

ACCON response for Reading Borough Council in respect of issues raised at the meeting held on 6th February 2019's regarding air quality at the proposed development (Application No. 181117/FUL)

This Technical Note responds to issues raised by individual Councillors at the Planning Meeting in order to briefly summarise the situation with respect to air quality.

Point raised by:		ACCON Response
Councillor J Williams	Councillor Williams wanted to understand whether the air quality would be at an acceptable level for occupants of the proposed building (particularly Apartment 2) on a hot summer day, given the proximity of Southampton Street.	Air quality is not specifically assessed on a single day or period of the year. The approved method for determining the effect of air pollutant concentrations is by reference to the annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). ACCON's Air Quality Assessment as referenced in the Case Officers report to the Committee identified that predicted levels of pollutants would be below the levels where mitigation would be required. At ground floor level the predicted level of NO₂ is a worst-case of 30.4µg/m³ which is significantly below the Air Quality Objective level of 40 µg/m³. Pollutant concentrations of particulates and fine particles are also significantly below the Air Quality Objective levels. The annual mean pollutant concentrations are predicted using meteorological data for each and every hour of a year and therefore take account of all weather conditions including hot summer days with still wind conditions. According to guidance, there is only a risk that the NO₂ 1-hour objective (200µg/m³) could be exceeded on the development site if the annual mean NO₂ concentration is greater than 60µg/m³. At the development site, the worst case annual mean predicted concentration is 30.4µg/m³ (Development Receptor 2 – ground floor) – therefore hourly exceedances would not be expected. What this means in practice is that there would not be health effects for occupiers of the proposed development resulting from air quality. With respect to internal pollutant concentrations predictions are carried out for the façade of a building with the general assumption that internal pollutant concentrations will be the same

		as those outside regardless of whether windows are closed or open.
Councillor Maskell	Councillor Maskell in summing up the information requirements prior to the application coming back to Committee, stated that the Committee needed to be sure that the occupiers of the building would be protected from severe impacts of air quality.	Predicted pollutant concentration values are significantly below the Air Quality Objectives such that there would be no severe or significant health effects on future occupiers of the development. The predicted pollutant concentration levels are in line with passive monitoring carried out at the Red Cow by RBC which has shown that in the years 2015 to 2017 the NO₂ levels have remained below the Air Quality Objective of 40µg/m³. RBC's Specialist Environmental Protection Officers have acknowledged that there is no basis, in line with policy or national guidance, to require mitigation measures to be provided in respect of air quality and that air quality will not negatively impact on future occupiers of the proposed development.

Graham A Parry

20.02.2019