Air Quality CONSULTANTS

Air Quality Assessment:
1 Rushmead, Tower Hamlets

December 2020

Experts in air quality management & assessment

AIR QUALITY CONSULTANTS - CELEBRATING 25 YEARS - 25

Document Control

Client	London Borough of Tower Hamlets	**Principal Contact**	Peggy Le Cren (LTS Architects)

Job Number	J4248

Report Prepared By:	Tomas Liska and Frances Marshall

Document Status and Review Schedule

Report No.	Date	Status	Reviewed by
J4248A/1/F2	9 December 2020	Final	Guido Pellizzaro (Associate Director)

Air Quality Consultants Ltd
23 Coldharbour Road, Bristol BS6 7JT Tel: 0117 974 1086
119 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5PU Tel: 020 3873 4780
aqc@aqconsultants.co.uk

Registered Office: 23 Coldharbour Road, Bristol BS6 7JT
Companies House Registration No: 2814570

Executive Summary

The air quality impacts associated with the proposed residential development of land at 1 Rushmead in Tower Hamlets have been assessed. The development will provide five residential units on land currently occupied by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets 'Bethnal Green One Stop Shop' office building.

Rushmead is a one-way street accessed from Bethnal Green Road (the A1209); the proposed properties will be approximately 30 m from the A1209. The assessment has demonstrated that future residents will experience acceptable air quality, with pollutant concentrations below the air quality objectives.

The proposed development is car-free, and heat and hot water will be provided by individual domestic combination boilers. The proposed development will not, therefore, generate any significant emissions itself.

Overall, the air quality effects are judged to be 'not significant'.

Contents

Tables

Figures

1 Introduction

1.1 This report describes the potential air quality impacts associated with the proposed residential development at 1 Rushmead in Tower Hamlets, currently occupied by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets 'Bethnal Green One Stop Shop' office building (hereafter referred to as the Site'). The assessment has been carried out by Air Quality Consultants Ltd on behalf of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

1.2 The proposals involve the demolition of the existing building and the construction of five residential units, comprising two private sale and three affordable units (hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development'). The proposed development lies within a borough-wide Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and 24-hour mean PM_{10} objectives.

1.3 The development is car-free, and each new home will be provided with heat and hot water from an individual domestic combination boiler. The proposed development will, therefore, have no significant effect on local air quality conditions.

1.4 The Greater London Authority's (GLA's) London Plan (GLA, 2016) requires certain developments to be assessed in terms of their air quality neutrality. The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Sustainable Design and Construction (GLA, 2014a) details the methodology for this assessment. However, the SPG makes clear that only 'major' developments need to be assessed, which are defined in the London Plan as being developments of ten or more residential units. The proposed development is for five residential units and it is, therefore, not defined as a major development. An assessment of the air quality neutrality of the proposed development is thus not required.

1.5 The GLA has also released Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition (GLA, 2014b). The SPG outlines a risk assessment approach for construction dust assessment and helps determine the mitigation measures that will need to be applied. However, the SPG makes clear that only 'major' developments need to prepare a dust risk assessment, and, as set out in Paragraph 1.4, the proposed development is not a major development; a construction dust risk assessment is, therefore, not required.

1.6 This report describes existing local air quality conditions (base year 2019, which is the latest full-year of monitoring data in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets), and considers air quality conditions at the proposed development in 2022, which is the anticipated year of first occupation.

1.7 This report has been prepared taking into account all relevant local and national guidance and regulations, and follows a methodology agreed with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

2 Policy Context

2.1 The United Kingdom formally left the European Union (EU) on 31st January 2020; until the end of 2020 there will be a transition period while the UK and EU negotiate additional arrangements. During this period EU rules and regulations will continue to apply to the UK. All European legislation referred to in this report is written into UK law and will remain in place beyond 2020, unless amended, although there is uncertainty at this point in time as to who will enforce the requirements of some of this legislation.

Air Quality Strategy

2.2 The Air Quality Strategy (Defra, 2007) published by the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Devolved Administrations, provides the policy framework for air quality management and assessment in the UK. It provides air quality standards and objectives for key air pollutants, which are designed to protect human health and the environment. It also sets out how the different sectors: industry, transport and local government, can contribute to achieving the air quality objectives. Local authorities are seen to play a particularly important role. The strategy describes the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime that has been established, whereby every authority has to carry out regular reviews and assessments of air quality in its area to identify whether the objectives have been, or will be, achieved at relevant locations, by the applicable date. If this is not the case, the authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an action plan which identifies appropriate measures that will be introduced in pursuit of the objectives.

Clean Air Strategy 2019

2.3 The Clean Air Strategy (Defra, 2019) sets out a wide range of actions by which the UK Government will seek to reduce pollutant emissions and improve air quality. Actions are targeted at four main sources of emissions: Transport, Domestic, Farming and Industry. At this stage, there is no straightforward way to take account of the expected future benefits to air quality within this assessment.

Reducing Emissions from Road Transport: Road to Zero Strategy

2.4 The Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and Department for Transport (DfT) published a Policy Paper (DfT, 2018) in July 2018 outlining how the government will support the transition to zero tailpipe emission road transport and reduce tailpipe emissions from conventional vehicles during the transition. This paper affirms the Government's pledge to end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040, and states that the Government expects the majority of new cars and vans sold to be 100% zero tailpipe emission and all new cars and vans to have significant zero tailpipe emission capability by this year, and that by 2050 almost every car and van should have

zero tailpipe emissions. It states that the Government wants to see at least 50%, and as many as 70%, of new car sales, and up to 40% of new van sales, being ultra-low emission by 2030.

2.5 The paper sets out a number of measures by which the Government will support this transition, but is clear that the Government expects this transition to be industry and consumer led. The Government has since announced *"plans to bring forward an end to the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans to 2035, or earlier if a faster transition is feasible, subject to consultation, as well as including hybrids for the first time"*. If these ambitions are realised, then road traffic-related NOx emissions can be expected to reduce significantly over the coming decades.

Planning Policy

National Policies

2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019a) sets out planning policy for England. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and that the planning system has three overarching objectives, one of which (Paragraph 8c) is an environmental objective:

"to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy".

2.7 To prevent unacceptable risks from air pollution, Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by…preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality".

2.8 Paragraph 180 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development".

2.9 More specifically on air quality, Paragraph 180 makes clear that:

"Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local

areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan".

2.10 The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2019b), which includes guiding principles on how planning can take account of the impacts of new development on air quality. The PPG states that:

"Defra carries out an annual national assessment of air quality using modelling and monitoring to determine compliance with Limit Values. It is important that the potential impact of new development on air quality is taken into account where the national assessment indicates that relevant limits have been exceeded or are near the limit, or where the need for emissions reductions has been identified".

2.11 Regarding plan-making, the PPG states:

"It is important to take into account air quality management areas, Clean Air Zones and other areas including sensitive habitats or designated sites of importance for biodiversity where there could be specific requirements or limitations on new development because of air quality".

2.12 The role of the local authorities through the LAQM regime is covered, with the PPG stating that a local authority Air Quality Action Plan "*identifies measures that will be introduced in pursuit of the objectives and can have implications for planning*

2.13 Regarding the need for an air quality assessment, the PPG states that:

"Whether air quality is relevant to a planning decision will depend on the proposed development and its location. Concerns could arise if the development is likely to have an adverse effect on air quality in areas where it is already known to be poor, particularly if it could affect the implementation of air quality strategies and action plans and/or breach legal obligations (including those relating to the conservation of habitats and species). Air quality may also be a material consideration if the proposed development would be particularly sensitive to poor air quality in its vicinity".

