

## How should cumulative development around major accident hazards be dealt with?

Local planning authorities should ensure that their land-use or other relevant policies take account of public consultation requirements in preventing major accidents and limiting the consequences of such accidents for human health and the environment. They also need to take account of the increase in the number of dwellings (or population at risk) in the consultation zones from the time the hazardous substance consent was granted.

Local planning authorities are well placed to judge the extent of development around major hazard establishments and major accident hazard pipelines so, when considering public safety in planning decisions and the formulation of development plan policies, they should take account of the total number of people that are present in the consultation zones around these sites, and the implications of any increase as a result of a planning decision or policy. In the case of encroachment (development getting closer to the major hazard) the risks can increase as well as the number of people.

Cumulative development may not always be obvious particularly in the case of infill (buildings built to occupy space between existing buildings) and densification (replacement of single houses with multiple-occupancy properties). Such cumulative development, by whatever means, leads to a rise in population within the consultation zone and a proportionate increase in the consequence should a major accident occur. This can also add substantial costs for businesses that may be required to provide additional safety measures.

Local planning authorities can consult the [Health and Safety Executive on other applications](#), for example where several planning applications fall below the thresholds in the regulations but would require consultation if they had been submitted as one larger application. Local authorities can consult the Environment Agency where a new development contains sustainable drainage. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework ([paragraph 170](#)), new development should not be put at unacceptable risk from pollution.

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