

Air and Noise Pollution

POLICY 7.14 IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

Strategic

- A The Mayor recognises the importance of tackling air pollution and improving air quality to London's development and the health and well-being of its people. He will work with strategic partners to ensure that the spatial, climate change, transport and design policies of this plan support implementation of his Air Quality and Transport strategies to achieve reductions in pollutant emissions and minimise public exposure to pollution.

Planning decisions

- B Development proposals should:
- a minimise increased exposure to existing poor air quality and make provision to address local problems of air quality (particularly within Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and 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 as 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 from 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 be made to reduce emissions from a development, this is usually 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

LDF preparation

- C Boroughs should have policies that:
- a seek reductions in levels of pollutants referred to in the Government's National Air Quality Strategy having regard to the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy
 - b take account of the findings of their Air Quality Review and Assessments and Action Plans, in particular where Air Quality Management Areas have been designated.

- 7.47 Poor air quality is a public health issue that is linked to the development of chronic diseases and can increase the risk of respiratory illness. Action is needed to improve air quality in London and the Mayor is committed to working towards meeting the EU limit values of fine particulate matter (PM₁₀) by 2011 and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) by 2015. The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy sets out policies

and proposals to address the full range of these air quality issues reducing emissions from transport, reducing emissions from homes, business and industry and increasing awareness of air quality issues. For example the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) will continue to deliver health benefits by reducing emissions from the oldest heavy diesel engined vehicles. The Strategy also includes proposals to extend the LEZ to heavier vans and mini buses from 2012 and to introduce a new standard for nitrogen oxides (NO_x) in 2015. Other transport policies to contribute to achieving these limit values address:

- encouraging smarter choices and sustainable travel behaviour
- promoting technological change and cleaner vehicles
- reducing emissions from public transport and public transport fleets.

7.48 The London Plan policies specifically address the spatial implications of the Air Quality Strategy and, in particular, how development and land use can help achieve its objectives. In his Air Quality Strategy (December 2010), the Mayor also encourages local authorities to publish supplementary planning documents to ensure that air quality is fully embedded within the planning process. The Mayor will also use the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) process to ensure that air quality improvement measures are included in borough transport plans. The Air Quality Strategy includes a mechanism for boroughs to set appropriate emission reduction targets that will assist in setting out the process where the offsetting of negative air quality impacts from development is required. The detailed air quality assessments that are required for certain types of development will assist in this process²¹. The GLA will develop a checklist to guide boroughs and developers in the assessment of potential emissions from development.

7.49 The GLA and London Council's Best Practice Guidance on *'The Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition'* provides one mechanism by which planning can address such issues. It is proposed that this guidance will be reviewed with a view to it being consulted on and published as supplementary guidance to the London Plan.

7.50 Concerns have been raised over the air quality effects of some biomass boilers. In order to address these concerns, the Mayor will expect an air quality assessment to be undertaken where planning applications are submitted that include proposals for biomass boilers. Where an assessment demonstrates adverse effects associated with the biomass boiler, this type of biomass boiler should not be used in the development.

7.51 Increased exposure to existing poor air quality should be minimised by avoiding introduction of potentially new sensitive receptors in locations where they will be affected by existing sources of air pollution (such as road traffic and industrial processes). Particular attention should be paid to development proposals such as housing, homes for elderly people, schools and nurseries. Where additional negative air quality impacts from a new development are identified, mitigation measures will be required to ameliorate these impacts. This approach is consistent with PPS 23 (Planning and Pollution Control). These could include on-site measures such as design solutions, buffer zones and smarter travel measures that support and encourage sustainable travel behaviours. Where it can be clearly shown that on-site mitigation measures are impractical or inappropriate, and where measures having clearly demonstrated equivalent air quality benefits could be taken elsewhere, local planning authorities should use their planning powers to ensure this. The Mayor will produce guidance to assist boroughs in developing

supplementary planning documents on air quality for boroughs to assist them in determining planning applications and identifying appropriate offsetting and mitigation measures. Developer contributions and mitigation measures should be secured through planning conditions, Section 106 agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy, where appropriate.

POLICY 7.15 REDUCING NOISE AND ENHANCING SOUNDSCAPES

Strategic

- A The transport, spatial and design policies of this plan will be implemented in order to reduce noise and support the objectives of the Mayor's Ambient Noise Strategy.

Planning decisions

- B Development proposals should seek to reduce noise by:
- a minimising the existing and potential adverse impacts of noise on, from, within, or in the vicinity of, development proposals
 - b separating new noise sensitive development from major noise sources wherever practicable through the use of distance, screening, or internal layout in preference to sole reliance on sound insulation
 - c promoting new technologies and improved practices to reduce noise at source.

LDF preparation

- C Boroughs and others with relevant responsibilities should have policies to:
- a reduce the adverse impact of noise through the distribution of noise making and noise sensitive uses, and in highway

management and transport policies (see Chapter 6)

- b protect Quiet Areas, to be formally identified under Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and consider protection of spaces of relative tranquillity or high soundscape quality, particularly through borough open space strategies.

7.52 Reducing noise pollution and protecting good soundscape quality where it exists, contributes to improving quality of life. The Mayor's published Ambient Noise Strategy²² contains policies and proposals on noise related to road and rail traffic, aircraft, water transport and industry. The GLA Act 1999 excludes some sources from the definition of 'ambient noise', such as construction and neighbour noise, where powers are held by borough councils. London Plan policies address the spatial implications of the Ambient Noise Strategy.

7.53 In March 2010, the Government published a Noise Action Plan for the London Agglomeration (larger than GLA area) under the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Airport operators have responsibility for Noise Action Plans for Airports (within the GLA area, Heathrow and London City). Boroughs will need to liaise with central Government on identification of 'Quiet Areas' (see Glossary). Where formal national designation may not be appropriate, boroughs still have opportunities to protect tranquil spaces or soundscapes of local importance.

Protecting London's Open and Natural Environment

7.54 The Mayor strongly supports the protection, promotion and enhancement of London's open spaces and natural environments.