

22 February 2010

Our ref:

Councillor Keith Moffitt  
Leader of the Council  
Liberal Democrat Group  
West Hampstead Ward  
London Borough of Camden  
Room 125  
Camden Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London WC1H 9JE

The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs  
Nobel House  
17, Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR



*Dear Secretary of State,*

**Ongoing breaches of EU daily limit values for particulates PM10 and for nitrogen dioxide (NO2).**

I am writing on behalf of Camden Council to bring to your attention our concern around the likelihood of most of London, including Camden, failing to meet the EU daily limit value for dangerous airborne particles (PM10) by 11 June 2011.

As you know, concentration of PM10 and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) are high across much of inner London and in particular along some of Camden's busiest roads, such as Euston Road, Finchley Road, Southampton Row, Kentish Town and Kilburn High Roads. We can supply contemporary substantiating data that we monitor and collect on request. You will see from the URL link appended\* that Camden residents rank fourth highest among London boroughs for concern that "Pollution is something most in need of improvement".


Following the European Commission's rejection of the UK's application for a time extension to comply with the limit values for PM10, these standards should be met in full in the calendar year 2010, but we gather that the government may yet wish to re-apply for a time extension on PM10. We also understand that the government plans to apply for a time extension for nitrogen dioxide (NO2). But in both cases, action is needed now.

Whilst we are a leading borough in our efforts to reduce particulate concentration, it would be of limited effectiveness for Camden to act alone, which is why we are seeking to engage with DEFRA and others in respect of wider measures we might jointly support. We are clearly operating within the context of the Greater London Authority and Transport for London's work on this subject – and eagerly await the Mayor's completed Air Quality Strategy – but we feel that joined-up working with boroughs, regional bodies and DEFRA will be necessary to establish a feasible solution.

I understand that the government must show how 'conformity will be achieved with the limit value [or PM10] before the new deadline' (11 June 2011) if it is to be permitted a time extension. In a related manner, if the government successfully obtains a time extension to comply with the limit values for NO2 it will be necessary to ensure annual mean levels of NO2 remain below 60 micrograms per cubic metre instead of 40 mg/m3. I am advised by our experts that neither of these standards is likely to be met, yet London will become the focus of the world in 2012.

I would welcome a meeting with you and your officials in the near future, together with representatives from the GLA. I would be accompanied by Camden officers and my councillor colleagues Chris Knight (Executive Member for Environment) and Paul Braithwaite, to discuss our concerns and how Camden might play a constructive role with the achievement of the EU limit values. We have already approached the GLA's Mayoral Adviser on the Environment, Isabel Dedring, who we believe will be supportive of such a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely  


**Cllr Keith Moffitt**  
**Leader of the Council**

cc. Daniel Instone – Head of Waste Strategy, DEFRA  
Isabel Dedring – Mayoral Adviser on the Environment, GLA  
Councillor Chris Knight – Executive Member Environment, LBC  
Councillor Paul Braithwaite, LBC  
Councillor Alexis Rowell, LBC  
Rachel Stopard – Director of Culture and Environment, LBC  
Sam Monck – Assistant Director (Public Realm and Sustainability), LBC  
Oliver Myers – Head of Corporate Sustainability, LBC  
Gloria Esposito – Senior Sustainability Officer (Air Quality), LBC