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Acoustics | Vibration | Air Quality

Noise Impact Assessment

Ropemaker Court, Manchester

Noise Impact Assessment

Project: ROPEMAKER COURT, MANCHESTER

Report reference: RP01-25534-R0

Client: ROPEMAKER PROPCO LIMITED
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cass Allen has been instructed by Ropemaker Propco Limited to assess the noise impact of a new development on the existing surrounding noise-sensitive receptors at Ropemaker Court, Manchester.
- 1.2 The assessment was carried out in accordance with relevant local and national planning guidance.
- 1.3 A noise survey was carried out at the site to investigate the existing noise environment.
- 1.4 Noise levels at the location of the noise-sensitive receptors are dictated by road traffic noise emissions from Moss Lane East and Wilmslow Road, existing plant on the ground floor of the Ropemaker building, and by commercial activity associated with the adjacent Worldwide Foods Rusholme supermarket.
- 1.5 Potential noise emissions from external mechanical plant equipment associated with the pavilions have been assessed. Plant noise limits at the nearest sensitive receptors have been set for noise emissions from new external plant associated with the amenity pavilions. The design of new external mechanical plant items will be reviewed as project information becomes available to ensure that the selections are in line with the plant noise limits. Compliance with the limits could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition, if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.6 The proposed sprinkler tank will only operate in case of an emergency and during routine maintenance testing. It is our view that noise limits should not apply to any emergency plant and therefore no further assessment is required. Additionally, maintenance testing would be managed internally by the building, meaning that all tenants would be notified of its operation in advance.
- 1.7 The proposed social study area and study rooms are not anticipated to generate high levels of noise. Given the nature of the proposed activities, the noise levels within the study rooms are expected to be lower than the existing uses occupying these areas, therefore no further assessment is necessary.
- 1.8 Noise limits at the nearest noise sensitive receptors have been set for potential noise breakout from the entertainment and operational uses of the amenity pavilions. Compliance with the limits could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.9 In summary, it is our view that the preliminary design of the development is acceptable in relation to the potential noise generated by the development, subject to detailed design in due course, and that noise should not be a barrier in granting planning permission.

