

Noise impact assessment of a proposed ancillary pod classroom at an existing children's nursery

3-5 Craven Road, Reading, RG1 5LE



Client: N Family Holdings Limited

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0. SUMMARY

- 0.1. N Family Club proposes to erect a new ancillary pod classroom on an area of hardstanding to the rear of the existing nursery outdoor play area at 3-5 Craven Road, Reading.
- 0.2. ACA Acoustics Limited has been commissioned to assess the acoustic impact of the proposed pod classroom on nearby noise-sensitive properties.
- 0.3. ACA Acoustics have previously carried out a sound level survey at the development site. Existing ambient sound levels during the daytime were measured at LAeq 51dB. Background sound levels were LA90 46dB. It should be noted that these were measured in 2022, prior to the existing nursery opening. Therefore, current background sound levels are likely to be slightly higher than these, with the soundscape also including noise from children associated with the nursery. As appropriate noise criteria is often relative to the existing acoustic conditions, if sound levels are higher than those used in the assessment then this adds a significant degree of safety into the design.
- 0.4. A 3D computer calculation model has been used to determine sound emissions from use of the pod classroom to nearby noise-sensitive receptors. Table 1 below summarises the assessment of the pod classroom to the most noise-sensitive receptors.

Emission from Pod Classroom to Outside Receptor	Existing Residual Sound Level	Resultant Cumulative Sound Level	IEMA Assessment Magnitude of Impact	Existing Background Sound Level	Excess of Pod Classroom over Background Sound Level
LAeq 34dB	LAeq 51dB	LAeq 51dB	Negligible	LA90 46dB	-12dB

Table 1: Summary of pod classroom noise assessment

- 0.5. Noise from the pod classroom will be below the existing residual and background sound levels when assessed at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors both at times when windows/doors are closed and when these are open. This equates to an assessment outcome of “*Negligible*” when assessed in accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment’s *Guidelines for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment*, and complies with recommended criteria in the Association of Australasian Acoustical Consultants’ *Guideline for Child Care Centre Acoustic Assessment*. This is below the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL), as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance – Noise.

- 0.6. In accordance with relevant Policies, Standards, and guidance documents, it is the author's opinion that the proposed pod classroom will not have any adverse impact on neighbouring properties and planning consent should not be withheld on noise grounds.

1. INTRODUCTION

ACA Acoustics Limited has been commissioned by Firstplan on behalf of the client to carry out a noise impact assessment of a proposed pod classroom being installed within an existing children's day nursery at 3-5 Craven Road, Reading and, where necessary, to make recommendations for a mitigation scheme to ensure that the amenity of nearby noise-sensitive properties is not compromised.

For this type of development the primary noise source which could require consideration is:

- Noise associated with the use of the pod classroom

The site is already in use as a children's nursery and there would be no change to use or operation of the outside play space which is already in use by nursery children throughout the day. The small increase in the overall number of children using the play space would be dispersed over the day and would result in a negligible increase in overall sound level with no change to the character of the noise. As such, no assessment of noise from children playing in the outdoor play space is required.

This report presents results of a sound level survey, computer modelling of noise emissions from the proposed pod classroom, and assessment of the results.

2. ACOUSTIC CRITERIA

2.1. National Planning Policy Framework and Noise Policy Statement for England

The National Planning Policy Framework (referred to as NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides guidance on how these are expected to be applied, providing a framework within which Local Authorities can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that,

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability."

Paragraph 198 also talks specifically about noise and advises,

"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:

- *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 quality of life.*
- *Identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.”*

The Government’s long-term policy aims relating to noise are contained in the Noise Policy Statement for England (referred to as NPSE). Stated aims of the NPSE are:

“Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour, and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy of 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.”*

Paragraphs 2.19 to 2.24 of the NPSE clarify the above aims, referring to established concepts from toxicology; NOEL (No Observed Effect Level) and LOAEL (Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level). It also introduces a new concept relating to “significant adverse” of SOAEL (Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level), however noting,

“It is not possible to have a single objective noise-based measure that describes SOAEL that is applicable to all sources of noise in all situations. Consequently, the SOAEL is likely to be different for different noise sources, for different receptors and at different times.”

The first aim of NPPF Paragraph 198 and the second underlying aim of the NPSE refers to the situation where the impact lies somewhere between LOAEL and SOAEL. It requires that all reasonable steps should be taken to mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life while also considering the guiding principles of sustainable development, as set out in the NPPF. As neither the NPPF nor NPSE includes any numerical criteria, it is necessary to consider guidance provided in other documents to determine suitable limits that would define the LOAEL on an individual basis.

Finally, it is also of benefit to consider Paragraph 2.7 of NPSE, which advises that,

“... the application of the NPSE should enable noise to be considered alongside other relevant issues and not to be considered in isolation. In the past, the wider benefits of a particular policy, development or other activity may not have been given adequate weight when assessing the noise implications.”

This provides clear guidance that noise must not be considered in isolation but as part of the overall scheme taking into account the overall sustainability and associated impacts of the proposed development; there is no benefit in reducing noise to an excessively low level if this creates or

increases some other adverse impact. Similarly, it may be appropriate in some cases for noise to have an adverse impact if this is outweighed by the reduction or removal of some other adverse impact that is of greater significance to the development.

2.2. Planning Practice Guidance – Noise

Related to the NPSE and the NPPF, The Department for Communities and Local Government has published additional guidance and clarifications within the Planning Practice Guidance – Noise (PPG-N), available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/noise--2>.

Paragraph 003 of the PPG advises,

“Plan-making and decision making need to take account of the acoustic environment and in doing so consider:

- *Whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur,*
- *Whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur, and*
- *Whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.*

In line with the Explanatory Note of the Noise Policy Statement for England, this would include identifying whether the overall effect of the noise exposure ... is, or would be, above or below the significant observed adverse effect level and the lowest observed adverse effect level for the given situation.”

This guidance is like that set out in the NPPF and NPSE, however, Paragraph 005 of the PPG provides outline guidance on the definition of ‘significant adverse effect’ and ‘adverse effect’. A copy of the table appended to Paragraph 005 is repeated in Figure 1.

Although the table in Figure 1 provides descriptive definitions for the NOEL, LOAEL, and SOAEL, as with the NPPF and the NPSE there are no numerical values provided, and it is necessary to consider guidance in other documents.

Response	Examples of outcomes	Increasing effect level	Action
No Observed Effect Level			
Not present	No Effect	No Observed Effect	No specific measures required
No Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and not intrusive	Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a change in the quality of life.	No Observed Adverse Effect	No specific measures required
Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and intrusive	Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, 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. Affects the acoustic character of the area such that there is a small actual or perceived change in the quality of life.	Observed Adverse Effect	Mitigate and reduce to a minimum
Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level			
Present and disruptive	The noise causes a material change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, 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
Present and very disruptive	Extensive and regular changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress, e.g. regular sleep deprivation/awakening; loss of appetite, significant, medically definable harm, e.g. auditory and non-auditory.	Unacceptable Adverse Effect	Prevent

Figure 1: Noise exposure hierarchy, taken from Planning Practice Guidance – Noise

2.3. Reading Borough Council Policy CC8

In accordance with Reading Borough Council's Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity,

“Development will not be permitted where it would cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of adjoining land uses and occupiers, or cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of future occupiers of the development.

In assessing the impact of development, the Council will have regard to: ...

- *Noise and vibration”.*

Policy CC8 does not include any specific criteria or assessment methodology. There is also no British Standard or defined guidance specific to the assessment of noise from children's nurseries. It is therefore necessary to consider guidance in other relevant documents.

2.4. IEMA Guidelines for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment

Noise emissions from the classroom pod will comprise almost exclusively of children's voices. There is no specific formal methodology for undertaking an assessment of noise from voices potentially affecting nearby residential occupiers.

A general principle that can be employed in situations of potential noise disturbance where there is no formal assessment methodology is to consider whether the new noise source will likely cause a significant increase over the current sound level, or a change of character compared to the existing noise climate.

