

Rt Hon Emma Reynolds MP

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
c/o Planning Inspectorate, GUCtransfer@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

10 February 2026

Dear Secretary of State

**GRAND UNION CANAL TRANSFER
SECTION 46 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008: DUTY TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF
STATE OF PROPOSED APPLICATION
PLANNING INSPECTORATE CASE REFERENCE: WA0210001**

This letter is to inform you that Severn Trent PLC, Affinity Water Ltd, and the Canal & River Trust¹ propose to make an application to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under the Planning Act 2008 for a Development Consent Order for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Grand Union Canal Transfer (the Proposed Development).

This letter comprises the formal notification of the proposed application to the Secretary of State under Section 46 of the 2008 Act. The Applicant intends to submit the DCO Application in Summer 2027. The Proposed Development was issued a direction under Section 35(1) of Planning Act 2008 on 1 October 2024 by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs confirming that it should be treated as development for which development consent is required.

The Applicant previously provided notification pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 on 31 March 2025 that the scheme is an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA development"), as defined by those regulations, accordingly an Environmental Statement will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

The submission of the DCO application will follow a second round of pre-application consultation carried out pursuant to sections 42, 47 and 48 of the 2008 Act, the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009 ("the APFP Regulations"), and the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the EIA Regulations"). The consultation will commence on **Wednesday 11 February 2026** and end at **11.59pm on Thursday 2 April 2026**.

The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will principally consist of:

- a new Advanced Water Treatment Plant located on Severn Trent-owned land south-east of its existing Minworth Wastewater Recycling Centre;
- an approximately 15-kilometre (km) buried pipeline between the Minworth Wastewater Recycling Centre and a proposed outfall near Atherstone (including a Break Pressure Tank near Baxterley);
- a range of new infrastructure, including up to four new locks, new pumped and gravity bypasses, some sections of bank raising and modifications to existing infrastructure, to manage flow velocities and water level changes on the existing canal network between Atherstone and Bletchley;
- new and improved infrastructure at the existing Daventry and Drayton Reservoirs, to enable their utilisation as additional storage in addition to their function of supplying water for canal navigation;
- a new Water Treatment Works and water storage, south east of Milton Keynes;

¹ A final decision on whether the Canal & River Trust will be a formal co-applicant will be made before the DCO is submitted.

- an approximately 28 km buried pipeline between the new Water Treatment Works and an existing underground reservoir near Luton;
- associated infrastructure, mitigation and enhancement measures, and other ancillary works, for example, fencing, security, temporary access roads, permanent means of access, highway works, temporary works compounds and work sites; and
- in addition, any necessary rights and powers will be sought to ensure delivery of the scheme, including permanent and temporary compulsory acquisition (if required).

Consultation documents

Section 46 of the 2008 Act requires the Applicant to supply the Secretary of State with the information that it intends to provide to consultees under section 42 of the 2008 Act, on or before commencing consultation under section 42. The Applicant hereby supplies the Secretary of State with the same information that is being supplied to all relevant consultees identified in accordance with section 42 of the 2008 Act.

The full set of consultation documents (“the consultation materials”) being supplied to section 42 consultees are listed below and will be made available from **Wednesday 11 February 2026 to 11.59pm on Thursday 2 April 2026** on the Scheme’s website at: <https://www.guctransfer.co.uk>.

- Phase Two Public Consultation Brochure;
- Consultation Feedback Form;
- Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR);
- PEIR Non-technical Summary (NTS);
- Scheme Development and Options Report;
- Draft Design Principles;
- Map Book;
- Phase One Public Consultation Report;
- Approach to Social Value

A Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) has been prepared in accordance with section 47 of the Act and is included in the suite of materials for information.

If you have any problems accessing the consultation documents on the scheme’s website from 11 February 2026, please let the Applicant know at your earliest convenience. We are providing the above information to the Secretary of State via weblink however should the Secretary of State require the material in an alternative format such as the documents on a USB or via a file sharing link please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details below.

The Applicant has included as attachments with this letter the templates of the letters being sent to statutory consultees under section 42 of the 2008 Act. These are:

- Section 42(1)(a) and (b) consultee letter – prescribed consultees and local authorities;
- Section 42(1)(d) consultee letter – persons with an interest in land.

A copy of the Applicant’s statutory notice prepared in accordance with section 47 and 48 of the 2008 Act and regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations is an enclosure to the letters and is also included as an attachment to this notification. Inclusion of the notice with these letters meets the Applicant’s obligations under Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations.

We would be grateful if you could please acknowledge that this section 46 notice has been received as a record of compliance. In the meantime, should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the project team by email at contact@guctransfer.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Clare Carlaw
Head of Engagement, Land & Consents
Grand Union Canal Transfer

Attached

- Copy of section 42(1)(a) and (b) letter (prescribed consultees and local authorities);
- Copy of section 42(1)(d) letter (persons with an interest in land);
- Section 47 / 48 notice