

Date: 29 October 2021
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Dear Sir or Madam

**Strategic regional water resource solutions:
Standard gate one draft decision for Grand Union Canal Transfer**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above draft decision.

This Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and is mindful of the potential impact on the Borough of any future proposed changes to the operation and capacity of the Grand Union Canal. It remains committed to protecting those who live and work in this Borough and its environment from adverse impacts and to realise opportunities to improve the environment and wellbeing of those who live and work in this Borough.

A very significant area of our Borough comprises of the Chilterns AONB which is an important environmental area, both in terms of biodiversity and tranquility.

In common with other local authorities in the South East region this Borough is tasked with accommodating very significant growth. Dacorum is looking to deliver some 18,500 new homes to 2038 which will see growth in existing settlements.



This Council is preparing a new Local Plan with significant levels of growth for housing and employment in its urban locations. The Grand Union Canal (GUC) passes through this Borough including the major settlements of Tring, Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead and is an important asset and resource for the Borough.

The GUC SRO is recognised as being one of a number currently under consideration. The Council welcomes measures that promote the resilience of water supply to the South East region as it experiences high levels of growth provided that negative impacts upon the environment are properly minimised and mitigated from both the construction and operation of the GUC SRO.

These are early days in the consideration of the SRO's and there are understandably a significant number of uncertainties which need to be addressed as they progress. On the information provided so far it is not possible for this Council at this point to provide a properly informed view upon what is proposed. This Council welcomes that RAPID recognises that the evidence base requires further work, especially in the area of the environment.

It is vital that there is consistency in the evidence provided in respect of the various SRO's to enable a proper and objective assessment and evaluation to be undertaken as they proceed through the gateways.

It is noted that potential abstraction points are identified in the vicinity of Tring and Hemel Hempstead for further consideration. In addition to the actions to be addressed and the recommendations, as summarised in the Appendix "Actions – to be addressed in gate two submission and Recommendations" of the draft decision, we consider that impacts upon existing and proposed development should also be fully taken into account as part of the evidence base to be progressed as part of the gate two submission, including the recognised potential increase to possible flood risk and the impacts of land take, construction and operation of the GUC SRO upon the surrounding area.

This Council expects to be involved in the engagement process in the continuing gathering of the evidence base and in the evaluation and assessment of the GUC SRO as it progresses.

We hope that you find this response helpful

Yours faithfully,



Strategic Planning Officer - Strategic Planning and Regeneration