ACOUSTICAL CONTROL Engineers & Consultants

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Acoustic Impact Assessment of Proposed Refrigeration / Air-Conditioning Plant at:

Co-op
36 Main Street,
Burton Joyce,
Nottingham
NG14 5DZ

for: CBES Ltd.
on behalf of: The Co-operative Group

Report Reference: B5348 2021-04-15 R

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Contents

1.0 Synopsis

1.1 Acoustical Control Consultants (ACC) has been appointed to conduct an acoustic assessment of proposed changes to fixed plant and equipment at the Co-operative Food store on Main Street in Burton Joyce.

1.2 Sound level criteria have been established with reference to the local authority guidance relating to fixed plant and equipment at a retail foodstore such as this. The derived criteria are within the sound levels required to protect amenity according to relevant guidance.

1.3 As part of the assessment, an acoustic survey was undertaken to gather representative sound level measurements during the most sensitive times of the day and night periods.

1.4 The proposed plant has been selected, located and orientated to produce sound levels at the most sensitive receptors that comply with the identified criteria.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Acoustical Control Consultants (ACC) has been appointed by CBES Ltd. on behalf of The Co-operative Group (Co-op) to undertake an acoustic assessment in support of proposals to install new fixed plant at their store in Burton Joyce.

2.2 Prior to undertaking the development, it is necessary to ensure that the site will be able to operate efficiently, without disturbing the closest noise sensitive receptors.

2.3 This assessment utilises the principles of BS 4142:2014 +A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound, and provides details of the site surveys and subsequent qualitative and quantitative analysis.

2.4 ACC is an independent acoustic consultancy company. All of our acoustic consultants are qualified and experienced practitioners and are either Associate or Corporate members of the Institute of Acoustics. Acoustical Control Engineers Limited is our associated company specialising in engineered solutions to acoustic problems.

3.0 Scope

3.1 Undertake a desktop review of the site and details of proposed work to identify potential noise sensitive receptors (dwellings) that may be most sensitive to noise from the proposed plant and potential measurement locations in preparation for acoustic survey.

3.2 Conduct a fully attended acoustic survey to gather relevant data from the site.

3.3 Identify an appropriate method of assessment and, as appropriate, agree this with the local planning authority.

3.4 Identify appropriate criteria for the sound produced by the proposed plant at the identified noise sensitive receptors and provide acoustic advice for plant selection.

3.5 Establish through acoustic calculations whether the selected plant will achieve the required sound level at the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

3.6 If appropriate, establish the level of attenuation required in order for the proposed plant to meet the required criteria.

3.7 Provide an acoustic assessment report to be submitted to support the planning application, setting out the information outlined above, and which demonstrates how the agreed criteria will be achieved.

4.0 Acoustic Environment

4.1 The store is located on Main Street in Burton Joyce to the north east of Nottingham. The A612 (Nottingham Road) runs through Burton Joyce and provides a route to and from Nottingham and areas to the north east. The store is approximately 200 m to the north of a railway line which runs from east to west. Figure 4.1 shows the relative location of the store and surrounding areas.

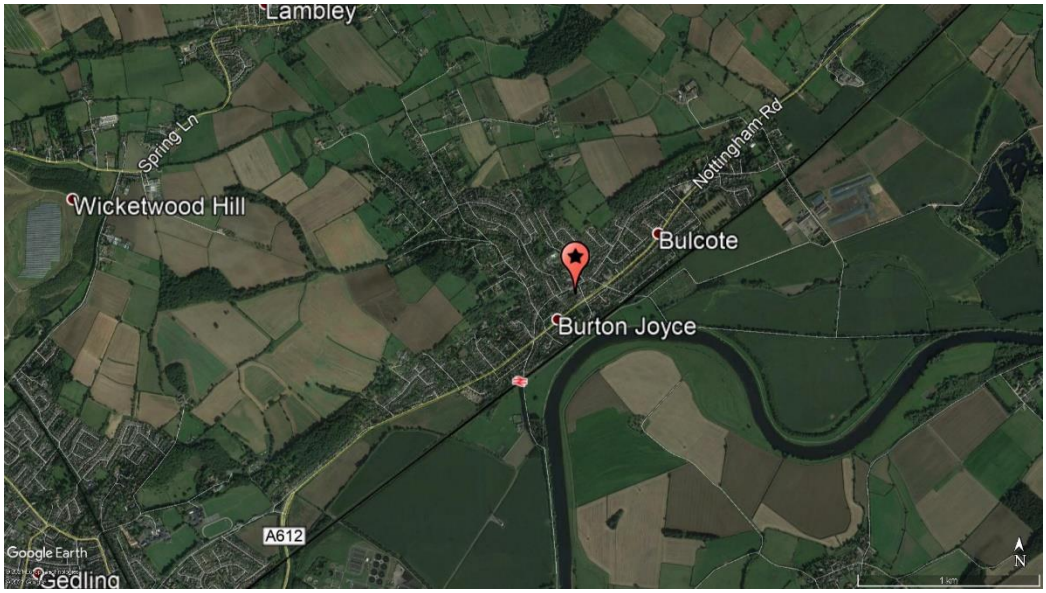


Figure 4.1 Location of store in context of surrounding area

4.2 The store building is located on the corner of Chestnut Grove to the east and Main Street to the north. The store is set back from the road to provide an area for parking for approximately 30 vehicles. The car park can be accessed from both Chestnut Grove and Main Street. The store itself is of single storey construction with a service yard/external plant area to the southern façade. There are louvres on the eastern façade of the store which provide airflow for an internal plant area.

4.3 New fixed plant and equipment to be installed at the store will include a new internal pack which will be located in a different location from the existing internal plant area (from which the current plant is to be removed), and it is understood from the current design that there will not be any external apertures in the space where the pack is to be located. Calculation of breakout noise through the building façade is outside the scope of this report.

4.4 It is also proposed that a gas cooler/remote condenser and three air conditioning condensing units are located externally, replacing the plant to the southern façade of the store.

4.5 There is a dwelling to the south of the plant area which is considered the most noise sensitive receptor during the day and night (gardens during the day, and dwelling windows during the night). There is an approximately 2 m high fence between the plant area and the receptor to the south which will provide acoustic screening to the garden and the dwelling windows. The rear of the garden closest to the store has been selected at the most sensitive area for the day time assessment; it should be kept in mind that the area closer to the dwelling would benefit from additional distance attenuation from plant noise.

4.6 The acoustic environment in the vicinity of the store is influenced by road traffic noise passing on Nottingham Road, as well as more local road traffic, sound from vehicles and activity in the store car park, domestic activity at nearby dwellings, and occasional trains traversing the railway line which also include freight trains.

5.0 Survey

5.1 A fully attended site visit and survey was carried out by Richard A Collman BSc (Jt. Hons), CEng, MIOA, Tech IOSH and Robert Bungay BEng(Hons), MIOA, on Thursday, 04 March 2021 between the hours of 20:45 to 21:50 and from 22:50 to 23:35. Measurements were taken at a height of 1.2 m to 1.5 m above the ground and at least 3.5m away from reflective surfaces apart from the ground.

5.2 Sound pressure level measurements were taken to inform the assessment and to assist with characterising the acoustic environment. Measurements were taken of the gas cooler/remote condenser in the external plant area to determine an indicative sound power level of the equipment, at 10 m from the plant room façade to the east of the building, and residual measurements were taken in a car park to the south of the store in an area that is representative of the most sensitive receptors without influence from plant at the store. Passing road traffic on the surrounding roads may be overstated at the measurement position compared to the day and night time receptors due to increased distance separation and screening.

5.3 Figure 5.1 shows the relative positions of the store (red outline), various dwellings that may be sensitive to noise from plant (green outline), proposed plant location (blue outline), existing internal plant location where plant will be removed (light blue outline), proposed internal plant location (yellow outline), and the measurement locations (numbered markers).

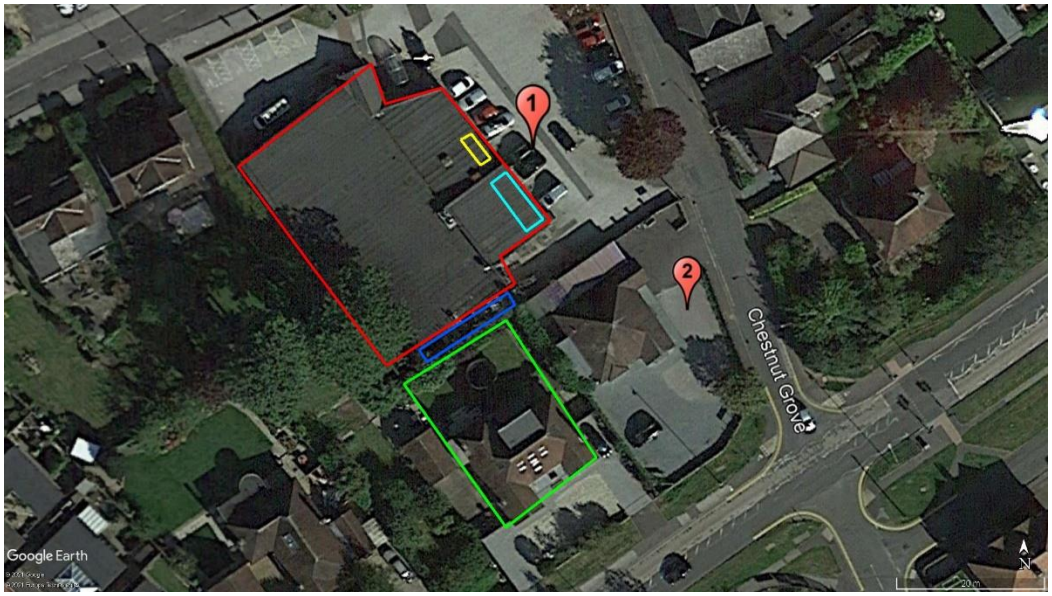


Figure 5.1 Store, Receptors, Plant, and Measurement Locations

5.4 Annex A reviews factors that affect the background sound level, which varies depending upon many factors, rather than being a single value as the name may suggest. The synopsis summarises the factors considered when determining the most appropriate timing, duration and method for the acoustic survey.