2.14 The PPG sets out the information that may be required in an air quality assessment, making clear that:

"Assessments need to be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed and the potential impacts (taking into account existing air quality conditions), and because of this are likely to be locationally specific".

2.15 The PPG also provides guidance on options for mitigating air quality impacts, as well as examples of the types of measures to be considered. It makes clear that:

"Mitigation options will need to be locationally specific, will depend on the proposed development and need to be proportionate to the likely impact. It is important that local planning authorities work with applicants to consider appropriate mitigation so as to ensure new development is appropriate for its location and unacceptable risks are prevented".

London-Specific Policies

2.16 The key London-specific policies are summarised below, with more detail provided, where required, in Appendix A1.

The London Plan

2.17 The London Plan (GLA, 2016) sets out the spatial development strategy for London consolidated with alterations made to the original plan since 2011. It brings together all relevant strategies, including those relating to air quality.

2.18 Policy 7.14, 'Improving Air Quality', addresses the spatial implications of the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy and how development and land use can help achieve its objectives. It recognises that Boroughs should have policies in place to reduce pollutant concentrations, having regard to the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy.

2.19 Policy 7.14B(c), requires that development proposals should be "*at least 'air quality neutral' and not lead to further deterioration of existing poor air quality (such as designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs))*". Further details of the London Plan in relation to planning decisions are provided in Appendix A1.

2.20 The 'Intend to Publish' version of the new London Plan was published in December 2019 (GLA, 2019), incorporating consolidated changes to previous versions suggested by the Mayor of London, as well as addressing the Inspectors' recommendations following the 2019 Examination in Public. Despite not yet being adopted, the 'Intend to Publish' London Plan is a material consideration in planning decisions and is afforded considerable weight. Policy SI1 on 'Improving Air Quality' states that:

"Development plans, through relevant strategic, site specific and area-based policies should seek opportunities to identify and deliver further improvements to air quality and should not reduce air quality benefits that result from the Mayor's or boroughs' activities to improve air quality".

2.21 It goes on to detail that development proposals should not:

- *"lead to further deterioration of existing poor air quality*

- *create any new areas that exceed air quality limits, or delay the date at which compliance will be achieved in areas that are currently in exceedance of legal limits*
- *create unacceptable risk of high levels of exposure to poor air quality".*

2.22 It also states that:

"Masterplans and development briefs for large-scale development proposals subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment should consider how local air quality can be improved across the area of the proposal as part of an air quality positive approach. To achieve this a statement should be submitted demonstrating a) how proposals have considered ways to maximise benefits to local air quality, and b) what measures or design features will be put in place to reduce exposure to pollution, and how they will achieve this."

London Environment Strategy

2.23 The London Environment Strategy was published in May 2018 (GLA, 2018a). The strategy considers air quality in Chapter 4; the Mayor's main objective is to create a *"zero emission London by 2050".* Policy 4.2.1 aims to *"reduce emissions from London's road transport network by phasing out fossil fuelled vehicles, prioritising action on diesel, and enabling Londoners to switch to more sustainable forms of transport".* An implementation plan for the strategy has also been published which sets out what the Mayor will do between 2018 and 2023 to help achieve the ambitions in the strategy.

Mayor's Transport Strategy

2.24 The Mayor's Transport Strategy (GLA, 2018b) sets out the Mayor's policies and proposals to reshape transport in London over the next two decades. The Strategy focuses on reducing car dependency and increasing active sustainable travel, with the aim of improving air quality and creating healthier streets. It notes that development proposals should *"be designed so that walking and cycling are the most appealing choices for getting around locally".*

GLA SPG: Sustainable Design and Construction

2.25 The GLA's SPG on Sustainable Design and Construction (GLA, 2014a) provides details on delivering some of the priorities in the London Plan. Section 4.3 covers Air Pollution. It defines when developers will be required to submit an air quality assessment, explains how location and transport measures can minimise emissions to air, and provides emission standards for gas-fired boilers, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and biomass plant. It also sets out, for the first time, guidance on how Policy 7.14B(c) of the London Plan relating to 'air quality neutral' (see Paragraph 2.19, above) should be implemented.

Air Quality Focus Area

2.26 The GLA has identified 187 air quality Focus Areas in London. These are locations that not only exceed the EU annual mean limit value for nitrogen dioxide, but also have high levels of human exposure. They do not represent an exhaustive list of London's air quality hotspot locations, but locations where the GLA believes the problem to be most acute. They are also areas where the GLA considers there to be the most potential for air quality improvements and are, therefore, where the GLA and Transport for London (TfL) will focus actions to improve air quality. The proposed development is located approximately 240 m to the west of the A107 Cambridge Heath Road/Bethnal Green Road to Mare Street/Well Street air quality Focus Area. Consequently, the Site is not located in the air quality Focus Area.

Local Transport Plan

2.27 The Tower Hamlets Draft Transport Strategy (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2019a) includes improving air quality as one of its six priorities. Specifically, Priority 5 describes the existing and proposed initiatives aimed at improving air quality. These include raising awareness about air quality and encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles.

Local Policies

2.28 The new local plan (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2020a) was adopted in January 2020. This plan covers the period up to the year 2031 and includes Policy ES2, which directly refers to air quality. It states that:

"…

1. *Development is required to at least meet the 'Air Quality Neutral' standard, including promoting the use of low or zero emission transport and reducing the reliance on private motor vehicles.*
2. *An Air Quality Impact Assessment, using the GLA's approved methodology, is required as part of the planning application for:*
    a. *Major developments;*
    b. *Developments which will require substantial earthworks or demolition;*
    c. *Developments which include education or health facilities or open space, including child play space; and*
    d. *New build developments in areas of sub-standard air quality.*

3. *Where an air quality assessment indicates that a development will cause harm to air quality or where end users could be exposed to poor air quality, development will be resisted unless mitigation measures are adopted to reduce the impact to acceptable levels.*

4. *New build developments which propose to provide any private, communal or public open space, including child play space, in areas of sub-standard air quality, are required to demonstrate that the proposal has considered the positioning and design of the open space, to reduce exposure of future users to air pollution."*

Air Quality Action Plans

National Air Quality Plan

2.29 Defra has produced an Air Quality Plan to tackle roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the UK (Defra, 2017); a supplement to the 2017 Plan (Defra, 2018a) was published in October 2018 and sets out the steps Government is taking in relation to a further 33 local authorities where shorter-term exceedances of the limit value were identified. Alongside a package of national measures, the 2017 Plan and the 2018 Supplement require those identified English Local Authorities (or the GLA in the case of London Authorities) to produce local action plans and/or feasibility studies. These plans and feasibility studies must have regard to measures to achieve the statutory limit values within the shortest possible time, which may include the implementation of a Clean Air Zone (CAZ). There is currently no straightforward way to take account of the effects of the 2017 Plan or 2018 Supplement in this assessment; however, consideration has been given to whether there is currently, or is likely to be in the future, a limit value exceedance in the vicinity of the proposed development. This assessment has principally been carried out in relation to the air quality objectives, rather than the EU limit values that are the focus of the Air Quality Plan.

Local Air Quality Action Plan

2.30 The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has declared an AQMA for nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter that covers the whole Borough. The Council has since developed an Air Quality Action Plan (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2017) which outlines how the Council plans to effectively use local levers to tackle air quality issues such as encouraging the uptake of cleaner transport within the borough. The Site is located in the AQMA.