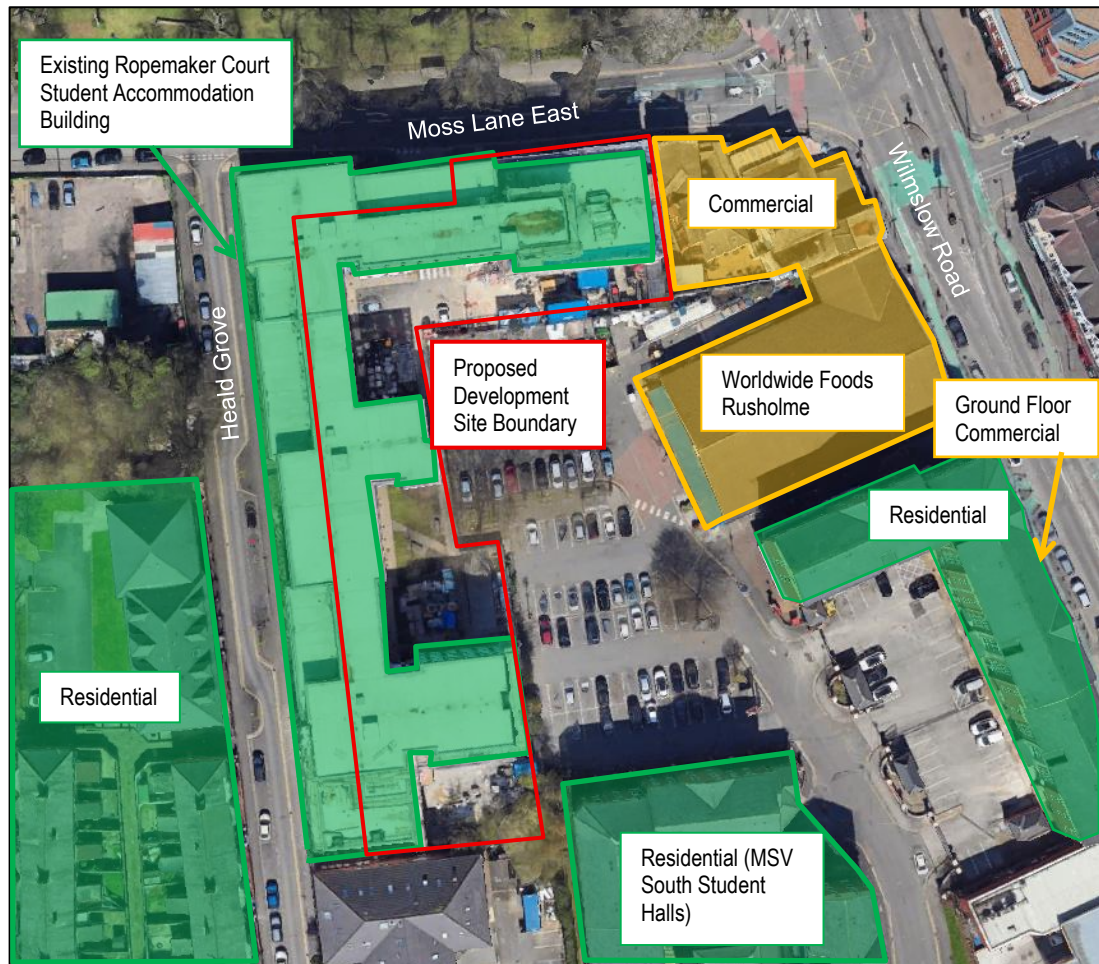
2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Cass Allen has been instructed by Ropemaker Propco Limited to assess the noise impact of a proposed new development at Ropemaker Court, Manchester on existing surrounding noise-sensitive receptors.
- 2.2 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with relevant local and national planning guidance.
- 2.3 The aims of the assessment were:
- to assess the potential impact of on the noise emissions from mechanical plant and operational activities associated with the development at the positions of existing sensitive receptors.
 - where required, to identify appropriate measures to optimise the acoustic design of the development and achieve suitable noise levels in amenity areas
- 2.4 This report contains technical terminology; a glossary of terms can be found at www.cassallen.co.uk/glossary.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The proposed development site forms part of the established Ropemaker Court Student Accommodation property and will contribute to the overall amenity provision associated with the student residential use. The site is located in a mixed-use area, bounded to the West by Heald Grove, to the North by Moss Lane E, and to the East by Wilmslow Road. There are a number of properties along Wilmslow Road with ground floor commercial uses and residential uses above. Worldwide Foods Rusholme supermarket is located adjacent to the eastern site boundary. To the south and west of the site are residential areas, including MSV South Student Halls adjacent to the southern site boundary.
- 3.2 The site location and surrounding area are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Site Location and Surrounding Area



- 3.3 The proposal includes the refurbishment of the ground floor landlord and amenity areas within the northeastern wing of the existing Ropemaker building, construction of two amenity pavilions and an external amenity area in the current car park, and the addition of bin and battery storage buildings behind the most northern pavilion. A current drawing of the proposed development layout is shown in Appendix 1.

4. PLANNING POLICY

National Policy

- 4.1 Outline guidance for the assessment of noise affecting new developments is given in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024). Relevant sections in this case are highlighted below:

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of ...noise pollution.

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 the 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 noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the 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.

Local Policy

- 4.2 Manchester City Council's Local Plan, *Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027*, provides outline guidance on the assessment of noise affecting student accommodation in the area. Relevant extracts are copied below.

Policy DM 1 – Development Management

All developments should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given with a supplementary planning document:

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.

Policy H 12 – Purpose Built Student Accommodation

6. Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the student accommodation and siting of individual uses within the overall development in relation to adjacent neighbouring uses. The aim is to ensure that there is no unacceptable effect on residential amenity in the surrounding area through increased noise, disturbance or impact on the

street scene either from the proposed development itself or when combined with existing accommodation.

- 4.3 Manchester City Council's Supplementary Planning Document (MCC SPD) – *Planning and Noise: Technical Guidance* (October 2022) provides guidance on the assessment of mechanical plant noise associated with new developments. Relevant sections are copied below.

3.1.7.5 Industrial / commercial development

Noise and vibration from fixed plant / equipment:

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 (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location.

3.7.1.2 Entertainment Venues

A planning application for a new entertainment venue that is structurally detached from other building uses should demonstrate that music noise from the proposal will not be 'audible' in nearby residential properties, assuming that the residential properties in question have their windows open. The criterion here is:

Entertainment noise (LAeq,5min) should be controlled to 5dB below the typical background noise level (LA90) in each octave band at the nearest noise sensitive location.

