

De-risk your land and unlock its potential with our Land Quality Service

Do you have a site with complex contamination, geotechnical or perception issues that you're looking to deliver, sell or build out with development partners for housing? Our Land Quality Service evaluates your enabling works and/or site preparation solutions. Through a Land Quality Certificate, we can provide reassurance that the works are right for your development and meet the land quality requirements of NHBC Standards, providing a pathway to future NHBC warranty acceptance.

This independent certification enhances the site's appeal, instilling confidence in potential development or funding partners or, if you're planning to develop the land with a development partner, it makes procurement more straightforward, providing confidence that the scheme is buildable without unexpected constraints or abnormals.

Specialist input from geotechnical and geo-environmental engineers

Our specialist team of geotechnical and geo-environmental engineers have worked on some of the largest land regeneration schemes in the UK. Together, they offer technical opinion on all forms of land at pre-development stage, from brownfield and geotechnically challenging sites to marginal and greenfield sites.

Three assessment stages provide a pathway to warranty acceptance

The service includes thorough review and assessment of the site's (1) investigation, (2) land remediation proposals and (3) verification works for compliance with NHBC Standards.

On successful completion, a Certificate of Land Quality is issued, outlining the checks performed to ensure confidence in the land quality aspects of the site and specifying which foundation solutions will be acceptable to NHBC. This is likely to enhance the land's value and assist you in meeting our warranty requirements.

The benefits to you

Addressing challenging ground conditions before starting work on site streamlines the building process, reducing risks of delays, unforeseen and abnormal costs.

- Are your preferred bidders or development partners NHBC registered builders?
- Do you need an independent opinion to reassure wider stakeholders or to secure funding?
- Is there a risk of purchasers renegotiating on land value due to perceived abnormals?

Time saving benefits of early engagement with our Land Quality team

- Early understanding of current and future challenges, supporting decision-making and effective planning.
- Improves land saleability and the confidence of wider stakeholders or investment partners/funders.
- Our specialist team is fully conversant with residential markets to quickly consider issues or plan changes.

Quality benefits from working with our experts

- Our specialist engineers know the requirements of the NHBC Standards inside out and provide technical clarity on key elements of work.
- Trusted, independent oversight reassures others that NHBC land quality requirements can or have been met.
- Considers compatibility of remedial and geotechnical solutions and clarifies the site's status from the viewpoint of a warranty provider.

Cost saving benefits for your proposed development

- Reduces the likelihood of buyers renegotiating costs or development partners needing to alter contract terms.
- Provides greater certainty in procurement because you have certainty on what is accepted or recognise what still needs to be addressed.
- Provides feedback on proposed alternative value engineering and innovative solutions, minimising the risk of unnecessary work and costs.
- Developing land that has been pre-checked against NHBC Land Quality requirements will reduce a buyer's ability to renegotiate the land's value due to abnormals.

Frequently asked questions

How far in advance should I engage your Land Quality team?

For maximum benefit, we would always recommend that you engage the team as early as possible in the pre-development stages. At the very least, a minimum of three months in advance of construction work starting or contracts being exchanged.

How much does it cost?

This is a bespoke service and the price for each project will be determined by a number of factors such as the complexity and size of the site, the duration of our engagement and the level of service required.

Do you carry out land quality assessments or land remediation?

No, we don't. Our Land Quality Service offers technical risk management for clients who want to evaluate and remediate their sites for future residential development or who need assurance that proposed foundation or remedial solutions for their development objectives, comply with the NHBC Standards (Chapter 4.1 Land Quality: Managing Ground Conditions), supporting their future application for warranty and insurance cover.

We use our own technical advisors and consultants, who provide guidance and guarantees. Why do we need the NHBC Land Quality team?

Consultants are usually focussed in one specific area. Our team includes both geotechnical and geo-environmental specialists who work together to ensure that solutions are well-matched across both areas and practical for construction. Only NHBC has the authority to determine whether proposals (or works) can meet the requirements of the NHBC Standards.

What happens when planning approval is already granted and environmental conditions are discharged?

Planning often ignores whether a site is practical for residential development. Instead, it focuses on regulations like contamination, noise, wildlife and water. Our Land Quality Service is fully focused on whether the site is right for future home building and will meet the land quality requirements of NHBC Standards.

Can you help me maximise material re-use on my site?

If you're thinking of building on engineered fill and need to keep the material on site, as the team who wrote the Engineered Fill chapter of the NHBC Standards, our specialists are best placed to help you get it right.

I want to use innovative methods, will NHBC recommend a more onerous or conservative solution?

By engaging our Land Quality Service early, you can simplify the warranty acceptance process. Our team can review your proposals and work with you to achieve solutions that mean you can achieve your goals without the risk of abortive costs. This is particularly useful where innovative or unique approaches, are being considered. Our team has often supported housebuilders in gaining acceptance for innovative methods, such as ground improvement solutions on peaty ground or sites with high-ground gas risks. Please ask to see some case studies.



Get in touch

The team would love to hear from you. If you have any questions at all, please visit nhbc.co.uk/lqs, or you can email us on lq@nhbc.co.uk.