



TECHNICAL NOTE

Land north of Woodpecker House, Sawley Old Brow, Sawley BB7 4LF

Proposed construction of a single-storey short-term holiday let.

Date 12th August 2026
Site Visited N/A
Ribble Valley Ref. 3/2026/0476
Ref. 20260812 9964.Clitheroe TN
Prepared by: M A Kenyon MSc BSc MIOA



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Martec has been instructed to prepare a noise impact assessment in connection with the above, by J Douglas Town Planning, in the following terms:

“...the Council has requested a noise assessment. They said, ‘please supply a noise assessment as the development will be located in close proximity to residential receptors and carries noise generating potential’ ”

This Technical Note sets out the history of the site and application, explains the lack of noise criteria and draws conclusions as to the likely noise impact.

Appendix 1 explains acoustic terminology and Appendix 2 contains the author’s qualifications and experience.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO CASE

2.1 Previous Application

Some two years ago an application was made for two, single-storey holiday lets on the site [Ribble Valley Ref. 3/2024/0672]; the application site plan is shown in Figure 2 of this Technical Note.

I have looked through the online planning documents for the previous application, only one of the four 3rd party responses mentioned noise:

“The dwellings are holiday homes which will increase noise levels, scare wildlife and may cause nuisance to elderly neighbours.”

The parish council response also mentioned noise but in the context of disturbance to wildlife only:

“At the moment the area is used by badgers, deer, and other wild mammals. It is suspected that the noise of any holidaymakers would deter the animals!”

In the delegated report prior to decision to refuse, noise was considered by the officers as follows:

“Use of the proposed holiday let accommodation has the potential to invite some noise disturbance however given the small scale use proposed and separation distances that would be in place between the holiday lets and neighbouring properties, it is not anticipated that the noise generated from the proposal would

be of a scale that would be of detriment to the amenity of the nearest neighbouring residents."

Subsequently planning consent was refused on two grounds, neither of which related to noise.

To summarise the noise impact of use of the two holiday lets was considered and the officers concluded that due to the "*...small scale use proposed and separation distances that would be in place between the holiday lets and neighbouring properties...*" that the noise impact was not an issue.

2.2 Comparison of Previous and Current Applications

The site plan for the current application is shown in Figure 1 of this report. By comparing with Figure 2 [previous site plan] it can be seen that whereas previously there would have been both a 'north' and 'south' two-bed holiday let, the current application would omit the 'north' holiday let, effectively leaving only the 'south' holiday let; this would effectively halve what was previously described as a "*...small scale use*".

Again comparing the two site plans, it can be seen that that the retained 'south' holiday let is the same distance from the properties opposite as previously, so there has been no significant change in the *separation distances that would be in place between the holiday lets and neighbouring properties...*".

Similarly the orientation of the 'south' holiday let remains the same and therefore no change in noise impact as a result.

In summary the officers considered that the noise impact of the previous application would be acceptable due to the small-scale use and separation distances. Under the current application, the scale of use has halved and there have been no changes that would have increased noise impact; therefore, the overall noise impact can only have decreased and consequently the noise impact of the new holiday let proposal should also be acceptable.

3.0 CRITERIA

In my experience the ‘typical’ noise impact of holiday lets is the same in character as for ‘normal’ dwellings, i.e. people’s voices and possibly music, which is a type of “neighbour noise”. For holiday lets, in complaint/problem situations, there simply tends to be more of this “neighbour noise”.

3.1 BS4142:2014 “Method for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound”

Section 1.3 of The Scope states *“The Standard is not intended to be applied to the rating and assessment of sound from... people”*

So directly applying BS4142 would not be appropriate.

3.2 BS8233:2014 “Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings”

This Standard sets out acceptable noise levels for dwellings in its Section 7.7 and particularly in its Table 4; however, it states at its Section 7.7.1 *“Occupants are*

usually more tolerant of noise without a specific character than, for example, that from neighbours which can trigger complex emotional reactions ...For simplicity, only noise without character is considered in Table 4.” No guidance is offered in the standard on neighbour/human voice type noise which again means that using this standard directly would not be appropriate.

3.3 Summary

The latest planning guidance makes it clear that objective criteria can be used to assess noise impacts; however, the methodologies generally used for planning assessments [BS8233 and BS4142] do not cover the noise impact of people and/or speech.

The author is not aware of any criteria that apply to the circumstances of this situation.

4.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

In granting planning permission for a dwelling, either a holiday let or otherwise, which would be close to other dwellings, it can never be guaranteed that the noise impact on the neighbours will be acceptable. It will entirely depend on the users of the new dwelling.

There are no well established object assessment criteria for people/neighbour noise.

In my experience, the noise issues with holiday lets mostly relate to larger lets that can host large groups of people who meet specifically for the purposes of having a party or similar event at the large holiday let, possibly with others staying nearby. For example, a six-bed holiday let could sleep say 12 people and would probably have space for a significantly larger group of people to attend a party/event. Similar issues can arise with larger holiday lets in resorts or cities such that larger groups of people can be 'coming and going' to and from entertainment venues, possibly into the early hours of the morning.

By contrast, the current proposal is for a two-bed holiday let which could sleep four people at most, and with a relatively modest kitchen/diner/living room space, which could not host many more than that. In addition, the flat space around the property, where people could gather outdoors, is very limited. Equally relatively the sites isolated rural location means that occupants of the holiday let would be unlikely to be visiting, or returning from, nearby entertainment venues into the early hours.

In summary, the proposed holiday let is unlikely to give rise to significant noise issues, in my opinion.

APPENDIX 1

EXPLANATION OF ACOUSTIC TERMS

The dB or the decibel, is the unit of noise. The number of decibels or the level, is measured using a sound level meter. It is common for the sound level meter to filter or 'weight' the incoming sound so as to mimic the frequency response of the human ear. Such measurements are designated **dB(A)**.

A doubling of the sound is perceived, by most people, when the level has increased by 10 dB(A). The least discernible difference is 2 dB(A). Thus most people cannot distinguish between, say 30 and 31 dB(A).

The Background level of noise is most commonly represented by the level which is exceeded for 90% of the time i.e. the LA90.

If a noise varies over time then the **equivalent continuous level, or LAeq**, is the notional constant level of noise which would contain the same amount of acoustic energy as the time varying noise.

The following table gives an approximate indication of the comparative loudness of various noises expressed in terms of the A weighted scale:

Source of noise	dB(A)	Nature of Noise
Inside Quiet bedroom at night	25-30	Very Quiet
Quiet office	40-45	
Rural background noise	35-45	
Normal conversational level	55-65	
Busy restaurant	65-75	
Inside suburban electric train	70-80	
Hand clap @ 1m	75-85	
HGV accelerating @ 5m away	85-90	Very Loud

APPENDIX 2**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF M.A. KENYON**

My full name is Melville Alexander Kenyon. I am the principal of the firm of Martec Environmental Consultants Ltd, a consultancy company that specialises in environmental noise assessment and control. I graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor's degree in Engineering and subsequently a Master's degree in Environmental Acoustics. I have been a corporate member of the professional body for noise and vibration specialists, the Institute of Acoustics, since 1988, and have sat on the British Standards Committee dealing with noise in buildings [BS.8233:1999].

I have lectured at Liverpool John Moores University on the Diploma of Acoustics course and at Manchester Metropolitan University on their Environmental Health degree course.

The firm of Martec Environmental Engineering was formed in the 1970's and joined The Association of Noise Consultants in 1996. The company is now known as Martec Environmental Consultants Ltd.

Since its formation, Martec has advised many groups of both residents and developers about the problems of noise and vibration in the environment.

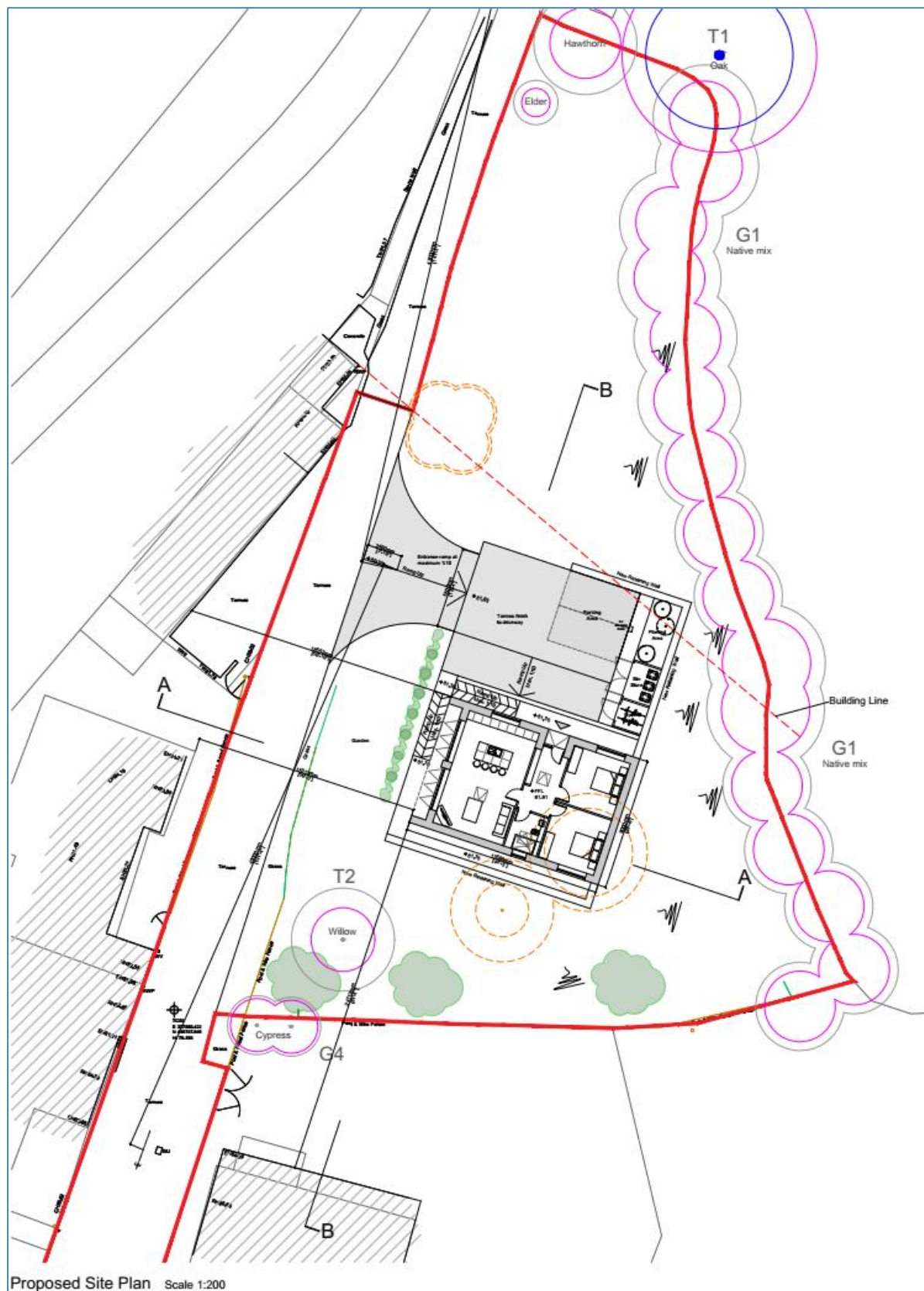


Figure 1: Site Plan for Current App [SPA Drawing 6962-P10]



Figure 2: Site Plan for Previous App [SPA Drawing 6962-P01/B]