

Appendix 10.2

Relevant Policies and Guidance

Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)

The NPSE is the overarching Government policy on noise. It seeks to clarify the underlying principles and aims in past and existing policy documents, legislation and guidance in relation to all forms of noise including environmental noise, neighbour noise and neighbourhood noise (but not noise in the workplace).

It uses the established concepts of No Observed Effect Level (NOEL) and Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL). The NPSE extends these by introducing Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL). This is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur. However, the explanatory note to the NPSE states that it is not possible to identify a single objective value to define SOAEL for noise that is applicable to all sources of noise in all situations. It is likely to be different for different noise sources, for different receptors and at different times. The NPSE recognises that ‘further research is required to increase understanding of what may constitute a significant adverse impact on health and quality of life from noise. However not having specific SOAEL values in the NPSE provides the necessary policy flexibility until further evidence and suitable guidance is available’. Consequently, the practitioner must determine the appropriate threshold values to be adopted for the sources and situations being assessed, based on the available evidence.

The NPSE’s vision is consistent with paragraph 5.195 of the NPSNN (paragraph 5.2.8 above). It is to:

“Promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.

This long-term vision is supported by the following aims:

- Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development: Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life;*
- Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and*
- Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.”*

Within the NPSE, the phrase ‘within the context of Government policy on sustainable development’ is used. This means that noise must not be treated in isolation. Instead, when implementing the aims of the policy, consideration should be given to the economic and social benefit of the activity causing the noise as well as the other environmental effects of the development. Issues relevant to this ‘balance’ between different aims and objectives of policy, and between benefits and impacts, is addressed holistically in the separate Planning Statement.

The second aim of the NPSE refers to noise impacts that lie somewhere between LOAEL and SOAEL. The NPSE asserts that, while this means that all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects, this does not mean that such adverse effects cannot occur.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is referenced in paragraph 5.193 of the NPSNN. The document was originally published in 2012 and last amended in December 2024 and sets out the Government's planning policy for England. At its heart is an intention to promote more sustainable development, including delivering against economic, social, and environmental objectives and outcomes.

The relevant paragraphs concerning noise in the NPPF are:

- Paragraph 187: *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution, ... Development should, wherever possible, should help to improve local environmental conditions".*
- Paragraph 198 *"Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
 - a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life;
 - b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason"*

It can be seen from these paragraphs how the NPPF reflects the aims of the NPSE and the decision tests in the NPS. Furthermore, the NPPF makes reference to the NPSE for advice on the achievement of these policy aims, and particularly in connection with adverse impacts. It also evident from paragraph 187 that there is a higher level of impact than the significant adverse effect level, i.e., the unacceptable effect level. This is discussed further below.

Planning Practice Guidance: Noise (PPG: N)

Further government guidance on the consideration of noise for planning has been published as the Planning Practice Guidance for Noise (PPG: N) originally published in 2014. Its most recent revision was in July 2019. The PPG: N supports the NPPF by providing a range of advice.

Paragraph 003 notes that plan-making and decision making should take account of the acoustic environment and in doing so should consider:

- Whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur;
- Whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and
- Whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

The PPG: N includes a noise exposure hierarchy table, and again makes reference to the NPSE. The hierarchy table (replicated in **Table 1**) provides descriptive (i.e., non-numerical) guidance on the potential effects of various degrees of noise exposure.

Paragraph 004 of the document states that while the word 'level' is used in the definitions of NOEL, LOAEL and SOAEL (see tceshe section titled Noise Policy Statement for England

above for further information on these terms), it does not mean that the effects can only be defined in terms of a single value of noise exposure. In some circumstances, adverse effects are defined in terms of a combination of more than one factor, such as noise exposure, the number of occurrences of the noise in a given time period, the duration of the noise and the time of day the noise occurs. The table confirms that adverse effects (i.e., between LOAEL and SOAEL, where noise starts to cause small changes in behaviour or attitude) should be mitigated and reduced to a minimum¹.

Table 1: PPG:N Noise Exposure Hierarchy

Response	Examples of outcomes	Increasing effect level	Action
No Observed Effect Level			
Not present	No effect.	No Observed Effect	No specific measures required
No Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and not intrusive	Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a change in the quality of life	No Observed Adverse Effect	No specific measures required
Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and intrusive	Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, e.g. turning up volume of television; speaking more loudly; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to close windows for some of the time because of the noise. Potential for some reported sleep disturbance. Affects the acoustic character of the area such that there is a small actual or perceived change in the quality of life.	Observed Adverse Effect	Mitigate and reduce to a minimum
Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and disruptive	The noise causes a material change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, e.g. avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to keep windows closed most of the time because of the noise. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening	Significant Observed Adverse Effect	Avoid

¹ With the NPSE confirming in its paragraph 2.24 that reasonable steps should be taken to achieve that outcome.

Response	Examples of outcomes	Increasing effect level	Action
	and difficulty in getting back to sleep. Quality of life diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area.		
Present and very disruptive	Extensive and regular changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress, e.g. regular sleep deprivation/awakening; loss of appetite, significant, medically definable harm, e.g. auditory and non-auditory.	Unacceptable Adverse Effect	Prevent

Increasing noise exposure will cause the SOAEL boundary to be crossed. As shown in **Table 1**, there are two levels of adverse effect above the SOAEL:

- the significant observed adverse effect – noise causes a material change in behaviour e.g. keeping windows closed or avoiding certain activities at certain times. The planning process should be used to avoid this effect occurring, for example through choice of sites and use of appropriate mitigation (discussed further below). It is undesirable for such exposure to be caused, but as mentioned in Footnote 27, there are circumstances when such effects can occur. Decisions must take account of the economic and social benefit of the activity causing or affected by the noise caused.
- the unacceptable adverse effect – noise exposure would cause extensive and sustained adverse changes in behaviour and / or health without the ability to mitigate the effects of the noise. Under these circumstances the impacts on health and quality of life are such that regardless of the benefits of the activity causing the noise, this situation must be prevented from occurring. While not stated in the table, the boundary this type of effect can be referred to as the unacceptable adverse effect level (UAEL).

Regarding appropriate mitigation measures that can be employed to avoid significant adverse effects (and mitigate and minimise adverse effects), paragraph 010 of the PPG(N) indicates that there are 4 broad types of mitigation:

- Engineering: reducing the noise generated at source and or containing the noise generate;
- Layout: where possible, optimising the distance between the source and noise sensitive receptors and/or incorporating good design to minimise noise transmission through the use of screening (by natural or purpose-built barriers or other buildings);
- Using planning conditions/obligations to restrict activities allowed on the site at certain times and/or specifying permissible noise levels differentiating as appropriate between different times of day, such as evening and late night; and
- Mitigating the impact on areas likely to be affected by noise including through noise insulation when the impact is on a building.

National Policy Summary

With regard to government policy on noise, it is recognised that:

- Adverse effects can occur, as long as reasonable steps have been taken to keep such effects to a minimum;
- Significant adverse effects should be avoided but there may be circumstances where this cannot be achieved, even after the application of mitigation; and
- Unacceptable adverse effects must not occur, regardless of the economic and social benefits that may arise from the activity generating the noise.

Local Policy

Manchester City Council - Manchester's Local Development Framework. Core Strategy Development Plan Document

The Core Strategy was adopted by Manchester City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework and covers a period of 15 years from 2012 to 2027.

Section 13.6 of states that:

"All new developments should follow the 'Development Principles' and accord with the design guidance set out in the Supplementary Planning Documents"

Policy DM 1 sets out specific issues that all developments should have regard to and that more detailed guidance is available within a supplementary planning document, as discussed in the following section, the issue within Policy DM1 that pertains to this assessment is reproduced below:

- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

Manchester City Council - Planning and Noise Technical Guidance

Manchester City Council (MCC) provide noise technical guidance to applicants and consultants concerning the assessment and prediction of environmental noise associated with a particular development. It outlined that the overarching policy on noise management is set out in the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance, outlined previously.

MCC assessment criteria

The Planning and Noise Technical Guidance states:

"In the context of government policy, the Council require that developments aim for:

1. A noise level between the No Observed Effect Level (this is the level of noise exposure below which no effect at all on health or quality of life can be detected) and the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (this is the level of noise exposure above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected). Conditions may be attached.

If point 1 cannot be achieved, then:

2. If the assessment results in a level between the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level and the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (this is the level of noise exposure above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur), mitigation will be necessary to reduce the level and thus conditions will be attached.