The basis for this form of assessment is discussed in the *Guidelines for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment*, written by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).

Having established the likely change in sound levels due to the new activity, an initial indication of the significance of the change can be determined from the table below, taken from Table 7-12 of the Guidelines.

Effect Description	Definition
None/Not Significant	Less than LAeq 2.9dB change in sound level and/or all receptors are of negligible sensitivity to noise.
Slight	A LAeq 3dB to 4.9dB change in sound level at a receptor of some sensitivity.
Moderate	A LAeq 3dB to 4.9dB change in sound level at a sensitive or highly sensitive receptor, or a greater than LAeq 5dB change in sound level at a receptor of some sensitivity.
Substantial	Greater than LAeq 5dB change in sound level at a noise-sensitive receptor, or a LAeq 5dB to 9.9dB change in sound level at a receptor of high sensitivity to noise.
Severe	Greater than LAeq 10dB change in sound level at a receptor of high sensitivity to noise.

Table 2: Effect descriptors for change in sound level taken from Table 7-12 of the *Guidelines for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment*

Note that defining the change of loudness to one decimal place is not a reflection of the accuracy of any assessment undertaken but rather to provide a clear threshold between adjacent effect descriptions.

Section 7 of the Guidelines advises that the change in sound level provides an initial estimate of the impact, which should then be examined considering the context of the development, the type of noise source, nature of the change, and other factors. Paragraph 7.6 summarises that,

“In some situations, the conclusions about the degree of the impact will be clear and straightforward; but in others it is likely that, ultimately, a professional judgement will have to be made by the assessor. It must be remembered that the effects of noise are primarily subjective, and while it is desirable to include as much objectivity as possible into the assessment process in order to obtain consistency, there should be no concern in allowing professional judgement to come into the final analysis. However, the basis for the judgement made must be clearly set out so that it is clear how the conclusion has been reached.”

Once the initial estimate of the impact has been corrected to account for the context of the assessment, the magnitude of the impact and significance of the effects can be reviewed against Table 7-7 of the Guidelines, copied below.

Magnitude of Impact	Description of Effect
Negligible	No discernible effect on the receptor.
Slight	Receptor perception = Non-intrusive Noise impact can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude. Can slightly affect the character of the area but not such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.
Moderate	Receptor perception = Intrusive Noise impact can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour and/or attitude. Potential for non-awakening sleep disturbance. Affects the character of the area such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.
Substantial	Receptor perception = Disruptive Causes a material change in behaviour and/or attitude. Potential for sleep disturbance. Quality of life diminished due to change in character of the area.
Severe	Receptor perception = Physically harmful Significant changes in behaviour and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress or physiological effects.

Table 3: Relationship between noise impact and noise effects

It is of benefit to notice the similarity between the effect descriptions in Table 3 with the examples of outcome in Figure 1, taken from the PPG-N. From this, achieving a magnitude of impact of “slight” corresponds to designing noise to below the LOAEL. ACA Acoustics therefore recommends that where an assessment indicates an impact of “negligible” or “slight” this is fully acceptable in accordance with the NPPF, NPSE, and PPG-N. Where an assessment indicates a “moderate” impact then this would potentially have an adverse impact on nearby residents and would only be acceptable where it can be adequately mitigated and minimized.

2.5. AAAC Guidelines for Child Care Centre Acoustic Assessment

The Association of Australasian Acoustical Consultants (AAAC) have published a *Guideline for Child Care Centre Acoustic Assessment (Version 3.0)*. The introduction to the Guidelines advises that,

“This guideline has been prepared by members of the Association of Australasian Acoustical Consultants (AAAC) to assist child care centre developers, child care centre operators, architects, local council or regulatory officers, AAAC and other acoustical consultants to assess the noise impact from proposed child care centres consistently, accurately and fairly”.

Whilst it is acknowledged that guideline criteria and assessment methodology from other countries is not always applicable to the assessment requirements in the UK, noise from children’s nurseries will be largely universal and in the absence of specific assessment methodology applicable for nurseries in the UK, consideration of this guidance can provide additional weight to the assessment outcome.

Section 3.2.2 of the Guidelines provides criteria for the assessment of noise from indoor play to external receptors. Appropriate criteria is proposed at,

“The cumulative $L_{eq, 15-minute}$ noise emission level resulting from the use and operation of the child care centre, with the exception of noise emission from outdoor play discussed above, shall not exceed the background noise level by more than 5dB at the assessment location”.

3. REVIEW OF SITE LOCATION

The development site is at the existing N Family Club nursery, 3-5 Craven Road, Reading.

Extract from the proposed site plan, provided by the client, is included below. This identifies the location of the proposed pod classroom to the rear of the site, adjacent to the existing outdoor play area.

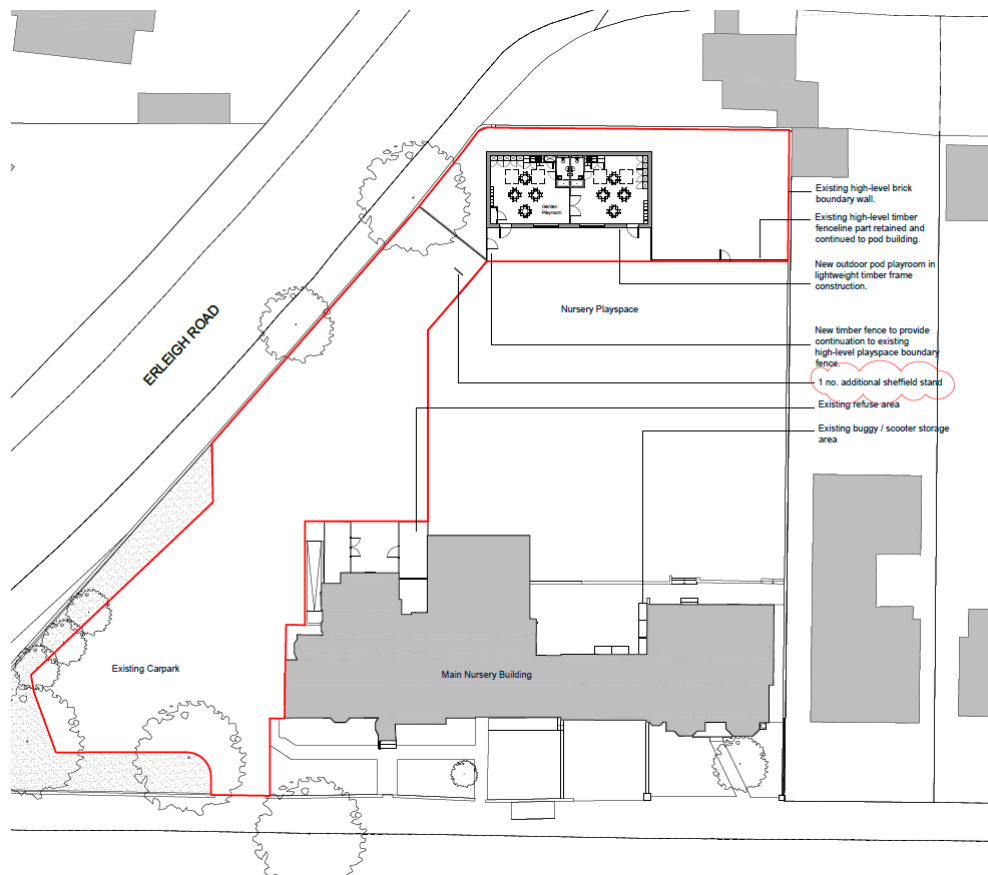


Figure 2: Site layout drawing

There is an existing residential property directly to the east and a residential garden to the south-east, with the dwelling to the south.

The overall nursery operational hours are between 07:00 and 19:00 hours, however it is anticipated that the pod classroom will be typically in use in the core hours of between 08:00 and 18:00 hours. The facility will be used on weekdays only.

4. SOUND LEVEL SURVEY

To assess the acoustic impact of the new nursery it is necessary to establish existing residual and background sound levels in the vicinity during the proposed opening times.

ACA Acoustics undertook a background sound level survey at the site in 2022, prior to the opening of the current nursery. This will have determined the acoustic climate at the time, comprising primarily of traffic on surrounding routes and other similar environmental noise sources. The current soundscape will also include noise from children associated with the nursery, including

playing in the outdoor play space. This means that sound levels now are likely to be slightly higher than those previously measured.

As the IEMA assessment method and AAAC assessment method both consider the potential change in sound level against the baseline level, this means that if the baseline sound level is higher then noise emissions from the pod classroom could be higher and still achieve the criteria. Therefore, using the lower measured sound levels from before the nursery opened represents a very conservative assessment and ensures a high degree of safety in the design.

Details of the survey are included below.

The monitoring position was selected at the rear of the play space garden, adjacent to the existing brick wall boundary to the closest noise-sensitive property. This position is representative of the closest receptors in the vicinity.

The survey was set up by Tommy Burn of ACA Acoustics and conducted between 28th and 29th March 2022.

At the time of setting up the survey, the soundscape in the vicinity was noted as being influenced predominantly by traffic on nearby roads.

The following equipment was used during the survey. An on-site calibration check was conducted on the sound level meter prior to the survey and repeated after with no deviation noted.

Equipment	Serial Number
Rion Class 1 sound level meter type NL-52, complete with weatherproof outdoor environmental kit	00564867
Svantek calibrator type SV33B. Compliant to IEC 60942-1:2017	57595

Table 4: Equipment used for the sound level survey

Weather conditions at the time of setting up the survey were sunny, mild (17°C), dry, and with a very light (1m/s) north-easterly breeze. Meteorological conditions are considered acceptable and will not have adversely impacted the survey results.

Results of the survey are shown in graphical form in Figure 3 below.

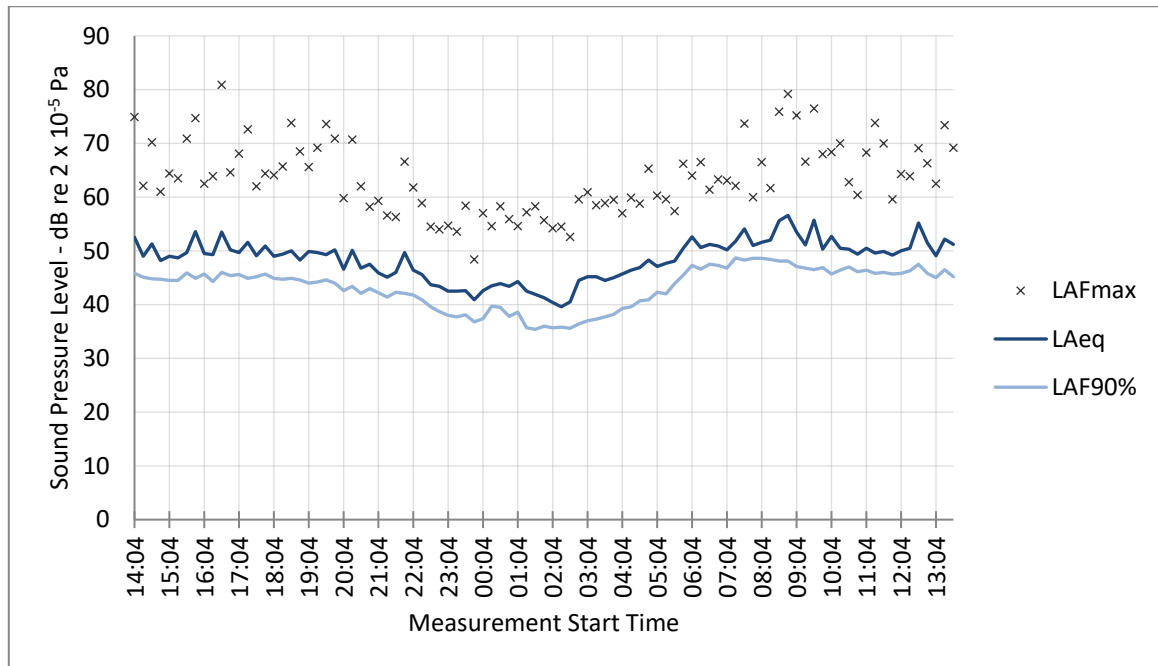


Figure 3: Sound level survey results

Summary results are shown in the table below.

