

# Contamination



Everything you need to know:

There's an ever increasing desire for owners to extend a property instead of moving. Many also love doing a conversion or even building their own property on acquired land. You should be mindful that it isn't always as straight forward as it may seem and this is where your Local Authority Building Control Team can help! Below are some helpful tips and things to be aware of.

## What should you consider?

Contamination can be traced back in history from when the earth was formed through to Roman Times, The Industrial Revolution and subsequent activities on areas of land.

Defra and the Environment Agency State;-

**\*\*A contaminant is a substance that has the potential to cause harm.\*\***

There is a wide range of contaminants which can be found in solid, liquid and gaseous forms. They have the potential to be anywhere but especially on areas of land that have had a previous use (or property sited near to) a scrap yard, railway land, engineering works and garages.

Contaminants may be detrimental to health as they can enter the body through different routes. They can be ingested through food grown on the land, touching objects or through inhalation of gases which can percolate through the building fabric and services.

Some gases form naturally within the soils including Methane, Carbon Dioxide, Nitrogen and Radon.

Consideration should be given to the specific remediation measures for the type of contamination. This could be the treatment of the substance, containment within an impervious sack or the total removal to a designated landfill site by a licenced carrier.

## What do you need to do next?

Before starting any project, whether it is an extension, conversion or a new build, make sure you know the background of the land.

There are four main areas that you need to consider;-

1. Environmental desk study. (Research)
2. Intrusive investigation. (Excavation)
3. Remediation study. (Removal / containment)
4. Validation report. (Certificate)

Organisations and the legislation that administer all areas regarding contamination are;-

- The Environment Agency.
- Defra
- Public Health England.
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- The Environmental protection Act 1990 – Part 2A.

You can ask an architect, an independent land investigator or a builder to complete the research. We recommend exploring different options and review feedback on quality of reports they provide.

Once you are confident and can show compliance with the above, you are able to start planning your building work for your designated project.

Make your Building regulations application here :

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/building-control/make-a-building-regulations-application](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/building-control/make-a-building-regulations-application)

You can start work 48 hours after submitting your application.

***On successful completion you will receive a certificate of compliance to keep safe should you ever sell your property.***

Still have a query? Did you know that we do offer 1 hours free pre application consultation for those who need it. Contact us today at [building.control@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) / 01502 523072