

CATEGORY 4 SCREENING LEVELS (C4SLS)

Background

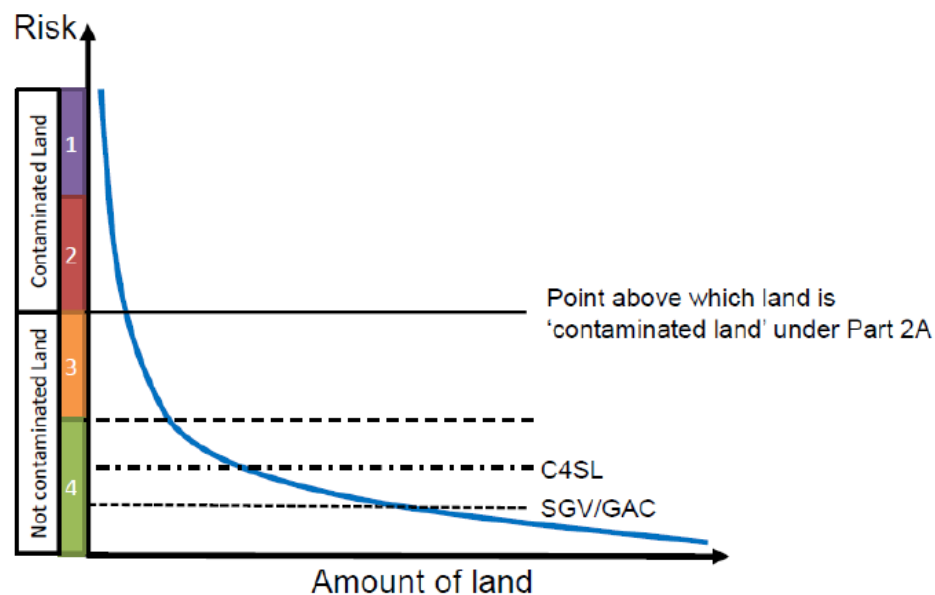
The non-statutory guidance was rewritten last year to address concerns that unnecessary clean-up was occurring on sites with only slightly elevated levels of contaminants. The guidance made it clear that the current soil guideline values (SGV) were in fact intended to indicate where there was potentially an issue which may need to be addressed.

The New Guidance

The revised non-statutory guidance proposes four categories of land;

- 1: Clearly contaminated,
- 2: After investigation found to be contaminated,
- 3: After investigation found to be uncontaminated, and
- 4: Clearly uncontaminated.

The guidance made clear that the SGVs were probably somewhere below the category 3 to 4 boundary. It was therefore decided to establish some Category 4 Screening Levels (C4SLS).



C4SLs

The current Soil Guideline Values and Generic Assessment Criteria (SGV & GAC) have been augmented with ‘more practical (but still strongly precautionary)’ Category 4 Screening Levels for 6 substances; benzene, cadmium, arsenic, benzo(a)pyrene, hexavalent chromium and lead.

Category 4

- Describes land that is clearly not contaminated land
- Land where there is ‘no risk or where the level of risk posed is low’

C4SLs are;

- Generic screening values to help show when land is within Category 4
- Describe a level of risk that whilst above ‘minimal’ is still ‘low’
- Provide a ‘higher simple test’ for deciding that land is suitable for use and definitely not contaminated

The C4SLs are higher than the SGVs with the exception of lead. New toxicological research has resulted in the C4SL for lead being significantly less than the current SGV.

How to save money

Consideration should be given to appropriate use of the C4SLs on current and future projects with potential reductions in remediation costs. It will be necessary to discuss the local authority’s requirements on a site specific basis until it is clear whether the C4SLs will be adopted in the planning regime.

Further Information

The above are, of course, just “edited highlights”, designed solely to create awareness and are not for guidance. You can see the documents [here](#).

To discuss these issues please contact me, Peter George either on 077 6523 2995 or at pdg@gosolve.co.uk.