5.5 As noted in Section 8 of BS 4142: 2014, the most sensitive time of the night is likely to be when people are going to or awakening from sleep. Measurements were taken during these more sensitive periods. The contextual discussion is critical to properly understand the significance of any potential impact.

Instrumentation

Cirrus Optimus Sound Level Analyser Type CR 171B, Serial No. G068809
Cirrus Calibrator Type CR 515, Serial No. 73201
Cirrus Windshield
Tripod
Skywatch Meteos Anemometer

5.6 Operational reference checks were undertaken before and after the measurements using the calibrator. The instrument displayed negligible drift in calibration. In addition to the on-site operational check the instrumentation holds valid calibration certificates which are available upon request.

5.7 Weather conditions were logged throughout the survey. At the measurement location there was 100% cloud cover, calm winds, dry ground surfaces, and temperatures of around 5°C. It is considered that the local weather conditions at the time of the survey were within the limits set out in the guidance and appropriate for measurements to be taken.

5.8 As explained more fully in Annex A, the ambient sound level is dependent upon the prevailing weather conditions. Under differing weather conditions, it is expected that the residual sound level may be somewhat higher or lower due to the variation in contribution from more distant sources such as the road networks to the east.

Measurements

5.9 The measured background sound level is what was measured at the time and under the weather conditions prevailing during the survey. This is used for the acoustic assessment, but consideration should also be given to the uncertainty that may be introduced in the outcome of the assessment due to the variation in background sound level at different times or under different weather conditions.

5.10 The measurement technique used for this survey involves logging the sound level many times each second and recording relevant observations of factors contributing to the acoustic environment at this time. This technique provides a substantial amount of data regarding the acoustic environment and informs consideration of the effects of uncertainty. In the case of the residual sound level, approximately 57,600 sound level measurements were obtained per hour of measurements and are shown graphically to enable the character of the acoustic environment to be better understood.

5.11 These measurements show the level and variability of the residual acoustic environment at the time of the survey. The fully attended survey provides a far better understanding of the factors that affect the measured sound level than is possible with an unattended survey. Even if an unattended survey is for a prolonged period of time the uncertainty regarding the measurement conditions and how this affected the measured levels remains. It is also likely that an unattended survey over a few days will record the residual sound level under relatively similar conditions and it is usually not practicable to gather data over a much longer period that includes seasonal variation and a much wider range of weather conditions. Annex A provides further detail, explaining why a relatively short duration fully attended survey provides better quality data that, together with an appropriate consideration of uncertainty, appropriately informs the subsequent assessment of the data.

5.12 The aim of the survey was to establish representative residual and background sound levels in the vicinity of the most sensitive areas. Graphs 1, 2 and 3 of Appendix 1 present the results of the measurements made during the survey.

5.13 Graph 1 shows the residual sound level during the evening. There was frequent road traffic noise with vehicles passing on the A612, other nearby roads and the car park which produced sound levels varying between 55 and 70 dB L_A. The store is near a bus stop where two busses stopped and resulted in sound levels of around 60 dB L_A at the measurement location. The background sound level ranged from 32 to 35 $L_{A90,15min}$ and the average residual sound level ranged from 50 to 52 $L_{Aeq,15min}$.

5.14 Graph 2 shows the residual sound level measured during the night time period. Road traffic noise continued with less frequency with vehicles producing sound levels of between 60 and 70 dB L_A at the measurement location. A bus idled at a nearby stop for two minutes producing a steady sound level of 40 dB L_A before departing. Trains on the railway line to the south raised the sound level to 60 dB L_A. Some domestic activity which included the movement of wheelie bins produced varying sound levels of between 30 and 35 dB L_A. The background sound level varied between 29 and 31 $L_{A90,15min}$ and the average residual sound level varied between 45 and 49 $L_{Aeq,15min}$.

5.15 Graph 3 shows series of measurements taken at, or 10 m from the existing plant at the store which is due to be removed. The first two series of measurements were taken at the hub of two of the fans from the three fan condenser with results of were 57 and 55 dB L_A respectively. The third and fourth measurement series were taken one after the other 5 m in front of the louvres of the internal plant room on the eastern façade of the store. Extraneous sound masked the plant sound at this location for much of the evening. However, at 21:10:15 the sound from the plant could be briefly heard in isolation, with a level of 43 dB L_A. During the night time/late evening measurement, the plant sound was more readily identifiable. The sound level from one of the internal units ranged between 36 and 40 dB L_A, with another unit starting up at around 22:53:15 until 22:55:15 where the sound level was increased to around 46 dB L_A.

5.16 The thicker red and black lines show the background sound level ($L_{A90,15min}$) and corresponding residual sound level ($L_{Aeq,15min}$) respectively and are summarised in Table 5.2 below:

	Daytime Level dB	**Night-time Level dB**
Residual sound level ($L_{Aeq,15min}$)	50 - 52	45 - 49
Background sound level ($L_{A90,15min}$)	32 - 35	29 – 31

Table 5.1 Summary of measured sound levels

5.17 Figure 5.3Figure 5. provides statistical analysis of all the background sound levels ($L_{A90,15min}$) captured during the survey in order to provide an overview of the likely representative background sound level during the monitoring period.

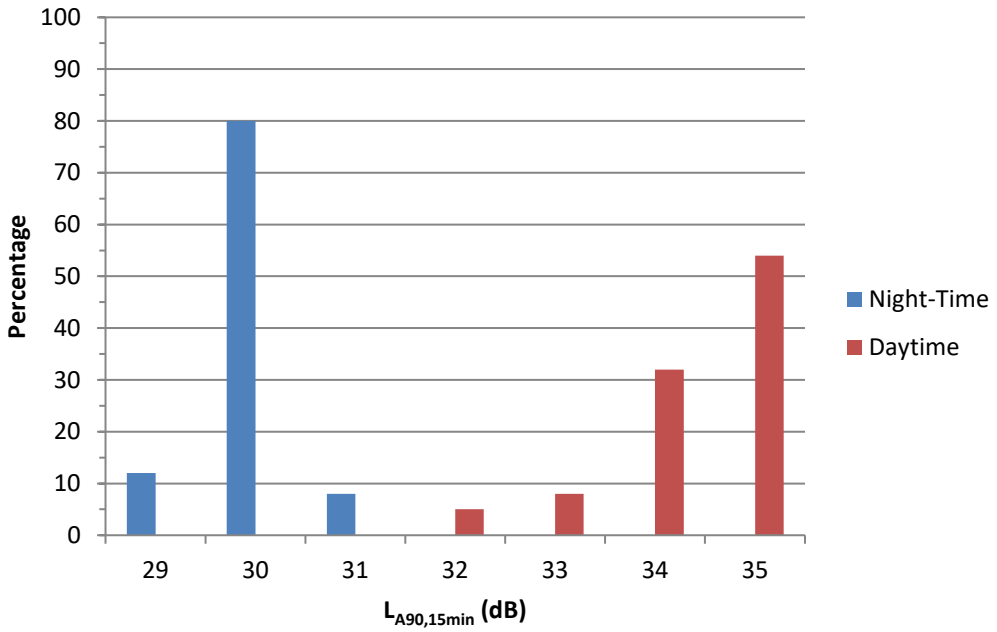


Figure 5.3 Histogram of background sound levels ($L_{A90,15min}$)

5.18 Taking the above described factors into account and the context of the acoustic environment, a background sound level of 35 dB L_{A90} will be used for daytime assessment purposes and a background sound level of 30 dB L_{A90} will be used for night time assessment purposes in order to establish an Initial Estimate of the Likely Significance of Impact.

6.0 Relevant Guidance & Criteria

6.1 Annex B provides a detailed review of relevant guidance that may be applicable to this assessment. The key points of each relevant document are summarised below:

BS 4142:2014 + A1:2019 Methods for rating industrial and commercial sound

6.2 The BS 4142 methodology simply compares the rating level (average source noise level with a suitable character correction if applicable), against the existing background level (that exceeded for 90% of the time i.e. the quietest 10% level) and provides an indication of the likelihood of adverse impact based upon this differential.

Rating level - Background sound level	Initial Estimate
Around 10 dB or more	Likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the context.
Around 5 dB	Likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context.
Similar levels	An indication of the specific sound source having a low impact, depending on the context.

6.3 One of the significant differences between BS 4142:2014 and previous editions of the Standard is the explicit requirement to consider context as part of the assessment. It is no longer adequate to simply compare the rating level and the background sound level without due regard to the context of the acoustic environment and the sound source. The context can significantly affect the outcome of the Initial Estimate, which is based solely on the difference between the rating and background sound levels. The background sound level (L_{A90}) specifically excludes acoustic events occurring for less than 90% of the time, such as passing vehicles or activity occurring for much but not all of the time. This means that the difference between rating and background sound levels can be identical for two locations with very different acoustic characteristics and corresponding sensitivities to noise.

6.4 In addition to comparing the level and character of the specific and residual sound, the context also includes careful consideration of other factors such as the character of the locale e.g. quiet rural or predominantly industrial; noise sensitive receptors e.g. outdoor amenity space or indoors; and duration and time of specific sound e.g. 24/7 operation or one event per week.

6.5 Depending upon the context, other guidance may be more appropriate, such as considering the potential impact of sound on residents during the night when the primary concern is to ensure that they are not disturbed whilst sleeping, possibly with open bedroom windows. In this case the difference between background sound level and rating level outdoors is likely to be of little significance to the residents indoors.

BS 8233:2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings

6.6 For dwellings the main considerations are to protect sleep in bedrooms and to protect resting, listening and communicating in other rooms. For noise without a specific character it is desirable that the overall average levels during the night or day time periods do not exceed 30 dB $L_{Aeq,8hour}$ or 35 dB $L_{Aeq,16hour}$ respectively.

6.7 For amenity space, such as gardens and patios, it is desirable that the average level does not exceed 50 dB L_{Aeq}, with an upper guideline value of 55 dB L_{Aeq} which would be acceptable in noisier environments. For dwellings with conventional windows, an internal target of 35 dB L_{Aeq} during the day equates to around 50 dB L_{Aeq} (possibly slightly lower) outside noise sensitive rooms with openable windows.

Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) March 2010

6.8 The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) sets out the long term vision of Government noise policy by promoting good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development. It provides an often previously missed '*opportunity for the cost effective management of noise'*.

6.9 This applies three concepts to assess noise impact:

6.10 No Observed Effect Level (NOEL) which is the level below which no effect can be detected.

6.11 Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) which is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected.

6.12 Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) which is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur.

6.13 The first aim of the NPSE states that significant adverse effects on health and quality of life should be avoided while also taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development.

6.14 The second aim of the NPSE refers to the situation where the impact lies somewhere between LOAEL and SOAEL. It requires that all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life while also taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development. This does not mean that such adverse effects cannot occur.

6.15 These make it clear that noise must not be considered in isolation but as part of the overall sustainability and associated impacts of the proposed development. There is no benefit in reducing noise to an excessively low level, particularly if this creates or increases some other adverse impact.

6.16 NPSE clarifies the difference between NOEL and LOAEL as used in Night Noise Guidelines for Europe, which gives values of 30 dBA and 40 dBA for the night time average level measured outside dwellings respectively. This indicates that there may be no significant overall benefit in achieving an average level of less than around 40dBA outside dwellings during the night.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) June 2019

6.17 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This does not change the statutory status of a pre-existing development plan as the starting point for decision making, but subsequent strategic policies should be in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.18 Developments should improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: … d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.

6.19 Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

National Planning Practice Guidance – Noise (NPPG) July 2019

6.20 This document '*advises on how planning can manage potential noise impacts in new development*'.

6.21 Below the 'lowest observed adverse effect level' (LOAEL) '*the noise may slightly affect the acoustic character of an area but not to the extent there is a change in quality of life. If the noise exposure is at this level no specific measures are required to manage the acoustic environment*'.

6.22 Above the 'significant observed adverse effect level' (SOAEL) '*the noise causes a material change in behaviour such as keeping windows closed for most of the time or avoiding certain activities during periods when the noise is present. If the exposure is predicted to be above this level the planning process should be used to avoid this effect occurring, for example through the choice of sites at the plan-making stage, or by use of appropriate mitigation such as by altering the design and layout'*.

6.23 Between the LOAEL and SOAEL '*the noise starts to cause small changes in behaviour and attitude, for example, having to turn up the volume on the television or needing to speak more loudly to be heard. The noise therefore starts to have an adverse effect and consideration needs to be given to mitigating and minimising those effects (taking account of the economic and social benefits being derived from the activity causing the noise)*'.

6.24 Paragraph 170(e) requires inter alia that new development should not contribute to or be adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution.

6.25 Paragraph 180(a) requires inter alia that new development should be appropriate for its location and where appropriate potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development should be mitigated and reduced to a minimum.

World Health Organization: Guidelines for Community Noise & Night Noise Guidelines for Europe

6.26 These establish that a steady level of 30 dB L_A within bedrooms is suitable to protect vulnerable people from sleep disturbance and that occasional maximum levels of up to around 42 dB L_{Amax} to 45 dB L_{Amax} are also consistent with this. The difference between a sound level outdoors and the resultant level indoors with open windows varies through Europe due to differing building characteristics and particularly window type. An average difference of around 15 dB L_A is often used, although this is also dependent upon other factors such as the frequency spectrum of the incident sound.

Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers: CIBSE Guide A: Environmental Design

6.27 The environmental design guidance provides details of Noise Rating (NR) curves which are commonly used within Europe for specifying mechanical plant in order to control the character of the noise. The relationship between NR and dBA is not constant because it depends upon the spectral characteristics of the noise. However, for ordinary intrusive noise found in buildings, dB L_A is usually between 4 and 8 greater than the corresponding NR. BS 8233 gives a single conversion value of 6.

6.28 Table 1.15 of the design guidance provides a suggested maximum noise level generated within urban dwellings of NR25 for bedrooms and NR30 for living rooms. Guidance is also provided for offices and public buildings.

Local Authority Specific Guidance

6.29 From previous discussions held with Antony Oseland, Environmental Health Officer for Gedling Borough Council, it was the concluded that the council's starting point for an assessment would be a rating level which results in low impact, i.e. up to 4 dBA above background levels whilst ensuring that the external sound levels at the receptor do not exceed 45 dBA during the day and 40 dBA during the night.

Discussion

6.30 An Initial Estimate of the Likely Significance of the Impact can be determined from the difference between the Rating and background sound levels. This will include uncertainty due to many different factors that must also be considered. The context of the assessment can also significantly alter the outcome of the Initial Estimate.

6.31 National Planning Policy recognises that development may affect amenity but clarifies that any such impact must be within acceptable limits. There may be no benefit in achieving conditions below the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) because this is unlikely to provide any additional benefit and may have other adverse effects on the sustainability of the development.

6.32 In addition to the difference between the rating and background sound levels, which excludes consideration of most characteristics of the residual acoustic environment. Other authoritative documents such as BS 8233, and that from the World Health Organization provide guidance in terms of long term environmental sound levels which can inform the selection of appropriate thresholds depending on the context of the acoustic environment.

6.33 These identify that a level of around 35 dB L_A inside the closest noise sensitive receptors is likely to be suitable to properly protect residential amenity. This equates to an external sound level of 45 to 50 dB L_A.

6.34 At night, a steady level of around 30 dB L_A inside bedrooms is suitable to protect residents from sleep disturbance. With open windows this can be achieved if the external sound level is around 40 dB L_A.

6.35 Taking all of the above factors into account along with the consideration of the existing acoustic environment all proposed fixed plant and equipment should not exceed a cumulative design rating level of 39 dB L_{Ar} at the nearest receptor during the daytime and 34 dB L_{Ar} at the closest noise sensitive windows at night.

7.0 Assessment of Fixed Plant and Equipment

Existing Plant

7.1 Measurements were taken at 5 m from the eastern plant room façade during the evening. In isolation, the plant in the plant room was producing approximately 43 dB L_A at the measurement location. During the night additional measurements were taken at which time two internal units running produced a sound level of around 46 dB L_A. The most sensitive dwelling to sound from the internal plant room was an additional 25 m away on the opposite side of Chestnut Grove, which would benefit from roughly 14 dB distance attenuation, which would result in sound levels from internal plant external to the dwelling ranging between 29 and 32 dB L_A.

7.2 These internal units are going to be removed as part of the works which will provide an improvement to the acoustic environment at this receptor.

Plant Location

7.3 It is proposed that new fixed plant and equipment at the store would comprise a gas cooler/remote condenser and three air conditioning condensing units located externally, replacing the plant to the southern façade of the store.

7.4 Calculation Sheet 1, presented in Appendix 2, details the calculated cumulative sound pressure level at the closest noise sensitive receptors. Corrections are included to account for distance, screening, reflective surfaces, and directivity.

Character correction

7.5 When applying a character correction, it is the significance or otherwise of the characteristics of the source sound at the noise receptor location that must be considered. For example, sound from the source may appear highly impulsive when standing next to it, particularly under 'laboratory' conditions, but only slightly so at a noise receptor location, where the varying residual sound level may mask the characteristics that may otherwise attract a character correction.

7.6 To establish an appropriate character correction the level and character of sound from the source must be put in the context of the residual soundscape at the noise receptor location. It is not appropriate simply to compare the sound from the source to the background sound level, it must also be compared to other characteristics of the residual soundscape such as the way in which the residual sound level varies with time and the type of sound of which it is comprised.

7.7 The proposed plant is comprised of units that produce broadband sound levels when operating. These units are fitted with inverter style fans which ramp up and down to meet the demand on the unit, avoiding impulsive characteristics. Therefore, a rating penalty is not applicable.

Assessment

7.8 Plant will be operational during the day and night. Therefore, the reference time interval (T_r) is 1 hour during the day (07:00-23:00) and 15 minutes during the night (23:00-07:00). The plant will not operate at maximum capacity all of the time, the variation in operation depending upon several factors such as load and ambient temperature. Therefore, it may be prudent to assume a sound level based upon continuous maximum capacity operation throughout this period but be aware that the actual specific sound level will be lower than this.

7.9 Based on the results of the acoustic survey and the calculated cumulative rating level from the proposed fixed plant and equipment the Initial Estimate according to BS 4142 is shown in Table 7.1 below.

Result	Daytime	Night-time
Residual sound level	50 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ – 58 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$	45 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ – 49 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$
Background sound level	35 dB $L_{A90,T}$	30 dB $L_{A90,T}$
Cumulative Specific Level at Receptor	40 dB $L_{Aeq,60min}$	30 dB $L_{Aeq,15min}$
Character correction	0	0
Cumulative rating level at Receptor	40 dB $L_{Aeq,60min}$	30 dB $L_{Aeq,15min}$
Excess over background sound level	+5	0
Initial Estimate	Likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context	An indication of the specified sound source having a low impact, depending on the context

Table 7.1 Initial Estimate of Likely Significance of Impact

7.10 During the day, the residual sound level will vary significantly depending upon factors such as activity in the immediate area, together with more distant sources and traffic density. The background sound level will be somewhat higher than at night. This means that a rating level of 40 dB L_{Ar} at the nearest noise sensitive receptors, due to plant at the store, will be significantly below the residual acoustic environment. This is also consistent with levels recommended in BS 8233 and by the World Health Organization.

7.11 When considering the context of this assessment, a rating level of 40 dB L_{Ar} due to the new plant will not significantly increase the existing residual level and will not disturb neighbouring residents, would improve the existing acoustic environment in this area, and will be consistent with relevant authoritative guidance. Given that unlikely scenario that all of the plant will run simultaneously at full load for the assessment period of 1 hour, in addition to the 1 decibel exceedance above the selected criterion being acoustically insignificant, there is therefore likely to be no acoustic impact associated with this.

7.12 At night, the primary concern is to protect residents from being disturbed by the level or character of sound from plant at the site, whilst avoiding the potential adverse sustainability consequences of trying to achieve an unnecessarily low level that provides no additional benefit. Authoritative guidance such as BS 8233 and the World Health Organization indicates that a sound level up to around 40 dB L_A outside the nearest dwellings will be consistent with these objectives.

