

City of London Noise Strategy 2012-2016 Summary Version





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Introduction

Being located at the heart of London, the City of London inevitably experiences relatively high levels of noise.

The main noise sources of concern in the City are from building works, street works, road traffic, leisure activities, and other commercial activities such as deliveries, plant and equipment. High levels of noise can cause disturbance to residents and can also disrupt business activity in the City. The City Corporation has a statutory responsibility to manage and minimise exposure to excessive and sometimes unnecessary noise, whilst ensuring that the City can continue to function as a modern world-class business centre.

The City of London Noise Strategy brings together and updates policies and programmes that are already in place to manage and mitigate noise. It also proposes additional measures which together with existing ones should improve management of noise in the City.

Policies and an action plan address the following:

- Noise associated with new developments
- Noise associated with transport and street works
- Noise complaints from residents and businesses
- Protecting tranquil areas of the City from increased noise levels

The strategy reflects the concerns of residents, workers and visitors to the City who have previously been interviewed and consulted about the City's noise environment.

The strategy supports local, regional and national policy¹ and aims to:

- *Avoid or reduce noise, and noise impacts, which could adversely affect the health and well-being of City residents, workers and visitors*
- *Support the City Corporation to fulfil its statutory obligations for local noise management and assist others in fulfilling theirs*
- *Commit the City Corporation to provide joined-up regulation on environmental noise issues and to take account of this strategy in policy development and delivery of its various activities within the City*
- *Balance minimisation of noise and noise impacts with the need to improve and update City infrastructure*
- *Encourage measures which will reduce noise emissions in the Square Mile*
- *Build corporate, business and public awareness, understanding of noise issues and noise management good practice*
- *Recognise, reward and disseminate good practice*
- *Work in partnership with other organisations, to take a lead and help shape local and regional policy*

¹ The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008 - 2014; City of London Local Development Framework Core Strategy, September 2011; The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, July 2011; Noise Policy Statement for England 2010, Defra March 2010; National Planning Policy Framework DCLG 2012.

1. New Developments

Overall aim: To prevent or minimise noise emissions and noise impacts of developments on residents, businesses, workers and visitors at noise sensitive locations.

The City of London has a highly complex and intensively used built environment in which space is at a premium and neighbours in very close proximity.

Although office based business and financial related services are the dominant activities, the City is also a place where people live. Additionally, the City has a small number of educational and health service sites which have particular noise sensitivities.

The main noise sources related to developments in the City are:

- Demolition and construction work and associated activities e.g. piling, heavy goods vehicle movements, utilities street works
- Building services plant and equipment e.g. ventilation fans, air-conditioning, emergency generators
- Leisure facilities and licensed premises e.g. amplified music
- Servicing activities e.g. deliveries, window cleaning and building maintenance

The level of new development, including redevelopment of existing buildings, continues to be high. The City of London Core Strategy anticipates continuing economic growth for the City, predominantly business and financial services led. There will be a consequential increase in demand for retail and leisure facilities and a growth in residential accommodation.

Minimising noise from new developments will be primarily through the implementation of appropriate planning and licensing policies and working more closely with businesses before formal applications are submitted.

POLICIES

Planning development

Developments 1: Minimising noise emissions and impacts of new development through the development and application of appropriate and effective planning policies, conditions and agreements within the Local Development Framework.

Premises Licence policies, conditions and enforcement

Developments 2: Minimising noise emissions and impacts of new leisure and entertainment premises through the development, application and enforcement of appropriate, consistent and effective policies, procedures and conditions within the framework of the City of London Statement of Licensing Policy.

Infrastructure projects

Developments 3: Continue to work proactively to minimise noise impacts of major developments and infrastructure projects through:

- Lobbying and technical representations
- Use of Planning Conditions e.g. requiring provision of Environmental Management Plans for approval
- Promoting a flexible approach to compliance and good practice contained in the City of London Code of Practice on Deconstruction and Construction
- Where necessary, use of enforcement measures under the Control of Pollution Act 1974.

