



# Review of Air Quality Management Areas

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Huntingdonshire District Council

2023

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## 1. Introduction

This report has been developed in order to review the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) within the district of Huntingdonshire; demonstrate where compliance is being achieved; and consider action to be taken.

### 1.1 Local Air Quality Management (LAQM)

The air quality objectives set out in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 928), as amended by the Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 (SI 3043), provide the statutory basis for the air quality objectives under the LAQM regime in England. A summary of the air quality objectives in England can be seen in table 1 below:

*Table 1 – Summary of Air Quality Objectives in England:*

Pollutant	Objective	Averaging Period
Nitrogen Dioxide - NO <sub>2</sub>	200 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 18 times/year	1-hour mean
	40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Annual mean
Particles - PM <sub>10</sub>	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 35 times/ year	24-hour mean
	40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Annual mean
Sulphur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	266 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 35 times/year	15 minute mean
	350 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 24 times/year	1 hour mean
	125 µg/m <sup>3</sup> not to be exceeded more than 3 times/year	24 hour mean

*The units are in micrograms of pollutant per cubic metre of air (µg/m<sup>3</sup>).*

Source: Defra Policy Guidance (PG22) available at: [LAQM-Policy-Guidance-2022.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/policy-guidance/laqm-policy-guidance-2022.pdf)

These are the same as the limit values specified within the Air Quality Standard Regulations 2010 (as amended), which transposed the European Union's (EU) Directive on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (2008/50/EC).

Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, Section 82 requires local authorities to review and assess local air quality and determine whether or not the objectives are likely to be achieved. The LAQM programme places a duty on local authorities to

report their progress regarding this on an annual basis to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This is referred to as the Annual Status Report (ASR) and Huntingdonshire District Councils' can be viewed here [Air Quality - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.airquality-huntingdonshire.gov.uk).

Where air quality objectives are not being achieved, or are not likely to be achieved, Sections 83 & 83A of the Environment Act 1995 require local authorities to designate an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the pollution reduction measures to improve local air quality in order to achieve the objectives.

## **2. Monitoring**

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) undertake air quality monitoring across the district using both automatic air quality monitoring and passive diffusion tube sampling methods in line with government guidance to enable the results to be utilised for LAQM reporting purposes.

### **2.1 Automatic Monitoring**

Huntingdonshire District Council operate a static road-side Air Quality Monitoring Station (AQMS) located on the Huntingdon ring road, within the Huntingdon AQMA. The location was chosen in an attempt to monitor the worst level of pollution, whilst considering access, land availability and service requirements.

The AQMS monitors both Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and the analysers are regularly serviced and audited by external independent specialists. A review of the equipment took place in 2018, resulting in replacement of the analysers in April 2019 to ensure improved accuracy and reliability in the monitoring data.

## 2.2 Non-automatic NO<sub>2</sub> diffusion tube monitoring

Huntingdonshire District Council currently undertakes non- automatic (passive) monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> at 58 sites across the district, with the use of Diffusion Tubes, many of which are located within the AQMA's, as shown in Figures 1 – 4 below.

Funding for additional Diffusion Tubes in 2017 and 2019 increased the number of original monitoring sites, in order to assist in assessing the impact of relocating the A14. These are a requirement under the A14's Development Consent Order (DCO) and will remain in place until at least early 2025.

A further internal review of the diffusion tube network in 2018 identified an additional 7 sites and removal of 2. These were deployed in January 2019, bringing the total to 58 with the inclusion of the additional A14 tubes.

Whilst diffusion tubes are not able to provide an hourly mean for comparison with the hourly mean objective, government guidance<sup>1</sup> states:

*'A study carried out on behalf of Defra and the Devolved Administrations identified that exceedances of the NO<sub>2</sub> 1-hour mean are unlikely to occur where the annual mean is below 60µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Analysis of data in more recent years has shown local authorities should continue to use this assumption where NO<sub>2</sub> 1-hour mean monitoring data are not available (typically if monitoring NO<sub>2</sub> using passive diffusion tubes). It should be noted that this relationship is based upon observations made predominantly at roadside and kerbside monitoring sites where road traffic is the primary source of emissions'*

Therefore, if the annual mean is less than 60µg/m<sup>3</sup> it can be assumed that an exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective for NO<sub>2</sub> was unlikely to have occurred.

The monitoring results from the diffusion tubes are bias adjusted and distance corrected where necessary, in line with Defra guidance. More details regarding this can be found in the ASR at [Air Quality - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/air-quality).

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<sup>1</sup> DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance 2022 Section 7.97

### **3. Huntingdonshire District Council's Air Quality Management Area's (AQMA's)**

Huntingdonshire currently has four Air Quality Management Areas.

1. Huntingdon,
2. St Neots,
3. Brampton, and
4. A14 Hemingford to Fenstanton.

Table 2 below provides a summary regarding these areas and Figures 1 - 4 identify the locations and monitoring points. All four AQMAs were declared due to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), primarily due to vehicle emissions.

Table 2: Information regarding Huntingdonshire District Council's Air Quality Management Area's:

AQMA Name	Date of Declaration	Pollutants and Air Quality Objectives	City / Town	Description	Level of Exceedance (maximum monitored/modelled concentration at a location of relevant exposure (RE))	
					At Declaration	Most recent year (2022)
<b>HDC Air Quality Management Area Order No. 1 (Huntingdon: Nitrogen Dioxide)</b>	16th November 2005 - amended 29th October 2007	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Huntingdon	An area encompassing approximately 2831 domestic properties affected by the A14, A141, B1044, B1514 and Huntingdon Inner Ring Road.	<b>50.2</b> µg/m <sup>3</sup> (2004) At 96 Orthwaite	28.2 µg/m <sup>3</sup> at Pathfinder House*
<b>HDC Air Quality Management Area Order No. 2 (St Neots: Nitrogen Dioxide)</b>	16th November 2005 - amended 29th October 2007	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	St Neots	An area encompassing approximately 115 domestic properties affected by local traffic in the town centre.	<b>45.2</b> µg/m <sup>3</sup> (2004) At 26 High Street	23.2 µg/m <sup>3</sup> At 8-10 High Street (St Neots 5)
<b>HDC Air Quality Management Area Order No. 3 (Brampton)</b>	1st September 2006 - amended 29th October 2007	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Brampton	An area encompassing approximately 82 domestic properties affected by the A14.	<b>37.2</b> µg/m <sup>3</sup> (2004) At 16 Wood View	14.7 µg/m <sup>3</sup> At 1 Laws Crescent (Brampton 3) *
<b>HDC Air Quality Management Area Order No. 4 (Hemingford to Fenstanton: Nitrogen Dioxide)</b>	1st September 2006	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Fenstanton	An area encompassing approximately 62 domestic properties affected by the A14.	<b>46.2</b> µg/m <sup>3</sup> (2004) Slipway, Huntingdon Road	13 µg/m <sup>3</sup> at Hilton Road (Fenstanton 1)

\* Not calculated to RE point, which would therefore be even lower than the figure shown



Figure 1 Huntingdon AQMA and monitoring locations

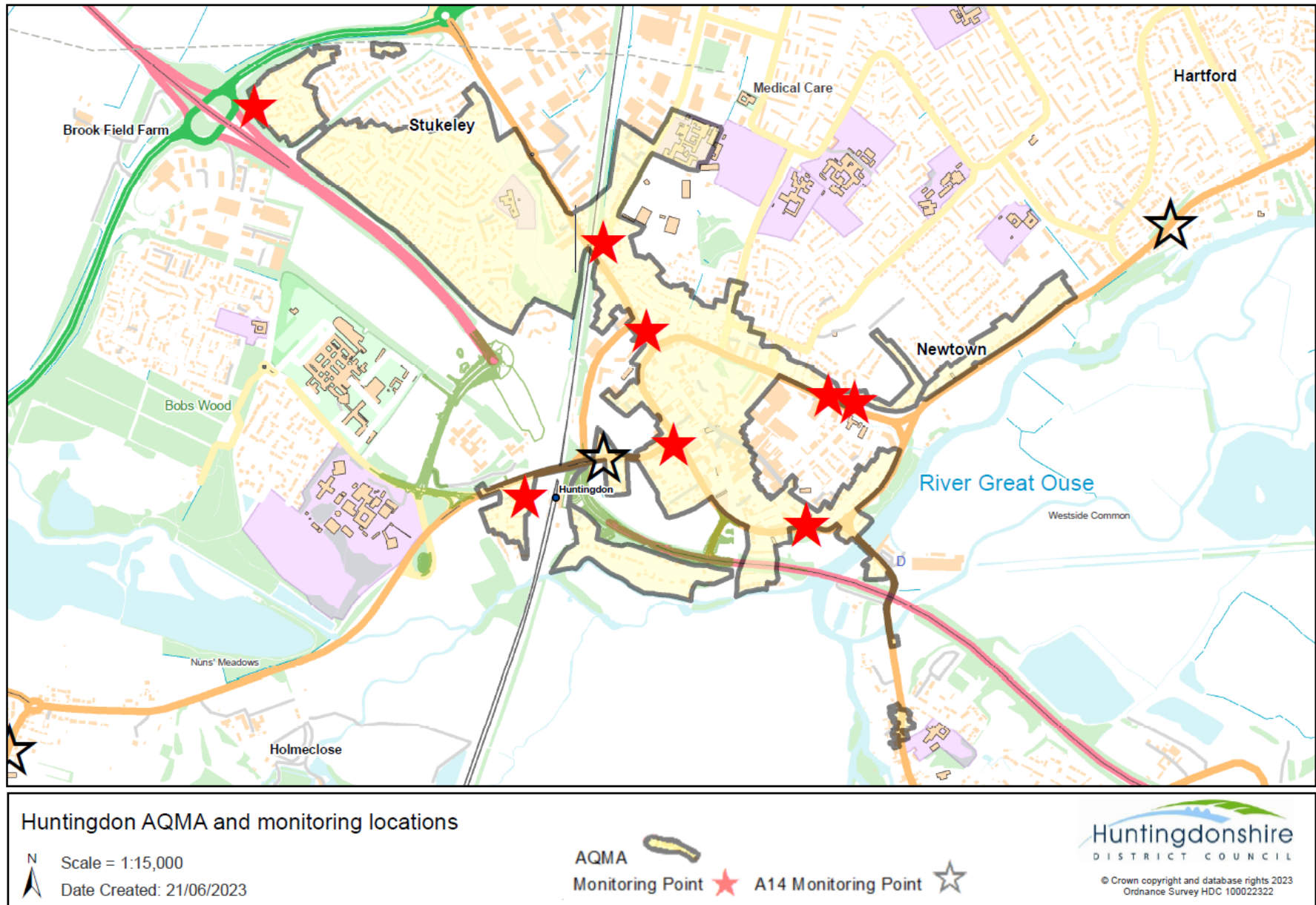
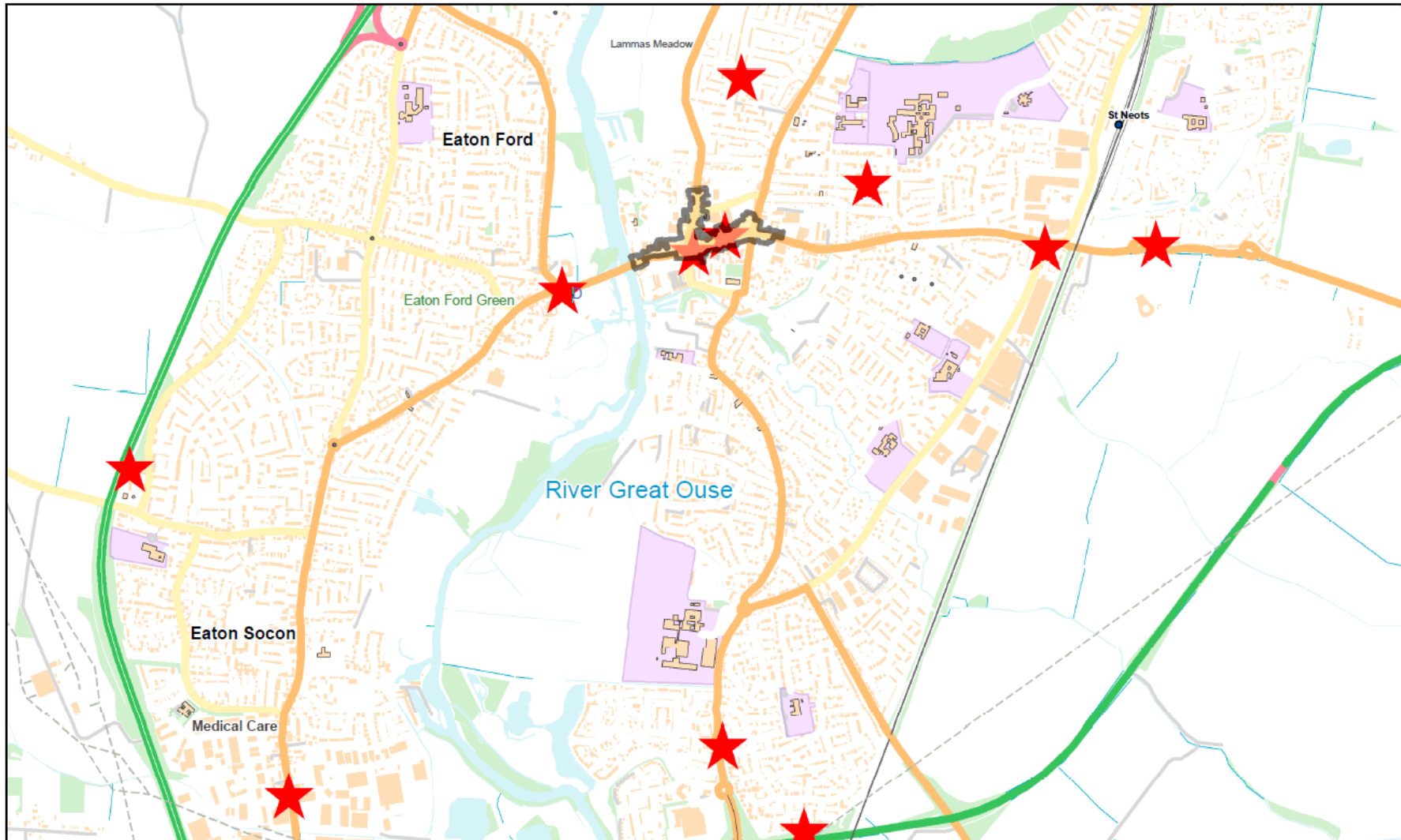




Figure 2 St Neots AQMA and monitoring locations



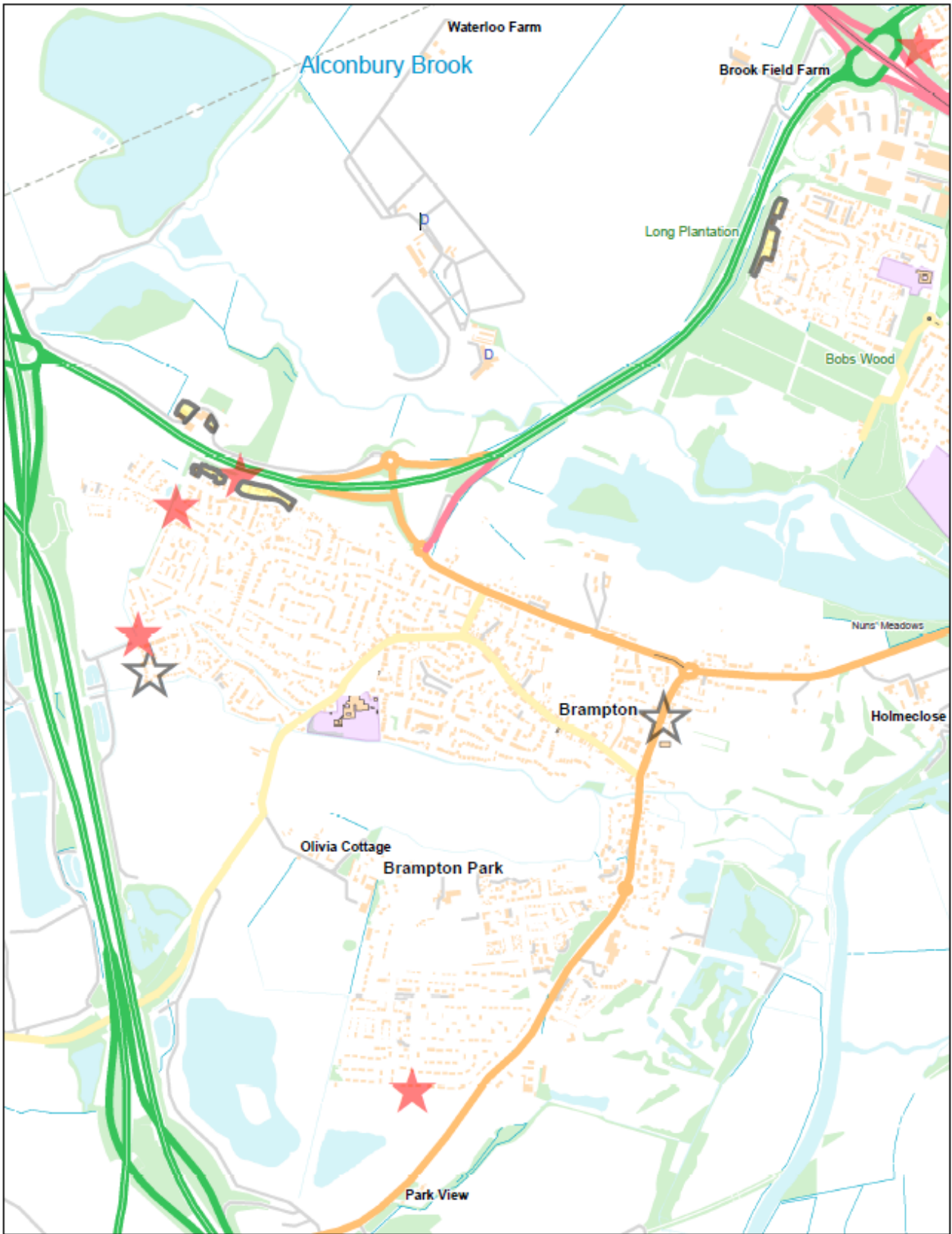
St Neots AQMA and monitoring locations

N  
Scale = 1:17,000  
Date Created: 21/06/2023

AQMA   
Monitoring Point 




  
Huntingdonshire  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
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Figure 3 Brampton AQMA and monitoring locations



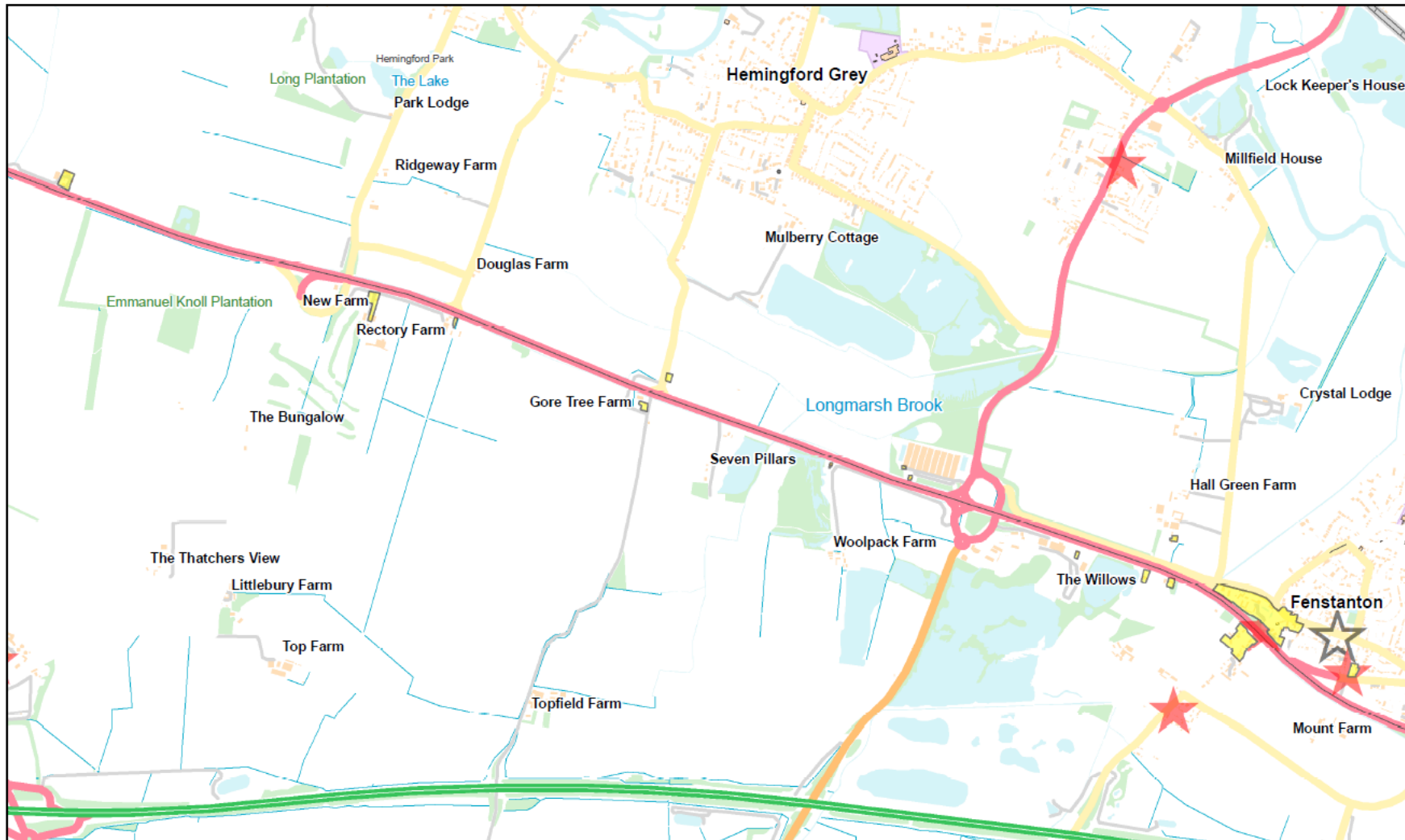
Brampton AQMA and monitoring locations

N Scale = 1:15,000  
Date Created: 21/06/2023

AQMA   
Monitoring Point  A14 Monitoring Point 


  
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Ordnance Survey HDC 100022322

Figure 4 Fenstanton AQMA and monitoring locations



Fenstanton AQMA and monitoring locations

N  
Scale = 1:20,000  
Date Created: 22/06/2023

AQMA  
Monitoring Point  A14 Monitoring Point 



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## 4. Current situation

### 4.1 Huntingdon

Historically the main sources of pollution within the Huntingdon AQMA were traffic on the A14 and the ring road. Works for re-routing the A14 resulted in a new section of road opening at the end of 2019, taking the majority of heavy traffic away from Huntingdon. This coincided with the impacts of the Covid pandemic and various lock downs in 2020 and 2021, which affected traffic figures. The A14 works to remove the viaduct within Huntingdon centre and fully open the A1307 were completed in May 2022 with all associated traffic restrictions lifted on the 30th of that month, marking the end of the A14 relocation project. Therefore, traffic levels may have been impacted during the first few months of 2022, as roadworks could have influenced drivers' behaviour. This, coupled with the likelihood that peoples travelling habits may have changed since the pandemic, makes it difficult to assess the impact of the relocation of the A14, however, it is considered it has had a beneficial impact on pollution levels within Huntingdon.

