MPF/P1230/L01

18 June 2009

sol
acoustics

Albion Wharf, Albion Street, Manchester, M1 5LN

tel 0161 923 4844
fax 0161 923 4833
email info@solacoustics.co.uk

Jonathan Heyes
Common
39-41 Edge Street
MANCHESTER
M1 3DA

PLANNING

19 JUN 2009

Dear Jonathan

PROPOSED EXTERNAL SEATING, A PLACE CALLED COMMON, EDGE STREET, MANCHESTER

We write with reference to the proposal for external seating to the existing bar at A Place Called Common, Edge Street, Manchester.

It is understood that seating for up ten people is proposed on Edge Street and that the seating would be available up to 9pm for patrons of the bar. Furthermore, Manchester City Council has requested that an assessment be made of the potential for noise disturbance due to use of the seating area.

We have spoken with Ann Orme, Environmental Health Officer at Manchester City Council to discuss the requirements of a noise assessment.

It was agreed that a weekday evening noise survey would provide the necessary data to assess the existing noise climate external to nearby noise sensitive receptors and to determine the viability of the external seating.

Existing Noise Levels

The closest residential dwellings to A Place Called Common are within a mixed-use commercial and residential development on Hare Street. Noise levels on Hare Street have been measured during both a manned noise survey on a Tuesday evening, 26th May 2009 and by continuous noise logging measurements between Thursday 28th May 2009 and Monday 1st June 2009. The full results of the noise surveys are presented in Sol Acoustics' report 'Common, 39-43 Edge Street, Environmental Noise Study' dated June 2009, submitted to Manchester City Council as part of the Planning Submission for a proposed extension to the existing bar.

The background and ambient noise levels on Hare Street measured on the Tuesday evening were 45dB L_{A90} to 48 dB L_{A90} and 51dB L_{Aeq} to 54dB L_{Aeq} respectively.

Potential noise level from seating area

At its closest point, the proposed seating area will be approximately 10 metres from the nearest window to a residential dwelling on Hare Street. If it is assumed that five people are talking in normal voices, and all are positioned at the closest point to the nearest dwelling, then a noise level of 51dB(A) is expected at the nearest dwelling. This noise level is slightly in excess of the existing background noise levels, and is comparable to the existing ambient noise levels.

Whilst no published guidance is available that gives recommended assessment criteria for noise due to patrons outside a bar, it is considered that, given the cessation of the use of the external salting area at 9 pm, the above noise levels should be acceptable. (Reference can be made to the Institute of Acoustics' draft Code of Practice on the Control of Noise from Pubs and Clubs. This suggested that up to 10 pm, the L_{Aeq} noise level external to a dwelling due to noise from a bar should be no more than 3dB(A) higher than the pre-existing L_{Aeq} noise level. Whilst no criteria were given in the final version of the Code of Practice, this criterion has been applied successfully by some Local Authorities. The expected noise level due to patrons outside Common would comply with this suggested criterion).

It is understood that currently, approximately five patrons may be gathered outside the existing Common bar at any one time in the evening in order to smoke. If no complaints have been received to date regarding this activity, then it may be appropriate to conclude that similar satisfactory noise levels could be achieved with an external seating area.

It should be noted that the above assessment assumes that voices are at a normal level when seated externally. Management control would be required to ensure that patrons do not talk at inappropriate noise levels given the proximity to dwellings and that the seating area is not available for use after 9pm.

If there is any aspect of the above that you would like to discuss then please give me a call.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Fisher
For and on behalf of Sol Acoustics