

Developers Guide to Noise Mitigation



Building and construction work can, by its very nature generate noise. However, noise from construction sites can be very disturbing and can affect peoples' use and enjoyment of their property.



This Council recognise that construction is an important part of the economic growth of the district, however this cannot be completely at the expense of the people who live in close proximity to the site.

Most construction noise comes from the operation of plant, machinery and power tools, the movement of vehicles and deliveries of materials.

Construction activities include:

- construction of new buildings renovation of

existing buildings (including houses)

- demolition
- repairing road surfaces and installing/repairing utilities
- other engineering projects, for example on railways

Control of construction site noise

The main control is through restricting the hours that noisy work is carried out. As a rule of thumb we require construction sites to stick to working hours of **8am until 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am until 1pm on Saturdays. No noisy works should be carried out on Sundays and Bank Holidays.**

These times do not restrict other work activities that won't be heard at neighbouring noise sensitive premises, for example internal work like electrical wiring, fixing doors.

In some circumstances (such as emergencies or the delivery of large plant and equipment where congestion and risks to safety prevent roads being

used during working hours) noisy construction works may be necessary outside these hours. For non-emergency exceptions we would expect the developer to seek prior permission.

Contractors should also do everything reasonably possible (using best practical means) to ensure noise from works within working hours is also kept to a minimum.

This includes;

- Use well-maintained and silenced plant and equipment including compressors, generators and power tools;
- Ideally use mains operated equipment with a low noise specification; Ensuring that sub-contractors are aware of and stick to the site rules;
- Limit the use and volume of amplified music on site;
- Use temporary acoustic screening to protect noise sensitive properties from noisy activity;
- Manage the timing and control of delivery operations to minimise

- disturbance;
- Make sure that construction site staff moderate their language;
- Limit unnecessary movement of mobile plant and revving of engines.

Involve the community

In our experience the biggest cause of noise complaints is down to poor communication between the developer and the local community.



If expectations and good lines of communication are established from the start then it builds trust and most complaints can be avoided.

Simple ways to do this:

- notify residents about noisy phases of work and how long they will last for;

- carry out periodic checks on dust levels and check that noise controls are being used;
- provide contact details on a contacts board at front of site;
- listen, investigate and then respond to complaints;
- if a complaint is unreasonable or excessively demanding, be polite and explain why the noisy work is being done, why there is no alternative and how long it will last for.

The [Considerate Constructors Scheme](#) contains best practice case studies on noise reduction. BS5228 gives guidance on calculating noise levels from construction works and assessing the likely effects it will have on neighbouring residential premises, in particular if it is likely to generate complaints.

We expect all contractors working on site to keep to the guidance in BS5228 (Parts 1, 2 and 4). This means that you will have to use the most practical measures possible to

control noise, vibration and dust.

Legal Controls

Under section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act (COPA) 1974 and section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities have powers to control noise (and vibration) from building sites. Construction phase conditions can also be imposed as part of the planning consent.

If we do receive complaints relating to noise a legal notice can be served on the person responsible for the construction operations. The notice can specify types of plants and machinery, enforced permitted hours of operation, boundary noise levels and the use of 'best practicable means' to keep all noise to a minimum - for example, that plant and machinery used on the site shall be properly silenced and radios or other amplified music shall not be played.

Contractors planning to undertake construction and demolition work can consult environmental health to ask for

our requirements.

Alternatively, contractors could formally apply for a Prior Consent under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, which covers all the aspects described above. This enables contractors to formally agree with the Council the detail of operating conditions before the development starts and gives them an exemption from any of the legal notices mentioned above.



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