

Ultimatum from villagers on noise pollution dangers

BY ANGELA McCORMICK

Residents in car clogged Julianstown, where the traffic noise is so bad they should be wearing ear muffs, say Meath County Council is in danger of failing to met EU deadlines on a noise action plan for the village.

Residents say the council has until Friday to produce this action plan. A noise map of the village, which has 22,000 vehicles a day passing through it, was released by the Environmental Protection Agency in January.

It showed the extremely high volumes of traffic results in noise levels in excess of 75 decibels in the centre of Julianstown.

Under EU law workers exposed to 75 decibels must wear ear protection.

'The council is just not taking this problem seriously. Under the Noise Pollution Act they have until Friday, July 18th to produce an action plan but we so far we have seen nothing to say it is on its way,' said residents' Chairman



The village of Julianstown is still choked with traffic.

Fred Logue.

A council spokesman was quick to 'refute any suggestion' that the council is 'in breach of our duties under the regulations.'

The spokesman maintained only a draft plan is required by Friday, with the final one due on October 31st.

'The council is working to meet both deadlines. This is quite onerous given the work involved but we are confident that we will do it,' he stressed.

Julianstown residents however, insist that Friday is the deadline for the full action plan, not the draft.

They point out that the council has known about traffic problems in the village for the past 30 years.

'For years we have been dismissed and stonewalled by the council. The traffic noise now exceeds motorway volumes.

'Work on the plan may be onerous but living next to harmful noise is a serious health risk. The council is legally obliged to take

urgent steps to remove that risk,' Mr Logue pointed out.

The Julianstown residents want a number of measures included in any noise plan.

'In the short term we want our homes sound proofed. Engineering measure to significantly slow down traffic are needed in the medium term but our long term aim is to get the village bypassed,' said Mr Logue.

A spokesman said the council has 'noted' the residents' concerns.

He pointed out that on Monday, July 7th the council received a presentation on its obligations under the Noise Regulations 2006.

'A draft action plan is currently being finalised and will be placed on public display shortly,' he added.

The residents group say they will give the council time but if they are considering making a complaint to the Environmental Protection Agency.

'The council's data shows the noise is a severe public health issue. We are simply not going to let them get away with doing nothing about it,' said Mr Logue.