

Response to CSA Report from Hoare Lea

Many thanks for sending through the Clarke Saunders Associates (CSA) critique of the Hoare Lea Acoustics (HLA) assessment into the noise impact of the Monkton Park skate park.

The CSA critique focuses on two main issues: first they consider that the baseline background noise levels used for the comparative assessment should be lower, and second they consider the source levels adopted for the skate park activity should be higher. Both of these eventualities could clearly lead to different assessment conclusions being drawn on the basis that the stipulated assessment criterion is generally based on the relative difference between the skate park noise and the existing background, although HLA has additionally considered the potential impact of L_{Amax} levels.

In terms of the baseline background levels, HLA has not undertaken any new background noise measurements. The scope of the appointment of HLA specifically requested that they should adopt the baseline background noise levels determined by others. Whether or not lower noise levels may be expected when the facility is in use would clearly depend on the varying background level as a function of time of day, evening or night. CSA are quite correct to point this out as a possibility depending on the potential hours of use of the facility, but this issue was not part of the remit of HLA's assessment which was restricted to assessing potential noise impact against the supplied baseline noise levels.

In terms of the source noise levels, CSA indicate their own data to indicate higher source levels than those adopted by HLA. HLA clearly can not dispute the statement of CSA that their own measurements have indicated higher source levels. What HLA can state, however, is that the measurements on which HLA have based their own assessment were based on results obtained at a modern, concrete skate park with metal rails, which is understood to be of the type considered at Monkton Park. Also, during the measurements, users were specifically requested to work their boards hard in order to generate higher rather than lower noise levels. On this basis HLA is confident of the source levels utilised in its calculations and would contend that there is no requirement to increase the calculated noise emission levels as suggested by CSA. HLA would however additionally suggest that, if the difference between the parties comes down simply to an argument as to the appropriate source levels to use, then some joint measurements at an agreed facility could effectively be used to resolve this issue.

The final point is one of a request for clarification in the CSA report where it refers (in the penultimate paragraph of page 2 of the CSA report) to HLA stating that an L_{Amax} level of 52 dB(A) is calculated to occur at location R1 (as listed in the table on Page 7 of the HLA report). CSA suggest that this quoted 52 dB(A) should be 59 dB(A) on the basis that the source levels need to be uplifted by 7 dB in accordance with CSA's own source data when compared with HLA's source data. However, the L_{Amax} level reported in the HLA table for the screened facility is actually just under 45 dB(A), and so even adding the 7 dB CSA uplift would result in a revised L_{Amax} level of 52 dB(A) and not 59 dB(A)?

I hope that this response adequately addresses the issues raised, but if you require any further information then please don't hesitate to contact me.