Air quality monitoring results from previous years have been in line with national trends and shown a predominantly year on year reduction in Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), however following the expected dip in pollution levels during 2020, due to control measures associated with Covid-19, overall results slightly increased in 2021 and this trend has continued into 2022, with another slight increase at the majority of sites.

The highest concentrations measured by diffusion tube within the whole district during 2022 were at Pathfinder House (PFH) with the mean result of the triplicate tubes at 28.2µg/m<sup>3</sup>. This compares to a figure of 27µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2021 and remains well within the objective. Whilst the overall trend this year and last year has been an increase, all of the sites remain below the levels measured in 2019, before Covid and the completion of the A14 works.

The data demonstrates that in 2022 all sites met the NO<sub>2</sub> objective of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> and the continuing low trend is likely due to the relocation of the A14 and a change in travel behaviour.

Following completion of the A14 works, data is being gathered during 'normal' traffic flows and the AQMA in Huntingdon will be reviewed over the next few years in line with LAQM Technical

Guidance (TG22). Due to the works in Huntingdon on the viaduct removal and the A1307 impacting the earlier part of 2022 it is considered 2023 will be the earliest year to commence using data to assess this. In line with paragraph 3.57 of TG22 if compliance is achieved for three consecutive years, revocation will be considered. This may result in an AQMA with more than 5 years consecutive compliance, which is against the guidance, however this would ensure a robust assessment.

Additional information regarding the diffusion tubes can be found in Appendix C of the most recent ASR located here: [Air Quality - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Air-Quality).

The trend in air quality within the Huntingdon AQMA can be seen in Figure 5 on the following page.

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**When assessing the results with regard to the air quality objectives, the information demonstrates that there have been no breaches of the 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> NO<sub>2</sub> limit within the Huntingdon AQMA since 2019.\***

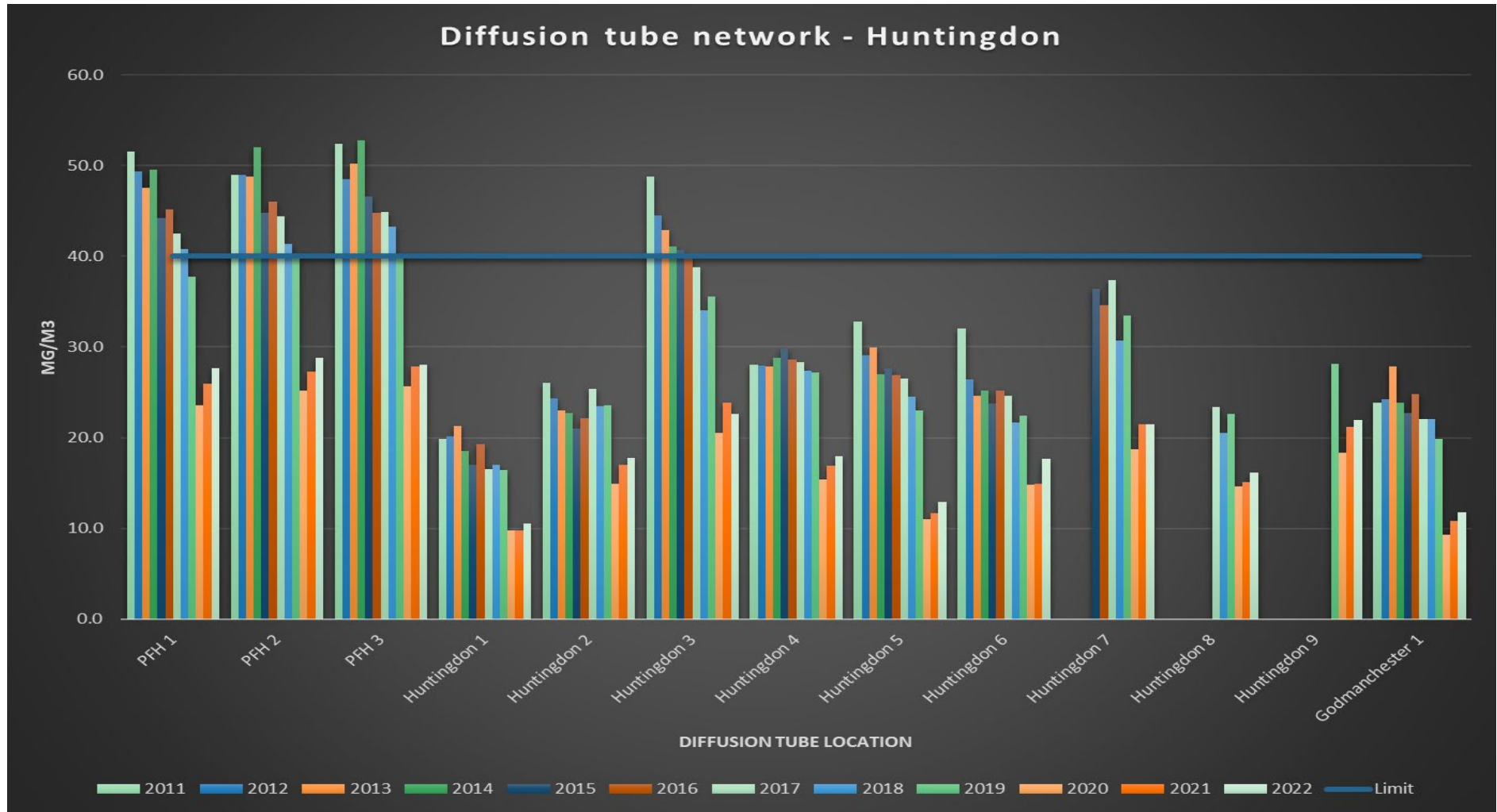
**There were no annual means greater than 60µg/m<sup>3</sup>, indicating that an exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective was unlikely.**

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\* Whilst there have not been any breaches since 2019 it is not currently proposed to revoke the Huntingdon AQMA see Section 10 below for further information.



Figure 5 Annual mean trend in Huntingdon AQMA



Full results can be seen in Appendix A.

## 4.2 St Neots

Monitoring within the AQMA has demonstrated that the air quality objectives are not being breached in St Neots. The highest level monitored in 2022 was  $23.2\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  on the High Street. Further to the diffusion tube monitoring that continues to take place, in 2017 an independent detailed modelling assessment of  $\text{NO}_2$  concentrations was completed confirming air quality limits were not being breached. This can be viewed on our website at: [Air Quality Modelling for St Neots - Final Report \(huntingdonshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Air-Quality-Modelling-for-St-Neots-Final-Report).

Large scale development is taking place within St Neots and whilst the impacts of these developments were assessed through the planning process, Huntingdonshire District Council have introduced two new diffusion tube locations in order to ensure any potential impact is being monitored and assessed.

The trend in air quality within the St Neots AQMA can be seen in Figure 6 on the following page.