Assessment Criteria

2.31 The Government has established a set of air quality standards and objectives to protect human health. The 'standards' are set as concentrations below which effects are unlikely even in sensitive population groups, or below which risks to public health would be exceedingly small. They are based purely upon the scientific and medical evidence of the effects of an individual pollutant. The 'objectives' set out the extent to which the Government expects the standards to be achieved by a

certain date. They take account of economic efficiency, practicability, technical feasibility and timescale. The objectives for use by local authorities are prescribed within the Air Quality (England) Regulations (2000) and the Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations (2002).

2.32 The UK-wide objectives for nitrogen dioxide and PM_{10} were to have been achieved by 2005 and 2004 respectively, and continue to apply in all future years thereafter. The $PM_{2.5}$ objective is to be achieved by 2020. Measurements across the UK have shown that the 1-hour nitrogen dioxide objective is unlikely to be exceeded at roadside locations where the annual mean concentration is below 60 µg/m^3 (Defra, 2018b). Measurements have also shown that the 24-hour mean PM_{10} objective could be exceeded at roadside locations where the annual mean concentration is above 32 µg/m^3 (Defra, 2018b). The predicted annual mean PM_{10} concentrations are thus used as a proxy to determine the likelihood of an exceedance of the 24-hour mean PM_{10} objective. Where predicted annual mean concentrations are below 32 µg/m^3 it is unlikely that the 24-hour mean objective will be exceeded.

2.33 The objectives apply at locations where members of the public are likely to be regularly present and are likely to be exposed over the averaging period of the objective. Defra explains where these objectives will apply in its Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (Defra, 2018b). The annual mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide and PM_{10} are considered to apply at the façades of residential properties, schools, hospitals etc.; they do not apply at hotels. The 24-hour mean objective for PM_{10} is considered to apply at the same locations as the annual mean objective, as well as in gardens of residential properties and at hotels. The 1-hour mean objective for nitrogen dioxide applies wherever members of the public might regularly spend 1-hour or more, including outdoor eating locations and pavements of busy shopping streets.

2.34 EU Directive 2008/50/EC (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2008) sets limit values for nitrogen dioxide, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, and is implemented in UK law through the Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010). The limit values for nitrogen dioxide are the same numerical concentrations as the UK objectives, but achievement of these values is a national obligation rather than a local one. In the UK, only monitoring and modelling carried out by UK Central Government meets the specification required to assess compliance with the limit values. Central Government does not normally recognise local authority monitoring or local modelling studies when determining the likelihood of the limit values being exceeded, unless such studies have been audited and approved by Defra and DfT's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU).

2.35 The relevant air quality criteria for this assessment are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Air Quality Criteria for Nitrogen Dioxide, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$

Pollutant	Time Period	Objective
Nitrogen Dioxide	1-hour Mean	200 µg/m^3 not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year
	Annual Mean	40 µg/m^3
Fine Particles (PM_{10})	24-hour Mean	50 µg/m^3 not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year
	Annual Mean	40 µg/m^3
Fine Particles ($PM_{2.5}$) [a]	Annual Mean	25 µg/m^3

[a] The $PM_{2.5}$ objective, which was to be met by 2020, is not in Regulations and there is no requirement for local authorities to meet it.

Descriptors for Air Quality Impacts and Assessment of Significance

2.36 There is no official guidance in the UK in relation to development control on how to describe air quality impacts, nor how to assess their significance. The approach developed jointly by Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) and the IAQM (Moorcroft and Barrowcliffe et al, 2017) has therefore been used. Full details of the EPUK/IAQM approach are provided in Appendix A2. The approach to determine significance includes elements of professional judgement, and the experience of the consultants preparing the report is set out in Appendix A3.

3 Assessment Approach

Consultation

3.1 The assessment follows a methodology agreed with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets via email correspondence between Arya Dayanandan (Environmental Health Officer at the London Borough of Tower Hamlets) and Tomas Liska (Air Quality Consultants) between 8th and 16th September 2020.

Existing Conditions

3.2 Existing sources of emissions and baseline air quality conditions at the proposed development have been defined using a number of approaches. Industrial and waste management sources that may affect the local area have been identified using Defra's Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (Defra, 2020b). Local sources have been identified through examination of the Council's Air Quality Review and Assessment reports.

3.3 Information on existing air quality has been obtained by collating the results of monitoring carried out by the local authority. Background concentrations have been defined using the 2018-based national pollution maps published by Defra (2020c). These cover the whole of the UK on a 1x1 km grid.

3.4 Whether or not there are any exceedances of the annual mean EU limit value for nitrogen dioxide in the study area has been identified using the maps of roadside concentrations published by Defra (2020d) (2020e), as well as from any nearby Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN) monitoring sites (which operate to EU data quality standards). These maps are used by the UK Government, together with the AURN results, to report exceedances of the limit value to the EU. The national maps of roadside PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations (Defra, 2020e), which are available for the years 2009 to 2018, show no exceedances of the limit values anywhere in the UK in 2018.

Impact of Road Traffic on Future Residents of the Development

3.5 The impacts of concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ on new residents of the proposed development have been assessed qualitatively. The assessment considers air quality conditions at the proposed development taking account of local air quality monitoring data, background pollutant concentrations and proximity to the local road network.

3.6 The assessment examines air quality conditions in 2019, and assumes these are representative of air quality conditions in the future when the development is occupied; this assumption is considered to be worst-case as it is generally expected that nitrogen dioxide, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations will decline in future years.

4 Site Description and Baseline Conditions

4.1 The proposed development is located approximately 30 m to the north of the A1209 Bethnal Green Road, 150 m to the east of the B108 Squirries Street and 190 m to the south of the B118 Old Bethnal Green Road. The area immediately surrounding the proposed development is a mixture of residential and small commercial units.

Industrial sources

4.2 A search of the UK Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (Defra, 2020b) has not identified any significant industrial or waste management sources that are likely to affect the proposed development, in terms of air quality.

Air Quality Management Areas

4.3 In December 2000, an AQMA was declared for the entire borough for exceedances of both the annual mean nitrogen dioxide and 24-hour mean PM_{10} objectives. As above, the Site is located in the AQMA.

Air Quality Focus Areas

4.4 The proposed development is located approximately 240 m to the west of the A107 Cambridge Heath Road/Bethnal Green Road to Mare Street/Well Street air quality Focus Area and approximately 800 m to the north of the A11 Whitechapel Road to Mile End junction A1205 Burdett Road air quality Focus Area. Focus Areas are locations that not only exceed the EU annual mean limit value for nitrogen dioxide but also experience high levels of human exposure. The locations of nearby Focus Areas relative to the proposed development are provided in Figure 1. As above, the Site is not located in an air quality Focus Area,

Local Air Quality Monitoring

4.5 The London Borough of Tower Hamlets operates four automatic monitoring stations within its area, the closest of which is located on Mile End, approximately 1.5 km to the southeast of the proposed development. The Council also operates a number of nitrogen dioxide monitoring sites using diffusion tubes prepared and analysed by Socotec (using the 50% TEA in acetone method), including ten within an 800 m radius of the proposed development.

4.6 Annual mean results for the years 2015 to 2019 are summarised in Table 2 and the monitoring locations are shown in Figure 1. Measured concentrations for these sites for the years 2015 to 2018 have been taken from the Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) for 2018 (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2019b), whilst concentrations for the diffusion tubes for 2019 have been taken from the Council's website (London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2020b). 2019 monitoring data for the automatic monitor have been taken from the Air Quality in England website (Defra, 2020a).

