



North Yorkshire Council

Air Quality Action Plan

(2024 – 2029)

In fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995

Local Air Quality Management

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Executive Summary

This Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been produced as part of our statutory duties required by the Local Air Quality Management framework. It outlines the action we will take to improve air quality in the North Yorkshire Council area between 2024 and 2029.

On 1st April 2023, the new unitary authority of North Yorkshire Council (NYC) was formed from the former County Council, Borough and Districts of Richmondshire, Selby, Craven, Harrogate, Hambleton, Scarborough, and Ryedale.

This action plan replaces the previous action plans from the former district Councils, incorporated into NYC, which ran initially between 2012 and 2018, for those areas listed below. The measures detailed within this updated action plan are largely localised measures relevant to the AQMAs listed in Table 5.1, with some district wide initiatives.

Projects delivered through the past action plans include:

- Harrogate – Engineering scheme at Bond End, Knaresborough (2018)
- Hambleton - The new A684 Bedale bypass to relieve traffic congestion and pollution levels (2016)
- Ryedale – Malton junction improvement and reduction in traffic flow schemes (2012)
- Selby – New Street Area Traffic Management improvements to address congestion issues (2017)
- Local school travel plans – Clean Air Day Campaigns and Leave your car at home days.
- Anti Idling campaigns outside schools and at Traffic light junctions.
- Taxi licence initiatives
- Cycle to work schemes

Additions for the 2024 to 2029 AQAP include:

- Air Quality projects to better monitor NO_x, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} using recently purchased Aeroqual AQS1 monitors,
- Promoting Low Emission Transport including procuring alternative refuelling infrastructure to promote Low Emission Vehicles, with recharging points,
- Replacing conventional fleet vehicle with EV alternatives, where possible.

Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with inequality issues because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas^{1,2}.

The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion³. North Yorkshire Council is committed to reducing the exposure of people in North Yorkshire to poor air quality to improve overall health.

North Yorkshire Council have developed actions that can be considered under the following themes and 6 broad topics:

¹ Environmental equity, air quality, socioeconomic status and respiratory health, 2010

² Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

³ Defra. Abatement cost guidance for valuing changes in air quality, May 2013

Alternatives to Private Vehicle Use

Policy Guidance and Development Control

Promoting Low Emission Transport

Promoting Travel Alternatives

Public Information and Education

Transport Planning and Infrastructure.

Our priorities are continuing the monitoring programmes throughout North Yorkshire, reviewing monitoring locations and seeking further opportunities to improve air quality across the localities.

In this AQAP we outline how we plan to effectively tackle air quality issues within our control, however, we recognise that there are a large number of air quality policy areas that are outside of our influence (such as vehicle emissions standards agreed in Europe), but for which we may have useful evidence, and so we will continue to work with regional and central government on policies and issues beyond North Yorkshire Council's direct influence.

Responsibilities and Commitment

This AQAP was prepared by the Scientific Team in Regulatory Services at North Yorkshire Council with the support and agreement of the following officers and departments:

NYC Public Health

NYC Highways and Traffic management, Transport Planning

NYC Planning policy, Sustainability and Economic Development

This section will be completed following the consultation period

This AQAP has been approved by:

Director of Public Health and

Corporate Director, Environment.

This AQAP will be subject to an annual appraisal of progress and will be reported in the Annual Status Reports (ASRs) produced by North Yorkshire Council as part of our statutory Local Air Quality Management duties.

If you have any comments on this AQAP, please send them to Kevin Carr at:

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1 Introduction

This report outlines the actions that North Yorkshire Council will deliver between 2024 – 2029 to reduce concentrations of air pollutants and exposure to air pollution; thereby positively impacting on the health and quality of life of residents and visitors to the North Yorkshire Council Area.

It has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to work towards Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

This Plan will be reviewed every five years at the latest and progress on measures set out within this Plan will be reported on annually within North Yorkshire Council's Annual Status Report (ASR).

2 Summary of Current Air Quality in North Yorkshire Council

2.1 Location and Context

From the 1 April 2023 all District and Borough Councils in North Yorkshire were combined to create a new unitary authority, North Yorkshire Council. This report represents the first North Yorkshire Air Quality Action Plan, incorporating all Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) across North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire is a large non-metropolitan county, a geographical area incorporating the historic towns of Harrogate, Richmond, Scarborough, Malton, Skipton, and Selby with the County Town of Northallerton. There are also large stretches of deep rurality from the West of the Yorkshire Dales to the unique coastline of the East, with a county population of over 600,000 people (Census 2021).

The major source of pollution within North Yorkshire is from road transport, both NO₂ and PM₁₀. The major road systems that run the length and breadth of the county include the A1, A66, the A19 and A59, plus various highway schemes and bypasses that encompass the rural and urban areas. The East Coast main line Railway also intersects the county, connecting people with the North and the South of the UK. Whilst the longer-term trend is showing a reduction in pollution concentrations, and AQMAs are planned for revocation, there are some elevated results that require further monitoring.

2.2 Overview of Air Quality Management Areas

AQMAs	Location	Source	Year Declared	AQO Exceedance
AQMA 1	Bond End Knaresborough	Road Transport related	November 2010	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 2	Wetherby Road, Harrogate	Road Transport related	October 2017	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 3	Low and High Skellgate, Ripon	Road Transport related	November 2010	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 4	York Place, Knaresborough	Road Transport related	October 2017	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 5	Bridge Street and Market Place, Bedale	Road Transport related	November 2017	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 6	New Street, Selby	Road Transport related	February 2016	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 7	Castlegate, Yorkersgate, Old Maltongate, Wheelgate, Malton	Road Transport related	December 2009	Annual Mean exceedance of NO ₂
AQMA 8	Staithe, Scarborough	Domestic Heating	August 2018	Exceedance of PM ₁₀

It is a requirement that if pollutant levels fall below the UK national air quality objective levels for a period of 5 consecutive years, the AQMA must be revoked.