Date / Time	LAeq	LA90	LAfmax Range
28 th -29 th March 2022	51dB	46dB	60dB – 81dB

Table 5: Summary sound level survey results

5. NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF POD CLASSROOM

A computer model has been developed to calculate noise emissions from the pod classroom. The model uses iNoise proprietary noise mapping software, based on the calculation procedures of ISO 9613-1/2:2024 standards and the associated ISO 17534 quality standard.

Based on sound level surveys in existing nursery classrooms, the following sound levels have been used as the source for the assessment. This is a typical high level, allowing for noisy activities occurring in the nursery classroom. Sound levels during more sedate activities will be consequently lower, ensuring that the overall sound level throughout the day will be lower than those used in the computer model

Description	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4kHz	LAeq
Nursery classroom	57	59	63	68	68	65	60	72dB

Table 6: Source sound levels in nursery classroom

The pod classroom structure will be of lightweight construction, with insulated frame, timber outer cladding, and plasterboard to the inner face. The roof will also be of a lightweight insulated timber frame, with a suspended plasterboard ceiling below using a metal frame system forming nominally a 400mm cavity. Windows, doors and glazed rooflights are assumed to be thermal double-glazing with asymmetric pane thickness such as 4-16-6 configuration or similar. If toughened/laminated panes are required for security or safety reasons then this would increase the acoustic performance of the element. Insul proprietary calculation software has been used to determine the likely sound insulation performance of the elements, as summarised below.

Element	Sound Reduction Index
Walls	Rw 43dB / Rw + C'tr 37dB
Roof	Rw 52dB / Rw + C'tr 44dB
Windows/Doors	Rw 34dB / Rw + C'tr 30dB

Table 7: Summary sound level survey results

The following data and assumptions have been included within the computer model.

- The computer model uses a source sound level of LAeq 72dB in the pod classroom, as shown in the table above.
- The acoustic performance of pod classroom elements are as shown in the table above.
- Two models have been developed; with windows/doors closed and with them open. The model for open windows/doors assumes that doors will be held fully open as may occur during free flow play in the warmer months. Windows and rooflights have been modelled as being partially open, with a loss of around 10dB through the opening as described in BS 8233:2014.
- The model incorporates the existing brick walls at the perimeter of the site along with timber fencing to the play area.
- The assessment assumes moderate downwind propagation from the source to all receptors simultaneously.
- Ground absorption coefficient assumed to be 0 (fully reflective hard ground) throughout.
- The sound reflection coefficient from all buildings is assumed to be 0.8, equating to traditional buildings with windows, small additions, or bays.

Printouts from the 3D computer models are included in Figure 4 and Figure 5 below. Values shown at the receptor to the rear are for sound levels to ground and upper floor levels.

