Table 1 Risk estimation - classification of probability

Classification	Definition of the Probability of Harm/Pollution Occurring
High Likelihood	The pollutant linkage exists and it is very likely to result in harm/pollution in the short term, and/or will almost inevitably result in harm/pollution in the long term, and/or there is current evidence of harm/pollution. Likelihood is defined as more likely than not and meets the definition of 'significant possibility' under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Likely	The source, pathway and receptor exist for the pollutant linkage and it is probable that harm/pollution will occur. Circumstances are such that harm/pollution is not inevitable, but possible in the short term and likely over the long term. Likelihood is defined as reasonably possible and meets the definition of 'significant possibility' under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Low Likelihood	The source, pathway and receptor exist and it is possible that harm/pollution could occur. Circumstances are such that harm/pollution is by no means certain in the long term and less likely in the short term.
Unlikely	The source, pathway and receptor exist for the pollutant linkage but it is improbable that harm/pollution will occur even in the long term.

Table 2: Risk estimation - classification of consequence

Classification	Definition of Consequence
Human Health Receptors – Site end use or other more sensitive receptor	
Severe	Acute damage to human health based on the effects on the critical human health receptor. Concentrations of contaminants above appropriate site specific assessment criteria. Harm meets definition of 'significant harm' under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Medium	Chronic damage to human health based on the effects on the critical human health receptor. Concentrations of contaminants above appropriate site specific assessment criteria. Harm meets definition of 'significant harm' under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Mild	No appreciable impact on human health based on the potential effects on the critical human health receptor. Concentrations of contaminants above generic assessment criteria but below appropriate site specific assessment criteria.
Minor	No appreciable impact on human health based on the effects on the critical human health receptor. Concentrations of contaminants below appropriate generic assessment criteria.
Human Health Receptors – Site construction workers	
Severe	Exposure to hazardous substances resulting in a reportable death, major injury, 3-day injury or illness/disease under RIDDOR.
Medium	Exposure to hazardous substances resulting in a dangerous occurrence reportable under RIDDOR. Exposure to hazardous substances resulting in exceedance of a workplace exposure limit.

Mild	Exposure to hazardous substances resulting in limited effects such as headache, dizziness, nausea. Exposures below the workplace exposure limits. Not reportable under RIDDOR.
Minor	Minor exposure to hazardous substance resulting in no appreciable ill health effects.
Controlled Water Receptors	
Severe	Pollution of a Principal aquifer within a source protection zone or potable supply characterised by a breach of drinking water standards. Pollution of a surface water course characterised by a breach of an EQS at a statutory monitoring location or resulting in a change in GQA grade of river reach. Discharge of a List I or List II substance to groundwater. Pollution meets Part 2A definition.
Medium	Pollution of a Principal aquifer outside a source protection zone or a Secondary A aquifer characterised by a breach of drinking water standards. Pollution of an industrial groundwater abstraction or irrigation supply that impairs its function. Substantial pollution but insufficient to result in a change in the GQA grade of river reach. Pollution meets Part 2A definition.
Mild	Low levels of pollution of a Principal aquifer outside a source protection zone or an industrial abstraction, or pollution of a Secondary aquifer. Low levels of pollution insufficient to result in a change in the GQA grade of river reach, pollution of a surface water course without a quality classification.
Minor	No appreciable pollution, or pollution of a low sensitivity receptor such as a non-aquifer or a surface water course without a quality classification
Property Receptors – Buildings, Foundations and Services	
Severe	Catastrophic damage to buildings, such as explosion. Catastrophic failure of foundations and services. Substantial damage to a Scheduled Monument significantly impairing the by reason of which the monument is scheduled. Harm meets definition of ‘significant harm’ under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Medium	Substantial damage to buildings and foundations rendering the structures unsafe. Substantial damage to services impairing their function. Significant damage to a Scheduled Monument significantly impairing the reason of which the monument is scheduled. Harm meets definition of ‘significant harm’ under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Mild	Significant damage to buildings and foundations but not resulting in them being unsafe for occupation. Damage to services but not sufficient to impair their function. Damage to a Scheduled Monument but no significant impairment to the reason of which the monument is scheduled.
Minor	Easily repairable damage to buildings, foundations and services.
Property Receptors – Crops and Livestock	
Severe	Substantial loss in the value of crops or domestically-grown produce. Death to livestock, domesticated animals or wild animals subject to shooting or fishing rights. Harm meets definition of ‘significant harm’ under Part 2A of EPA 1990.

Medium	Substantial diminution in yield (over 20% reduction) of crops or domestically-grown produce. Serious disease or other serious physical damage to livestock, domesticated animals or wild animals subject to shooting or fishing rights. Harm meets definition of 'significant harm' under Part 2A of EPA 1990.
Mild	Harm to crops but not resulting in a substantial loss in value or diminution in yield (less than 20% reduction). Limited harm in terms of disease or other physical damage to livestock, domesticated animals or wild animals subject to shooting or fishing rights.
Minor	No appreciable harm, or harm to a low sensitivity receptor.

1.1 The contaminated land risk, a function of the probability and the consequence, is then defined using the risk matrix given in Table 7 which is taken from the NHBC and EA's guide R&D66.

Table 3: Estimation of the level of risk by comparison of consequence and probability

		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

The descriptions of the classified risks as given in R&D66, are as follows:

- Very high risk:

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 the site owner/or occupier. Investigation is required as a matter of urgency and remediation works likely to follow in the short-term.

- High risk:

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 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, 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 risk:

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 risk:

It is a low possibility that harm could arise to a designated receptor, but it is likely at worst, that this harm if realised would normally be mild or minor.

- No potential risk:

There is no potential risk if no pollution linkage has been established.