

Noise Control on Construction and Demolition Sites Guidance Note

This guidance note has been produced to help contractors, developers, architects and anyone who is carrying out construction or demolition work within the Sevenoaks District Council's area. It is a framework of the requirements of the District Council's Environmental Health Department to control noise on site and includes hours of working, working practices and maintaining good public relations with local residents.

Noise Control

The District Council has powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 Section 60 to control site noise. The local authority can serve a Notice imposing requirements as to the way in which works are to be carried out.

Such a notice may specify:-

- The plant or machinery which is or is not, to be used;
- The hours during which the works may be carried out;
- Noise levels which must not be exceeded
- Provide for any change of circumstances.

These requirements can cover the following kinds of work:-

- (a) The erection, construction, alteration, repair or maintenance of buildings, structures or roads;
- (b) Breaking up, opening or boring under any road or adjacent land in connection with the construction, inspection, maintenance or removal of the works;
- (c) Demolition or dredging works;
- (d) Any work or engineering construction (whether or not comprised in paragraphs (a), (b) or (c) above.

Subject to a right of appeal against a notice to a Magistrates Court within 21 days of the date of service, if any person upon whom such a notice is served contravenes, without reasonable excuse, any requirements of the notice, they shall be guilty of an offence.

Penalties upon conviction are up to £2000 for a first or subsequent offences, together with a fine of up to £50 for each day on which the offence continues after conviction.

It should be noted that a local authority has alternative powers to take proceedings in the High Court for an injunction in cases where they consider it appropriate and this authority will not hesitate to take such action where a serious noise nuisance exists and/or unacceptable delay would be occasioned by following the procedure outlined above.

The District Council's Requirements

- **Hours of Working**

The District Council would prefer that contractors adhere to the following hours of working:-

Monday – Friday	08.00 to 18.00
Saturday	08.00 to 13.00
Sundays and Bank Holidays	NO WORKING

These hours apply to ANY work causing noise audible at the site boundary.

It is appreciated that on rare occasions, work outside these hours may be unavoidable. For example, police restrictions could mean that certain deliveries can only take place on a Sunday when traffic flow is light. Except in cases of extreme emergency, the District Council would expect to be notified well in advance as well as expecting the contractor to have similarly advised surrounding residents.

- **Working Practices**

Contractors are expected to use the Best Practical Means to minimise noise on site. Contractors should look at BS5228 Parts 1,2 and 4 for guidance (although this does not prejudice any requirements made by the District Council).

Although this is not a full list, the following are some of the things to be considered:

- (i) The quietest plant and machinery available should be used; e.g. hoists and cement mixers should be electrically powered wherever possible;
- (ii) All equipment should be properly maintained to prevent unnecessary noise;
- (iii) Acoustic covers to items such as compressors and generators should ALWAYS be in place;
- (iv) When machinery is not actually being used, it should be switched off and not left idling;
- (v) Stationary noise sources should be sited away from noise-sensitive areas such as nearby houses etc. Acoustic barriers should be used to shield these noise sources; these can be purpose built or constructed from materials on site such as bricks, sheds or mounds of earth;
- (vi) Employees should be told of the noise control measures required by or agreed with the District council and should be given training where necessary.

- **Public Relations**

The importance of notifying local residents in advance of any unavoidably noisy operations, particularly when these are to take place outside normal working hours, cannot be stressed too highly. People likely to be affected can often make arrangements to be away during the noisy period and those who cannot, will at least know what is happening and how long it will last for.

It is a good idea for a contact name and number to be given to local residents so that any complaints or queries can be dealt with promptly. Good public relations go a long way to ensuring that residents can accept the need for the work and could mean that a complaint to the District Council is avoided.

This guidance aims to give a broad idea of what the District council expects from those who work in the area. For more detailed advice, please contact the District Council's

Environmental Protection Team on:

Telephone - 01732 227000 Fax - 01732 2274239

email environmental.protection@sevenoaks.gov.uk