

The work across the whole market area, and specifically in front of the apartment started in March. In summary, it has now reached a point where I need to find a solution to the intolerable level of disruption to my enjoyment of the apartment. In this context, it's worth remembering that I work in the apartment so have no time when I have any respite from the disruption.

The problems can be summarised as:

- 1) **Noise**
- 2) **Dust**
- 3) **Completion**

Noise

- Cutting paving: The entire area is being paved with concrete paving slabs. The design apparently demands a great deal of cutting. A high speed bench saw or a grinding tool are used. Both are driven by a portable generator.
From the balcony, the saw measures 83db in noise. This is used regularly all hours from 8am to 7pm.
- The generator measures 65db in noise. It is never switched off even when the saw is not in use.
- For comparison, 60db is equal to constant traffic while 80db is at a level where you have to shout to be heard.
- Digging up past paving: Although the jackhammer has currently moved, it's worth noting that absolutely nothing has been done on the opposite side of the road and the jackhammer will have to be brought in to remove all of that plus the main road surface. And then it will be paved (see above).
- Hours of work: Moving construction trucks before the 8am curfew is frequent with the accompanying loud reversing buzzers.
- The noise quite possibly breaches laws on environmental disturbance, and the generators on pollution from exhaust from low quality motors. No efforts have been made to mitigate any of the noise.

Dust

- This is my main concern.
- Large amounts of dust are being produced from the paving cutting process, plus the removal of past road surfacing. The entire area is blanketed.
- As an indicator, the apartment was cleaned by Dana around 3 weeks ago. I can now very clearly write my name in the dust that has gathered on the bookshelves. It is the same grey as the paving.
- I Googled the process and cutting paving produces Respirable Crystalline Silica which is potentially extremely dangerous. I now have an allergic reaction similar to that from springtime pollen every day and my eyes are constantly gritty. Everything I touch here now feels like it has a powder on it.
- I am quite sure the level of dust is illegal and most certainly it must be for the workers (not Spanish) who have no respirators. No effort is made to minimise or remove the dust.

Completion

- The work continues on a piecemeal basis. This means there is literally no area in the entire project that is fully complete.
- This has two main effects: There is never any respite from the noise and dust as there is always someone doing some work. One man with one grinder is as disruptive as a team of men.
- There is no access for the normal city cleaning. So the dust lies everywhere and is kicked up by pedestrians. Junk from wooden pallets to barriers and general trash lie around everywhere.
- I have no realistic expectation that the work will finish even by the delayed new end date of April 2022.
- And finally, there is nothing I've found to indicate what the end result might be.
 - I've no idea how the areas left unpaved in front of the apartment will be used (they say maybe a playground but there are 3 of them);
 - the opposite side of the street has been dug up and filled in - twice, and remains totally unchanged;
 - the road that ran by the church is now closed to traffic, so will all traffic now be directed past the apartment, or will regular traffic be banned;
 - will a bus route be reintroduced - the opposite side of the market is now a huge pedestrian area with no road running through it.

So what are my choices.

As you know, I love it here, but I am increasingly thinking of moving out - at least until the work is completed. I really don't want to but the following ideas on how to make life tolerable aren't very attractive either...

- 1) Keep the windows closed permanently (even when I'm out) to prevent the dust
- 2) Buy a \$250 air purifier to attempt to clean out the dust if/when it does get in
- 3) Continue to pay Dana EU40 every 4 weeks to thoroughly clean
- 4) Take much more regular short breaks to gain relief (I will see how my 8 days in Andalusia now might improve my allergies and eyes).
- 5) Extend my December/January one month long-term break to run until March or until the work completes

It seems to me as a foreigner, that it's not the Spanish way to challenge authority. The wool shop guys on the ground floor are suffering badly, but seem content to just shrug and say it will pass.

As you know I'm not made that way, but I have no standing here and my lack of language means I cannot make even the mildest suggestion.

It's strange to see architectural police scanning for ruins, and the council regulating tables to be closer together on terraces (in times of a pandemic), but no environmental examination whatsoever.

At the very least, I'd like to see the council commit to

- 1) work being completed in full in definable areas - not on a piecemeal basis
- 2) dust suppressed using water on the saw or grinder and by frequent washing down of all paving
- 3) noise suppressed by turning off generators when not in use
- 4) full cleanup by the council mechanical sweepers after work finishes every day
- 5) publication of design plans with a realistic schedule to completion
- 6) no work to commence before 8am including the movement of any construction vehicles

In truth, I'm not sure I'd press on with these complaints even if I could because I don't think the council will take any notice and I'd be reluctant to identify myself as a trouble-maker. But there comes a point...