

From: Wedgbury, Stuart
Sent: 28 May 2024 12:41
To: Morris, Rachael
Subject: F/24/97188 - UNIT H, GEORGE CURL WAY, EASTLEIGH, SO18 2RX -

Afternoon Rachel

F/24/97188 - UNIT H, GEORGE CURL WAY, EASTLEIGH, SO18 2RX - Creation of headquarters for Hampshire Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA) and other healthcare services to include offices; the creation of a helipad; change of use and minor alterations to existing building to form a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E(e) and E(g); and other associated works. Our Ref- PR202404-104215

I received a call this morning from Nigel Thompson, director of Flight Operations at Babcock Onshore; they are partners to the applicant and essentially provide the pilots to fly the helicopters.

As advised previously, I wanted him to expand upon the following previous commentary provided last week by the applicant's agent namely:

'We conduct a 15min engine wash and system check ground run every day. This is normally done at the start of the shift between 0700hrs and 0800hrs and is a check of all aircraft systems and proactive protection of the engines. This permits faster HEMS starts and reduces potential maintenance and is especially pertinent as we operate close to the coast and in a generally 'salty' environment which can be detrimental to engine performance.

Most aircraft maintenance that requires ground runs is done at Staverton. If a maintenance ground run is required at the base this can normally be conducted as part of the daily ground run rather than in addition to it. Based on this it is safe to assume that the need for any additional unplanned maintenance ground runs is minimal and could be predicted as 1-2 a month or zero.'

He has advised verbally:

1. It is reasonable to assume that the noise during the wash and clean operation carried out on site would typically occur 07:30 hours to 08:30 hours every day, but times and need would vary dependent upon the pilot's availability and activity on the previous day. It is an essential check of the aircraft operating conditions.
2. The helicopter engine is operational throughout this period and it is reasonable to assume that a similar noise emission occurs as is the case during takeoff and landings.

So returning to the amended acoustic report C11045/NIA/1.4 May 2024 and in particular Section 4.4 and 4.5. The consultant assumed that such activities would not occur during the operational hours of the neighbouring commercial units. I do not know if that is the case, but it seems unlikely. To carry out a sensitivity assessment we can ask; what would the position be if such wash and clean cycles occurring during the neighbouring commercial units operational hours with the same assumptions and methodology applied? So, if one were to amend Table 4.5 along these lines we would assume that the 'Measured on time' increases from 650 seconds to 1550 seconds. The subsequent calculations would result in conclusions as follows:

- Corrected for the 16 hour daytime period $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hour}} = 55.3\text{dBA}$
- Correction for a partially open window (-13dB) $L_{Aeq,16\text{ hour}} = 42.3\text{dBA}$

On this basis a marginal exceedance of the recommended office space criterion of 40dBA would result from the operation of the helicopter alone on the site, rather than a compliance as predicted by the consultant.. However, the type of approach adopted by the consultant in this regard is quite clumsy for a number of reasons. I expect that airport noise already significantly impacts upon the commercial units and would add to the noise level at the commercial buildings; whereas these calculations assume helicopter noise only impacts the commercial

uses. The consultant's state more helpfully that it is '*also worth noting that the contours from SOU Annual Noise Report 2023 range between 57dB – 60dB $L_{Aeq16hr}$* ' If we assume the mid point of this range applies at the commercial units; this in combination with the helicopter activity would result in a combined level of 62dBA or 49dBA inside offices assuming an open window; more significantly in excess of the suggested office criterion.

This I think obscures the real issues. I expect (but do not know) that commercial uses already in this location will either occupy buildings designed to cope with the pre-existing noisy environment and not rely upon open windows to ventilate office space, or will have commercial processes less sensitive than office activity to high noise environment, or have adapted their processes to cope with the existing environmental conditions. A site survey would be needed to establish this. Further the absence of objections from neighbouring commercial uses may be suggestive that current occupiers do not foresee any significant disruption, if they are aware of the application.

It would appear from the reference to the airport noise contours that the addition of helicopter noise in this location would likely make overall average 16 hour noise conditions only slightly worse than those already present. I do not know how noise from individual helicopter activity would compare to noise from aircraft landings and takeoffs at the commercial premises, since unfortunately this isn't explored in the consultant's work. Nonetheless, overall I expect that the small quantum of such activity, will likely not pose more than an occasional disruption at worst during relatively short periods of helicopter activity. Sorry I cannot be more definitive.

I hope that helps.

Regards

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