

**Report VA5454.240804.NIA**

**Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square,  
London**

Noise Impact Assessment

05 August 2024

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## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Design Criterion and Assessment Methodology .....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1	Camden Council Requirements .....	1
2.2	BS8233:2014 .....	2
<b>3.</b>	<b>Site Description .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Environmental Noise Survey .....</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1	Survey Procedure & Equipment .....	3
4.2	Results .....	3
4.3	Plant Noise Emission Limits .....	4
<b>5.</b>	<b>Predicted Noise Impact .....</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1	Proposed plant .....	4
5.2	Recommended Mitigation Measures .....	5
5.3	Predicted noise levels .....	5
5.4	Comparison to NR35 Curve .....	5
5.5	Comparison to BS8233:2014 Criteria .....	5
<b>6.</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>5</b>

## Attachments

VA5454/SP1	Indicative Site Plan
VA5454/TH1-TH4	Environmental Noise Time Histories
Appendix A	Acoustic Terminology
Appendix B	Acoustic Calculations

Report Version	Author	Approved	Changes	Date
NIA	Steven Liddell	Ben Alexander	-	05/08/2024

The interpretations and conclusions summarised in this report represent Venta Acoustics’ best technical interpretation of the data available to us at the time of assessment. Any information provided by third parties and referred to in this report has not been checked or verified by Venta Acoustics, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. Venta Acoustics cannot accept any liability for the correctness or validity of the information provided. Due to a degree of uncertainty inherent in the prediction of all parameters, we cannot, and do not guarantee the accuracy or correctness of any interpretation and we shall not, except in the case of gross or wilful negligence on our part, be liable for any loss, cost, damages or expenses incurred or sustained by anyone resulting from any interpretations, predictions of conclusions made by the company or employees. The findings and conclusions are relevant to the period of the site survey works, and should not be relied upon to represent site conditions at later dates. Where additional information becomes available which may affect the findings of our assessment, the author reserves the right to review the information, reassess the findings and modify the conclusions accordingly.

# 1. Introduction

It is proposed to replace existing condenser units with new units at basement level of Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square, London.

Venta Acoustics has been commissioned by T & B (Contractors) Ltd to undertake an assessment of the potential noise impact of these proposals in support of an application for planning permission.

An environmental noise survey has been undertaken to determine the background noise levels at the most affected noise sensitive receptors. These levels are used to undertake an assessment of the likely impact with reference to the planning requirements of Camden Council.

## 2. Design Criterion and Assessment Methodology

### 2.1 Camden Council Requirements

Camden Council’s Local Plan (adopted June 2017), Appendix 3, provides the following guidance regarding noise from Industrial and Commercial Noise Sources

*A relevant standard or guidance document should be referenced when determining values for LOAEL and SOAEL for non-anonymous noise. Where appropriate and within the scope of the document it is expected that British Standard 4142:2014 ‘Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound’ (BS 4142) will be used. For such cases a ‘Rating Level’ of 10 dB below background (15dB if tonal components are present) should be considered as the design criterion).*

Existing Noise sensitive receiver	Assessment Location	Design Period	LOAEL (Green)	LOAEL to SOAEL (Amber)	SOAL (Red)
Dwellings**	Garden used for main amenity (free field) and Outside living or dining or bedroom window (façade)	Day	‘Rating level’ 10dB* below background	‘Rating level’ between 9dB below and 5dB above background	‘Rating level’ greater than 5dB above background
Dwellings**	Outside bedroom window (façade)	Night	‘Rating level’ 10dB* below background and no events exceeding 57dB <sub>L<sub>max</sub></sub>	‘Rating level’ between 9dB below and 5dB above background or noise events between 57dB and 88dB L <sub>max</sub>	‘Rating level’ greater than 5dB above background and/or events exceeding 88dB <sub>L<sub>max</sub></sub>

*\*10dB should be increased to 15dB if the noise contains audible tonal elements. (day and night). However, if it can be demonstrated that there is no significant difference in the character of the residual background noise and the specific noise from the proposed development then this reduction may not be required.*

*In addition, a frequency analysis (to include, the use of Noise Rating (NR) curves or other criteria curves) for the assessment of tonal or low frequency noise may be required.*

*\*\*levels given are for dwellings, however, levels are use specific and different levels will apply dependent on the use of the premises.*

*The periods in Table C correspond to 0700 hours to 2300 hours for the day and 2300 hours to 0700 hours for the night. The Council will take into account the likely times of occupation for types of development and will be amended according to the times of operation of the establishment under consideration.*

*There are certain smaller pieces of equipment on commercial premises, such as extract ventilation, air conditioning units and condensers, where achievement of the rating levels (ordinarily determined by a BS:4142 assessment) may not afford the necessary protection. In these cases, the Council will generally also require a NR curve specification of NR35 or below, dependant on the room (based upon measured or predicted  $L_{eq,5mins}$  noise levels in octave bands) 1 metre from the façade of affected premises, where the noise sensitive premise is located in a quiet background area.*

## 2.2 BS8233:2014

BS8233 *Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings* provides guidance as to suitable internal noise levels for different areas within residential buildings.