Engagement, advice and guidance

Developments 4: Continue to provide advice, support and guidance to the City Corporation on minimising noise and noise impacts arising from proposed Corporation development activities.

Developments 5: Continue to work to assess and minimise noise and noise impacts of street and other open space events planned in the City.

Developments 6: Continue to work proactively with the leisure, hospitality, construction and other business sectors to ensure noise and other environmental impacts of new developments are adequately managed and minimised.

2. Transport and Street Works

Overall aim: To promote and support the minimisation, or reduction where possible, of transport and street related adverse noise and noise impacts, while recognising the need to minimise disruption resulting from infrastructure works.

The City of London needs and promotes an efficient transportation system that allows commuters to get to and from work, couriers and goods vehicles to make essential deliveries and collections.

Noise from street works need to be minimised while also exercising the traffic management duty. Effective consultation and communications with affected residents and businesses are key measures to minimise complaints.

The most significant sources of transport related noise causing annoyance and disturbance in the City, according to complaints received, are street works. Road traffic noise is also a significant source of environmental noise in the City but is less frequently a source of complaint. Road Transport noise is most likely to cause adverse impacts on quality of life and possibly on health. Other transport related noises are from aircraft (including helicopters), sirens from emergency vehicles, and the rail and underground networks.

POLICIES

City of London Highways Authority Functions

Transport 1: Minimise and where necessary limit the noise impacts of street-works with reference to the latest relevant City of London Code of Practice² and wherever possible consider alternative arrangements to minimise duration of works and disruption to traffic.

Transport 2: Continue the development of close cooperation and partnerships on street-works noise issues between City Corporation Departments, TfL, Utilities and contractors.

Transport 3: Encourage, seek funding for and support use and further development of effective community communications strategies to minimise noise disturbance and duration of street-works.

Transport 4: Integrate noise minimisation considerations into policy, planning and design of City Corporation's transport, cleansing, planning, highways management and improvement activities across the City.

2 Currently, the 6th ed. available at <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/environmental-health/environmental-protection/Pages/Noise-strategy-and-policy.aspx>

City of London Highways Authority Functions

Transport 5: Integrate noise minimisation requirements into City Corporation procurement processes and contract specifications for highways maintenance and improvement, engineering, transportation and cleansing activities.

Transport 6: Incorporate noise minimisation considerations for City Corporation schemes, including good design practice, when considering improvements or changes to road transport planning, traffic and pedestrian routes. Prioritise noise minimisation measures according to noise reduction benefit.

Transport 7: Meet the Corporation's obligations as a Highways Authority in the Noise Action Plan: London Agglomeration, and also support TfL's obligations to implement the Action Plan on TfL roads in the City.

Advocacy

Transport 8: Work to influence TfL, Utilities companies, Network Rail, Crossrail, Civil Aviation Authority, Police Authorities and other emergency services wherever possible to reduce noise and vibration levels and impacts from their operations for City residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

Night Time Servicing

Transport 9: Continue to support restrictions on night time and weekend commercial vehicle movements through the City and to limit operational hours of noisy servicing activities in noise sensitive locations where necessary. Support for quieter delivery, collection and servicing trials and schemes where application of time limits are not practicable AND they achieve acceptable noise reduction.

General

Transport 10: Exploit opportunities and synergies with other City of London Corporation policies (e.g. the City Corporation's Air Quality Strategy 2011 and Local Transportation Implementation Plan) to reduce noise and noise impacts from road transportation, servicing and street works.

Transport 11: Where possible, support and contribute to the development of low noise methods, schemes, management techniques and technologies which could reduce noise or noise impacts from road traffic, street works and servicing.

3. Dealing with Noise Complaints and Incidents

Overall aim: To resolve noise complaints and incidents through a coordinated noise response, enforcement and information sharing network.

