

NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT **BS4142:2014**

October 2023

Noise Impact Assessment of the Installation of the
proposed Air Conditioning System



Site Address

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NW3 1HL

Prepared For

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Executive Summary

An environmental noise survey and noise impact assessment have been undertaken at 5A, Back Lane, London NW3 1HL to assess the potential increase in noise levels from the installation of the proposed Air Conditioning System on the surrounding Noise Sensitive Receptors. The measured background sound levels have allowed a BS4142:2014 noise assessment to be carried out.

The BS4142:2014 assessment indicates that provided the proposed acoustic enclosure is installed as specified within this report and recommendations in the report are adhered to, the Rating Noise Level should be below the background sound level by 10 dB. This indicates low impact in accordance with BS4142:2014 and 'No Observed Effect Level' when assessed in accordance with the NPSE and NPPF.

An overview of the recommendations can be found below:

Recommendations and Mitigation Measure Overview

- The make, model, and location of the proposed units should not be altered should these be changed further assessment may be required.
- All the proposed plant units should be installed within an acoustic enclosure capable of providing a minimum of 15 dB insertion loss to ensure all noise emissions fall 10 dB below the background sound level.
- Where appropriate all plant units should be installed on appropriate anti-vibrational mounts.

The findings of this report will require written approval from the Local Authority prior to work commencing.

1. Introduction

Overview

NOVA Acoustics Ltd has been commissioned to prepare a noise assessment for the installation of the proposed Air Conditioning System (the Proposed Development) at 5A Back Lane, Camden, London NW3 1HL (the Site).

The applicant has submitted an application reference 2021/0544/P (the Application) to Camden Council.

The following technical noise assessment has been prepared to support the planning application to Camden Council. And specifically assess the noise emissions associated with the replacement of an existing air conditioning system.

This report details the existing background sound climate at the nearest receptors, as well as the sound emissions associated with the Proposed Development.

This noise assessment is necessarily technical in nature; therefore, a glossary of terms is included in Appendix A to assist the reader.

Scope & Objectives

The scope of the noise assessment can be summarized as follows:

- Baseline sound monitoring survey to evaluate the prevailing background sound levels at the nearest sensitive receptor (‘NSR’) to Site;
- Detailed acoustic calculation and analysis in accordance with; ISO9613 – 1 ISO 9613-2 - Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors prediction methodology, to predict sound levels at the NSR;
- A detailed assessment of the suitability of the Site, in accordance with relevant standards in respect of sound from the proposed sources; and
- Recommendation of mitigation measures, where necessary, to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), Noise Policy Statement for England (2010) and British Standard BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 - Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound. Further information on the legislation can be found in Appendix B.

Local Policy Guidance (Camden Council)

The Local Authority states in its noise policy guidance that the noise emissions must be *"lower than the lowest existing background noise level by at least 10dBA, by 15dBA where the source is tonal, as assessed according to BS4142:2014 at the nearest and/or most affected noise sensitive premises, with all machinery operating together at maximum capacity"*

2. Environmental Noise Survey

Measurement Methodology

In order to characterise the sound profile of the area at the closest sensitive receptor (NSR), an environmental sound survey has been carried out from the 14/01/2021 to 15/01/2021. The monitoring position was chosen in order to collect representative sound levels at the NSR during the typical operational periods of the proposed development. The monitoring location is shown in Figure 1.0.



Figure 1.0 - Indicative Site Layout



Figure 2.0 – Plant and NSRs Layout

Context & Subjective Impression

The area surrounding the site is primarily residential. To the south-west runs Back Lane, which runs along with residential buildings and facilitates light levels of traffic flow. Just off Back Lane and to the west runs Heath Street (A502) with mixed residential and commercial activity which facilitates moderate levels of road traffic flow. Streatley Place is located to the north, a quiet pedestrian passageway. The rear of the property faces the neighbouring residential area with no commercial activity. The noise profile of the area is dominated by distant traffic flow and other noise sources secondary in nature. The AC units to be replaced are currently installed by the driveway and the terrace at the back of the property. The proposed new 2 no. AC units will be installed in the location highlighted in Figure 2.0 above. The plans also indicate the units will be installed within an acoustic enclosure however ever the exact acoustic performance of the enclosure has not yet been defined.

Environmental Noise Survey Results

The proposed plant will operate any time throughout the week. The table below outlines the background sound levels, during the operational period of the plant, that will be used as the baseline for the noise assessment. Further summary results for the entire measurement period can be found in Appendix D.

