

Appendix F – Risk Evaluation

RISK EVALUATION

The method for risk evaluation is a qualitative method of interpreting the output from the risk estimation stage of the assessment, based on CIRIA 552²⁰. It involves the classification of the:

- Magnitude of the potential consequence (severity) of the risk occurring (Table A).
- Magnitude of the probability (likelihood) of the risk occurring (Table B).

Consequence (Severity)		
Classification	Definition	Example
Severe	Short term (acute) risk to human health likely to result in 'significant harm' as defined by the Environment Protection Act 1990, Part IIA. Short term risk of pollution (note: water Resources Act contains no scope for considering significance of pollution) of sensitive water resource. Catastrophic damage to buildings/properties. A short-term risk to a particular ecosystem, or organism forming part of such ecosystem (note: the definition of ecological systems within the Draft Circular on Contaminated Land, DETR, 2000).	High Concentrations of cyanide on the surface of an informal recreation area. Major spillage of contaminants from site into controlled waters. Explosion, causing building collapse (can also equate to short term human health risk if buildings are occupied).
Medium	Chronic damage to Human Health ('significant harm' as defined in DETR, 2000). Pollution of sensitive water resources (note Water Resources Act contains no scope for considering significance of pollution). A significant change in a particular ecosystem, or organism forming part of such ecosystem.	Concentrations of a contaminant from site exceed generic, or site-specific assessment criteria. Leaching of contaminants from a site to a major or minor aquifer (Principal and Secondary). Death of a species within a designated nature reserve.
Mild	Pollution of non-sensitive water resources. Significant damage to crops, buildings, structures, and services ('significant harm' as defined in DETR, 2000). Damage to sensitive buildings/structures/services or the environment.	Pollution of non-classified groundwater. Damage to building rendering it unsafe to occupy (e.g., foundation damage resulting in instability).
Minor	Harm, although not necessarily significant harm, which may result in a financial loss, or expenditure to resolve. Non-permanent health effects to human health (easily prevented by means such as personal protective clothing etc). Easily repairable damage to buildings, structures, and services.	The presence of contaminants at such concentrations that protective equipment is required during site works. The loss of plants in a landscaping scheme. Discoloration of concrete.

Table A. Classification of Consequence

Probability (Likelihood)	
Classification	Definition
High Likelihood	There is a pollutant linkage and an event that either appears very likely in the short term and almost inevitable over the long term, or there is evidence at the receptor of harm or pollution.
Likely	There is a pollutant linkage, and all the elements are present and in the right place, which means that it is probable that an event will occur. Circumstances are such that an event is not inevitable, but possible in the short term and likely over the long term.
Low Likelihood	There is a pollutant linkage and circumstances are possible under which an event could occur. However, it is by no means certain that even over a longer period such event would take place and is less likely in the shorter term.
Unlikely	There is a pollutant linkage, but circumstances are such that it is improbable that an event would occur in the very long term.

Table B. Classification of Probability.

These classifications are then compared to indicate the risk presented by each pollutant linkage (Table C). It is important that this classification is only applied where there is a possibility (which can range from high likelihood to unlikely) of a pollutant linkage existing.

		Consequence			
		Severe	Medium	Mild	Minor
Probability	High Likelihood	Very High Risk	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate / Low Risk
	Likely	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Moderate / Low Risk	Low Risk
	Low Likelihood	Moderate Risk	Moderate / Low Risk	Low Risk	Very Low Risk
	Unlikely	Moderate / Low Risk	Low Risk	Very Low Risk	Very Low Risk

Table C. Comparison of Consequence against Probability

Once the risk has been determined the corresponding action can be assessed (Table D).

Risk	Action Required
Very High Risk	There is a high probability that severe harm could arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard, OR there is evidence that severe harm to a designated receptor is currently happening. This risk, if realised, is likely to result in a substantial liability. Urgent investigation (if not already undertaken) and remediation are likely to be required.
High Risk	Harm is likely to arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard. Realisation of the risk is likely to present a substantial liability. Urgent investigation (if not undertaken already) is required and remedial works may be necessary in the short term and are likely over the longer term.
Moderate Risk	It is possible that harm could arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard. However, it is either relatively unlikely that any such harm would be severe, or if any harm were to occur it is more likely that the harm would be relatively mild. Investigation (if not already undertaken) is normally required to clarify the risk and to determine the potential liability. Some remedial works may be required in the longer term.
Low Risk	It is possible that harm could arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard, but it is likely that this harm, if realised, would at worst normally be mild.
Very Low Risk	There is a low possibility that harm could arise to a receptor. In the event of such harm being realised it is not likely to be severe.

Table D. Description of the Classification and Likely Action Required.

Where a very low risk is identified no specific remediation is required.

Where a low risk is identified, some form of remediation may be required depending on the pollutant linkage, the type and concentration of contaminants present and the proposed development.

Where there is a moderate/low risk is identified, an assessment will be undertaken to establish what category the pollutant linkage will fall into.

Where LKC identifies a moderate or higher risk, remediation or further investigation work is recommended.

Appendix G - References

¹ Environment Agency, October 2020, "Land contamination risk management (LCRM). How to assess and manage the risks from land contamination".

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, July 2021, "National Planning Policy Framework".

³ Environment Agency, October 2020, "Land contamination risk management (LCRM). How to assess and manage the risks from land contamination".

⁶ DEFRA & Environment Agency, March 2002, "Potential Contaminants for the Assessment of Land", R&D Publication CLR 8.

⁸ Department of the Environment, 1995, "Railway land", Industry Profile, ISBN 1 85112 253 2.

¹² Environment Agency, January 2009, "Updated technical background to the CLEA model", Science Report SC050021/SR3.

¹⁷ CIRIA, January 2001, "Contaminated land risk assessment. A guide to good practice", C552.

¹⁸ Health & Safety Executive, 1991, "Protection of Workers and the General Public during the Development of Contaminated Land", HSG66.

²⁰ CIRIA, January 2001, "Contaminated land risk assessment. A guide to good practice", C552.

Based across the UK with offices in
Manchester, Liverpool, Swindon and Glasgow.

Manchester (Head Office)

Unit 29
Eton Business Park
Eton Hill Rd, Radcliffe
M26 2ZS

t: 0161 763 7200
e: info@thelkgroup.com

Manchester

84 Silk Street
Ancoats
Manchester
M4 6BJ

t : 0161 763 7200
e : info@thelkgroup.com

Liverpool

Unit 10
12 Jordan Street
Baltic Triangle
Liverpool
L1 0BP

t: 0161 763 7200
e: info@thelkgroup.com

Glasgow

Wright Business Centre
1 Lonmay Road
Glasgow
G33 4EL

t: 0141 773 6269
e: info@thelkgroup.com

Swindon

39 Bowman House Business Centre
Bowman Court
Whitehill Lane
Royal Wootton Bassett
Swindon
SN4 7DB

t : 01793 987 390
e : info@thelkgroup.com



- » Geotechnical
- » Contaminated Land
- » SuDS & Flood Risk
- » Project Management
- » Land Remediation
- » Land Drilling
- » Japanese Knotweed
- » Air Tightness Testing