



# Carbon Reduction Plan 2024



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# Executive Summary

Recognising that climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, Quod is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. This commitment is made in line with the Quod Carbon Policy.

During Quod's transition to net zero, remaining emissions will be offset through investment in carbon-reduction projects certified to international standards, in our commitment to Quod being carbon neutral from 2021.

Quod has adopted the following science-based targets (SBTs) to reduce emissions against the 2019 emission baseline:

- 2025 Target: 30% reduction in absolute emissions
- 2030 Target: 50% reduction in absolute emissions

Quod operates an ISO14001 certified environmental management system (EMS). We are committed to reducing our company's 'carbon footprint' and building awareness of environmental sustainability.

To implement our EMS, Quod has a 'Sustainability Action Plan' and carbon footprint reduction targets, the Sustainability Action Plan identifies key sustainability / environmental themes and aspects relevant to our business and sets corresponding objectives and targets. This includes a range of carbon reduction initiatives.

Implementing the initiatives has resulted in Quod's 2023 'carbon footprint' reporting a reduction of 29% over the 2019 emission baseline and a further 7% reduction from 2022. Therefore, making a significant contribution towards meeting the 30% target reduction by 2025.



# About us

**Quod is an independent and employee-owned multi-disciplinary consultancy dedicated to all aspects of planning practice and development.**

Quod is a multi-disciplinary consultancy dedicated to all aspects of planning practice and development. Established in 2010, our company has over 110 employees across offices in London and Leeds. Uniquely, we combine mainstream planning advice with industry leading expertise on socio-economic issues, environmental assessments, infrastructure and development economics including affordable housing and viability. We have had the opportunity to work on some of the UK's most significant, complex and high profile schemes, as well as a huge range of medium-sized projects across the country.

Quod are committed to conducting sustainable business for the benefit of the environment, society and local community. We recognise that we have a role to play in reducing our environmental impact both through our direct operations and indirectly through the projects we work on. To reflect this, we have adopted policy in relation to sustainability, sustainable procurement, carbon reduction, waste management and recycling. We also operate an ISO14001-certified environmental management system (EMS) to monitor our environmental performance and make efforts towards continual improvement.



# Net Zero

In June 2019, Parliament passed new legislation requiring the government to reduce the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases by 100% relative to 1990 levels by 2050. This is known as the 'net zero target'. This legislation was passed to keep the UK in line with its commitments made as part of the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5oC compared to pre-industrial levels. The government enshrined the net zero target in UK law through the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. In doing so, the UK was the first major economy to pass a net zero emission law.

The widely accepted definition of net zero within the corporate sector has been established by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). According to this definition, reaching net-zero emissions for a company means achieving a state in which the activities within the value chain of a company results in no net impact on the climate from greenhouse gas emissions. This is achieved by:

1. Setting and pursuing a 1.5oC aligned science-based target for the full value-chain of emissions; and
2. Balancing the impact of any remaining hard-to-decarbonise greenhouse gas emissions with an appropriate amount of certified greenhouse gas removals.



## Quod's Commitment to achieving Net Zero

Recognising that climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, **Quod is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050**. This commitment is made in line with the Quod Carbon Policy.

During Quod's transition to net zero, remaining emissions will be offset through investment in carbon-reduction projects certified to international standards, in our commitment to **Quod being carbon neutral from 2021**.

**Quod is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050**

Management Board 2023

# Scope of Emissions

The scope of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions included within Quod’s ‘carbon footprint’ have been defined in line with the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard<sup>1</sup>.

To delineate direct and indirect emission sources and improve transparency, the GHG Protocol identifies three scopes for accounting and reporting purposes:

- **Scope 1: direct GHG emissions that occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the company, e.g. combustion in owned boilers.**
- **Scope 2: indirect GHG emissions from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by the company.**
- **Scope 3: other indirect GHG emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the company but occur from sources not owned or controlled by the company.**

