

NOISE MAPPING AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION UNDER THE EUROPEAN NOISE DIRECTIVE (END)

The European Council Directive relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise is intended to provide a common approach across the European Union to avoid, prevent and reduce, on a prioritised basis, the harmful effects of exposure to environmental noise from transportation and industrial sources.

This Directive commonly known as the European Noise Directive (END) was transposed into local law by the Environmental (Assessment and Management of Noise) Regulations 2006. It is a requirement of the Directive for Member States to produce strategic noise maps for the following:-

- 1) Agglomerations with more than 250000 inhabitants.
- 2) Major roads with more than 3000000 vehicle passages a year.
- 3) Major railways with more than 60000 train passages per year; and
- 4) Major airports with more than 50000 movements per year.

Locally the Directive only applies to noise from major roads, and therefore this consultation is specifically on noise from major roads.

Traffic flow studies have identified that seven major roads namely, Queensway, Winston Churchill Avenue, Devils Tower Road, Line Wall Road,

Europa Road, Glacis Road and Rosia Road each exceed 3000000 vehicles passage a year.

Strategic noise maps for these roads have already been produced. These give details of the daytime and nighttime noise levels along these roads. These maps are used to assess the number of people potentially annoyed and sleep disturbed and form the basis for the preparation of an Action Plan to manage noise issues from traffic on these roads.

What are noise maps?

Noise maps are maps designed for the assessment of noise exposure in a given area or for overall predications of noise for such an area. A noise map has contours that join points of equal noise level. These maps have been produced by computer modelling techniques that calculate the noise levels at specific points. The modelling software utilises data such as traffic flow, types of roads and types of vehicles. Features such as barriers, topography, weather conditions and absorbance of different surfaces are also taken into consideration.

The maps are produced for use at a strategic level and give an acceptable level of accuracy for this purpose. They do not however represent every situation at a local level.

The maps were produced by a British Firm, Amec, on behalf of the Government of Gibraltar and can be downloaded below.

Technical Terms used in the maps

dB(A) – ‘A’ weighted Decibel. A unit of sound pressure, adjusted in accordance with the ‘A’ weighting scale, which takes account the increased sensitivity of the human ear at some frequencies.

L_{night} . The ‘A’ weighted average sound level over the 8 hour night period of 23.00 – 7.00.

L_{den} . The day, evening, night level. L_{den} is a logarithmic composite of the L_{day} , L_{evening} and L_{night} levels but with 5 dB(A) being added to the L_{evening} value and 10 dB(A), being added to the L_{night} value.

The noise maps shown in this site are only intended to be used for the strategic assessment of noise exposure in different areas.

These maps should not be used to attempt to determine, represent or imply noise values at individual locations.

Public Consultation

The Directive requires that the general public is consulted as part of the action planning process before the Competent Authority adopts the final Action Plan.

The general public are therefore invited to participate in this consultation process by submitting their views or comments in writing directly to the Environmental Agency or by email at admin@environmental-agency.gi by not later than Friday 31st May 2013

on the following measures which will form the backbone of this Action Plan:-

- 1) Traffic planning on these roads.
- 2) The present and future use of the land adjoining these roads.
- 3) Noise attenuation measures on these roads.
- 4) Any other measures that the public might consider of merit.

The general public is reminded that this consultation is **only** in respect of noise from Queensway, Winston Churchill Avenue, Devils Tower Road, Line Wall Road, Europa Road, Glacis Road and Rosia Road .