

Neath Town Centre Redevelopment

Noise Assessment

April 2020.

Phase 3: Retail & Leisure



A Noise Impact Assessment for the redevelopment of part of the Neath Town Centre was submitted in support of the hybrid outline/full planning application P2013/0863, which was approved on the 13th November 2013.

That permission approved the full planning for the demolition of the Magistrates Court and adjacent demountable buildings, and the development of a 4 deck, 604 space multi-storey car park, 1 No. Retail unit (Class A1), and Shopmobility unit; together with associated permanent and temporary public realm improvements.

Together with outline planning for the demolition of existing multi-storey car park (incorporating Wilkinson and Tesco) and the Greyhound PH, and the development of 9 No. Retail units (Class A1); 7 No. Retail/Food and Drink units (Classes A1/A3); 2 No. Retail/office units (Classes A1/A2); 1 No. Office/Community facility unit (Class B1/A2/D1), and up to 31 No. Residential Units, together with associated public realm improvements, reconfigured service yard and car parking.

Development of the first phase (granted full planning permission) has been completed.



Phase One.

A further phase of that development, was granted full planning permission under P2016/0654 on the 9th January 2017 for a 3 Storey mixed use block comprising 6 commercial units (Class A1/A2/A3 with 12 No. residential units and associated works, including changes to existing service yard and public realm improvements.

Work on that phase has been implemented on site.



Phase Two.

Phase 1 (Detailed Application): approximately 2,148m² for commercial floor space (approximately 2,216 m² including shop mobility) and a 604 space multi storey car parking area over four deck levels.

Phase 2 (Outline Application): approximately 12,309m² in total including commercial floor (A1/A3), offices (B1) and residential areas (C3) with approximately 27 units

A copy of the original Noise Impact Assessment is enclosed in Appendix 1.

Phase 2: Development Proposals.



The development includes a new swimming pool with associated leisure facilities, including a café and first floor gym. Six ground floor units, that would allow for a mix of A1 (Retail) A3 (Restaurant) and D1 uses together with a first floor library facility.

In total the development will provide 5,375 m² of ground floor space, with an additional 1,707m² of first floor space, together with service yard, and public realm

The service yard and servicing all takes place off Prince of Wales Drive, as previously proposed, albeit in outline only.

Planning Policy- National and Local

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, Dec 2018)

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise (1997)

This note provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business. It outlines some of the main considerations which local planning authorities should take into account in drawing-up development plan policies and when determining planning applications for development which will either generate noise or be exposed to existing noise sources.

Local authorities should adopt a corporate approach and ensure close co-operation between planning and environmental health departments when considering noise and noise generating developments.

The Development Plan

Where noise policies apply to the plan area as a whole, they should be set out in the same way as other general policies. Area specific noise policies may be useful in some circumstances. In such cases, the relevant boundaries should be illustrated on the proposals map. However, it will generally be inappropriate for a proposals map to show detailed noise contours as noise emissions may change significantly over time, (e.g. in the case of an aerodrome, operational changes may lead to significant variations in the impact of the noise on those living in the area).

Where it is particularly difficult to separate noise sensitive development from noisy activities, plans should contain an indication of any general policies which the local planning authority proposes to apply in respect of conditions or planning obligations.

Noise Exposure Categories for Residential Development

Noise Exposure Categories (NECs) (see Annex A) have been derived to assist local planning authorities in their consideration of planning applications for residential development near transport related noise sources.

Development Control

Noise generating development

Local planning authorities must ensure that noise generating development does not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance. They should also bear in mind that if subsequent intensification or change of use results in greater intrusion, consideration should be given to the use of appropriate conditions.

Noise characteristics and levels can vary substantially according to their source and the type of activity involved. In the case of industrial development, for example, the character of the noise should be taken into account as well as its level. Sudden impulses, irregular noise or noise which contains a distinguishable continuous tone will require special consideration. In addition to noise from

aircraft landing and taking off, noise from aerodromes is likely to result from engine testing as well as ground movements. The impact of noise from sport, recreation and entertainment will depend to a large extent on frequency of use and the design of facilities. Advice on assessing noise and on factors to consider in relation to the major noise sources including roads, railways, airports, industrial and recreational noise and their measurement is given in Annex B.

Noise-sensitive development

Local planning authorities should consider whether proposals for new noise-sensitive development would be incompatible with existing activities, taking into account the likely level of noise exposure at the time of the application and any increase that may reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future. Such development should not normally be permitted in areas which are, or are expected to become, subject to unacceptably high levels of noise and should not normally be permitted where high levels of noise will continue throughout the night.