Depending on the circumstances it could be that both the above criteria are applicable for the same development (new entertainment venue). In order to control music noise levels so as not to exceed any agreed maximum permissible operating levels, as a last resort, a suitable noise limiting device may be necessary to install, in addition to structural acoustic treatments such as uprated lobby systems and size, location and fixing of loudspeakers.

3.7.1.3 Mixed Use Developments

Where a planning application includes a proposal to contain a potentially noisy development within the same building as a noise sensitive use or vice versa the noise survey should consider the transfer of noise between the noisy and noise sensitive uses. An example of where this should be considered would be a proposal for a bar or club within the same building as residential properties

- 4.4 To address the requirements of the national and local policies, the following key acoustic matters have been assessed:

- noise emissions from mechanical plant associated with the development at the position of existing sensitive receptors in the area
- noise emissions from operational activities associated with the development at the positions of existing sensitive receptors in the area

5. NOISE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT

Existing Site Noise Levels

- 5.1 A noise survey was carried out at the site from 28 January to 2 February 2026. The survey included measuring the background noise levels at the areas of the site closest to the existing surrounding noise-sensitive receptors, at the rear of the site. The full survey methodology and results are given in Appendix 2.
- 5.2 Average (LAeq) and maximum (LAm_{ax}) noise levels at the site are dictated by road traffic noise emissions from Moss Lane East and Wilmslow Road, and by commercial noise associated with the adjacent Worldwide Foods Rusholme supermarket (including vehicle movements in the car park).
- 5.3 Background noise levels (LA₉₀) at the site are dictated by road traffic noise emissions from Moss Lane East and Wilmslow Road, and by existing Ropemaker mechanical plant at the north of the site.

Proposed Development Design

- 5.4 The proposed amenity buildings comprise a multi-function room, games area and social area within Pavilion 1, a gym within Pavilion 2, and an external amenity space at the southern edge of the site.
- 5.5 The ground floor refurbishment of the northern arm of the Ropemaker building involves reducing the size of the current social area and removal of the TV room to install a social study area and study rooms. The current maintenance room will be adjusted to house an emergency sprinkler tank room alongside the existing water tank room. Additionally, bin store and battery storage buildings will be constructed externally behind Pavilion 1.
- 5.6 The impact of the potential noise emissions associated with the proposed new development on existing surrounding noise sensitive receptors falls into two distinct categories.
 - 1. Noise generated by new mechanical plant associated with the amenity pavilions and the ground floor refurbishments.
 - 2. Noise breakout from the entertainment and operational uses of the amenity pavilions

These are discussed in the following sections of this report.

Mechanical plant noise

- 5.7 BS4142:2014+A1:2019 – *Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound* (hereafter BS4142) can be used to assess the impact of noise from external industrial and/or commercial noise sources on nearby sensitive receptors.
- 5.8 The BS4142 assessment methodology can be summarised as follows:
 - 1. Measure the existing background noise levels (LA_{90,T} dB) at the locations of nearby noise sensitive receptors during the quietest periods when the noise source(s) under investigation will operate

2. Predict or measure the noise emissions (LAeq,T dB) from the noise source(s) under investigation at the location(s) of the nearby sensitive receptors, and add corrections for any distinguishable acoustic features (e.g. tones, whines, screeches, hisses etc)
3. Subtract the measured background noise levels (Item 1 above) with the measured or predicted rating noise levels (Item 2 above) at each sensitive receptor. BS4142 states that:

- a) *Typically, the greater this difference, the greater the magnitude of the impact.*
- b) *A difference of around +10 dB or more is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the context.*
- c) *A difference of around +5 dB is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context.*
- d) *The lower the rating level is relative to the measured background sound level, the less likely it is that the specific sound source will have an adverse impact or a significant adverse impact. Where the rating level does not exceed the background sound level, this is an indication of the specific sound source having a low impact, depending on the context.*

NOTE Adverse impacts include, but are not limited to, annoyance and sleep disturbance. Not all adverse impacts will lead to complaints and not every complaint is proof of an adverse impact.