The relevant section of the standard is shown below in Table 2.1.

Activity	Location	07:00 to 23:00	23:00 to 07:00
Resting	Living Room	35 dB $L_{Aeq, 16\text{ hour}}$	-
Dining	Dining Room	40 dB $L_{Aeq, 16\text{ hour}}$	-
Sleeping (daytime resting)	Bedroom	35 dB $L_{Aeq, 16\text{ hour}}$	30 dB $L_{Aeq, 8\text{ hour}}$

Table 2.1 - Excerpt from BS8233: 2014

[dB ref. 20µPa]

## 3. Site Description

As illustrated on the attached site plan VA5454/SP1, the site building is located to the east of Gordon Street within the UCL campus, surrounded by UCL buildings. On the opposite side of Gordon Street are the Bloomsbury Theatre and UCL Student Centre.

Two external condenser units are being replaced on a like-for-like basis, with the new models within the same range replacing the end-of-life units. These units are to be located under the fire escape

stairs at basement level on the northern side of the building. This area contains plant servicing other areas of the campus and is screened from the surrounding buildings.

The most affected noise-sensitive receivers are expected to be residential dwellings on Traviton Street to the northeast. The noise impact at Bloomsbury Theatre is also assessed for completeness.

Existing building services plant was noted on several of the neighbouring rooftops.

## 4. Environmental Noise Survey

### 4.1 Survey Procedure & Equipment

In order to establish the existing background noise levels at the site, a noise survey was carried out between Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at roof level at the location shown in site plan VA5454/SP1.

Continuous 5-minute samples of the  $L_{Aeq}$ ,  $L_{Amax}$ ,  $L_{A10}$  and  $L_{A90}$  sound pressure levels were undertaken at the measurement location.

The weather during the survey period was generally dry with light winds. The background noise data is not considered to have been compromised by these conditions.

Measurements were made generally in accordance with ISO 1996 2:2017 *Acoustics - Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise – Part 2: Determination of sound pressure levels*.

The following equipment was used in the course of the survey:

Manufacturer	Model Type	Serial No	Calibration	
			Certificate No.	Date
NTi Class 1 Integrating SLM	XL2	A2A-11586-E0	1509201-2	19/7/24
Larson Davis calibrator	CAL200	19816	1509201-5	19/7/24

**Table 4.1 – Equipment used for the tests**

The calibration of the sound level meter was verified before and after use with no significant calibration drift observed.

### 4.2 Results

The measured sound levels are shown as time-history plots on the attached charts VA5454/TH1-4.

The background noise level is determined by plant servicing the surrounding buildings.

The minimum background noise levels measured were:

Monitoring Period	Minimum LA90,5min
07:00 – 23:00 hours	53 dB
23:00 – 07:00 hours	53 dB

Table 4.2 – Minimum background noise levels

[dB ref. 20 µPa]

### 4.3 Plant Noise Emission Limits

On the basis of the measured noise levels and the planning requirements of the Local Authority, and considering that it is not expected that tonal noise will be generated by the proposed plant units, the following plant specific sound levels should not be exceeded at the most affected noise sensitive receivers:

Monitoring Period	Design Criterion (LAeq)
07:00 – 23:00 hours	43 dB
23:00 – 07:00 hours	43 dB

Table 4.3 – Specific sound pressure levels not to be exceeded at most affected noise sensitive receivers

## 5. Predicted Noise Impact

### 5.1 Proposed plant

The following plant is proposed for installation at basement level at the location indicated on site plan VA5454/SP1.

This location benefits from line of sight screening, provided by the built form of the site and surroundings, from all noise sensitive receptors.

Plant Item	Quantity	Proposed Model	Notes
Condensers	1	Daikin RZAG125NV1	Sound Power of Lw 69dB
Condensers	1	Daikin RZAG60A	Sound Power of Lw 65dB

Table 5.1 – Indicative plant selections assumed for this assessment.

Consulting the manufacturer’s datasheets, the following noise emissions levels are attributed to the proposed plant items:

Plant Item	Octave Band Centre Frequency (Hz)								dB(A)
	Power Level, Lw (dB)								
	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k	8k	
Daikin RZAG125NV1	73	71	69	70	62	56	50	48	69
Daikin RZAG60A	-	68	64	64	59	53	47	41	65

Table 5.2 – Advised plant noise data used for the assessment.

## 5.2 Recommended Mitigation Measures

It is not anticipated that any additional mitigation measures, beyond the site’s inherent built form, will be required for the control of external plant noise emissions.

## 5.3 Predicted noise levels

The cumulative noise levels at the most affected noise sensitive receivers have been calculated on the basis of the above information, with reference to the guidelines set out in ISO 9613-2:2024 *Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors - Part 2: Engineering method for the prediction of sound pressure levels outdoors*.

