



Last week the UK government released its long-awaited draft Air Quality plan to tackle air pollution.

Ben Kite, Managing Director of EPR, an ecological consultancy that works on behalf of developers and planners throughout the UK, has drawn attention to shortfalls in the ability of the paper to deliver a robust framework that meets both development and ecological needs.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact if you would like a conversation with Ben for further comments.

Ben Kite, Managing Director of ecological consultancy, EPR, said:

"The economy's reliance on fossil fuels is well documented, as is the impact of air pollution on human health, well-being and the environment. This latest strategy rightly focuses on the level of traffic-related emissions in towns and cities, where air pollution poses the greatest public health risk. However, there are only brief references to impacts in other areas and on the natural environment. Aside from fairly broad references to proposed future legislation, and headline incentives to improve vehicle emissions standards, there is little sign that enough thought has been invested in determining how to ensure that pollution is not simply displaced to other areas not currently targeted for air quality management.

In my view this strategy could have gone further, and sought to make better use of the land-use planning system in general as a tool to tackle air pollution in a more holistic sense. Much of the burden for delivering action is also placed onto individual Local Authorities, risking a disjointed and inconsistent approach across and between different areas. There is very little new guidance for planners and environmental practitioners, as to how plans to reduce air quality impacts can be implemented in practice, on a local level, given the complex difficulties. In view, for example, of the recent High Court case quashing housing provisions set out by Lewes District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority due to inadequate consideration of potential in-combination effects on a protected area elsewhere in Wealden District, this could be leaving a lot to chance"