

Update on A1 Wokingham Car Spares

I recently met with Julia Simpson, Area Director at the Environment Agency (EA) on 27 January 2020.

During the meeting, I set out the concerns constituents have expressed about the noise and odour emanating from the site and emphasised the need for more to be done to ensure A1 is a good neighbour. I also raised a number of further points which Ms Simpson has addressed in her latest response (copy enclosed below).

She confirms that the EA has undertaken a programme of visits to Tiffany Close, Kent Close and Limmerhill Way over the last three weeks and at various times of the day in which the A1 site has been operating. The EA has also completed a noise assessment by their national noise expert, and they intend to publish their findings at the end of this month.

Ms Simpson also wishes to reassure constituents that the regular noise logs they have been sending to the EA are being actively considered as part of their overall assessment of the noise. These will be taken into account when the EA determines how to proceed further.

I will continue to make representations to the EA on this matter. I await the outcome of the noise assessment with interest.

Response from Julia Simpson:

Dear Sir John,

It was good to meet with you on 27 January 2020 to discuss the latest situation at A1 Wokingham Car Spares, alongside flood risk management issues within your constituency. Further to this, please find below my response to your letter dated 13 January 2020 to Sir James Bevan, which also includes our response to your follow up questions raised on 27 January, relating to both A1 and some more specific flood risk matters within the area.

In relation to your request of 13 January 2020 seeking further details of the noise monitoring we have undertaken, this has included completion of a proactive programme of officer visits to residential areas across 3 weeks from 03 September 2019 to 20 September 2019. The visits included Tiffany Close, Kent Close and Limmerhill Way and were at various times of day during the operating hours of the A1 site. We also completed a noise impact assessment by our National noise expert on 14 November 2019. This assessment included noise monitoring at the A1 site, at a location between the A1 site and the residential area and also at Kent Close and Dorset Way in the residential area.

Going forwards we will complete our assessment of the recent noise monitoring and meet with the Site Operator to discuss the latest position and any potential next steps. We will also keep the residents who have reported their concerns updated on our findings and proposed next steps and plan to meet

with them by the end of February 2020. I recognise that some residents are frustrated by the time our assessment is taking but we need to gather and assess our evidence of the current situation to evaluate if the A1 facility is compliant with its environmental permit and if additional actions are required to mitigate the noise generated on site.

Further to our meeting, and in relation to the email from your office dated 27 January 2020, seeking additional information on specific questions relating to A1 Wokingham Car Spares, I have set our response to the three questions below for ease / clarity.

Question 1: When do the EA intend to publish their conclusions on the noise report undertaken into A1 Wokingham Car Spares?

Response; The Environment Agency will inform the residents of the findings of the noise monitoring and our proposed way forward by the end of February 2020.

Question 2: A number of constituents are sending the EA regular noise logs via email. Are these being taken into account as part of the overall noise assessment?

Response; The reports by residents to our Incident Hotline have been the reason we have undertaken additional noise monitoring and site inspections. They are also being considered as part of our overall assessment and the proposed way forward.

Question 3: Is prior non-compliance by the site management, where this has occurred, factored into the decision making process by the EA when making determinations on whether A1 is in compliance with the site permit?

Response; our overall assessment of site compliance with the environmental permit is made on an annual basis and is dependent on the overall results of site inspections that we have made during that period. Hence a site's Compliance Band (A to F) is assessed and can vary from year to year.

I trust that this provides a helpful update on the information you requested. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Kind regards,

Julia

Julia Simpson
Area Director – Thames
Environment Agency