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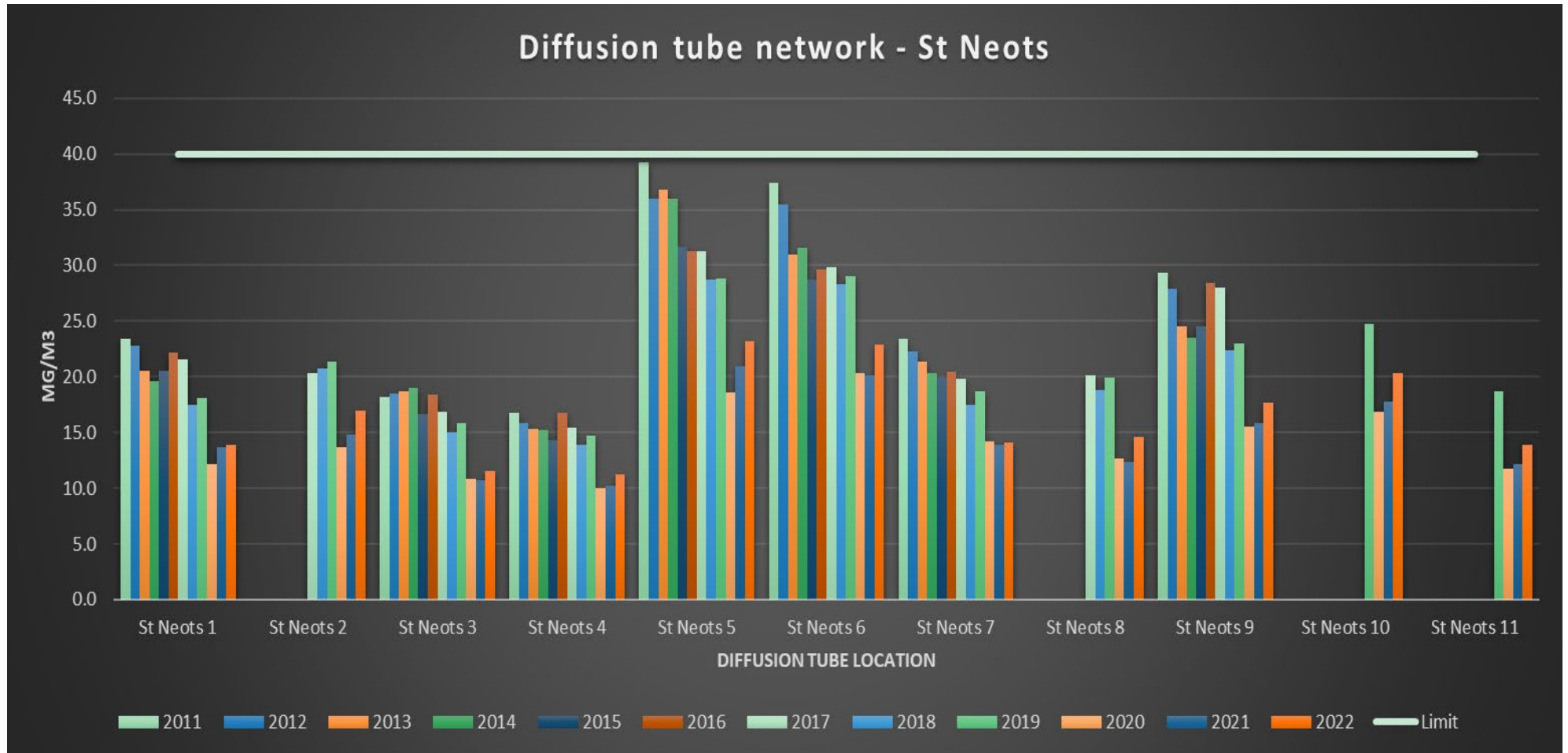
**When assessing the results with regard to the air quality objectives, the information demonstrates that there have been no breaches of the  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$   $\text{NO}_2$  limit for more than 10 years at any location.**

**There were no annual means greater than  $60\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , indicating that an exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective was unlikely.**

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Figure 6 Annual mean trend in St Neots AQMA



Full results can be seen in Appendix A.

### 4.3 Brampton

Monitoring within Brampton demonstrates that NO<sub>2</sub> levels are well within the air quality objectives. Levels reduced during Covid, and have increased slightly during 2021 and 2022, however the highest level monitored in 2022 within the AQMA was 14.7µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Air quality is likely to have improved with the relocation of the A14.

The trend in air quality within the Brampton AQMA can be seen in Figure 7 on the following page.

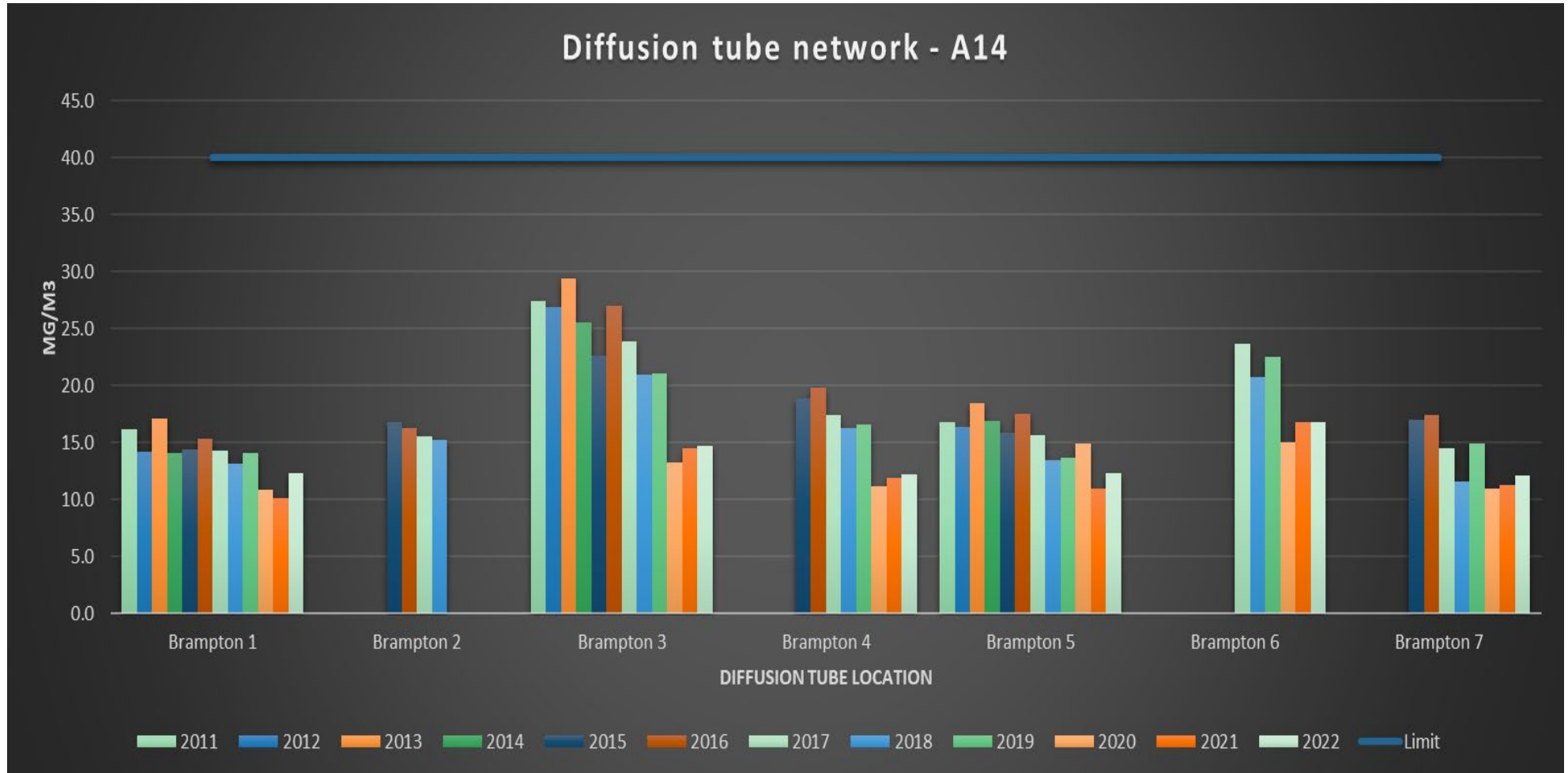
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**When assessing the results with regard to the air quality objectives, the information demonstrates that there have been no breaches of the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> NO<sub>2</sub> limit in more than 10 years at any location.**

**Annual means are substantially below 60 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, indicating that an exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective was highly unlikely.**

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Figure 7 Annual mean trend in Brampton AQMA



Full results can be seen in Appendix A.

#### 4.4 Fenstanton

The trend over the last few years has been primarily a reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> and monitoring demonstrates good compliance in this area of the district. Pollution levels are likely to have reduced due to the relocation of the A14. The highest level monitored within the AQMA in 2022 was 13µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

The trend in air quality within the Fenstanton AQMA can be seen in Figure 8 on the following page.