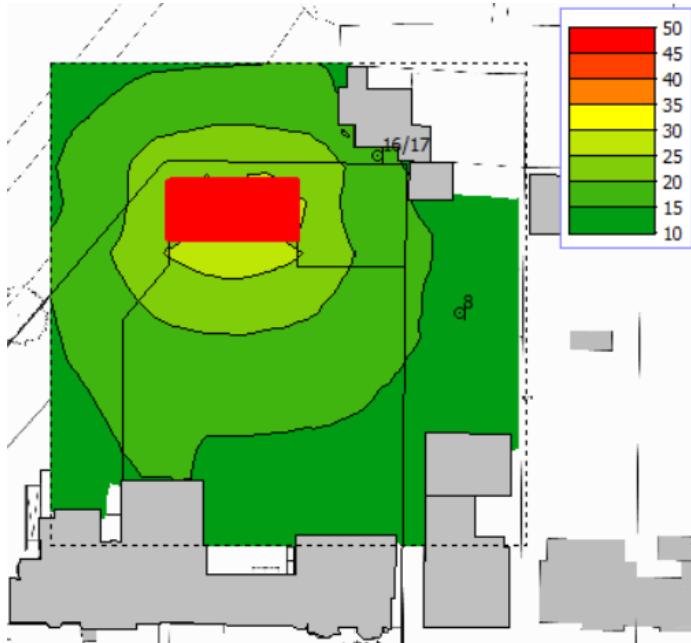


Figure 4: Printout from the computer model showing noise emissions from the pod classroom with windows/doors/rooflights closed

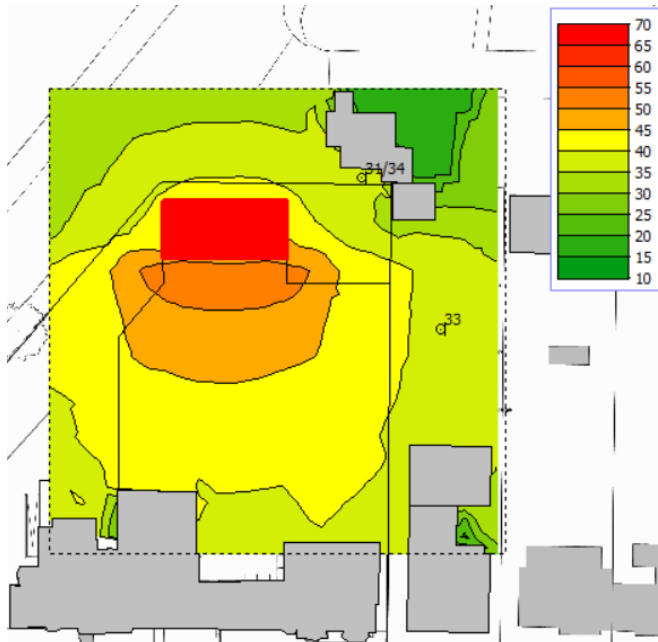


Figure 5: Printout from the computer model showing noise emissions from the pod classroom with windows/doors/rooflights open

With windows and doors closed, noise emissions from the pod classroom will be LAeq 17dB to the most-affected neighbouring receptor. With windows/doors/rooflights open, sound levels from the pod classroom to the closest receptor are LAeq 34dB.

Summary of the calculated noise breakout from the pod classroom to outside the closest residential receptors is shown in the table below. The table also includes comparison against the existing residual sound levels and the initial numerical outcome of the IEMA assessment.

Receptor Location	Sound Level from Pod Classroom	Existing Residual Sound Level	Cumulative Change in Sound Level	IEMA Initial Outcome
Closest residential receptors	L _{Aeq} 34dB	L _{Aeq} 51dB	<1dBA	None/Not Significant

Table 8: Summary noise emissions from pod classroom to nearby noise-sensitive properties

Table 8 and Figures 4 and 5 confirms that the highest noise emissions from the proposed pod classroom is at its busiest is L_{Aeq} 34dB to outside the most-affected residential property, even during times when all the doors, windows, and rooflights are open. This will cause a cumulative increase to the existing residual sound level of less than 1dBA. When assessed in accordance with the IEMA Guidelines, as shown in Table 2 this gives an initial impact of “None/Not Significant”.

In accordance with the IEMA Guidelines the calculated initial impact should be corrected, taking into account the context of the development. Relevant factors which should be considered are shown in Table 7-2 of the Guidelines and have been used as headings to guide the assessment in the table below.

Factor	Issue	Discussion
Averaging period	Is the averaging time so long that it might mask a greater impact at certain times, or does the noise change occur for such a small proportion of the time that it therefore can be considered of little consequence?	The pod classroom will be open throughout the day. However, considering the impact over the full day may mask short term impacts and therefore the selected period of highest activity is considered the most appropriate.
Time of day/night/week	Is the change occurring at a time that might increase or reduce its effect from that implied by the basic noise change?	The pod classroom will typically be in use in the core hours between 08:00 and 18:00 hours, weekdays only. These daytime hours reduce the impact. Therefore, this should be considered a positive factor.

