

Rooftop terrace noise emissions. One Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester.

Introduction

This document provides consideration of the potential for noise generation and disturbance associated with the proposed development at One Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester.

The proposed development includes the creation of an external terrace at rooftop level which will act as an amenity space for users of the office floorspace within the building at the application site.

Initial consideration and commentary is provided in this Technical Note in respect of the potential for activity noise emissions from the terrace area affecting the surrounding noise sensitive premises. The proposed rooftop terrace space is located approximately 35 m away from the Ibis Styles Manchester Portland Hotel, across Portland Street. There is therefore a risk of noise emissions affecting this noise sensitive receptor if noisy activities are to be carried out.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

Policy DM 1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) establishes a requirement for all development to have due regard to the effects of any proposed development on amenity including as a result of noise.

Manchester City Council ('MCC') has also published a Technical Guidance note on Planning and Noise in October 2022. This note provides a summary of the relevant policies and guidance and approach to noise within Manchester.

Assessment

Previous acoustic surveys carried out in the vicinity of the application site (to inform proposals for new MEP equipment etc) found existing, typical background noise levels in the region of 45 – 50 dB LA90. This is a relatively high background noise level which is primarily due to the City Centre location and associated activity and predominantly commercial character.

The established background noise levels would therefore offer a slightly increased allowance for noise generating activities or uses from a planning perspective. A specific background noise survey may need to be determined through an additional survey to establish specific limits to control operations at the application site.

MCC states the following with regards to entertainment noise emissions:

'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'.

It is understood that the external terrace area is generally to be used as an external seating. There may be opportunities for the occupants of the office floorspace to host small scale events for employees or similar, however capacity of the terrace will be controlled.

Where the space is to be used as an external seating area, conversation noise is not expected to raise any conflict with noise policies given the nature of the use, established levels of background noise and separation distance from any sensitive receptor. The space is not expected to display more intensive or impactful noise characteristics (such as raised voices or music) which could be expected in large external bar areas linked to entertainment venues or drinking establishments.

Generally, any activities carried out on the terrace should not incorporate amplified music / sound that can be heard from beyond the application site to ensure that there is no non-compliance with the MCC requirements given above.

Summary and Conclusion

Based on our initial review of the proposed development, the application site and the background noise levels within this part of the City Centre, we do not anticipate there will be any conflicts with policies relating to noise and amenity.

Appropriate controls can be imposed by planning condition to ensure that the future operation and use of any terrace does not pose any unnecessary risk to the amenity of surrounding uses.