If points 1 & 2 cannot be achieved, then:

3. If the assessment results in a Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level after mitigation, the application will be recommended for refusal.”

Noise Assessment Guidance

The Planning and Noise Technical Guidance does set out specific guidelines for the assessment of noise from various developments, assessment guidance pertinent to the Proposed Development is outlined below:

Industrial / commercial developments

For noise sources of an Industrial/commercial developments nature, The Planning and Noise Technical Guidance states:

“The Council consider that new developments should contribute and enhance the area in which they are located and where possible i.e. prevent ‘noise creep’, contribute to the improvement of people’s health and quality of life as per the NPSE. With this in mind, the design objective should be:

‘The development should be designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (L_{Aeq}) below the typical background (L_{A90}) level at the nearest noise sensitive location.’

Where this criterion cannot be achieved, the various noise control measures considered as part of the assessment should be fully explained (i.e. relocation of noise sources, use of quieter equipment, enclosures, screening, restriction of the hours of operation) and the achievable noise level should be identified. This information will allow a judgement to be made concerning the application and its likely impact on the surrounding area.”

Noise and vibration from fixed plant / equipment

For noise sources from fixed plant and equipment, The Planning and Noise Technical Guidance suggests that many of the complaints Environmental Health receive about noise from plant, equipment and machinery specifically concern the character of the noise emitted. It outlined that:

“ Any noise assessment needs to consider not only the overall level of noise emitted, but also its particular characteristics. The noise assessment should be based on BS 4142, and any application for fixed plant, equipment or machinery must demonstrate that:

‘Externally mounted ancillary plant, equipment and servicing shall be selected and/or acoustically treated in accordance with a scheme designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (L_{Aeq}) below the typical background (L_{A90}) level at the nearest noise sensitive location’.

By designing the sound pressure level of any plant items to generate a noise impact of at least 5dB below the existing background level, any plant noise impact should be of a negligible level which should not give rise to complaints from users or occupiers of existing noise-sensitive usages. See Appendix A with regards to the expectation of how to calculate a ‘typical’ background level.”

Appendix A

The expected methodology to calculate the typical background noise level L_{A90} requires the practitioner to calculate the arithmetic average of all 15minute periods over the duration of the survey.

The identification of the typical background level can then be chosen as the minimum value of the averaged individual 15 minute periods for the assessment period. The example used in Appendix A is reproduced in **Plate 1**.

