

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Report of the meeting held between Leominster Town Council, Herefordshire Council and BPI on Thursday 30th June 2016 at 10.00am at the BPI Factory, Leominster.

PRESENT:

Leominster Town Council : Cllr Jenny Bartlett, Roger Pendleton, Mr Paul Russell (Town Clerk)

Residents: Mr Ferarri and Mr Domanski.

BPI –Leominster: Mr Dirk Deweer (Senior Operations Manager- Belgium), Neil Shaw (Operational Manager- Leominster), Neil Hawkins (Health, Safety & Environment Manager- Leominster),

Herefordshire Council Environmental Health: Marc Willimont (Head of Regulatory & Development Management Services), Bruce Chartres (Service Manager Environmental Protection), Elisabeth Laughland (Principal Environmental Health Officer)

1. TOWN COUNCIL

Following introductions, a brief outline was provided regarding the current issues. The work carried out had achieved a suppression of high frequency noise emissions from the factory but there still may be an underlying noise nuisance from low frequency noise emissions.

Noise emissions below 50 hertz could still be a problem, and not going away. It was suggested that attenuation work to address the problem was required.

The two residents in attendance both lived east of the factory, around 2 kilometres away, although it was confirmed that the nuisance was being experienced in the west as well.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Environmental Health Officers confirmed that they had undertaken a significant investigation into the noise emissions in 2014. That investigation did not identify a statutory noise issue. Some issues were identified though and Herefordshire Council acknowledged that the report had not been universally accepted.

The report had been based on decibel (dB) readings and Officer observations, covered a year's worth of investigation and had been published on 10th October 2014.

It was suggested that there was possibly an issue with the peaks in production periods, although BPI confirmed that the plant operated consistently on a 24 hour basis and did not have specific peak production periods.

It was suggested that a new appraisal to assess noise emissions be carried out that was not dB based, as there was a real need to identify the underlying problem.

It was confirmed by Herefordshire Council that dB was the way all noise issues were assessed. Measurements had been taken within the premises where access was allowed. Herefordshire Council was doing all it could do under Government regulations.

3. BPI

BPI had been on site for the last 50 years. Prior to that the site had been a pumping station. BPI employed 150 people and adhere to the requirements under ISO14001.

A planning application had been submitted in August 2015 to house new machinery. As part of that application a series of noise reduction measures had been included. The roof line had been altered and roof panels replaced with noise reducing panels (33dB to 24dB).

In addition to the new machinery work was undertaken on the chillers which had been housed in enclosures and fitted with acoustic reducers.

It was confirmed that the Silos were not loaded between 7pm and 7am, external doors were closed as much as possible and there was a no reversing policy for lorries after 7pm.

Nova Acoustics had been commissioned in 2014 to carry out a noise survey. Herefordshire Council had undertaken some monitoring as well to assess the additional works undertaken by BPI as part of its planning application. The results had been inconclusive with neither an increase or decrease being identified in the early results.

The residents were requested to develop a diary to help BPI identify the periods when noise emissions were at their worst to hopefully enable the sources to be identified. It is unclear whether this was agreed to.

. Planning applications did not have noise conditions included. Herefordshire Council was reminded that it had agreed to carry out an assessment and produce a report. A strongly worded directive had been included as part of the planning permission granted

At the Planning Committee, EH confirmed that they would undertake some further monitoring and keep liaising with BPI re their post implementation monitoring.

BPI confirmed that it would be undertaking a further study and had commissioned RPS to undertake a full survey. It would take place over a four week period with noise emissions being measured prior to the factory closure,

further measurements being taken between the 18th and 30th August, when the plant was shut down, and the week following.

It was hoped that the survey reports would help inform the company where the issue might be located if it was coming from the site. The criteria within BS4142, which related specifically to low frequency emissions, would form part of that survey.

It was acknowledged that energy was the issue and BPI were asked whether it had installed dampers under the new machinery. The meeting was informed that advice from the machine manufacturer to BPI indicated that the new machinery was unsuitable to have such dampers installed.

BPI confirmed its commitment to being a good neighbour and to consider anything that came out of the newly commissioned study. The results would be available in November.

It was agreed that Leominster Town Council would collate any complaints received and submit them to BPI.

EH offered to send a letter to the BPI complainants it was aware of. This letter would have the details of who the complainants should contact if they wished to participate in the BPI consultants monitoring survey. EH said they would confirm details with the town Council and BPI before sending the letter.

A further meeting would be held in November/December 2016 following receipt of the results of the study. Action points would be outlined at that meeting.

There being no other business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 11.10am.