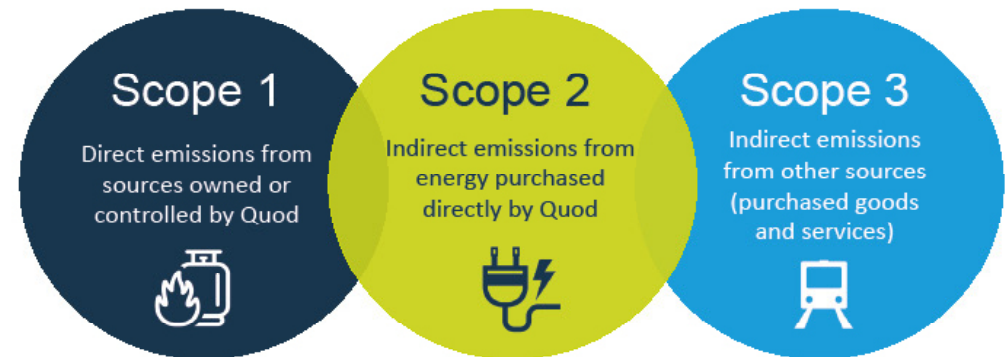
Quod’s ‘carbon footprint’ covers the sources of emissions set out in the Table 1 opposite.

Whilst we fully acknowledge that emissions associated with our project advice are highly significant, those emissions are beyond the scope of this Carbon Reduction Plan. However, we are committed to using our skills and influence to improve sustainability within the built environment and to maintain the integrity and quality of the environments of our projects.

**Table 1: Quod’s Scope of Emissions**

Scope 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running of boilers on-site</li> </ul>
Scope 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity purchases made by Quod</li> </ul>
Scope 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy used in serviced offices</li> <li>• Purchased Waste</li> <li>• Employee commuting</li> <li>• Business travel (including flights associated with company social trips)</li> <li>• Home working</li> </ul>

**Figure 1: GHG Scope**



<sup>1</sup> World Business Council for Sustainable Development and World Resources Institute. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol, a Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard



# Quod's Baseline Emission Footprint (2019)

**Quod's 'carbon footprint' for the year 2019 was 165.8 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.**

The breakdown of this figure is presented in Table 2. 2019 was the first year for which we calculated our company carbon footprint, and thus acts as Quod's emission baseline.

In 2022, we reviewed our emission scope and expanded it to include flights associated with company social trips (under business travel) and homeworking. Our emission baseline has been updated from that presented in the 2022 Carbon Reduction Plan.

All emissions have been calculated using the most relevant emission factors sourced from government and official environmental bodies, and suppliers<sup>1</sup>. As shown in Table 2, the most significant emissions are from employee commuting.

**Table 2: Quod's Baseline Emission Footprint (2019)**

Emissions	Total (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
<b>Scope 1</b>	
Gas	13.3
<b>Scope 2</b>	
Purchased Electricity	32.2
<b>Scope 3</b>	
Purchased Goods	7.8
Waste	0.3
Employee Commuting	76.2
Business Travel	36.0
Home working	0.0
<b>Total Emissions</b>	<b>165.8</b>

<sup>1</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2022. Greenhouse gas reporting: conversion factors 2022 / Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2022. UK and England's carbon footprint to 2019, including conversion factors by SIC code.

# Emission Reduction Targets

Quod has adopted the following science-based targets (SBTs) to reduce emissions against the 2019 emission baseline:

- *2025 Target: 30% reduction in absolute emissions*
- *2030 Target: 50% reduction in absolute emissions*

