear of the main church, which includes an old school room and church hall, together with a single-storey brick structure to the side of the church which acts as the main entrance and vestry. All of these structures appear to be later additions to the main church.

The annexe buildings do have some character and interest and have a fairly positive impact upon the character of the wider area. However, these structures are not fundamental to the character of the main church and their demolition will therefore not detract from the appearance and character of the church. Additionally, the footprint of these structures take up the whole of the rear of the site, and given that they have first-floor windows on the boundary of the site, any conversion of them would be difficult without resulting in direct overlooking of neighbouring properties. The replacement extension will be narrower and will take up a smaller part of the site than the existing annexe, whilst the removal of the single-storey vestry will allow for a substantial area of soft landscaping, to be utilised by future occupiers as a communal garden area. The principle of demolishing these annexe structures is therefore considered to be acceptable and will not have an unacceptable impact upon the overall character of the church, and the positive impact it has on the wider street scene.

The proposed addition to the church will be a two-storey extension adjoined to the rear. It will be both narrower and lower than the main church building but has been designed to match it, with a gable feature on the south-east elevation, together with windows to match the new windows on the main church building itself. The extension will be built in brick, with the brick chosen to match the existing church as much as possible. The proposed extension will be largely screened from the street scene of Alderley Road by the church, and will therefore have minimal impact upon the character of the building or the street scene. The scale of the extension, being smaller in height, width and depth than the church, will ensure that it appears subordinate and does not detract unnecessarily from the appearance of the church. The footprint of the extension will also be substantially smaller than the annexe buildings to be demolished, and this will allow the church itself to become the main focal point of the site, whilst the landscaping of the area adjacent to the church will also enhance its setting.

### Residential Amenity

The proposed extension will replace an existing church hall and annexe. The rear boundary of the existing hall currently forms the boundary with 5 Lake Place, and is approximately 6.5 and 5 metres

from the main rear elevation of 3 and 5 Lake Place respectively, which limits the outlook from these adjacent properties. The proposed extension has been designed with a hipped roof on this elevation, will be set off this boundary and will be a distance of approximately 11 metres from the main rear elevation of 3 and 5 Lake Place. The existing and proposed buildings are similar in height and this increase in separation distance should therefore actually improve the outlook from these existing properties.

The first-floor windows in the north-west elevation of the proposed extension will be within 5-8 metres of the boundary with the rear gardens of 7-11 Evans Road. Two of these windows will serve the kitchen area for two of the apartments - however, these rooms are served by an additional window on the south-east elevation, meaning these windows can be obscurely glazed without impacting on the amenities of future occupiers. The additional first-floor windows on this elevation will serve two bathrooms and a staircase which are non-habitable and can therefore also be obscurely glazed. This is considered to be sufficient to ensure that the proposed extension does not result in loss of privacy or overlooking to properties on Evans Road.

Each of the proposed windows in the south-east elevation will overlook the landscaped garden area, providing good outlook for future occupiers. Hoylake Town Centre adjoins the south-eastern boundary of this site, with a Sainsburys Local food store and other commercial units adjacent to the site. There does appear to be, however, a residential unit at 21 Market Street which is located in the town centre. This property has a rear extension and garden area which will be within close proximity of windows in the proposed extension. However, the existing annexe building projects right up to this boundary and also contains windows. This annexe will be demolished and the proposed extension will be built approximately 5 metres further from this boundary, and this is considered to be an improvement on the existing situation.

There will be bedroom windows in the north-west elevation of the existing church within close proximity of 4 Alderley Road, and this is considered to be acceptable as a way of retaining and making best use of the existing church. The main living area of these units will have a good outlook overlooking the landscaped garden area and these units are therefore considered to be acceptable overall.

The church widens towards the rear and proposed windows in the north-west elevation in this location will be within 2 metres of the boundary with the rear garden of 4 Alderley Road. The upper floor windows, which each serve a bedroom, are in close proximity to this garden area. However, given the width of the church at this point, it is considered that windows are required in some form on the north-west elevation in order to utilise the building to its full potential and to therefore ensure its retention. Therefore, to prevent undue overlooking, a small oriel window will be added at both first and second floor. This will allow for a clear-glazed window to face north-east (towards the Lake Place access road), with an additional obscurely-glazed window facing towards 4 Alderley Road, allowing extra light but preventing any unacceptable overlooking. This solution will provide some outlook and sufficient light for future occupiers, whilst limiting the impact upon the neighbouring properties, all whilst ensuring the retention of the significant character of the existing church building. Given the location of the proposed oriel windows, they will have minimal impact upon the character of the building itself.

### **SEPARATION DISTANCES**

Separation distances are dealt with in more detail above.

### **HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS**

There are no off-street parking spaces provided and this may result in additional on-street parking in the surrounding area. However, Supplementary Planning Document 4: Parking Standards indicate that there should only be a maximum of one parking space per flat. This site is considered to be within an extremely sustainable location, with numerous services available in the adjacent Hoylake Town Centre and close to a train station and regular bus routes, and the lack of any dedicated off-street parking is therefore considered to be acceptable.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

A Drainage Strategy was submitted with the application and the Lead Local Flood Authority subsequently have no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions.

## HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed development retains a prominent church with significant heritage interest which is identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hoylake as key building by converting it into residential use and this is to be welcomed, ensuring that the positive impact it has on the character of the surrounding street scene is retained. The proposed extension will be in keeping with the existing church whilst also appearing subordinate to it. The proposed development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties, whilst the internal layout has been designed in order to provide acceptable accommodation for future occupiers whilst making best use of the existing church. The lack of any off-street parking is considered to be acceptable given the sustainable location of the site. Overall, the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and complies with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy HS13, TR9, TR12 and CHO1, SPD2, SPD4; the Joint Waste Local Plan Policies WM8 & WM9 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:- The proposed development retains a prominent church with significant heritage interest which is identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hoylake as key building by converting it into residential use and this is to be welcomed, ensuring that the positive impact it has on the character of the surrounding street scene is retained. The proposed extension will be in keeping with the existing church whilst also appearing subordinate to it. The proposed development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties, whilst the internal layout has been designed in order to provide acceptable accommodation for future occupiers whilst making best use of the existing church. The lack of any off-street parking is considered to be acceptable given the sustainable location of the site. Overall, the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and complies with Wirral Unitary Development Plan Policy HS4, HS13 and CHO1, SPD2, SPD4 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Recommended Decision:**                      **Approve**

### Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 6th July 2017 and listed as follows: 477.001; 477.002; 477.003; 477.004; 477.005; 477.006; 477.007; 477.008; 477.009; 477.010

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

3. Before any construction commences, samples of the materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy HS13 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. The following windows shall be obscurely glazed and non-opening up to a minimum of 1.7m above finished floor level, and shall be retained as such thereafter:
- All first-floor windows in the north-west elevation of the proposed extension;
  - The bathroom window serving Plot 9;
  - The first-floor, north-west window in the existing church, serving a communal area (between Plots 9 and 10);
  - The west-facing windows in the oriel bays on the north-west elevation of the existing church (serving Plots 10 and 16).

**Reason:** In the interest of residential amenity

5. No development shall take place until a Site Waste Management Plan, confirming how demolition and construction waste will be recovered and re-used on the site or at other sites, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Plan shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that the proposed development would include the re-use of limited resources, and to ensure that the amount of waste for landfill is reduced to accord with Policy WM8 of the Merseyside and Halton Joint waste Local Plan.

6. The development hereby permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the approved documents:

- Sustainable Drainage Strategy <27/9/17 / CL7959 / SWF Consultants>.
- Proposed Drainage Plan <APR2017/ CL7959-101/Rev P2/ SWF Consultants>

The approved scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetable.

**Reason:** To ensure satisfactory sustainable drainage facilities are provided to serve the site in accordance with the Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework, HCWS 161 House of Commons Written Statement on Sustainable Drainage Systems, and Policy CS35 in the Core Strategy Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft.

7. No development shall commence until full details of a scheme for a surface water sustainable drainage system to serve the site, and method of implementation including arrangements to secure funding and maintenance for the lifetime of the development through an appropriate legally binding agreement have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Lead Local Flood Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetable. Thereafter the surface water sustainable drainage system shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved scheme.

**Reason:** To ensure satisfactory drainage facilities are provided to serve the site in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 103 and Policy CS35 in the Core Strategy Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft

8. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE until details of secure covered cycle parking and/or storage facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and made available for use prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted and shall be retained for use at all times thereafter.

**Reason:** To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than the private car, having regard to Policy TR12 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

9. No development shall take place until a written programme of archaeological building recording has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved programme

**Reason:** In the interest of archaeology.

10. No development shall commence until details of an appropriate management and maintenance plan, including arrangements to secure funding for the lifetime of the development through an appropriate legally binding agreement, for the surface water sustainable drainage system, comprising all components of the surface water drainage system, have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of any of the approved dwellings, or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Thereafter the surface water sustainable drainage system shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason:** To ensure satisfactory management and maintenance of the approved surface water drainage facilities is provided for the site for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 103 and Policy CS35 in the Core Strategy Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft.

11. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE until arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse, and vehicle access thereto, have been made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full before any of the apartments are occupied and shall be retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure a satisfactory appearance and adequate standards of hygiene and refuse collection, having regard to Policy WM9 of the Waste Local Plan.

**Further Notes for Committee:**

1. Details relating to Condition 10 shall include:
- i. the arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or management and maintenance by a Residents' Management Company or other private body
  - ii. arrangements concerning appropriate funding mechanisms for its on-going maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system (including mechanical components) and will include elements such as:
    - a. on-going inspections relating to performance and asset condition assessments
    - b. operation costs for regular maintenance, remedial works and irregular maintenance caused by less sustainable limited life assets or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime;
  - iii. means of access for maintenance

**Last Comments By:** 21/08/2017 09:23:03

**Expiry Date:** 05/10/2017