A summary of the calculations is shown in Appendix B.

Description	dB(A)
Plant noise criterion	43
L <sub>p</sub> 1m from receiver (Bloomsbury Theatre)	30
L <sub>p</sub> 1m from receiver (Traviton Street)	16

**Table 5.3 – Predicted noise levels and design criteria at noise sensitive location**

## 5.4 Comparison to NR35 Curve

As can be seen from the following comparison in Table 5.4, the predicted noise levels at 1m from the most affected receivers are comfortably below the NR35 curve.

Frequency (Hz)	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k	8k
NR35	63	52	45	39	35	35	30	28
L <sub>p</sub> 1m from Bloomsbury Theatre	32	32	29	30	23	17	11	8
L <sub>p</sub> 1m from Traviton Street	18	18	15	16	9	3	-3	-6

**Table 5.4 – Comparison of predicted noise levels against the NR35 criterion**

## 5.5 Comparison to BS8233:2014 Criteria

BS8233 assumes a loss of approximately 15dB for a partially open window. The predicted external plant noise levels shown in Table 5.3 would result in internal noise levels that achieve all guidelines shown in Table 2.1.

## 6. Conclusion

A baseline noise survey has been undertaken by Venta Acoustics to establish the background noise climate in the locality of Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square, London in support of a planning application for the replacement of building services plant.

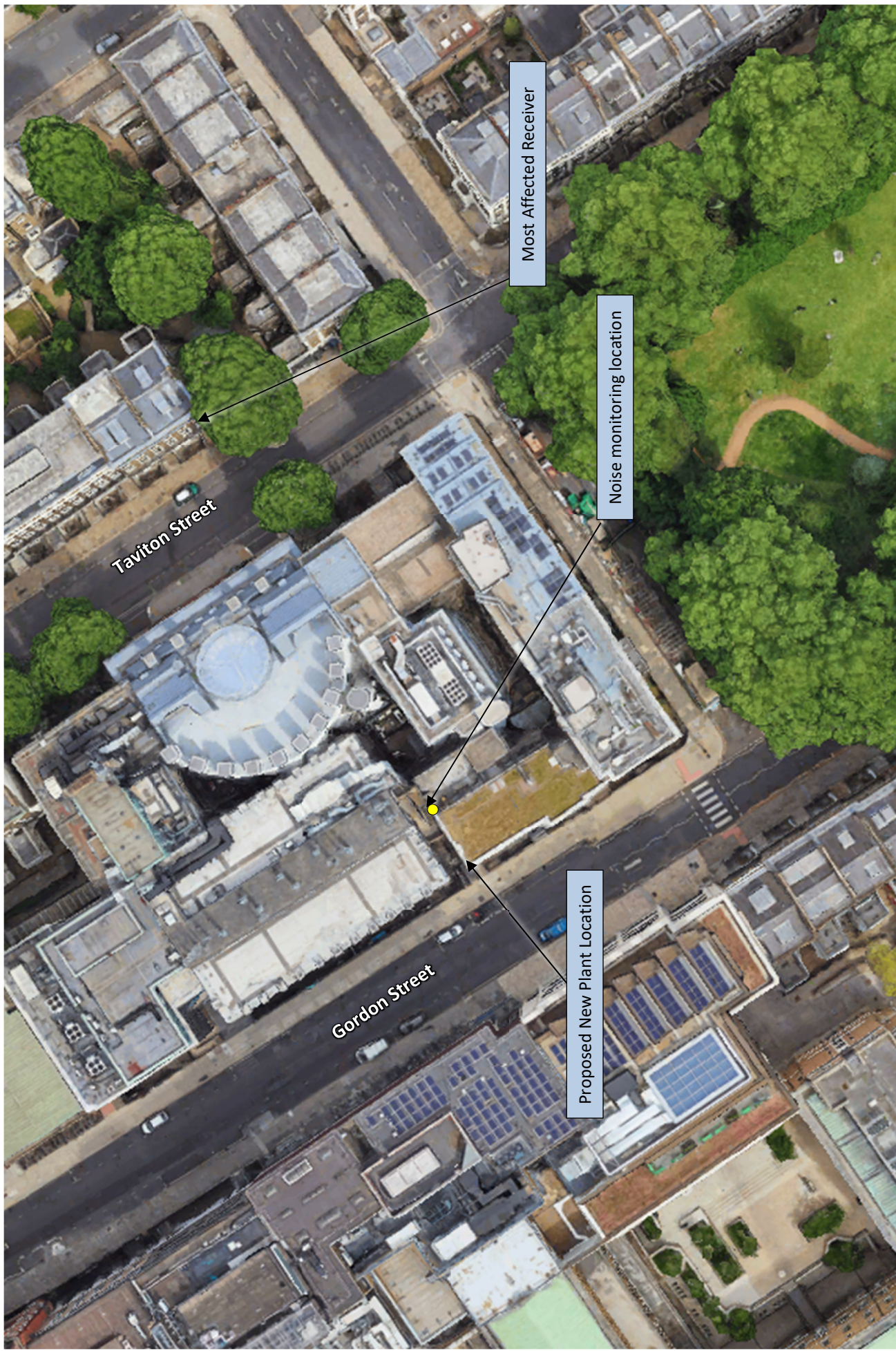
This has enabled noise emission limits to be set at the most affected noise sensitive receivers such that the proposed installation meets the requirements of Camden Council .



