

## QPI Preliminary Survey Report by Mat Eric Hart

Location : La Torse, 13090, Aix-en-Provence, France

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 12:00 - 13:30

Weather Conditions :

- Overcast, Grey
- Humidity 70% (no rain)
- Light WNW wind 10km/h
- 11°C
- Pressure 1,014 mBar



### Promenade de La Torse, Aix-en-Provence, 13090, France

Located towards the eastern quarters, Promenade de La Torse is described as the *poumon vert* (green lung) of the city of Aix-en-Provence. It surrounds La Torse river on its southwards course through the city from its source in the Pinchinats valley down towards a confluence with L'Arc. This public park was created and developed as recently as 1984 and covers an area of nearly 8 hectares. The park has a very natural and rural appearance thanks to the presence of dense and very high

quality tree vegetation, including a healthy collection of plane trees that date to being over a hundred years old. With its many paths and the three footbridges crossing La Torse river, it is a haven for walkers and joggers. A large lawn with its carefully tended grass, is particularly popular with yoga and gymnastics enthusiasts and with families who use it for picnics. In the northern part, a facility with several weight machines allows the public to do free gymnastic exercises amongst nature. Alongside this area, a 2500 m<sup>2</sup> pond is home to numerous ducks and other birds, herons, moorhens, etc. living there in harmony with old carp and barbel. For children, there are two designated play located next to two local schools - the Torse school and also the Val Saint André school. A bowling green sits shaded beneath a canopy for *pétanque* enthusiasts. There are several entrances to the park. Four main ones offer parking spaces. Pedestrians can enter the Park from the Route de Nice, at the Pavillon de la Torse or on the Route Cézanne at the Charles Tillon roundabout. It is also easy to go directly from the Parc de la Torse to the sports facilities at the Stade Georges Carcassonne sports complex to the west. In the next few years, a 7-hectare plot of land has been purchased by the municipality with a view to extending the park towards the eastern districts in the direction of Cortésine. With the green corridor already laid out, it will then be possible to walk seamlessly to the Bibemus plateau via the Escrachepeou path.

## **Locations**

A total of five locations were examined across the length of the park. Details of each location, including GPS co-ordinates, date & time, SPL readings and notable disturbances can be accessed by following [this Google Map link](#). SPL readings were taken using a professional sound level meter (Velleman model DVM1326, measuring range (30-100dB with A weighting/fast response) Results were corroborated with the SPL monitoring application SmarterNoisePro. Measurements were taken for approx. 2 minutes at each location. Video capture and additional audio recordings made using an ORTF stereo array of LOM BasicUcho omni-directional microphones paired with a Sound Devices MixPre6 recorder, have been made available through accessing [this Google Drive link](#).

For an urban park surrounded by roads, there are some surprisingly quiet zones. Readings ranged from 36.5dB(A) to peaking at 62.3dB(A). Not all of the park is quiet, with an average SPL of 46.1dB(A) across the 5 locations examined, however there are locations with sound pressure levels under 45 dB(A), certainly towards the center of the park where only sporadic noise disturbances occur. The presence of traffic noise around the periphery contributes significant noise, and despite the aesthetic beauty clearly present here, one struggles to really feel detached from the soundscape of the nearby city.

### **Position #1 - 43.52082, 5.46676**

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 12.11 pm

Avg SPL over 2 minutes : 51.1 dB(A)

Notable Disturbances :

- Children playing in nearby school (peaks at 62.3dB)
- Distant chainsaw (50.4dB)
- Passing walker on phone (peaks at 53dB)



This location is situated at the entrance to the park from the nearby public car park. La Torse river flows by, guarded by a procession of tall plane trees. A nearby primary school and children's playground contributes considerable noise at peak times (08-09:00, 12-1300, 15-1600).

### **Position #2 - 43.52232, 5.4652**

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 12.32 pm

Avg SPL over 2 minutes : 41.2 dB(A)

Notable Disturbances :

- Children playing in distance (peaks at 43.1dB)
- Distant construction (peaks at 44dB)
- Distant motorbike (peaks at 46.1dB)

The first of two locations that comply with the QPI standards. With an average SPL reading of 41.2dB(A) recorded over a 2 minute period. Disturbances here were minimal being situated in one of the quieter corners of the park. Located on higher ground than the other locations, nearby traffic is susceptible from the surrounding roads. Pleasant variety of birdsong can be heard from the surrounding trees.



### **Position #3 - 43.52431, 5.46436**

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 12.48 pm

Avg SPL over 2 minutes : 39.7 dB(A)

Notable Disturbances :

- Children playing in distance (42.4dB)
- Cyclist bike chain (peaks at 51.3dB)
- Passing jogger (peaks at 48.9dB)
- Distant construction vehicle reversing (peaks at 43.9dB)



The quietest location monitored. With an average SPL reading of 39.7dB(A) over a 2 minute period. Located on the periphery of the park, this large sports field was empty at the time of visiting, but borders a large sports complex, Stade Georges Carcassonne (also empty), which when occupied would result in considerably elevated noise levels.



#### **Position #4 - 43.52657, 5.46349**

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 13.02 pm

Avg SPL over 2 minutes : 47.8 dB(A)

Notable Disturbances :

- Passing traffic (peaks at 55.1dB)
- Car door closing (51.7dB)

This location was chosen to reflect the ambient noise floor of La Torse river. A beautiful listening spot, we hear the ebb & flow of water passing over rocks and roots. A main road (Avenue des Écoles Militaires) and nearby parking area contribute a considerable amount of traffic noise to the soundscape.



#### **Position #5 - 43.51896, 5.4643**

Date : Tuesday 4th April 2023

Time : 13.27 pm

Avg SPL over 2 minute : 50.5 dB

Notable Disturbances :

- Dog barking (peaks at 54.4dB)
- Passing traffic (peaks at 56dB)

This location is located towards the South entrance to the park. A peaceful spot with benches provided just across from La Torse river. Another main road (Cours Gambetta) is exposed, leaking a considerable amount of traffic noise which can be heard here constantly.