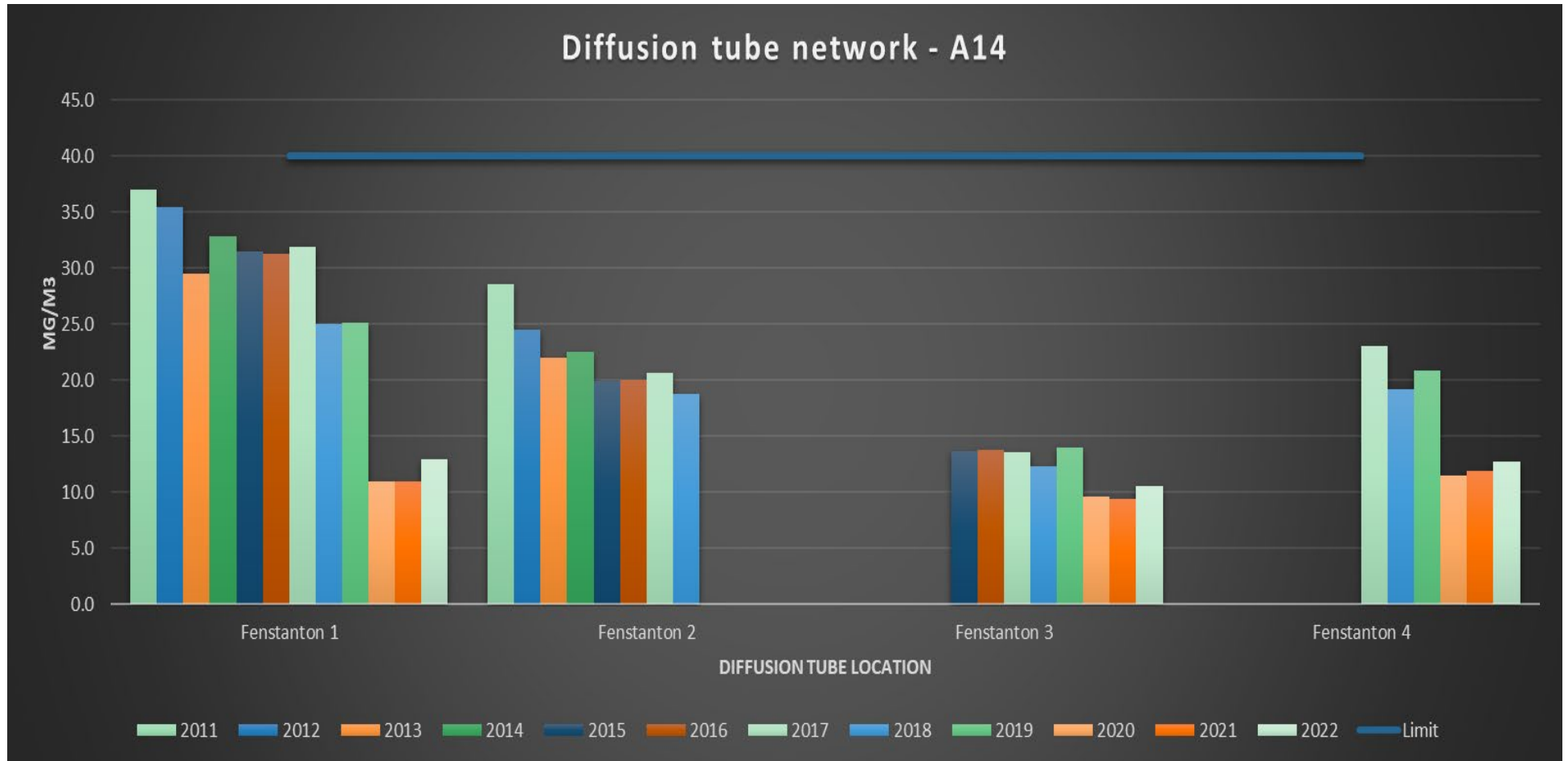
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**When assessing the results with regard to the air quality objectives, the information demonstrates that there have been no breaches of the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> NO<sub>2</sub> limit in more than 10 years at any location.**

**Annual means are substantially below 60 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, indicating that an exceedance of the 1-hour mean objective is highly unlikely.**

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Figure 8 Annual mean trend in A14 Fenstanton AQMA



Fenstanton 2 ceased in 2018, Fenstanton 3 commenced in 2015 and Fenstanton 4 commenced in 2017.

Full results can be seen in Appendix A.

## 5. Reasons for improvement

All four AQMA's were designated due to pollution from road traffic. The government recognises that emissions of pollutants to air from the transport sector have shown a consistent decline over time, most likely due to the introduction of stricter European emission standards and turnover of vehicles, resulting in the gradual removal of older more polluting vehicles from the roads. This has been acknowledged in the UK Informative Inventory Report on Atmospheric Emissions 1990 – 2021 published in March 2023<sup>2</sup> which shows reducing trends in emissions across the UK sectors, indicating a steady decline in emissions from NO<sub>x</sub> (as NO<sub>2</sub>) amongst others. Low NO<sub>x</sub> boilers and stricter industrial emission limits have also assisted in reducing overall NO<sub>2</sub> levels.

With regard to the AQMA in St Neots, strategic highway improvements have been completed, including the introduction of a smart traffic lighting system, which have led to an improvement in traffic movement and subsequent reduction in air pollution.

The relocation of the A14 has improved the air quality in the Huntingdon, Brampton and Fenstanton AQMA's.

## 6. Huntingdonshire District Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)

A joint Air Quality Action Plan was completed in 2009 between South Cambs, Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire District Council with the aim to consider air quality impacts collaboratively over the broader local area and enable consideration of schemes with a wider impact. The action regarding highway improvements in St Neots and the relocation of the A14 were aims within the AQAP, and both have been implemented. The AQAP document requires updating and HDC aims to provide a new AQAP or alternative, once the future of the AQMA's within the district has been determined, to ensure the most appropriate action is taken.

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<sup>2</sup> [UK IIR 2023 Submission \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/air-quality/uk-irr-2023-submission)

## 7. Requirements for revoking an AQMA

Three of the four AQMA's have been meeting the air quality objectives for a number of years. Defra has been advising Huntingdonshire District Council that these should be revoked, within their feedback on the Annual Status Report.

Under the Environment Act 1995 a local authority does not necessarily have a duty to revoke an AQMA once the air quality objectives are met. It is at that Local Authorities discretion to revoke if following a review, it is considered air quality objectives are likely to be met and will continue to do so.

The process for revoking an AQMA is outlined in the DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy and Technical Guidance 2022 (LAQM.PG(22) & LAQM.TG(22)). The main points are highlighted in the following table:

Table 3: Process for revoking an AQMA:

Guidance	Section	Requirement	HDC compliant?
<b>LAQM PG(22)</b>	4.10	Air quality objectives are being met and will continue to do so. Compliance with objectives should be for 3 or more years.	<b>Compliant</b> < 3 years data for St Neots, Brampton and Fenstanton
	4.11	Publicise the revocation to ensure the public and local businesses are aware of the situation	<b>Required</b> Can be placed on website
	4.12	Following a revocation, (where this would result in that local authority no longer having any AQMA) a local air quality strategy should be put in place to ensure air quality remains a high-profile issue and enable a quick response should there be any deterioration in condition.	<b>Not formally required</b> Unless the Huntingdon AQMA is also revoked