Table 2: Summary of Nitrogen Dioxide Monitoring (µg/m³) [a]

Site ID	Site Type	Location	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Automatic Monitor - Annual Mean (µg/m³)							
TH2	Roadside	Mile End	**53**	**52**	**48**	**47**	35
Objective			**40**				
Automatic Monitor - No. of Hours > 200 µg/m³							
TH2	Roadside	Mile End	0	0	2	0	1
Objective			**18**				
Diffusion Tubes - Annual Mean (µg/m³)							
1	Kerbside	Colombia Road / Gossett Street	38	37	39	34	33
3	Kerbside	Bethnal Green Road / Brick Lane	**47**	**46**	**45**	36	37
12	Kerbside	Buckfast Street / Bethnal Green Road	**42**	**42**	39	35	32
13	Kerbside	Squirries Street / Gosset Street	**-**	**-**	**-**	38	38
14	Kerbside	Warner Place / Hackney Road	**42**	**42**	**41**	38	35
15	Kerbside	Parmiter Street / Cambridge Heath Road	**-**	**-**	**-**	**45**	**41**
16	Kerbside	Paradise Row / Bethnal Green Road	**50**	**50**	**42**	**41**	36
17	Kerbside	Finnis Street / Three Colts Lane	35	35	35	29	31
21	Kerbside	Queensbridge Road / Hackney Road	-	-	-	**55**	35
27	Kerbside	Roman Road / Globe Road	**-**	**-**	**-**	36	34
Objective			**40**				

[a] Exceedances of the objectives are shown in bold.

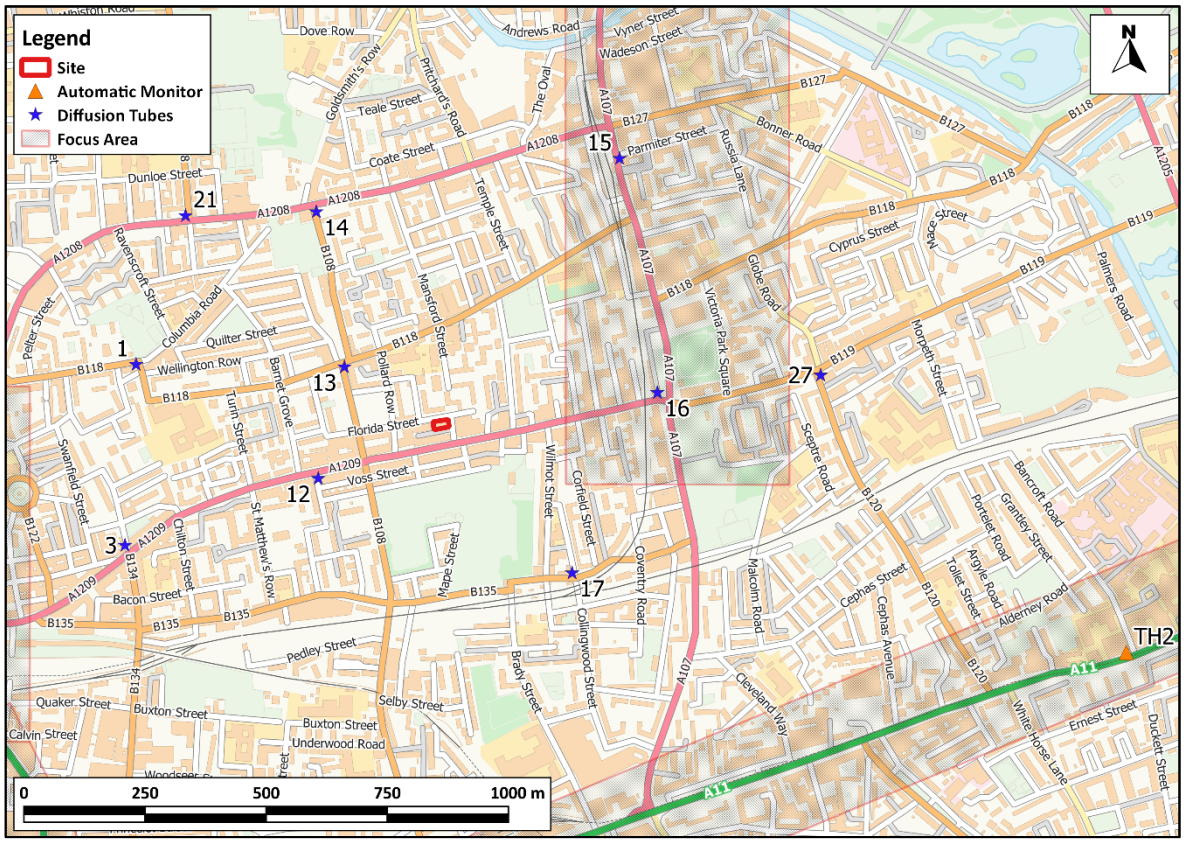

Figure 1: Nitrogen Dioxide Monitoring Locations

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020. Ordnance Survey licence number 100046099. Additional data sourced from third parties, including public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0.

4.7 As shown in Table 2, measured nitrogen dioxide concentrations exceeded the annual mean objective at one site in 2019; Site 15 which is within 1 m of the A107, a busy road carrying over 18,000 vehicles daily (DfT, 2020). Measured concentrations in 2019 at all other sites were below the annual mean objective. Direct measurements of hourly concentrations at the Mile End monitor confirm that the 1-hour mean nitrogen dioxide objective is met adjacent to the A11; measured annual mean concentrations at the diffusion tube sites have also not exceeded 60 µg/m^3 in any year presented (see paragraph 2.32), indicating that it is unlikely the 1-hour mean objective will be exceeded at the proposed development.

4.8 The monitoring sites presented in Figure 1 are all located adjacent to busy roads carrying large volumes of traffic daily; in contrast, the proposed development is over 30 m from the nearest busy road, and Rushmead itself will not carry large volumes of traffic. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that concentrations of nitrogen dioxide at the proposed development will be lower than those measured across the borough, and below the objectives.

4.9 Based on the data in Table 2, and as demonstrated in Figure 2, roadside locations with five years of data show a gradual reduction in measured concentrations.

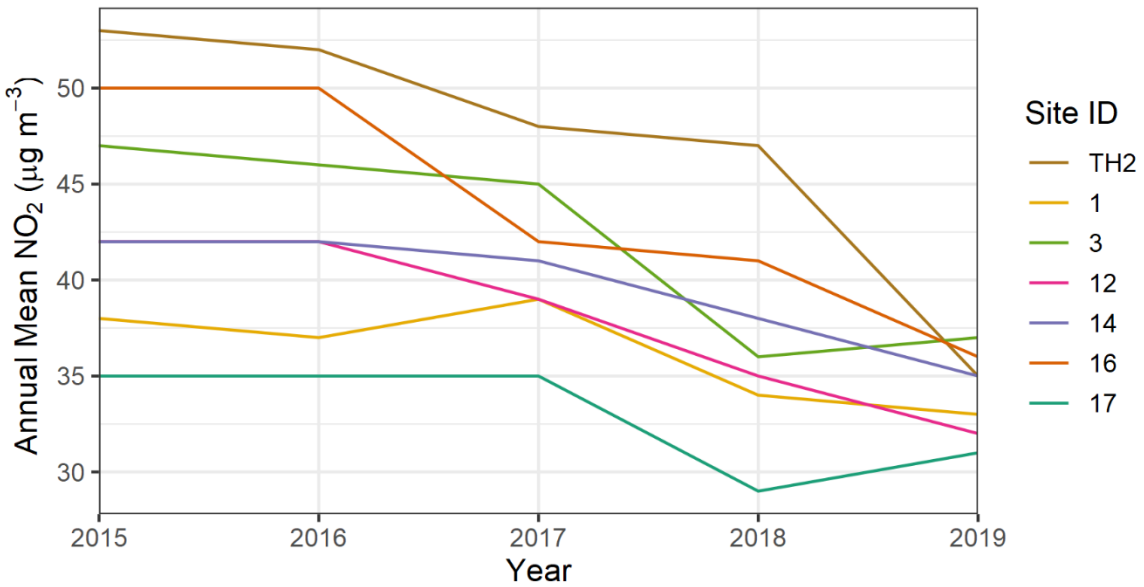

Figure 2: Trend in Annual Mean NO_2 Concentrations (µg/m³) at Monitoring Sites with Five Years of Data

4.10 The Mile End automatic monitor only measures concentrations of nitrogen dioxide; the nearest automatic monitors measuring concentrations of particulate matter are in Blackwell and Victoria Park, which are over 2.5 km from the proposed development. Nonetheless, measured concentrations of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ at these locations within the borough have been well below their respective objectives for several years. Monitored PM_{10} concentrations in 2019 were 20.0 µg/m³ and 17.6 µg/m³ at Blackwell and Victoria Park, respectively. Monitored $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations at Blackwell were 13.4 µg/m³ in 2019. As such, it is reasonable to expect that concentrations in close proximity to the proposed development will also be below the objectives.

