

# Site Contamination Policy for Endorsement

Tuesday, 17 September 2024  
City Finance and Governance  
Committee

Strategic Alignment - Our Environment

Public

**Program Contact:**

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**Approving Officer:**

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Shaping

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the updated Site Contamination Policy (the Policy) (**Attachment A**).

The Policy and associated Site Contamination Operating Guidelines (the Operating Guidelines) were scheduled for review in December 2018. The review commenced in late 2017 but was postponed as the Environment Protection Authority South Australia (EPA) commenced a review of the draft Site Contamination Framework for the SA Planning System. As a result of the State Government's review, a standardised legislative framework to assess and manage risks posed by known or potential site contamination to enable the safe development and use of land is now in operation under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

The review of the City of Adelaide's Policy and Operating Guidelines recommenced in March 2024 and has resulted in minor amendments to the Policy and more significant updates to the Operating Guidelines to reflect legislative changes and operational practices over the past eleven (11) years.

A workshop was held with the City Finance and Governance Committee on 20 August 2024 to discuss the City of Adelaide's framework for managing site contamination including the amendments to the Policy and Operating Guidelines ([Link 1](#)).

Amendments to the Policy include updating information and improving legibility, specifically:

- Updated legislative references.
- Updated Risk Management section for alignment with the City of Adelaide's strategic goals.
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities to reflect current practices.
- Updated Monitoring and Implementation section relating to responsibilities and obligations.

Amendment of the Operating Guidelines ([Link 2](#)) is a matter for the Chief Executive Officer and will commence pending the Council's adoption of the Policy.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 24 September 2024 for consideration

THAT THE CITY FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Adopts the Site Contamination Policy as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 17 September 2024.
2. Revokes the Site Contamination Policy 2013.
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to make typographical, syntactical and technical amendments to the Site Contamination Policy 2024 contained in Attachment A to Item 7.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 17 September 2024.

## IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	<b>Strategic Alignment – Our Environment</b> Protect, enhance and activate our Park Lands and Open space.
Policy	The updated Site Contamination Policy and Operating Guidelines will revoke and replace all previous iterations, including the Site Contamination Policy 2013 ( <a href="#">Link 3</a> ). The Operating Guidelines will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer following Council's consideration of the Policy. The Operating Guidelines set out the administrative procedures and practices for mitigating, remediating, or managing site contamination in line with the Policy.
Consultation	The Policy and Operating Guidelines are informed by engagement across the City of Adelaide, legislative requirements, State Government guidelines as well as external input from the Environment Protection Authority South Australia (EPA). Public consultation on the Policy is not required.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The City of Adelaide has legislative and regulatory obligations relating to site contamination. The Policy and Operating Guidelines clarify the roles of the City of Adelaide, the EPA, site contamination practitioners and other statutory bodies in the identification, investigation and remediation of site contamination.
Opportunities	The Policy and Operating Guidelines provide a framework, guiding principles, and procedures to assist the City of Adelaide in minimising risk and developing a culture of best practice in preventing, managing, and monitoring site contamination.
24/25 Budget Allocation	The City Services Program has an operating budget allocation for managing site contamination, including reviewing the Site Environmental History Register, collating any other records within the Register, and developing a GIS spatial mapping layer identifying known areas of contamination for administration use.
Proposed 25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The Policy and Operating Guidelines will be in place ongoing and should be reviewed every five (5) years.
24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