The cumulative noise emission levels from the proposed plant have been assessed to be compliant with the plant noise emission limits at both the neighbouring theatre and the nearest residential dwellings. The predicted sound level of 30dB at the nearest receiver is low in absolute terms, well below both the local background sound level and the NR35 curve criteria and likely to be lower than the existing units would have generated.

The proposed scheme is not expected to have a significant adverse noise impact and the relevant planning requirements have been shown to be met.

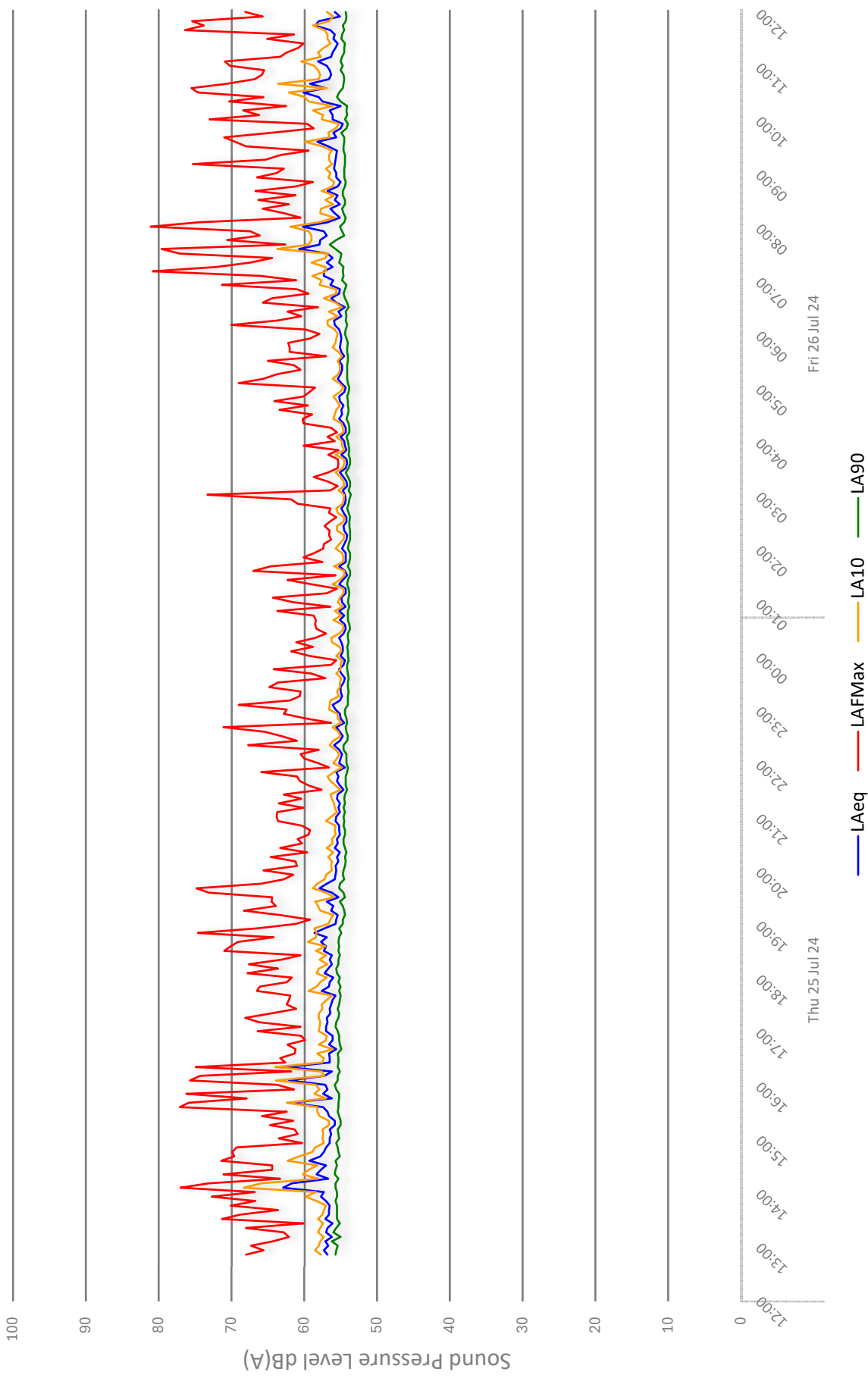
## **Steven Liddell MIOA**



Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square, London  
Environmental Noise Time History: 1