North Yorkshire Council are therefore proposing to revoke the following AQMAs previously declared for exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) annual mean objective of 40µg/m³ at:

- Low and High Skellgate, Ripon (AQMA 3)
- York Place, Knaresborough (AQMA 4)
- Castlegate, Malton (AQMA 7)

And for the previous exceedance of the annual mean objective for PM₁₀

- Staithes, Scarborough (PM₁₀) (AQMA 8).

3 North Yorkshire Council's Air Quality Priorities

This section presents the main priorities and the approach to be taken by North Yorkshire Council to continue to improve air quality within its administrative area.

The main factor affecting air quality in the council's area is related to transport emissions.

Priorities will focus on the following:

- An overarching AQAP tailored to encompass all former 7 districts within North Yorkshire Council in collaboration with the Transport, Planning, Public Health, and Sustainability colleagues to reduce emissions, to link in with strategies and policy and to improve awareness of air quality.
- Revocation of 4 existing AQMAs which is mandatory after achieving below the annual mean objective for 5 consecutive years.
- Continue to review and assess local air quality across North Yorkshire and to fulfil our legal obligations
- Reviewing development schemes and improvement works.

3.1 Public Health Context

Air pollution is associated with several adverse health impacts. Local authorities are expected to work towards reducing emissions and/or concentrations of PM_{2.5} (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 µm or less).

The PM_{2.5} indicator in the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) (England) provide further impetus to join up action between the various local authority departments which impact on the delivery of air quality improvements.

To help facilitate this, Defra commissioned research to develop a toolkit to help local authorities and public health professionals tackle air pollution in their area with a

particular focus on PM_{2.5}. The toolkit provides a one-stop guide to the latest evidence on air pollution, guiding local authorities to use existing tools to appraise the scale of the air pollution issue in its area. It also advises local authorities how to appropriately prioritise air quality alongside other public health priorities to ensure it is on the local agenda.

3.2 Planning and Policy Context

North Yorkshire Council has several development frameworks and core strategies and policies that still exist across the former districts that are now part of NYC.

A new steering group has been established to undertake a review of the existing policies and strategies, with the aim of consolidating the strategic objectives relevant to air quality. This will ensure that all development and change is considerate of encouraging the use of sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, walking, and cycling and reducing the adverse impact of society on the environment (e.g., reducing pollution) and responding to the implications of climate change.

The draft AQAP will also be submitted to Planning as a consultee prior to the final version of this draft.

Local Plans, new policies, updated national planning policy will also be considered in this draft.

The National Planning Policy Framework, dated December 2023, sets out that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.

Paragraph 192 specifically says 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.

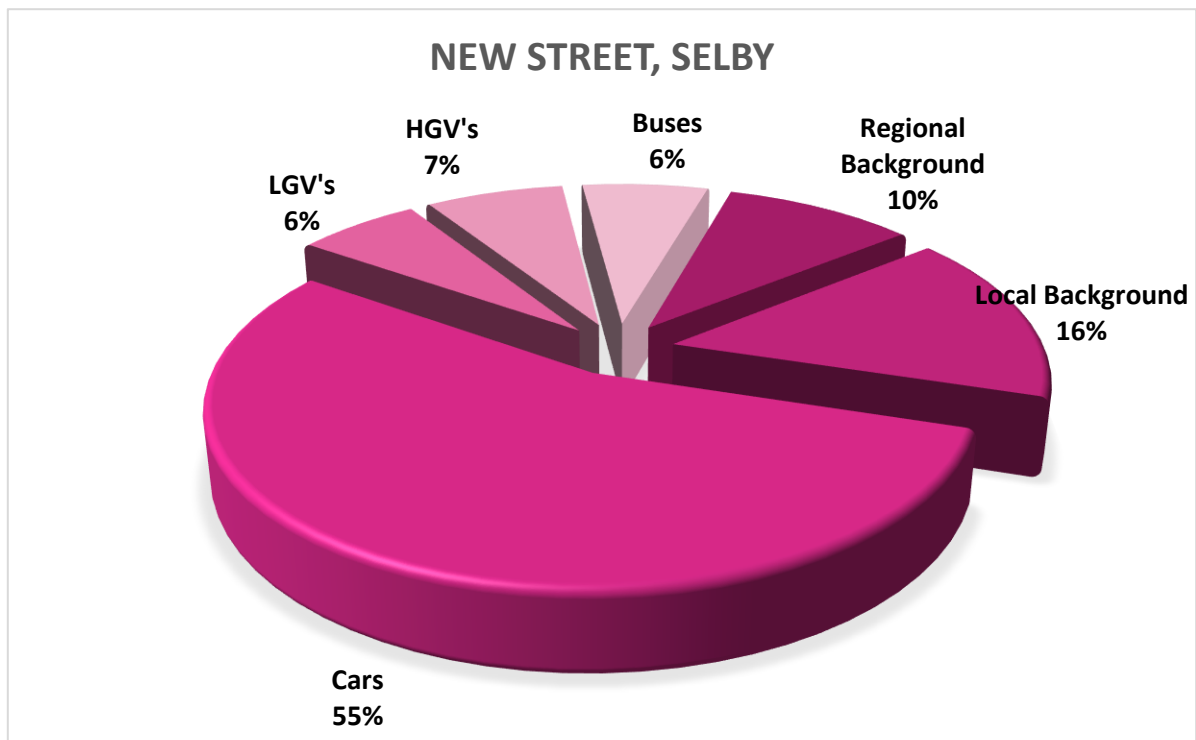
3.3 Source Apportionment

This Action plan includes data from four separate air quality studies commissioned for the former district areas. The source apportionment studies focus on the main sources of emissions within North Yorkshire's area, Nitrogen Dioxide NO₂. A source apportionment exercise was carried out by North Yorkshire Council in 2024, using monitoring data from 2022. This identified within the AQMAs the percentage source contributions were as follows:

3.3.1 New Street, Selby – AQMA 6

Figure 1. NO₂ Source Apportionment - Selby

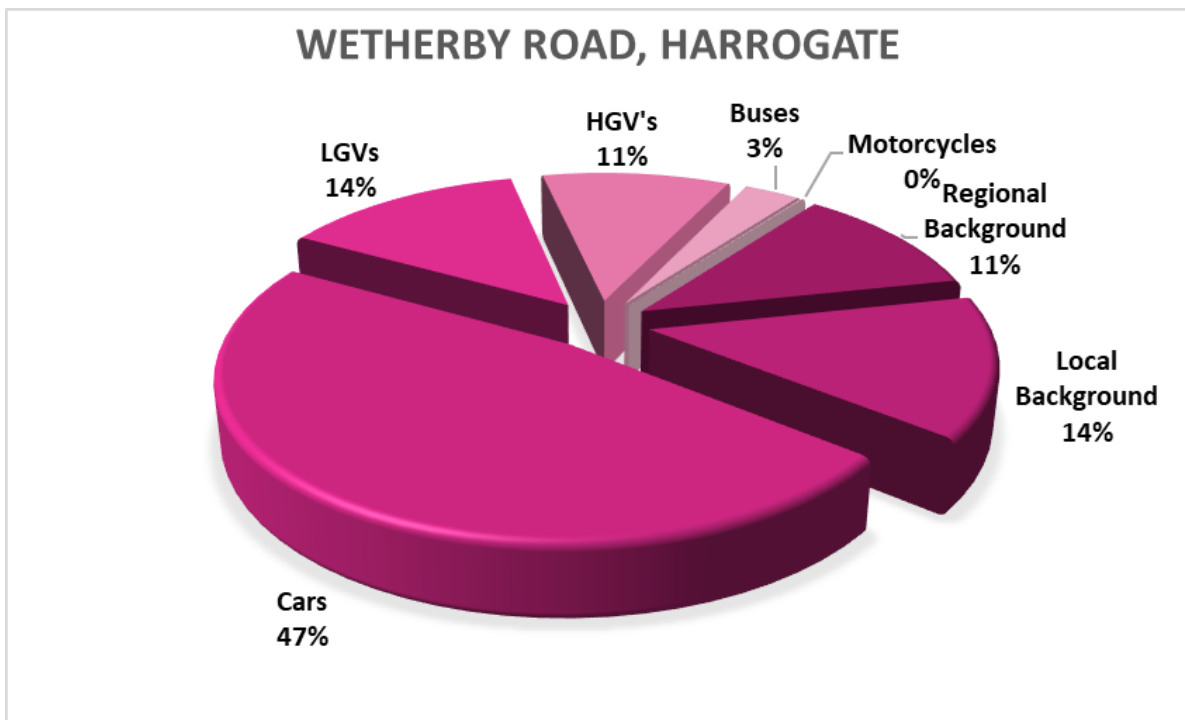
	Regional Background	Local Background	Cars	LGV's	HGV's	Buses
Concentration µg/m ³	3.80	6.11	21.46	2.45	2.76	2.52
% contribution	9.73	15.63	54.86	6.27	7.06	6.45



3.3.2 Wetherby Road, Harrogate (AQMA 2)

Figure 2. NO₂ Source Apportionment – Harrogate

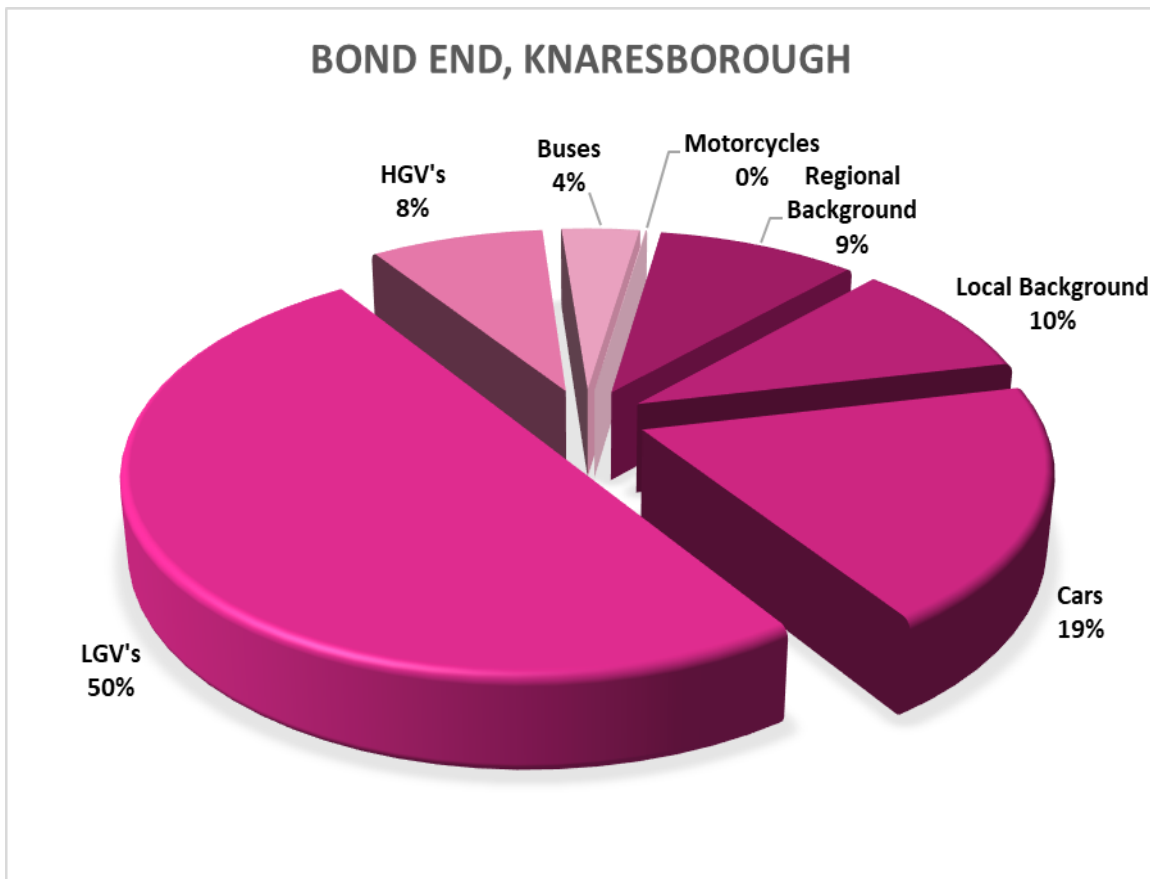
	Regional Background	Local Background	Cars	LGV's	HGV's	Buses	Motorcycle
Concentration µg/m ³	3.61	4.46	15.06	4.29	3.35	0.99	0.02
% contribution	11.36	14.04	47.39	13.49	10.54	3.11	0.06



