

Ref: DP703/21262/Rev. 1

Date: 30 July 2021



Mr Arjun Singh Gill
OOAK Developments Limited (SPV1)
81 Kings Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 3DD

Dear Mr. Arjun,

**PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - CLASS O
IMPACT OF NOISE FROM COMMERCIAL PREMISES
ABBAY CORNER, 2-4 KINGS ROAD, READING, RG1 3AA**

I understand you are submitting Prior Approval application to convert the above office (formerly Class B1 now E(g)(i)) building to residential (Class C3), under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (as amended).

Statutory Instrument, no. 332, requires that applicants apply to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for determination as to whether the prior approval of the LPA will be required as to “*impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development*”.

Commercial Premises is a tightly defined term in the Regulations. It means “*any premises normally used for the purpose of any commercial or industrial undertaking, which existed on the date of application...and includes any premises under the Licensing Act 2003(a) or any other place of public entertainment*”.

Therefore, this means that if a site is affected by industrial noise, noise from air conditioning plant relating to a commercial or industrial undertaking, or music from a venue for example, that the LPA could expect an acoustic assessment as part of the Permitted Development determination process. It is significant that the Regulations do not always require an assessment, as many sites would not be affected by commercial noise. It is also significant that if the noise sources affecting a site are not from commercial premises, as defined, then they need not be considered. This means that noise from transportation sources (road, rail, air etc) do not need to be assessed.

Spectrum have conducted a site visit on Thursday 22nd of July 2021. The comments below relate to the site as observed during that visit.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application is for the creation of 16 new dwellings in existing office accommodation at Abbey Corner, 2-4 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3AA. The building has 4 storeys and is currently used as offices. The proposals involve converting all the floors to residential use.

The site is located at the corner of Kings Road and Duke St in Reading. The site is bounded to the east and south by buildings with commercial units at ground floor and office space or residential properties directly above.

Directly opposite on King's Road is Jackson's Corner, comprising commercial units at ground floor and residential properties on 3 floors directly above. To the north-west of the site, at the corner of King St and High St is a 4-storey building with commercial units at ground floor and office space directly above.

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Opposite the site on Duke St is a 4-storey building, comprising Royal Tandoori Restaurant at ground floor and Ibis Hotel directly above. Further south on Duke St there are buildings with commercial units on ground floor and office space or residential properties directly above. King's Walk and The Oracle shopping centres are located approximately 60m to the south-west of the site.

There are a number of mechanical plant units on the roof of the building, serving the existing office spaces. The proposals involve removing all the mechanical plant associated with the existing offices.

From the roof of the subject building, a number of mechanical plant units are visible on the roofs of the office buildings on Duke St, as well as on the roofs of the commercial units at King's Walk and The Oracle.

Photographs of the site and surrounding properties are shown in Figures 1 to 8 below:



Fig 1: Site from Kings Road



Fig 2: Aerial view towards site



Fig 3: Commercial units with residential properties directly above at Jacksons Corner, opposite the site on Kings Road



Fig 4: Royal Tandoori at ground floor with Ibis hotel directly above, opposite the site on Duke St.



Fig 5: Roof of commercial properties at King's Walk and The Oracle, to the south-west of the site



Fig 6: Office buildings to the south of the site, on Duke St



Fig 7: Residential properties, to the north of the site



Fig 8: Existing condensers on the roof of the subject building, all to be removed

2. ASSESSMENT

As detailed above, all the existing mechanical plant units on the roof of the subject building would be removed.

Mechanical plant noise from nearby office buildings and commercial premises was audible at the roof level on the south-western corner of the subject building. Therefore, it is considered appropriate that the impact of noise from this mechanical plant is assessed in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 *Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound*.

A sample measurement was taken at this location during a lull in local road traffic, however distant traffic was still audible. The measured L_{Aeq} level was 51 dB. The contribution from mechanical plant at this location is estimated to be up to L_{Aeq} 50dB. The third floor windows of the subject building are partially screened from mechanical plant on the roofs of nearby buildings. The expected attenuation from screening is at least 5 dB. This would reduce the incident noise level from mechanical plant on the third floor windows to L_{Aeq} 45 dB, which is considered to be the specific level in terms of a BS 4142 assessment.

The background sound level was also measured at the nearest window of the proposed residential properties, with all the existing mechanical plant units on the roof of the subject building switched off. At this location, no other mechanical plant was audible. The measured background sound level was $L_{A90,15min}$ 51 dB.

In accordance with BS4142, the character of the sources is considered. Noise from mechanical plant is broadband and continuous and would not stand out against the residual acoustic environment at the receptor locations. Therefore, no correction to the specific sound level need be applied and the rating level is, therefore, $L_{A_{r,Tr}}$ 45 dB. This is 6 dB below the background sound level, which is considered to be a low impact in accordance with BS 4142, and therefore acceptable.

It is therefore our opinion that the likely *impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development* are not sufficient to constitute a material factor on the proposals. Therefore, I conclude that there is no technical noise reason under the General Permitted Development Order to refuse this application and that, I recommend that the LPA can approve the application accordingly.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

David Pauliuc
Consultant