

# Chief Planning Officer's Advice Note:

## Planning for Air Quality

This is one of a series of notes issued by the Chief Planning Officer to guide greater consistency when making planning decisions. These notes may be updated from time-to-time in response to changing circumstances.

It provides guidance to help reach a decision only and should not be used as a reason for refusal. The note cannot be used as a substitute for the policies of the adopted Local Plan.

As set out in Policy 16 of our Local Plan, development should not worsen areas of poor air quality, or tangibly increase the risk to public health.

Poor air quality is normally caused by emissions from road traffic. New development will usually generate more traffic. However, the overall effect of developments of less than 50 homes and small scale employment and retail development, even in declared or proposed Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) or the Council's 'Areas of Concern' (an area where pollution levels are approaching an air quality objective and development poses a risk to air quality) will seldom increase the risk to health. Larger developments, or the cumulative effect of development, can.

The information requirements which applicants are expected to meet when submitting a relevant development proposal take the above into account and are explained further below.

### Assessment and mitigation

It is important that the potential effect on air quality and human health is assessed. This should be undertaken as set out in the [Clean Air for Cornwall Strategy](#) (Chapter 7), which refers to the standards of the joint Environmental Protection UK and Institute of Air Quality Management's current Guidance on Planning for Air Quality. Development requiring assessment is defined in the Environmental Health consultation criteria and includes:

- Schemes of over 50 dwellings, or a large commercial proposal (with 50+ parking spaces) within, or up to 1km of, an AQMA or Area of Concern, and
- All schemes in excess of 200 dwellings, 300 parking spaces, and also Short Term Operating Reserve (STOR) energy facilities (diesel generators) or largescale industrial uses in any location.

The cumulative impact of other committed development in the area of the proposal should, where appropriate, be taken into account. Where a 'moderate or substantial' adverse impact is identified there is an expectation of appropriate mitigation. This should be in line with Air Quality Action Plans (AQAP) and may include measures such as the

installation of electric car charging points or car clubs on large developments. The proposed development or suggested mitigation must not conflict with the AQAP measures. Where an adverse impact cannot be mitigated the proposal should be refused.

### Unacceptable risk

Development within Air Quality Priority Areas (areas of particularly poor air quality within an AQMA), is inappropriate due to the increased risk to health. In these areas mitigation is unlikely to be possible. Officers of the Neighbourhoods and Public Protection (N&PP) service will provide consultee advice in cases where applications are received, but engaging in pre-application advice with input from N&PP is recommended. N&PP will provide such input via the 'Environmental Health – Technical Advice for Planning Applicants' (EH-TAP) service upon payment of the relevant fee.

### Advice of Neighbourhoods & Public Protection Service

It is advised that applicants begin consideration of mitigation measures early in the design and transport planning process to ensure that their influence on travel can be designed into the development. Mitigation should be agreed with input from Environmental Protection Officers of N&PP.

It is crucial that developers and planning officers seek the advice of the N&PP service, including reference to online information (Technical Advice for Planning Applicants or air quality web pages), tel 0300 1234212 or email us [cep@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:cep@cornwall.gov.uk).

Air Quality Management Areas, Areas of Concern and Priority Areas are mapped on the Cornwall Council [interactive mapping](#).

Air Quality Management Areas:	CC Areas of Concern:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Camborne, Pool and Redruth*</li><li>• Bodmin* • Tideford*</li><li>• St Austell* • Gunnislake*</li><li>• Launceston (tbc) • Truro</li><li>• Camelford* • Grampound</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Newquay</li></ul>

\* Area includes an 'Air Quality Priority Area'

Department for Communities and Local Government's  
**Planning decisions and air quality flow chart**

