



Noise Management Plan

Easteds Barn, Easteds Lane, Southwater,
Horsham

Client

Little Barn Owls Ltd

Evolved Acoustics

info@evolvedacoustics.co.uk

EV2615-01-C

Evolved Acoustics Limited
Registered at 2 St Andrews Place,
Southover Road, Lewes BN7 1UP
Company No. 14503285

Document Control and Revision History

Report Reference	EV2615-01-C
Project	Noise Management Plan for Proposed New Building at Little Barn Owls, Easteds Barn, Easteds Lane, Southwater.
Client	Little Barn Owls Ltd
Author	T Hegan MIOA

Rev	Date of Issue	Comment
A	26/03/26	Initial draft for client review
B	08/04/26	Updated following client review
C	08/04/26	For submission

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the named Client using reasonable skill and care and all information is confidential to the Client. Any third party relying on the contents of this report do so entirely at their own risk and the author accepts no responsibility, including in negligence, to any such third party. Furthermore, no responsibility is accepted for matters falling outside of the scope of works agreed with the Client.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	Scope	1
2.	Site Context and Proposed Development	2
2.1	Current Nursery	2
2.2	Proposed Building	2
3.	Noise Considerations and Assessment	3
3.1	Noise-Sensitive Receptors	3
3.2	Qualitative Review	3
3.3	Quantitative Assessment	4
3.4	Outcome of Noise Assessment	5
4.	Noise Management Plan	6
4.1	Proposed New Classroom Building	6
4.2	Management of Outdoor Activity	6
4.3	Structured and Supervised Activities	6
4.4	Management of Noisier Behaviour	7
4.5	Use of Off-site Woodland Area	7
4.6	Ongoing Review of Activities	7
5.	Conclusions	8

Appendix A – Figures

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope

Evolved Acoustics Limited was commissioned by Little Barn Owns Ltd in March 2026 to assist in developing a Noise Management Plan (NMP). The purpose of the NMP is to accompany a planning application for the removal of covered play area and erection of single storey classroom, which will facilitate an increase in provisions of up to 10 children.

Pre-app advice has been sought by the applicant from Horsham District Council (HDC) which responded with the following comments relating to noise and amenity impacts:

“Amenity Impacts

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land. The proposed building is not considered to give rise to overlooking or privacy issues to nearby properties. The submitted Cover Letter details that the proposed new classroom will allow an increase in provision, allowing for a further 9 children to attend and two extra staff to be employed. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within the Built-Up Area, given the proximity of neighbouring residential dwellings, it is important to consider noise management. Given the increase in provision, it is considered reasonable to request a Noise Management Plan, seeking details on how this additional noise will be managed/mitigated against.

The application will be subject to consultation with HDC's Environmental Health Department and public consultation, should an application be submitted.”

The primary aims of the NMP are firstly to assess the extent to which the proposal will lead to a change in sound levels from the facility (if any), and secondly to propose noise management or mitigation measures to limit any adverse noise effects, if required.

2. Site Context and Proposed Development

2.1 Current Nursery

The application site comprises an existing nursery operating from a converted barn at Easteds Lane, Southwater, Horsham, providing day nursery care for children from early years to pre-school age. The nursery's activities take place primarily within the main barn building, with associated external space used in connection with the nursery operation. The nursery's educational model includes creative learning activities and structured outdoor learning as part of its day-to-day operation.

Children over the age of 3 also participate in regular forest school sessions at an off-site private woodland area located a short distance from the site. The nursery therefore operates through a combination of indoor learning activities, use of the on-site outdoor space, and off-site outdoor learning sessions.

A site plan is shown on Figure A1 of Appendix A.

2.2 Proposed Building

The proposed development comprises the removal of an existing covered play shelter and the erection of a single-storey classroom in the same location within the north-eastern corner of the nursery site. The replacement building will occupy broadly the same footprint as the existing structure and will remain within an area already in use as part of the nursery's operational outdoor space.

The proposed classroom will have a footprint of approximately 27 m² and will be constructed with timber stud walls, horizontal timber cladding and a pitched membrane roof. Openings will face inward toward Easteds Barn and the playground, while the elevations facing neighbouring properties are formed of a solid construction.

The floor plans of the existing covered play area and proposed new building are shown on Figure A2 in Appendix A.

3. Noise Considerations and Assessment

3.1 Noise-Sensitive Receptors

The closest residential noise-sensitive receptors are the dwellings at 1 Nutham Lane to the east of the nursery site and the two dwellings on Easteds Lane immediately to the north. These are marked on Figure A1 in Appendix A.