Exceedances of EU Limit Value

4.11 There are several AURN monitoring sites within the Greater London Urban Area that have measured exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide limit value. Furthermore, Defra's roadside annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations (Defra, 2020e), which are used to report exceedances of the limit value to the EU, identify exceedances of this limit value in 2018 along many roads in London, including the A1209 near to the proposed development. The Greater London Urban Area has thus been reported to the EU as exceeding the limit value for annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations. Defra's predicted concentrations for 2022 (Defra, 2020d) do not, however, identify any exceedances within 1 km of the proposed development. As such, there is considered to be no risk of a limit value exceedance in the vicinity of the proposed development by the time that it is operational.

4.12 Defra's Air Quality Plan requires the GLA to prepare an action plan that will *"deliver compliance in the shortest time possible"*, and the 2015 Plan assumed that a CAZ was required. The GLA has already implemented an LEZ and an ULEZ, thus the authority has effectively already implemented the required CAZ. These have been implemented as part of a package of measures including 12 Low Emission Bus Zones, Low Emission Neighbourhoods, the phasing out of diesel buses and taxis and other measures within the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

Background Concentrations

4.13 Estimated background concentrations at the proposed development have been determined for 2019 and the opening year 2022 using Defra's 2018-based background maps (Defra, 2020c). The background concentrations are set out in Table 3 and are all below the objectives.

Table 3: Estimated Annual Mean Background Pollutant Concentrations in 2019 and 2022 (µg/m^3)

Year	NO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
2019	32.9	20.0	12.7
2022	29.2	18.9	12.1
Objectives	**40**	**40**	**25** [a]

[a] The $PM_{2.5}$ objective, which was to be met by 2020, is not in Regulations and there is no requirement for local authorities to meet it.

5 Impact Assessment

5.1 The proposed development will have no on-site car parking and will have individual domestic combination boilers to provide heat and hot water. The proposed development will therefore not contribute to local pollutant concentrations.

5.2 The main source of pollution close to the proposed development will be the adjacent road network. The proposed development is located on a no through street, approximately 30 m north of the A1209 Bethnal Green Road and 150 m east of the B108 Squirries Street.

5.3 Measured concentrations of nitrogen dioxide presented in Table 2 show exceedances of the annual mean objective across the borough since 2015, although only one site measured an exceedance of the annual mean objective in 2019. Nonetheless, these monitoring sites are mostly kerbside locations (within 1 m of the road), and adjacent to busy roads which carry in excess of 10,000 vehicles daily (DfT, 2020). Defra's Technical Guidance (Defra, 2018b) states that "*concentrations fall-off rapidly on moving away from the source*", it is, therefore, reasonable to assume that concentrations at the proposed development will be lower than measured by the monitoring sites detailed in Table 2.

5.4 Defra's Technical Guidance (Defra, 2018b) also defines urban background monitoring locations as being 50 m from major sources of pollution. Given that the proposed development is some 30 m from the nearest major road, nitrogen dioxide concentrations at the development site are likely to be approaching the background concentration values presented in Table 3. Nitrogen dioxide concentrations at the proposed development are, therefore, anticipated to be below the objective.

5.5 Based on the trends in measured nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the area (Figure 2), concentrations in the local area are also likely to decrease further by the proposed first occupancy in 2022.

5.6 There is no monitoring of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ carried out in close proximity to the proposed development, however, measured concentrations throughout the borough have been well below their respective objectives for a number of years. These measurements include at roadside locations adjacent to busy roads which experience approximately 40,000 vehicles per day (DfT, 2020). Given the setting of the proposed development relative to the nearby road network, it is therefore judged that future residents will be exposed to concentrations of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ which are well below the objectives.

5.7 There is a small flue located on the neighbouring Tesco building, which likely serves an internal combustion plant. Nonetheless, this exhausts vertically approximately 15 m above ground level. Owing to the frequency of south-westerly wind directions in London, exhaust gases from the flue are likely to regularly disperse away from the proposed development; occasions where emissions disperse toward the proposed development (i.e easterly winds) will be infrequent. Further, there are existing sensitive receptors at heights similar to, or greater than, the flue, and therefore it is unlikely

that the emissions from the existing flue are recognised as a significant local source. The flue, will not, therefore, lead to any exceedances of the objective at the proposed development.

Significance of Operational Air Quality Effects

5.8 The operational air quality effects, without mitigation, are judged to be 'not significant'. This professional judgement is made in accordance with the methodology set out in Appendix A2.

5.9 More specifically, the judgement that the air quality effects will be 'not significant', without mitigation, takes account of the assessment that concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ will be well below the relevant objectives, and that the proposed development will not generate any local emissions.

6 Mitigation

Good Design and Best Practice

6.1 The EPUK/IAQM guidance advises that good design and best practice measures should be considered whether more specific mitigation is required or not. The proposed development incorporates the following good design and best practice measures:

- car-free development, with no car parking spaces, to discourage the use of private vehicles to access the proposed development; and
- use of individual combination boilers to avoid the need for centralised combustion sources.

6.2 The assessment has demonstrated that new residents of the development will experience acceptable air quality, and that the overall effect of the development will be 'not significant'. It is, therefore, not considered necessary to propose mitigation measures for this development.

6.3 Measures to reduce pollutant emissions from road traffic are principally being delivered in the longer term by the introduction of more stringent emissions standards, largely via European legislation (which is written into UK law). The local air quality plan that the GLA is required to produce in order to address limit value exceedances in its area will also help to improve air quality.

7 Conclusions

7.1 The air quality impacts associated with the proposed residential development of land at 1 Rushmead in Tower Hamlets have been assessed. Rushmead is a minor one-way street and the proposed properties are 30 m from the nearest main road. Future residents will, therefore, experience acceptable air quality, with pollutant concentrations approaching background levels and below the air quality objectives.

7.2 The proposed development is car-free, and heat and hot water will be provided from individual domestic combination boilers. As such, the proposed development will not generate any emissions, and the overall operational air quality effects of the development are judged to be 'not significant'.

7.3 The development will have no adverse effects on local air quality and does not introduce new exposure within an area of poor air quality, thus no additional mitigation has been proposed.

8 References

Defra (2007) *The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*, Defra.

Defra (2017) *Air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO2) in the UK*, Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017.

Defra (2018a) *Supplement to the UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations*, Available: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/746100/air-quality-no2-plan-supplement.pdf.

Defra (2018b) *Review & Assessment: Technical Guidance LAQM.TG16 February 2018 Version*, Defra, Available: https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-TG16-February-18-v1.pdf.

Defra (2019) *Clean Air Strategy 2019*, Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019.

