

31-32 & 33-34 Alfred Place London

Environmental Noise Survey Report

29661/ENS1

1 April 2022

For:
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Document Control

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1.0 Introduction

It is proposed to refurbish the properties on 31-32 & 33-34 Alfred Place. Works related to the refurbishment include renovations of the existing properties and the re-location of the existing plant.

Hann Tucker Associates have therefore been commissioned to undertake a detailed 24-hour daytime and night-time fully automated environmental noise survey of the site to establish the currently prevailing noise climate and propose suitable plant noise emission criteria, based on the results of the survey and the requirements of the Local Authority.

2.0 Objectives

To establish by means of an unmanned environmental noise survey the existing L_{Amax} , L_{Aeq} and L_{A90} environmental noise levels at up to 2No. secure and accessible on-site positions, using fully computerised noise monitoring equipment.

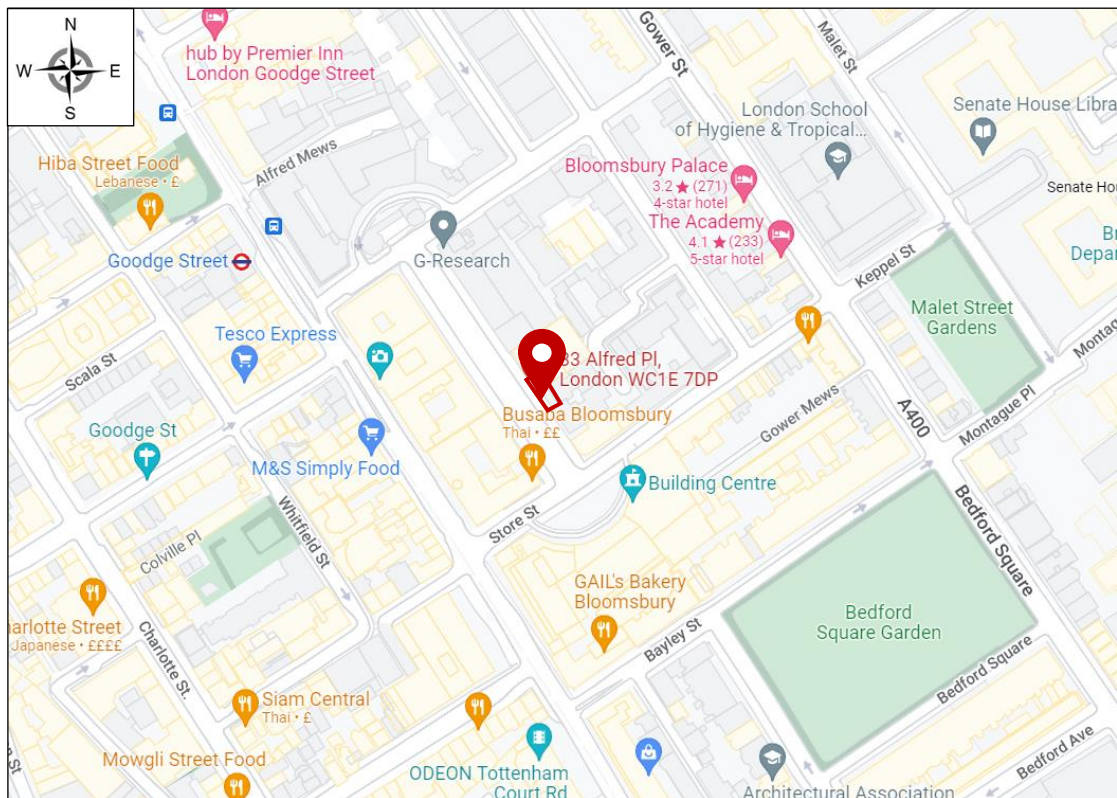
Based on the results of the noise survey, and with reference to the requirements of the Local Authority, to recommend suitable plant noise emission criteria.



3.0 Site Description

3.1 Location

The site is located at 31-32 & 33-34 Alfred Place, London, WC1E 7DP. The location is shown in the Location Map below.



Location Map (Map data © 2022 Google)

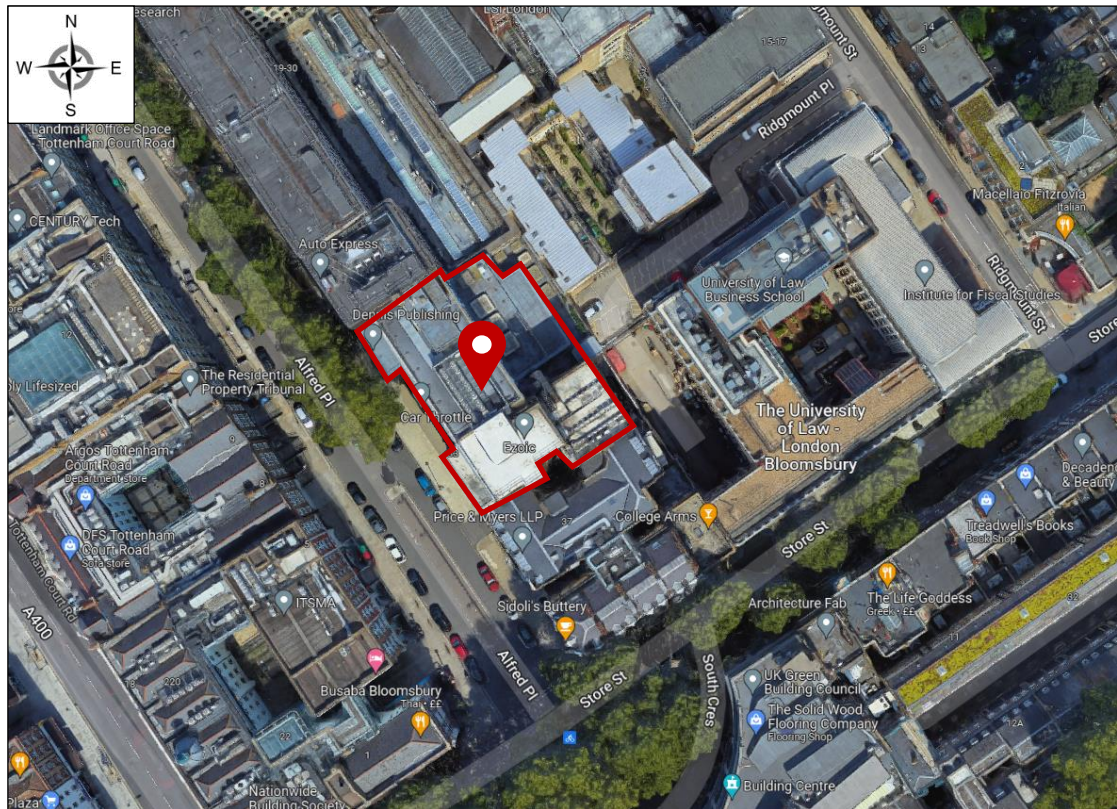
The site falls within the jurisdiction of London Borough of Camden.

3.2 Description

The site is bounded to the north-west with office premises, to the southwest with Alfred Place (currently a plaza) and mixed-use buildings (commercial/office/residential), to the southeast with office premises and the University of Law-London Bloomsbury, and to the north-east with residential premises and Ridgmount Place. The offices at the north-west have a height of ground plus 7 storeys. The mixed-use buildings at the southwest and the offices at the southeast have a height that ranges from ground plus 3 to ground plus 4 storeys. The university has a height of ground plus 5 storeys. The residential dwellings have a height that ranges from ground plus 2 to ground plus 3 storeys.



The site is shown in the Site Plan below.



Site Plan (Imagery © 2022 Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies, The GeoInformation Group, Map Data © 2022 Google)

4.0 Acoustic Terminology

For an explanation of the acoustic terminology used in this report please refer to Appendix A enclosed.

5.0 Acoustic Standards and Guidelines

5.1 Noise Policy Statement for England

The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) was published in March 2010 (i.e. before the NPPF). The NPSE is the overarching statement of noise policy for England and applies to all forms of noise other than occupational noise, setting out the long term vision of Government noise policy which is 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.”



“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; and*
- *where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.”*

The Explanatory Note to the NPSE has three concepts for the assessment of noise in this country:

NOEL – No Observed Effect Level

This is the level below which no effect can be detected and below which there is no detectable effect on health and quality of life due to noise.

LOAEL – Lowest Observable Adverse Effect Level

This is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected.

SOAEL – Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level

This is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur.

None of these three levels are defined numerically and for the SOAEL the NPSE makes it clear that the noise level is likely to vary depending upon the noise source, the receptor and the time of day/day of the week, etc. The need for more research to investigate what may represent an SOAEL for noise is acknowledged in the NPSE and the NPSE asserts that not stating specific SOAEL levels provides policy flexibility in the period until there is further evidence and guidance.

The NPSE concludes by explaining in a little more detail how the LOAEL and SOAEL relate to the three NPSE noise policy aims listed above. It starts with the aim of avoiding significant adverse effects on health and quality of life, then addresses the situation where the noise impact falls between the LOAEL and the SOAEL when *“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.”* The final aim envisages pro-active management of noise to improve health and quality of life, again taking into account the guiding principles of sustainable development which include the need to minimise travel distance between housing and employment uses in an area.



5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012. This document replaced the existing Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 (PPG24) "Planning and Noise". A new edition of NPPF was published in July 2021 and comes into effect immediately.

The following paragraphs are from the NPPF (published July 2021):

185. 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 impacts 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.

187. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed."

Paragraph 185 also references the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE). This document does not refer to specific noise levels but instead sets out three aims:

- "Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.
- Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life from environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.



- Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.”

The NPPF document does not refer to any other documents or British Standards regarding noise other than the NPSE.

Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states that *“planning law required that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that *“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”*

5.3 Planning Practice Guidance on Noise

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) under the NPPF has been published by the Government as a web based resource at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>. This includes specific guidance on Noise although, like the NPPF and NPSE the PPG does not provide any quantitative advice. It seeks to illustrate a range of effect levels in terms of examples of outcomes as set out in the following table:

Perception	Examples of Outcomes	Increasing effect level	Action
Not noticeable	No effect	No Observed Effect	No specific measures required
Noticeable and not intrusive	Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.	No Observed Adverse Effect	No specific measures required
		Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level	
Noticeable and intrusive	Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. turning up volume of television; speaking more loudly; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to close windows for some of the time because of the noise. Potential for some reported sleep disturbance.	Observed Adverse Effect	Mitigate and reduce to a minimum



Perception	Examples of Outcomes	Increasing effect level	Action
		Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level	
Noticeable and disruptive	The noise causes a material change in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to keep windows closed most of the time because of the noise. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening and difficulty in getting back to sleep. Quality of life diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area.	Significant Observed Adverse Effect	Avoid
Noticeable and very disruptive	Extensive and regular changes in behaviour and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress or physiological effects, e.g. regular sleep deprivation/awakening; loss of appetite, significant, medically definable hard, e.g. auditory and non-auditory.	Unacceptable Adverse Effect	Prevent

5.4 Local Authority Requirements

The site lies within the jurisdiction of London Borough of Camden. Their advice regarding criteria for atmospheric noise emissions from building service plant is as follows:

“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).

Table C: Noise levels applicable to proposed industrial and commercial developments (including plant and machinery)

Existing Noise sensitive receptor	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



Existing Noise sensitive receptor	Assessment Location	Design Period	LOAEL (Green)	LOAEL to SOAEL (Amber)	SOAL (Red)
Dwellings**	Outside bedroom window (façade)	Night	'Rating level' 10dB* below background and no events exceeding 57dB _{L_{Amax}}	'Rating level' between 9dB below and 5dB above background or noise events between 57dB and 88dB _{L_{Amax}}	'Rating level' greater than 5dB above background and/or events exceeding 88dB _{L_{Amax}}

*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 Leq,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."

5.5 BS 4142:2014 + A1:2019

When setting plant noise emission criteria reference is commonly made to BS 4142:2014 "Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound".

The procedure contained in BS 4142:2014 provides an assessment of the likely effects of sound on people when comparing the specific noise levels from the source with representative background noise levels. Where the noise contains "a tone, impulse or other characteristic"



then various corrections can be added to the specific (source) noise level to obtain the “rating level”.

BS 4142 states that: *“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 noise can be obtained by the difference of the rating noise level and the background noise 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 low impact, depending on the context.”*

The determination of the “rating level” and the “background level” are both open to interpretation, depending on the context.

In summary it is not possible to set plant noise emission criteria purely on the basis of BS 4142:2014+A1:2019. It is reasonable to infer from the above, however, that a difference of around -5dB corresponds to “No Observed Effect Level” as defined in the Noise Policy Statement for England. It is also reasonable to infer from the above that if the plant noise rating level does not exceed the existing background noise level outside any noise sensitive residential window then the plant noise is of “low impact”.



5.6 World Health Organisation Guidelines on Community Noise

BS8233:2014 is based upon the current World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance “Guidelines on Community Noise”. A summary of the noise guidelines relevant to the proposed scheme is presented in the table below.

Residential Environment	Critical Health Effect(s)	L _{Aeq}	L _{AFmax}	Time Base
Outdoor living area	Serious annoyance, daytime and evening	55	-	07:00-23:00
	Moderate annoyance, daytime and evening	50	-	07:00-23:00
Dwelling, indoors	Speech intelligibility and moderate annoyance, daytime and evening	35	-	07:00-23:00
Inside bedrooms	Sleep disturbance, night-time	30	45	23:00-07:00
Outside bedrooms	Sleep disturbance, window open (outdoor values)	45	60	23:00-07:00

These WHO guidelines are based, in almost all cases, on the lower threshold below which the occurrence rates of any particular effect can be assumed to be negligible.

5.7 British Standard BS8233: 2014

British Standard 8233: 2014 “Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings” provides guidance for the control of noise in and around buildings.

BS8233:2014 Section 7.7.2 titled “Internal ambient noise levels for dwellings” states:

“In general for steady external noise sources, it is desirable that internal ambient noise levels do not exceed the following guideline values:

Activity	Location	Desirable Internal Ambient Criteria	
		07:00 - 23:00	23:00 - 07:00
Resting	Living Rooms	35 dB L _{Aeq,16hour}	-
Dining	Dining Room/Area	40 dB L _{Aeq,16hour}	-
Sleeping (Daytime Resting)	Bedroom	35 dB L _{Aeq,16hour}	30 dB L _{Aeq,8hour}



5.8 Statutory Noise Nuisance

There is no quantitative definition of statutory noise nuisance. It is generally accepted however, that if the plant noise level is at least 5dB (or 10dB if tonal) below the minimum background $L_{90(15\text{minutes})}$ at 1m from the nearest noise sensitive residential window, then the risk of a statutory noise nuisance is avoided. By adopting this as a design criterion the guidance contained in BS 4142:2014 should also be complied with.

6.0 Methodology

The survey was undertaken by Rebeca Sanchez LArch, MSc(Hons).

6.1 Procedure

Fully automated environmental noise monitoring was undertaken from approximately 11:30 hours on Tuesday 29 March 2022 to 11:30 hours on Wednesday 30 March 2022.

During the periods we were on site the wind conditions were calm. The sky was generally overcast. We understand that generally throughout the survey period the weather conditions were dry with short periods of light rain. These conditions are considered suitable for obtaining representative measurement results.

Measurements were taken continuously of the A-weighted (dBA) L_{90} , L_{eq} and L_{max} sound pressure levels over 15-minute periods.

6.2 Measurement Positions

The noise level measurements were undertaken at 2No. positions as described in the table below.

Position No	Description
1	The microphone was positioned on the north-east boundary of the roof, at a height of approximately 1.5 metres above roof level (approximately 22.5 metres above ground level).
2	The microphone was positioned on the southwest boundary of the roof, at a height of approximately 1.5 metres above roof level (approximately 22.5 metres above ground level).



The positions are shown on the plan below.



Plan Showing Measurement Positions (Imagery © 2022 Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies, The GeoInformation Group, Map Data © 2022 Google)

6.3 Instrumentation

The instrumentation used during the survey is presented in the table below:

Description	Manufacturer	Type	Serial Number	Calibration
Position 1 Type 1 ½" Condenser Microphone	PCB	377B02	106753	Calibration on 20/10/2021
Position 1 Preamp	Larson Davis	PRM902	880	Calibration on 20/10/2021
Position 1 Type 1 Data Logging Sound Level Meter	Larson Davis	824	3839	Calibration on 20/10/2021
Position 2 Preamp	Larson Davis	PRM902	4157	Calibration on 05/11/2021



Description	Manufacturer	Type	Serial Number	Calibration
Position 2 Type 1 Data Logging Sound Level Meter	Larson Davis	824	3053	Calibration on 05/11/2021
Position 2 Type 1 ½" Condenser Microphone	PCB	377B07	107417	Calibration on 05/11/2021
Type 1 Calibrator	Bruel & Kjaer	4230	1558535	Calibration on 14/12/2020

Each sound level meter, including the extension cable, was calibrated prior to and on completion of the surveys. No significant changes were found to have occurred (no more than 0.2 dB).

Each sound level meter was located in an environmental case with the microphone connected to the sound level meter via an extension cable. Each microphone was fitted with a windshield.

7.0 Results

The results have been plotted on Time History Graphs 29661/TH1 to 29661/TH2 enclosed presenting the 15-minute A-weighted (dBA) L_{90} , L_{eq} and L_{max} levels at each measurement position throughout the duration of the survey.

The following table presents the representative (modal) measured L_{A90} background noise levels during the survey:

Position	Representative (modal) Measured $L_{A90(15min)}$ Background Noise Level (dB re 2 x 10 ⁻⁵ Pa)		
	Daytime (07:00 – 23:00) Hours	Night-Time (23:00 – 07:00) Hours	24 Hours
1	52 dBA	49 dBA	49 dBA
2	53 dBA	47 dBA	47 dBA

8.0 Discussion Of Noise Climate

We conducted a site inspection and unmanned noise measurements to establish the existing airborne noise levels due to traffic and other environmental sources around the site. During the periods we were on site the dominant noise sources were noted to be road traffic noise from the nearby road network and noise from nearby plant from neighbouring premises.



9.0 Plant Noise Emission Criteria

Building services plant external noise emission levels will need to comply with local planning/environmental authority requirements and statutory noise nuisance legislation.

The requirements imposed by London Borough of Camden are stated on Section 5.4 of this report.

On the basis of the above and the results of the environmental noise survey, we propose that the following plant noise emission criteria be achieved at 1 metre from the nearest noise sensitive residential windows.

Façade	Plant Noise Emission Criteria (dB re 2x10 ⁻⁵ Pa)		
	Daytime (07:00 – 23:00 hours)	Night-time (23:00 – 07:00 hours)	24 hours
North-east	42 dBA	39 dBA	39 dBA
South-west	43 dBA	37 dBA	37 dBA

The above criteria are to be achieved with all of the proposed plant operating simultaneously. It should be noted that the above are subject to the final approval of the Local Authority.

10.0 Conclusions

An environmental noise survey has been undertaken in order to establish the currently prevailing noise levels.

Plant noise emission criteria have been recommended based on the results of the noise survey and with reference to the Local Authority's requirements.

Appendix A

The acoustic terms used in this report are defined as follows:

dB	Decibel - Used as a measurement of sound level. Decibels are not an absolute unit of measurement but an expression of ratio between two quantities expressed in logarithmic form. The relationships between Decibel levels do not work in the same way that non-logarithmic (linear) numbers work (e.g. $30\text{dB} + 30\text{dB} = 33\text{dB}$, not 60dB).
dBA	<p>The human ear is more susceptible to mid-frequency noise than the high and low frequencies. The 'A'-weighting scale approximates this response and allows sound levels to be expressed as an overall single figure value in dBA. The _A subscript is applied to an acoustical parameter to indicate the stated noise level is A-weighted</p> <p>It should be noted that levels in dBA do not have a linear relationship to each other; for similar noises, a change in noise level of 10dBA represents a doubling or halving of subjective loudness. A change of 3dBA is just perceptible.</p>
$L_{90,T}$	L_{90} is the noise level exceeded for 90% of the period T (i.e. the quietest 10% of the measurement) and is often used to describe the background noise level.
$L_{eq,T}$	$L_{eq,T}$ is the equivalent continuous sound pressure level. It is an average of the total sound energy measured over a specified time period, T .
L_{max}	L_{max} is the maximum sound pressure level recorded over the period stated. L_{max} is sometimes used in assessing environmental noise where occasional loud noises occur, which may have little effect on the L_{eq} noise level.
L_p	Sound Pressure Level (SPL) is the sound pressure relative to a standard reference pressure of 2×10^{-5} Pa. This level varies for a given source according to a number of factors (including but not limited to: distance from the source; positioning; screening and meteorological effects).
L_w	Sound Power Level (SWL) is the total amount of sound energy inherent in a particular sound source, independent of its environment. It is a logarithmic measure of the sound power in comparison to a specified reference level (usually 10^{-12} W).

33/34 Alfred Place

Position 1

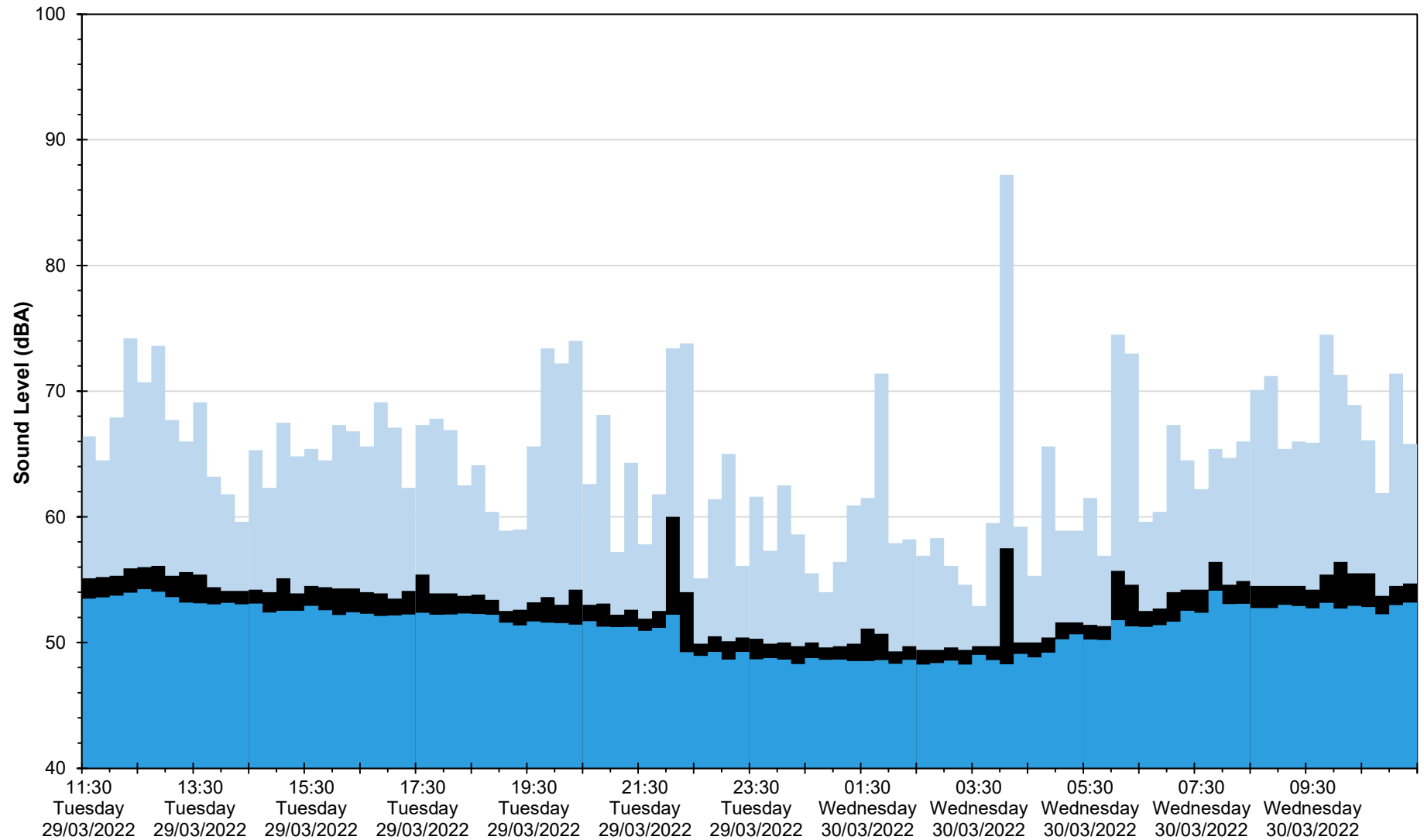
L_{eq} , L_{max} and L_{90} Noise Levels

Tuesday 29 March 2022 to Wednesday 30 March 2022

■ L_{max}

■ L_{eq}

■ L_{90}



Date and Time

29661/TH1

33/34 Alfred Place

Position 2

L_{eq} , L_{max} and L_{90} Noise Levels

Tuesday 29 March 2022 to Wednesday 30 March 2022

