

Construction Site Noise

Unfortunately, due to the nature of construction works, noise is inevitable and can rarely be completely prevented. However it is accepted that noise from construction sites can be very disturbing, particularly if it is a large development that takes a considerable length of time. 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 e.g. on railways

Control of construction site noise

Our main control is through restricting the hours that noisy work is carried out from **08:00 until 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 until 13:00 on Saturdays. No noisy works should be carried out on Sundays and Bank Holidays.** These times do not restrict other work activities that do not result in noise disturbance at neighbouring noise sensitive premises, (internal work like electrical wiring, fixing doors for example).

In some circumstances it may however be necessary for noisy construction works to be carried out outside these hours. Such works may arise from emergency circumstances or the delivery of large plant and equipment where congestion and risks to safety prevent roads being used during working hours.

Contractors should also do everything reasonably possible (using best practical means) to ensure noise from works within these hours is also kept to a minimum. This includes using well-maintained and silenced plant and equipment including compressors, generators and power tools.

Under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act (COPA) 1974, local authorities have powers to control noise (and vibration) from building sites.

The control is by the service of a notice making requirements on the person responsible for the construction operations.

The notice can specify types of plants and machinery, permitted hours of operation, boundary noise levels and the use of 'best practicable means' to keep all noise to a minimum - e.g. 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 Protection before proceeding and ask for our requirements or download our Code of Practice which can be found on the main *Planning and Noise* page of the website

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. Download the application which can be found on the main *Planning and Noise* page of the website.

Controlling noise from building sites – involving the community

We set down strict time limits for noisy building works and we try to enforce this rigorously (although there have to be some exceptions). But builders, on major projects, can do a lot more to reduce disturbance to local people, for example.

- notifying residents about particularly noisy work
- scheduling drilling, piling and other very noisy work to give local residents and businesses some breaks
- avoiding delivery and skip vehicles arriving before 8am