

Air Quality Progress Report 2004/05

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Summary

This Air Quality Progress Report has been prepared to detail the progress made with implementing local air quality management in York, and to provide an update on the progress made in achieving / maintaining pollutant concentrations in York below the air quality objectives.

In accordance with the air quality progress report guidance note LAQM.PRG(03) the following items have been included:

- New air quality monitoring results (description of monitoring sites, summary results including historical trends in air quality data)
- An overview of new local developments that may affect local air quality
- A full update on City of York Council's Air Quality Action Plan
- A summary of policies that exist relating to air quality and the planning process
- An update on the progress made with the Local Transport Plan

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Reviews and assessments of air quality in York

Under the requirements of the Environment Act 1995, Part IV, all local authorities are required to periodically review and assess air quality in their areas against health based objectives prescribed by the Government. Where it is found that the objective levels are unlikely to be met, local authorities must declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and draw up Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs) for improving air quality in those areas.

In December 1998 City of York Council completed the First Stage Review and Assessment of Air Quality in York. This report concluded that no further action would be needed to meet the air quality objectives for the following pollutants:

- benzene
- 1,3 butadiene
- lead
- carbon monoxide

For three other pollutants; nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and PM₁₀, the report concluded that more detailed reviews and assessments should be undertaken.

In February 2000 City of York Council completed the Second and Third Stage Review and Assessment of Air Quality in York. This report concluded that the air quality objectives for sulphur dioxide and PM₁₀ would be met, but recommended that an AQMA should be declared due to potential breaches of the annual average nitrogen dioxide objective. Following a period of extensive public participatory consultation an AQMA was declared in January 2002.

The declaration of the AQMA in York placed a duty on City of York Council to undertake a fourth stage review and assessment of nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the city and to submit an AQAP to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). A final Fourth Stage Review and Assessment of Air Quality in York, and an AQAP were submitted to DEFRA in July 2004.

In 2003 local authorities were issued with new guidance requiring them to undertake a risk based approach to future reviews and assessments of all pollutants for which air quality objectives have been set. The aim of this approach is to ensure that the amount of work undertaken for each pollutant is proportional to the risk of the objectives for that pollutant being breached.

In accordance with the revised guidance an Update and Screening Report for York was submitted to DEFRA in May 2003. The report concluded that no further action was needed to meet the air quality objectives for benzene, 1,3

