

Dear

5 July 2023

Request for Information – ATISN 17459

Thank you for your request for information regarding Air quality. I apologise for the late response.

Information requested

1. The impact of the 50mph limit on air quality in M4 Newport
2. The impact of 50mph limit in Pontypridd on air quality on A470
3. The impact of 50mph limit in Aberavon. On air quality on the M4
4. The impact of Glyncoch quarry on air quality
5. The impact of Morganstown Quarry on air quality
6. The impact of steel works in Port Talbot on air quality
7. The financial cost of signage change to 30mph and street painting
8. The number of Welsh Government official journeys undertaken on public transport
9. The number of Wells Government journeys official journeys undertaken by car

Our response

For questions 1-3, please find below a link to the report covering the monitoring data at the three sites, [Annual data on NO2 concentrations for the motorway and trunk road: 2020 to 2021 | GOV.WALES](#) provides monitored data year 2018 to 2021. Speed limits were introduced in summer 2018.

2022 NO2 data is being finalised and this will be published in May/June, as well as publishing updated Air Quality Plan.

I can confirm the following for question 4 and 5 -

I am enclosing a copy of the final report, dated 19 August 2022, in relation to a planning appeal made by Hanson UK Ltd in relation to Craig yr Hesg Quarry in Glyncoch. The report contains advice on air quality impacts arising from operations at the site. Further information is contained in the submitted appeal documents which can be found at the planning appeal casework service on the Welsh Government website here. You will need to search under the following case numbers:-

APPEAL A: APP/L6940/A/20/3265358

APPEAL B: APP/L6940/A/21/3282880

APPEAL A: The construction of a landscape screening landform around the eastern and northern margins of the extension area; construction of a screen mound along the western boundary of the extension area; the extension of Craig yr Hesg Quarry via the phased extraction of some 10 million tonnes of Pennant Sandstone; extraction of the remaining reserves of some 5.7 million tonnes of sandstone within the existing quarry; retention of existing aggregate crushing screening plant to process sandstone from the existing quarry and extension site together with related access roads and infrastructure; use of existing approved quarry access road to the public highway; and implementation of a comprehensive restoration scheme for the application site to establish amenity grassland, woodland and nature conservation uses.

APPEAL B: Continuation of quarrying and related operations without complying with conditions 1-4 inclusive and conditions 45 and 46 imposed on the Environment Act ROMP schedule of conditions issued by RCT Council on 24th April 2013, ref 08/1380/10.

If you are seeking information not contained in the above, please could you provide further clarification, including whether it is information on actual impacts or predicted impacts that you are seeking and if it is information created over a particular period of time, and/or relating to impacts over a particular period of time?"

No information is held about the impact of Morganstown quarry (known as Taffs Well Quarry) on air quality.

With regard to question 6 about the impact of steel works in Port Talbot on air quality, the Welsh Government is responsible for reporting compliance with air quality target values in Wales. The Welsh Government has reported exceedances of the target value for benzo[a]pyrene in the Swansea Urban Area agglomeration zone and South Wales non-agglomeration zone. The reports can be viewed [here](#).

Neath Port Talbot Council is responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting air quality in their area as part their Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) duties. This includes assessing the impact of any industrial sites on ambient air quality levels.

Air quality monitoring is undertaken at several sampling points in the vicinity of TATA Steel in Port Talbot. The sampling points include sites comprising part of UK monitoring networks and also Neath Port Talbot Council's local monitoring network.

All data collected by monitors within the networks is publicly available. Current and historic data for monitors in UK monitoring networks can be viewed [here](#) and the Council's monitoring data can be viewed [here](#), with supporting information available [here](#) in their annual progress report.

For Question 7. The financial cost of changes to traffic signs as a result of the reduction of the default speed limit from 30mph to 20mph is estimated to be £25.7 million.

For questions 8 and 9, requesting a broad scope of information as described without specifying a timeframe makes the search very difficult and time consuming.

Section 12 of FOIA allows the Welsh Government to refuse a request for general information in circumstances where it estimates that it would exceed the "appropriate limit" to either comply with the request in its entirety or, confirm or deny whether the requested information is held.

The appropriate limit is currently set at £600 for the Welsh Government, which is calculated on the basis of one member of staff taking more than 24 hours to comply with the request.

There are roughly 5000 individuals working for the Welsh Government. This would therefore encompass searching each individuals' financial record across the whole of

the Welsh Government over a number of years which would be very time consuming. The finance report would need to be analysed each posting line by line, as it is not always immediately evident as to what the costs relate to i.e. travel, accommodation or food etc. In addition it would also take a significant amount of time to review records / information on Ministerial travel in Official cars. We would then have to extract the relevant information, it would take one official well in excess of 24hrs to complete the exercise.

I have therefore concluded that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to deal with that part of your request. I have therefore decided to refuse that part under Section 12 of the FoIA as to comply with it would exceed the appropriate limit.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales. Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely