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David Fowler
Planning and Building Control Customer Service Team
London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square
London
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16 August 2021

By email

Dear David,

**APPLICATION REFERENCE 2021/2813/P: A MINOR MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO VARY
CONDITION 2 OF PERMISSION REFERENCE 2020/2486/P DATED 27 NOVEMBER 2020**

**LAND SURROUNDING SNOWMAN AND CASTERBRIDGE HOUSE, BELSIZE ROAD,
CAMDEN, NW6 4DP**

On behalf of the London Borough of Camden (hereafter 'the applicant'), please find enclosed a response to the comments and objections registered by local residents, in relation to the above Section 73 application.

The application was prepared in consultation with Camden planning officers and in accordance with Camden and Greater London Authority planning policies. The full details of the works proposed, and the planning policy assessments carried out, are contained in the documents submitted as part of the application and are available on the LB Camden website.

This letter will address the specific concerns raised by residents and, where relevant, reference is made to the documents submitted as part of the application or to the supplementary Acoustic Technical Note prepared by RBA Acoustic in response to comments (included at Appendix A).

The applicant and the developer (Wates) are also engaging with local residents on an ongoing basis, primarily through the Construction Working Group, and are working with residents to answer any questions they have.

Application Background

Following the approval of the planning application for the Health and Community Centre the applicant team undertook further detailed design work and technical coordination, which is the standard process for scheme proposals. During this process the roof plant was developed, with further information on the requirements of the end users (the NHS and the Abbey Community Centre) that were established through the developed design and technical design stages of the project. Following the determination of the original planning application (2020/2486/P), the air distribution systems were designed, which enabled static pressures to be calculated. Due to the static pressure requirements larger fans were required, increasing the size of the plant.

As a result of the required changes, the design team undertook a review of the proposed roof level plant to reconfigure and minimise any post-determination changes. The design team have reconfigured the roof plant, grouping heat pumps to reduce the coverage on the roof. In addition, one heat pump has been removed from the roof and positioned at ground level. The ground floor heat pump is not visible from the surrounding properties, as demonstrated by the plans and views in the AHR design document (submitted as part of the application). This document sets out the proposed roof level plant and provides, for reference, a comparison against that which was consented which demonstrates that whilst there is some limited change the overall effect is not materially different.

As demonstrated in the design and technical documents submitted as part of the planning application; the proposed amendments are minor in nature and are required to address detailing and technical coordination matters which arise post-planning and prior to construction. The proposed roof plant has been carefully designed resulting in reduced visual impact from a number of key viewpoints, as demonstrated by the AHR design document submitted as part of the application. The proposed plant has also been assessed by acousticians, RBA Acoustics, who have confirmed the plant is compliant with all relevant criteria.

Noise

The proposed plant has been assessed by RBA Acoustics, as set out in their Acoustic Technical Note which was submitted as part of the Section 73 application. The plant meets the London Borough of Camden target criteria and satisfies the planning noise requirements. In addition, RBA have prepared a supplementary Technical Note to answer the comments and questions raised by residents, which can be found at Appendix A of this letter.

Operation of the Community Centre

The operating hours of the Community Centre are secured by a planning condition attached to the original permission (reference 2020/2486/P):

Condition 7

Hours of use – Community Centre

The Community Centre shall not operate between 09:30-21:00 Monday to Thursday and on Sundays and Bank Holidays, and between 09:30-22:30 on Fridays and Saturdays.

Summary

In conclusion, the proposed amendments are minor, do not undermine the design quality of the scheme and are required to address detailing and coordination matters which arise post-planning and prior to construction of a development. The amendments would not introduce any new uses or raise any new planning policy matters and are considered to be minor in relation to the scheme as a whole. The proposed roof plant has been carefully designed and coordinated, resulting in reduced visual impact of the plant from a number of key viewpoints. The proposed plant has been assessed by the acousticians and is confirmed as compliant with all relevant criteria.

We have conducted a careful review of the objections, comments and questions submitted by residents and have addressed their concerns through the contents of this letter and, where necessary, have referred to technical documents prepared as part of the application and/or the supplementary note found at Appendix A.

We trust this is clear and helpful but will be happy to answer any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sinéad McNestry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'M'.

SINÉAD MCNESTRY
PLANNER

APPENDIX A

ACOUSTIC TECHNICAL NOTE



Reference:	9769.ATN05.PNA.0
Revision:	0
To:	Wates
From:	Toby Walton
Date:	30 July 2021
Project:	Abbey Area Phase 2
Subject:	Response to Residents Objections

1.0 INTRODUCTION

RBA Acoustics have previously undertaken an assessment of plant proposed for the Abbey Area Phase 2 development, detailed within RBA Acoustics' Acoustic Assessment report 9769.RP01.AAR.4 dated 27 May 2020, with a subsequent revision detailed within Acoustic Technical Note 9769.ATN04.PNA.2 dated 1 June 2021.

Some objections have been received as forwarded by CBRE.

This note provides a response to those comments.

2.0 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

2.1 Comments Received from H G Sugiura

Comment 1

1. No BS 4142:2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound assessment has been done.

Response 1

As discussed within the RBA Acoustics Acoustic Assessment Report (reference 9769.RP01.AAR.4) dated 27 May 2020, the project plant noise criteria have been set in accordance with Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, which provides the following information regarding the required noise levels for proposed plant items:

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' (BS4142) will be used. For such cases a 'Rating Level' of 10 dB below background (15 dB if tonal components are present) should be considered as the design criterion.

The environmental noise survey, subsequent setting of noise criteria, and the assessment of the proposed plant noise have therefore been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority and the methodology contained within BS 4142.