- 5.9 It is understood (see Paragraph 4.3) that Manchester City Council consider “a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location” to be appropriate daytime and night-time criteria for new developments within their borough. These criteria have been adopted for the assessment of noise emissions from the development.
- 5.10 The nearest noise-sensitive receptors to the proposed plant are the existing residential facades of the Ropemaker Student Accommodation building which overlook the new pavilions, i.e. facades facing into the carpark.
- 5.11 Background noise levels (LA90) at the site were measured as part of the site noise survey outlined in Appendix 2. The measured background noise levels have been used to develop limits for plant noise emissions from the new development at the positions of the surrounding residential properties in accordance with the MCC SPD criteria. The limits are shown in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1 Plant Noise Limits

Location	Period	
	Day-time/Evening (0700-2300hrs)	Night-time (2300-0700hrs)
Residential facades overlooking carpark in northern wing of Ropemaker building	45 dB L _{Ar} ,Tr	41 dB L _{Ar} ,Tr
Residential facades overlooking carpark in southern wing of Ropemaker building	44 dB L _{Ar} ,Tr	42 dB L _{Ar} ,Tr

Note 1 The above limits are 'rated' noise levels. Any mechanical plant noise emissions should have appropriate corrections for the character of the noise applied and still meet these limits.

Proposed mechanical plant design

- 5.12 Detailed design information is not yet available for external mechanical plant for the development, and therefore noise emissions from external mechanical plant cannot be accurately predicted at the positions of nearby residential properties at this stage.
- 5.13 The selection and design of external mechanical plant will be reviewed as project information becomes available to ensure that the project plant noise limits given in Table 1 are achieved.
- 5.14 Compliance with the limits could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.15 The proposed sprinkler tank will only operate in case of an emergency and during routine maintenance testing. It is our view that noise limits should not apply to any emergency plant and therefore does not require a more detailed assessment. Additionally, maintenance testing would be managed internally by the building, meaning that all tenants would be notified of its operation in advance.
- 5.16 It is understood that the bin store will be naturally ventilated, therefore there will be no external mechanical plant associated with this building.

Amenity Noise Breakout Impact Assessment

- 5.17 The potential noise breakout from the proposed amenity pavilions have been assessed, specifically noise from the multifunctional and games rooms within Pavilion 1, and the gym within Pavillion 2.
- 5.18 Potential noise emissions from the pavilions may include amplified music, amplified speech, and general party noise from the rooms within Pavillion 1, and amplified music from the gym within Pavillion 2.
- 5.19 It is understood that both pavilions will be supplied with units for heat recovery, heating and cooling, therefore it is assumed for the purpose of this assessment that all doors and windows will remain closed during use of these rooms.

- 5.20 It is understood that these rooms will all be in 24-hour use, however the gym opening hours can be controlled by building management, if required.
- 5.21 The proposed social study area and study rooms are not anticipated to generate high levels of noise. Given the nature of the proposed activities, the noise levels within the study rooms are expected to be lower than the existing uses occupying these areas, therefore no further assessment is necessary.

Design Criteria

- 5.22 In the absence of nationally approved standards or authoritative guidance for assessing music and general entertainment noise breakout from amenity areas, it is necessary to adopt suitable criteria based on the guidance provided within the MCC SPD.
- 5.23 As per Paragraph 4.3, entertainment noise should be controlled to 5 dB below typical background noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptor. In our view, these criteria are appropriate and can be adopted for this assessment given the nature of the noise expected from the amenity pavilions (see Paragraph 5.18) and would be sufficient to ensure that existing residential receptors in the area are not adversely impacted.
- 5.24 The music noise limits summarised in Table 2 below have been set based on the measured background noise levels at the location of the nearest surrounding noise sensitive receptors and the criteria within MCC SPD.

Table 2 Amenity Music Noise Criteria

Receptor	Daytime Amenity noise emissions limit at location of existing facade, LAeq, T	Night-time Amenity noise emissions limit at location of existing facade, LAeq, T
Residential facades overlooking carpark in northern wing of Ropemaker building	45	41
Residential facades overlooking carpark in southern wing of Ropemaker building	44	42

- 5.25 Noise limits can be set in individual octave bands once the final performance of the building façade and glazing will be defined at later design stages. Furthermore, noise levels in individual octave bands will depend on the specific use of the amenity rooms (e.g. if amplified music will be used) and therefore can be defined at a later stage.
- 5.26 Compliance with the limits could be secured through commissioning pre-completion testing, with the possibility of introducing further noise mitigation measures (e.g. by installing a noise limiting device) to comply with both the broadband and octave band criteria.
- 5.27 It is expected that it will be straightforward to achieve the nominated noise limits in Table 2 given the pavilion facades can be designed such that potential music noise is effectively reduced by the

facade construction, and the pavilion windows and doors will remain closed during use, given that ventilation and comfort heating/cooling will be supplied mechanically.