7.13 When considering the context of this assessment and the acoustic environment during the night-time period, it is likely that the neighbouring residents who may be sleeping with open bedroom windows will not be disturbed as long as the cumulative rating level from all plant associated with the store does not exceed 35 dB L_{Ar}. This would also be consistent with National Planning Policy and with relevant authoritative guidance. The rating level will also be significantly below the existing residual level, therefore there is likely to be no acoustic impact associated with this.

7.14 Table 7.2 below details a full assessment of the impact from proposed fixed plant and equipment considering the context of all current authoritative guidance.

Results	Daytime	Night-time
BS 8233:2014 guidance	50 dB L_A within outdoor amenity areas	30 dB L_A cumulative indoors equating to 40 dB L_A outside internal receptors
NPSE guidance		LOAEL 40 dB L_A outside internal receptors
World Health Organization	35 dB L_A cumulative indoors equating to 45 dB L_A outside internal receptors	30 dB L_A cumulative indoors equating to 40 dB L_A outside internal receptors
Local Authority guidance	Rating level no more than 4dB above the background sound level equating to 39 dB L_{Ar}	Rating level no more than 4dB above the background sound level equating to 34 dB L_{Ar}
Cumulative rating Level	40 dB L_A	30 dB L_A
Assessment	Low impact	Low impact

Table 7.2 Assessment

7.15 The outcome of the assessment is an indication of the likely significance of the impact of sound from the plant at nearby noise sensitive receptors. The criteria that have been identified to properly protect noise sensitive receptors take account of the context of the situation, considering the acoustic characteristics of the plant, its hours of operation, the acoustic characteristics of the area where the plant is installed and where the store and noise receptors are situated, together with the locations that may be affected e.g. outdoors in gardens and indoors in habitable rooms during the day, or inside bedrooms at night, assuming that windows may be open for ventilation where this is applicable.

Uncertainty

7.16 Annex C provides further information regarding the causes and effects of Uncertainty in an acoustic assessment such as this. There is relatively little uncertainty in the measured levels due to the measurement system (perhaps of the order of 1 dB or so), but far greater uncertainty in other parts of the assessment.

7.17 The background sound level is representative of a range that can vary by many decibels depending upon factors such as the time of day, season, wind speed and direction. However, the selection of the criteria to ensure that residents are properly protected against disturbance is informed by both the representative background sound levels and authoritative guidance that provides absolute values based on physiological responses to sound and large-scale surveys. These criteria will ensure that residents will not be disturbed by noise from the plant across the range of variation of the background sound level.

7.18 Any acoustic analysis such as those in the Calculation Sheets includes uncertainty due to factors such as the acoustic character of the propagation path from source to receiver. The modelling methods used adopt a conservative approach where appropriate in order to provide some margin of safety to the calculated sound levels.

7.19 There is inevitably further uncertainty in the data provided by plant manufacturers. In some cases, this is relatively small, in other cases much greater. This can be exacerbated by the appropriateness and magnitude of a character correction, which should be based on the subjective characteristics at the noise receptors. However, by applying extensive experience of the types and acoustic characteristics of the selected plant, together with the subjective method of assigning a character correction, it is possible to considerably reduce this level of uncertainty. The plant manufacturers are also aware that it is their responsibility to ensure that the plant complies with their stated performance and that should this not prove to be the case, they will be responsible for treating the plant so that it does then comply. An additional margin of safety is provided by assuming that all plant that may operate at the time being considered (daytime or night-time) may simultaneously be operating at maximum capacity for that time. In reality, it is likely that only some plant will be operating at maximum capacity at any time, as a result of which the actual sound level produced by the plant will be slightly lower than assumed for assessment purposes.

8.0 Conclusions

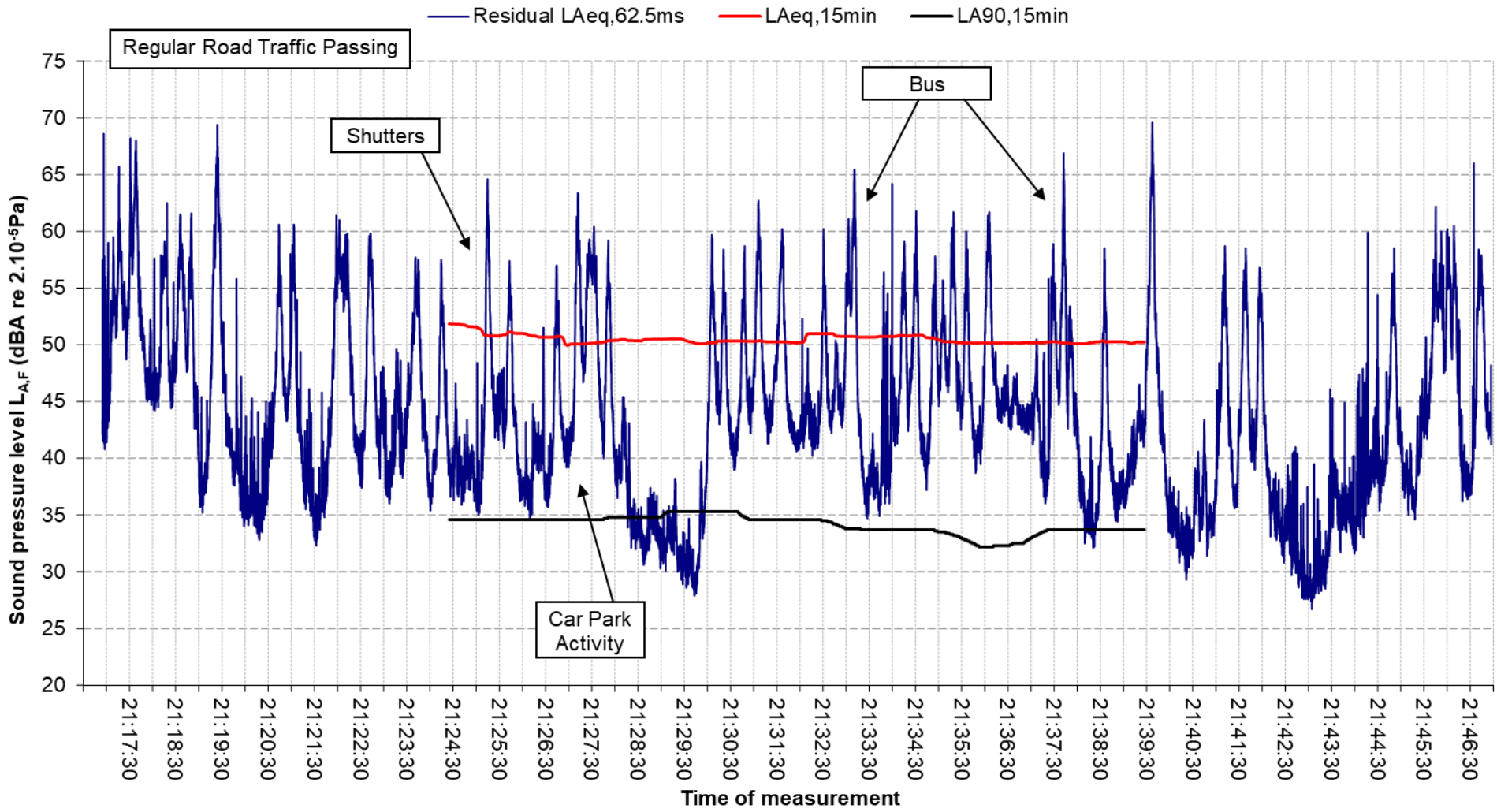
8.1 Acoustical Control Consultants have been appointed to undertake an assessment of the proposed fixed plant and equipment at Co-op Burton Joyce.

8.2 The selected plant has been assessed using relevant British Standards, National and Local planning policy and guidance from the Local Authority. These documents along with the results of a site survey and a consideration of the context of the area were used to derive criteria for suitable sound levels at the closest sensitive properties to protect the amenity of residents.

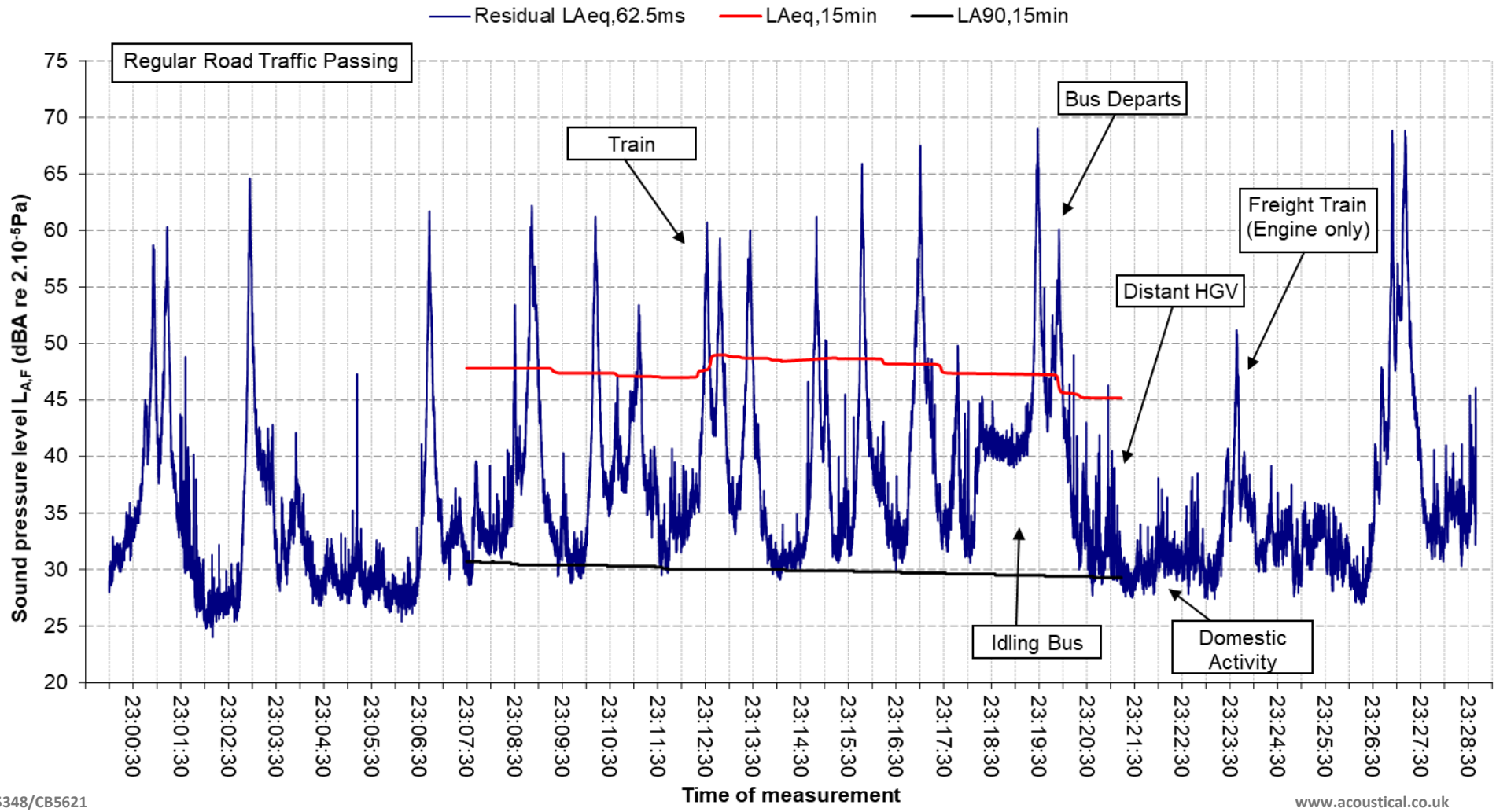
8.3 The selected plant, with the proposed attenuation, is predicted to comply with those criteria and therefore will achieve suitable sound levels and the amenity of those residents will be properly protected.