3.2 Qualitative Review

3.2.1 Sound Sources

The building itself replaces an existing area used for play activity, and comprises of a building that is more acoustically insulated than the original structure. Furthermore, the building itself is to be used for creative learning activities rather than any free or unstructured play activity. Consequently, it is not expected that noise emanating from the building itself will result in any material increase in noise levels.

3.2.2 Nature of the Proposed Change

The proposal represents a modest increase in provision enabled by the introduction of a new classroom building to accommodate the existing *atelier* function, thereby releasing space within the main barn.

3.2.3 Consideration of Outdoor Activity Noise

The garden is used on a broadly continuous basis throughout the nursery day, typically between approximately 08:00 and 18:00, with the busiest periods generally occurring during the morning and mid-afternoon. Use may increase slightly around midday during summer months, when outdoor lunch activities may also take place.

Notwithstanding this, the outdoor area is not generally occupied by all children at any one time. Rather, children move on a free-flow basis between different indoor and outdoor activities, such that garden use is distributed across the day and typically occurs in smaller groups. This overall pattern of use would remain unchanged under the proposed development.

The additional provision will not lead to any change in the hours of operation of the nursery as a whole nor will it result in any extension to the hours of outdoor play activities within the garden.

3.2.4 Qualitative Review Summary

Overall, the proposed development would not introduce a materially different form of activity on the site, and the principal noise consideration remains the managed use of the outdoor area associated with the nursery.

3.3 Quantitative Assessment

As a simple indication of the scale of change, a basic logarithmic comparison can be made between an assumed baseline of 54 children and a proposed level of 64 children. Assuming, on a simplified basis, that noise output scales approximately with the number of children and that all other factors remain unchanged, the theoretical change in sound level would be:

$$\Delta L = 10 \log_{10}(62/52) \approx 0.8 \text{ dB}$$

A calculated change in noise level of +0.8 dB is predicted.

As this calculation refers only to the contribution of noise from the nursery, the presence of other environmental sound will likely mean that the actual noise level change may be even smaller. Even so, the calculated increase of less than 1 dB is comfortably below the IEMA threshold for a significant effect, with the guidance indicating that changes of less than 2.9 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ fall within the “none / not significant” category ¹. The same principle would apply to noise from staff and parents’ vehicles accessing the site.

This simple calculation indicates the scale of change arising from the proposed increase in provision. Whilst not a detailed acoustic prediction, it indicates that the increase in child numbers would result in only a very small change in sound level.

In practice, children would not all be outside at the same time, and the additional provision would be distributed across the nursery’s wider activities. Any associated increase in noise would therefore be limited.

¹ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. Guidelines for Environmental Noise Impact Assessment. Nov 2014.



3.4 Outcome of Noise Assessment

Overall, the potential for any material increase in noise impact is considered to be low. Nevertheless, a Noise Management Plan has been prepared to minimise any potential for adverse effects on neighbouring NSRs.

4. Noise Management Plan

The following measures are proposed to ensure that the modest increase in nursery provision does not give rise to any material increase in noise impact.

4.1 Proposed New Classroom Building

The three sides of the proposed classroom building facing to the east, north and west are to be constructed of solid walls. Any windows on these elevations will remain closed whilst activities are taking place inside the building, whilst the main doors (facing south) may remain open for ventilation.

The proposed building shall not be used for any activities involving musical instruments or amplified music. Any such activities will take place within the existing main barn building.

4.2 Management of Outdoor Activity

Outdoor play and learning activities shall be structured such that the number of children using the on-site outdoor area at any one time does not materially exceed the existing pattern of use. The programme of activities has been optimised to prevent excessive noise and is formed of:

- Children split into groups moving between indoor and outdoor spaces on a free-flow basis depending on the activity being undertaken.
- Aside from slightly busier periods during the mid-morning and mid-afternoon, garden use is distributed across the day to avoid peaks in noise levels and to avoid large groups of children outside at the same time.
- Use of off-site outdoor areas e.g. the woodland, helping to reduce on-site noise.

Use of outdoor areas of the nursery shall continue to be limited to 08:00 – 18:00 hrs.

The basic noise calculations documented in Chapter 3 demonstrate that, provided the current general pattern of use of the outdoor area is maintained, the modest increase in provision is unlikely to lead to any noticeable change in noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

4.3 Structured and Supervised Activities

Use of the outdoor area shall continue to comprise supervised and structured play and learning activities under staff oversight.

4.4 Management of Noisier Behaviour

Staff-to-child ratios will be maintained in accordance with relevant statutory and industry requirements, so that children can be appropriately managed and any instances of elevated noise can be promptly addressed. Where noise levels become excessive on a persistent basis, appropriate steps shall be taken to redirect the activity, provide reassurance, or relocate the child or activity indoors as appropriate.