- 5.28 These measures could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.29 The preliminary design of the development is, therefore, considered to be acceptable in relation to potential noise break out from the amenity pavilions, subject to detailed design of the pavilion facades in due course.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Cass Allen has been instructed by Ropemaker Propco Limited to assess the noise impact of a new development on the existing surrounding noise-sensitive receptors at Ropemaker Court, Manchester.
- 6.2 The assessment was carried out in accordance with relevant local and national planning guidance.
- 6.3 A noise survey was carried out at the site to investigate the existing noise environment.
- 6.4 Plant noise limits at the nearest sensitive receptors have been set for noise emissions from new external plant associated with the amenity pavilions. Compliance with the limits could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.5 It is our view that noise limits should not apply to any emergency plant, therefore no further assessment of the sprinkler tank is required.
- 6.6 Given the nature of the proposed activities, the noise levels within the study rooms are expected to be lower than the existing uses occupying these areas, therefore no further assessment is necessary.
- 6.7 Noise limits at the nearest noise sensitive receptors have been set for noise breakout from the entertainment and operational uses of the amenity pavilions. Compliance with the limits could be secured through the imposition of a suitable planning condition if deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.8 In summary, it is our view that the preliminary design of the development is acceptable in relation to the potential noise generated by the development, subject to detailed design in due course, and that noise should not be a barrier in granting planning permission.

Appendix 1 Development Layout

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MAIN FUNCTION

- AMENITY
- AMENITY - ACTIVITY / ENTERTAINMENT
- AMENITY - OUTDOOR
- AMENITY - SOCIAL
- AMENITY - STUDY
- BEDROOM
- Corridor
- DDA BEDROOM
- STAFF
- FM
- CIRC
- KLD All Types

TOTAL BEDS - 416

AMENITY AREAS
EXISTING GF - 164sqm
EXISTING 01 - 21sqm
PAVILLION 1 - 109sqm
PAVILLION 2 - 109sqm
TOTAL - 403sqm
sqm per student = 0.97sqm



GA PLAN - LEVEL 00 - PROPOSED
SCALE: 1 : 200

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02/10/25	FIRST ISSUE	P01	DS	RL
08/10/25	DESIGN CHANGES	P02	RL	SB
17/10/25	DESIGN CHANGES	P03	DS	SB
31/10/25	STAGE 02 & PLANNING PRE-APP	P04	DS	TC
06/11/25	AMENDMENTS TO PRE-APP ISSUE	P05	DS	TC
02/01/26	REMOVAL OF SOUTH PAVILLION, RELOCATION OF FM WORKSHOP AND EXTERNAL BIN STORE	P06	RL	TC
09/01/26	POTENTIAL BATTERY LOCATIONS, RELOCATION OF FM WORKSHOP AND SPRINKLER TANK	P07	RL	TC
23/01/26	BATTERY LOCATION FINALISED, CENTRAL SOCIAL AREA FINALISED	P08	RL	TC
05/03/26	UPDATES IN-LINE WITH SPRINKLER DESIGN AND INTERIOR DESIGN COORDINATION	P09	RL	TC
10/03/26	PLANNING ISSUE	P10	RL	TC
11/03/26	UPDATES FOLLOWING DTM 10/03/26	P11	TC	SB

Keyplan

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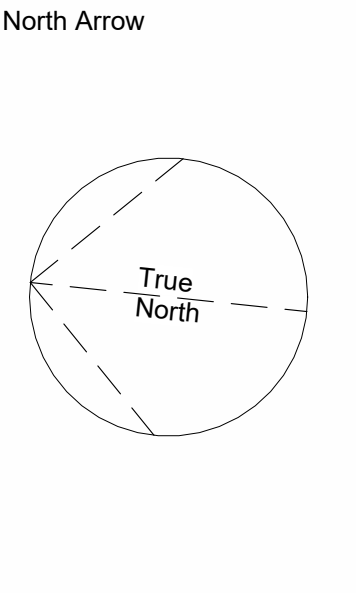
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Appendix 2 Survey Results

Survey Summary:

The survey comprised short-term operator attended noise measurements and longer-term unattended noise monitoring at the site. Noise levels at the site were dictated by road traffic on Wilmslow Road and Moss Lane E. Regular noise associated with the neighbouring commercial use, Worldwide Foods Rusholme, was identified, including delivery lorry and forklift activity and waste being deposited into a nearby skip at the approximate location of 'L2', frequently dictating average and maximum noise levels. Traffic flow on Heald Grove was sufficiently low such that no significant noise was identified from this road.