Measurement Position MP1				
Measurement Period ('t')	L_{A90,15min}	*SMR	Min.	Max.
		L_{A90,15min}	L_{A90,15min}	L_{A90,15min}
Night 1 – 14/01/2021 – 23:00 – 06:59	42.0	38.0	37.0	43.0

Table 1.0 – Background Sound Level Summary Results

**Statistically Most Repeated*

As can be seen in the table above the lowest measured $L_{A90,15min}$ value is 37 dB. The range of measured background sound levels is moderate and as such, the lowest measured $L_{A90,15min}$ value is deemed 'Typical' and will be used in the following assessment as it is considered to provide a robust assessment.

3. BS4142:2014 Noise Assessment

The following section of the report analyses the expected impact of the noise emissions associated with the AC units. The manufactures data sheets can be found in Appendix E along with the location plans. The plans indicate there will be a wall located between the units and the NSR this will provide approximately 10 dB of further shielding which has been accounted for in the subsequent assessment.

Plant Equipment	Sound Pressure Level at 1m (dB)	Distance to NSR	Shielding (dB)	Specific Noise Level at NSR* ¹	Acoustic Feature Correction * ²
Daikin REYQ10U	60.0 * ³	4 m	-10.0 * ⁴	38.0 dB	Tonality +2
Daikin REYQ12U	61.0 * ³	4 m	-10.0 * ⁴	39.0 dB	Intermittency +3
Cumulative Rating Noise Level L_{AR,TR} @ NSR				47.0 dB	

Table 2.0 – Plant Noise Emissions

* The noise level at the NSR has been calculated using the following equation $-20\log(r1/r2)$.

*² The new source cannot be measured because it is only proposed, but the characteristics of similar sources can subjectively be assessed. Typically, the unit will switch on and off during the operational period, meaning the noise emissions will be intermittent. A penalty must also be added for perceptible tonality.

*³ The specific noise has been determined considering the cooling cycle, representing the worst case scenario. It is likely that the unit will be quieter than this for most of the time. Datasheet can be found in Appendix E.

*⁴ A shielding correction is applicable as a solid body e.g. flat roof, building blocks the line of sight between the noise of source and the NSR.

The BS4142 Assessment of the AC units is outlined in the table below.

Results	Sound Level (dB)	Notes
Rating Sound Level	47.0	Acoustic feature corrections as shown in Table 2.0.
Background Sound Level	37.0	As shown in Table 1.0
Excess of Rating over Background Sound Level	+10.0	The assessment indicates; Significant Adverse Impact, Dependant on Context

Table 3.0 – BS4142:2014 Noise Assessment

Discussion

The assessment above indicates that the rating level is above the background sound level at the noise sensitive receptor by 10 dB. This indicates the potential for Significant Adverse Impact Dependant on Context impact on the surrounding residential Noise Sensitive Receptors.

The Local Council's noise criteria requires that noise associated with the proposed unit should 10 dB below the minimum background sound levels. Due to the low existing background sound level, it is anticipated that should the emissions from the proposed development be 10 dB below the existing L_{A90}, tonal or intermittent characteristics will not be readily audible at the NSR.

Therefore, it is recommended that an enclosure would need to provide 15 dB of attenuation to ensure this criterion can be achieved.

It should also be noted that there are already existing AC units installed at the site that is to be replaced and as such the impact rating stated above may be lower due to the fact a wholly new noise type is not being introduced into the area and the NSRs may have some level of tolerance to AC unit Noise.

3.1 Recommendations & Mitigation

The following section outlines the mitigation measures that are necessary to reduce the impact of the proposed Air Conditioning System.

- The make, model, and location of the proposed units should not be altered should these be changed further assessment may be required.
- All the proposed plant units should be installed within an acoustic enclosure capable of providing a minimum of 15 dB insertion loss to ensure all noise emissions fall 10 dB below the background sound level.
- Where appropriate all plant units should be installed on appropriate anti-vibrational mounts