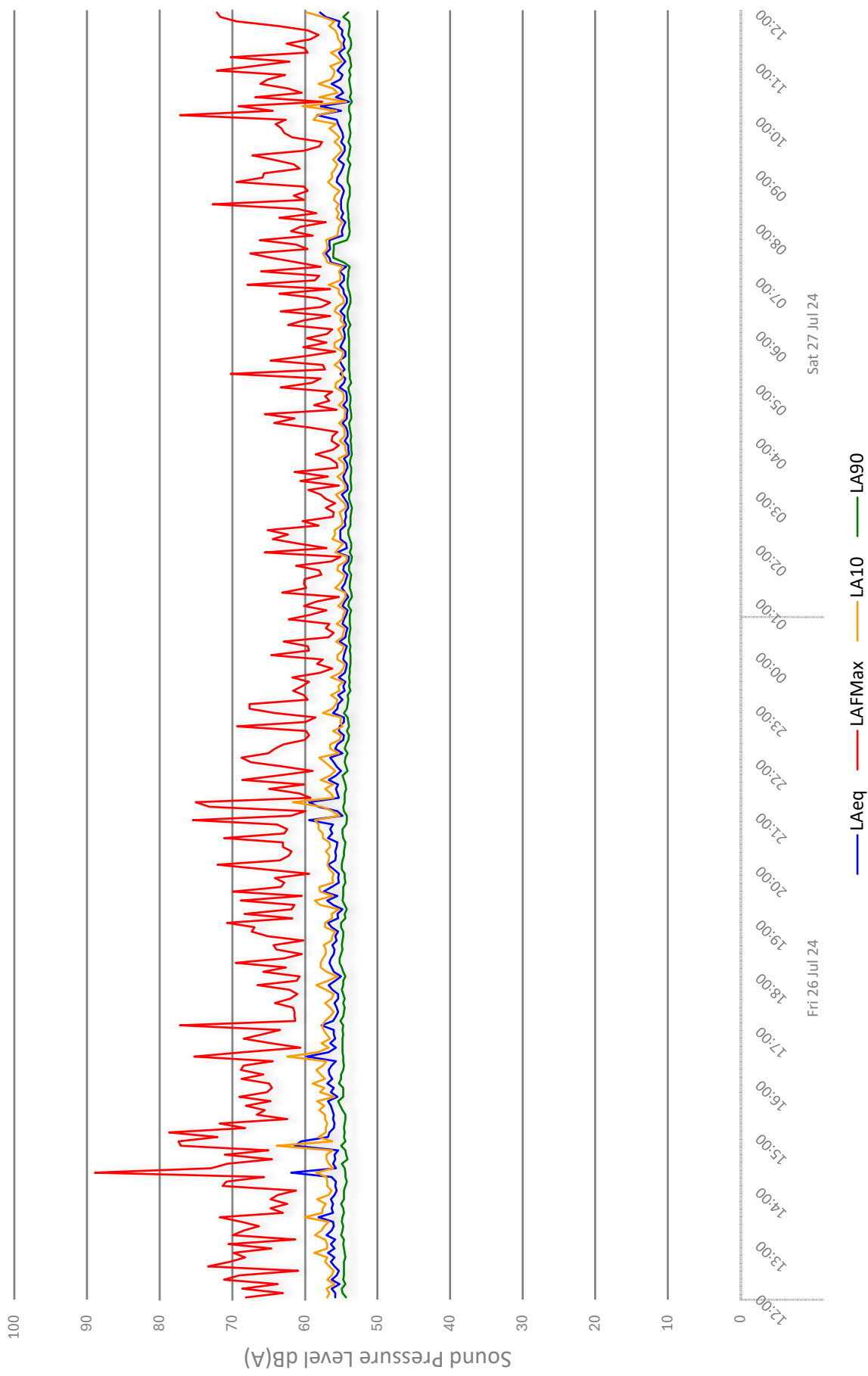
Figure VA5454/TH1



Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square, London  
Environmental Noise Time History: 2



