

Chelmsford Waitrose – Site Investigation

Former Use: Post Office Sorting Office and warehousing
Client: John Lewis Partnership
Value: £undisclosed
Location: Chelmsford

This former Post Office sorting office site was being developed for commercial land use as a Waitrose store with associated car parking, a community centre and 37 residential units. Provectus were contracted to complete a site investigation to establish the ground conditions and any soil or groundwater contamination present.

The site is located in the town centre with the railway line running alongside it, a narrow access road and a river located approximately 180m away.

Work included:

- Dynamic/window sampling boreholes max depth 6m
- Cable percussive boreholes max depth 15m in external areas
- Electric percussive boreholes max depth 15m within buildings
- Installation of 50mm diameter HDPE standpipes in all boreholes, with gas taps and metal stopcock covers
- Excavation of trial pits max depth 2.5m
- Ordnance supervision including magnetometer testing to provide a safe drilling procedure
- Testing using MCERTS/UKAS accredited laboratory
- Ongoing monitoring over a 6 month period for groundwater and soil gas readings
- Soil leachate, groundwater sampling and analysis



Safety was paramount on this site for a number of reasons.

- The yard itself was busy with post office vehicles and the general public moving through the yard throughout the day and into the early evening.
- The town centre location meant the site had the potential for unexploded ordnance, so all excavation and drilling works were supervised by a specialist to ensure safety.
- As there were buildings onsite, some of the works were undertaken inside an operational building. This meant that equipment and holes were present in areas that workers were not used to them being

The works then allowed the progression of a detailed remediation strategy in order to allow unhindered development of the new store, community centre and residential units.