

The issue of night-time traffic noise is one of concern to people who live within earshot of the A303. Goodman's traffic projections show that the number of HGVs travelling on the A303 east of the 100-Acre roundabout will increase by 165% due (principally) to the MEGAShed (an increase in number of HGVs from 155 to 411 each and every night). This increase will raise the average night-time A303 traffic noise levels by between 2 and 3 dB.

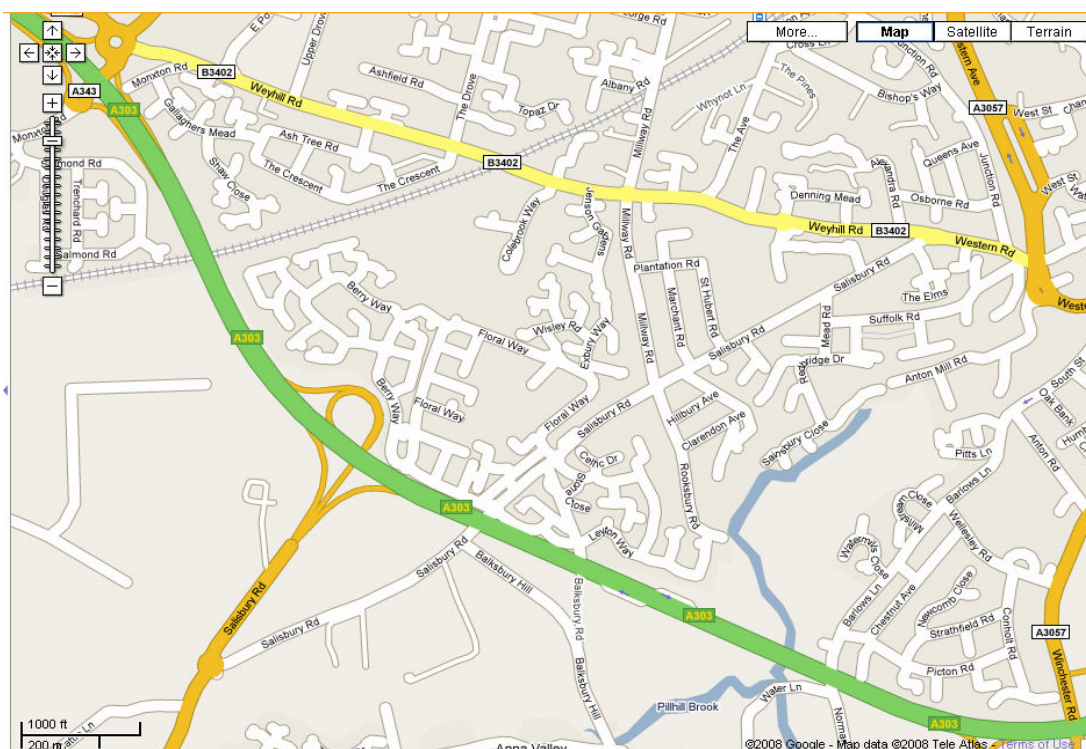
As the figure below shows, a large swathe of Andover, stretching two miles between the 100-Acre roundabout and the Winchester Road A303 junction, borders the A303. Because of the existing A303 traffic, Goodman's measurements show that night noise levels at houses close to the A303 are already well above the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline of 45dB (LA_{eq}). The WHO guidelines were drawn up to reflect the detrimental physical and mental effects of disturbed sleep. It must be questioned whether it is right to exacerbate these effects by further adding to the night noise levels.

In addition to the hundreds of households where the night noise levels are already above WHO guidelines, there will be a further swathe of houses where the night noise levels are currently below the WHO limit but would then exceed it should this development go ahead. Beyond these houses there are hundreds, if not thousands, of houses where residents find that the early-morning noise from the A303 is intrusive in certain weather conditions and it threatens to become more so because of this development.

Furthermore, the possibility of a similar sized 24-hour distribution centre being given approval at Solstice Park would increase night A303 lorry traffic, and the consequent noise, even further.

In the more immediate vicinity of the Business Park, Goodman's own analysis shows that, despite some optimistic assumptions, the noise due to on-site activities at 9 out of 10 chosen receptor sites will exceed the target (of 5dB less than the current background levels) set by TVBC.

If planning permission is given for the Business Park, the only way for these health and nuisance effects to be minimised is to prohibit night-time operation of the MEGAShed. Beneficial side effects would be that disturbance due to early morning car traffic associated with shift changes would also be eliminated and the visual intrusiveness of all-night lighting at the MEGAShed would be avoided.



WHO guidelines and statement of affects of sleep disturbance can be viewed at http://www.ruidos.org/Noise/WHO_Noise_guidelines_summary.html#3