



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Environment Scrutiny Committee Report

Wednesday 22nd October 2025

Contaminated Land Strategy

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Overton – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Enforcement
Lead Director:	Dean Sargeant – Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services
Service Area:	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Report considered by:	Environment Scrutiny Committee – 22 October 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Environment Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 note the process for considering and regulating contaminated land across the borough;
- 1.2 note that there are no sites within Telford and Wrekin that are categorised as contaminated under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and
- 1.3 review the draft Contaminated Land Strategy (appendix A) while offering feedback and suggestions for review as part of finalising the Strategy for adoption.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to:

Contaminated Land Strategy

- a) provide an update on contaminated land in Telford and Wrekin while outlining the process for considering and regulating contaminated land across the borough; and
- b) seek feedback from Committee on the draft Contaminated Land Strategy.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Telford and Wrekin has an extensive history of industrial activity across the Borough, having been at the forefront of the industrial revolution. While many industries have since ceased, the potential for land contamination remains.
- 3.2 Contaminated land is often referred to as land that contains substances or materials that could cause harm to the environment, health or property. Typical causes include but are not limited to:
 - Industrial activity
 - Fuel storage/leakage
 - Waste disposal e.g. landfill
 - Agricultural chemicals e.g. pesticides
- 3.3 The Environmental Protection Act defines contaminated land as any land which appears to the local authority to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that:
 - a) Significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or
 - b) Significant pollution of controlled waters is being caused, or there is a significant possibility of such pollution being caused
- 3.4 The Council has undertaken a detailed review of land across the borough to identify land that has the potential to be contaminated. The Council has investigated several sites across the borough for possible contamination and classification under the Environmental Protection Act.
- 3.5 While there are pockets of contaminated land in the borough that is subject to ongoing monitoring, management and remediation, there is currently no land within the borough that is categorised as contaminated in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act. This is underpinned by a framework set out by a Contaminated Land Strategy (appendix A).
- 3.6 Until recently, there was one site in the borough that fell within the criteria for contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act. The land in question was managed under responsibility of the Environment Agency (as lead agency).
- 3.7 In 2025, following collaboration between the Environment Agency and the landowner, it was confirmed that the site is no longer classified as contaminated under the Environmental Protection Act. Consequently, the council has removed the contaminated land designation. This decision was based on a thorough review

of supporting documentation and detailed evidence demonstrating that reclassification was appropriate.

3.8 Once finalised and approved, the draft Contaminated Land Strategy will replace the existing Strategy that was developed in 2013. This refreshed strategy reflects updated statutory guidance and local context. The draft Contaminated Land Strategy outlines:

- The legislative framework
- The Borough's industrial legacy and geological characteristics
- The council's inspection and prioritisation methodology
- A shift in focus from proactive inspection to managing contamination through planning and voluntary remediation.

3.9 In continuing to manage and monitor land use and the possible risks of contaminated, the council will continue to maintain and update the Contaminated Land register which is publicly available on this link [Register of Contaminated Land Sites](#). The register continues to hold information on all sites, regardless of whether they are still classified as contaminated land or not.

3.10 The council will continue to refresh and update the strategy as part of updates to legislation. This will be in parallel to maintaining the register of sites.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 This report provides Environment Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the approach to developing and maintaining a Contaminated Land Strategy while seeking feedback from the committee as part of developing the final document.

4.2 The Contaminated Land Strategy updates the Council's approach to identifying and managing contaminated land in line with Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

4.4 The Contaminated Land Strategy outlines the Council's inspection duties, risk assessment methodology and collaborative approach to ensure land is fit for current and future use.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 While there are limited alternatives to developing and adopting a contaminated land strategy, it is best practice for councils to have an adopted strategy as part of commitments to protecting and enhancing the environment.

5.2 The planning process has a critical role in identifying, managing and remediating contaminated land particularly when land is proposed for new development or a change of use. The planning systems works in parallel to environmental legislation to ensure that land is suitable for its intended use and that risks are mitigated. The role of planning is to ensure that contaminated land is identified early in the development process and that remediation, if required, is undertaken prior to use

or occupation. The planning system complements, rather than replaces, Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act as this deals with existing contamination that pose unacceptable risk.

- 5.3 Having an adopted strategy ensures transparency, consistency, and proactive land management.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The proposed strategy helps to mitigate key environmental and public health risks by ensuring that land contamination is identified, assessed, and managed in accordance with statutory duties under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 6.2 By adopting a structured and evidence-based approach, the proposed strategy reduces the likelihood of regulatory non-compliance and supports the Council's wider risk management framework.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 Once adopted, the Contaminated Land Strategy will support the delivery of the following strategic priorities.
- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
 - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
 - Our natural environment is protected – we take a leading role in tackling the climate emergency
 - A community-focused, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Implementation and ongoing management of the strategy will be managed within existing resource.
- 8.2 Where remediation is required, the council will identify and engage responsible parties—including landowners and developers—to ensure that costs are appropriately attributed.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 provides a definition of contaminated land and requires Local Authorities to inspect their area periodically to identify contaminated land and use a strategy to help determine risk.

The duty to inspect for and identify contaminated land is contained in Section 78B of the Act which states this should be done in accordance with statutory guidance.

The Statutory Guidance requires a Local Authority to prepare and publish a written strategy for inspecting land and ensure the strategy reflects local circumstances and is consistent with national guidance.

9.2 The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 Once adopted, this strategy covers the whole Borough.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 The Contaminated Land Strategy is designed to safeguard public health by identifying and managing risks from land contamination, especially in areas with historical industrial activity.

11.2 The strategy supports pollution control, ensuring land is safe for current and future use, and aligns with statutory duties under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 ensuring transparent and consistent decision-making.

11.3 In conjunction with the planning system, the Contaminated Land Strategy facilitates safe sustainable redevelopment and regeneration, potentially unlocking land for housing, commercial use, and infrastructure.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The Strategy supports the council's environmental commitments.

12.2 Equality and diversity considerations are inherent in developing the Contaminated Land Strategy including:

- Helping to safeguard who may be affected by contaminated; and
- Promote inclusive risk assessment practices that consider vulnerable groups

12.3 To strengthen equality outcomes, the Council will ensure that communication about contaminated land is accessible to all residents.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 The Contaminated Land Strategy aligns with the Council's statutory duties under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, ensuring land is safe for current and future use. It supports the Council's environmental commitments to protecting and enhancing the environment, contributing to neighbourhoods that are safe, and healthy.

13.3 The strategy promotes sustainable development, balancing environmental protection with economic and social needs. It ensures that remediation efforts are proportionate and manageable for individuals, businesses, and society.

13.4 The Contaminated Land Strategy acknowledges the impact of climate change, particularly increased flooding, on contaminated land risks. These environmental changes may mobilise pollutants and increase exposure risks.

13.5 The Council's approach includes annual reviews of the strategy and action plan to remain adaptive to climate-related developments

14.0 Background Papers

None.

15.0 Appendices

A Draft Contaminated Land Strategy

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	20/10/2025	20/10/2025	SH
Finance	20/10/2025	20/10/2025	PT