Survey Period:

28/01/2026 to 02/02/2026

Survey Objectives:

- To identify noise sources that contribute to ambient noise levels at the site;
- To measure noise levels around the site over a typical day and night-time period.
- To measure background noise levels at the site over a typical day and night-time period.

Equipment Used:

Type	Manufacturer	Model	Serial Number
Sound level meter ¹ (noise logger)	Rion	NL-32	00482672
Sound level meter ¹ (noise logger)	Rion	NL-32	00251125
Calibrator	Rion	NC-74	34551703
Sound level meter ¹	Rion	NL-52	00965090

Note 1: All sound level meters were calibrated before and after measurement periods and no significant drift in calibration was found to have occurred. The results of the measurements are therefore considered to be representative.

Weather Conditions:

The observed weather conditions were acceptable for acoustic measurement throughout the attended survey periods (low-medium wind speeds and no rain). Weather records for the area confirmed that weather conditions were also generally acceptable for acoustic measurement during the unattended monitoring.

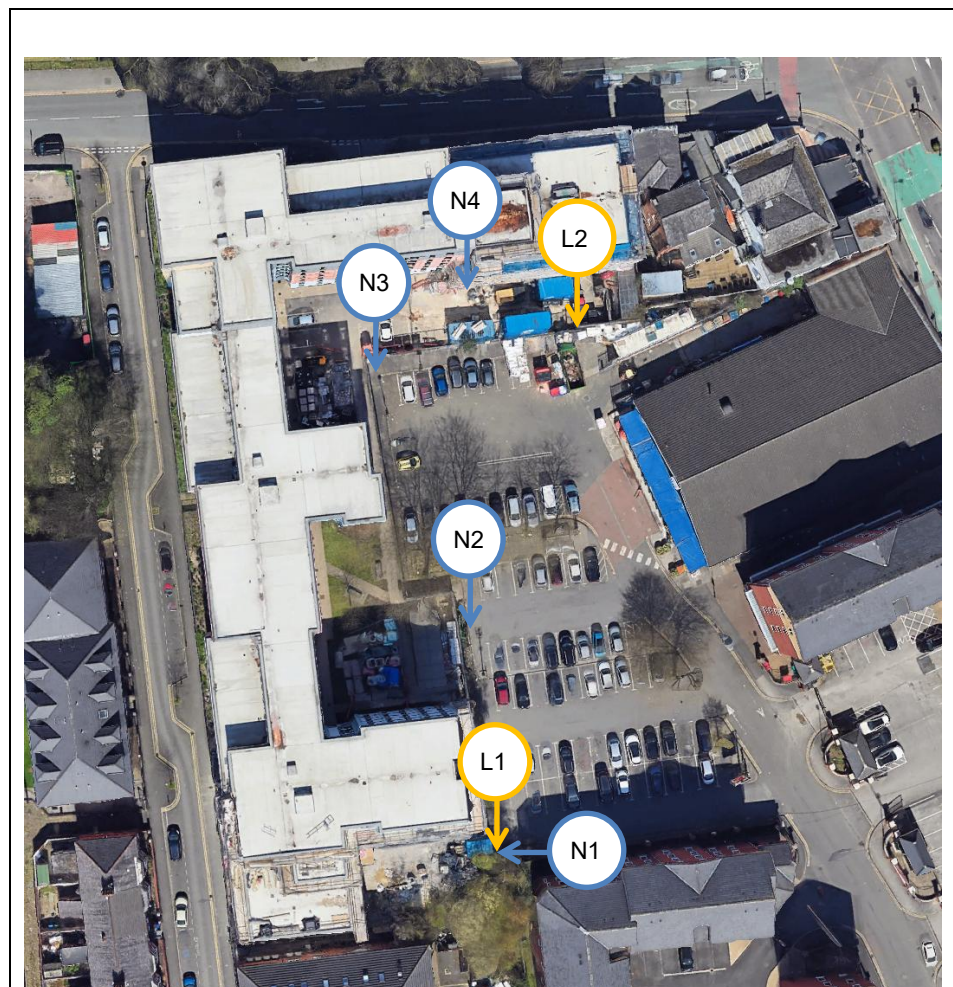
Measurement Positions:

Position (refer plan below)	Description
N1	Attended noise monitoring position. L1 position at 1.5m above ground. Free-field.
N2	Attended noise monitoring position. 1.5m above ground. Free-field.
N3	Attended noise monitoring position. 1.5m above ground. Free-field. Direct line of sight to Moss Lane E.

Measurement Positions:

Position (refer plan below)	Description
N4	Attended noise monitoring position. 2m above ground. Façade level. Measurement of ground-floor ventilation termination, 1m from source on wall of Ropemaker building.
L1	Unattended noise logging position. 3m above ground level. Free-field.
L2	Unattended noise logging position. 3m above ground level. Free-field.

Site Plan showing Measurement Positions:



Attended Noise Monitoring Results:

Date	Position	Time	Meas. Length	LAeq, dB	LAm _{ax} , dB	LA90, dB	Observations
02/02/2026	N1	11:45	4 mins 21 secs	53	66	50	Noise levels dictated by road traffic on Wilmslow Road and Moss Lane E. Maximum levels generated by vehicle movements in car park.
	N2	11:50	4 mins 28 secs	53	62	51	Noise dictated by road traffic from Wilmslow Road and Moss Lane E, with more contribution from Moss Lane E compared with position N1. Maximum levels generated by infrequent vehicle movements and pedestrian noise (customers of Worldwide Foods Rusholme) in car park.
	N3	11:55	5 mins	57	78	52	Background levels dictated by road traffic on Wilmslow Road. Average levels dictated by idle and accelerating vehicles on Moss Lane E. Maximum levels generated by frequent slamming of pedestrian gate as students move in/out of the premises, and by horns and sirens on Wilmslow Road and Moss Lane E.
	N4	12:10	11 secs	63	64	63	Noise dictated by plant noise on the side of Ropemaker building.

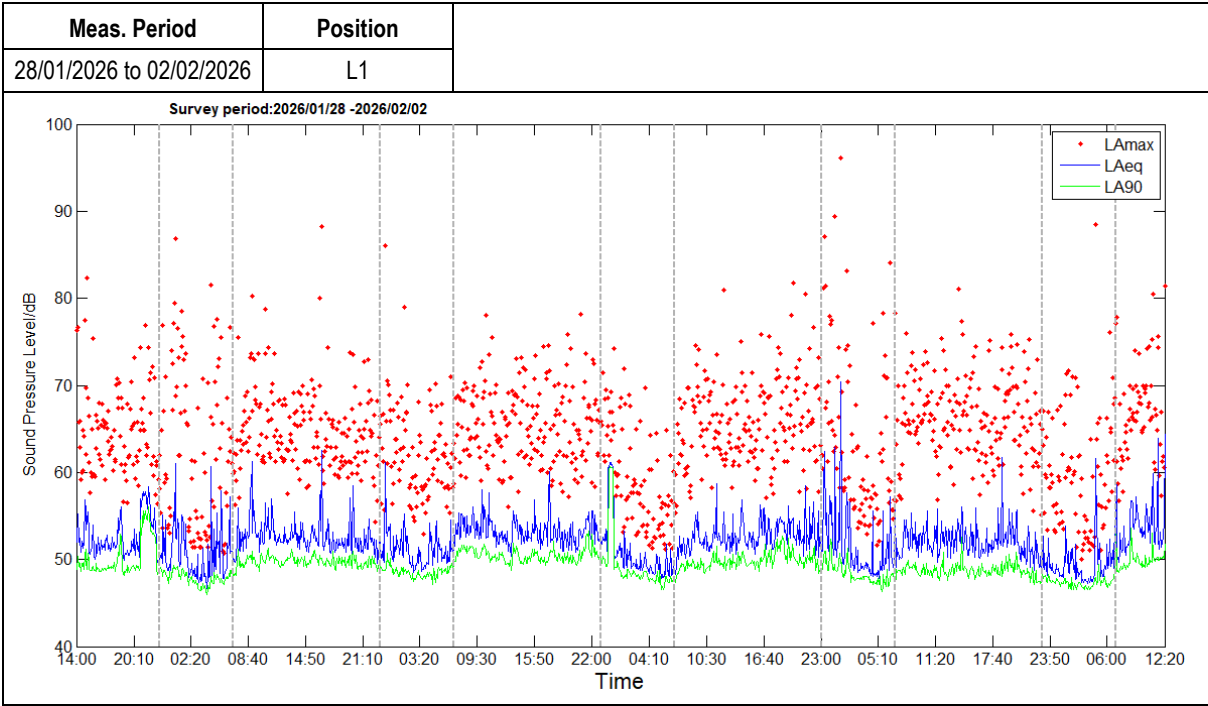
Unattended Noise Monitoring Results:

Meas. Period	Position	Daytime (0700-2300hrs)		Night-time (2300-0700hrs)		
		LAeq,16hr, dB	LA90,1hr dB ¹	LAeq,8hr, dB	LA90,5mins, dB ¹	LAm _{ax} , dB ²
28/01/2026 to 02/02/2026	L1	53	49	53	47	69-71
	L2	59	50	54	46	71-73

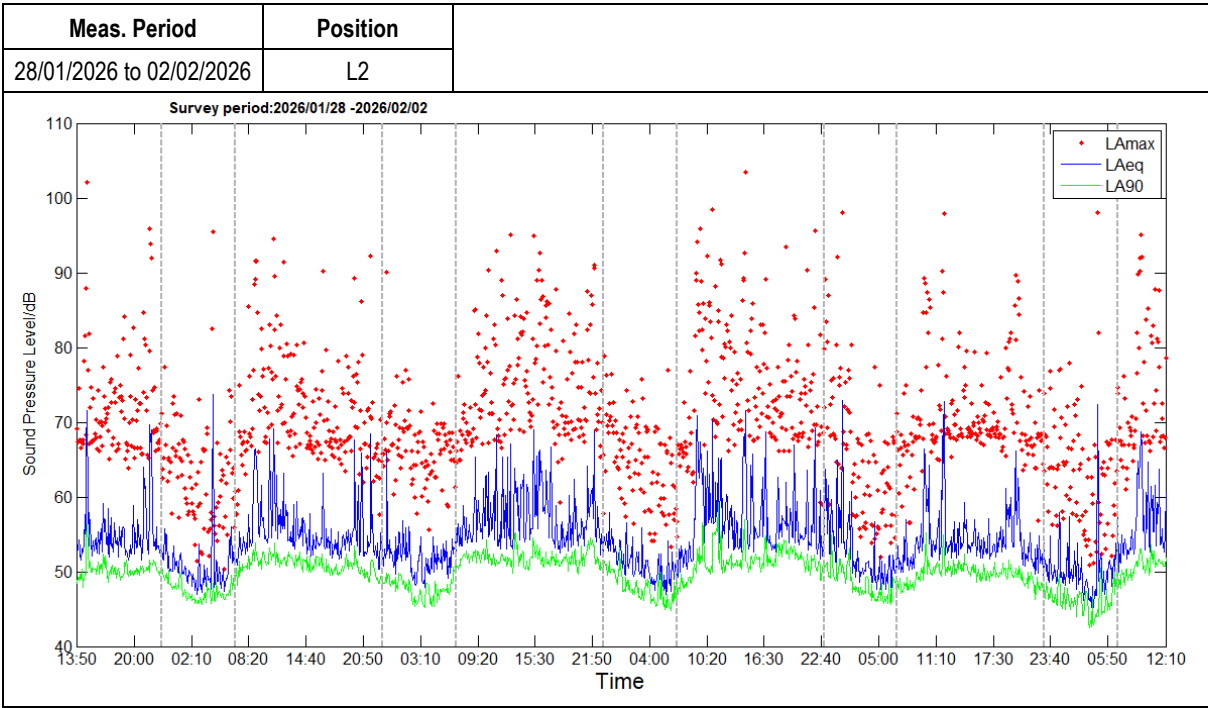
Note 1: Typical lowest measured during the period shown.

Note 2: Highest typical maximum noise level during the night-time (not exceeded more than 10-15 times per night).

Unattended Noise Monitoring Results:



Unattended Noise Monitoring Results:





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