

Why Plan to Improve Air Quality?

- The Planning system has a key role to play in improving air quality in the long term and minimising exposure to poor air quality.
- Local Authorities need to ensure that air quality is assessed appropriately and mitigation measures applied when necessary.



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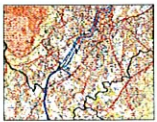

Why produce an Air Quality Guidance Document in Belfast?

- LAQM is a relatively new process
- Developers are often unaware of air quality issues in relation to development in Belfast and throughout other areas of Northern Ireland.
- BCC identified the need to provide guidance for Developers and Consultants in relation to air quality considerations with the ultimate aim of protecting human health.
- Aimed at developers and consultants with the objective of providing technical advice on how to address planning applications that could have a significant impact on air quality.
- This document sets out situations when an assessment may be required and suggests an approach as how to undertake it to the satisfaction of Belfast City Council.

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Ambient air quality is likely to be particularly important where:

- The proposed development is inside or adjacent to an AQMA.
- The development could result in designation of a new AQMA.
- The granting of planning permission would conflict with, or render unworkable, elements of a local authority's air quality action plan.





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Project Aim

Specifically to address the lack of planning policy and guidance relating to development control and air quality and context by:

- Developing a Policy that could be adopted by the Planning Service.
- That Council develops a policy which is adopted as the Planning Policy context in which decisions are made in relation to development control and air quality within the city.
- Consistency and speeding up the planning process.




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Project Planning

- Project planned in advance and provisions accounted for in the Environmental Protection Unit's annual budget.
- Establish working group
- Agreed roles and responsibilities of individual team members
- Project plan put in place
- Consultation process
- Corporate communication publication process

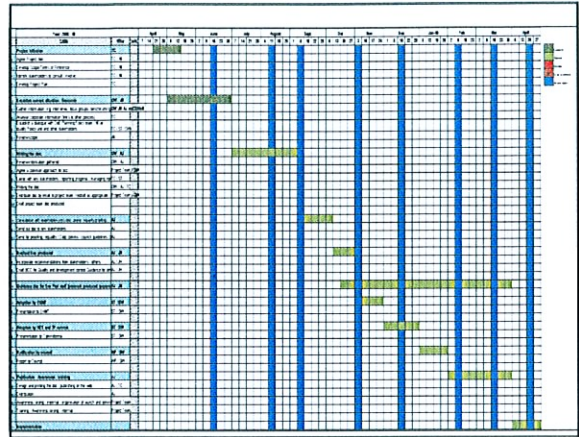

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Key Activities to be completed


- Scope of the project to be developed including incorporate with all relevant Council Policy positions and corporate plan .
- Establish a dialogue with Planning Policy team and joint agreement in goal.
- Planning Policy to be adopted by Planning Service or memorandum of Understanding to be agreed.
- Establish dates for EH and Town Planning Committee to consider the proposals- at key stages.
- Policy / guidance to be published and awareness raising exercise.
- Use of and implementation of policy/guidance training internally and externally to partner organisations.

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Project Evaluation

- It has speeded up the planning process
- Enabled consistency in the approach to dealing with air quality and planning in Belfast.
- Document has been well received and is widely used.
- Potential for transferability throughout NI.



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Conclusion

Facilitating the document allows for sustainable economy growth without compromising existing actions and targets which are in place to improve air quality throughout Belfast.