Appendix 1 Measurement Graphs

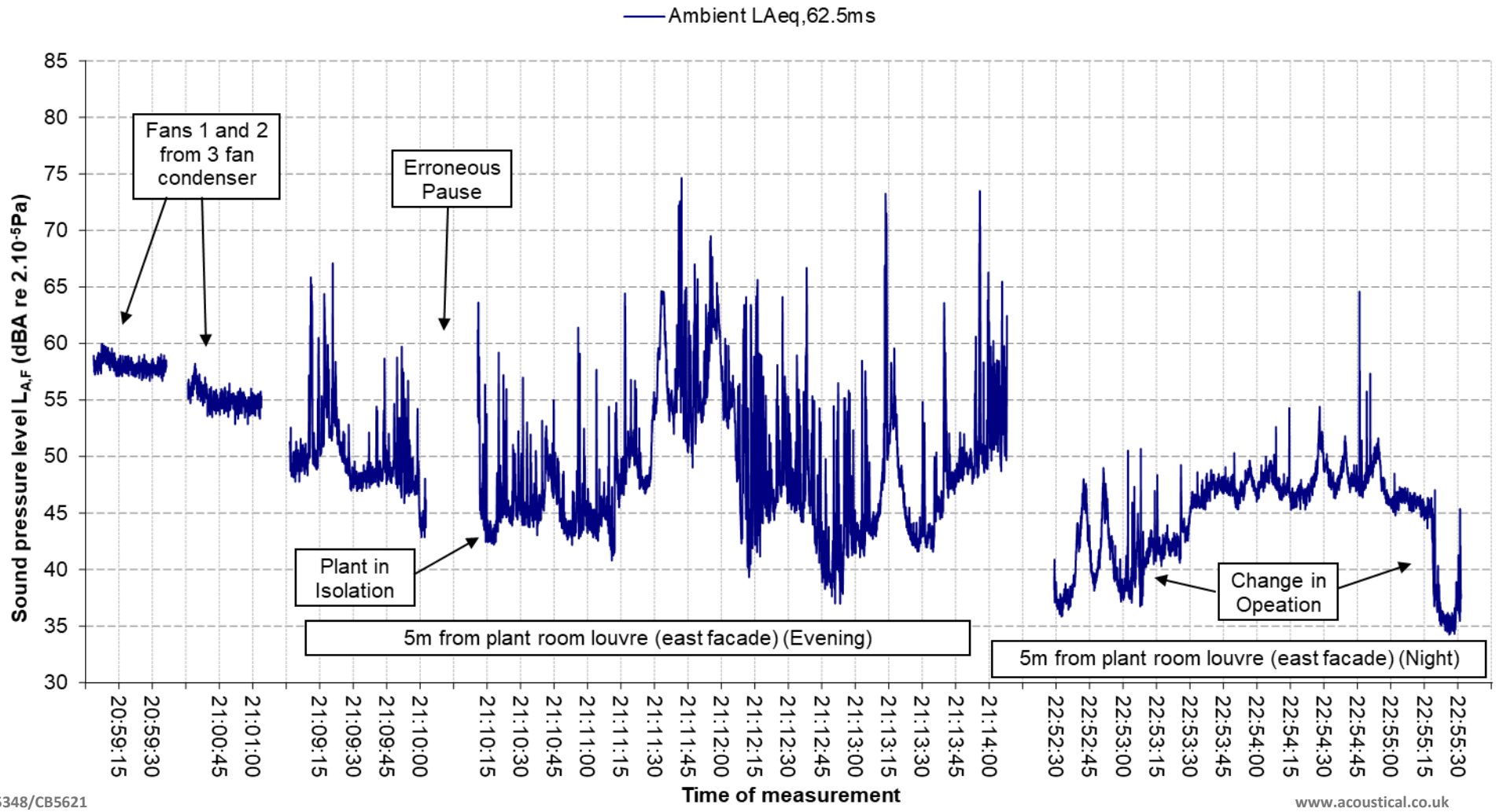
Graph 1 - Existing ambient sound level in vicinity of Co-op Burton Joyce
Measured 4th March 2021



Graph 2 - Existing ambient sound level in vicinity of Co-op Burton Joyce
Measured 4th March 2021



Graph 3 - Existing sound levels from Plant measured at Co-op Burton Joyce Measured 4th March 2021



Appendix 2 Calculation Sheets

Calculation Sheet 1a –Acoustic Assessment – Daytime

		Gas Cooler		3x AC			
Sound Power Level			**60 dBA**		**67 dBA**		
Corrections	Distance Attenuation	5m	-22 dB	5m	-22 dB		
	Screening Attenuation	Slight	-5 dB	Significant	-10 dB		
	Source Reverberant Factor	1 wall	+3 dB	1 wall	+3 dB		
	Directivity	In front	+0 dB	In front	+0 dB		
	Attenuation Performance	None	+0 dB	None	+0 dB		
	Receptor Reverberant Factor	Flat surface	+0 dB	Flat surface	+0 dB		
	Specific Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$		**36 dBA**		**38 dBA**		
	Rating Penalty		+0 dB		+0 dB		
	Rating Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$		**36 dBA**		**38 dBA**		

Existing Plant Correction	+0 dB
Cumulative Plant Rating Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$	**40 dBA**
Cumulative Design Rating Level, $L_{Aeq,T}$	39 dBA
Difference Between Cumulative Plant Rating Level and Design Rating Level	+1 dB
Assessment	**Low Impact**

Calculation Sheet 1b –Acoustic Assessment – Night-time

		Gas Cooler		3x AC		
Sound Power Level			**60 dBA**			
Corrections	Distance Attenuation	10m	-28 dB			
	Screening Attenuation	Slight	-5 dB			
	Source Reverberant Factor	1 wall	+3 dB			
	Directivity	In front	+0 dB	**Not Operational**		
	Attenuation Performance	None	+0 dB			
	Receptor Reverberant Factor	Flat surface	+0 dB			
	Specific Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$		**30 dBA**			
	Rating Penalty		+0 dB			
	Rating Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$		**30 dBA**			
		Existing Plant Correction				+0 dB
		Cumulative Plant Rating Level at Receptor, $L_{Aeq,1h}$				**30 dBA**
		Cumulative Design Rating Level, $L_{Aeq,T}$				34 dBA
		Difference Between Cumulative Plant Rating Level and Design Rating Level				-4 dB
		Assessment				**Low Impact**

Annex A Background sound level

Synopsis

A.1 The background sound level is not a single numerical value but a range that is unlikely to be precisely defined numerically.

A.2 It is equally important to understand the range of factors that affect the background sound level as the actual measured levels.

A.3 Appropriately timed short duration attended measurements can provide much better quality data than unattended measurements taken over a significantly longer period.

Introduction

A.4 The 2014 edition of BS 4142provides clearer and more specific guidance that the background sound level should be representative and not the lowest level that can be measured. This is to prevent some abuses of the Standard which have occurred in the past, such as where criteria have been set based on the lowest background level measured during any 5 minute period throughout the night.

A.5 Clause 8.1.4 states that: '*The monitoring duration should reflect the range of background sound levels for the period being assessed. In practice, there is no "single" background sound level as this is a fluctuating parameter. However, the background sound level used for the assessment should be representative of the period being assessed*'.

A.6 This means that if a single 'representative' background sound level is used for an assessment, consideration must also then be given to the likely range of variation in background sound and its effect on the outcome of the assessment. Ideally, the range of variation should reflect the variation of the residual sound during the period(s) of interest, taking account of both level and likelihood of such levels occurring, rather than simply attempting to consider the maximum potential range between lowest or highest possible sound levels that may occur.

A.7 However, it must also be recognised that the background sound level will usually vary significantly depending upon many different factors such as weather conditions; time of the day or night; day of the week; and time of the year. Even at the same time of day/ night and same time of the year, the background sound level can often vary by more than 10 dBA depending upon wind direction, even under conditions that are all regarded as being 'suitable' for valid measurements to be taken.

A.8 Most residual sound and the associated background sound levels are affected by sources close to the measurement location and also more distant sources such as transportation systems; commercial/ industrial and other human activity; and foliage moving in the wind or even water flowing. The sound level at the measurement location will therefore vary as the wind changes in speed and direction. Sound from more distant sources is affected by wind at low and higher altitudes, which can be significantly different in both speed and direction. Therefore even under apparently similar conditions at the measurement location, the residual sound level may vary to a greater extent than would be expected if the wind at higher altitude is more variable than at lower altitude.

