

Appendix H Risk Assessment Criteria

The classification presented in Table H.1 to Table H.4 below are modified from, 'contaminated land risk assessment: A guide to good practice, 2001, CIRIA C552'.

Table H.1. Classification of Consequence

Classification	Definition
Severe	Short-term (acute) risk to human health likely to result in "significant harm" as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Part IIA. Short term risk of pollution (note: Water Recourses Act contains no scope for considering significance of pollution) of sensitive water resource. Catastrophic damage to buildings/property. A short-term risk to a particular ecosystem (note: the definitions of ecological systems within the Draft Circular on Contaminated Land, DETR, 2000.)
Medium	Chronic damage to Human Health ("significant harm" as defined in DETR, 2000). Pollution of sensitive water recourse (note: Water Recourses Act contains no scope for considering significance of pollution). A significant change in a particular ecosystem (note: the definitions of ecological systems within the Draft Circular on Contaminated Land, DETR, 2000.)
Mild	Pollution of non-sensitive water recourses. Significant damage to crops, buildings, structures and services ("significant harm" as defined in the Draft Circular on Contaminated Land, DETR, 2000.)
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.)

Table H.2. Classification of Probability

Classification	Definition
High likelihood	There is a pollution 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 receptors of harm or pollution.
Likely	There is a pollution 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 pollution 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 short term.
Unlikely	There is a pollution linkage, but circumstances are such that it is improbable that an event would occur even in the long term.

Table H.3. Comparison of Consequence Against Probability

Probability	Consequence			
	Severe	Medium	Mild	Minor
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 risk	Low risk	Very low risk	Very low risk

Table H.4. Risk Classifications

Very High	There is a high probability that severe harm could arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard at the site without remediation action OR there is evidence that severe harm to a designated receptor is already occurring. Realisation of that risk is likely to present a substantial liability to be site owner/or occupier. Investigation is required as a matter of urgency and remediation works likely to follow in the short-term.
High	Harm is likely to arise to a designated receptor from an identified hazard at the site without remediation action. Realisation of the risk is likely to present a substantial liability to the site owner/or occupier. Investigation is required as a matter of urgency to clarify the risk. Remediation works may be necessary in the short-term and are likely over the longer term.
Moderate	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, and if any harm were to occur it is more likely, that the harm would be relatively mild. Further investigative work is normally required to clarify the risk and to determine the potential liability to site owner/occupier. Some remediation works may be required in the longer term.
Low	It is possible that harm could arise to a designated receptor from identified hazard, but it is likely at worst, that this harm if realised would normally be mild. It is unlikely that the site owner/or occupier would face substantial liabilities from such a risk. Further investigative work (which is likely to be limited) to clarify the risk may be required. Any subsequent remediation works are likely to be relatively limited.
Very low	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.
None	No potential risk if no pollution linkage has been established.

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