Appendix A – Acoustic Terminology

Sound Pressure	Sound, or sound pressure, is a fluctuation in air pressure over the static ambient pressure.
Sound Pressure Level (Sound Level)	The sound level is the sound pressure relative to a standard reference pressure of 20µPa (20x10 ⁻⁶ Pascals) on a decibel scale.
Decibel (dB)	A scale for comparing the ratios of two quantities, including sound pressure and sound power. The difference in level between two sounds s ₁ and s ₂ is given by 20 log ₁₀ (s ₁ / s ₂). The decibel can also be used to measure absolute quantities by specifying a reference value that fixes one point on the scale. For sound pressure, the reference value is 20µPa.
A-weighting, dB(A)	The unit of sound level, weighted according to the A-scale, which takes into account the increased sensitivity of the human ear at some frequencies.
Noise Level Indices	Noise levels usually fluctuate over time, so it is often necessary to consider an average or statistical noise level. This can be done in several ways, so a number of different noise indices have been defined, according to how the averaging or statistics are carried out.
L _{eq,T}	A noise level index called the equivalent continuous noise level over the time period T. This is the level of a notional steady sound that would contain the same amount of sound energy as the actual, possibly fluctuating, sound that was recorded.
L _{max,T}	A noise level index defined as the maximum noise level during the period T. L _{max} is sometimes used for the assessment of occasional loud noises, which may have little effect on the overall L _{eq} noise level but will still affect the noise environment. Unless described otherwise, it is measured using the 'fast' sound level meter response.
L _{90,T}	A noise level index. The noise level exceeded for 90% of the time over the period T. L ₉₀ can be considered to be the "average minimum" noise level and is often used to describe the background noise.
L _{10,T}	A noise level index. The noise level exceeded for 10% of the time over the period T. L ₁₀ can be considered to be the "average maximum" noise level. Generally used to describe road traffic noise.
Free-Field	Far from the presence of sound reflecting objects (except the ground), usually taken to mean at least 3.5m
Facade	At a distance of 1m in front of a large sound reflecting object such as a building façade.
Fast Time Weighting	An averaging time used in sound level meters. Defined in BS 5969.

In order to assist the understanding of acoustic terminology and the relative change in noise, the following background information is provided. The human ear can detect a very wide range of pressure fluctuations, which are perceived as sound. In order to express these fluctuations in a manageable way, a logarithmic scale called the decibel, or dB scale is used. The decibel scale typically ranges from 0 dB (the threshold of hearing) to over 120 dB. An indication of the range of sound levels commonly found in the environment is given in the following table.

Sound Level	Location
0dB(A)	Threshold of hearing
20 to 30dB(A)	Quiet bedroom at night
30 to 40dB(A)	Living room during the day
40 to 50dB(A)	Typical office
50 to 60dB(A)	Inside a car
60 to 70dB(A)	Typical high street
70 to 90dB(A)	Inside factory
100 to 110dB(A)	Burglar alarm at 1m away
110 to 130dB(A)	Jet aircraft on take off
140dB(A)	Threshold of Pain

The ear is less sensitive to some frequencies than to others. The A-weighting scale is used to approximate the frequency response of the ear. Levels weighted using this scale are commonly identified by the notation dB(A).

In accordance with logarithmic addition, combining two sources with equal noise levels would result in an increase of 3 dB(A) in the noise level from a single source. A change of 3 dB(A) is generally regarded as the smallest change in broadband continuous noise which the human ear can detect (although in certain controlled circumstances a change of 1 dB(A) is just perceptible). Therefore, a 2 dB(A) increase would not normally be perceptible. A 10 dB(A) increase in noise represents a subjective doubling of loudness.

A noise impact on a community is deemed to occur when a new noise is introduced that is out of character with the area, or when a significant increase above the pre-existing ambient noise level occurs.

For levels of noise that vary with time, it is necessary to employ a statistical index that allows for this variation. These statistical indices are expressed as the sound level that is exceeded for a percentage of the time period of interest. In the UK, traffic noise is measured as the L_{A10} , the noise level exceeded for 10% of the measurement period. The L_{A90} is the level exceeded for 90% of the

time and has been adopted to represent the background noise level in the absence of discrete events. An alternative way of assessing the time varying noise levels is to use the equivalent continuous sound level, L_{Aeq} .

This is a notional steady level that would, over a given period of time, deliver the same sound energy as the actual fluctuating sound. To put these quantities into context, where a receiver is predominantly affected by continuous flows of road traffic, a doubling or halving of the flows would result in a just perceptible change of 3 dB, while an increase of more than 25%, or a decrease of more than 20%, in traffic flows represent changes of 1 dB in traffic noise levels (assuming no alteration in the mix of traffic or flow speeds).

