

SUPERSONIC



FAIR BLOWS THE WIND

It is an extraordinary vision – a timber-framed building clad in straw, a wind-turbine standing tall beside it, the soaring spire of York Minster just visible above the roof tops. This is the vision York City Council has for their new Commercial Services Depot at Foss Islands.

In a bold new undertaking, York City Council is looking to replace their Commercial Services Depot with a new, fully ecologically friendly development, which will house both the commercial services department and also, close by, a new household waste recycling centre. In keeping with the green aims of the development as a whole, the new office building will be timber-framed with straw cladding. The Council is also seeking to ensure that the site is highly water and energy efficient, and one element in that

plan involves the possible use of a wind turbine to generate energy for the site. Hepworth Acoustics was asked by the council to conduct a noise impact assessment, to judge whether noise from the turbine would affect local commercial and domestic properties.

The proposed Foss Islands ecoDepot lies near to the centre of the city, just outside the old city walls, not far from York Castle and Museum. The site is surrounded by an industrial estate, with some dwellings beyond.

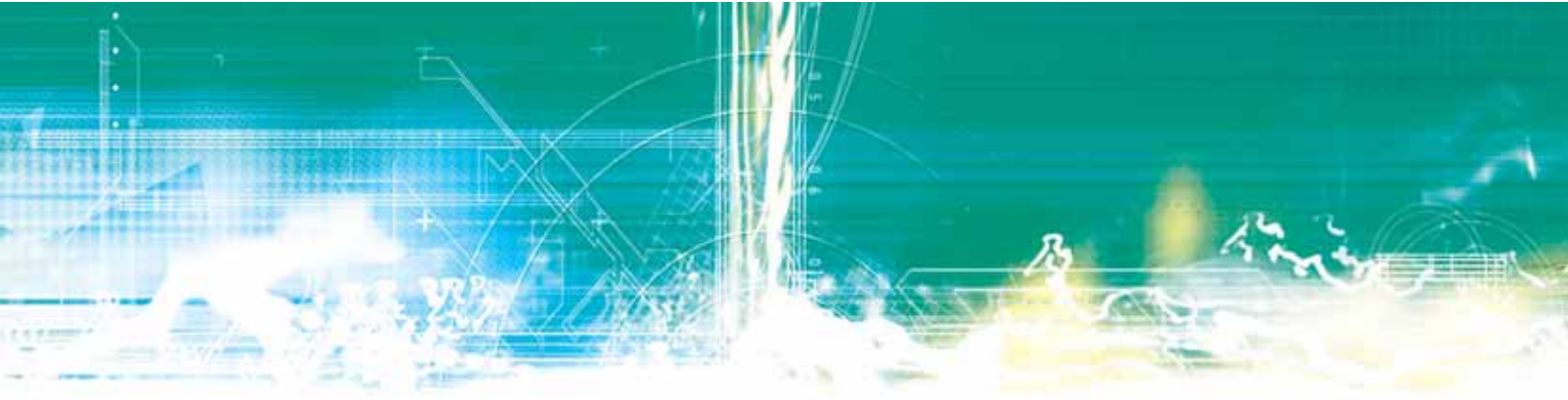
Hepworth Acoustics carried out extensive measurements of existing noise levels. As was to be expected, the industrial estate provided a fairly consistent level of sound

throughout working hours – vehicles moving, doors banging – but out of working hours and at the weekend, the area was relatively quiet, with birdsong being a noticeable, and pleasant, component of the soundscape.

Hepworth Acoustics was able to establish that the noise generated by the turbine would be well within the relevant criteria for the nearest residential and commercial premises.

So, soon, perhaps it will be just like old times – sails turning in the wind, casting their shadow on the straw-clad building below.

City of York Council
www.york.gov.uk/sustainability



ONE THOUSAND AND RISING

The recent changes to Part E of the Building Regulations have introduced the need to carry out sound insulation testing to many new residential properties. All new developments formed by conversion of existing properties and many new build properties are required to prove that they meet the sound insulation standards by testing.

Hepworth Acoustics is at the forefront of providing a quick and cost effective sound insulation testing service to the construction industry. The company has six testers registered under the Association of Noise Consultants Registration Scheme for sound insulation testing and can provide the testing from each of the six company offices.

Each office is equipped with a full set of sound insulation testing equipment for a swift response. In the last 18 months, Hepworth Acoustics has carried out over 1100 individual tests, with an overall pass rate of over 95%.

LIVING IT UP WHILE KEEPING IT DOWN IN OXFORD

One of the more unusual venues in which Hepworth Acoustics has recently been asked to carry out a noise assessment was within the walls of what was, until recently, Oxford Prison.

The new Oxford Castle development has opened up this once gloomy and desolate place and transformed it into chic boutiques, comfortable cafés, a prestigious hotel, and an outstanding restaurant and refuge from the pressures of everyday life.

It was this last, The Living Room, that commissioned Hepworth Acoustics to provide advice, both in terms of minimising the effect that convivial patrons might have on the neighbours as they came and went, and also in terms of sealing off the hotel above from any potentially intrusive noise from the sociable hubbub of the restaurant and bar.

