

Acoustic South East



Noise Assessment

Report by: Scott Castle BSc (Hons) CEnvH, MCIEH MIOA

Date: 12/05/2026

Project: J4206

Issue 1

Site: **Police Workshop, Snowhill, Felbridge**

Client: **Sussex Police/DMH Stallard**

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Checked by: Peter Attwood BSc(Hons) MSc MCIOB MIOA

Issue 1	12/05/2026	Original Issue
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1 Introduction and Executive Summary

Acoustic South East have been appointed to undertake an acoustic assessment to support a planning application to extend operating hours at a vehicle workshop.

A class 1 sound level meter was located at the site boundary near to a potential residential receptor between 9th to 21st April 2026. The survey period deliberately included two weekend periods when the workshop was not in operation.

Both the measured background ($L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$) and the ambient noise levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$) were reviewed for the current opening hours of 07:30 to 16:30 hours Monday to Friday. The modal and most representative background sound pressure level was then compared against known periods (ie Saturday and Sunday) when the workshop was closed in order to identify what, if any, impact the workshop was having on the site.

The measured background sound pressure levels ($L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$) were unchanged and were 42dB with the workshop both open and closed. The same exercise was carried out with the ambient noise levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$) for the workshop again open and closed and these were also unchanged with the same sound pressure level of 49dB $L_{Aeq,T}$.

The assessment at the site boundary indicates that the vehicle workshop is not having any adverse impact on the site boundary. It follows logically, that if there is no impact at the closest potential receptor at 55m from the workshop, then the nearest residential at 146m to the North East and adjacent to the busy road will equally not be impacted.

Notwithstanding the lack of impact, it is recognised that there have been historic concerns by the Environmental Health Department (Environmental Protection) over the testing of vehicle sirens at the site. For this reason, whilst the workshop hours may extend, the police workshop intend to honour the arrangement and ensure compliance with condition 4 of DM/17/2946 which requires that sirens are only tested during daytime hours.

Based on the above information, planning consent to extend the hours of operation of the workshop should not be refused on noise grounds.

2 Context, Noise Criteria & Noise Assessment Methodology

2.1 Application Title

Application to vary conditions 4 & 10 of planning permission DM/17/2946 to enable extended operational hours at the site.

2.2 Context

The site is a workshop for repair and servicing of police vehicles.

Planning permission was granted by Mid Sussex District Council in December 2017 under DM/17/2946 for an extension to the site building. The full decision notice can be seen in Appendix A.

As one might expect for a vehicle workshop, there are conditions relating to deliveries (condition 9) as well as the closing of doors (condition 10). Given the nature of the site, there is also a condition (4) which places a time constraint on the testing of the vehicle sirens, which by their nature are loud to attract other road users' attention.

The workshop as seen in Figure 1 below is set back approximately 92m from the main road (A264).

A 2.4m fence line exists to the Western and Northern boundaries, consistent with the requirements of the previous acoustic reporting.

No works occur externally and the site is dominated by large numbers of parked vehicles.

Through discussion with site staff, there are no reported noise complaints or noise concerns.

The workshop currently operates approximately 07:30 to 16:30 hours Monday to Friday with occasional Saturday morning working.

It is proposed to extend the workshop hours to 07:00 to 19:30 hours daily and this report serves to support the planning application being made.

2.3 Site Location

The application site is detailed in red in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Site Location

2.4 Soundscape

The soundscape noted from site visits related to overhead aviation noise due to the proximity to Gatwick airport and distant road traffic noise as well as bird song. Noise was not audible from within the workshop.

2.5 Closest Residential Property

The closest residential properties are likely to be located approximately 146m North West of the site on the Northern side of the A264.

Whilst the survey was set up on the applicant's land, close to a building previously understood to be residential, it is relevant to note that the site has not likely been used in a residential capacity in a number of years and will likely have lost its potential for a residential use class.

2.6 Previous Planning/Acoustic Reporting

An acoustic report was noted on the previously consented planning website at Mid Sussex by WYG dated July 2017. Correspondence was noted on the planning website between the Environmental Protection team as technical consultees to the local planning authority and the report authors (WYG).

2.7 Siren Testing

Whilst loud, it must be recognised that the issue of siren testing is not a regular occurrence.