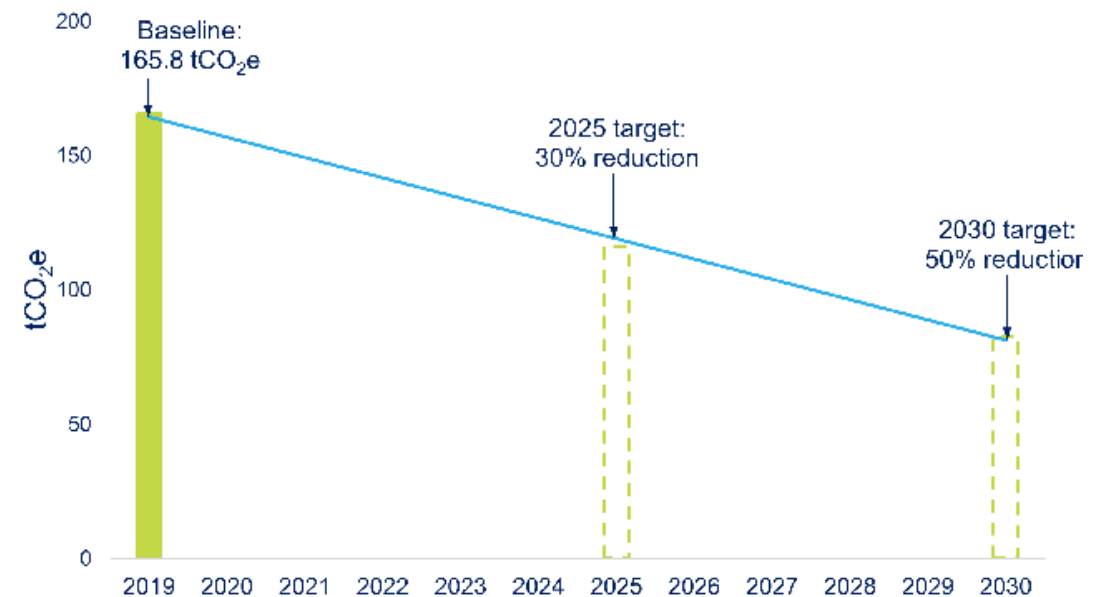
These targets are consistent with the UK's Net Zero by 2050 pathway that reflects efforts to limit climate change to less than 1.5oC.

Quod's employee headcount is expected to grow over the coming years. To meet the reduction targets, significant reductions in carbon intensity (tCO<sub>2</sub>e/FTE) will be required.

During Quod's transition to net zero, residual emissions will be compensated for through investment in carbon-reduction projects certified to international standards. Further details are as set out on page 9.

In accordance with the SBTi, Quod will publicly report our 'carbon footprint' and progress against our emission reduction targets on an annual basis.

Figure 2: Quod's Emission Reduction Pathway

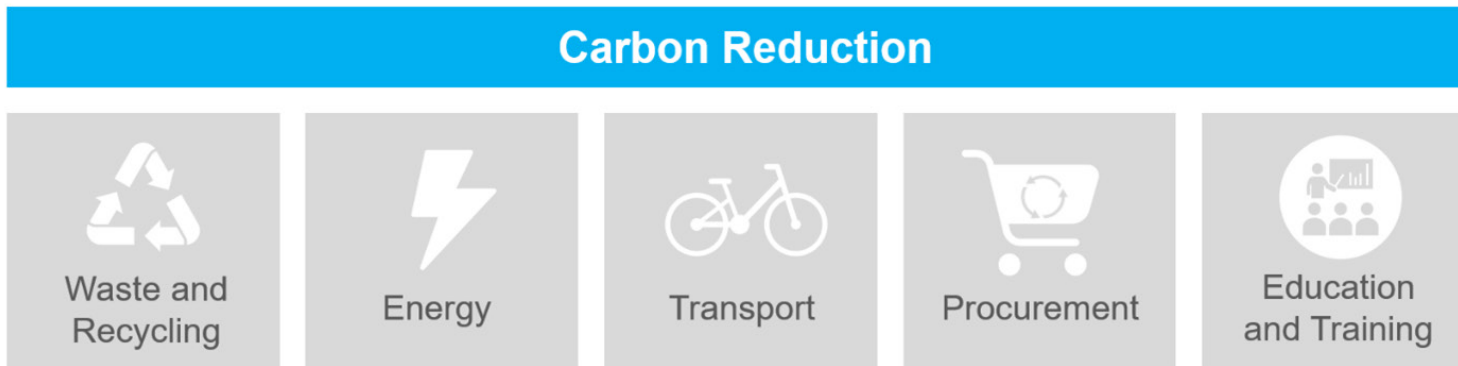


# Carbon Reduction Initiatives

Quod operates an ISO14001 certified environmental management system (EMS). We are committed to reducing our company's 'carbon footprint' and building awareness of environmental sustainability. To implement our EMS, Quod has a 'Sustainability Action Plan'. The Sustainability Action Plan identifies key sustainability / environmental themes and aspects relevant to our business and sets corresponding objectives and targets. It establishes a framework for monitoring performance and identifies measures to be implemented to ensure continual improvement towards the achievement of each target.

The Sustainability Action Plan covers the following five key environmental themes for action: waste and recycling, energy, transport, procurement, and education and training. These themes were identified as having most relevance to Quod's operations and potential for positive contribution to the company's sustainable and environmental performance. Quod's carbon reduction initiatives cut across all five themes.

