

Biomass Power Tamdhu

Tamdhu Distillery proposed to install a new biomass fuelled boiler plant for the distillery located in the Spey Valley at Knockando, (just above the famous white water rapids). In the course of preliminary consultations, the local planning authority, the Moray Council, had requested that the planning application should be accompanied by an environmental noise impact assessment. The nearest dwelling overlooked the proposed installation.

The Airshed agreed the proposed methods and assessment criteria with the local EHO and subsequently conducted a baseline noise survey to confirm background and ambient noise. This found that the background noise levels were relatively high, despite the rural location, due to noise from the River Spey. The results from the baseline survey were used to help set a design criterion for the new installation so that there would be no increase in ambient noise.

Noise levels from the proposed boiler plant were predicted using Sound-Plan 7.2 using noise emission estimates provided by the equipment manufacturers, where noise from all plant was guaranteed to be < 85 dBA at 1m. The noise model included the complex topography in the river valley. Noise sources included noise breakout through the boiler plant building walls and roof, ventilation louvres, stack exhaust, conveyor and screw feed. The initial noise predictions found that although noise breakout from the building and fuel feed was likely to be insignificant, noise from the top of the stack could contribute to loss of amenity, due to the local topography. Accordingly a lower stack noise emission limit was specified for procurement.

Noise levels were assessed using the methodology specified by the Scottish Government's Technical Advice Note. This concluded that with appropriate mitigation, noise from the new boiler plant would be of neutral significance. The report was submitted as part of the planning application and approved by the planning authority.