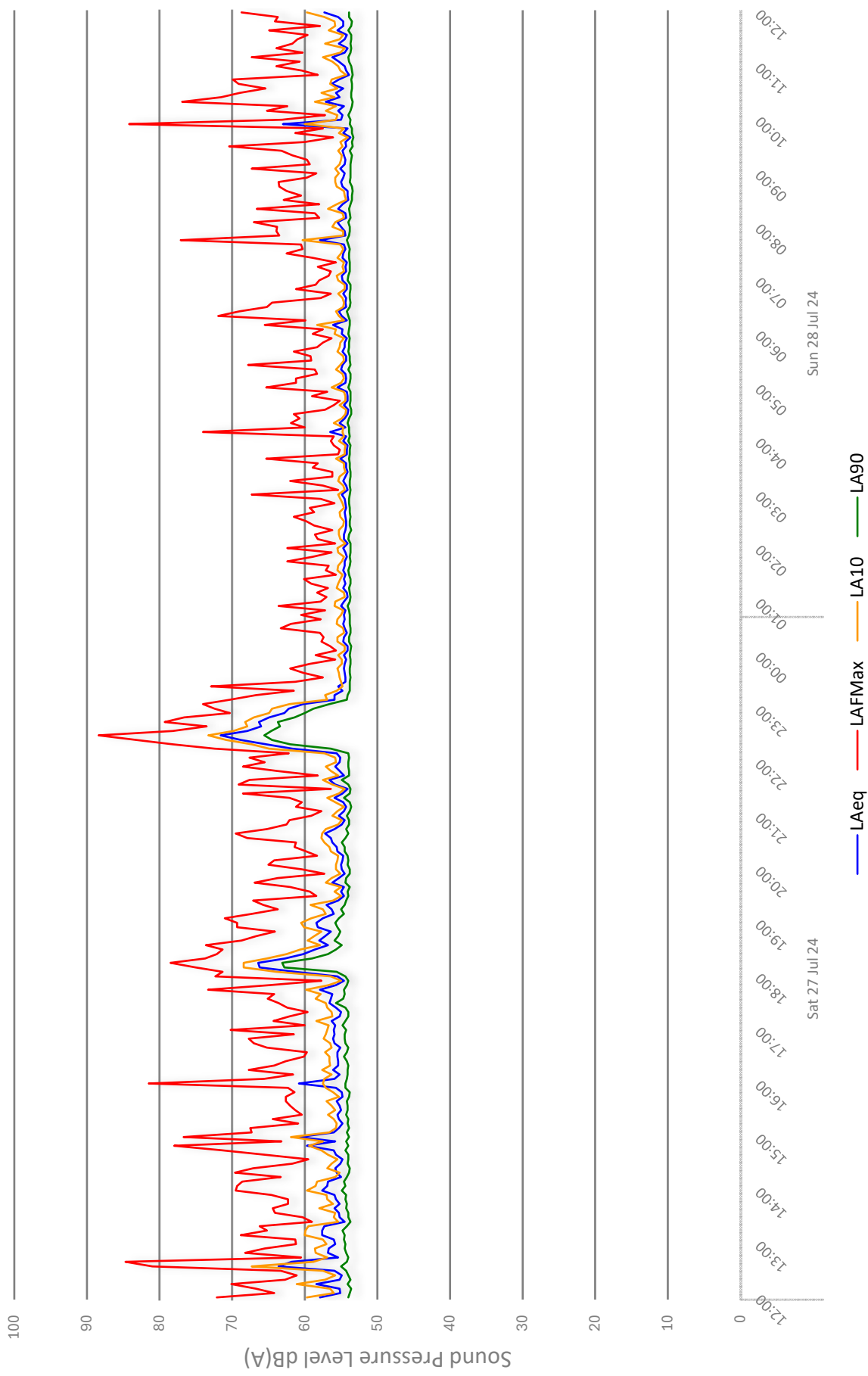
Figure VA5454/TH2



Gordon House. 29 Gordon Square, London  
Environmental Noise Time History: 3



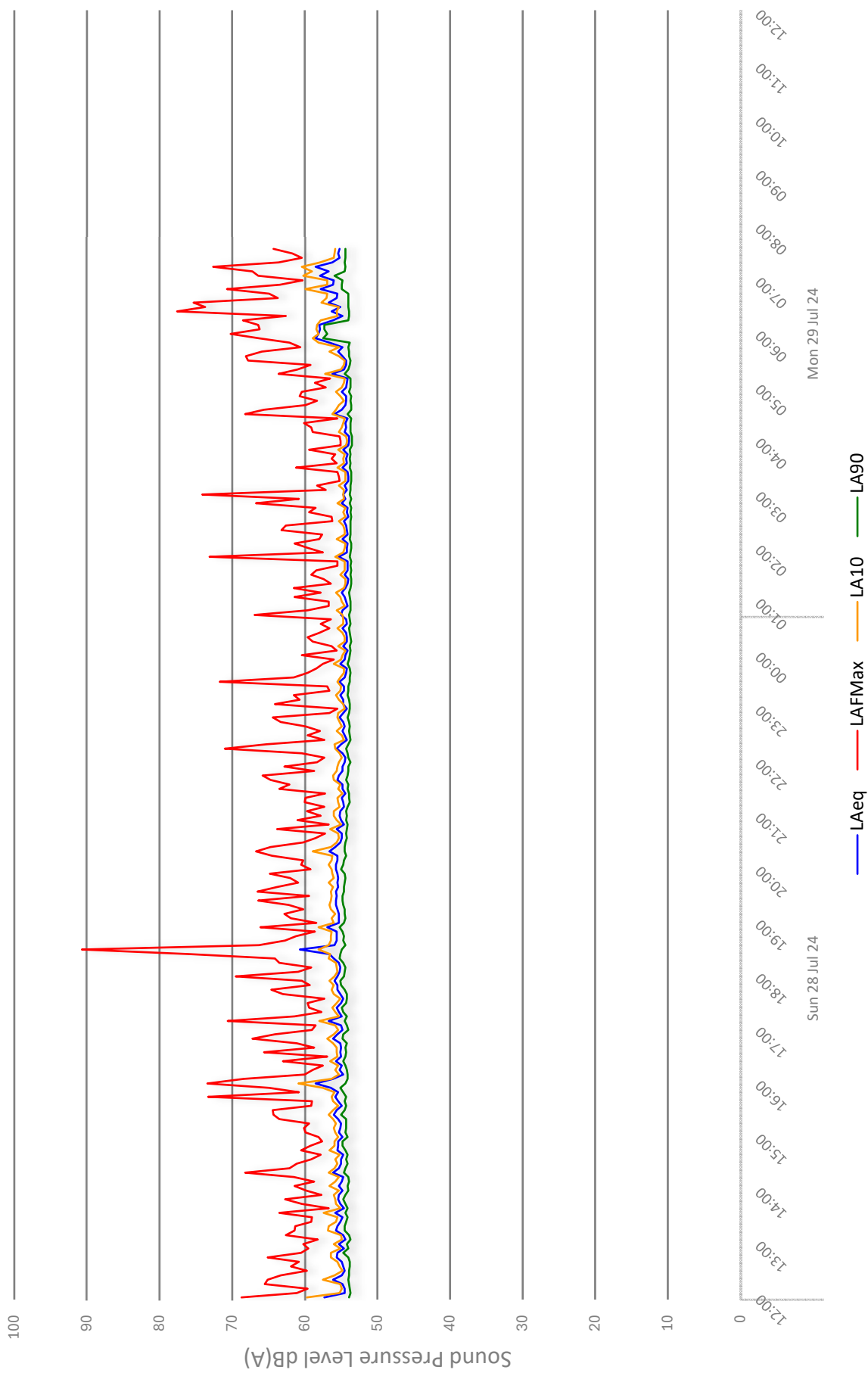
Figure VA5454/TH3



Gordon House, 29 Gordon Square, London  
Environmental Noise Time History: 4



Figure VA5454/TH4



# APPENDIX A

## Acoustic Terminology & Human Response to Broadband Sound

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### 1.1 Acoustic Terminology

The human impact of sounds is dependent upon many complex interrelated factors such as 'loudness', its frequency (or pitch) and variation in level. In order to have some objective measure of the annoyance, scales have been derived to allow for these subjective factors.

<b>Sound</b>	Vibrations propagating through a medium (air, water, etc.) that are detectable by the auditory system.
<b>Noise</b>	Sound that is unwanted by or disturbing to the perceiver.
<b>Frequency</b>	The rate per second of vibration constituting a wave, measured in Hertz (Hz), where 1Hz = 1 vibration cycle per second. The human hearing can generally detect sound having frequencies in the range 20Hz to 20kHz. Frequency corresponds to the perception of 'pitch', with low frequencies producing low 'notes' and higher frequencies producing high 'notes'.
<b>dB(A):</b>	Human hearing is more susceptible to mid-frequency sounds than those at high and low frequencies. To take account of this in measurements and predictions, the 'A' weighting scale is used so that the level of sound corresponds roughly to the level as it is typically discerned by humans. The measured or calculated 'A' weighted sound level is designated as dB(A) or $L_A$ . A notional steady sound level which, over a stated period of time, would contain the same amount of acoustical energy as the actual, fluctuating sound measured over that period (e.g. 8 hour, 1 hour, etc).