Guidance	Section	Requirement	HDC compliant?
<p><b>LAQM TG(22)</b></p>	<p>3.53</p>	<p>The decision to amend or revoke an AQMA should only be taken following a detailed study, which should set out in detail all the available information used to reach the decision, with the same degree of confidence as was provided for the original declaration.</p>	<p><b>Compliant</b> Completed for St Neots</p>
	<p>3.55</p>	<p>In some instances, if compelling evidence exists, detailed modelling to support the decision to amend/revoke an AQMA may not be necessary and an AQMA may be amended or revoked following a screening assessment or on the basis of robust monitoring evidence</p>	<p><b>Compliant</b> Completed for Brampton and Fenstanton</p>
	<p>3.56</p>	<p>Pollutant concentrations may vary significantly from one year to the next, due to the influence of meteorological conditions. Therefore, before revoking an AQMA based on measured pollutant concentrations, the authority needs to be reasonably certain that any future exceedances (that might occur in more adverse meteorological conditions) are unlikely. For this reason, it is expected that authorities will need to consider measurements carried out over several years, national trends in emissions, and local factors that may affect the AQMA, including measures introduced as part of the Air Quality Action Plan, together with information from national monitoring on high/low pollution years.</p>	<p><b>Compliant</b> No breaches in over 10 years in St Neots, Brampton and Fenstanton AQMA's</p>
	<p>3.57</p>	<p>The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring. Where NO<sub>2</sub> monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent</p>	<p><b>Compliant</b> &lt; 3 years data showing good compliance in St Neots, Brampton</p>

Guidance	Section	Requirement	HDC compliant?
		uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO <sub>2</sub> concentrations being lower than 36µg/m <sup>3</sup> (i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO <sub>2</sub> objective).	and Fenstanton AQMA's
	3.57	There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period.	<b>Not compliant</b> St Neots, Brampton and Fenstanton have demonstrated compliance for more than 5 years.

Therefore, in order to revoke any AQMA, Huntingdonshire District Council will need to provide either:

- A screening assessment with robust monitoring evidence over several years to demonstrate current and future year compliance, or
- A detailed measurement and modelling assessment similar to that undertaken to declare the AQMA

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**This document details robust monitoring evidence over a number of years to demonstrate current compliance for three of the AQMA's.**

**Detailed modelling has also been completed for the St Neots AQMA.**

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In Defra's previous responses to Huntingdonshire District Council's Annual Status Report they have stated that AQMA's 2, 3 and 4 (St Neots, Brampton and Fenstanton) should be revoked as soon as possible, as these AQMAs have recorded results far below objective limits for in excess of the last 5 years.

## 8. Impact of revoking an AQMA

The main benefits of having an AQMA in place are that applicants who propose developments within or near to these designated areas have to assess the potential impact to ensure they do not cause an increase in air pollution levels to exceed the objectives. The designation should also provide the council with more influence with regard to transport layout and infrastructure considerations, for example, highlighting hotspots and working in partnership with highways to ensure improvements, such as the St Neots change to the traffic light system and strategic highway improvements which have reduced the air quality issues at that location, and the A14 realignment.

However, with the continued compliance at three of the four AQMA's there is a risk developers may query the council's requirements and applicants for smaller developments are required to provide details that could be viewed as excessive. It should also be noted that large scale developments are often accompanied with Air Quality Impact Assessments and if considered appropriate, officers would ask for this information during the planning process.

The proposed Local Plan for Huntingdonshire to the year 2036 contains the Councils requirements regarding air quality which is dealt with through policy LP38 as follows:

**LP 38****Air Quality**

A proposal will need to be accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment where:

- a. it is for large scale major development, defined in the 'Glossary';
- b. it would potentially conflict with an Air Quality Action Plan;
- c. any part of the site is located within 50m of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) or a Clean Air Zone (CAZ);
- d. a significant proportion of traffic generated would go through an AQMA or a CAZ; or
- e. any part of the site is located within 100m of a monitoring site where the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide exceeds  $35\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

An Air Quality Assessment should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal and the level of concern about air quality, but should assess:

- f. the existing state of air quality surrounding the site;
- g. how the proposal could affect air quality during construction and operational phases;
- h. the extent to which people could be exposed to poor air quality; and
- i. how biodiversity could be affected by changes in air quality as a result of the proposal.

A proposal will need to be accompanied by a low emissions strategy where the air quality assessment shows that the proposal would:

- j. have a significant adverse effect on air quality;
- k. have an adverse effect on the air quality factors that led to the affected AQMA being designated;
- l. cause a significant increase in the number of people that would be exposed to poor air quality; or
- m. lead to a designated nature conservation site or protected species that is sensitive to poor air quality being adversely affected by changes in air quality.

The low emissions strategy will include measures that mitigate the impacts of the proposed development by contributing to the improvement of air quality and/ or the reduction of emissions relating to the designation of the affected AQMA/ CAZ, prioritising actions identified in relevant Air Quality Action Plans/ CAZ action plans or equivalent documents.

In other circumstances, where identified as necessary based on a transport assessment/ statement, measures to reduce air pollution arising from traffic and traffic congestion may also be required.

The removal of AQMA's would impact on the number of sites potentially having to provide an assessment under this policy under sections c. and d., however section e. ensures where  $\text{NO}_2$  figures are close to the objective an assessment would be required to make sure the impact can be fully assessed. It should also be noted that section a. covers higher risk sites and both national government and other guidance (such as Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality by IAQM & EPUK) also provide advice on when the impact of development requires a more detailed assessment in respect of air quality impacts.

Provision of infrastructure for electric vehicles is covered within the *‘Parking provision and vehicle movement’* section on page 79 of the Local Plan, as paragraph 5.60 states: *‘It is suggested that at least one charging point for an electric vehicle should be provided where a proposal includes 20 or more parking spaces and that 1 charging point is provided for every 50 spaces’.*

Improving air quality is a priority for Government. Poor air quality results in adverse health impacts, as well as wider costs to society for instance to the National Health Service and environmental impacts threatening habitats and biodiversity. Air quality continues to be an indicator for the Public Health Outcomes Framework and this ensures that it will remain high on the agenda with an emphasis on partnership working to minimise air quality impacts.

Therefore whilst keeping the Orders in force could offer a greater check on developments that have the potential to significantly impact on air quality, this can be addressed through the planning regime as these developments should have to demonstrate that they would not lead to unacceptable levels of air pollution or a breach in air quality objectives.

It should also be noted that if air quality worsens after removal of the AQMA status and breaches of the objectives occur, we would have a statutory duty to declare an AQMA covering the necessary area.

## 9. The future

If an AQMA is revoked, our air quality duties do not end:

- Monitoring for nitrogen dioxide will continue at locations around the district, including areas that are currently within an AQMA.
- NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> & PM<sub>2.5</sub> will be monitored by the analysers located at Pathfinder House.
- Other monitoring provisions will continue to be explored to ensure we gain the best information possible.
- Annual reports containing monitoring data will continue to be published on the council’s website and submitted to Defra.

- Air quality will remain a consideration in planning policy and future planning permissions across the district.
- Data for the Huntingdon AQMA will continue to be assessed, and if the AQMA is to remain in place an updated more focussed Air Quality Action Plan will be prepared. If the pollution levels are such that this is put forward in future for revocation, an Air Quality Strategy will be developed in line with government guidance<sup>3</sup>.
- As well as pollution from road vehicles other pollution aspects will continue to be considered including pollution from industry, particulates from wood burning stoves and construction etc.

### 9.1 Emerging Issues

- Relocation of the A14 – Additional monitoring has been introduced in areas where traffic levels may increase following the realignment of the A14. This will enable an assessment of the general impact in areas such as Hilton, Brampton, Edison Bell Way and around the Huntingdon ring road.
- Monitoring has increased in St Neots and future monitoring provisions are being investigated.
- National Highways will be commencing development of the A428 improvements which run south of St Neots and directly affects traffic flows within St Neots. Works are programmed to commence this year and officers at Huntingdonshire District Council have been involved in the air quality aspects of this and will continue to assess construction impacts to ensure these are minimised as far as possible.

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<sup>3</sup> [LAQM-TG22-August-22-v1.0.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

## 10. Summary & Recommendation

When comparing the current AQMA's to the NO<sub>2</sub> air quality objectives:

- Annual mean air quality objective of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>
- 1 hour mean air quality objective of 200 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year.