Note that the time constant and the period of the noise measurement should be specified. For example, BS4142:2014 specifies background noise measurement periods of 1 hour during the day and 15 minutes during the night. The noise levels are commonly symbolised as $L_{A90,1hour}$ dB and $L_{A90,15mins}$ dB. The noise measurement should be recorded using a 'FAST' time response equivalent to 0.125ms

Appendix B – Legislation, Policy and Guidance

This report is to be primarily based on the following legislation, policy and guidance.

B.1 - National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Government policy on noise is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in 2013. This replaced all earlier guidance on noise and places an emphasis on sustainability. In section 15, Conserving and enhancing the natural and local environment, paragraph 174e, it states:

Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans;

Paragraph 185 states:

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 impact resulting 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; and*
- c) Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*

B.2 - Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)

Paragraph 185 of the NPPF also refers to advice on adverse effects of noise given in the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE). This document sets out a policy vision to:

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

To achieve this vision the Statement identifies the following three aims:

Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development:

- Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life;*
- Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life;*
- Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.*

In achieving these aims the document introduces significance criteria as follows:

SOAEL – Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level

This is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur. It is stated that “significant adverse effects on health and quality of life should be avoided while also considering the guiding principles of sustainable development”.

LOAEL – Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level

This is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected. It is stated that the second aim above lies somewhere between LOAEL and SOAEL and requires that: “all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life while also considering the guiding principles of sustainable development. This does not mean that such adverse effects cannot occur.”

NOEL – No Observed Effect Level

This is the level below which no effect can be detected. In simple terms, below this level, there is no detectable effect on health and quality of life due to the noise. This can be related to the third aim above, which seeks: “where possible, positively to improve health and quality of life through the pro-active management of noise while also considering the guiding principles of sustainable development, recognising that there will be opportunities for such measures to be taken and that they will deliver potential benefits to society. The protection of quiet places and quiet times as well as the enhancement of the acoustic environment will assist with delivering this aim.”

The NPSE recognises that it is not possible to have a single objective noise-based measure that is mandatory and applicable to all sources of noise in all situations and provides no guidance as to how these criteria should be interpreted. It is clear, however, that there is no requirement to achieve noise levels where there are no observable adverse impacts but that reasonable and practicable steps to reduce adverse noise impacts should be taken in the context of sustainable development and ensure a balance between noise sensitive and the need for noise generating developments.

Any scheme of noise mitigation outlined in this report will, therefore, aim to abide by the above principles of the NPPF and NPSE whilst recognizing the constraints of the site.

B.3 - British Standard BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 - Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound

Overview

BS4142:2014 sets out a method to assess the likely effect of sound from factories, industrial premises or fixed installations and sources of an industrial nature in commercial premises, on people who might be inside or outside a dwelling or premises used for residential purposes in the vicinity.

The procedure contained in BS4142:2014 for assessing the effect of sound on residential receptors is to compare the measured or predicted sound level from the source in question, the $L_{Aeq,T}$ ‘specific sound level’, immediately outside the dwelling with the $L_{A90,T}$ background sound level.

Where the sound contains a tonality, impulsivity, intermittency and other sound characteristics, then a correction depending on the grade of the aforementioned characteristics of the sound is added to the specific sound level to obtain the $L_{Ar,Tr}$ 'rating sound level'. A correction to include the consideration of a level of uncertainty in sound measurements, data and calculations can also be applied when necessary.

Rating Penalty

Section 9 of BS4142:2014 describes how the rating sound level should be derived from the specific sound level, by deriving a rating penalty.

BS4142:2014 states:

"Certain acoustic features can increase the significance of impact over that expected from a basic comparison between the specific sound level and the background sound level. Where such features are present at the assessment location, add a character correction to the specific sound level to obtain the rating level. This can be approached in three ways:

- a) subjective method;*
- b) objective method for tonality;*
- c) reference method."*

Due to the nature of the development the subjective method has been adopted to derive the rating sound level from the specific sound level. This is discussed in Section 9.2 of BS4142:2014, which states:

"Where appropriate, establish a rating penalty for sound based on a subjective assessment of its characteristics. This would also be appropriate where a new source cannot be measured because it is only proposed at that time, but the characteristics of similar sources can subjectively be assessed. Correct the specific sound level if a tone, impulse or other characteristics occurs, or is expected to be present, for new or modified sound sources."

