



Department
for Transport

Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance (QCG)

practical advice on carbon analysis to inform transport strategies and schemes



- Reducing transport-related carbon emissions is vital for the UK to reach net zero
- Decisions taken in development of transport strategies and schemes can have a significant influence on emissions
- QCG provides guidance to help authorities consider carbon throughout the local transport planning process

This leaflet provides a high-level summary of the QCG

Despite significant progress in recent years on carbon management and assessment, a gap was identified: carbon guidance tailored to the specific process, methods and challenges of local transport.

This gap has limited the ability of local authorities to influence carbon impacts, especially at the earliest stages of transport planning.

QCG seeks to fill this gap – making it easier for authorities to take an evidence-based approach to transport planning.

It does this by outlining a best-practice process that will help authorities to take decisions that reduce transport-related carbon emissions.

For analysts QCG also provides a comprehensive summary of different carbon assessment methodologies. This will make it easier to select the right methodology and for authorities to undertake this analysis themselves.

Early consideration of carbon in the transport planning process can reduce risks and costs where it informs decisions that avoid schemes with a high carbon impact and helps achieve objectives with lower cost and carbon.

This approach can also support the pursuit of local decarbonisation goals in a way that reflects local circumstances and addresses local issues while supporting the UK's target of reaching Net Zero by 2050.



Who should use QCG?

QCG is intended for local transport authorities responsible for developing transport strategies (e.g. Local Transport Plans) and schemes.

Do I need to read the full guidance?

No - the guidance does not have to be read end-to-end.

Chapters 2 – 5 are likely to be most useful for policy officers looking to understand how carbon analysis can support decision-making.

Chapters 6 – 9 will be most applicable to analysts undertaking carbon assessments.

How does QCG relate to existing guidance and standards?

QCG does not replace or supersede any existing guidance.

It provides transport specific advice on how to prepare and use carbon analysis in a way that is supportive of existing carbon management, assessment and business case guidance such as PAS2080:2023 and TAG Unit A3.

What tools and resources are available to support this analysis?

The majority of methods outlined in QCG can be completed using tools developed by DfT and partners.

Do I have to follow the process and methodologies in QCG?

The QCG does not mandate when it should be applied; but advises where such analysis could support decision-

making and how it can be undertaken where authorities choose to do so or are required to by existing guidance or legislation.



Transport Strategy Development



QCG Chapter 3

- Understand current and future transport-related emissions across your area (without proposed interventions).
- Most authorities won't need to do any analysis themselves; just obtain data prepared at a regional level.

QCG Chapter 4

- Consider carbon in the generation and sifting of options
- Draw on insights from the evidence-base established in analysis described in Chapter 3
- Consider user and infrastructure carbon impacts when sifting – this could be qualitative or use quantitative benchmarking methods
- Quantify the impact of shortlisted interventions to inform whether further refinement or ambition is needed

Transport Scheme Development



QCG Chapter 5

- Assess carbon impacts in early stages of scheme development to inform optioneering and design and set a baseline for carbon management.
- Benchmarking methods can be used for quick, early estimates where appropriate.
- Prepare updated assessments at later stages, typically using more detailed information.
- These assessments provide inputs to business cases where required.

(Scheme delivery)

Evaluation

QCG Chapter 9

- QCG provides high-level advice on key principles and concepts of carbon impact evaluation.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 provides technical advice on the methodologies described in Chapters 3, 4 and 5