Plate 1: Appendix A Example

APPENDIX A														
EXAMPLE														
BS4142 'Typical' background noise level calculation														
Time	Measured LA90 levels													
	8 to 9 Oct	9 to 10 Oct	10 to 11 Oct	11 to 12 Oct	12 to 13 Oct	13 to 14 Oct	14 to 15 Oct	15 to 16 Oct	16 to 17 Oct	17 to 18 Oct	18 to 19 Oct	19 to 20 Oct	20 to 21 Oct	P arithmetic average
23:03	43.1	50.8	53.9	52.7	41.5	44.7	38.7	39.9	51.2	48.1	51.0	42.9	44.4	46.4
23:18	43.3	54.8	56.3	55.8	40.2	46.5	38.3	39.6	58.8	52.6	50.3	43.5	46.6	48.2
23:33	43.6	58.9	58.4	62.8	39.1	50.0	38.0	39.0	64.0	51.3	48.2	43.6	50.4	49.8
23:48	43.7	62.1	59.6	62.8	37.8	47.4	37.2	38.2	61.8	52.0	50.1	44.9	51.9	50.0
00:03	42.5	52.8	51.1	54.4	38.3	46.6	35.3	38.9	48.7	48.0	48.8	45.2	46.4	45.9
00:18	41.8	50.0	47.3	46.7	39.7	46.0	34.7	37.1	45.4	47.3	45.8	42.1	45.5	43.8
00:33	40.5	47.7	48.0	44.0	37.4	46.1	35.3	36.5	47.1	47.4	45.9	40.4	42.4	43.0
00:48	40.9	48.5	46.4	44.1	36.9	44.5	34.3	36.4	49.1	48.5	46.5	41.6	45.0	43.3
01:03	39.2	48.0	45.6	47.2	36.9	44.8	33.6	34.4	51.0	44.4	45.5	41.2	45.8	42.9
01:18	39.8	53.7	43.4	44.7	36.0	48.0	32.7	34.3	52.6	45.7	47.0	40.7	47.5	43.5
01:33	40.5	49.8	45.6	45.7	35.7	49.9	33.0	33.8	56.6	45.4	47.3	40.5	47.2	43.9
01:48	40.1	55.5	48.2	47.2	35.6	47.0	32.1	36.5	57.5	46.2	47.5	41.4	47.0	44.8
02:03	39.6	55.9	47.6	46.8	34.4	47.1	34.5	34.0	56.2	49.2	45.8	40.9	50.3	44.8
02:18	41.1	57.8	49.6	47.7	34.0	49.3	32.1	34.1	58.4	48.6	47.0	40.3	49.4	45.3
02:33	47.6	57.0	51.1	48.3	33.8	52.3	32.0	34.0	60.8	47.5	49.1	39.4	49.5	46.3
02:48	43.1	59.3	48.8	47.5	33.1	54.8	32.5	33.3	61.8	49.6	48.5	38.7	54.0	46.5
03:03	40.4	57.2	48.6	46.4	33.4	51.3	32.8	32.9	54.6	46.4	47.7	39.2	52.8	44.9
03:18	40.6	44.4	49.8	49.3	34.0	39.7	33.3	33.6	38.1	48.5	47.9	38.1	43.3	41.6
03:33	40.2	39.1	48.7	51.0	34.0	38.5	32.9	34.6	37.5	51.7	47.6	38.8	41.9	41.3
03:48	39.6	38.4	52.3	49.7	33.9	40.0	33.8	34.8	38.1	51.4	49.2	38.3	42.3	41.7
04:03	39.4	39.0	53.8	51.8	35.1	40.7	32.7	35.7	37.8	50.8	51.0	38.4	42.1	42.2
04:18	39.3	38.6	54.2	54.9	36.7	39.6	34.0	35.0	38.6	48.6	52.4	39.5	43.0	42.6
04:33	39.9	39.3	52.1	53.1	37.4	38.4	34.9	36.5	38.8	49.6	51.8	40.2	44.6	42.8
04:48	39.9	40.1	52.7	54.2	37.7	38.3	34.6	37.6	45.3	49.3	55.7	39.8	44.2	43.8
05:03	40.2	40.0	51.7	58.4	38.4	40.3	36.1	39.3	46.9	48.7	55.6	40.3	43.5	44.6
05:18	41.1	40.8	53.9	53.6	38.7	40.8	36.6	39.4	47.2	50.5	56.1	43.4	45.4	45.2
05:33	41.5	42.7	53.7	45.2	42.8	41.7	38.7	39.8	47.4	50.3	43.5	43.1	45.3	44.3
05:48	43.2	42.9	55.2	42.2	42.7	41.8	38.9	40.8	47.8	48.2	40.8	44.0	48.9	44.4
06:03	43.8	43.7	55.7	40.2	42.4	43.1	39.3	41.6	48.0	42.3	40.9	44.8	50.2	44.3
06:18	44.9	45.2	42.7	37.5	44.6	44.5	40.9	43.3	48.2	41.8	40.7	45.4	51.0	43.9
06:33	46.0	46.1	42.3	36.6	44.6	45.4	43.4	44.5	48.4	42.7	40.9	46.0	52.5	44.6
06:48	47.6	46.8	43.5	37.3	45.1	46.2	46.1	45.4	49.4	42.1	41.8	47.3	51.8	45.4

41dB is taken as the typical background as it is the minimum value of the averaged individual 15 minute periods

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan

Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan for the nine Greater Manchester districts (excluding Stockport), aims to set strategic policies for homes, jobs, environment, and infrastructure, covering the period 2022–2039 and was adopted 21st March 2024.

The overarching policy affecting noise outlined in the document are **JP-P1** and **JP-S5**

The policies suggests that noise is treated as part of environmental pollution and new developments must:

- Minimise exposure to pollution (including noise) for sensitive receptors (homes, schools, healthcare);
- Provide mitigation where development is close to existing noise sources (transport corridors, industry);
- Developers must supply environmental information where impacts on air and noise quality are likely; and
- Construction Management Plans are required to manage construction noise.