Factor	Issue	Discussion
Nature of the noise source	Is there a change in the nature of the noise source which might alter the effect?	There is an existing nursery with outdoor play space. The dominant noise source from the pod classroom would be children's voices. This is identical to the current use of the site. There is no change to the noise source and this decreases the potential for adverse impact.
Frequency of occurrence	How does the frequency of the occurrence of the noise source affect the effect?	The nursery will be open daily (weekdays only). This regularity may have a slight increase in the potential for adverse impact.
Noise indicator	Has the indicator(s) which best correlate with the specific effect been correctly identified? (i.e. does the change in level as described by the indicator used adequately reflect the change that would be experienced by those exposed to it and could be affected by it?)	The pod classroom will be in use throughout the day and therefore the LAeq – equivalent energy averaged sound level – has been used. The alternative indicator would be to consider the LAfmax sound levels; the short-term peak sound level from individual high-noise events such as a child shouting or laughing during play. Typical LAfmax sound levels inside the classroom are unlikely to exceed 90dB. The resultant noise emissions from the classroom to outside the nearest receptors will therefore not exceed LAfmax 52dB. Comparing these levels to measured existing LAfmax values, shown in Table 5, it is evident that noise emissions from the classroom would be significantly below the existing range of LAfmax levels measured over the survey.
Absolute level (benchmark)	How does the change relate to any applicable published guidance?	BS 8233:2014 recommends that to provide a reasonable standard of amenity, sound levels outside a residential property should ideally achieve a level of LAeq, 16-hour 55dB. The calculated sound level from the

Factor	Issue	Discussion
		pod classroom is LAeq, 12-hour 34dB. This is significantly below the BS 8233 guideline levels. Furthermore, the BS 8233 levels are provided over a 16-hour day. Sound levels later into the evening, once the nursery has closed, will be lower, reducing the 16-hour average level. Use of the pod classroom will not cause the average level to exceed the BS 8233 guideline limits and there is no increase to the potential for adverse impact.
Impact and assessment of effects	Taking the relevant factors into account, as discussed above, the author considers that the use of the pod classroom will remain very low, and equates to an impact of “Negligible”. Noise from children playing inside the pod classroom may be heard at a low level on occasions when all the windows and doors are open but would not cause any change in behaviour or attitude. There would be no change to the character of the area and no adverse impacts on neighbouring residents.	

Table 9: IEMA Assessment factors and assessment outcome

In addition to the assessment in accordance with the IEMA methodology, as discussed in Section 2.5, the AAAC Guideline methodology is an alternative method to assess the potential impact of the nursery pod classroom on nearby residents.

Assessment in accordance with the AAAC Guidelines is included in the table below.

Receptor Location	Sound Level from Pod Classroom	Existing Background Sound Level	Excess of Sound from Classroom above Background Sound Level	AAAC Guidelines Outcome
Closest residential receptors	LAeq 34dB	LA90 46dB	-12dBA	Pass

Table 10: Assessment of noise emissions from pod classroom to nearby noise-sensitive properties in accordance with AAAC Guidelines

Assessment of noise from the pod classroom achieves the criteria set out in the AAAC Guidelines to protect the amenity of nearby residential properties.

As discussed in Table 9 and Table 10, and in accordance with relevant Standards, guidance documents, and government planning policy it is the author's opinion that the noise impact of the proposed pod classroom will be very low, will not be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residential occupants and the site is suitable for the proposed development.

6. CONCLUSION

A planning application is to be submitted for the erection of a new pod classroom at the existing N Family Club nursery, 3-5 Craven Road, Reading.

It is the author's opinion that the pod classroom will not have a negative impact on the closest noise-sensitive residential dwellings and complies with relevant national Standards and guidance documents.

The author considers that the site is suitable for the proposed development and planning consent should not be withheld on noise grounds.