

Points of Clarification relating to Acoustic Matters –

Acousticians Comments/Responses.

173-175 Friar Street Reading

These comments are to be read in conjunction with the latest report by Jostec.

‘BS4142:2014-A1:2019 AND BS8233:2014 ASSESSMENT OF 173-175 FRIAR STREET, READING’
dated 27th September 2024

1. The source of noise at the front of the building is deemed to be pedestrian and vehicle traffic. At weekends is there no noise impact from operation of nearby commercial venues – e.g. O’Neils? This seems very unlikely in this location and requires further analysis. Noise from music or from patrons queuing outside venues then the nature of this noise needs to be taken into account.

The noise was assessed over a weekend with night-time noise levels taken into account at the front of the building. There is clearly no distinct noise from the surrounding venues that would exceed the passing traffic, which remains the dominant noise source.

Entertainment noise is not assessed within BS4142:2014, nor BS8233:2014 nor is there any need to expand this into using IOA Pub & Club guidelines due a lack of noise being generated by the venues. There is no guidance documents that include external queues for venues so this all falls into the ‘patron and vehicle noise’ that has already been assessed, and the recommendations made for glazing and ventilation based on this assessment.

2. I note the BS4142 assessment of plant noise at the rear. I would recommend for existing plant that the noise levels are limited to 0 dBA above background. At night it is 2 dBA above. Plant noise should be mitigated at source to allow occupants to open windows – such mitigation should be set out within the noise report.

The plant noise assessed is already present and enclosed within a fenced-off area and services another building. As the majority of the proposed dwellings are above the noise source with increased distance there will therefore only be a 2dB impact on the first-floor dwellings, which is audibly not a perceptible level. Those above will be less than background. All of these factors will mean that the final values for all properties will be at background or less. BS4142:2014 considers values of 5dB and below to result in a ‘low chance of adverse impact’. In any case, the MHVR to the rear provides ventilation when the windows are closed to mitigate any noise concerns.

3. As the noise levels with windows open exceed the recommended internal levels, ventilation should be provided. The trickle ventilation proposed is unlikely to be sufficient particularly given the requirements of the condition. Proposals for alternative ventilation such as mechanical (MHRV), are required to be considered and assessed.

This is seen as an unnecessary and costly alternation to the building at such low levels to the rear of the building. The high LAMax values in particular at the front provide more

of an argument for mechanical ventilation. Therefore MVHR is being provided accordingly as a mitigation strategy.

4. Clearer information within the noise report is required with regard to the predicted internal noise levels with the proposed window upgrades (with windows open and windows closed, assuming 13 dBA decrease through an open window).

The calculations are shown in section 5.5 of the report with the windows closed. In regards to the openable windows, the acoustician is unclear where the 13dB figure comes from as they have not found this in the guidance documentation for Reading or the West-London area. BS8233:2014 says that open windows provide up to 15dB attenuation with this figure expected to be achieved with new windows. In any case, where the proposals are introducing an MVHR system, this is seen as being negated with the removal of the need for opening windows as per the requirements outlined in the condition.