



Environmental Impact Assessment [version 1.0]

Proposal title: Green Gas		
Project stage and type: <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Idea Mandate <input type="checkbox"/> Outline Business Case <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Business Case		
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other [please state]	<input type="checkbox"/> Already exists / review	
Directorate: Property Assets & Infrastructure	Lead Officer name: David Gray	
Service Area: City Leap Client Function	Lead Officer role: Energy Supply Manager	

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment is to help you develop your proposal in a way that is compliant with the council’s policies and supports the council’s strategic objectives under the [One City Climate Strategy](#), the [One City Ecological Emergency Strategy](#) and the latest [Corporate Strategy](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the project proposal process by someone with a good knowledge of the project, the service area that will deliver it, and sufficient influence over the proposal to make changes as needed.

It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the Environmental Impact Assessment. See further [guidance](#) on completing this document. Please email environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Please use plain English, avoiding jargon and acronyms.

The proposal is to make use of ‘green gas’ (biomethane) as a carbon offsetting mechanism, increasing the amount of green gas used across the BCC estate in order to meet carbon neutrality targets. It also seeks approval for the procurement mechanism to be used to secure the volume of green gas certificates required.
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1.2 Will the proposal have an environmental impact?

Could the proposal have either a positive or negative effects for the environment now or in the future? If ‘No’ explain why you are sure there will be no environmental impact, then skip steps 2-3 and request review by sending this form to environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk

If ‘Yes’ complete the rest of this assessment.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	[please select]
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The use of greater volumes of green gas will reduce the impact of BCC’s ongoing natural gas usage.
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1.3 If the proposal is part of an options appraisal, has the environmental impact of each option been assessed and included in the recommendation-making process?

If ‘Yes’ please ensure that the details of the environmental impacts of each option are made clear in the pros and cons section of the [project management options appraisal document](#).

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	[please select]
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If ‘No’ explain why environmental impacts have not been considered as part of the options appraisal process.

Step 2: What kinds of environmental impacts might the project have?

Analysis of impacts must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts of the proposal in this section, referring to evidence you have gathered. See detailed [guidance documents](#) for advice on identifying potential impacts.

Does the proposal create any benefits for the environment, or have any adverse impacts?

Outline any potential benefits of the proposal and how they can be maximised. Identify how the proposal will support our corporate environmental objectives and the wider [One City Climate and Ecological Emergency strategies](#).

Consider how the proposal creates environmental impacts in the following categories, both now and in the future. **Reasonable efforts should be made to quantify stated benefit or adverse impacts wherever possible.**

Where the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact, consider what actions would enhance those impacts. Where the proposal is likely to have a harmful impact, consider whether actions would mitigate these impacts.

Enhancements or mitigation actions are only required when there is a likely impact identified. Remember that where enhancements or mitigation actions are listed, they should be assigned to staff and appropriately resourced.

GENERAL COMMENTS (highlight any potential issues that might impact all or many categories)		
<p>ENV1 Carbon neutral: Emissions of climate changing gases</p> <p>BCC has committed to achieving net zero emissions for its direct activities by 2025, and to support the city in achieving net zero by 2030.</p> <p>Will the proposal involve transport, or the use of energy in buildings? Will the proposal involve the purchase of goods or services? If the answer is yes to either of these questions, there will be a carbon impact.</p> <p>Consider the scale and timeframe of the impact, particularly if the proposal will lead to ongoing</p>	Benefits	<p>Increasing the volume of green gas used will directly reduce the carbon emissions associated with the Council’s use of natural gas across the Council estate.</p>
	Enhancing actions	<p>To contract for a higher volume of green gas, up to the end of the new gas supply contract in September 2028. The position vis-à-vis green gas usage from 2028 will be reviewed when the next gas supply contract is submitted for approval.</p>
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>	
	Adverse impacts	<p>Green gas (biomethane) is a very low carbon energy source, it is not zero carbon. Ongoing use of gas on the Council estate will still lead to ongoing carbon emissions, albeit at reduced levels. The increased use of green gas is an interim measure, pending plans to electrify heat or replace gas heating systems with District Heat network connections.</p> <p>There may be a reputational risk associated with the option of purchasing unbundled certificates (where the RGGO certificates are purchased separately from the gas), because there is a less direct</p>

