Adur District Council

INTERNAL MEMO

Housing, Health and Community Safety-
Environmental Health

To: Peter Barnett
CC:
From: Michael Lavender
My Ref: WK201003937
Your Ref: ADC/0389/10 Date: 1st December 2010

Re: Noise Assessment, Homebase, Holmbush Centre, Upper Shoreham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex

Further to your e-mail dated the 15th November 2010 regarding the above I wish to make the following comments.

I visited the site on the 17th November looked around the store to get a feel for the layout, including existing barriers etc; and I visited a resident who backed onto the property. My subjective opinion of the ambient noise at this time was that the children in the local school were the predominant noise source and the distant traffic though audible was not excessive. The wind was blowing from the South West and the existing building shielded the garden from noise from the Upper Shoreham Road and the roundabout.

The second time I visited on the 24th November to take a snap shot of the noise levels in the garden, the wind this time was from the North and subjectively I could clearly notice the contrast in the ambient noise levels from my previous visit, this time the predominant noise was the distant traffic. Unfortunately it started to rain a minute after starting my recordings so the measurement was abandoned.

With regards to the RPS report, the noise readings for use in the assessment were taken over two hours on the 9th November 2010 between 6pm and 8pm. The report does not provide details of the weather conditions or the wind direction at the time of measurement, which from my own experience does make a difference on ambient noise levels. However, the weather report in the Argus for the 9th November 2010 reports North Easterly winds so it is fair to assume that the predominant noise source in the locality at that time would be distant road noise from the A27. It is also fair to say that between the hours of 6pm and 8pm the A27 is still fairly busy, whereas local roads will be quieter. I am therefore of the opinion that the background level the whole assessment is based on is not a fair reading.

Secondly, it is not clear from one of the scenarios tested what is meant by other activities within the yard area or what assumptions have been made in the modelling, for example has any allowance been made for the existing fence and what sound levels were used for the other activities and for how long etc?

The report was prepared by Mr Biggs and last week I called him to discuss the model to establish what assumptions had been included. He told me a colleague had done the assessment and he would speak to him. I have not heard anything back.

Information needed to assess the impact of the development objectively has arrived in dribs and drabs and still I have further questions unanswered. In addition since the noise assessment arrived the environmental health department has relocated offices. I therefore feel that insufficient time has been given for me to provide Council with an informed view and to ensure that any planning conditions are sufficient to mitigate any impact.

Ideally I would like the applicant to take further background readings, when the wind is from the prevailing south westerly direction and to model an actual delivery scenario with goods being conveyed from the vehicles using the pump trucks and cages that are proposed. During this time I will take some independent noise readings, which I have not had time or the right weather conditions to do so far. I would therefore request that any decision be deferred to allow time for this.

It should be clear that I am not objecting to the proposals in principle and I believe that suitable conditions can be agreed once the facts are established and therefore committee may wish to consider delegating authority to the officer to make the final decision once the information is provided.

Michael Lavender
Senior Environmental Health Officer