3.3.3 Bond End, Knaresborough (AQMA 1)

Figure 3. NO₂ Source Apportionment - Knaresborough

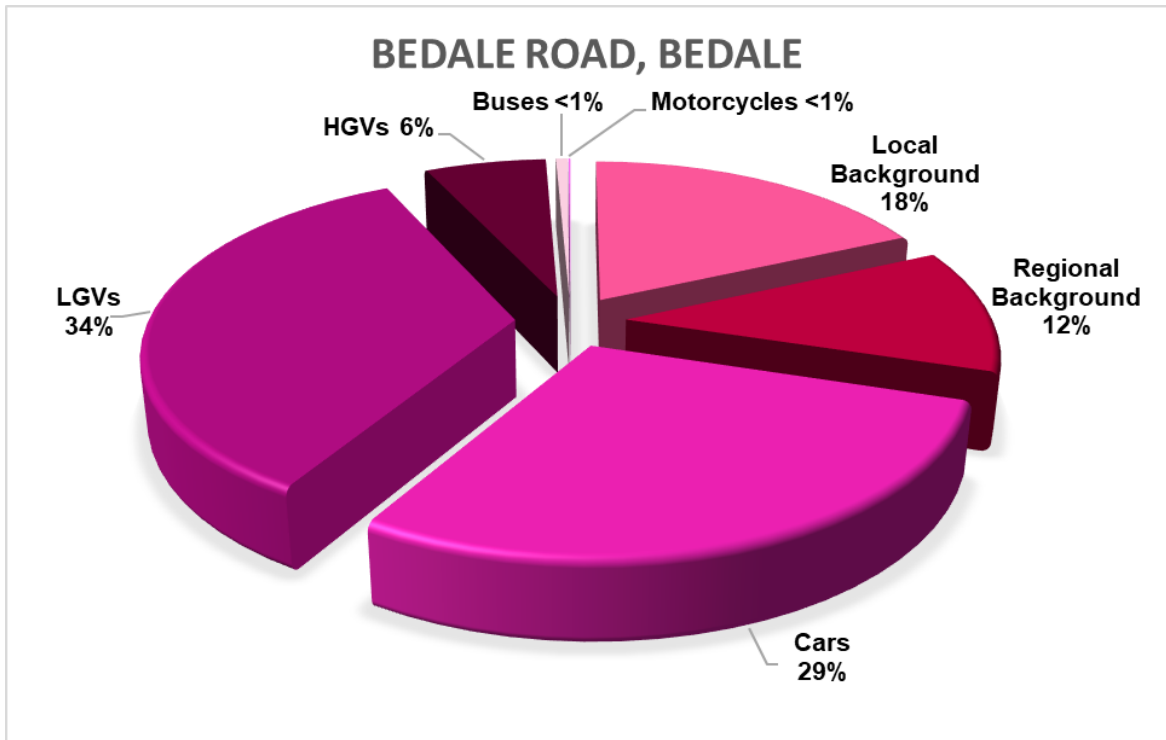
	Regional Background	Local Background	Cars	LGV's	HGV's	Buses	Motorcycle
Concentration µg/m ³	3.62	3.66	7.32	19.14	3.14	1.41	0.01
% contribution	9.44	9.54	19.11	49.98	8.20	3.69	0.04



3.3.4 Bridge Street and Market Place, Bedale – (AQMA 5)

Figure 4. NO₂ Source Apportionment – Bedale Road (nearest traffic monitoring location)

	Regional Background	Local Background	Cars	LGV's	HGV's	Buses	Motorcycles
Concentration $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	2.3	1.5	3.7	4.4	0.8	0.08	0.01
% contribution	18.2	11.6	28.8	34.4	6.3	0.6	0.1



3.4 Required Reduction in Emissions

The required reduction in emissions calculations is not required as the air quality improvements have been achieved in the following AQMAs and the nitrogen dioxide annual average air quality objective is no longer being exceeded. The highest annual mean concentration within the AQMAs is shown below:

AQMA	Highest Recorded concentration in 2022 ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
Bond End, Knaresborough	38.4
Wetherby Road, Harrogate	31.8
Market Place/Bridge Street, Bedale	18.5
New Street, Selby	39.1

3.5 Key Priorities

North Yorkshire Council's main priorities in addressing air quality involve:

- Continue to monitor all AQMAs to assess whether the predicted reduction in concentrations will continue to be achieved
- Continue to monitor the Bedale AQMA considering the new and proposed development(s) (housing and commercial) in the Bedale/Leeming Bar area.
- Continuing monitoring at other locations across the district to highlight any potential exceedances of air quality objectives.
- Identifying potential new locations where air pollution or traffic congestion is perceived to be a problem.
- Work with strategic partners, traffic management and planning to mitigate any potential areas of concern and to seek opportunities for alternatives and improvement areas.

4 Development and Implementation of North Yorkshire Council's AQAP

4.1 Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

In developing and updating this AQAP, we have worked with local authorities, agencies, businesses and the local community to improve local air quality. Schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to consult the bodies listed in Table 4.1. In addition, we have undertaken the following stakeholder engagement:

This section and the table below will be completed following the consultation period

Appendix A: Response to Consultation Table 4.1 – Consultation Undertaken

Consultee	Consultation Undertaken
The Secretary of State	
The Environment Agency	
The highways authority	
All neighbouring local authorities	
Other public authorities as appropriate, such as Public Health officials	
Bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate	

4.2 Steering Group

A combined Steering Group has been formed that is composed of NYC officers from key service and delivery areas that can influence and impact air quality

improvements. This should be led by senior officers within NYC to ensure engagement at political and senior management levels across the Council and with external agencies and partners has momentum. The Steering Group will include representatives from:

- NYC Environmental Health and/or Scientific Team
- NYC Trading Standards
- NYC Planning Policy
- NYC Climate Action officers
- NYC Highways and Traffic Management
- NYC Public Health Officer.
- NYC Economic Development

Other authority departments may be engaged, including local businesses and community groups as required.