<p>emissions beyond the 2025 and 2030 target dates.</p> <p>Further guidance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No impact</p>		<p>relationship with the production of the gas and it is less likely to encourage the production of more certified green gas to decarbonise the gas market further. There is also less likely to be control of feedstocks (gas produced from wastes is preferred to gas produced from energy crops).</p>
	Mitigating actions	<p>Ensure ongoing plans to improve heating efficiency (to reduce gas usage) and to replace gas heating with heat pumps and District Heat Networks continue.</p> <p>A soft market testing exercise will be set up to look at the various purchasing options in more detail.</p>
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>	
<p>ENV2 Ecological recovery: Wildlife and habitats</p> <p>BCC has committed to 30% of its land being managed for nature and to halve its use of pesticides by 2030.</p> <p>Consider how your proposal can support increased space for nature, reduced use of pesticides, reduce pollution to waterways, and reduce consumption of products that undermine ecosystems around the world.</p> <p>If your proposal will directly lead to a reduction in habitat within Bristol, then consider how your proposed mitigation can lead to a biodiversity net gain. Be sure to refer to quantifiable changes wherever possible.</p> <p>Further guidance</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No impact</p>	Benefits	Not applicable
	Enhancing actions	Not applicable
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>	
	Adverse impacts	Not applicable
	Mitigating actions	Not applicable
<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>		
<p>ENV3 A cleaner, low-waste city: Consumption of resources and generation of waste</p> <p>Consider what resources will be used as a result of the proposal, how they can be minimised or swapped for less impactful ones, where</p>	Benefits	<p>Increased demand for green gas will support wider initiatives to develop the green gas supply market. Conversion of waste to green gas will have a beneficial effect on waste management and in reducing overall carbon emissions.</p>
	Enhancing actions	To contract for additional green gas supplies.
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>	

<p>they will be sourced from, and what will happen to any waste generated</p> <p>Further guidance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No impact</p>	<p>Adverse impacts</p>	<p>The impact BCC will have on waste management and reducing emissions will depend on the feedstock used to generate BCC's green gas supplies. If this is largely based on 'fuel crops', this will reduce the beneficial impact BCC might have made.</p>	
	<p>Mitigating actions</p>	<p>Green gas supplies are backed by various certification schemes. It will be important to ensure the propriety and source of green gas for any certification scheme that BCC signs up to.</p>	
<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>			
<p>ENV4 Climate resilience: Bristol's resilience to the effects of climate change</p> <p>Bristol's climate is already changing, and increasingly frequent instances of extreme weather will become more likely over time.</p> <p>Consider how the proposal will perform during periods of extreme weather (particularly heat and flooding).</p> <p>Consider if the proposal will reduce or increase risk to people and assets during extreme weather events.</p> <p>Further guidance</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No impact</p>	<p>Benefits</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
	<p>Enhancing actions</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>		
	<p>Adverse impacts</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
	<p>Mitigating actions</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>			
<p>Statutory duty: Prevention of Pollution to air, water, or land</p> <p>Consider how the proposal will change the likelihood of pollution occurring to air,</p>	<p>Benefits</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
	<p>Enhancing actions</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	
	<p>Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years</p>		

water, or land and what steps will be taken to prevent pollution occurring. Further guidance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No impact	Adverse impacts	Not applicable
	Mitigating actions	Not applicable
	Persistence of effects: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year or less <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years	

Step 3: Action Plan

Use this section summarise and assign responsibility for any actions you have identified to improve data, enhance beneficial, or mitigate negative impacts. Actions identified in section two can be grouped together if named responsibility is under the same person.

This action plan should be updated at each stage of the project. Please be aware that the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service may use this action plan as an audit checklist during the project’s implementation or operation.

Enhancing / mitigating action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Ensure the propriety and origins of any green gas certificates that BCC procures	Energy Supply Manager	In tender
Set up a soft market testing exercise to look at purchasing options in more detail	Energy Supply Manager	October 2024

Step 4: Review

The Sustainable City and Climate Change Service need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your impact assessment. Assessments should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the environmental impact of the proposal.

Please seek feedback and review by emailing environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk before final submission of your decision pathway documentation¹.

Where impacts identified in this assessment are deemed significant, they will be summarised here by the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service and must be included in the ‘evidence base’ section of the decision pathway cover sheet.

Summary of significant beneficial impacts and opportunities to support the Climate, Ecological and Corporate Strategies (ENV1,2,3,4): Certified green gas will be an important interim step to support carbon neutrality targets until gas heating systems can be replaced with alternatives on the council estate.
Summary of significant adverse impacts and how they can be mitigated:

¹ Review by the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely environmental impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.

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Environmental Performance Team Reviewer: Giles Liddell, Environmental Performance Co-ordinator	Submitting author: David Gray
Date: 22/08/2024	Date: 28 th July 24