

PLANNING FRAMEWORKS FOR MANAGING AIR QUALITY IN URBAN AREAS - THE UK EXPERIENCE

N.K. Woodfield, J.W.S. Longhurst, C.I. Beattie, T.J. Chatterton

Air Quality Management Resource Centre, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK

Road transport is a major source of local air pollution in UK towns and cities. Road traffic accounts for over half of nitrogen oxides emissions and over 75% of all locations identified as at risk of failing to meet national air quality targets. A quarter of UK local authorities have declared air quality management areas (AQMAs) as a result of predicted exceedences of the nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (PM10) UK objectives. A local authority has a statutory duty to develop an air quality action plan to mitigate local air quality problems found. National and local transport policy measures will be required to bring about improvements in local air quality. These will include fiscal measures, regulatory measures and local improvements in public and alternative transport provision. More fundamental to this, however, is the need to ensure that strategic land-use planning and development does not impact on air quality locally, and that air quality is given detailed consideration in all local and regional strategic planning processes. In the UK, AQMAs have planning implications at the local level, and these are explored within the context of a local authority's statutory duty to work towards meeting the UK air quality objectives. This paper will critically review national and local planning policy (transport and strategic planning) to consider how best the national air quality objectives are to be achieved locally.