Representation from the Regulatory Services Scientific Team will be made at the local Transport Board meetings to feed in Air Quality considerations.

The AQAP Steering Group will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the delivery of the AQAP to ensure measures are on track and report progress back to Defra.

5 AQAP Measures

Table 5.1 shows the North Yorkshire Council AQAP measures. It contains:

- a list of the actions that form part of the plan
- the responsible individual and departments/organisations who will deliver this action
- estimated cost of implementing each action (overall cost and cost to the local authority)
- expected benefit in terms of pollutant emission and/or concentration reduction
- the timescale for implementation
- how progress will be monitored

NB: Please see future ASRs for regular annual updates on implementation of these measures

Table 5.1 – Air Quality Action Plan Measures

Measure No.	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
1	Bedale Aiskew Leeming Bar bypass scheme	Traffic Management	Strategic highway improvements	2015/16	Bypass completed in 2016.	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	Fully funded	> £10m	Implemented	Reduced vehicle emissions to below 10% of the NO ₂ annual mean objective (36µg/m ³)	Measured NO ₂ concentration at diffusion tube site HDC28, HDC29, HDC30 in Bedale AQMA	Monitoring results from 2022 indicate the bias adjusted annual mean is below 36µg/m ³ (17.6 µg/m ³).	Monitoring to continue to assess whether reduction is sustainable.
2	A168 Thirsk junction improvement scheme	Traffic Management	Strategic highway improvements	2018 to 2019	Junction opened June 2019.	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	Fully funded	> £10m	Implemented	Predicted reduction vehicle emissions to below 10% of the NO ₂ annual mean objective (36µg/m ³)	Measured NO ₂ concentration at diffusion tube sites HDC33, HDC34 and HDC35 in Thirsk	Monitoring results from 2022 indicate the bias adjusted annual mean is below 36µg/m ³ (24.3 µg/m ³).	Monitoring to continue to assess whether predicted reduction is achieved.
3	NYC Local Planning and Conservation Framework	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Other policy	2007 - 2026	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	N/A	N/A	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	N/A	The strategic objectives of the Core Strategy relevant to air quality include ensuring that all development is sustainable, reducing the need for travel and encouraging the use of sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, walking and cycling, reducing the adverse impact of society on the environment (eg reducing pollution) and responding to the implications of climate change. https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/planning-and-conservation/planning-policy/planning-policy-your-local-area

Measure No.	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
4	Procuring alternative Refuelling infrastructure to promote Low Emission Vehicles, EV recharging	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Instillation of EV recharging points	2019 - 2045	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ongoing program to provide EV charging points across NYC's estate and car parks	Funding and available infrastructure
5	Replacing conventional fleet vehicle with EV alternatives	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Introduction of EV	2019 - 2045	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NYC have started to replace conventional fleet vehicles with EV. The first Phase has involved replacing Front line services vehicles and pool cars.	Funding and available infrastructure
6	Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Other policy	2016 - 2045	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council, internal budget	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Objectives include Environment and Climate Change – managing the adverse impact of transport on the environment and Healthier Travel – promoting healthier travel opportunities known as 'active travel'.
7	Provision of Air Quality Information - Air Quality Campaigns and Education	Public Information	Social media and NYC website and working with local schools	N/A	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment-and-neighbourhoods/pollution/air-quality/air-quality-your-area
8	Signposting information on walking groups	Public Information	Social media and NYC website	N/A	N/A	North Yorkshire Council	North Yorkshire Council	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/major-transport-schemes-and-plans/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plans-lcwips

Measure No.	Measure	Category	Classification	Estimated Year Measure to be Introduced	Estimated / Actual Completion Year	Organisations Involved	Funding Source	Defra AQ Grant Funding	Funding Status	Estimated Cost of Measure	Measure Status	Target Reduction in Pollutant / Emission from Measure	Key Performance Indicator	Progress to Date	Comments / Potential Barriers to Implementation
9	Anti-idling campaigns	Traffic management	Anti-idling and enforcement	2025	2028	North Yorkshire Council		No							
10	Undertake enforcement of New Street, Selby weight restriction	Freight and Delivery Management	Other	2024	2025	NYC (Trading Standards, Env Health), Police		No							
11	Air Quality Guidance for Developers	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	2026	2026	North Yorkshire Council		No							
12	Improving Cycle Routes and Facilities	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Cycle Network	2024	2028	North Yorkshire Council and Developers		No							
13	Promote Sustainable Travel Options	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Other	2025	2028	North Yorkshire Council		No							
14	Promote Air Quality Information and Advice	Public Information	Other	2025	2028	North Yorkshire Council		No							
15	Transformation Scheme	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Strategic Improvements in towns of Harrogate, Selby, and Skipton	2024	2030	NYC/West Yorkshire Combined Authority/ Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)	NYC/West Yorkshire Combined Authority/ Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)	No	Funded	£45m	Planning			Planning	

Appendix A: Response to Consultation

Table A.1 – Summary of Responses to Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement on the AQAP

Consultee	Category	Response

Section to be completed after consultation has taken place.