BS4142:2014 defines four characteristics that should be considered when deriving a rating penalty, namely; tonality; impulsivity; intermittency; and other sound characteristics, which are defined as:

a) Tonality

A rating penalty of +2 dB is applicable for a tone which is "just perceptible", +4 dB where a tone is "clearly perceptible", and +6 dB where a tone is "highly perceptible".

b) Impulsivity

A rating penalty of +3 dB is applicable for impulsivity which is "just perceptible", +6 dB where it is "clearly perceptible", and +9 dB where it is "highly perceptible".

c) Other Sound Characteristics

BS4142:2014 states that where "the specific sound features characteristics that are neither tonal nor impulsive, though otherwise are readily distance against the residual acoustic environment, a penalty of +3 dB can be applied."

d) Intermittency

BS4142:2014 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 ... if the intermittency is readily distinctive against the residual acoustic environment, a penalty of +3 dB can be applied.”

Background Sound Level

The background sound level is the underlying level of sound over a period, T, and is indicative of the relative quietness at a given location. It does not reflect the occurrence of transient and/or higher sound level events and is generally governed by continuous or semi-continuous sounds.

To ensure the background sound level values used within the assessment are reliable and suitably represent both the particular circumstance and periods of interest, efforts have been made to quantify a ‘typical’ background sound level for a given period. The purpose has not been to simply select the lowest measured value. Diurnal patterns have also been considered as they can have a major influence on background sound levels, for example, 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.

Since the intention is to determine a background sound level in the absence of the specific sound that is under consideration, it is necessary to understand that the background sound level can in some circumstances legitimately include industrial and/or commercial sounds that are present as separate to the specific sound.

Assessment of Impact

BS4142:2014 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 estimation of the impact of the specific sound can be obtained by the difference of the rating sound level and the background sound level and considering the following:

- “Typically, the greater this difference, the greater the magnitude of the impact.”
- “A difference of around +10dB or more is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the context.”
- “A difference of around +5dB is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context.”
- “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 negligible impact, depending on the context.”

Interpreting the guidance given in BS4142:2014, with consideration of the guidance given in the NPSE and NPPG Noise, an estimation of the impact of the rating sound is summarised in the following text:

- A rating sound level that is +10 dB above the background sound level is likely to be an indication of a Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level;

- A rating sound level that is +5 dB above the background sound level is likely to be an indication of a Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level;
- The lower the rating sound 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 sound level does not exceed the background sound level, this is an indication of the specific sound source having a negligible impact and would therefore be classified as a No Observed Adverse Effect Level.

During the daytime, the assessment is carried out over a reference time period of 1-hour. The periods associated with day or night, for the purposes of the Standard, are 07.00 to 23.00 and 23.00 to 07.00, respectively.

