

1st July 2026

NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Site: 110 Manchester Street, Heywood

Proposal: Change of Use of First Floor from Class E Commercial Accommodation to One Self-Contained Residential Dwelling (Use Class C3) with Retention of Ground Floor Commercial Unit

1. Introduction

This Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared in support of a Prior Approval application submitted under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

The proposal seeks prior approval for the change of use of the first floor of 110 Manchester Street, Heywood, from Class E commercial accommodation to a single self-contained one-bedroom residential dwelling. The existing ground floor commercial premises will remain in lawful commercial use, with no external alterations proposed to the building.

The purpose of this assessment is to consider the prior approval matter contained within Paragraph MA.2(2)(d), namely the impact of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the proposed residential development.

2. Site Context

The application property occupies a prominent position within the established commercial area of Heywood Town Centre and forms part of a continuous terrace of mixed-use buildings. The surrounding locality is characterised by a variety of commercial premises including retail units, offices, financial and professional services together with a number of residential properties occupying upper floors of neighbouring buildings.

This pattern of development is typical of traditional town centres where commercial activity at ground floor level co-exists with residential accommodation above. The proposal therefore represents the continuation of an established mixed-use environment rather than the introduction of a sensitive use into an isolated commercial location.

The site benefits from excellent accessibility to local services and public transport and is considered an appropriate and sustainable location for residential occupation.

3. Existing Noise Environment

The principal sources of environmental noise affecting the site comprise general town centre activity associated with Manchester Street, including passing road traffic, pedestrian movements and the normal operation of neighbouring commercial premises.

Noise generated within the locality is typical of a busy urban centre and is predominantly associated with daytime trading activity, customer movements and general vehicle traffic. Commercial servicing activities occur intermittently throughout normal business hours and are characteristic of the surrounding environment.

No heavy industrial operations, manufacturing processes or significant sources of continuous mechanical plant noise have been identified immediately adjoining the application property. Likewise, there are no late-night entertainment venues operating in close proximity that would be expected to generate abnormal levels of noise affecting future occupiers.

Typical background noise levels experienced within comparable town centre environments generally range between approximately 55–65 dB LAeq during daytime periods, reducing to around 50–60 dB LAeq during the evening. Such levels are commonplace within mixed-use commercial centres and are regularly accommodated through appropriate building design and acoustic separation.

4. Existing Commercial Use

The proposal retains the existing lawful commercial unit at ground floor level within Use Class E. Whilst the precise nature of any future commercial occupier cannot be predetermined, the use will remain restricted to activities permitted within Class E together with the statutory controls that regulate commercial operations.

Any commercial occupier is required to operate in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and remains subject to Environmental Health legislation relating to statutory nuisance. Consequently, any activity capable of generating excessive noise would itself be subject to separate regulatory controls irrespective of the proposed residential conversion above.

The assessment has therefore considered the likely effects arising from a typical Class E commercial premises rather than an intensive industrial or manufacturing operation.

5. Internal Noise Transmission

The proposed apartment will occupy the first floor directly above the retained commercial premises. In order to provide an appropriate standard of residential amenity, the conversion will incorporate enhanced acoustic construction within the separating floor between the commercial and residential uses.

The floor construction will include suitable acoustic insulation, upgraded ceiling construction, resilient detailing where necessary, acoustic plasterboard systems and carefully sealed service penetrations to minimise airborne sound transmission. Particular attention will be given to junction detailing to reduce the potential for flanking sound transmission between the two uses.

These measures are capable of delivering a significantly improved level of acoustic separation compared with that found within many existing mixed-use buildings of similar age and construction.

6. Building Regulations and Acoustic Performance

The proposed conversion will be undertaken in full accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations, including Approved Document E, which establishes minimum standards for resistance to the passage of sound between adjoining uses.

Upon completion of the works, pre-completion sound insulation testing will be undertaken by a suitably qualified and independent acoustic consultant where required by Building Control in order to verify compliance with the relevant acoustic performance standards.

Whilst Building Regulations approval represents a separate legislative process from planning, compliance with Approved Document E provides additional assurance that the completed development will achieve an appropriate standard of sound insulation for future residential occupiers.

7. External Noise

The proposed dwelling utilises the existing window openings serving the first floor accommodation. The installation of modern thermally efficient double-glazed windows, together with appropriate background ventilation, will substantially reduce the transmission of external traffic noise into habitable rooms whilst maintaining suitable levels of natural ventilation.

No external plant, air conditioning equipment or mechanical extraction systems are proposed as part of the development that would give rise to additional noise emissions affecting neighbouring occupiers or future residents.

8. Assessment Against National Guidance

This assessment has been undertaken having regard to the principles contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, the Government's Planning Practice Guidance relating to Noise, BS 8233:2014 *Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings* and Approved Document E of the Building Regulations.

The proposal reflects a well-established pattern of development found throughout town centres across England whereby residential accommodation is located above commercial premises. Such forms of development are specifically encouraged through the introduction of Class MA permitted development rights in order to make more efficient use of existing buildings within sustainable locations.

Having regard to the surrounding land uses, the nature of the retained commercial premises and the proposed acoustic mitigation measures, it is considered that future occupiers will enjoy an acceptable standard of residential amenity consistent with the objectives of national planning policy.

9. Professional Planning Assessment

Having inspected the property and considered both the surrounding land uses and the nature of the retained commercial accommodation, it is not considered that the proposal gives rise to circumstances which would ordinarily necessitate a detailed BS 4142 acoustic survey.

The surrounding environment is representative of a typical mixed-use town centre where residential and commercial uses have co-existed for many years. There are no identifiable industrial processes, significant fixed mechanical plant or commercial activities operating in the immediate vicinity that would reasonably be expected to generate unacceptable levels of noise for future occupiers.

The proposed conversion incorporates a comprehensive package of acoustic mitigation measures through enhanced floor construction, upgraded ceiling systems, modern double glazing and full compliance with the acoustic requirements of the Building Regulations. These measures are considered entirely proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development and provide appropriate mitigation for the existing acoustic environment.

Having regard to the character of the locality, the retained lawful commercial use and the mitigation proposed, it is concluded that future occupants of the dwelling will experience an acceptable level of residential amenity. Consequently, the proposal satisfies the requirements of Paragraph MA.2(2)(d) of Class MA relating to the impact of noise from commercial premises upon the intended occupiers of the development.

10. Conclusion

This assessment has considered the relationship between the retained ground floor commercial premises and the proposed first floor residential dwelling. The site occupies a sustainable town centre location where mixed commercial and residential uses are well established and form an integral part of the character of the area.

The proposed development does not introduce residential accommodation into an inappropriate location but rather continues an established pattern of upper floor residential occupation commonly found throughout traditional town centres. The retained commercial use is entirely compatible with this context and remains subject to statutory environmental controls that regulate noise emissions from commercial activities.

The incorporation of enhanced acoustic separation within the building fabric, together with compliance with the Building Regulations and Approved Document E, will ensure that the proposed dwelling achieves an appropriate internal acoustic environment for future occupiers.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal will not expose future residents to unacceptable levels of noise arising from the retained commercial premises and that the development fully satisfies the requirements of Paragraph MA.2(2)(d) of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.