A.9 Whilst it may appear that taking measurements for a few days will provide better data covering a range of weather conditions, this may not be the case. Weather conditions tend to remain fairly similar for several days so a measurement period of this duration is likely to provide several days data for similar conditions. It is also highly unlikely that this period will cover the range of conditions that affect the background sound level which means that the extended measurement period may provide a false sense of reliability of data when it is of no more benefit than that obtained over a single 24 hour period.

A.10 A further problem with this approach is that unattended measurements provide very little or even no data about what has actually been measured. Fully attended measurements enable the acoustic environment to be properly understood and factors that affect the sound level to be identified and their contribution quantified. A short duration attended survey can usually provide far better quality data than a longer term unattended survey, although where long term measuring is required, such as for compliance monitoring, this may not be appropriate.

A.11 Where it is necessary to fully understand the variation in residual sound during the day and night it may be appropriate to take measurements throughout this period. However, this is unlikely to be representative of different conditions such as days of the week, public holidays and even school holiday conditions. In many situations it is more appropriate to specifically consider the most sensitive times of the day or night, on the basis that if these are satisfactory then less sensitive times will also be satisfactory. For plant that operates on a 24/7 basis the most sensitive time of the night is likely to be when people are going to or awakening from sleep rather than the quietest part of the night. During the day the most sensitive time is likely to be the evening when the residual level may be lower than at other times of the day.

Annex B Character correction

Synopsis

B.1 A character correction is applicable if sound has significant characteristics such as tonality or impulsivity that attract a listener's attention at the noise sensitive location to be considered for the assessment.

B.2 A character correction can comprise separate corrections for tonality, impulsivity, other characteristics (if neither tonality nor impulsivity apply), and intermittency. These corrections are additive.

B.3 The subjective method(s) should be used to determine the character correction unless agreement cannot be reached, in which case the objective/ reference methods may be appropriate alternatives.

B.4 Whilst the maximum character correction could arguably be 15 dB or possibly even 18 dB, in reality it is expected that, where a character correction is applicable, a correction in the range of 5 dB to 10 dB is likely to be appropriate in the vast majority of cases.

Introduction

B.5 Sound which has characteristics that attract a listener's attention may be significantly more intrusive than sound of a somewhat higher level that is more innocuous. The most common acoustically distinguishing characteristics are tonality, impulsivity and intermittency. BS 4142provides guidance regarding how a character correction should be determined. It is important to note that this is based on the level and character of the specific sound at the noise sensitive location(s) in comparison to the level, character and context of the residual acoustic environment. It is intended that the subjective method be used where agreement can be reached regarding penalties where appropriate, with the objective/ reference methods only being used in more contentious situations.

B.6 Because the level and character of both the specific and residual sound vary with time, it is likely that the significance of any acoustically distinguishing characteristics will also vary with time. It is most appropriate to establish a character correction for representative conditions but to then consider the range of variation of potential character correction as part of the consideration of the uncertainty of the assessment.

Tonality

B.7 For tonality, Clause 9.2 states that: '*For sound ranging from not tonal to prominently tonal the Joint Nordic Method gives a correction of between 0 dB and +6 dB for tonality. Subjectively, this can be converted to a penalty of 2 dB for a tone which is just perceptible at the noise receptor, 4 dB where it is clearly perceptible, and 6 dB where it is highly perceptible*'.

B.8 In most cases where plant produces sound that is tonal but similar in level to the residual sound, the tonality may tend to be slightly or clearly rather than highly perceptible at the noise sensitive location(s), with the relative prominence of the tonality being reduced due to masking by the residual acoustic environment. In such cases it may be appropriate to apply a penalty of 2-4 dB to account for this effect.

Impulsivity

B.9 For impulsivity, Clause 9.2 states that: '*A correction of up to +9 dB can be applied for sound that is* highly *impulsive, considering both the rapidity of the change in sound level and the overall change in sound level. Subjectively, this can be converted to a penalty of 3 dB for impulsivity which is just perceptible at the noise receptor, 6 dB where it is clearly perceptible, and 9 dB where it is highly perceptibl*e'.

B.10 In most cases where plant produces sound that is impulsive but similar in level to the residual sound, the impulsivity may tend to be slightly or clearly rather than highly perceptible at the noise sensitive location(s), with the relative prominence of the impulsivity being reduced due to masking by the residual acoustic environment. In such cases it may be appropriate to apply a penalty of 3-6 dB to account for this effect.

Other Characteristics

B.11 Clause 9.2 also states that '*Where the specific sound features characteristics that are neither tonal nor impulsive, though otherwise are readily distinctive against the residual acoustic environment, a penalty of 3 dB can be applied*'.

B.12 This means that, depending upon circumstances such as the context, it may be applicable to apply a 3 dB penalty to sound that is neither tonal nor impulsive where it has other characteristics that tend to attract a listener's attention to the sound against the residual acoustic environment at the noise sensitive location(s).

Intermittency

B.13 For intermittency Clause 9.2 states that: '*When the specific sound has identifiable on/off conditions, the specific sound level ought to be representative of the time period of length equal to the reference time interval which contains the greatest total amount of on time. This can necessitate measuring the specific sound over a number of shorter sampling periods that are in combination less than the reference time interval in total, and then calculating the specific sound level for the reference time interval allowing for time when the specific sound is not present. If the intermittency is readily distinctive against the residual acoustic environment, a penalty of 3 dB can be applied*'.

B.14 This means that, depending upon circumstances such as the context, it may be applicable to apply a 3 dB penalty where the intermittency of the specific sound tends to attract a listener's attention to the sound against the residual acoustic environment at the noise sensitive location(s).

Conclusion

B.15 On an extremely rare occasion when the specific sound is both highly tonal and highly impulsive at a noise sensitive location, it could conceivably be appropriate to apply a character correction of 15 dB and possibly even 18 dB if the intermittency of the specific sound exacerbates the impact of what is already highly intrusive sound still further. If sound is both tonal and impulsive but one of these characteristics is dominant then it may be appropriate to apply just the correction for that characteristic. In situations where the specific sound is similar in level to the residual sound it is more likely that such characteristics will be masked to some extent by the residual sound at the noise sensitive location(s). In this case it is more likely that a character correction of 2-4 dB for tonality and/ or 3-6 dB for impulsivity may be applicable, possibly with an additional 3 dB penalty for intermittency if this is significant. In most cases it is expected that a character correction, if applicable, will be in the range of 5-10 dB.

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Annex C Uncertainty

Synopsis

C.1 Despite sound measurement systems usual precision of 0.1dB, any measurement of environmental sound or specific components of this can only be representative of its constantly varying level and character, at best.

C.2 In addition to uncertainty in sound level measurement systems, the actual level being measured varies continuously in level and character. Analysis of the measured levels adds further uncertainty, as does assessment of the potential impact of sound, which is greatly affected by the specific context of the situation being assessed.

C.3 It is not appropriate to estimate all uncertainty that may occur and deduct this from a 'suitable' level to establish a 'safe' level that 'should be ok'. This would result in sound levels that are substantially lower than necessary or appropriate, providing no benefit for those being 'protected', whilst creating significant adverse impacts on the sustainability of any development and making many impracticable, thereby preventing much development that should proceed, and denying the benefits of such development, often to the very people that are being 'protected'.

C.4 The way in which uncertainty is addressed must depend upon factors such as the sensitivity of the situation, the potential magnitude of the uncertainty, and its potential significance on the outcome of the assessment.

Introduction

C.5 Environmental sound is constantly changing in level and character. The relative significance of any component of this similarly varies continuously as sound from both the specific component and all other residual sources varies. The propagation paths between sources and receiver change for reasons such as varying wind speed and direction which further alters the level and character of environmental sound at any location. Sound can be measured and expressed in many different ways using different parameters such as the maximum, logarithmic average, minimum, or statistical distribution. These values will themselves depend upon other factors such as the time period over which they apply and the response time of the measurement system. This means that any quantified level of residual sound or that from a specific source is representative rather than precise and it is necessary to more fully understand the acoustic characteristics of the acoustic environment that is being considered.

C.6 Uncertainty has been the acoustic 'elephant in the room' for many years. Some acousticians have considered it; many have ignored it; and other people, particularly non-acousticians, have been unaware of it, assuming incorrectly that acoustic analyses presented to a precision of 1 dB or even 0.1 dB are accurate to that level of accuracy.

C.7 In most cases, when setting sound levels based on an acoustic assessment it is not appropriate to set a criterion that incorporates uncertainty to the extent that the criterion is highly unlikely to be exceeded under any circumstances. Clearly there are some exceptions to this, such as the safety requirement to protect personnel from hearing damage at work. In this case subtracting 1 standard deviation (σ) from a hearing protector's average performance is used to give an assumed level of performance that should be achieved for 84% of users. Although subtracting 2σ would protect 97.5% of users and 3σ would protect 99.9%, a balance has been struck between cost/ practicability and benefit in deciding that uncertainty where 16% of people may not be provided with the expected level of protection is appropriate in this case.

C.8 In non-safety critical situations it is generally appropriate to accept a greater level of uncertainty in the outcome of any assessment. In many acoustic assessments it is also not practicable to numerically quantify the level of uncertainty in the manner that is possible for hearing protection devices which can be thoroughly tested and measured under carefully controlled laboratory conditions.

C.9 BS 4142aims to provide guidance as to the likely significance of impact of industrial or commercial sound, taking into account not only the level and character of that sound but also the context in which it is heard, which can significantly affect the significance of its impact.

C.10 The impact of industrial or commercial sound will vary as the level and character of both the source and residual sound changes. This means that the assessment of its impact will be a general indication and that its significance will change continuously. As noted above, it is generally not appropriate to consider a theoretical 'worst case' scenario comparing the highest possible rating level against the lowest possible background sound level. Instead, representative rating and background sound levels should be compared, considering the level, character and context of the specific sound and residual acoustic environment. There will inevitably be occasions when the impact is slightly greater than this representative situation and conversely there will be other occasions when the impact is less. This is no different to the impact of different sources of sound in the residual acoustic environment, such as pedestrians conversing loudly whilst passing a dwelling, a vehicle horn being sounded, or a siren being heard on occasion.

Measurement Uncertainty

C.11 Any measurement whether acoustic or not, includes an element of uncertainty in the measured value, the magnitude and significance of which usually depends upon many factors. The most obvious factor for measurements undertaken for this assessment is due to instrumentation, but this is minimised by a range of controls set out in Craven & Kerry's *'A Good Practice Guide on the Sources and Magnitude of Uncertainty Arising in the Practical Measurement of Environmental Noise'* (as referenced in BS 4142: 2014) including:

- Use of Type 1 sound level analysers
- Bi-annual calibration of sound level analysers and annual calibration of calibrators (relevant calibration certificates are provided elsewhere.
- Periodic cross-calibration with other calibrated analysers and monitoring of system's calibration characteristics.
- On site calibration checks before and after measurements are taken.
- Avoidance and control of interference due to electromagnetic sources, weather or other factors.

Other Causes of Uncertainty

C.12 These measures ensure that the uncertainty due to the measurement system is relatively small in comparison with factors that affect the overall uncertainty incorporated in this assessment. These include:

- Variations in the level and character of residual and associated background sound at the measurement and noise sensitive receptor locations.
- Variations in the level and character of the specific sound.
- Where the specific sound level is calculated from the difference between the ambient sound level with the source operating and the residual level without, significant variability in either of these levels increases the uncertainty in the calculated specific level and significant variability in both increases the uncertainty by a greater amount.
- The magnitude of any character correction that should be applied and under which conditions e.g. full load or partial load operation or different plant characteristics.
- Modelling of the sound path from source to receptor.

C.13 In addition to the Good Practice measures identified by Craven and Kerry, appropriate measurement techniques can further reduce uncertainty such as undertaking fully attended surveys, recording the sound level many times each second and noting acoustically significant factors that may affect the measured level on a second by second basis.

Background & Residual Sound Level Uncertainty

C.14 In many cases the level and character of residual and background sound is strongly affected not only by the level of activity which varies with time of day, but also by seasonal effects such as foliage generated noise and to an even greater extent by weather conditions, of which the most significant is usually wind speed and direction, which itself varies with location and altitude. Because weather conditions tend to remain fairly similar for several days, taking measurements for this length of time is likely to provide a few days and nights of similar data rather than a reflection of the likely range of sound levels under different weather conditions. Where it is necessary to fully understand this effect it is necessary to undertake long term monitoring for extended periods, generally also at different times of the year. Clearly this is only likely to be practicable for major developments such as national infrastructure construction. Even for large windfarms it is usually only considered appropriate to gather data for a period of many weeks rather than many months. Long term residual and background sound level measurements are neither practicable nor appropriate for small scale developments, particularly if the background sound level informs rather than dictates the outcome of a BS 4142assessment.

C.15 Where the residual sound level is relatively steady measuring for a short time can provide as good an indication of the representative level prevailing at that time under those specific as a longer duration measurement. As the variability of the residual sound level increases the range of residual and background sound levels also increases and the uncertainty in these levels similarly increases. However, as discussed above, the variability and uncertainty in the residual and background sound levels will tend to be greater under different weather conditions than at different times of the day or night under similar weather conditions. Measuring the sound level many times every second provides a clear understanding of how the sound level depends upon a range of factors such as passing traffic, distant plant and activity, so that the likely range of variation of the residual and background sound levels can be better understood.

C.16 There is a balance to be struck between reducing uncertainty and the duration and associated costs of the measurement period(s).

Source Level Uncertainty

C.17 There is uncertainty in the level and character of sound from sources for many reasons. These include:

- Varying plant operational conditions.
- Variation in sound level produced by different items of equipment.
- Uncertainty or error in manufacturer's data.
- Uncertainty or error in measured levels of other 'representative' sources.
- Acoustic characteristics of plant such as directivity.

C.18 Plant may operate differently under different conditions and for example, may be restricted so that the level and character of sound will be different during the night than day time. Even where plant operates in only one mode, the level and character of sound that it produces may vary. BS 4142considers the average sound level that the plant may produce over a 15 minute period during the night and 1 hour during the day. The characteristics of the sound may also differ during these times as a result of which the rating correction(s) may be different.

C.19 Where there are multiple items of equipment, the variation in level and character of each is likely to result in even greater variation of the overall level and character of sound from the equipment as a whole. However, there can also be some 'smoothing' effect if the overall result is that plant operates more or less continuously, with individual items of plant starting and stopping at different times. Provided that the changes in level and character due to individual items of plant are not significant this can result in slight variations in an otherwise relatively steady sound that may be less significant than a single item of plant intermittently stopping and starting.

C.20 Where a new source is proposed, it may be appropriate/ necessary to use manufacturer's data to assess the likely significance of its impact. This data may vary from a single figure dBA level that may or may not clarify whether it is a sound pressure level measured at a specific distance under known acoustic conditions, or a sound power level, to a detailed frequency spectrum, possibly for different operating conditions. Experience can greatly assist the interpretation of such data and the assessment of its reliability. Even where detailed frequency spectra are provided, this does not provide a definitive indication of appropriateness or otherwise of a character correction and its magnitude if this is found to be applicable.

C.21 In many cases it is appropriate to use data obtained from other similar equipment as an indication of the likely level and character of sound that will be produced by proposed plant. In these cases it is necessary to consider the uncertainty in these measured levels including not only the effects of the measurement environment and operational characteristics of the representative plant, but also any differences due to other factors such as required maintenance.

Character correction Uncertainty

C.22 The character correction includes corrections for sound that is tonal, impulsive, intermittent, or has other characteristics that will tend to attract a listener's attention. The significance of these characteristics should be assessed by comparison of the specific and residual sound at the noise sensitive location(s), not closer to the source. This may be difficult to do for existing sources due to difficulties in measuring the specific and residual sound, although in most cases it should be possible to use the simplified subjective method set out in clause 9.2 of BS 4142.

C.23 For a proposed source it will not be possible to directly measure or subjectively assess the sound it produces at the noise sensitive receptors, but it may still be possible to apply the subjective method in such situations, considering the known level and character of sound the source will produce and the level and character of the residual acoustic environment at the noise sensitive location(s).

C.24 There may be uncertainty whether a specific sound may have tonal or impulsive content that is just or clearly perceptible; or is clearly or highly perceptible. It is up to the parties undertaking the assessment to form an opinion regarding what would constitute an appropriate character correction and to clearly explain how this has been arrived at. The uncertainty in the magnitude of the character correction and the likely significance of the character of the specific sound at the noise sensitive location(s) should then be considered further as part of the assessment process.

Modelling Uncertainty

C.25 Where an existing source is being assessed based on measurements and observations at the noise sensitive location(s) there may be no need for any acoustic modelling of the source characteristics or sound propagation path. However, in most cases it is likely that a combination of measurement and calculation will be necessary and this will introduce further uncertainty. For example levels measured close to a source can be extrapolated back to the noise sensitive location(s) but the actual level produced at the more distant location(s) will be affected by factors such as reflections or screening by structures, attenuation due to the ground or air, and possibly most significantly by wind speed and direction.

Conclusion

C.26 Some of the elements of uncertainty that affect the actual level and character of sound at noise sensitive locations can be numerically estimated, although this is unlikely to be the case for the more significant ones. However, the aim is not to derive a precise numerical outcome from a BS 4142assessment but to consider the likely significance of the impact of industrial or commercial sound at affected noise sensitive locations.

C.27 Where there is a very clear outcome and relatively small uncertainty, then the uncertainty will have negligible effect on the outcome of the assessment. However, where the outcome is less clear and/ or the level of uncertainty is greater, this should be reflected in the assessment.

C.28 The assessment must consider not only the level and character of sound from the source(s) and also the residual acoustic environment but also the context in which it is experienced. The effect of sound on a listener is subjective and it is necessary to incorporate some subjectivity into a BS 4142 assessment. This is generally the most appropriate way in which to incorporate the effects of uncertainty into the outcome of the assessment.

Annex D Guidance

Synopsis

D.1 BS 4142:2014 uses a comparison between the rating and background sound levels to establish an Initial Estimate of the Likely Significance of Impact. The context of the assessment must then be considered, which can significantly alter the outcome of the assessment.

D.2 Where the aim is to ensure that people are not disturbed by plant during the night it is the absolute level of sound within the dwelling that will be of most significance. What constitute a suitable level of sound from plant will depend upon the character of the acoustic environment. This means that identification of a suitable criterion to properly protect residents must be informed by the existing residual sound level, of which the background sound level is one partial indicator, with others such as the average or maximum providing further information.

D.3 For gardens and other outdoor amenity areas, BS 8233indicates that an average level of 50dBA may be desirable, but this is based on considering residential development in what may be relatively noisy areas. For quieter locations NPPF and NPSE provide further assistance. When establishing what may be a suitable level in gardens etc. for sound from plant, it is important to consider the existing acoustic environment including the residual levels (background, average, etc.) and the character of the area e.g. quiet rural, busy urban, adjacent to a car park or service yard.

BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods of rating industrial and commercial sound

D.4 BS 4142:2014 differs from previous editions of this Standard in many ways, including that:

- The aim is to assess the likely significance of impact not the likelihood of complaint. This is consistent with current Government planning policy but is not aligned to it because this is a British standard, whereas planning policy does not apply to all of Britain.
- The context of the situation must be considered as part of and can significantly affect the outcome of the assessment.
- The outcome of the numerical assessment will not be a single number but a range, together with uncertainty, the significance of which must be considered as part of the assessment process.
- The absolute sound levels may be more significant than the difference between the rating and background sound levels.
- It may also be appropriate to consider other guidance such as BS 8233:2014 as part of the assessment.

- Sound having significant characteristics that attract a listener's attention may be significantly more intrusive than featureless sound of a somewhat higher level, as a result of which the character correction may now be significantly greater than before.
- The reference to a rating level 10 dB below the background sound level has been removed because this was mis-applied in many cases to impose unreasonably low criteria.
- The many factors that affect the uncertainty of an assessment must be taken into account.