Appendix B: Reasons for Not Pursuing Action Plan Measures

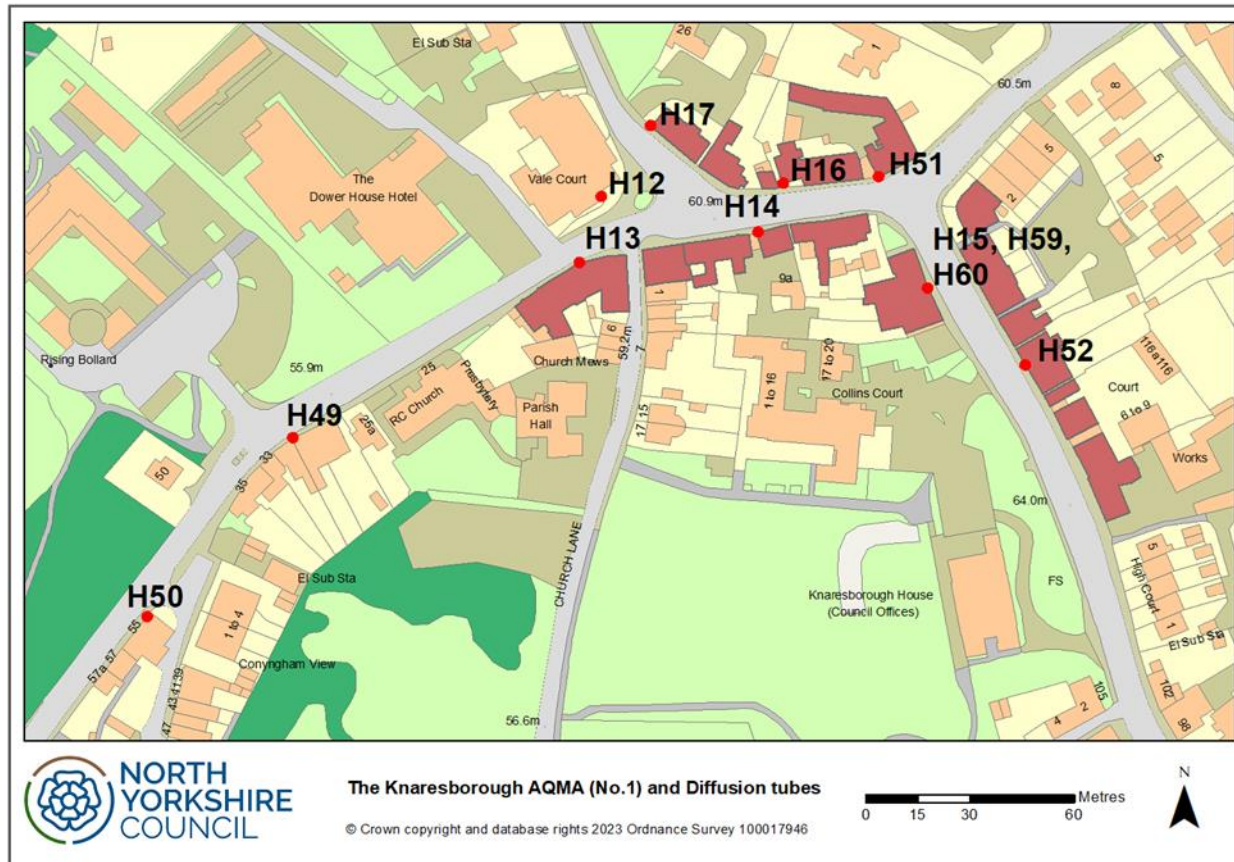
Table B.1 – Action Plan Measures Not Pursued and the Reasons for that Decision

Action category	Action description	Reason action is not being pursued (including Stakeholder views)
Traffic Management		

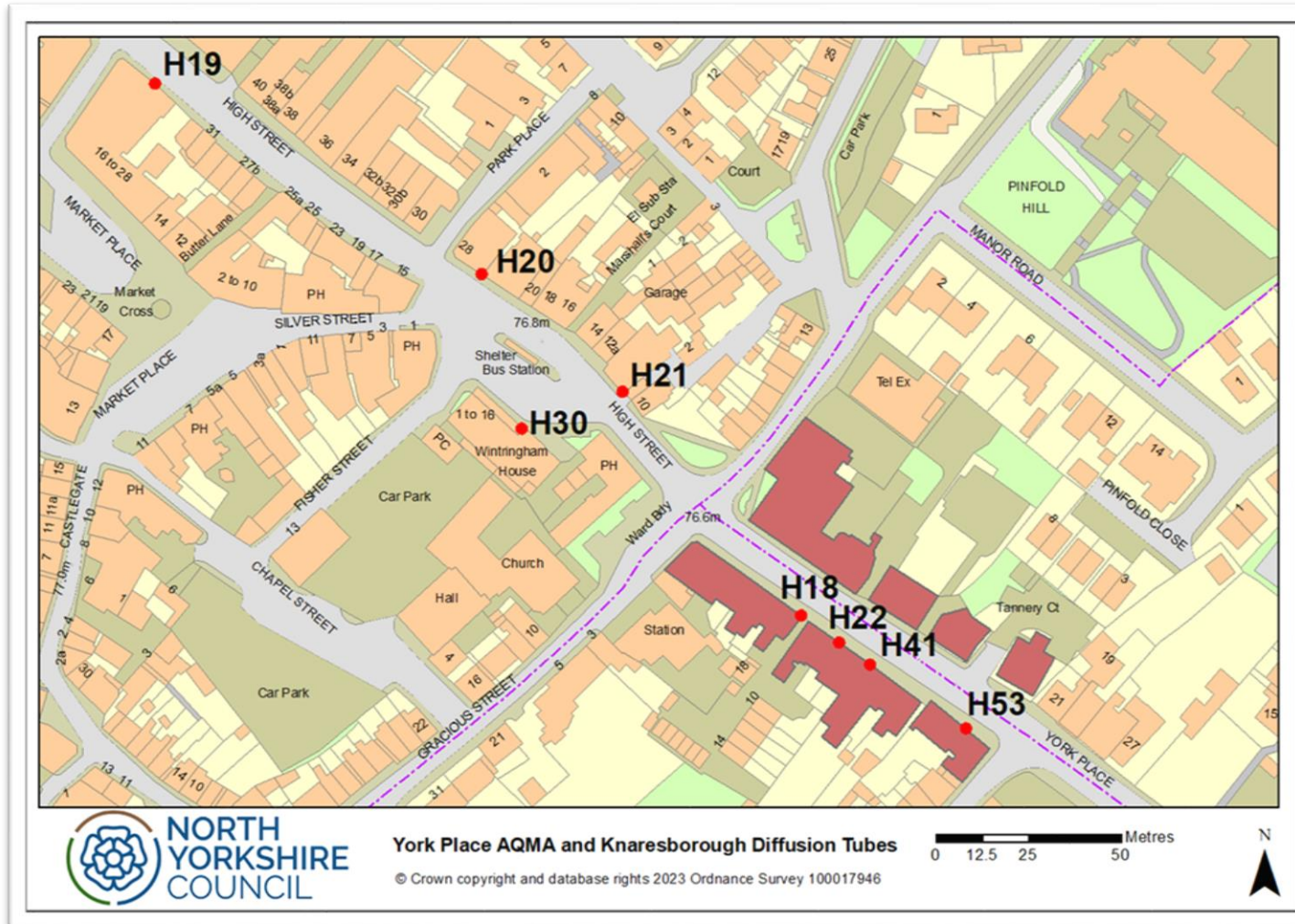
To be completed following consultation.

