

Evaluating the effectiveness of the contaminated land regime

INDUSTRY

Public and construction sector

LOCATION

Across UK

SERVICE AREA

Environmental

CHALLENGE

Almost all contaminated land remediation in England is secured through the planning system, but systematic assessments of whether this delivers suitable sites are rare. Concerns about sites 'slipping through the net,' inconsistent report quality, limited verification, and under-resourced local authority teams all create uncertainty for regulators, developers, lenders, and insurers.

SOLUTION

Crawford Environmental Consultants is conducting evidence-based evaluations of around 300 contaminated land reports submitted through planning by various authorities. These are being assessed against LCRM, national policy, and professional standards. The research reviews local authority actions, contaminated land management, and alignment with wider policy areas such as soil reuse and circular economy outcomes. Deep-dive reviews, interviews, and optional ex-post soil testing provide insight into behaviours and systemic weaknesses. The findings will give regulators robust evidence to strengthen governance and improve planning outcomes, and will help the mortgage and insurance sector understand residual risks and the adequacy of validation processes.

RESULTS

- Evidence-based review of **300+** contaminated land reports
- Strengthening governance, clarifying risks