

Executive Summary

Introduction

Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 came into force on 1st April 2000 and introduced a new regime for the identification and remediation of contaminated land.

It requires local authorities to inspect their areas for contaminated land and to submit to the DETR a strategy detailing how this will be accomplished. The strategy has been produced by the Environmental Protection Section of the Environmental Health Services Division following consultation with all relevant/interested parties.

The Contaminated Land Strategy

The Strategy sets out the London Borough of Harrow's intended strategic approach to the new legislation and the requirement to inspect for contaminated land in its area. It outlines this authority's aims, objectives and priorities for inspection, identification and remediation of contaminated land. The strategy will consist of 4 basic stages to be implemented over a set time period as set out below.

- ❖ Stage 1 - will involve the running of data handling and risk modelling systems for the identification and risk categorisation of sources, receptors and pathways.
- ❖ Stage 2 - will involve a more detail study (desktop) of the areas highlighted in Stage 1.
- ❖ Stage 3 - will involve site investigations of those areas highlighted in Stage 2 and where a pollution linkage exists.
- ❖ Stage 4 - will involve the determination of the land as contaminated and action will be taken to ensure the land is made safe.

It is important to note that contamination does not necessarily mean contaminated. For land to be designated as contaminated, it will be necessary to identify a source-pathway-receptor scenario and the determination of significant harm or the possibility of significant harm. Pollution of controlled waters also plays a part in this designation.

Information

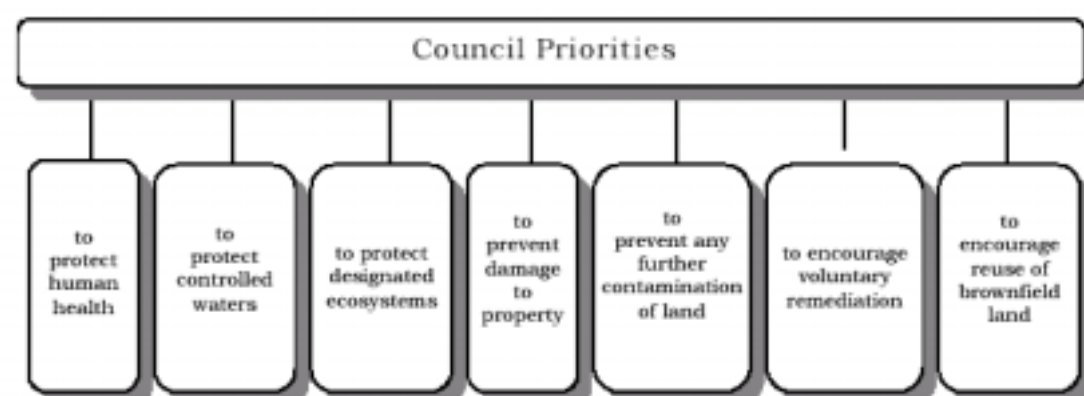
A GIS (geographical information system) will be incorporated into the strategy, which will enable computerised data handling and risk modelling. All available datasets relating to source, receptors and pathways from external and internal sources will be incorporated into this system. Based on this GIS system, land where contamination may exist can be determined and a risk category applied to them. Further, more detailed risk assessment work will be carried out on the land identified. It is intended at present that this will be done in house, but some consultancy services may be required at a later date for the more detailed assessment work e.g. soil sampling and analysis.

It is likely that the inspection programme for contaminated land will take 5 years commencing in September 2001. This programme and time restraint will be reviewed/reassessed within 1 year of the adoption of the strategy.

The Local Authority

The Council's priorities in dealing with contaminated land will be: -

Diagram 1 – Council priorities



It is intended to initially deal with high-risk areas, controlled waters and Council owned land. Areas identified during the Stage 1 assessment of sources, pathways and receptors will be continuously risk assessed and priorities updated and resources targeted at the areas of greatest need.

The authority has a duty under Part IIA to ensure the remediation of contaminated land and to ensure that the land is 'suitable for use'. This can be by voluntary means or through remediation notices.

In previous years, the main control for contaminated land has been via the planning process and this is unlikely to change following the introduction of Part IIA. Planning Services will still take the lead, particularly at the planning application stage and the Environmental Health Divisions will continue to assist in this process.

With respect to existing sites and previously redeveloped sites, the Environmental Health Division will take the lead in partnership with Planning Services and others in determining and risk assessing land, service of remediation notices and ensuring that the remediation of contaminated land is carried out.

Partnerships with other organisations and interested parties

The Council will work in partnership with all organisations and interested parties with respect to the application of this new legislation and Strategy.

There will continue to be a close liaison with the Environment Agency, which will be a two way process.

The Council is required to notify the Environment Agency with respect to Controlled Waters and so called 'Special Sites' in relation to contaminated land, for which the Environment Agency is the enforcing authority. In addition, the Council will provide regular information to assist them with respect to their provision of a National Report on contaminated land. The Environment Agency in turn will provide advice and guidance to the Council with respect to its duties under the contaminated land regime.

Public Register

The Council will maintain a register at the Civic Centre in Harrow which is intended to act as a full and permanent record of all regulatory action taken by the enforcing authority in respect of the remediation of contaminated land, and will include information about the condition of the land.

It is intended that the strategy, public register and information held, will generally be open to the public and others. This will be subject to matters of confidentiality e.g. information of a personal or commercially sensitive nature.