Assessment of Carapooee Dog Barking Recordings

One (1) of the objectors to the application for a planning permit for a dog breeding facility at Rocky Ridge Road Carapooee (Anne and Robin Hughes) have provided Council (via Local Laws Unit) with numerous hours of recordings that they have done at their property. The recording was done on a domestic quality recorder set up in a pot plant, which gives the recording an amphitheatre type effect. The noise levels, when the playback is set to enable the listener to actually hear the dogs barking, means that small birds (wrens, finches) which are in the vicinity are very loud in comparison to the dog barking, and a louder bird such as a cockatoo, or a vehicle passing on the highway causes distortion and is almost deafening.

Local Laws Officers have listened to the recordings, and were also present during some of the recording.

The recordings would not be admissible in any Court or Tribunal hearing.

For a recording of this type of noise to be admissible for a Court or Tribunal hearing there are a number of issues that would need to be proven;

- The recording instrument would need to be calibrated to ensure accuracy
- Both sites would need to have ambient noise levels established over several days, evenings and nights.
- The recording would need to have been done by a person qualified to;
  a) Set up, calibrate and operate the recording device;
  b) Interpret the recording; and
  c) Determine the noise levels in accordance with EPA guidelines including Noise in Regional Victoria (NIRV) State Environment Protection Policy (SEPP) (Control of noise from Commerce, Industry and trade) and EPA Noise Control Guidelines.

It is estimated that it would cost between $3000 and $5000 for an appropriately qualified person (e.g. acoustics engineer) with the required equipment to make the appropriate determinations on the audible noise levels associated with the planning permit application that are subject to objection.

The attached reference is from the EPA Publication 1254 Noise Control Guidelines and is the only reference to dog breeding establishments or dog noise.

4 DOG KENNELS
The problems caused by the perpetual barking of dogs has been known to exist at distances as far as 500 metres from the actual source. The following criteria for dog kennels have therefore been assembled to limit both the physical stimuli to the dogs and the outbreak of noise from the kennels.
• The kennels should be located at least 500 metres from residential areas.

• Some fully enclosed or acoustically baffled kennels should be available to house particularly noisy animals, at a ratio of 1:15.

• Electronic masking noise devices should be provided to reduce audible stimuli to the dogs.

• Kennels should be constructed to visually screen stimuli such as other dogs, animals, traffic or passers-by.

• Access to kennels should be restricted solely to staff.

NOISE CONTROL GUIDELINES

• Feeding of the dogs should be restricted to the daytime hours of 7 am — 6 pm.

• Exercise of the dogs may only be performed between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm.

• A responsible person must be available on site 24 hours per day.

• Kennels should be constructed of such a material so as to provide an appropriate reduction in the emission of noise. Materials such as masonry and cement sheeting would provide a suitable structural basis.

• The kennels should be positioned so as to utilise the ability of the topography to reduce noise.

Note: Noise originating from dog kennels may be assessed using State Environment Protection Policy (Control of noise from commerce, industry and trade)