Appendix C: AQMA Maps

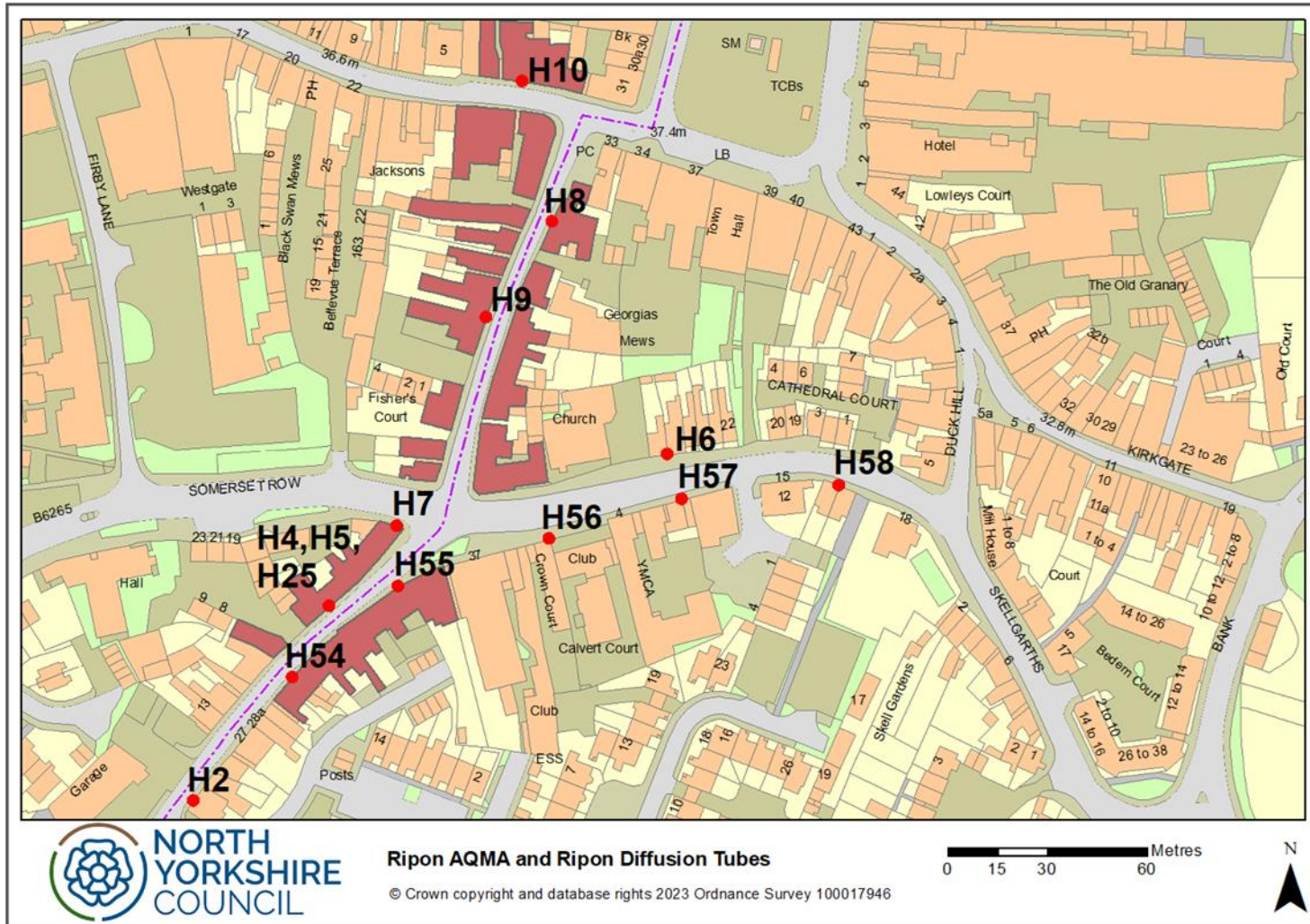
AQMA 1 – Bond End, Knaresborough – Continued Monitoring