Overall it can be seen from Figures 5 – 8 there has been a steady decline in the levels of NO<sub>2</sub> measured around the district, with 3 of the 4 AQMA's meeting the air quality objectives for a number of years and Defra advise where there have been no exceedances for the past five years, local authorities must proceed with plans to revoke the AQMA.

### 10.1 St Neots Recommendation:

**Revoke** but have an air quality strategy to ensure developers are aware of Huntingdonshire District Council's requirements and air quality impacts are considered and mitigated as far as reasonably possible. Continue liaising with National Highways regarding the A428 and consider any construction impacts and mitigation. Continue monitoring and investigate alternative methods of monitoring within the town.

### 10.2 Fenstanton Recommendation:

**Revoke** – Objectives are being met, and with the relocation of the A14 they will continue to be met.

### 10.3 Brampton Recommendation:

**Revoke.** Defra have stated they would support a revocation of this AQMA in line with the others due to monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations which have been consistently well below objective levels for a number of years, demonstrating continued compliance.



#### 10.4 Huntingdon Recommendation:

**Do not revoke.** Continue to review data over the next 3-5 years. If pollution levels increase and the AQMA needs to remain in place, the Air Quality Action Plan will require updating. If the levels continue to remain well within the objectives and the data gained meets the requirements of the government guidance, the AQMA should be put forward for revocation and an Air Quality Strategy completed. Traffic on the ring road will remain a focus within any future action plan/strategy and partnership working with Highways and Public Health will be required to consider what actions can be taken to minimise the impact.

All of the AQMA's have been in place for over 15 years. There is significant supporting evidence to revoke 3 of the 4, and still have an alternative method of control in place. There is a need to ensure the downward trend in air pollution continues, and air quality impacts are minimised as far as possible with the use of clever and innovative design and mitigation measures for new development when going through the planning regime. An Air Quality Strategy could be introduced to ensure air quality impacts remain a high-profile issue, and an Action Plan may be required for the Huntingdon AQMA.

Appendix A – Annual Mean NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Results:

Site ID	Site Type	Monitoring Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) <sup>(1)</sup>	Valid Data Capture 2022 (%) <sup>(2)</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>(3)</sup>				
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>PFH</b>	Roadside	Automatic	73.7	73.7	28	37	25	27	28.2
<b>St Neots 1</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	17.5	18.1	12.2	13.7	13.9
<b>St Neots 2</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	20.7	21.4	13.7	14.8	17.0
<b>St Neots 3</b>	Urban Background	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	15.0	15.8	10.9	10.8	11.5
<b>St Neots 4</b>	Urban Background	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	13.9	14.7	10.0	10.2	11.2
<b>St Neots 5</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	28.7	28.8	18.6	21.0	23.2
<b>St Neots 6</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	28.4	29.0	20.4	20.2	22.9
<b>St Neots 7</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	17.4	18.7	14.2	13.9	14.1
<b>St Neots 8</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	18.8	19.9	12.7	12.4	14.6

Site ID	Site Type	Monitoring Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) <sup>(1)</sup>	Valid Data Capture 2022 (%) <sup>(2)</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>(3)</sup>				
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>St Neots 9</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	22.4	23.0	15.5	15.8	17.6
<b>Southoe 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	16.2	15.5	10.9	10.4	11.1
<b>Buckden 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	21.9	21.8	13.0	14.3	18.1
<b>Buckden 2</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	19.7	22.2	14.4	15.6	16.1
<b>Buckden 3</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	25.4	25.7	17.5	17.8	20.8
<b>Buckden 4</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	15.8	17.1	12.0	12.1	13.0
<b>Brampton 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	13.1	14.1	10.8	10.1	12.3
<b>Brampton 2</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	28.2	18.3	21.2	21.9
<b>Brampton 3</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	21.0	21.0	13.3	14.5	14.7
<b>Brampton 4</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	16.3	16.6	11.2	11.9	12.2
<b>Brampton 5</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	13.4	13.6	14.9	11.0	12.3
<b>Catworth 1</b>	Rural	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	15.8	16.4	11.7	11.7	13.2

Site ID	Site Type	Monitoring Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) <sup>(1)</sup>	Valid Data Capture 2022 (%) <sup>(2)</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>(3)</sup>				
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>PFH 1, PFH2, PFH3</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	<b>43.3</b>	<b>40.1</b>	24.8	26.3	28.2
<b>Huntingdon 1</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	17.0	16.5	9.8	9.8	10.6
<b>Huntingdon 2</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	23.5	23.6	14.9	17.0	17.7
<b>Huntingdon 3</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	34.0	35.6	20.5	23.9	22.6
<b>Huntingdon 4</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	27.4	27.2	15.4	17.0	17.9
<b>Huntingdon 5</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	24.6	23.0	11.0	11.7	12.9
<b>Huntingdon 6</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	21.6	22.4	14.8	14.9	17.6
<b>Godmanchester 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	22.1	19.9	9.3	10.9	11.8
<b>Wood Green Animal Shelter</b>	Rural	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	12.7	12.6	9.6	10.4	10.6
<b>Fenstanton 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	25.0	25.2	11.0	11.0	13.0
<b>Fenstanton 2</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	16.6	10.6	10.3	10.7
<b>Fenstanton 3</b>	Rural	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	12.4	14.0	9.6	9.4	10.6

Site ID	Site Type	Monitoring Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) <sup>(1)</sup>	Valid Data Capture 2022 (%) <sup>(2)</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>(3)</sup>				
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>St Ives 1</b>	Urban Background	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	16.3	16.0	11.3	11.3	12.9
<b>St Ives 2</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	19.3	19.3	12.0	13.0	13.4
<b>St Ives 3</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	15.9	15.8	10.6	10.6	11.9
<b>Ramsey 1</b>	Urban Background	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	17.2	17.7	11.7	12.8	13.4
<b>Yaxley 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	27.8	27.1	18.0	19.3	19.9
<b>Stibbington 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	22.8	23.6	14.7	14.0	15.9
<b>Alwalton 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	19.2	19.1	12.7	12.6	13.1
<b>Sawtry 1</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	20.3	18.0	11.9	13.1	14.2
<b>Alconbury 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	19.0	17.4	13.4	13.9	15.3
<b>Great Stukeley 1</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	16.4	17.0	10.7	10.2	11.1
<b>Huntingdon 7</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	30.7	33.5	18.8	21.4	21.5
<b>Huntingdon 8</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	20.5	22.6	14.6	15.1	16.2

Site ID	Site Type	Monitoring Type	Valid Data Capture for Monitoring Period (%) <sup>(1)</sup>	Valid Data Capture 2022 (%) <sup>(2)</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>(3)</sup>				
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Hilton 1</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	10.8	12.9	8.5	8.3	9.1
<b>Fenstnton 4</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	19.2	20.9	11.5	11.9	12.7
<b>Alconbury 2</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	11.2	13.2	9.1	8.8	9.7
<b>Brampton 6</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	20.7	22.5	15.1	16.8	16.8
<b>Brampton 7</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	11.6	14.9	11.0	11.3	12.2
<b>Offord D'Arcy 1</b>	Suburban	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	10.7	13.2	8.8	8.8	9.5
<b>Offord Cluny 2</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	16.0	19.3	10.7	12.0	13.5
<b>St Neots 10</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	24.7	16.9	17.8	20.3
<b>St Neots 11</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	18.7	11.8	12.2	13.9
<b>St Ives 4</b>	Kerbside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	27.6	18.6	19.8	21.9
<b>St Ives 5</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	100.0	100.0	N/A	28.1	21.3	24.3	24.5
<b>Bluntisham</b>	Roadside	Diffusion Tube	91.7	91.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.5

*(1) Data capture for the monitoring period, in cases where monitoring was only carried out for part of the year.*

*(2) Data capture for the full calendar year (e.g. if monitoring was carried out for 6 months, the maximum data capture for the full calendar year is 50%).*

*(3) Reported concentrations are those at the location of the monitoring site (bias adjusted and annualised, as required), i.e. prior to any fall-off with distance correction.*