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| Local Authority: | Thanet |
| Reference: | AP1-274 |
| Date of issue | 30/1/2013 |

Action Plan Appraisal Report

This Appraisal Report covers the Air Quality Action Plan report submitted by Thanet District Council. The Action Plan sets out information on air quality obtained by the Council as part of the Local Air Quality Management process required under the Environment Act 1995 and subsequent Regulations. It is a draft Action Plan, which includes measures aimed at the Thanet Urban AQMA, declared in November 2011.

The overall plan is clear, concise and generally follows the guidance outlined in LAQM PG(09). The plan provides good detail on the extent of the AQMA in question, as well as information about the previous AQMAs which were revoked and incorporated into this wider AQMA. This includes the findings of the source apportionment exercise, and the levels of exceedences at monitoring sites within the AQMA.

The plan also provides an overview of other relevant plans and policies that are likely to have a bearing on local air quality. Eight measures been included in the draft action plan, along with a ninth action for the council to undertake feasibility studies and data collection (requiring funding) to better understand the impacts of the other measures.

The eight measures identified are:

- Investigate Traffic Signal and Junction Configuration
- Improving movement of freight
- Encouragement of public transport use
- Car Sharing and Travel Planning (with a number of sub-measures)
- Promotion of cycling and walking
- Development planning
- Promotion of Air Quality Issues
- Parking Enforcement

The Council is advised to take consideration of the further commentary in the finalisation of its action plan.

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Commentary

1. Thanet District Council has adopted a strategic approach to the update of their action plan with strong links made to other council policy which is welcomed.
2. The AQAP clearly outlines the air quality improvement that will be required in order to meet the National Air Quality Standards throughout each AQMA. The highest reduction required in NO₂ was in Birchington Square where 5 µg m⁻³ reduction is required to meet the objective. This reflects an ongoing downward trend in NO₂ concentrations over the 2006-2011 period for which data is given.
3. Commensurately, the report is positive about the potential to reduce pollutant levels below the objective levels. The council has stated that should this not happen with the first set of measures, further measures to improve traffic flow at problem junctions will be considered.
4. The measures involved in the plan are very well presented. It is made clear which authority will lead on each measure, and the level of reduction in emissions expected from each measure is given. The timescales for these measures are also given. We would encourage the council to also provide the estimated costs – either as relative gradings, or approximate figures.
5. Source apportionment data have been included which demonstrate that road vehicle emissions are the dominant source. All categories of road traffic contribute significantly to the total emissions, and we therefore concur that the spread of measures presented in the action plan is appropriate.
6. The Council strongly promotes partnership engagement and ownership within its action plan which is very much encouraged.
7. Overall, much work has gone into the production of this action plan, and in to reducing air quality problems in Thanet in general. The overall downward trend is encouraging, and this Action Plan suggests that the measures contained within it may bring levels down below the relevant objectives.

This commentary is not designed to deal with every aspect of the Action Plan. It highlights a number of issues that should help the local authority in maintaining the objectives of its Action Plan, namely the improvement of air quality within the AQMA.

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Issues specifically related to this appraisal can be followed up by returning the attached comment form to Defra, Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government or DOE, as appropriate – or by emailing the form to reportappraisal@ttr-ltd.com.

For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:

Telephone: 0800 0327 953

Email: LAQMHelpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com

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Appraisal Response Comment Form

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| Contact Name: | |
| Contact Telephone number: | |
| Contact email address: | |

Comments on appraisal/Further information: