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VA3983 12 TILBURY CLOSE, CAVERSHAM, READING

Response to Environmental Health Comments

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Following our previous report assessing noise on the proposed new dwellings at 12 Tilbury Close, Caversham, Reading, the following comments have been made by the Environmental Health Department:

I have reviewed the noise assessment and am concerned about the impact of noise from the garage and the takeaway on the new occupants of the flats. The assessment concludes that there will be an adverse impact when assessed according to BS4142 which indicates that there may justifiable complaints made by the new occupants about the activities at these businesses¹. No mitigation is proposed other than suitable glazing², however, the criteria this is based on is to mitigate against non-anonymous noise sources, not these industrial/commercial noise sources³, and no mechanical ventilation is proposed therefore residents are likely to open their windows⁴. The front façade is less affected therefore consideration could be given to redesigning the proposed properties to be more front facing⁵, or other mitigation including mitigation at source⁶ or improvements to the proposed ventilation. Whilst there are other residents in the vicinity, the layout of the block means that these new residents would be some of the most adversely affected by the two noise sources⁷.

Venta Acoustics makes the following comments on each point:

¹ The context of the area and operational times of the businesses must also be considered. These are generally during the day (and evening for the extract fan), are generally intermittent in operation, at moderate sound levels and with periods of respite between noise events. The sound sources are congruent and expected within the area. Following BS4142, this context reduces the perceived impact. With the option to exclude this noise by closing windows, the overall impact on the residents within the dwellings can be controlled to acceptable levels and would be fitting with the surrounding residential uses.

² The noise sources are outside the control of the applicant. Screening is not a viable option due to the height of the first floor and the height of the extract duct. Moderate reductions may be achieved between the garage and ground floor by placing a solid screen such as a 2m high solid fence around the site perimeter. Glazing remains the final option available to control noise. The glazing specification is set to control the commercial noise to levels at which it would not be considered intrusive within the dwellings and not adversely affect residential amenity. With this in place, there would not be a need for further mitigation measures.

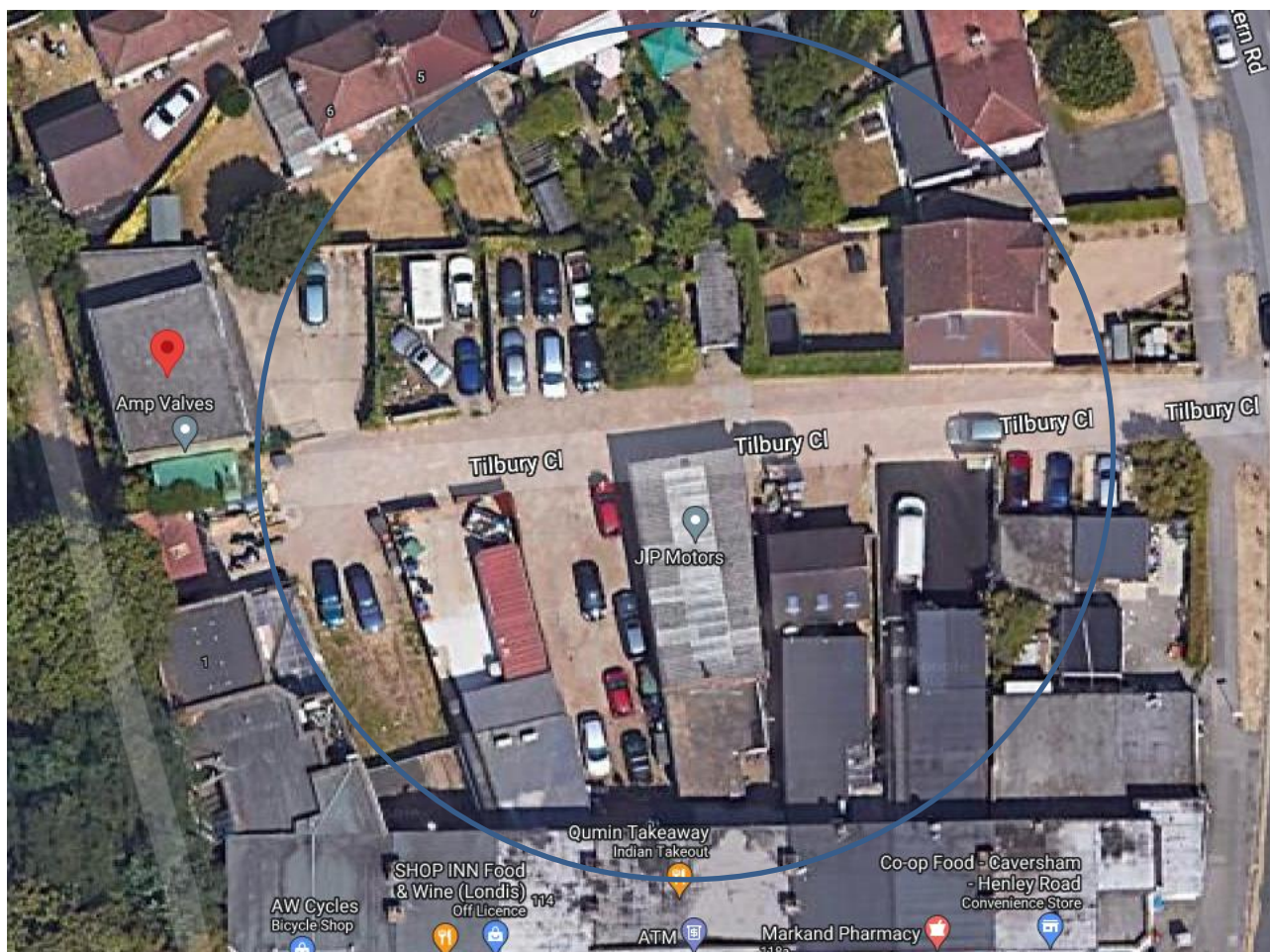
³ While BS8233 is intended for anonymous sources, the assessment compares the Rating Level (including BS4142 acoustic character penalties) to the BS8233 criteria. This is undertaken over a shortened assessment period applicable to the operations (not averaged over a full 8 or 16 hours as per BS8233) to provide a more robust assessment. In the absence of an alternative internal assessment methodology, this hybrid approach of assessing commercial noise with a BS4142 penalty against the BS8233 criteria (over a shortened assessment period) is the best available approach and is endorsed in the ProPG guidance.

⁴ The ventilation scheme will be designed to meet the relevant building regulations and standards applicable to permitted development. It is understood that a mechanical ventilation system is being proposed and that this will be specified to allow windows to remain closed without compromising the comfort of residents. The details of this system will be developed during the detailed design stage and can be secured by condition.

⁵ In principle, reorientating the building's internal layout to be more west facing would reduce the sound impact. However, this must be considered under the constraints of the existing building (limited changes are available under permitted development) and other aspects such as overlooking neighbours. Reorientation is understood to not be possible under permitted development and therefore mitigation in the form of glazing is the most appropriate approach.

⁶ The noise sources are outside of the applicant's control. As discussed above, the mitigation scheme in the form of building glazing is capable of controlling internal noise levels.

⁷ There are a number of houses nearer to closer to the garage. The internal layout of the houses is not known but it is likely that there would be bedrooms and possibly living rooms on some of the exposed façades, and hence these properties may be more exposed.



In addition, there are residential flats located directly above the commercial parade in extremely close proximity to the extract fan noise sources.

It is not believed that any complaints or action against the noise sources have been made in this residential context.

Residential use is demonstrated to be compatible as existing in this location and therefore should be acceptable.

Yours sincerely
on behalf of Venta Acoustics

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