# DISCUSSION

## Background

1. Site contamination occurs across South Australia as a result of former historical pollution and contaminating activities, such as waste disposal methods which would not be acceptable by today's standards.
2. The City of Adelaide has legislative and regulatory obligations relating to site contamination. The Policy and Operating Guidelines use a risk-based approach to assessing and remediating contamination to protect human health and the environment.
3. The City of Adelaide's current Site Contamination Policy ([Link 3](#)) and Operating Guidelines were approved by Council in 2013.
4. The Policy and Operating Guidelines were scheduled for review in December 2018. A review commenced in late 2017 but was postponed as the Environment Protection Authority South Australia (EPA) commenced a statewide review of the draft Site Contamination Framework for the SA Planning System.
5. As a result of the review, a standardised legislative framework commenced to assess and manage risks posed by known or potential site contamination to enable the safe development and use of land is now in operation under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.
6. A workshop was held with the City Finance and Governance Committee on 20 August 2024 to discuss the City of Adelaide's framework for managing site contamination including the amendments to the Policy and Operating Guidelines ([Link 1](#)).

## Review Process

7. The review of the City of Adelaide's Policy and Operating Guidelines recommenced in March 2024 and has resulted in minor amendments to the Policy and more significant updates to the Operating Guidelines to reflect legislative changes and operational practices over the past eleven (11) years.
8. Internal consultation was undertaken in March and May 2024 to understand the current operational practices relating to site contamination and assist with updating the Policy and Operating Guidelines to current practice.
9. External consultation with the EPA was completed in June 2024 to confirm the amendments to the Policy and Operating Guidelines align with environmental obligations.
10. The Operating Guidelines were reviewed concurrently with the Policy to ensure the City of Adelaide continues to meet legislative and operating requirements and provides an updated framework for managing site contamination across the organisation that supports the Policy's implementation.
11. Amendment of the Operating Guidelines ([Link 2](#)) is a matter for the Chief Executive Officer which will commence pending the Council's decision on the Policy.
12. A summary table outlining changes to the Policy and Operating Guidelines is provided ([Link 4](#)).

## Site Contamination Policy

13. The updated Policy (Attachment A) provides guiding principles to assist the City of Adelaide in minimising its risk and developing a culture of best practice in preventing, managing and monitoring site contamination.
14. Minor amendments were made to the Policy, including updating information and improving legibility, specifically:
  - 14.1. Updated legislative references.
  - 14.2. Updated Risk Management section for alignment with the City of Adelaide's strategic goals.
  - 14.3. Clarification of roles and responsibilities to reflect current practices.
  - 14.4. Updated Monitoring and Implementation section relating to responsibilities and obligations.

## Operating Guidelines review

15. The Operating Guidelines establish a framework of internal controls that support the Policy's implementation and mitigate risks to the environment, human health, and the Corporation.
16. The Operating Guidelines define the roles and responsibilities for implementing, administering, and reviewing the Policy, and maintaining a Site Environmental History Register. The Operating Guidelines include procedures for employees of the City of Adelaide involved in managing site contamination risks.

17. Amendments to the Operating Guidelines, include:
  - 17.1. Updated legislative references.
  - 17.2. Changes to reflect current regulations, frameworks, practice directions and terminology.
  - 17.3. Updated sources of information to reflect current practices.
  - 17.4. Additional information regarding the GIS spatial layer for the Site Environmental History Register was added to provide employees with additional guidance on data inputs.
  - 17.5. Clarification of roles and responsibilities to reflect current practices and provide accountability.
  - 17.6. Operating processes were reviewed and updated to reflect Policy and Operating Guideline changes.

**Next Steps**

18. Pending Council’s decision on the Site Contamination Policy, Administration will commence work to implement the Operating Guidelines including updating the Site Environmental History Register and creating a GIS spatial layer within the City of Adelaide’s online map viewer.
19. The next review of the Site Contamination Policy and Operating Guidelines will be scheduled for 2029.

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## DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**Link 1** – [Agenda – City Finance and Governance Committee – Thursday, 20 August 2024](#)

**Link 2** - [Site Contamination Operating Guidelines](#)

**Link 3** – [Site Contamination Policy 2013](#)

**Link 4** - [Site Contamination Policy and Operating Guidelines – Amendment Summary Table](#)

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## ATTACHMENTS

**Attachment A** – Site Contamination Policy

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