

INITIAL SITE APPRAISALS – An essential tool



including NHBC Chapter 4.1 Assessments¹

"Down to earth advice"



Initial site appraisals save money, and they often save time too! How? By enabling proper planning of an appropriate investigation so that subsequent decisions regarding site acquisition, development or disposal are soundly based.

Our initial site appraisals, also often called **desk studies**, **Phase 1** or **preliminary investigations**, are designed to meet the core requirements of the major relevant standards¹ whilst, by offering a range of optional extensions to scope, we provide the client with the flexibility to tailor the scope of the appraisal to suit the nature of their project and the level of information required.

SCOPE OF APPRAISAL²

The data sources considered by the desk study include:

- Geology – British Geological Survey (BGS) mapping
- Radon status and protection
- Ground working, mining, extraction & natural cavities
- Natural ground stability (including BGS GeoSure data sets)
- Groundwater, surface water and flooding
- Land use, current & historical – OS maps, contemporary trade directories and registers
- Statutory authorizations, consents, determinations, incident notices/prosecutions and registers – Environment Agency and Local Authorities
- Landfill and other waste sites
- Ecological designated sites (sensitive land uses)
- Client's own information

Building Regulations Part C:

"Desk Study. A review of the historical, geological and environmental information about the site is essential;" (Cls 1.1 b)

A **walkover survey** provides further valuable information about the condition of the site and its environs.

Our initial site appraisal reports provide a **Conceptual Ground Model** and an **evaluation** of the findings together with a photographic record of current features of interest/concern, topographic maps, geological maps and all the database search results.

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS TO SCOPE

- BGS borehole records – Available borehole logs are purchased and reviewed
- Full reports, when relevant, from databases of coal mining, natural cavities and non-coal mining
- Soil type – Soil Survey of England & Wales mapping
- Aerial photographs, including 'cover' search, purchase and interpretation
- Manual searches of reference material in county records offices, libraries, museums and local history sources
- Interviewing local officers for latest information (Planning, Environmental Health, Highways)
- Services searches – enquiries to all relevant utility companies for adopted services within the site
- Site-specific or client-specific services.

Notes:

1. The relevant standards and guidance documents include BS5930, BS10175, Eurocode 7 Part 2, Environment Agency CLR11, NHBC Standards Chapter 4.1, Building Regulations (Part C), various TRRL/TRL and BRE publications, and the AGS Client's Guide to Desk Studies; full references are provided on the Gabriel GeoConsulting website.
2. The extent of searches for some topics will be adjusted, in agreement with the client, to suit the nature of the site and the client's wishes.

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