Appendix D – Environmental Survey

D.1 Tabulated Summary Noise Data

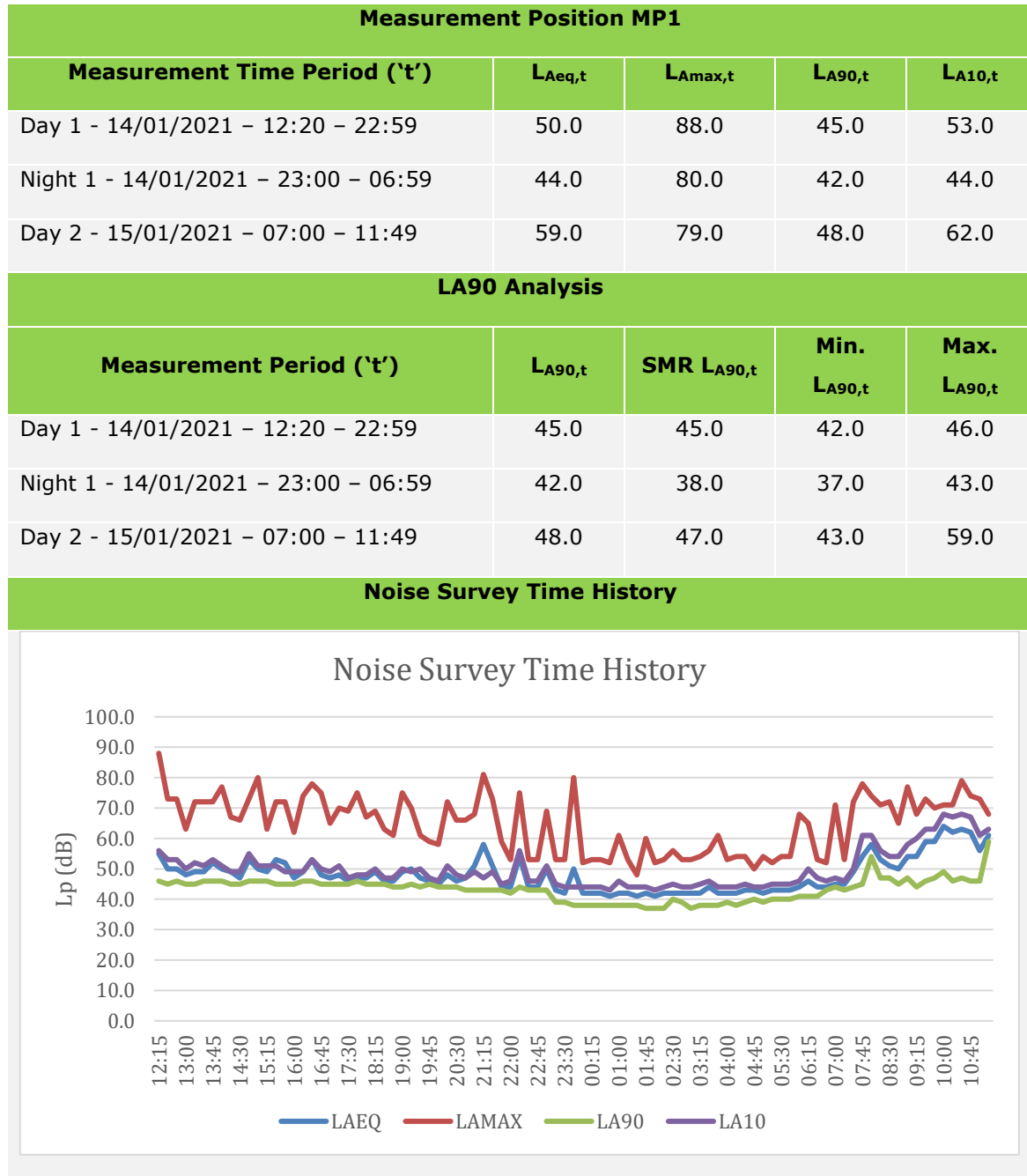


Table 4.0 – Sound Survey Summary Results

D.2 Surveying Equipment

Piece of Equipment	Serial No.	Calibration Deviation
CESVA SC420 Class 1 Sound level meter	T250680	≤0.5
CESVA CB006 Class 1 Calibrator	902441	

Table 5.0 – Measurement Equipment

All equipment used during the survey was field calibrated at the start and end of the measurement period with a negligible deviation of ≤ 0.5 dB. All sound level meters are calibrated every 24 months and all calibrators are calibrated every 12 months, by a third-party calibration laboratory. All microphones were fitted with a protective windshield for the entire measurements period. Calibration certificates can be provided upon request.

D.3 Meteorological Conditions

As the environmental noise survey was carried out over a long un-manned period no localized records of weather conditions were taken. However, during the set up and collection of the monitoring equipment the weather conditions have been documented in the following table. All measurements have been compared with met office weather data of the area, specifically the closest weather station, the data from the weather station is outlined in the table below. When reviewing the time history of the noise measurements, any scenarios that were considered potentially to be affected by the local weather conditions have been omitted. The analysis of the noise data includes statistical and percentile analysis and review of minimum and maximum values, which aids in the preclusion of any periods of undesirable weather conditions. The weather conditions were deemed suitable for the measurement of environmental noise in accordance with BS7445 Description and Measurement of Environmental Noise. The table below presents the average temperature, wind speed and rainfall range for each 24-hour period during the entire measurement.

Weather conditions – Pages Hill Allotment Weather Station				
Time period	Air temp (°C)	Rainfall mm/h	Prevailing Wind Direction	Wind Speed (m/s)
14/01/2021 – 00:00 – 23:59	1.2 – 9.2	0.0 – 3.6	W	0.0 – 2.6
15/01/2021 – 00:00 – 23:59	-0.1 – 3.4	0.0	WNW	0.0 – 0.85

Table 6.0 – Weather Summary

Appendix E – Manufactures Data sheets

Name	Model	Sound Power		Sound Pressure	
		Cooling	Heating	Cooling	Heating
		dB(A)	dB(A)	dB(A)	dB(A)
CU 1	REYQ10U	81	66	60	-
CU 2	REYQ12U	83	65	61	-