



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Lancaster City Council

Air Quality Action Planning Update - Carnforth Air Quality
Management Area

October 2018

Air Quality Action Planning Update - Carnforth AQMA

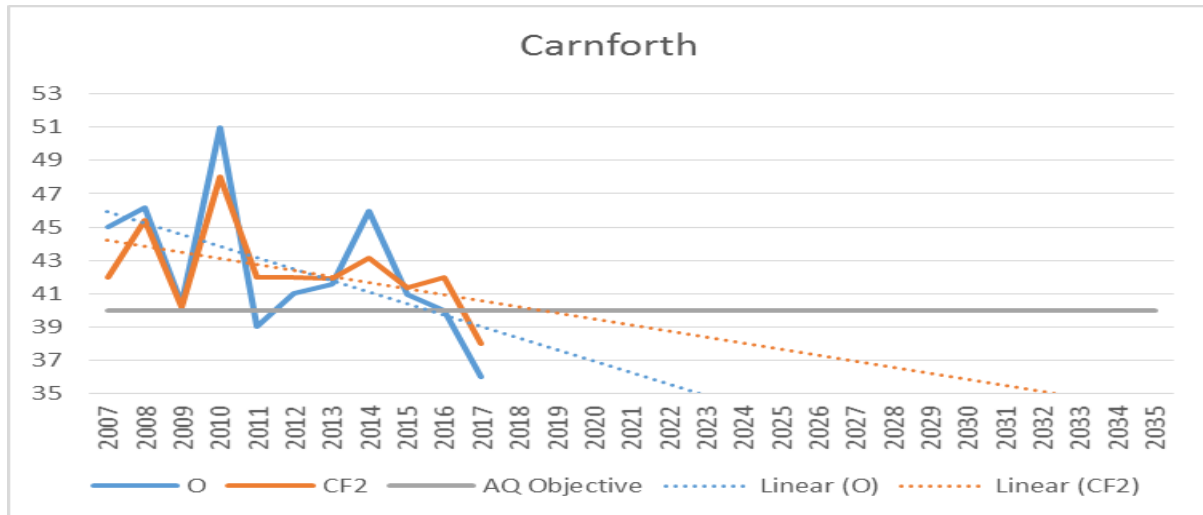
In 2013 Lancaster City Council produced and adopted a new Air Quality Strategy for Lancaster (available at: <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/environmental-health/environmental-protection/air-quality/air-quality-reviews-and-assessments>). The Strategy was considered necessary as plans had generally proved insufficient to address the issues presented. More recently it has also become clear that a key failing has been that vehicle emissions regulated through Euro emission standards have not delivered expected pollution reductions. The Strategy sets the aims and objectives for local air quality and set a route and process to provide 'the best environment and structure to achieve an agreed successful outcome'.

To deliver the Strategy the County Council proposed that the air quality delivery be incorporated into the then arising Transport Masterplan for Lancaster (available at: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/roads-parking-and-travel/highways-and-transport-masterplans/lancaster-district-highways-and-transport-masterplan/>). Through consultation on the detail of the plan, this approach was agreed and a schedule was put in place for the production of a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the Lancaster district based on the aims, objectives and process set out in the Air Quality Strategy for Lancaster. Interaction with key partners (particularly County Council Highways and planning sections of both councils) was a key concern of the Strategy adopted in 2013.

Although air quality issues are changing e.g. there are arising concerns over the increased use of solid fuels, the issue giving rise to the designation of Carnforth Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), are emissions from road traffic, specifically emissions of nitrogen oxides. In Carnforth the AQMA is designated due to the likely exceedance of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. An action plan was drafted in 2010, within which, the main action was traffic relief to Carnforth provided by the opening of the Heysham/M6 link road (the Bay Gateway). The new road opened in October 2016, delivering this planned action. At the same time the Transport Masterplan was adopted (the Bay Gateway being a key element of the Masterplan).

In 2017 air quality monitoring in Carnforth indicated compliance with air quality objective levels for nitrogen dioxide for the first time since the location was designated as an Air Quality Management Area. General pollution levels giving rise to the AQMA are considered to be slow gradual decline, particularly evident over the last four years. Air quality monitoring in Carnforth will therefore continue to track progress. At this time however, additional action is still considered to be required in Carnforth for three reasons (i) to reassure likely compliance with the objective in each future year (monitoring in 2017 indicated levels in some locations were just below the objective, not well under), (ii) to meet the Lancaster Air Quality Strategy objectives (which directs a reduction approach) and (iii) to respond to new demands arising from new development (which can add additional road traffic/emissions).

Graph showing indicated declining roadside NO₂ pollution levels in Carnforth AQMA (annual mean NO₂ ug/m³)



Actions being considered will comprise of a number of approaches, including, traffic route/management changes, measures to facilitate the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, measures to reduce emissions from buses and measures to facilitate and promote cycling and walking. A meeting was held in April 2018 to set out a process to assess measures that will form the basis of Air Quality Action Plan proposals. It is likely that that key measures in the arising air quality action plan will relate to those put forward in the transport masterplan, however, wider formal consultation on measures that may form part of the plan will commence in 2018 and continue to be open during the first half of 2019. After actions have been gathered, assessment will then take place to consider the likely impact of the measures and provide a recommended plan of actions which will be subject to consultation and finally adoption of a new plan in 2020. The assessment process will work using the outputs of work carried out or commissioned by both Lancaster City and Lancashire County Councils.

Given the traffic emissions are the key pollution source giving rise to the designation of the districts three AQMA's and the County Council's role as Highways authority (and for public health), it is considered that the close alignment of the Transport Masterplan and AQAP provides the best approach and opportunity to provide an effective, properly assessed, solution to air quality issues within the district.

Please be aware that a progress report (Annual Status Report) on air quality is provided to Defra on an annual basis and is available at : <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/environmental-health/environmental-protection/air-quality/air-quality-reviews-and-assessments>

As part of the process to produce a new air quality action plan for the Lancaster district we are currently consulting on actions that could be included within the plan. If you would like suggest any action the could be used to improve air quality in Carnforth or I other areas of the district please send your suggestions to:

environmentalhealth@lancaster.gov.uk

(please present the email subject as ' Suggested Air Quality Action Plan measures for Lancaster District')

or send by post to:-

FAO Paul Cartmell,
Senior Environmental Health Officer,
Lancaster City Council,
Morecambe Town Hall,
Marine Road,
Morecambe
LA4 5AF

The consultation will remain open until the 30 June 2019.