

3 CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY (AN296-2002)

Since the completion of the Contaminated Land Strategy, it has been recognised that the Geographic Information System (GIS) and accurate digital data management form an integral component of the project and require significant work to allow the ordered and efficient implementation of the strategy.

To date, substantial resource has been devoted to the time consuming task of collating historical and current information regarding the land uses within the council area. We are now in a position where the majority of the data has been collected and it has become necessary to develop a method of data interrogation and querying to improve efficiency and increase the value of the data held electronically

Until now, GIS work has been carried out using the council wide GIS system, DataMAP. DataMAP has been adequate to date for the simple data collation work, however it lacks the added functionality and a simple user interface found in mainstream GIS applications. The current limitations of the DataMAP system are proving restrictive and preventing full utilisation of the data currently held.

ArcGIS (formerly known as ArcView) is a GIS system with much wider national and international recognition. ArcGIS is perhaps the most common GIS application found in the public and private sector and has found favour with Agencies such as the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) as well as numerous Local Authorities. As a result, a number of commercial enterprises have realised the potential of GIS in the contaminated land field and have published software written specifically to enhance the productivity of the regulatory authorities.

Preliminary work has been carried out to ensure that data already captured in the DataMAP platform is compatible with the ArcGIS platform and vice versa. Initial indications are that data portability does not present a problem.

The purpose of this Committee Note is to seek approval to purchase 2 licences of ArcGIS and procure the necessary technical support to carry out the installation and software development required to:

- fully realise the potential benefits of the electronic information collated over the past 2 years by the addition of a reporting module written by the British Geological Survey (BGS) in ArcGIS;
- allow the rational, ordered and efficient inspection of the local authority area for the purposes of identifying contaminated land;
- to enable seamless interaction with other government Agencies; and
- to assist in the prioritisation of inspection of the council area

As the work required will evolve during the installation process. It is recommended that the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection Department be authorised to instruct expenditure up to the value of £25,000. This expenditure can be met from the Environmental and Consumer Protection Department's 2002/03 Capital Budget.