4.5 Use of Off-site Woodland Area

The nursery shall continue to make use of the off-site woodland area as part of its wider programme of outdoor learning and play activities. If for any reason the use of the off-site outdoor area should no longer be available in future then the NMP will be reviewed.

4.6 Ongoing Review of Activities

The management of noise shall be considered a key factor in any future changes to the nursery's learning and play programme. Where necessary, this NMP will be reviewed so that any potential noise impacts can be identified and mitigated accordingly.



5. Conclusions

The proposed development of a new classroom building to replace the existing covered play area is not expected to give rise to any material increase in noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive receptors. A simple quantitative comparison indicates that the uplift in provision would equate to a change of less than +1 dB, which would typically correspond with an insignificant impact. A Noise Management Plan has been set out to ensure the ongoing management of noise and to assist in preventing any adverse noise effects from arising in future.

Appendix A – Figures



Figure A1: Site Plan and Noise-Sensitive Receptors

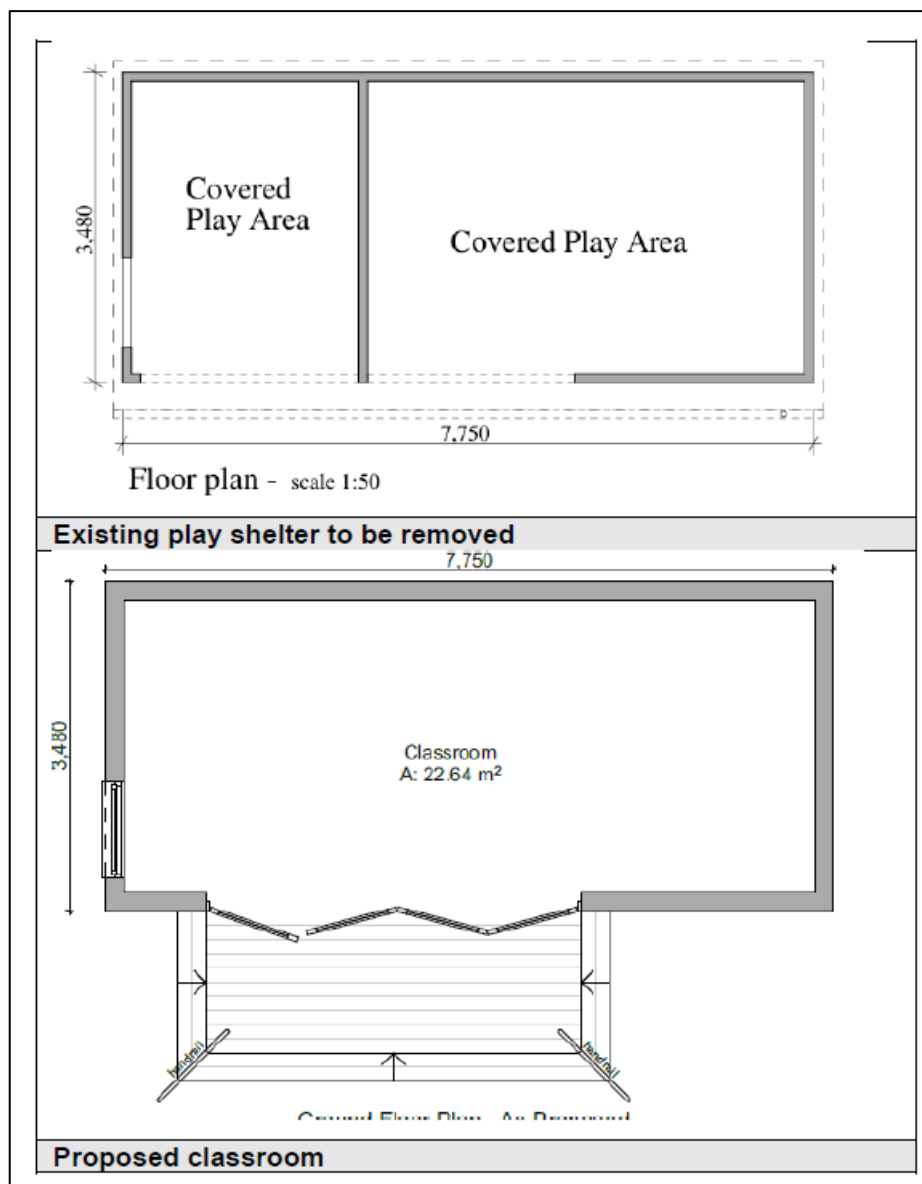


Figure A2: Existing Floor Plan and Proposed Replacement Classroom