

Appendix B – Glossary of Technical Terms

Glossary of Technical Terms

Abstraction	Removal of water from a groundwater or surface water body- usually by means of a pump. Groundwater is water that is contained in porous rocks underground.
Alluvial Deposits	Soil Sediments deposited by the action of rivers
Aquifer	A porous body of rock capable of holding quantities of water that can be abstracted for human use
Attenuation	Reduction. The term is used in drainage design to indicate a reduction in the rate of flow or flooding risk, for example by means of a pond to hold back water.
Base Flow	Normal water flow rate in the absence of significant run-off or precipitation.
Bio-accumulation	The accumulation of substances within living organisms
Biochemical Oxygen Demand.	A chemical procedure for determining the uptake rate of dissolved oxygen by biological organisms in water.
CaCO ₃	Calcium carbonate. An indicator of water hardness
Carcinogenic	Causing or tending to cause cancer
Catchment	The area of land which drains into a specific watercourse or river.
Coarse fish	Fish species such as cyprinids, pike and eel
Contaminated Land	Defined in Section 78 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as “any land which appears to the local Authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that:- a) significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or b) pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be caused.”
Cyprinid	A family of soft finned mainly freshwater fish including carp, tench, rudd and dace
De-watering:	Removal of water during construction with implications for pollution of surface water and changes to ground water.
DMRB:	The Department for Transport’s Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, a multi-volume work that gives guidance on all matters relating to highway construction. Volume 11 relates to Environmental Impact Assessment.
Earthworks:	In construction, this means any operations involved in moving, loosening, depositing, shaping, compacting and stabilising soil and rock. In archaeology, it means any archaeological features that are visible as slopes, mounds, banks or depressions in the ground surface.
Embankment:	An elongated mound of soil deliberately placed to form a raised area, sometimes built to elevate a highway surface above the surrounding ground.
Environmental Impact Assessment:	A systematic process for assessing a project’s likely significant environmental effects so that they can be taken into account in decision-making about the project.
Flood Plain	Area of land prone to flooding and protected against development.
Fluvial	Affected by rivers and streams
Fluvio-glacial Deposits	Material deposited by water from a melting glacier
Glacial Till	The mixture of rocks, stones and soils left behind when a glacier melts
Ground Investigation:	Survey incorporating boreholes and pits to investigate the

	nature and strength of soils below the ground.
Groundwater:	Water held underground within porous rocks.
Hydrocarbons	Organic compounds made of hydrogen and carbon, often found in fuels.
Hydrogeology	The study of groundwater.
Lower Lias	A period of geological time towards the end of the early Jurassic, ie. from about 195 – 180 million years ago.
Macro-invertebrate	An animal without a backbone large enough to be seen without magnification.
Made Ground:	Land which has been infilled or built up above original ground level.
Mitigation:	Measures, including any process, activity or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse effects of a development project.
Mutagenic	Causing genetic mutation.
Organohalogen	Organic compounds including fluorine, chlorine, bromine or iodine.
Organophosphorus	Common natural compound, but also the basis of many insecticides and herbicides
Organotin	Highly toxic organic compounds combined with tin, used as anti-foulant paint for boats
PH	A measure of relative acidity or alkalinity
Piling:	The act of driving 'piles' (supports) into the ground.
Planning Policy Guidance (PPG):	A series of government documents that provide guidance, principally to Local Planning Authorities, about various aspects of government policy in relation to the planning system.
Potable water	Water suitable for human consumption.
Ramsar	European Designated wildlife site
River Terrace	A flat platform of land created alongside a river.
Run-off:	Water which is not absorbed by the soil and flows to lower ground, eventually draining into a stream, river, or other body of water.
SAC	Special Area of Conservation. European designated wildlife site.
Salmonid	Fish species such as salmon and trout
Sediment:	Particulate matter that can be carried by water flow and eventually deposited as a layer of solid particles on the bed or bottom of a body of water. Sedimentation is the deposition by settling of a suspended material.
Siltation:	The deposition or accumulation on the bottom of a body of water of fine or intermediate sized mineral particles known as 'silt'.
Source Protection Zones (SPZ):	A defined zone surrounding a groundwater abstraction point (e.g. a well or a spring), within which certain activities are restricted to prevent contamination of the groundwater.
SPA	Special Protection Area. European designated wildlife site.
Surface Water:	Watercourses, ponds or lakes that run or lie on the surface of the land
Suspended Solids	Small solid particles which remain in suspension in water.
Teratogenic	Causing birth or embryo defects
Turbidity	Muddiness created by stirring up sediment.