

Our Ref: P8869-L1-V1

18th September 2026

Niall McDonald
Portakabin Limited
St Albans Hire Centre
Old Parkbury Lane
St Albans
AL2 2DZ

F.A.O: Niall McDonald

RE: LAND TO REAR OF 88 KNIGHTS WAY, EMMER GREEN, RG4 8RH

Dear Sir / Madam,

NoiseAir Limited has prepared this technical note in response to the request for further consideration of whether additional noise mitigation measures could reasonably be incorporated within the scheme at land to the rear of 88 Knights Way, Emmer Green, Reading. The request specifically asks that the assessment reviews whether physical mitigation, layout amendments, boundary treatments, acoustic screening, operational controls or other measures could further reduce impacts upon neighbouring residential properties.

The Noise Impact Assessment prepared by NoiseAir considers the potential noise emissions associated with the existing nursery operations and the proposed extension of the existing children's nursery. The assessment presents two modelling scenarios, comprising the existing external play arrangement and the proposed arrangement following implementation of the extension. The assessment indicates that the proposals would result in a relatively small increase in calculated noise levels at some neighbouring receptor locations. In particular, the increase in noise levels is calculated to be marginal at most receptor locations, with the greatest calculated increase occurring at the receptors to the southeast. The existing nursery is already an established part of the local acoustic environment during its operating periods and therefore the relevant consideration is the change in noise level and whether further mitigation is reasonable, proportionate and viable.

NoiseAir has reviewed the potential for additional physical mitigation. In acoustic terms, a barrier or screen will only provide a meaningful reduction where it is sufficiently high, continuous, impermeable



and located such that it breaks the line of sight between the relevant source and receiver. The application site is located within an established residential area, with residential receptors located around the site boundary. Existing gardens are already bounded by fencing and many of the neighbouring receptor windows are elevated relative to the external play area. As a result, any additional acoustic barrier would need to extend materially above standard domestic boundary treatment, and is likely to need to be in excess of approximately 3 m in height to provide a meaningful degree of acoustic screening to first-floor or elevated residential windows. Such a measure would be visually prominent, would be likely to give rise to visual amenity and planning concerns, and is not considered to represent a reasonable or viable mitigation measure in the context of the modest predicted changes in noise level.

The potential for layout amendment has also been considered. The proposed Portakabin structure is positioned toward the southeast side of the site. This arrangement provides a degree of physical screening and separation between parts of the proposed external play area and the residential receptors located to the south and east, which have the most direct line of sight toward the proposed play area. Relocating the proposed building away from this position would be likely to reduce the screening benefit currently provided by the building mass and could increase noise propagation toward those receptors. On that basis, NoiseAir considers that the submitted layout already represents a balanced arrangement having regard to the operational requirements of the nursery, the physical constraints of the site, and the need to minimise noise emissions to neighbouring properties where reasonably practicable.

Operational controls are considered to be the most appropriate and proportionate form of mitigation for this type of development. Noise from children's external play is variable and is best managed through good site management, staff awareness, supervision, control of external play periods where required, clear communication procedures and a robust complaints response process. These matters are appropriately secured through a Noise Management Plan, which formed the basis of the recommendations within the Noise Impact Assessment. A separate Noise Management Plan has been prepared by NoiseAir and is submitted under separate cover to set out the proposed operational controls and management procedures in more detail.

In summary, NoiseAir considers that the proposals already incorporate the most appropriate balance of acoustic mitigation having regard to the constrained residential setting of the site, the existing nursery use, the modest predicted changes in noise level, and the practical limitations of further physical screening. Additional boundary barriers or acoustic screens of sufficient height to materially reduce noise at neighbouring elevated windows are not considered reasonable or viable due to their



likely scale and visual impact. The proposed building position already provides some beneficial screening to relevant receptors and relocation could worsen noise propagation in certain directions. Accordingly, no further physical or layout-based mitigation is considered necessary or proportionate. The residual potential for noise impact is most appropriately controlled through the submitted Noise Management Plan.

Yours sincerely,

M MALONE, Bsc (hons), PGDip (IOA), MIOA



Technical Director
For NoiseAir Limited

