

# SITE CUTS MELBOURNE

## What are Site Cuts?

Site cuts are an important start to every new building journey. It is an exciting time for new home owners to see their piece of land starting to take shape to build their dream home. Site cut services are almost always used in Melbourne during the construction of new homes, houses, sheds and commercial & industrial land, and can also determine the end result of foundations and slabs. A solid foundation is a critical step in any construction project and having the right company with the experience to get it done right is important.



Before your projects start, whether that be a home, a commercial building, an industrial building, or any structure of this kind, you need to have the site cut. Site cutting means clearing a construction site from debris (vegetation, rocks) and perfectly levelling it with the use of some serious earthmoving equipment.

A “cut and fill” is the method of shifting soil from one location on site to another in order to level the site. A balanced cut and fill is the most desired outcome here, where the material you excavate or “cut” is placed in layers, and track rolled as “fill” to level the site. This process is called “cutting and filling” the land, or just simply a “cut and fill”.

Having the site cut by an [experienced excavation company](#) is crucial, as it will determine the quality of the foundation for your job. Earthlift Excavations have the right equipment and experience to prepare your building site on time and in compliance with all relevant engineering and building code requirements.

## Levels – are they all that matter?

Site levelling, when performed correctly, will ensure even and level ground. Using laser technology helps get your foundation right. Don't be fooled though, levels are important, but it's how your earthworks are prepared underneath that matter more.

Cutting and filling land requires a certain amount of experience, particularly if the land being filled is to be used for your home's foundations. Natural compaction is disturbed whenever the earth is excavated, and soil in this state is often described as bulked, aerated or fluffed. Once in this bulked out state, the placement of fill needs focus and skill to place back to a suitably compacted state ready for your retaining walls, drainage and concrete slab preparation.



For a building to be structurally sound, strict attention to engineer's notations and building code regulations are key to successful, repetitive results time after time. Slab heave can be a direct result of a poorly prepared site, so best not choose the cheapest excavation contractor if compliance matters to your business or home.



Here are some examples of buildings that require site cutting before being erected:

- Houses & New homes
- Commercial & Industrial buildings
- Multi unit developments
- Basements

Site cutting is not only about the perfect levelling of the ground. Focus on compliance should always be your

focus to achieve the best result for your project.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What size machines do we generally use for site cuts?



Generally, we will use the largest machines we can, to maximise the spoil removal rate. We mainly use 12 or 13 tonne excavators for speed and efficiency. However, other factors must be taken into account, such as access. Do you have power lines obstructing access? Does the street and surrounding landscape create tight access? Underground services can also

come into play. We have excavators ranging from 5 tonne to 20 tonne, with the larger machines generally used for breaking rock and large bulk out projects such as basement digs. We also use track loaders for spoil removal. Our trucks range from tandem (10m<sup>3</sup> body) to semi tippers (20m<sup>3</sup>).

Below are some of the main types of equipment used in site cutting:

- **Excavators:** used in efficiently running site excavations, load trucks and compact fill ready for the next stage of your build. Quite often a rock breaker needs to be fitted to allow levels to be achieved. We also carry rippers, mud buckets, dig buckets and our lasers to get your job done.
- **Trucks:** Tandems for tighter access and semis for efficiently running to fill sites and back to move dirt from site.

- **Compactors:** compactors can be crucial in “cut and fill” site cuts, where the compaction requires a certain percentage to be achieved in order to comply with engineer’s requirements.
- **Dozers:** if large quantities of soil or other materials have to be pushed at once, dozers do the job quickly and effectively.



## How long does a site cut take?

With site cuts, it can be hard to give an exact timing on how long it takes. That being said, we run state of the art software to determine soil volume that needs to be moved. This helps to allocate the right gear to your new home project in order to get it done efficiently. There’s a reason others imitate us, because we’ve had plenty of practice to get it right.

Factors like rock play a big part in determining how long your project will take for excavations. Rock can slow the job down dramatically, as rock must be broken using rock breakers. Your site cut will take longer if we need to send in smaller equipment to undertake the site levelling.

Other factors include the type of project:

- Medium Density and Multi Unit Excavation
- Basement Excavation
- Large cut and fill excavation

## Where do we take our excavated materials?

As the site owner, the builder must be aware of where the excavated spoil is taken when removed from site. Soil removal or spoil removal is a key part of any site cut, all the material excavated and graded must be removed. We take care of this for you. There are registered clean fill sites throughout Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo & Gippsland where all materials are taken to a permitted off-site treatment and/or clean fill disposal facility. In the situation the spoil removed is not classed as clean, this will go to a different waste facility. Rock removal is also taken to specialised sites. Quite often on larger cut and fill projects, material will be left on-site if that is a requested by the owner or builder.

## How do I know if my soil is contaminated?

If contaminants are present, it will be detailed within an environmental report and the time a soil report is prepared. Contaminants can be a number of different chemicals or components and will be given a category of contamination. If the soil tests as contaminated soil, it will be required to be taken to a licenced facility, where we will ensure compliance with all current EPA requirements of disposing that fill.

## Common Soil Types in Melbourne

Melbourne has relatively little geological movement, meaning our soils are mostly made up of a thin layer of topsoil that sits on top of deeper geological strata.

There are clay-rich loamy soils in Melbourne's northeast. Reddish-brown heavy clay sitting in loamy topsoil are more typical in the northwest. Dark grey sands blend with loam and clay in Melbourne's peninsula locations.

## Hopefully by now you are convinced...

Never consider saving money by not hiring professionals for site cutting. It is a crucial part of building a structure and will influence the rest of the project. Sometimes choosing the cheapest option means spending more in additional crushed rock, concrete or worse, re-engineering your slab.

Contact [Earthlift Excavations](#) today for a quote on your site cutting project and find out more about our [site excavations](#) and retaining wall services.