Comment 2

2. There is no basis to claim that the emission criteria are compliant with Policy A4 of the 2017 Local Plan.

Response 2

As discussed within the RBA Acoustics Acoustic Assessment Report (reference 9769.RP01.AAR.4) dated 27 May 2020, the project plant noise criteria have been set in accordance with Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, by targeting 10 dBA below the prevailing background noise level as measured during our environmental noise survey also presented within the same report. This is therefore in accordance with the recommendations and requirements of Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

Comment 4

4. Section 3 para 3.3 Tonality of the plant is said to be absent. Using a 1/1 octave analysis is equivalent to not looking for it. Tonality needs a 1/3 octave spectrum. This is not a sustainable argument and this is made more significant when combined with the absence of a BS 4142 assessment.

Response 4

The manufacturers plant noise data is provided as an octave-band spectrum in the case of the air handling units, and as a single figure dBA value in the case of the heat pumps. It is therefore not possible to undertake an assessment of tonality with the data available for the heat pumps, however in our extensive experience, having assessed many hundreds of installations, plant units of this type do not exhibit tonal characteristics. With regards of the air handling units, an assessment of tonality has been made based on the octave-band data.

It is important to note that the assessment of tonality is based on the received levels at the receptor, not at the plant location so, even in the case of plant being 'tonal' at 1m, this does not, in itself, mean it will be tonal at the receptor, as the effects of screening, etc. between plant and receptor, vary with frequency.

Comment 5

5. Section 4 Plant Noise Calculations are too simplistic. The calculation method for predicting noise levels from the proposed plant at the nearest residential windows (-20 log R and DI theta) are free-field corrections. An urban environment was free field 20 years ago. Today, we have a much better understanding from modern design aids to account for the built environment (i.e. not free-field). This again is made more significant in the absence of a BS 4142 assessment.

Response 5

The plant calculations have been made to reflect a worst-case scenario and are therefore made to a degree of simplicity but building in worst-case assumptions. In reality, the received noise levels at the identified receptors are likely to be lower due to attenuating elements that have, quite deliberately, not been included, e.g. roof-edge screening.

It is a standard approach to model a worst-case scenario, to give the best possible outcome to any noise-sensitive receptors.

Comment 8

8. Reselection of the air handling system (pressures calculated, increases the fan size required, bigger ductwork, higher velocity) has resulted in a new fan sound power level spectrum.

Response 8

Plant noise calculations for the air handling units have been based on the most up-to-date noise data for the units, and attenuators selected so as to achieve the plant noise criteria at the identified receptors.

Comment 9

9. The proposed mitigation by fitting attenuators to the atmospheric terminations of both air handling units (AHUs) will result in the total pressure increasing again... increase fan size / operating speed / new fan sound power level. This needs to be reported AFTER the attenuation is selected.

Response 9

Attenuators are specified and selected by the M&E engineer in order to achieve the necessary free area to allow the correct volume of air to move freely, and therefore resulting in no increase in noise levels. The specification for attenuators made by RBA Acoustics related to acoustic recommendations only.

2.2 Comments Received from Anna and Hussein Nasser

Comment 1

1. The movement of the Heat Pump will increase sound levels in our garden which we enjoy on a regular basis. The use of an arbitrary 5m and 10m range to decide that the noise is acceptable is wrong as we use the full length of the garden regularly. If there is noise from a heat pump this will severely impact our ability to enjoy our property.

Response 1

The decision to assess to a range of 5 and 10 metres is based on the premise that the far end of the garden (i.e. 1 m from the boundary wall), would not normally be used for relaxation purposes and is therefore not typically be considered as 'amenity'. Nominal distances of 5 and 10 metres was therefore selected as the most reasonable assumption of areas used for relaxation, and hence the closest point at which disturbance from noise generated by the heat pump in question would be experienced.

Comment 3

3. Furthermore, the calculations with respect to ambient noise have no basis as at no point has anyone from RBA Acoustic entered my property to measure the ambient sound. Therefore, the whole report and its "calculations" cannot be relied upon. Given that this is the basis upon which the whole planning application is based and we have shown that it's completely not based on any real observations I struggle to see how this application can be approved.

Response 3

It is very uncommon for engineers to access private residences (not forming part of the planning application) for the purposes of obtaining environmental noise measurements as part of planning applications, nor is this necessary in all but the most unusual circumstances. We need to assess to representative, rather than specific, in order to draw conclusions regarding the noise impact.

Measurement positions were selected to obtain representative noise levels at the worst-affected receptors, i.e., those situated closest to the proposed development. This is standard practice and a suitable way to assess potential noise impact in the surroundings of a proposed development.

The assessment limits are set at external locations in line with Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. The applicable noise limits at external locations result in internal noise levels within the BS 8233 limits with windows open and are hence considered acceptable.

Comment 5

5. As Mr Sugiura also puts it in his complaint (which we echo) "Noise emission levels from the reselection of the proposed roof level plant particularly low frequency tonal noise is likely to give rise to significant adverse impact on the health and quality of life of residents external and internal amenity". I would also add that people using the Health Centre will also be impacted by this given they are closer. Why anyone would want children in a creche to be subject to this noise is baffling.

Response 5

Mitigation measures have been proposed to comply with the Local Authority limits at the worst affected receptors. The assessment limits are set at external locations in line with Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. The applicable noise limits at external locations result in internal noise levels within the BS 8233 limits with windows open and are hence considered acceptable.

No adverse impact to the identified receptors is foreseen according to the methodology in Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017 and BS 4142.