Hepworth Acoustics worked closely alongside the architect and developer to ensure that the Living Room provided the 'relaxed, chilled environment' sought by owners Living Ventures, while providing strategies to avoid any potential annoyance to neighbours.



According to Living Ventures Commercial Director Jeremy Roberts, the outcome has been an outstanding success:

“Operating a lively bar and restaurant below a luxury hotel was always going to be a challenge. The secret of our success has been planning what we need to do acoustically with Hepworth well ahead of time and getting the developer to engage early in the process. I am delighted to say that I can sleep easily at night as can the occupiers of the bedrooms above us !”



FIRST ON THE MAP

In March of this year, Hepworth Acoustics, working together with environmental consultancy Entec UK, delivered to Defra the first noise maps to be completed under the Noise Mapping England project.

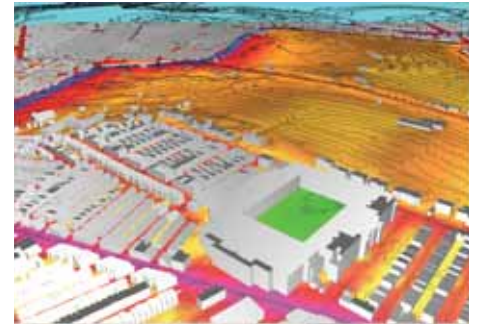
The Noise Mapping England project is a precursor to the noise mapping required by the EU Environmental Noise Directive. The END will require information on ambient noise levels in every major and medium-sized conurbation, at major airports and industrial sites, and along every major road and railway throughout the UK by 2012. Similar assessments will be required throughout the European Union. Once the noise maps have been prepared, strategies will need to be put in place to reduce ambient noise levels.

We are very proud that the first piece of the England Noise Mapping puzzle has been put in place by Hepworth Acoustics and Entec UK. The noise maps produced for the Manchester and Merseyside conurbations covered a total area of 2,000 km² requiring over 7 million calculation points. Using the dedicated LIMA noise-mapping software, we were able to deliver to Defra two highly detailed maps, together with their accompanying technical reports.

Hepworth Acoustics has long experience of noise mapping, having been involved in the mapping of all major noise sources from roads to railways, from industry to aircraft, and much else besides. Combined with our established expertise in the use

of the LIMA noise-mapping software, this places us at the forefront of independent acoustic consultancies able to conduct large noise-mapping projects.

Merseyside and Manchester are just the beginning. Watch this space for more in the months to come.



WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT

Hepworth Acoustics is increasingly being commissioned by national and local government bodies.

Recently we have completed a number of research projects for the Department of Environmental, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra) and are currently undertaking research on noise generated by construction plant (excavators, dump trucks, etc) that are used on quarries. This research project is being carried out in conjunction with the Acoustics Department of Salford University. The project involves carrying out an extensive programme of noise monitoring at quarries and preparing a database of the results.



We have also carried out a number of projects to assist local government bodies including Westminster City Council, Bolton MBC, Coventry City Council, Trafford MBC, York City Council, Sefton MBC, Preston BC, Lincolnshire County Council and Ashfield DC. The commissions have been interesting and varied projects including:

- assessing noise impact of a proposed wind turbine
- advising on acoustic requirements for extensions to schools
- assessing noise from BMX race meetings
- assessing noise from road speed humps
- environmental noise mapping
- assisting Environmental Health Departments by carrying out noise surveys or reviewing environmental noise impact reports carried out by others
- assessing noise from early morning operations at a quarry
- evaluating likely changes in traffic noise resulting from proposed weight restrictions.

Who's Who



PAUL BASSETT

Paul Bassett is one of the most established members of the Hepworth Acoustics team, having been with the company since 1992. Paul is Technical Director in charge of the Consultancy division and, as well as his demanding work within the company, has managed to find time to research and write a number of prestigious conference papers. Paul's qualifications include a BSc in Environmental Science, a Diploma in Acoustics and Noise Control and an MSc in Environmental Acoustics.



DUNCAN NEWHALL

Duncan Newhall, Principal Consultant in our London office, joined the company last year after having worked over 10 years in the industry, both for local authorities and as a consultant. Running the London office means sharing in a wide range of concerns, from maintaining the quiet of the semi-rural greenbelt to containing the noise of the city's night-life. He really enjoys working with Environmental Health Officers towards a shared objective, so that everyone ends up happy.

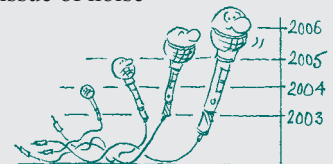
Hepworth Acoustics Heads West!

In January 2006, Hepworth Acoustics opened their newest office, in Bristol, following the acquisition of the instrumentation and goodwill of Woodward Acoustics.

This new location, initially headed up by Richard Watson, a Principal Consultant usually based in our Sheffield office, will mean that the services provided by Hepworth Acoustics will now be even more swiftly and readily available to architects, developers, industrialists, local authorities and any others who might need them all over the South West and Wales.

It is, as Peter Hepworth has pointed out, "a diverse area that includes large conurbations, industrial areas and seaports, with major road and rail links, so the issue of noise control is an important one".

The Bristol office is the latest element in Hepworth Acoustics' growing network of offices able to provide responsive local services backed up by extensive nationwide expertise.



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