



Report to the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Agenda 21, Crime & Community Development

Subject: Request to revoke Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for Sulphur Dioxide

Author: Brendan Cox – Scientific Officer

Date: 07th March 2007

Background

The Environment Act 1995 introduced the concept of LAQM which requires Local Authorities to carry out assessments of Air Quality in their areas to ensure it meets Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) specified for a number of 'pollutants of concern', one of which is sulphur dioxide.

Information

In 2001 Nottingham City Council's air quality review and assessment process identified that emissions of sulphur dioxide from boiler plant located at Nottingham City NHS Trust Hospital, may lead to the AQOs for sulphur dioxide being breached. The area of exceedence also included a small part of Gedling Borough, around Oxclose Lane. In 2002 an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared by Order. (copy attached)

Nottingham City's Stage Four Review and Assessment (2003) established that the concentrations of sulphur within the fuel (coal) used by the City Hospital boiler was lower than originally specified by the plant operator. The sulphur content of the fuel determines the quantity of sulphur dioxide released when combusted, thus a reduction in sulphur content in the fuel results in reduced emissions of sulphur dioxide. However, before the AQMA could be revoked monitoring information was required to confirm the air quality model's prediction that the AQOs were not being breached.

Monitoring data from a continuous analyser located within the AQMA demonstrates that the AQOs for sulphur dioxide have not been breached and complex computer modelling of current emissions predicts they are unlikely to be breached in the future (as detailed within Nottingham City Council's Local Air Quality Management; Updating and Screening Assessment June (2006)).

The Environment Act 1995 Section 83 (2) states 'An order under this section may, as a result of a subsequent air quality review,-

- (a) be varied by a subsequent Order; or
- (b) be revoked by such an Order,

if it appears on that subsequent Air Quality Review that the Air Quality Standards and Objectives **are being achieved**, and are likely throughout the relevant period to be achieved, **within the designated area**'.

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has confirmed in writing to Nottingham City Council (August 2006) their acceptance of their report's conclusions. DEFRA expects AQMA's to be declared or revoked within four months of the identification of the requirement to declare or revoke and have requested copies of the revocation order when made.

Recommendation

That Gedling No1: Air Quality Management Order, 2002 (sulphur dioxide) be revoked.