The City Corporation has a statutory obligation to investigate and take action on complaints of noise nuisance. Despite the numerous proactive measures to deal with the potential for excessive noise, the City Corporation receives a significant number of complaints. The strategy outlines a range of actions aimed at improving the way noise complaints are addressed.

The City Corporation and its partners need to have the arrangements in place to respond, assess and take action to minimise and prevent recurrences of unacceptable noise.

Not all noise complaints are necessarily made directly to the City Corporation. Some are received by the City of London Police, or are made directly to noise perpetrators or contractors through 'Helplines' such as the Crossrail Helpline.

Others with responsibilities for noise issues include:

- Corporation of London – e.g. Open Spaces, Housing, Planning, Licensing, Highways and Transportation, Barbican Centre
- City of London Police
- Registered Social Landlords
- Transport for London
- Civil Aviation Authority and Airport Authorities
- Ministry of Defence

There is scope for strengthening and improving current levels of co-ordination and cooperation between those with noise management responsibilities and the City Corporation Pollution Team, towards providing a joined-up noise response service.

POLICIES

Noise complaint resolution and enforcement

Responding 1: Provide a dedicated service responding to, assessing and resolving justifiable noise complaints according to statutory obligations and noise management policies and procedures, managing expectations and using law enforcement tools where necessary.

Responding 2: Continue to provide a rapid response to noise complaints requiring urgent action, in particular:

- 'Out of Hours' noise response service to respond swiftly to complaints of noise occurring outside office hours
- Response during 'office hours' to noise affecting businesses e.g. street works or construction sites.

Noise complaint resolution and enforcement

Responding 3: The City Corporation, in its capacity as London Port Health Authority, will undertake night time noise patrols on the River Thames, particularly during summer months, to monitor and control noise emanating from activities on the river, and prevent disturbance to City residents, through enforcement action where necessary.

Responding 4: To apply noise prevention, control and mitigation guidance developed or adopted by the City of London; currently this is the latest edition of the City of London Code of Practice for Deconstruction and Construction Etc. (Appendix 2 outlines the key requirements of the Code relevant to working hours of noisy work on sites).

Responding 5: Continue to develop timely, consistent, and co-ordinated joined up approaches to enforcement and partnership with other regulators and public bodies to resolve and reduce the number of noise (including noise-related anti-social behaviour) complaints, e.g. Planning Authority (both City Corporation and Mayor of London), City Police, Licensing Authority, Highways Authorities, Safer City Partnership, Housing Authority and other Registered Social Landlords.

Responding 6: Organisations involved with noise management powers and responsibilities will be encouraged and supported to resolve noise complaints made to them where that is possible.

Noise complaint information and data

Responding 7: Organisations involved with noise management powers and responsibilities will be encouraged to maintain and share information and data on noise complaints. The information made available will be collated, analysed and shared between them (within the limitations of data protection legislation).

Responding 8: The City of London Corporation will, where possible (subject to limitations of data protection legislation) share noise complaint data with City residents.

Engaging with businesses

Responding 9: Continue to work proactively with the leisure, hospitality, construction and other business sectors to manage and minimise noise impacts and other environmental impacts of their operations. Such work to include provision of advice and sharing information and best practice on reducing noise disturbance and complaints.

4. Protecting and Enhancing Tranquil Areas

Overall aim: To protect, and where possible enhance, the peace and tranquillity in parts of the City so that residents, workers and visitors can find respite from the noisy urban environment.

There is a requirement for local planning policies to identify and protect areas of relative tranquillity in order to provide areas of respite from noisy urban environments. This strategy proposes the identification of 'tranquil areas' in the City and the development of policies to protect and enhance these spaces. There are also suggestions for encouraging major new developments to include tranquil areas.

There is growing interest in the value of 'tranquil areas'. National, Regional and local policies support the identification and protection of areas of tranquillity or high soundscape quality³.