<b><math>L_{eq}</math> :</b>	The concept of $L_{eq}$ (equivalent continuous sound level) has primarily been used in assessing noise from industry, although its use is becoming more widespread in defining many other types of sounds, such as from amplified music and environmental sources such as aircraft and construction.  Because $L_{eq}$ is effectively a summation of a number of events, it does not in itself limit the magnitude of any individual event, and this is frequently used in conjunction with an absolute sound limit.
<b><math>L_{10}</math> &amp; <math>L_{90}</math> :</b>	Statistical $L_n$ indices are used to describe the level and the degree of fluctuation of non-steady sound. The term refers to the level exceeded for n% of the time. Hence, $L_{10}$ is the level exceeded for 10% of the time and as such can be regarded as a typical maximum level. Similarly, $L_{90}$ is the typical minimum level and is often used to describe background noise. It is common practice to use the $L_{10}$ index to describe noise from traffic as, being a high average, it takes into account the increased annoyance that results from the non-steady nature of traffic flow.
<b><math>L_{max}</math> :</b>	The maximum sound pressure level recorded over a given period. $L_{max}$ is sometimes used in assessing environmental noise, where occasional loud events occur which might not be adequately represented by a time-averaged $L_{eq}$ value.
<b><math>D_{nT}</math></b>	<i>Weighted Standardised Level Difference</i> . As defined in BS EN ISO 717-1, representing the <i>Weighted Level Difference</i> , when standardised for reference receiving room reverberant characteristics.
<b><math>D_{n,e}</math></b>	Normalised sound insulation of small building elements of fixed dimensions, such as vents, measured in an accredited laboratory test suite in accordance with the procedures laid down in BS EN ISO 10140-2:2010.
<b><math>D_{n,f}</math></b>	Flanking sound insulation of lightweight elements, such as curtain wall mullions, measured in an accredited laboratory test suite in accordance with the procedures laid down in ISO 10848-2:2006