This can happen inside the workshop but it was reported by site staff that a brief test normally occurs as the vehicle is being driven into the workshop. If and when a test occurs internally, it is necessary to warn the other members of staff within the workshop and there are a considerable number of work stations and engineers inside the floor plan.

A siren test will last between 3-4 seconds and may be carried out once over a period of a number of days, so it is not a highly typical or regular event. The siren is deliberately switched on to ensure only that it works on activation and there are no detailed measurements or methodologies undertaken.

It is noted that on newer police vehicles there is a setting that when a driver has the handbrake applied and the driver's door is opened, the siren volume is deliberately decreased to ensure that officers' hearing is not inadvertently impacted.

Also, it was reported that inside the vehicle workshop, where vehicles are being reassembled and in their component pieces, mufflers may be applied over the siren unit to prevent the noise being an issue to other workshop engineers.

2.8 Relevant Planning and Standards

2.8.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024) defines the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.

The following paragraphs are relevant within NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) states the following:

Paragraph 187(e) - Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability, and

Paragraph 198 - Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

Paragraph 200– Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

3 Methodology

A class 1 sound level was placed at the site's Southern boundary with the nearest potentially residential receptor at circa 55m from the South East corner of the workshop. The survey location was left in place between the 9th to 21st April 2026 to ensure a robust capture of data which deliberately included two weekends without the workshop operating.

The methodology was to collate both measured background sound pressure levels ($L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$) and ambient sound pressure levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$) and compare the periods that the workshop was open as well as the workshop being closed.

The survey position was deliberately selected as being away from the main road (A264) and at a position close to where a former residential property was located.

The weather conditions were predominantly dry with low wind speeds, ideal for environmental noise monitoring.

Survey(s) carried out by	Scott Castle BSc(Hons) Env Health, MCIEH CEnvH MIOA
Equipment Used	Svantek 971A Class 1 Sound Level Meter, mounted on a monopole at 2.3m in height.
Location	WhatThreeWords:vague.asset.cooks
Duration	9-21 April 2026

Table 1. Survey Data



Figure 2. Location of the Survey Equipment

4 Measured Data/Results

As previously stated, the current opening hours of the workshop were assessed with both the L_{A90} and the L_{Aeq} in order to compare periods with the workshop both open and closed and what, if any impact is occurring at the closest receptor location.

4.1 Measured Background Sound Pressure Levels ($L_{A90,T}$)

These use a modal assessment of the most frequently occurring background sound pressure levels.

4.1.1 Workshop OPEN (07:30-16:30 hours Monday to Friday)

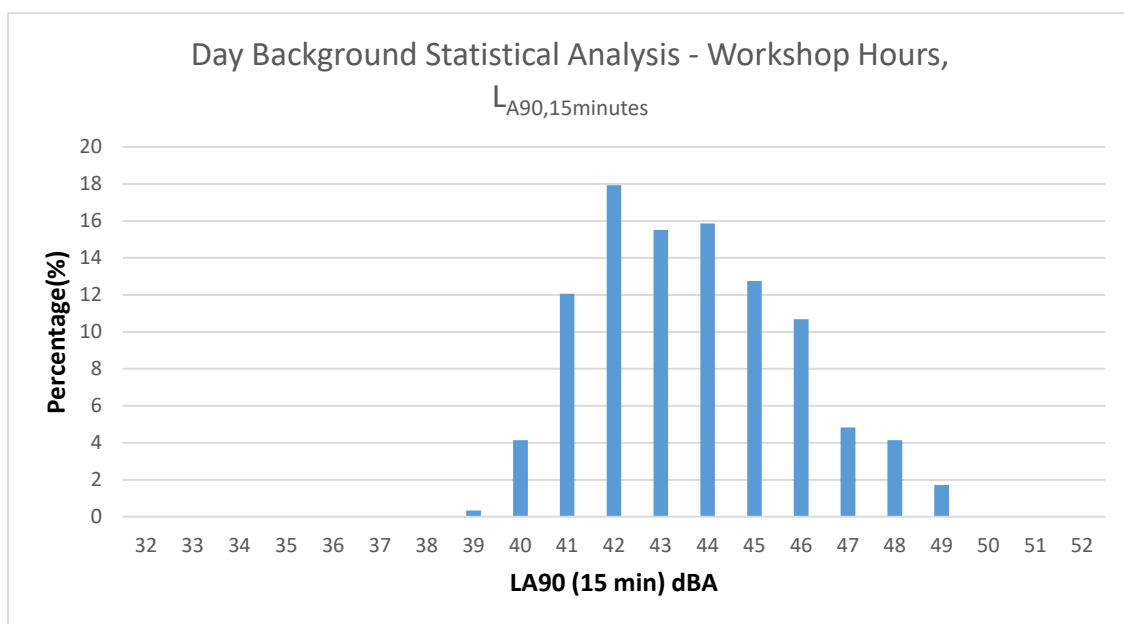


Figure 3. Measured $L_{A90,T}$, Workshop Open

The representative background sound pressure level with the site operating is 42dB $L_{A90,15minutes}$.

4.1.2 Workshop CLOSED (07:30-16:30hours Saturday and Sunday)

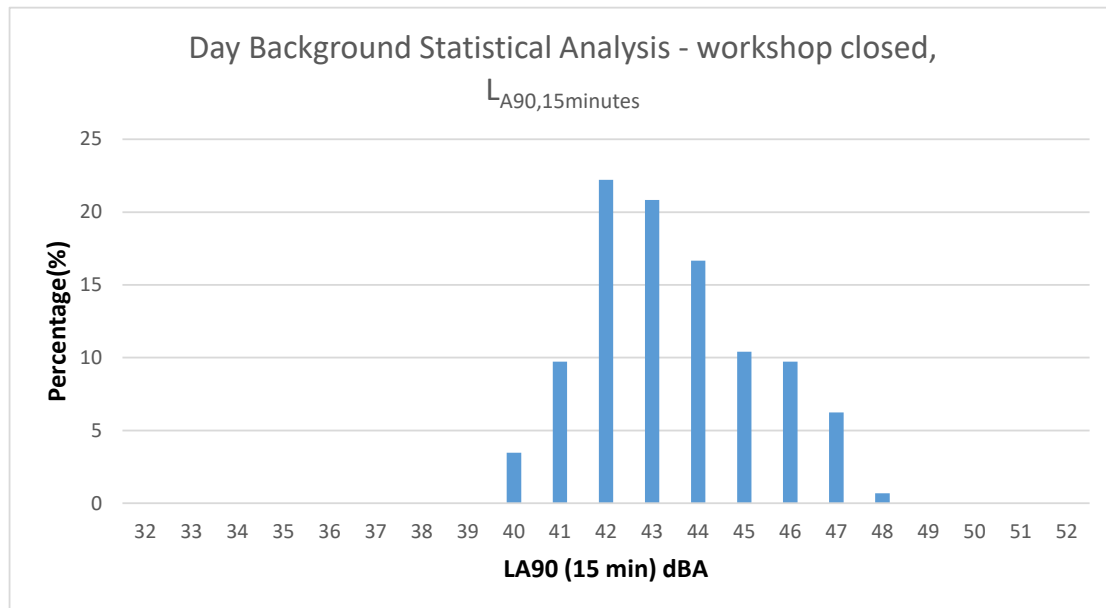


Figure 4. Measured $L_{A90,T}$, Workshop Closed

The representative background sound pressure level with the site closed is 42dB $L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$.

4.2 Measured Ambient Sound Pressure Levels ($L_{Aeq,1\text{minutes}}$)

The time periods were logarithmically averaged for the workshop opening hours and the same hours for the weekend. The weekend periods are denoted in blue. The results are presented in Figure 5 below.

Date	Day	Logarithmically averaged Sound Pressure Level L_{Aeq} dB
09-Apr	Thu	48
10-Apr	Fri	45
11-Apr	Sat	49
12-Apr	Sun	50
13-Apr	Mon	48
14-Apr	Tue	49
15-Apr	Wed	48
16-Apr	Thu	49
17-Apr	Fri	50
18-Apr	Sat(2)	49
19-Apr	Sun	48
20-Apr	Mon	53
21-Apr	Tu(2)	52
Average - Workshop OPEN		49
Average - Workshop CLOSED		49

Figure 5. Measured $L_{Aeq,T}$, Workshop Open and Closed

It is noted that on averaging the daytime periods and the weekend periods, these both provide an average of 49dB L_{Aeq} , 07:30 to 16:30 hours.

4.3 Indoor Siren Test

A vehicle siren was tested inside the workshop at the time of the visit (21st April 2025) to determine what, if any, impact this had on the survey position which was running simultaneously at the site boundary.

A police vehicle was tested on arrival into the workshop with all doors closed.

The data showed that the 1-minute period measured at the survey location which contained two 4 second activations, was no different to 1-minute readings either side of the test. This was true for both L_{Aeq} , and L_{Amax} conditions.

4.4 External Siren Test

The client reports that a siren test was carried out on 14th April 2026 at 14:00 hours. When reviewing the data measured at the survey location, this showed a 17dB increase in the $L_{Aeq,1\text{minute}}$. It is suspected that the siren was run over a number of minutes as opposed to seconds to ensure that the test was captured within the survey.

However, contextually, it is important to recognise that this was the only time that a siren was tested by the client for the survey period of 9-21st April 2026, a period of 13 days. Given that this would only typically occur for a 3-4 second duration, this reinforces section 2.6 above about the fact that the testing is infrequent and not likely to present a concern.

5 Discussion

From the measured data it is noted that at the survey position, the modal representative background sound pressure levels are the same for the periods with the workshop open as well as closed.

The comparison also notes that the average ambient sound pressure levels measured were also the same at 49dB $L_{Aeq,07:30 \text{ to } 16:30 \text{ hours}}$ with the workshop open and closed.

This serves to demonstrate that the workshop is not having any impact at the closest potential receptor location.

Logic therefore dictates that for residential positions located further afield to the North West (146m) would be less impacted and equally would have a higher soundscape due to the proximity of the A264 road.

On this basis and with it demonstrated that the workshop does not impact the closest potential receptor location, it is arguable that an extension of hours may be permitted.

However, it is recognised that there will likely remain concern over the potential testing of vehicle sirens. Given the infrequent activity and minimal duration of the tests, whilst the hours of operation of the workshop would change, the testing of sirens can remain at the same hours as permitted for condition 4 of DM/17/2946. This provides assurance to the local planning authority that there will not be any change to site circumstances or impact to nearby residents.

It is also relevant to note that there have not been any complaints to site or as the client understands it, to the local Environmental Health department.

6 Conclusion

A class 1 sound level meter was located at the site boundary near to a potential residential receptor between 9th to 21st April 2026. The survey period deliberately included two weekend periods when the workshop was not in operation.

Both the measured background ($L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$) and the ambient noise levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$) were reviewed for the current opening hours of 07:30 to 16:30 hours Monday to Friday. The modal and most representative background sound pressure level was then compared against known periods (ie Saturday and Sunday) when the workshop was closed in order to identify what, if any, impact the workshop was having on the site.

The measured background sound pressure levels ($L_{A90,15\text{minutes}}$) were unchanged and were 42dB with the workshop both open and closed. The same exercise was carried out with the ambient noise levels ($L_{Aeq,T}$) for the workshop again open and closed and these were also unchanged with the same sound pressure level of 49dB $L_{Aeq,T}$.

The assessment at the site boundary indicates that the vehicle workshop is not having any adverse impact on the site boundary. It follows logically, that if there is no impact at the closest potential receptor at 55m from the workshop, then the nearest residential at 146m to the North East and adjacent to the busy road will equally not be impacted.

Notwithstanding the lack of impact, it is recognised that there have been historic concerns by the Environmental Health Department (Environmental Protection) over the testing of vehicle sirens at the site. For this reason, whilst the workshop hours may extend, the police workshop intend to honour the arrangement and ensure compliance with condition 4 of DM/17/2946 which requires that sirens are only tested during daytime hours.

Based on the above information, planning consent to extend the hours of operation of the workshop should not be refused on noise grounds.

7 Appendix A – Historic Decision Notice (2017)

Sussex Police And Crime Commissioner And Surrey Police
Mr Andy Wells
WYG
Wharf House
Warf Road
Guildford
GU1 4RP

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE)
(ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

PERMISSION

REFERENCE: DM/17/2946

DESCRIPTION: TWO-STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING BUILDING:
LANDSCAPING AND RECONFIGURATION OF THE PARKING
AREA.

LOCATION: COURTLANDS SERVICE CENTRE, SNOW HILL, CRAWLEY
DOWN, CRAWLEY

DECISION DATE: 1 DEC 2017

CASE OFFICER: MR STEVEN KING - STEVEN.KING@MIDSUSSEX.GOV.UK

The Council hereby notify you that they **GRANT** planning permission for the above development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted application and plans and subject to compliance with the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. No new development shall be occupied until parking and turning space has been laid out within the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall allow for cars and bicycles to be parked, for the loading and unloading of vehicles and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. The parking/turning area shall be used and retained exclusively for its designated purpose.

Reason: To ensure that adequate and satisfactory provision is made for the accommodation of vehicles clear of the highways and to accord with Policy T6 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan, Policy DP19 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version and Policy CDNP07 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a landscaping scheme (including a programme for its implementation) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In the event that any such trees, or shrubs or plants die or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of 5 years following planting they shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and to accord with Policy B1 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan, Policy DP24 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version and Policy CDNP08 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4. No testing of sirens or washing of vehicles will take place outside of the hours of 0800 - 1930 Monday to Friday and 0800 - 1600 on Saturday's, Sunday's and Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjacent occupiers and to accord with Policies B3 and B23 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and Policies DP24 and DP27 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version.

5. No development shall take place until details of proposed acoustic fencing have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the extension hereby permitted shall be occupied until such acoustic fencing associated with them have been erected.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjacent occupiers and to accord with Policies B3 and B23 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and Policies DP24 and DP27 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version.

6. Vehicle siren testing shall only take place in the areas annotated on plan number SK-SCS-SITE-22 v4 for such activities.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjacent occupiers and to accord with Policies B3 and B23 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and Policies DP24 and DP27 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version.

7. The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage and means of disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The extension shall not be occupied until all the approved drainage works have been carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal is satisfactorily drained and to accord with the NPPF requirements, Policy CS13 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan, Policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031 Submission Version and Policy CDNP06 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

8. No work for the implementation of the development hereby permitted shall be undertaken on the site on Sunday Bank/Public Holidays or at any time other than between the hours 8 am and 6 pm on Mondays to Fridays and between 9 am and 1 pm Saturdays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residents and to accord with Policy B3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

9. Deliveries or collection of plant, equipment or materials for use during the demolition/construction phase shall be limited to the following times:

Monday to Friday: 08:00 - 18:00 hrs

Saturday: 09:00 - 13:00 hrs

Sunday & Public/Bank holidays: None permitted

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents and to comply with policy B3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

10. Outside of the hours of 0800 - 1930 Monday to Friday and 0800 - 1600 on Saturday's, Sunday's and Public Holidays, all external workshop doors are to remain closed other than for access and egress, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents and to comply with policy B3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

11. **Approved Plans**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application".

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

INFORMATIVES

1. In accordance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Human Rights Implications

The planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The following plans and documents were considered when making the above decision:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Submitted Date
Drainage Details	A090129-37-31-SK02		18.07.2017
Photographs			18.07.2017

Existing Site Plan	SK-SCS-SITE-01	2	14.07.2017
Existing Floor Plans	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-02	2	14.07.2017
Existing Floor Plans	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-03	2	14.07.2017
Existing Elevations	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-04	2	14.07.2017
Proposed Floor Plans	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-18	1	14.07.2017
Proposed Floor Plans	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-19	1	14.07.2017
Proposed Elevations	SK-SCS-LAYOUT-20	1	14.07.2017
Proposed Site Plan	SK-SCS-SITE-22	4	14.07.2017

SA Bonfield

Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy

NB: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU SHOULD READ THE NOTES ACCOMPANYING THIS FORM

PEFULZ

APPEALS TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Notes for Applicants

If you are aggrieved by the decision of your Local Planning Authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice;

However, if

- (i) this is a decision on a planning application relating to the same or substantially the same land and development as is already the subject of an enforcement notice, and you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision on your application, then you must do so within 28 days of the date of this notice; or
- (ii) an enforcement notice is subsequently served relating to the same or substantially the same land and development as in your application and if you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision on your application, then you must do so within:
 - 28 days of the date of service of the enforcement notice, or
 - within 6 months (12 weeks in the case of a householder appeal) of the date of this notice, whichever period expires earlier.

Appeals can be made online at: <https://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate>.

If you are unable to access the online appeal form, please contact the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a paper copy of the appeal form on tel: 0303 444 5000.

The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal but will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.

The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to the Secretary of State that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order.