Defra (2020a) *Air Quality in England*, [Online], Available: https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/local-authority/?la_id=210.

Defra (2020b) *UK Pollutant Release and Transfer Register*, Available: http://prtr.defra.gov.uk/map-search.

Defra (2020c) *Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Support Website*, Available: http://laqm.defra.gov.uk/.

Defra (2020d) *2020 NO2 projections data (2018 reference year)*, Available: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/no2ten/2020-no2-pm-projections-from-2018-data.

Defra (2020e) *UK Ambient Air Quality Interactive Map*, Available: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/gis-mapping.

DfT (2018) *The Road to Zero: Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy*.

DfT (2020) *Road traffic statistics*, Available: http://www.dft.gov.uk/matrix/.

GLA (2014a) *Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/supplementary-planning-guidance/sustainable-design-and.

GLA (2014b) *The Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition SPG*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/supplementary-planning-guidance/control-dust-and.

GLA (2016) *The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan.

GLA (2018a) *London Environment Strategy*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy.

GLA (2018b) *Mayor's Transport Strategy*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf.

GLA (2019) *The London Plan Intend to Publish version*, Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/intend-publish-london-plan-2019.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2017) 'Air Quality Action Plan', Available: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Environmental-protection/LBTH_Air_Quality_Action_Plan.pdf.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2019a) 'Transport Strategy', Available: https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s160545/Appendix%20A%20Tower%20Hamlets%20Transport%20Strategy%202019-2041.pdf.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2019b) *Air Quality Annual Status Report for 2018*.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2020a) 'Local Plan 2031', Available: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Planning-and-building-control/Strategic-Planning/Local-Plan/TH_Local_Plan_2031_accessibility_checked.pdf.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2020b) *Monitoring*, [Online], Available: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/environment_and_waste/environmental_health/pollution/air_quality/Monitoring.aspx.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019a) *National Planning Policy Framework*, Available: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019b) *Planning Practice Guidance*, Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance.

Moorcroft and Barrowcliffe et al (2017) *Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning For Air Quality v1.2*, IAQM, London, Available: http://iaqm.co.uk/guidance/.

The Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002, Statutory Instrument 3043 (2002), HMSO, Available: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/3043/contents/made.

The Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 Statutory Instrument 928 (2000), HMSO, Available: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/928/contents/made.

The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 Statutory Instrument 1001 (2010), HMSO, Available: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1001/pdfs/uksi_20101001_en.pdf.

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2008) *Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council*, Available: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32008L0050.

9 Glossary

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
AQC	Air Quality Consultants
AQAL	Air Quality Assessment Level
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
AURN	Automatic Urban and Rural Network
CAZ	Clean Air Zone
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
EPUK	Environmental Protection UK
Exceedance	A period of time when the concentration of a pollutant is greater than the appropriate air quality objective. This applies to specified locations with relevant exposure
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
Focus Area	Location that not only exceeds the EU annual mean limit value for NO_2 but also has a high level of human exposure
GLA	Greater London Authority
HDV	Heavy Duty Vehicles (> 3.5 tonnes)
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
JAQU	Joint Air Quality Unit
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
LDV	Light Duty Vehicles (<3.5 tonnes)
LEZ	Low Emission Zone
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
$\mu g/m^3$	Microgrammes per cubic metre
NO	Nitric oxide
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide

NOx	Nitrogen oxides (taken to be NO_2 + NO)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Objectives	A nationally defined set of health-based concentrations for nine pollutants, seven of which are incorporated in Regulations, setting out the extent to which the standards should be achieved by a defined date. There are also vegetation-based objectives for sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides
OLEV	Office for Low Emission Vehicles
PHV	Private Hire Vehicle
PM_{10}	Small airborne particles, more specifically particulate matter less than 10 micrometres in aerodynamic diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	Small airborne particles less than 2.5 micrometres in aerodynamic diameter
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
SCR	Selective Catalytic Reduction
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
Standards	A nationally defined set of concentrations for nine pollutants below which health effects do not occur or are minimal
TEA	Triethanolamine – used to absorb nitrogen dioxide
TfL	Transport for London
ULEZ	Ultra Low Emission Zone
ZEC	Zero Emission Capable

10 Appendices

A1 London-Specific Policies and Measures

London Plan

A1.1 The London Plan sets out the following points in relation to planning decisions:

"Development proposals should:

a) minimise increased exposure to existing poor air quality and make provision to address local problems of air quality (particularly within AQMAs or where development is likely to be used by large numbers of those particularly vulnerable to poor air quality, such as children or older people) such by design solutions, buffer zones or steps to promote greater use of sustainable transport modes through travel plans (see Policy 6.3);

b) promote sustainable design and construction to reduce emissions from the demolition and construction of buildings following the best practice guidance in the GLA and London Councils "The control, of dust and emissions form construction and demolition";

c) be at least "air quality neutral" and not lead to further deterioration of existing poor air quality (such as areas designated as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs));

d) ensure that where provision needs to made to reduce emissions from a development, these usually are made on site. Where it can be demonstrated that on-site provision is impractical or inappropriate, and that it is possible to put in place measures having clearly demonstrated equivalent air quality benefits, planning obligations or planning conditions should be used as appropriate to ensure this, whether on a scheme by scheme basis or through joint area-based approaches;

e) where the development requires a detailed air quality assessment and biomass boilers are included, the assessment should forecast pollutant concentrations. Permission should only be granted if no adverse air quality impacts from the biomass boiler are identified."

London Environment Strategy

A1.2 The air quality chapter of the London Environment Strategy sets out three main objectives, each of which is supported by sub-policies and proposals. The Objectives and their sub-policies are set out below:

"Objective 4.1: Support and empower London and its communities, particularly the most disadvantaged and those in priority locations, to reduce their exposure to poor air quality.

- *Policy 4.1.1 Make sure that London and its communities, particularly the most disadvantaged and those in priority locations, are empowered to reduce their exposure to poor air quality*
- *Policy 4.1.2 Improve the understanding of air quality health impacts to better target policies and action*

Objective 4.2: Achieve legal compliance with UK and EU limits as soon as possible, including by mobilising action from London Boroughs, government and other partners

- *Policy 4.2.1 Reduce emissions from London's road transport network by phasing out fossil fuelled vehicles, prioritising action on diesel, and enabling Londoners to switch to more sustainable forms of transport*
- *Policy 4.2.2 Reduce emissions from non-road transport sources, including by phasing out fossil fuels*
- *Policy 4.2.3 Reduce emissions from non-transport sources, including by phasing out fossil fuels*
- *Policy 4.2.4 The Mayor will work with the government, the London boroughs and other partners to accelerate the achievement of legal limits in Greater London and improve air quality*
- *Policy 4.2.5 The Mayor will work with other cities (here and internationally), global city and industry networks to share best practice, lead action and support evidence based steps to improve air quality*

Objective 4.3: Establish and achieve new, tighter air quality targets for a cleaner London by transitioning to a zero emission London by 2050, meeting world health organization health-based guidelines for air quality

- *Policy 4.3.1 The Mayor will establish new targets for $PM_{2.5}$ and other pollutants where needed. The Mayor will seek to meet these targets as soon as possible, working with government and other partners*
- *Policy 4.3.2 The Mayor will encourage the take up of ultra low and zero emission technologies to make sure London's entire transport system is zero emission by 2050 to further reduce levels of pollution and achieve WHO air quality guidelines*
- *Policy 4.3.3 Phase out the use of fossil fuels to heat, cool and maintain London's buildings, homes and urban spaces, and reduce the impact of building emissions on air quality*
- *Policy 4.3.4 Work to reduce exposure to indoor air pollutants in the home, schools, workplace and other enclosed spaces"*

A1.3 While the policies targeting transport sources are significant, there are less obvious ones that will also require significant change. In particular, the aim to phase out fossil-fuels from building heating and cooling and from NRMM will demand a dramatic transition.

Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

A1.4 The LEZ was implemented as a key measure to improve air quality in Greater London. It entails charges for vehicles entering Greater London not meeting certain emissions criteria, and affects older, diesel-engined lorries, buses, coaches, large vans, minibuses and other specialist vehicles derived from lorries and vans. The LEZ was introduced on 4th February 2008, and was phased in through to January 2012. From January 2012 a standard of Euro IV was implemented for lorries and other specialist diesel vehicles over 3.5 tonnes, and buses and coaches over 5 tonnes. Cars and lighter Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) are excluded. The third phase of the LEZ, which applies to larger vans, minibuses and other specialist diesel vehicles, was also implemented in January 2012. A NOx emissions standard (Euro IV) is included in the LEZ for HGVs, buses and coaches, from 2015.

A1.5 The Mayor of London confirmed in June 2018 that the LEZ will be amended such that a Euro VI standard will apply for heavy vehicles from 26 October 2020. Requirements relating to larger vans, minibuses and other specialist diesel vehicles will not change.

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

A1.6 London's ULEZ was introduced on 8th April 2019. The ULEZ currently operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the same area as the current Congestion Charging zone. All cars, motorcycles, vans, minibuses and Heavy Goods Vehicles will need to meet exhaust emission standards (ULEZ standards) or pay an additional daily charge to travel within the zone. The ULEZ standards are Euro 3 for motorcycles; Euro 4 for petrol cars, vans and minibuses; Euro 6 for diesel cars, vans and minibuses; and Euro VI for HGVs, buses and coaches.

A1.7 The Mayor of London confirmed in June 2018 that, from 25th October 2021, the ULEZ will cover the entire area within the North and South Circular roads, applying the emissions standards set out in Paragraph A1.6 for light vehicles. The ULEZ will not include any requirements relating to heavy vehicle emissions beyond 26 October 2020, as these will be addressed by the amendments to the LEZ described in Paragraph A1.5.

Other Measures

A1.8 From 2018 all taxis presented for licencing for the first time must be zero emission capable (ZEC). This means they must be able to travel a certain distance in a mode which produces no air pollutants. From 2018 all private hire vehicles (PHVs) presented for licensing for the first time must meet Euro 6 emissions standards. From 1st January 2020, all newly manufactured PHVs presented for licensing for the first time must be ZEC (with a minimum zero emission range of 10 miles). The Mayor's aim is that the entire taxi and PHV fleet will be made up of ZEC vehicles by 2033.

A1.9 The Mayor has also proposed to make sure that TfL leads by example by cleaning up its bus fleet, implementing the following measures:

- TfL will procure only hybrid or zero emission double-decker buses from 2018;
- a commitment to providing 3,100 double decker hybrid buses by 2019 and 300 zero emission single-deck buses in central London by 2020;
- introducing 12 Low Emission Bus Zones by 2020;
- investing £50m in Bus Priority Schemes across London to reduce engine idling; and
- retrofitting older buses to reduce emissions (selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology has already been fitted to 1,800 buses, cutting their NOx emissions by around 88%).

A2 EPUK & IAQM Planning for Air Quality Guidance

A2.1 The guidance issued by EPUK and IAQM (Moorcroft and Barrowcliffe et al, 2017) is comprehensive in its explanation of the place of air quality in the planning regime. Key sections of the guidance not already mentioned above are set out below.

Air Quality as a Material Consideration

"Any air quality issue that relates to land use and its development is capable of being a material planning consideration. The weight, however, given to air quality in making a planning application decision, in addition to the policies in the local plan, will depend on such factors as:

- *the severity of the impacts on air quality;*
- *the air quality in the area surrounding the proposed development;*
- *the likely use of the development, i.e. the length of time people are likely to be exposed at that location; and*
- *the positive benefits provided through other material considerations".*

Recommended Best Practice

A2.2 The guidance goes into detail on how all development proposals can and should adopt good design principles that reduce emissions and contribute to better air quality management. It states:

"The basic concept is that good practice to reduce emissions and exposure is incorporated into all developments at the outset, at a scale commensurate with the emissions".

A2.3 The guidance sets out a number of good practice principles that should be applied to all developments that:

- include 10 or more dwellings;
- where the number of dwellings is not known, residential development is carried out on a site of more than 0.5 ha;
- provide more than 1,000 m^2 of commercial floorspace;
- are carried out on land of 1 ha or more.

A2.4 The good practice principles are that:

- New developments should not contravene the Council's Air Quality Action Plan, or render any of the measures unworkable;
- Wherever possible, new developments should not create a new "street canyon", as this inhibits pollution dispersion;

- Delivering sustainable development should be the key theme of any application;
- New development should be designed to minimise public exposure to pollution sources, e.g. by locating habitable rooms away from busy roads;
- The provision of at least 1 Electric Vehicle (EV) "rapid charge" point per 10 residential dwellings and/or 1000 m^2 of commercial floorspace. Where on-site parking is provided for residential dwellings, EV charging points for each parking space should be made available;
- Where development generates significant additional traffic, provision of a detailed travel plan (with provision to measure its implementation and effect) which sets out measures to encourage sustainable means of transport (public, cycling and walking) via subsidised or free-ticketing, improved links to bus stops, improved infrastructure and layouts to improve accessibility and safety;
- All gas-fired boilers to meet a minimum standard of <40 mgNOx/kWh;
- Where emissions are likely to impact on an AQMA, all gas-fired CHP plant to meet a minimum emissions standard of:
    - Spark ignition engine: 250 mgNOx/Nm^3;
    - Compression ignition engine: 400 mgNOx/Nm^3;
    - Gas turbine: 50 mgNOx/Nm^3.
- A presumption should be to use natural gas-fired installations. Where biomass is proposed within an urban area it is to meet minimum emissions standards of 275 mgNOx/Nm^3 and 25 mgPM/Nm^3.

A2.5 The guidance also outlines that offsetting emissions might be used as a mitigation measure for a proposed development. However, it states that:

"It is important that obligations to include offsetting are proportional to the nature and scale of development proposed and the level of concern about air quality; such offsetting can be based on a quantification of the emissions associated with the development. These emissions can be assigned a value, based on the "damage cost approach" used by Defra, and then applied as an indicator of the level of offsetting required, or as a financial obligation on the developer. Unless some form of benchmarking is applied, it is impractical to include building emissions in this approach, but if the boiler and CHP emissions are consistent with the standards as described above then this is not essential".

A2.6 The guidance offers a widely used approach for quantifying costs associated with pollutant emissions from transport. It also outlines the following typical measures that may be considered to offset emissions, stating that measures to offset emissions may also be applied as post assessment mitigation:

- Support and promotion of car clubs;
- Contributions to low emission vehicle refuelling infrastructure;
- Provision of incentives for the uptake of low emission vehicles;
- Financial support to low emission public transport options; and
- Improvements to cycling and walking infrastructures.