### 1.2 Octave Band Frequencies

In order to determine the way in which the energy of sound is distributed across the frequency range, the International Standards Organisation has agreed on "preferred" bands of frequency for sound measurement and analysis. The widest and most commonly used band for frequency measurement and analysis is the Octave Band. In these bands, the upper frequency limit is twice the lower frequency limit, with the band being described by its "centre frequency" which is the

# APPENDIX A

## Acoustic Terminology & Human Response to Broadband Sound

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average (geometric mean) of the upper and lower limits, e.g. 250 Hz octave band extends from 176 Hz to 353 Hz. The most commonly used octave bands are:

Octave Band Centre Frequency Hz | 63 | 125 | 250 | 500 | 1000 | 2000 | 4000 | 8000

### 1.3 Human Perception of Broadband Noise

Because of the logarithmic nature of the decibel scale, it should be borne in mind that sound levels in dB(A) do not have a simple linear relationship. For example, 100dB(A) sound level is not twice as loud as 50dB(A). It has been found experimentally that changes in the average level of fluctuating sound, such as from traffic, need to be of the order of 3dB before becoming definitely perceptible to the human ear. Data from other experiments have indicated that a change in sound level of 10dB is perceived by the average listener as a doubling or halving of loudness. Using this information, a guide to the subjective interpretation of changes in environmental sound level can be given.

Change in Sound Level dB	Subjective Impression	Human Response
0 to 2	Imperceptible change in loudness	Marginal
3 to 5	Perceptible change in loudness	Noticeable
6 to 10	Up to a doubling or halving of loudness	Significant
11 to 15	More than a doubling or halving of loudness	Substantial
16 to 20	Up to a quadrupling or quartering of loudness	Substantial
21 or more	More than a quadrupling or quartering of loudness	Very Substantial

### 1.4 Earth Bunds and Barriers - Effective Screen Height

When considering the reduction in sound level of a source provided by a barrier, it is necessary to establish the "effective screen height". For example if a tall barrier exists between a sound source and a listener, with the barrier close to the listener, the listener will perceive the sound as being louder if he climbs up a ladder (and is closer to the top of the barrier) than if he were standing at ground level. Equally if he sat on the ground the sound would seem quieter than if he were standing. This is explained by the fact that the "effective screen height" is changing with the three cases above. In general, the greater the effective screen height, the greater the perceived reduction in sound level.

Similarly, the attenuation provided by a barrier will be greater where it is aligned close to either the source or the listener than where the barrier is midway between the two.



## APPENDIX B

### VA5454 - Gordon House. 29 Gordon Square, London Noise Impact Assessment

#### Assessment to Bloomsbury Theatre

		63 Hz	125 Hz	250 Hz	500 Hz	1 kHz	2 kHz	4 kHz	8 kHz	dB(A)
Daikin RZAG125NV1	Lw	73	71	69	70	62	56	50	48	<b>69</b>
Daikin RZAG60A	Lw	0	68	64	64	59	53	47	41	<b>65</b>
Comined Lw		73	73	70	71	64	58	52	49	<b>71</b>
Hemispherical propagation		-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	
Distance Loss	To 25m	-28	-28	-28	-28	-28	-28	-28	-28	
Screening loss*		-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	
<b>Level at receiver</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>

\* Screening loss limited to 18dB

#### Assessment to Taviton Street

		63 Hz	125 Hz	250 Hz	500 Hz	1 kHz	2 kHz	4 kHz	8 kHz	dB(A)
Daikin RZAG125NV1	Lw	73	71	69	70	62	56	50	48	<b>69</b>
Daikin RZAG60A	Lw	0	68	64	64	59	53	47	41	<b>65</b>
Comined Lw		73	73	70	71	64	58	52	49	<b>71</b>
Hemispherical propagation		-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	
Distance Loss	To 70m	-37	-37	-37	-37	-37	-37	-37	-37	
Screening loss*		-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	
<b>Level at receiver</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>16</b>

\* Screening loss limited to 18dB