

Drainage Fields

Criteria for Discharges to Drainage Fields

In relation to discharges to drainage fields in the red zone, Natural England have indicated that if all the following criteria are in place and can be evidenced, then phosphates would be unlikely to reach the river and therefore there is no pathway for impacts. With no pathway for impacts there is no need for further Habitat Regulations Assessment – Please note these criteria have been revised by Natural England in March 2021:

Proposed thresholds

Small discharges to ground i.e. less than $2\text{m}^3/\text{day}^1$ that are within the surface or groundwater catchment of a designated site will present a low risk that the phosphorus will have a significant effect on the designated site where certain conditions are met:

- a) The drainage field is more than 50m from the designated site boundary (or sensitive interest feature) **and**;
- b) The drainage field is more than 40m from any surface water feature e.g. ditch, drain, watercourse, **and**;
- c) The drainage field is in an area with a slope no greater than 15%, **and**;
- d) The drainage field is in an area where the high water table groundwater depth is at least 2m below the surface at all times **and**;
- e) The drainage field will not be subject to significant flooding, e.g. it is not in flood zone 2 or 3 **and**;
- f) There are no other known factors which would expedite the transport of phosphorus for example fissured geology, insufficient soil below the drainage pipes, known sewer flooding, conditions in the soil/geology that would cause remobilisation phosphorus, presence of mineshafts, etc **and**;
- g) To ensure that there is no significant in combination effect, the discharge to ground should be at least 200m from any other discharge to ground.