

Soil quality research carried out at Oravapuisto

The City of Helsinki is having research carried out at Oravapuisto park in Herttoniemi to detect possible soil contaminants. The first soil samples were collected in January 2023, and the last samples are likely to be collected at the end of April.

The studies are related to the area's land use planning. There are preliminary plans to build apartments by Oravapuisto park near Itäväylä. The studies are used to find out if the soil needs to be renewed before the construction begins.

So far, the samples collected from the soil in Oravapuisto have included chemical elements, petroleum hydrocarbons and ferricyanide, that are considered contaminants. The soil contaminants that were found are mostly located deep in the ground and do not pose a risk to the users of the park or the area's residents. More studies will be carried out in the area to ascertain the level of contaminants at different depths.

The Oravapuisto findings are not unexpected as the same contaminants were also detected in the previous soil quality research in 2008. In the 1950s, Oravapuisto park was the location of a sandpit, which was later filled with blasted rock and mixed filling materials, as was standard practice at the time. The soil contaminants originate from this filling.

Some of the soil in Oravapuisto park was renewed in 2009. On the basis of the research results so far, no new soil renewal work needs to be done before potential new construction.

The soil quality research will be completed this summer. If the research indicates a need for further measures, the city will inform about them after the research is completed.

The old artificial fill area under the park does not reach the Orava Playground area, and no soil contaminants have been found there.

Contact persons

Soil contaminants:
Heli Lehtinen, Inspector
heli.k.lehtinen@hel.fi, tel. 09 310 35623

Zoning and the projected infill construction:
Leena Holmila, Architect
leena.holmila@hel.fi, tel. 09 310 21301