The City Corporation has already been looking at options to protect and enhance tranquil areas. According to a social survey people who live in and work in the City value relatively quiet, tranquil areas and positive (e.g. iconic) sounds.

POLICIES

Policies to facilitate the protection and enhancement of tranquillity and positive sounds

Tranquil Areas 1: Where possible, acoustic design and management will be integrated into other relevant City Corporation policies and strategies and environmental management to enhance the City's 'soundscape' e.g. Open Spaces Strategy, Street Scene Manual, Area Strategies Local Implementation Plan.

Tranquil Areas 2: Open spaces that would benefit from additional protection from increased noise will be identified; specific recommendations will be made to protect and enhance these spaces in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, The London Plan and City of London Core Strategy, supported by appropriate planning policies.

Tranquil Areas 3: Existing noise levels at open spaces will be decreased whenever the opportunity arises

Tranquil Areas 4: Major site developments will be encouraged to include tranquil areas through the planning consent pre-application process.

Tranquil Areas 5: Information on publicly accessible tranquil open spaces will be made available to the public.

Tranquil Areas 6: Options for the protection and enhancement of iconic sounds will be investigated.

Tranquil Areas 7: Consideration will be given to developing sound-based public art features in the City which will positively enhance tranquillity.

³ The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, July 2011.
National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012; DCLG.
City of London Local Development Framework Core Strategy, September 2011.

APPENDIX 1: NOISE STRATEGY POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Policies Reference	Actions	Timescale
Developments 1 Tranquil Areas 1	1) Review and update planning conditions and informatives to ensure they are fit for purpose and reflect the policies and aims of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Core Strategy and City of London Noise Strategy,	December 2012 and ongoing
	2) Develop appropriate planning policies in the emerging Development Management DPD and other policy documents to reflect policies and aims of the Noise Strategy.	March 2014
	3) Consider noise and 'tranquil' areas issues in Environmental Enhancement Area Strategies as consultations emerge.	Ongoing
	4) Develop further guidance for designers and developers on designing 'tranquil' spaces and minimising final use noise impacts.	March 2014
	5) Review guidance to construction businesses on noise considerations and content relating to Environmental Management Plans.	March 2013
	6) Engage with relevant organisations including Defra and Department for Communities and Local Government, for noise related guidance on planning control during the early stages of implementation of the NPPF.	March 2012 - March 2014
Developments 2	7) Work to influence Licensing policy through the proposed review of the City of London Statement of Licensing Policy and procedures.	June 2012 - December 2012
Developments 3	8) Continue to lobby Crossrail for support to provide a timely response and consent process to Section 61 consent applications.	Ongoing
Developments 4	9) Continue to provide ad hoc advice to a wide range of City Corporation Departments e.g. Department of the Built Environment project works, facilities and housing stock management, waste collection, and events promotion and management, Barbican Centre.	Ongoing
Developments 5	10) Continue to consider noise impacts of City events and filming through the Augmented Safety Advisory Group (ASAG) and also via direct consultation with M&CP Pollution Team.	Ongoing

Policies Reference	Actions	Timescale
Transport 1, 2, 3, 11	1) Continue to work with Department of the Built Environment (DBE), contractors and utility companies to facilitate reduced traffic disruption (e.g. extended working hours) due to street works.	Ongoing
	2) Review options for reducing traffic disruption while minimising noise impacts for residents and businesses including review of the current 'quiet hours' requirements in the City of London Code of Practice for Deconstruction and Construction.	March 2013
	3) Lobby TfL to build flexible arrangements into their proposed 'lane rental' scheme to prevent nuisance and disturbance to City residents in sensitive locations of the TfL network within the City.	June 2012
	4) Develop formal liaison protocols on noise issues with Transport for London.	September 2013
	5) Work with relevant City Corporation Departments to provide advice and support on mimimising noise and noise impacts from their transport and highways related operations.	Ongoing
Transport 4, 6	6) Review and develop working arrangements between DBE and M&CP for integration of noise considerations where required into strategic and service planning and delivery.	September 2013
	7) Contribute to the inclusion of noise minimisation considerations into the City of London Manual for Sustainable Streets.	March 2013
Transport 5	8) Develop policy and arrangements for integration of noise management considerations into relevant City Corporation PP2P (Procure to Pay) procurement processes and contracts e.g. specifications.	May 2012 - March 2013
Transport 7	9) Seek funding for noise surveys to gather baseline noise data on road traffic noise levels in the City.	March 2013

Policies Reference	Actions	Timescale
	10) Noise Action Planning: - Complete investigation stages at Important Areas First Priority Locations (FPL) - Following the investigation stage, to consider and secure budget, where practical, to implement measures to reduce high road traffic noise levels at FPL's where the Corporation are the Highways Authority - Lobby and support, where necessary, TfL, Department of Transport and Office of the Rail Regulator to meet their similar obligations on other routes in the City.	November 2012 September 2013 March 2013
Transport 8	11) Continue discussions with Crossrail and their contractors to minimise noise impact of tunnelling and train movements when operational.	Ongoing
Transport 9	12) Continue to enforce and raise awareness of the City limits on night time deliveries in noise sensitive areas including temporary relaxation in the lead up to the Olympic and Paralympic games; the policy on night time delivery time limits may need to be considered and reviewed after the games.	April - September 2012 Review December 2012
	13) Continue to be involved with trials and schemes which promote quieter deliveries and premises servicing in the City during the Olympic and Paralympic Games: e.g. TfL Quiet Deliveries trials and Code of Practice.	April - August 2012
Transport 4, 10, 11	14) Continue to promote the use of quieter vehicles and reduced use of road traffic vehicles for journeys through the Core Strategy, Local Implementation Plan, City of London Cycling Plan and Air Quality Strategy.	Ongoing
Responding 1, 2, 4	1) Review, update and consolidate current M&CP noise service management and delivery policies.	March 2013
	2) Support and encourage good noise management practice in Licensed Premises through the development of good practice guidance for licensees.	September 2013
	3) Current edition of City of London Code of Practice on Deconstruction and Construction to be reviewed and updated.	March 2013

Policies Reference	Actions	Timescale
Responding 5, 6, 7, 9	4) Continue work with the Health and Well-being Board to include noise as a health 'issue' to be addressed in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.	Ongoing
	5) Continue with work involving the Licensing Liaison and Safer City Partnerships; encourage and support consistent and effective policies and procedures across the City Corporation and other agencies to respond to public nuisance related to operation of licensed premises.	Ongoing
	6) Support a joined-up approach to noise issues in the review of the Statement of Licensing Policy and the implementation of pending new licensing legislation.	June - December 2012
	7) Continue to support and take part in schemes which promote good practice in noise control and management e.g. City's Considerate Contractor Scheme (CCS) and 'Safety Thirst' scheme.	Ongoing annual schemes
	8) Develop formal liaison and coordination protocols with City Police on noise and anti-social behaviour enforcement matters and including information sharing.	September 2012
	9) Develop protocols with City Corporation DBE Development Planning on enforcement issues liaison relating to noise from unauthorised developments.	March 2013
	10) Develop protocols with City Corporation Housing Management (including Barbican Estate, Registered Social Landlords and Barbican Centre) for responding to and resolving neighbour and neighbourhood noise complaints.	March 2014
	11) Continue to build on business engagement including attending and presenting at business, licensed trade, sector liaison and residents meetings.	Ongoing
	12) Develop formal liaison protocols on noise issues with Transport for London.	September 2013
Responding 8	13) Make arrangements for the public sharing and availability of noise complaint data.	September 2012

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The full version of this strategy is available on the City of London website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/environmental-health/environmental-protection/Pages/Noise-strategy-and-policy.aspx

