

For Immediate Release

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MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL MUST TAKE NOISE PROBLEM IN JULIANSTOWN SERIOUSLY

Meath County Council is in breach of its legal obligations under new legislation aimed at reducing and preventing the harmful effects of traffic noise. Under the EU Environmental Noise Regulations introduced in 2006, Meath County Council now has a legal obligation to prevent, reduce or eliminate the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to traffic noise from busy roads.

The council must prepare noise maps for roads which carry in excess of 6 million vehicles per year. Following on from that they are legally required to consult with the public and prepare action plans aimed at reducing and eliminating harmful effects of noise before 18 July 2008. They are also obliged to make all the information available to the public using the internet.

Julianstown has been included in the noise mapping project because the R132, which passes through the centre of the village, carries a staggering 7.5 million vehicles per year.

Noise maps were completed in January but have yet to be published. We believe they show that noise in Julianstown is off the scale and at levels harmful to human health and detrimental to learning ability in children.

We have written to the council twice in the last week to ask them about progress on the noise action plan and also to find out where information may be accessed by members of the public.

While we understand there is some progress, the council has been unable to tell us when the public consultation will take place and how they have fulfilled their obligation to make information available to the public.

We are reasonably sure that they are in breach of the law by not completing the public consultation and action plan in time and by not making the information available to the public.

For thirty years we have been pointing out the serious traffic problems in Julianstown where traffic exceeds motorway volumes. We have constantly been dismissed and arrogantly stonewalled by the council. But now Meath County Council's own study shows that there is a serious threat to human health in Julianstown due to traffic noise and they are legally obliged to take action.

This is a serious matter for Julianstown residents and the failure by the council to carry out its basic obligations under the law is of concern but not a surprise since it is indicative of a pattern of neglect of Julianstown by the local authority.

We will be monitoring progress closely and if action isn't taken will make a complaint to the Environmental Protection Agency or the European Commission if necessary.

Harmful effects of noise are taken seriously across the EU where it is estimated to cost tens of billions of Euro, We can't understand why Meath County Council isn't approaching the problem in Julianstown with the same concern.

For more information see <http://www.julianstown.com/noise/>