AQMA 4 – York Place Knaresborough – To be Revoked



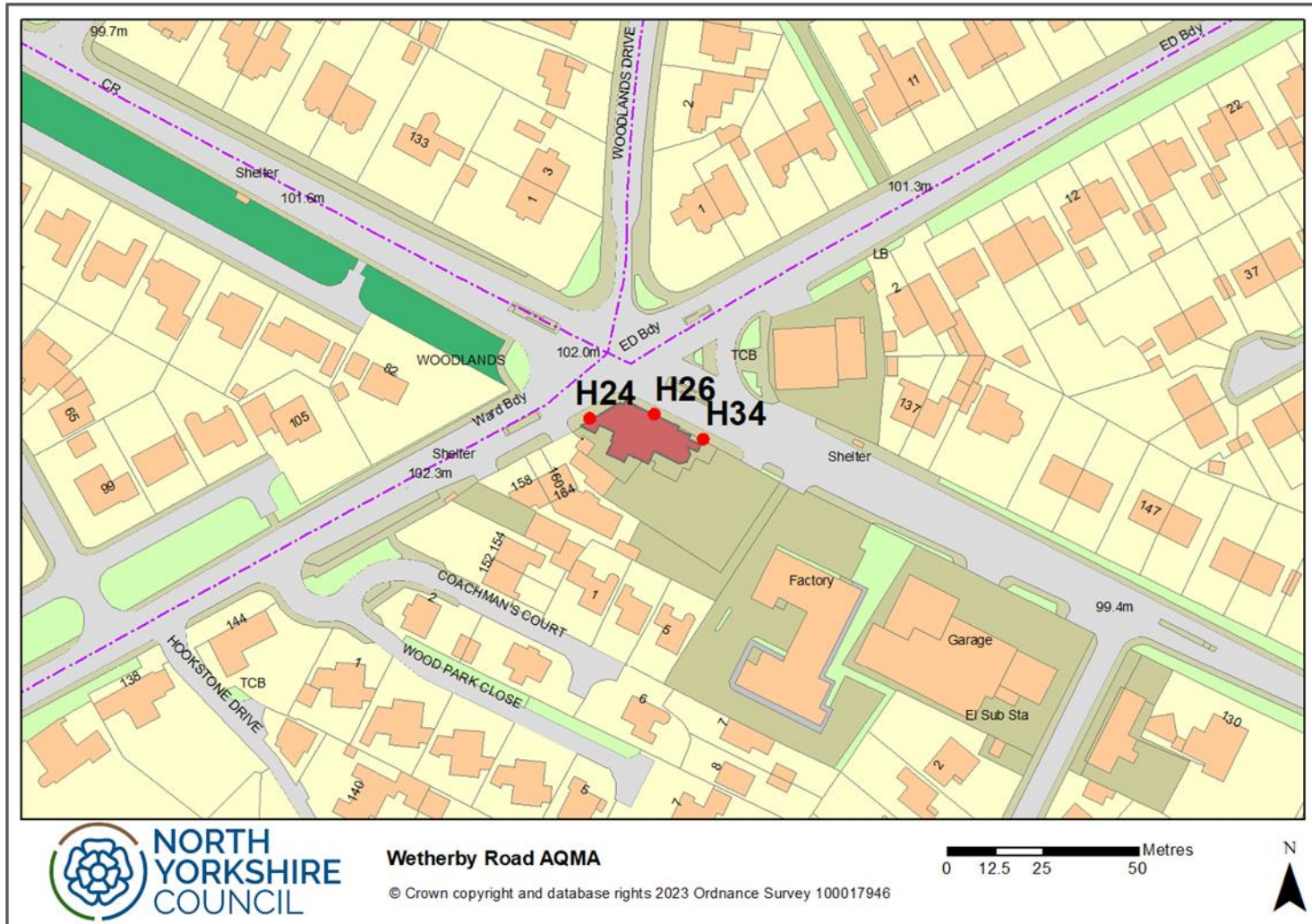
AQMA 3 Ripon – To be Revoked



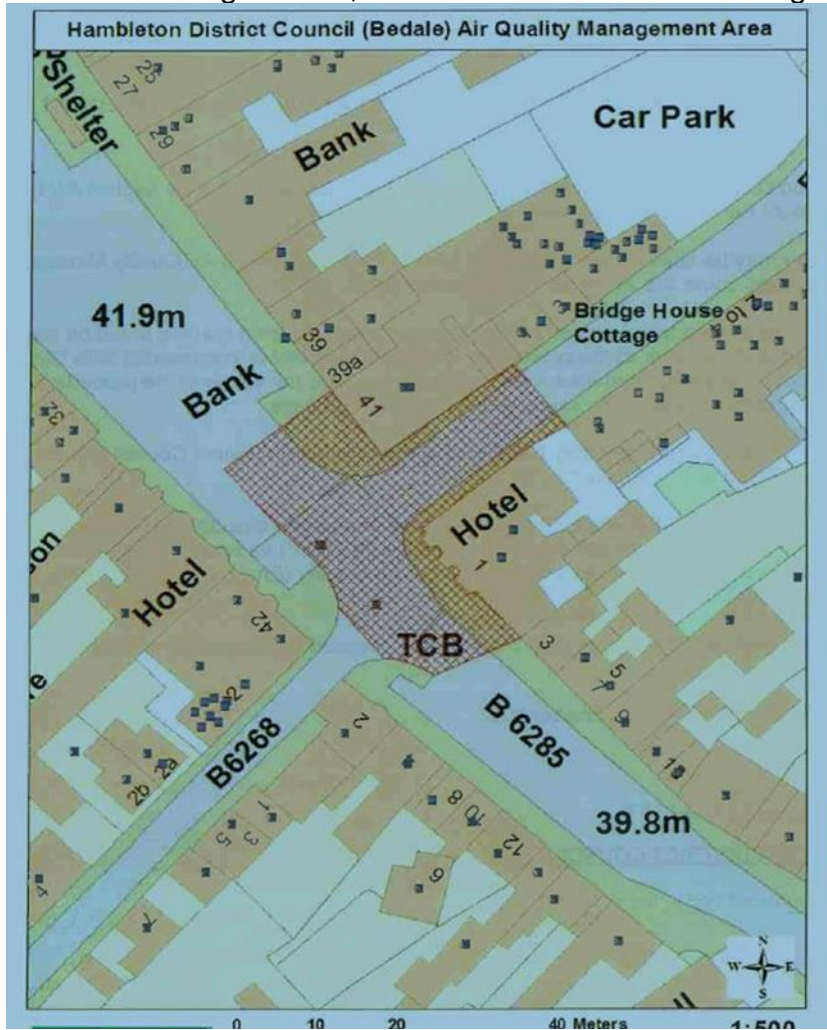
AQMA 6 – Selby – Continued Monitoring



AQMA 7 – Wetherby Road, Harrogate – Continued Monitoring



AQMA 5 – Bridge Street, Bedale – Continued Monitoring



AQMA 7 – Malton – To be Revoked



Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Description
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan - A detailed description of measures, outcomes, achievement dates and implementation methods, showing how the local authority intends to achieve air quality limit values'
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area – An area where air pollutant concentrations exceed / are likely to exceed the relevant air quality objectives. AQMAs are declared for specific pollutants and objectives
AQS	Air Quality Strategy
ASR	Air quality Annual Status Report
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EU	European Union
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
PM ₁₀	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10µm (micrometres or microns) or less
PM _{2.5}	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less

References

To be completed.