

# REDCAR ENERGY CENTRE APPENDIX 11.1

## Air Quality Planning Policy Context

Redcar Energy Centre  
Environmental Statement  
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## Contents

|     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 1   | AIR QUALITY PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT..... | 1 |
| 1.1 | Regulatory and Policy Framework.....     | 1 |
| 1.2 | Planning Policy Context.....             | 1 |

# 1 AIR QUALITY PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## 1.1 Regulatory and Policy Framework

- 1.1.1 There are three main aspects to the regulatory framework affecting potentially-polluting developments; the planning process determines whether and where the development can be located; building regulations control the design and construction of developments; and once built, regulation of pollution from the operation of certain prescribed processes is by the Environmental Permitting Regulations or by nuisance provisions for premises not operating prescribed processes. The relevant parts of the framework of pollution regulation, planning policy and relevant guidance are summarised below.

## 1.2 Planning Policy Context

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 1.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012) and was revised in July 2019 (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). The NPPF sets out three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development. The relevant objective in the context of this air quality assessment 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 adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy” (Paragraph 8c)*

- 1.2.2 Under the heading ‘Promoting sustainable transport’, the NPPF states:

*“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.” (Paragraph 103)*

- 1.2.3 Under the heading ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’, the NPPF states:

*Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

*a)...*

*e) 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 and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; ...” (Paragraph 170)*

*“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.”*  
(Paragraph 181)

## National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 1.2.4 The NPPG was issued on-line in March 2014 and is updated periodically by government as a live document. The last major update was in November 2019. The Air Quality section of the NPPG describes the circumstances when air quality, odour and dust can be a planning concern, requiring assessment.
- 1.2.5 The NPPG advises that whether or not 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.
- 1.2.6 The NPPG states that when deciding whether air quality is relevant to a planning application, considerations could include whether the development would:
- *“Lead to changes (including any potential reductions) in vehicle-related emissions in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development or further afield. This could be through the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure; altering the level of traffic congestion; significantly changing traffic volumes, vehicle speeds or both; or significantly altering the traffic composition on local roads. Other matters to consider include whether the proposal involves the development of a bus station, coach or lorry park; could add to turnover in a large car park; or involve construction sites that would generate large Heavy Goods Vehicle flows over a period of a year or more;*
  - *Introduce new point sources of air pollution. This could include furnaces which require prior notification to local authorities; biomass boilers or biomass-fuelled Combined Heat and Power plant; centralised boilers or plant burning other fuels within or close to an air quality management area or introduce relevant combustion within a Smoke Control Area; or extraction systems (including chimneys) which require approval or permits under pollution control legislation;*
  - *Expose people to harmful concentrations of air pollutants, including dust. This could be by building new homes, schools, workplaces or other development in places with poor air quality;*
  - *Give rise to potentially unacceptable impacts (such as dust) during construction for nearby sensitive locations;*
  - *Have a potential adverse effect on biodiversity, especially where it would affect sites designated for their biodiversity value.”*
- 1.2.7 The NPPG provides advice on how air quality impacts can be mitigated and notes *“Mitigation options where necessary will be locationally specific, will depend on the proposed development and should be proportionate to the likely impact. It is important therefore that local planning authorities work with applicants to consider appropriate mitigation so as to ensure the new development is appropriate for its location and unacceptable risks are prevented. Planning conditions and obligations can be used to secure mitigation where the relevant tests are met.”*

## Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council's Local Plan

- 1.2.8 The Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Local Plan was adopted in May 2018 and sets out policies for the period until 2032. The relevant policy for the proposed development is detailed below:

*"Policy SD 4. General Development Principles*

*In assessing the suitability of a site or location, development will be permitted where it:*

*...*

*b. will not have a significant adverse impact of the amenities of occupiers of existing or proposed nearby land and buildings;*

*...*

*e. avoids locations that would put the environment, or human health, or safety, at unacceptable risk;*

*...*

*All development must be designed to a high standard. Development proposals will be expected to:*

*...*

*n. minimise pollution including light and noise and vibration levels to meet or exceed acceptable limits;*

*..."*