

Dear Jill,

Thank you for your reply and clarification about the use of the Systra Final Report of May 2017 in the Ryedale Plan: Local Plan Sites Document and Policies Map public consultation process.

I have studied the Systra report and note that it, like many previous reports about the expected future levels of NO<sub>2</sub> in the Malton AQMA, relies heavily on predicted (modelled) improvements in vehicle emissions and subsequent reductions in NO<sub>x</sub> emissions that may or may not materialise due to changes in vehicle technology.

2027 is a long way off, and I would not like Ryedale District Council to gamble the future health of my children by laying bets on the levels of NO<sub>2</sub> rising or falling.

The concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> may fall but it also may rise, and if recent history has taught us anything (since the Malton AQMA was declared on 14 December 2009 - a full 8 years ago), it is that all previous predictions of a decrease in air pollution have been wrong.

Successive governments, and district and local councils are all guilty of standing in the way of progress by refusing to bring forward legislation with teeth, or by failing to implement decisions already made to improve air quality. The health of the people of Malton and Norton has been sacrificed on the altar of local business bias for the past 4.5 years. I refer to the failure of NYCC and RDC to implement the HGV restriction over Norton level crossing which is part of the still unfinished £6million Brambling Fields junction upgrade scheme.

I think, therefore, that the Systra report should, at best, be taken with a pinch of salt (or with a little water depending on taste). Some wishful thinking has clearly found its way into the mix and therefore I suggest that RDC should not risk our children's future health on the strength of what may, or may not, be the case in terms of NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in 2027. It is only safe to predict the unpredictable.

If RDC promotes future development in the towns based on the over-optimistic findings of the Systra report, and gets it wrong, it will place the future health of the children of Malton and Norton at significant risk of harm.

Therefore we must deal with the known facts and concentrate on what we already know:

In contrast to the predictive and uncertain nature of the above comments, the report DOES state that the Malton air quality will FAIL TO IMPROVE to meet the legal limit for the concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> at one receptor location. (The report softly refers to the "Objective limit or level" when, in fact, it is a Legally Binding Limit and should be described and treated as such).

**There is also a flaw in the Systra report findings caused by the omission of important data.**

Malton and Norton Air Quality Assessment

## Local Plan Assessment and Air Quality Action Plan Recommendations:

### Comparison of Highway Interventions

#### 10.1.5

Within the AQMA, the complementary measures for both scenarios generally create a mixture of slight improvements or slight deteriorations in Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter concentrations at the various Receptors. This can be expected given that each measure will alter traffic distribution and thus effect pollutant concentrations at Receptors differently. The variation is therefore due to the net effect of the trade-off between the traffic reduction and the lower speeds (due to the reduced road capacity) which differ by location.

#### 10.1.6

The exception to this pattern of 'small  $\pm$ change' is at Receptor 10 (Yorkersgate 2), where the 'All Measures' combination of measures is predicted to increase NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations significantly in both scenarios (in addition to some notable increases to Particulate Matter), which would give this location the poorest NO<sub>2</sub>-related air quality (and is significantly worse than any location in the Do Nothing scenario). These increases outweigh the small benefits created elsewhere in the town by the package of traffic management measures."

The conclusion of para 10.1.6. is not a trivial matter. The law requires that the concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> in the Malton AQMA reduces to 'within' the legally binding limit at ALL receptor locations, and thereafter it is expressly illegal to allow the limit to be breached. There is no margin for error.

Therefore, alongside the predictions of improvements in air quality as a result of changes to vehicle emission technology (and a possible, but by no means certain, increase in the use of electric vehicles), it is equally possible that the legal limit for the concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> may also be lowered.

It is universally accepted that there is NO safe concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> and it is, therefore, entirely possible that the legal limit for the concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> may be set much lower in 2027 as the dangers of NO<sub>2</sub> become more widely known.

To that end, I question the over-optimism of the Systra report, and, more importantly, draw your attention to its striking omission.

No account has been made in the Systra report for the proposed increase in scheduled rail services between Scarborough and York and the consequent increase in congestion and air pollution caused by the additional barrier closures. The increase in 'waiting' traffic on the approach roads from Welham Road, Church Street, Norton Road, Norton and Castlegate, all the way back to Butcher Corner, in Malton will have a significant impact on the future level of NO<sub>2</sub> in the Castlegate and Church Street sections of the Malton AQMA. It is entirely possible that this congestion will

also cause additional delays and pollution on Yorkersgate and Wheelgate and Old Maltongate as the likely tail-back of traffic has a knock-on effect.

The congestion and air pollution caused by the likely increase in the frequency of rail crossing barrier closures has not been accounted for in the Systra report and therefore the report is an unsound and unreliable document and should not be used as an evidence base in the current Local Plan Sites Document and Policies Map public consultation process until it has been reconsidered, recalculated, and amended accordingly. The omission of data from the Systra report makes the predictions of future NO2 concentrations in the Malton AQMA wholly unreliable.

I request that the Systra report be re-done in order to take into account the planned or possible increase in scheduled rail services. The timing of the increase in the number of services is, in common with all the other data used in the Systra report, purely conjectural and a modelled prediction at this stage.

It is my considered opinion that the increase in congestion and NO2 emissions that additional rail crossing barrier closures would cause, would impact negatively and severely on the air quality in the Malton AQMA and to such an extent that all future site allocations in Malton and Norton may prove untenable.

Yours sincerely,

Simon

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On 30 Nov 2017, at 15:12, Jill Thompson wrote:

[Good Afternoon Mr Thackray](#)

[The sites that have been allocated were considered as part of the AQA Systra report. They are in Scenario 7 of the Highway modelling that was then fed into the AQA work.](#)

[Jill](#)

**From:** Simon

**Sent:** 30 November 2017 08:08

**To:** Jill Thompson

**Subject:** Ryedale Plan - public consultation - AQA

Dear Jill,

MALTON AND NORTON AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT  
LOCAL PLAN ASSESSMENT AND AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Final: 15/05/2017

[https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/attachments/article/378/Systra\\_Ryedale\\_AQA\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.ryedaleplan.org.uk/attachments/article/378/Systra_Ryedale_AQA_Report_Final.pdf)

Please can you tell me if the site allocations proposed for the towns of Malton and Norton in the draft Ryedale Plan (currently subject to public consultation) have been considered against the findings of the AQA prepared for RDC by Systra Limited?

If they have not, please send me a link to the AQA that has been used.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Simon

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