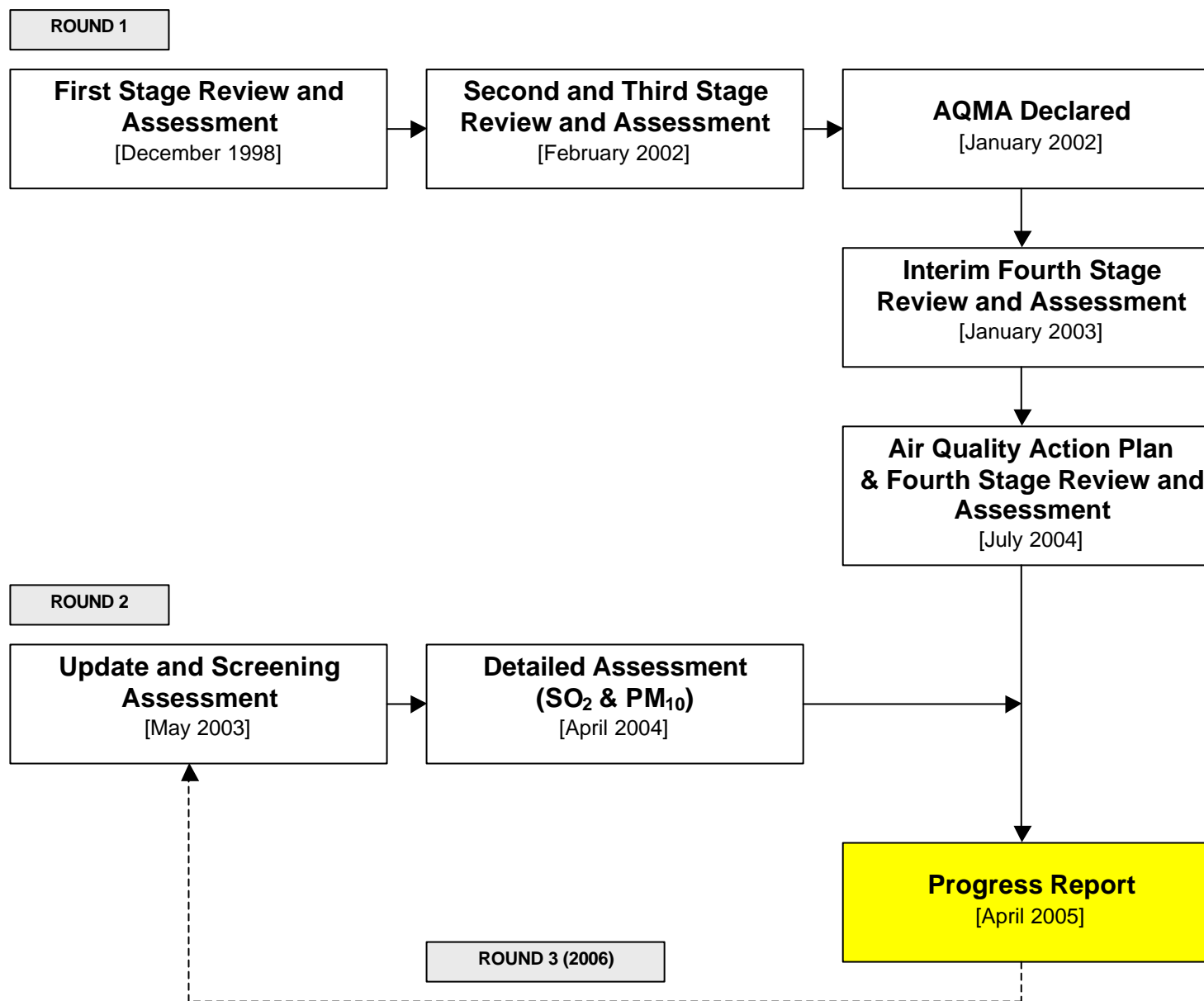
butadiene, carbon monoxide and lead. The report also concluded that no further action was needed to meet the objectives for nitrogen dioxide outside the current AQMA. The report did however identify a need to undertake further detailed assessments of :

- PM₁₀ emissions in villages where there is still a high proportion of domestic solid fuel burning, and;
- SO₂ emissions from diesel locomotives waiting in railway sidings

In April 2004 a Detailed Assessment was undertaken to provide an accurate assessment of the likelihood of the air quality objectives being exceeded at 'relevant locations' in the vicinity of these two emission sources. The report concluded that the declaration of further AQMAs for sulphur dioxide and PM₁₀ was not necessary.

City of York Council's Air Quality Review and Assessment process is shown in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 : Summary diagram of City of York Council's Air Quality Review and Assessment Process



1.2 Purpose of the Air Quality Progress Report

Historically, both Local Air Quality Management and the Review and Assessment process has seen to be too stop-start, with a number of local authorities competing their first round of review and assessment and then doing little for several years until the next round. This did not encourage the integration of LAQM into the routine work of local authorities. Progress reports are designed to ensure continuity in the local air quality management process. They thus fill the gaps between the three yearly requirement to carryout a review and assessment of air quality.

The overall aims of this document are :

- to report on the progress made on implementing local air quality management in York,
- to report on the progress made in achieving / maintaining pollutant concentration below the air quality objectives.

As such, this document provides an update on current air quality within York and details the progress made with the implementation of City of York Council's Air Quality Action Plan. The report also provides some commentary on the proposed integration of City of York Council's AQAP into the authority's second Local Transport Plan (LTP2).

The following report has been prepared in accordance with the Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance Note LAQM.PRG(03).