Screening

Impacts of the Local Area on the Development

"There may be a requirement to carry out an air quality assessment for the impacts of the local area's emissions on the proposed development itself, to assess the exposure that residents or users might experience. This will need to be a matter of judgement and should take into account:

- *the background and future baseline air quality and whether this will be likely to approach or exceed the values set by air quality objectives;*
- *the presence and location of Air Quality Management Areas as an indicator of local hotspots where the air quality objectives may be exceeded;*
- *the presence of a heavily trafficked road, with emissions that could give rise to sufficiently high concentrations of pollutants (in particular nitrogen dioxide), that would cause unacceptably high exposure for users of the new development; and*
- *the presence of a source of odour and/or dust that may affect amenity for future occupants of the development".*

Impacts of the Development on the Local Area

A2.7 The guidance sets out two stages of screening criteria that can be used to identify whether a detailed air quality assessment is required, in terms of the impact of the development on the local area. The first stage is that you should proceed to the second stage if any of the following apply:

- 10 or more residential units or a site area of more than 0.5 ha residential use; and/or
- more than 1,000 m^2 of floor space for all other uses or a site area greater than 1 ha.

A2.8 Coupled with any of the following:

- the development has more than 10 parking spaces; and/or
- the development will have a centralised energy facility or other centralised combustion process.

A2.9 If the above do not apply then the development can be screened out as not requiring a detailed air quality assessment of the impact of the development on the local area. If they do apply then you proceed to Stage 2, which sets out indicative criteria for requiring an air quality assessment. The Stage 2 criteria relating to vehicle emissions are set out below:

- the development will lead to a change in LDV flows of more than 100 AADT within or adjacent to an AQMA or more than 500 AADT elsewhere;
- the development will lead to a change in HDV flows of more than 25 AADT within or adjacent to an AQMA or more than 100 AADT elsewhere;
- the development will lead to a realigning of roads (i.e. changing the proximity of receptors to traffic lanes) where the change is 5m or more and the road is within an AQMA;
- the development will introduce a new junction or remove an existing junction near to relevant receptors, and the junction will cause traffic to significantly change vehicle acceleration/deceleration, e.g. traffic lights or roundabouts;
- the development will introduce or change a bus station where bus flows will change by more than 25 AADT within or adjacent to an AQMA or more than 100 AADT elsewhere; and
- the development will have an underground car park with more than 100 movements per day (total in and out) with an extraction system that exhausts within 20 m of a relevant receptor.

A2.10 The criteria are more stringent where the traffic impacts may arise on roads where concentrations are close to the objective. The presence of an AQMA is taken to indicate the possibility of being close to the objective, but where whole authority AQMAs are present and it is known that the affected roads have concentrations below 90% of the objective, the less stringent criteria are likely to be more appropriate.

A2.11 On combustion processes (including standby emergency generators and shipping) where there is a risk of impacts at relevant receptors, the guidance states that:

"Typically, any combustion plant where the single or combined NOx emission rate is less than 5 mg/sec is unlikely to give rise to impacts, provided that the emissions are released from a vent or stack in a location and at a height that provides adequate dispersion. As a guide, the 5 mg/s criterion equates to a 450 kW ultra-low NOx gas boiler or a 30kW CHP unit operating at <95mg/Nm^3.

In situations where the emissions are released close to buildings with relevant receptors, or where the dispersion of the plume may be adversely affected by the size and/or height of adjacent buildings (including situations where the stack height is lower than the receptor) then consideration will need to be given to potential impacts at much lower emission rates.

Conversely, where existing nitrogen dioxide concentrations are low, and where the dispersion conditions are favourable, a much higher emission rate may be acceptable".

A2.12 Should none of the above apply then the development can be screened out as not requiring a detailed air quality assessment of the impact of the development on the local area, provided that professional judgement is applied; the guidance importantly states the following:

"The criteria provided are precautionary and should be treated as indicative. They are intended to function as a sensitive 'trigger' for initiating an assessment in cases where there is a possibility of significant effects arising on local air quality. This possibility will, self-evidently, not be realised in many cases. The criteria should not be applied rigidly; in some instances, it may be appropriate to amend them on the basis of professional judgement, bearing in mind that the objective is to identify situations where there is a possibility of a significant effect on local air quality".

A2.13 Even if a development cannot be screened out, the guidance is clear that a detailed assessment is not necessarily required:

"The use of a Simple Assessment may be appropriate, where it will clearly suffice for the purposes of reaching a conclusion on the significance of effects on local air quality. The principle underlying this guidance is that any assessment should provide enough evidence that will lead to a sound conclusion on the presence, or otherwise, of a significant effect on local air quality. A Simple Assessment will be appropriate, if it can provide this evidence. Similarly, it may be possible to conduct a quantitative assessment that does not require the use of a dispersion model run on a computer".

A2.14 The guidance also outlines what the content of the air quality assessment should include, and this has been adhered to in the production of this report.

Assessment of Significance

A2.15 There is no official guidance in the UK in relation to development control on how to describe the nature of air quality impacts, nor how to assess their significance. The approach within the EPUK/IAQM guidance has, therefore, been used in this assessment. This approach involves a two stage process:

- a qualitative or quantitative description of the impacts on local air quality arising from the development; and
- a judgement on the overall significance of the effects of any impacts.

A2.16 The guidance recommends that the assessment of significance should be based on professional judgement, with the overall air quality impact of the development described as either 'significant' or 'not significant'. In drawing this conclusion, the following factors should be taken into account:

- the existing and future air quality in the absence of the development;
- the extent of current and future population exposure to the impacts;
- the influence and validity of any assumptions adopted when undertaking the prediction of impacts;
- the potential for cumulative impacts and, in such circumstances, several impacts that are described as '*slight*' individually could, taken together, be regarded as having a significant effect for the purposes of air quality management in an area, especially where it is proving difficult to reduce concentrations of a pollutant. Conversely, a '*moderate*' or '*substantial*' impact may not have a significant effect if it is confined to a very small area and where it is not obviously the cause of harm to human health; and
- the judgement on significance relates to the consequences of the impacts; will they have an effect on human health that could be considered as significant? In the majority of cases, the impacts from an individual development will be insufficiently large to result in measurable changes in health outcomes that could be regarded as significant by health care professionals.

A2.17 The guidance is clear that other factors may be relevant in individual cases. It also states that the effect on the residents of any new development where the air quality is such that an air quality objective is not met will be judged as significant. For people working at new developments in this situation, the same will not be true as occupational exposure standards are different, although any assessment may wish to draw attention to the undesirability of the exposure.

A2.18 A judgement of the significance should be made by a competent professional who is suitably qualified. A summary of the professional experience of the staff contributing to this assessment is provided in Appendix A3.

A3 Professional Experience

Guido Pellizzaro, BSc (Hons) MIAQM MIEnvSc PIEMA

Mr Pellizzaro is an Associate Director with AQC, with more than 14 years' experience in the field of air quality management and assessment. His main experience relates to managing and delivering air quality assessments for major planning applications and EIA development. He is a Member of the Institution of Environmental Sciences and of the Institute of Air Quality Management, and a Practitioner of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

Dr Frances Marshall, MSci PhD MIEnvSc MIAQM

Dr Marshall is a Senior Consultant with AQC, having joined the company in September 2016. Prior to joining AQC, she spent four years carrying out postgraduate research into atmospheric aerosols at the University of Bristol. Dr Marshall has experience preparing air quality assessments for a range of projects, including residential and commercial developments, road traffic schemes, energy centres, energy from waste schemes and numerous power generation schemes. She has experience in producing air quality assessments for EIA schemes, and has also assessed the impacts of Local Plans on designated ecological areas, prepared Annual Status Reports for Local Authorities, and undertaken diffusion tube monitoring studies. She is a Member of both the Institute of Air Quality Management and the Institution of Environmental Sciences.

Tomas Liska, BSc (Hons)

Mr Liska is an Assistant Consultant with AQC, having joined the company in September 2020. He is currently finishing his PhD at the University of Edinburgh where he has researched population exposure to air pollution and its inequality in the UK. He is now gaining experience in the field of air quality monitoring and assessment.