**Figure 3: Quod's five themes of Carbon Reduction**



Examples of carbon reduction initiatives currently implemented include:

- Encouraging sustainable ways of employee commuting through regular advertisement of Quod's Cycle to Work scheme, annual season ticket loans and Santander Cycle subscription benefits for employees;
- Recommending sustainable couriers for use by our consultants for unavoidable business deliveries;
- Operating multiple recycling points in our offices and encouraging staff participation in waste reduction and recycling; and,
- Raising energy management awareness among staff, including encouraging the switching off of electrical appliances when not in use.



# Current Emission Reporting (2023)



Quod’s ‘carbon footprint’ for the year 2023 was 118.3 tCO<sub>2</sub>e as detailed in Table 3 below. This is a reduction of 29% over the 2019 emission baseline and a further 7% reduction from 2022.

This reduction has been driven by a shift to flexible working resulting in a reduction in employee commuting, business travel and office usage, alongside implementation of Quod’s carbon reduction initiatives. Reductions have continued to be made despite company growth, with employee headcount increasing from 120 in 2019 to 132 in 2023.

**Table 3: Quod’s Carbon Footprint 2023**

Emissions	Total (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
<b>Scope 1</b>	
Gas	0.0
<b>Scope 2</b>	
Purchased Electricity	4.8
<b>Scope 3</b>	
Electricity (managed workspace)*	0
Purchased Goods	6.4
Waste	0.03
Employee Commuting	38.6
Business Travel	39.5
Home working	29.0
<b>Total Emissions</b>	<b>118.3</b>

Quod will continue to seek and evaluate opportunities to reduce the company’s environmental footprint to ensure we remain on track to meet, and where possible exceed, our emission reduction targets in line with the UK’s net zero by 2050 pathway.

\*Electricity contact is 100% renewable energy sources therefore tCO<sub>2</sub>e is zero.



# Removing Residual Carbon

At Quod, removing carbon through offsetting is a last step and will not be prioritised over making absolute reductions in our emissions. However, during our transition to net zero, remaining emissions will be offset in our commitment to Quod being carbon neutral from 2021.

The Gold Standard is a hallmark of quality within the carbon offsetting industry. It was established in 2003 by the WWF and various other international NGOs to ensure that carbon mitigation is not looked at in isolation, but also contributes towards meaningful sustainable development such as improving livelihoods and conserving ecosystems. For an offset project to be Gold Standard certified it must deliver a minimum of 3 of the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Quod will only offset residual emissions through investment in Gold Standard certified projects. Our 2023 'carbon footprint' was offset through investment in Gold Standard's Uganda Gender Responsive Safe Water Project.

This project contributes towards the following Sustainable Development Goals:



## Quod's 2023 Offset Project: Lango Gender Responsive Safe Water Project, Uganda

In Lango, access to safe water is a major challenge; boreholes to access groundwater often fall into disrepair due to lack of funding or training for their maintenance. This forces communities to use unsafe sources such as streams to get their water, which has to be boiled to make it safe. To boil the water, communities collect and burn firewood, which places greater pressure on dwindling forests and produces carbon emissions. It also creates a burden for women and children, who typically spend hours every day collecting firewood and water.

The project provides safe water to the Lango community which reduces carbon emissions through removing the need to boil water, alongside the following positive impacts:

- Reduced incidence of waterborne illness
- Nearly 4 hours saved each week for collecting water per household
- Reduced school absenteeism due to less exposure to water borne illness and less time spent collecting water
- Reduced incidence of domestic violence related to water collection



# Summary and Declaration

At Quod, we recognise that climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time and that we have a role to play in reducing our environmental impact both through our direct operations and indirectly through the projects we work on.

Quod is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050, and has established carbon reduction targets aligned with the UK's net zero pathway that reflect efforts to limit climate change to less than 1.5oC.

Whilst we prioritise reduction in our absolute emissions, in our transition to net zero we are offsetting residual emissions through investment in carbon-reduction projects that are Gold Standard certified, in our commitment to Quod being carbon neutral from 2021.

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been reviewed and signed off by the management board.

Signed on behalf of Quod:

*Tom Dobson*

Tom Dobson, Managing Director  
March 2023



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ACCREDITATIONS, AFFILIATIONS & AWARDS:

