

Pre Construction Information (PCI) – What to Consider

Why do I need a PCI document?

Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM) apply to peatland restoration works and the information below should aid a land manager considering undertaking such works. CDM’s aim is to improve health and safety in the construction industry and clarifies three main roles of Client, Designer and Contractor. Full Health and Safety Executive guidance can be found via their [website](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/index.html). We have also produced a shortened version of the guidance for Peatland ACTION restoration project applicants. This is available on our website.

One of the documents required by CDM Regulations is the PCI. It asks for the Client’s knowledge about the site that is held by, or could reasonably be obtained by, the Client or Designer. This is information that may be needed by Designers and Contractor(s) in order to contribute to the safety of their parts of the project and ensure that the project as a whole is brought forward safely.

Some of this information will form the basis of the Construction Phase Plan (CPP), where the Contractor shows that they have taken notice of this PCI by responding to it. For instance, if the PCI includes the fact that there are buried services on the site, one would expect the Contractor’s Construction Phase Plan to include their procedures for safely locating and safe-guarding the services.

The legal framework tells us that the PCI must:

“(a) be relevant to the particular project;

(b) have an appropriate level of detail; and

(c) be proportionate to the risks involved”

PCI should be gathered and added to as the design process progresses and reflect new information about the health and safety risks and how they should be managed. Preliminary information gathered at the start of the project is unlikely to be sufficient.

When the PCI document is complete, it must include proportionate information about:

* The project, such as the Client brief and key dates of the construction phase;
* Planning and management of the project such as the resources and time being allocated to each stage of the project.
* Arrangements to ensure cooperation between duty holders and that the work is coordinated;
* Health and safety hazards of the site, for design and construction, and how they will be addressed;
* Any relevant information in an existing health and safety file.

# 1. What must duty holders do?

## 1.1 The Client

The Client has the main duty for PCI and is likely to be the land manager or their agent. They must provide this information as soon as practicable to each Designer and Contractor being considered for appointment, or already appointed to the project.

See the [HSE leaflet for Clients](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.pdf).

The pre-construction information will evolve as the project progresses towards the construction phase. At first, the Client identifies any relevant documents they already hold. These might include a health and safety file produced as a result of any earlier works, surveys or assessments.

The Client should:

* Check whether there are significant gaps in the information provided;
* Obtain any information still needed, e.g. commission surveys where reasonable; and
* Provide the information to the Designer and Contractor as soon as practicable.

The stage at which it is practicable to provide information varies with the scale and complexity of the project, when the duty holders are appointed and when information is obtained. However, the Client must also take account of when Designers and Contractors will need some PCI information to enable them to carry out their duties, e.g. to:

* Understand the project enough to put together an appropriate bid;
* Estimate H&S risks and plan for them; and
* Plan, manage and monitor the works accordingly.

## 1.2 The Designer

The Designer must be provided with the relevant PCI site information by the Client as soon as possible, and then must take account of this when preparing or modifying designs. It should be sufficient to enable the Designer to judge whether it is reasonably practicable to eliminate foreseeable risks in their designs, and, where it is not, help identify the steps they should take to reduce and control the remaining risks.

The Designer should agree with the Client the level of support the Client needs to ensure the information is made available when others need it.

## 1.3 The Contractor

The Contractor has no specific duty in relation to PCI. However, they must liaise with the Client and/or Designer and share any information relevant to the planning, management, monitoring or coordination of the pre-construction phase.