Measures to mitigate the impact of noise

Measures introduced to control the source of, or limit exposure to, noise should be proportionate and reasonable, and may include:

- i. engineering: reduction of noise at point of generation (e.g. using quiet machines and/or quiet methods of working); containment of noise generated (e.g. insulating buildings which house machinery and/or providing purpose-built barriers around sites); protection of surrounding noise-sensitive buildings (e.g. improving sound insulation in these buildings and/or screening them by purpose-built barriers);
- ii. lay-out: adequate distance between noise source and noise-sensitive building or area; screening by natural barriers, other buildings, or non-critical rooms in a building;
- iii. administrative: limiting operating time of noise source; restricting activities allowed on the site; specifying an acceptable noise limit.

Local Development Plan.

It is considered that the impacts of Noise from the development of this phase can be split into 2 distinct sections;

Policy EN8 Pollution and Land Stability

Proposals which would be likely to have an unacceptable adverse effect on health, biodiversity and/or local amenity or would expose people to unacceptable risk due to the following will not be permitted:

- Air pollution;
- Noise pollution;
- Light pollution;
- Contamination;
- Land instability;
- Water (including groundwater) pollution.

Proposals which would create new problems or exacerbate existing problems detailed above will not be acceptable unless mitigation measures are included to reduce the risk of harm to public health, biodiversity and/or local amenity to an acceptable level

5.3.46 In relation to noise, potentially noisy proposals should not be located close to sensitive uses (such as hospitals, schools and housing) and new noise sensitive developments should not be located near to existing noisy uses (including industry and existing or proposed transport infrastructure) unless it can be shown that adverse effects can be dealt with through mitigation measures incorporated into the design. Where noise levels are likely to be a significant issue, developers may be required to provide information to show that no nuisance is likely to be caused through increased noise levels at sensitive locations if the development proceeds. Policy EN10 sets out policy relating to designated Quiet Areas

Supplementary Planning Guidance : Pollution 2016.

Construction phase.

In relation to the construction phase, these issues are transient in nature and can relate to the effects of construction noise on sensitive receptors, effects of construction and demolition vibration; construction traffic, and dust .

It is considered that these matters can be mitigated through the imposition of a suitably worded condition requiring a construction management plan. Specifically one that deals with the proposals and the confined nature of the site, within the town centre, including the routing of construction vehicles, construction compound location, hours and methodologies of work etc etc. With specific regard to piling methodology and timing, and dust suppression, that are issues raised under previous phases of development in this area.

Subject to these mitigation measures, it is considered that the noise and disturbance from the construction phase can be appropriately controlled.

Operational Phase.

Plant and Machinery installation.

The proposed development, dependant on the occupiers may require plant and machinery, in respect of air conditioning, refrigeration etc,

As these units are to be constructed speculatively the exact specification or requirements are yet to be clarified.

The Installation of this plant and machinery needs to consider both impacts upon the nearest noise sensitive properties off site, but also the impacts upon adjoining units, through the carrying or vibration and noise through the building fabric.

A condition stating that all plant and machinery to be installed must achieve noise levels no greater than existing background noise levels can be imposed. This will ensure that there are no impacts on noise from this equipment. With the potential for further details to be submitted where these levels cannot be achieved, for example the condition would state;

The noise rating level emitted from and plant or machinery including air conditioning or refrigeration equipment shall not the existing background noise level. The noise levels shall be determined at the nearest noise-sensitive premises or at another location that is deemed suitable by the Authority. Measurements and assessments shall be made in accordance with "BS 4142:2014 Method for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound".

Reason: To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Planning Policy

Servicing and deliveries.

In relation to increased traffic generation through servicing, a management plan for the service yard is necessary and should be dealt with via a suitably worded planning condition. This could prevent or limit servicing of the units between specific hours, to mitigate any potential impacts upon any nearby noise sensitive properties, especially those on the opposite side of Prince of Wales Drive.

In addition screening to the service yard, to provide physical screening in the interests of visual amenity, plus landscaping will again mitigate any noise impacts within the yard itself on any noise sensitive properties.



In the production of this management plan the Quiet Deliveries, good practice guidance should be considered.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quiet-deliveries-demonstration-scheme>

Conclusion.

It is considered that subject to the aforementioned mitigation measures, to be imposed as appropriately worded planning conditions (as in some cases these are dependent on the potential operators of the units) that issues of noise on existing sensitive receptors can be minimised.