D.5 Clause 11 states: '*The significance of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature depends upon both the margin by which the rating level of the specific sound source exceeds the background sound level and the context in which the sound occurs. An effective assessment cannot be conducted without an understanding of the reason(s) for the assessment and the context in which the sound occurs/will occur. When making assessments and arriving at decisions, therefore, it is essential to place the sound in context*'.

D.6 BS 4142requires that the rating level be compared to the background sound level to provide an Initial Estimate of the Likely Significance of Impact. This is then amended to take account of the context of the assessment, and the effects of the uncertainty in the entire process on the outcome of the assessment must also be considered.

D.7 The background sound level ($L_{A90,T}$) is defined as the level exceeded for 90% of the time i.e. the quietest 10% level. This specifically excludes consideration of the sound level prevailing for 90% of the time and is intended to provide an indication of the sound level during 'lulls' in activity. This means that the same background sound level can be measured outside a dwelling in a continuously quiet location with little activity or sources of residual sound, and outside a dwelling beside a road with vehicles passing at high speed every few minutes. Clearly these two locations have very different acoustic characteristics and sensitivity to sound, despite having the same L_{A90} level. In this situation the average ($L_{Aeq,T}$) levels may differ by around 20dBA to 30dBA and the maximum ($L_{AMax,T}$) levels may differ by 40dBA or more.

BS 8233:2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings

D.8 This Standard draws on authoritative guidance such as that issued by the World Health Organisation to identify suitable noise levels for a wide range of different environments. For dwellings these include bedrooms, where the aim is to protect people from sleep disturbance; other habitable rooms that are in use during the day, where the aim is to provide good listening/ communication/ recreational conditions; and outdoor amenity space including gardens.

D.9 This confirms that a steady average level of 30dBA within a bedroom, due to external sound sources, is desirable and that this should not have significant acoustically distinguishing characteristics. For habitable rooms during the day a desirable level is 35dBA.

D.10 For outdoor areas such as gardens and patios a desirable upper average level of 50dBA is stated, with an upper guideline average limit of 55dBA, which would be acceptable in noisier environments. However it is also recognised that for strategic reasons it may be appropriate to permit higher levels, such as for new dwellings in busy urban areas.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

D.11 These documents clarify Government policy regarding development and noise. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a recognition that when considering sustainability, the various factors that affect the sustainability of a proposed development must be considered collectively.

D.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

D.13 Paragraph 123 of NPPF states that:

> Planning policies and decisions should aim to:
>
> a. avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development;
>
> b. mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development, including through the use of conditions;
>
> c. recognise that development will often create some noise and existing businesses wanting to develop in continuance of their business should not have unreasonable restrictions put on them because of changes in nearby land uses since they were established; and
>
> d. identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.

D.14 The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) sets out the long term vision of Government noise policy by promoting good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.

D.15 Paragraph 2.23 of NPSE clarifies the first part of the above excerpt:

a. The first aim of the NPSE states that significant adverse effects on health and quality of life should be avoided while also taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development.

D.16 Similarly paragraph 2.24 of NPSE clarifies the second part:

a. The second aim of the NPSE refers to the situation where the impact lies somewhere between LOAEL (Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level) and SOAEL (Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level). It requires that all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life while also taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development. This does not mean that such adverse effects cannot occur.

D.17 These make it clear that noise must not be considered in isolation but as part of the overall sustainability and associated impacts of the proposed development. There is no benefit in reducing noise to an excessively low level, particularly if this creates or increases some other adverse impact. Similarly, it may be appropriate for noise to have an adverse impact if this is outweighed by the reduction or removal of some other adverse impact that is of greater significance when considering the overall sustainability of the proposed development.

D.18 NPSE clarifies the difference between NOEL (No Observed Effect Level) and LOAEL as used in Night Noise Guidelines for Europe, which gives values of 30dB(A) and 40dB(A) for the night time average level measured outside dwellings respectively. This indicates that there may be no significant overall benefit in achieving an average level of less than around 40dB(A) outside dwellings during the night.

D.19 It should also be considered that in order to make equipment quieter it is often necessary to use larger equipment that operates more slowly and for longer periods of time. This may increase energy consumption and hence the carbon footprint of the equipment. The overall impact of this may outweigh any acoustic benefit of the equipment being slightly quieter.

World Health Organisation: Guidelines for Community Noise; Night Noise Guidelines for Europe

D.20 The WHO publication 'Guidelines for Community Noise – 1999' provides guidance regarding suitable levels of noise that will protect vulnerable groups against sleep disturbance. A steady level of 30dB(A) in bedrooms, with occasional maximum levels of 45dB(A) are identified as being suitable to achieve this, with an assumed difference of approximately 15dB(A) between the noise level outdoors and that resulting in the bedroom, assuming that the bedroom windows are partly open for ventilation. This means that the corresponding targets for the noise level outdoors are steady levels of up to about 45dB(A) and occasional maxima of up to around 60dB(A).

D.21 The more recent WHO guidance 'Night Noise Guidelines for Europe – 2009' is more concerned with the longer term average noise levels that are covered by the EU Directive on Environmental Noise, although this does appear to suggest slightly lower external maximum noise levels of around 57dB(A) outside bedrooms during the night.

D.22 Furthermore the 1999 guidance states that: '*To protect the majority of people from being seriously annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor sound level from steady, continuous noise should not exceed 55dBLAeq on balconies, terraces and in outdoor living areas. To protect the majority of people from being moderately annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor sound level should not exceed 50dBLAeq. Where it is practicable and feasible, the lower outdoor level should be considered the maximum desirable sound level for new development.*'

Annex E Assessment of the Impacts

Assessment Method

E.1 Clause 11 states: '*The significance of sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature depends upon both the margin by which the rating level of the specific sound source exceeds the background sound level and the context in which the sound occurs. An effective assessment cannot be conducted without an understanding of the reason(s) for the assessment and the context in which the sound occurs/will occur. When making assessments and arriving at decisions, therefore, it is essential to place the sound in context*'.

E.2 An initial estimate of the impact should be made by subtracting the background sound level from the rating level, and it may be appropriate to make more than one assessment.

E.3 This initial estimate must then be modified as appropriate to take account of the context. This must consider all pertinent factors including:

- The absolute level of sound. This may be more as or more significant than the difference between the rating and background sound levels, particularly where the residual sound level is particularly high or low.
- The character and level of the residual sound compared to the character and level of the specific sound.
- The sensitivity of the receptor and whether the receptor may be protected by specific measures that will reduce the impact in comparison to receptors without such protection.

Specific Considerations

E.4 Clause 8.1 includes the following: '*the middle of the night can be distinctly different (and potentially of lesser importance) compared to the start or end of the night-time period for sleep purposes*'.

E.5 Annex A of the Standard provides an increased number of examples of how to use the standard to obtain ratings for various different scenarios. This states that: '*These examples illustrate how the standard could be applied and are not to be taken as a definitive interpretation of how it is intended to be used*'.

E.6 Examples 6, 7 & 8 of Annex A *'show how similar sound levels can produce different results, depending primarily upon the context in which the sound occurs'*. Examples 6 & 8 specifically consider the likely significance of the specific sound during the night on residents *'who could be sleeping with open bedroom windows'*. In this case other guidance such as BS 8233might also be applicable for several reasons:

- At low external residual sound levels the sound level within a dwelling with open windows is likely to be controlled not by the external residual sound level but by sounds created within the dwelling by a range of sources including refrigerators, pumps, boilers, water flowing through pipes, conversation, radios/ televisions, equipment cooling fans, animals, and even people breathing particularly when considering sound during the night.
- During the night people the level and character of sound outside a dwelling is of less significance than the acoustic environment within bedrooms and its suitability for going to sleep or not disturbing residents whilst asleep.
- The World Health Organisation provides authoritative guidance regarding suitable sound levels in bedrooms, from which the guidance in BS 8233is derived.

Annex F Competence & Experience

F.1 Acoustical Control Consultants Limited has the advantage of personnel that were directly involved in the drafting of BS 4142, who have specialised in the measurement, assessment and control of noise from industrial and commercial sources throughout their careers. This type of work forms a major part of our activity and has done so for several decades. Our culture, systems and working practices are geared towards ensuring that this type of work is consistently undertaken to the high and robust level of quality for which we are known.

F.2 **Richard A Collman** has overall responsibility for ACC's activities including BS 4142 assessments. He graduated with a BSc (Class I) in Acoustics and Computer Science from Salford University in 1984, being awarded the course prize in both the second and final years. He is a Chartered Engineer and has specialised in the measurement and assessment of sound from industrial and commercial plant for over 30 years, writing articles and papers on this subject for Acoustics Bulletin and IOA conferences. He pioneered the use of digital instrumentation for short duration consecutive logging rather than longer term statistical averaging measurement techniques. As an expert on sound from refrigeration and air conditioning plant he represented the Institute of Refrigeration on the BSI committee and the Drafting Panel responsible for the 2014 edition of BS 4142, presented the section on Uncertainty at the BS 4142Launch Meeting in November 2014, and authored an associated Technical Article in Acoustics Bulletin. He has been closely involved in the development of BRL's BS 4142measurement, assessment and reporting system to ensure that it is fully compliant with all aspects of BS 4142.

F.3 **Mike Hewett,** Principal Acoustician, joined the company in February 2021 bringing with him more than 30 years' experience of Acoustic consultancy. Mike's particular expertise is in the assessment, prediction and control of noise and vibration from structures, plant and equipment. Other skills include acoustic design, environmental acoustics and the assessment and control of vibration. He has managed several large-scale acoustic design projects and is highly experienced in diagnostic techniques including sound mapping, sound intensity and vibration measurements. He is an active member of the Institute of Acoustics has been chair and secretary of the Noise and Vibration Engineering specialist group and chair of the North West regional branch. In 1994 Mike was awarded the prize for the best overall performance in the IOA Diploma and has since presented papers at numerous conferences and seminars.

F.4 **Kristoffer Tsinontas**, Acoustician joined the company in September 2014 and has since been carrying out noise impact assessments primarily for the food retail industry, along with assisting in other larger projects undertaken by the company. Kristoffer has a BSc (Hons) in Music Technology, whereby he specialised in Acoustics and Psychoacoustics – particularly in modelling acoustic soundscapes. Kristoffer is a member of the Institute of Acoustics.