



# PINS NOTE 21/2015r1

To: All Examining Inspectors; all Major Applications & Plans; all Salaried Inspectors.

Relevancy: Applies to issues in planning and related casework where evidence on assessment and rating of industrial and commercial sound is presented.

Date of Issue: 23 April 2015

Currency: review on 23 October 2015

Last updated: 27 April 2015 – updated to refer to noise policy and guidance for Wales in footnote 2.

## BS 4142:2014 – METHODS FOR RATING AND ASSESSING INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL SOUND

### Action

1. Inspectors should be aware that from 31 October 2014, a revised British Standard was published, which describes methods for rating and assessing sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature<sup>1</sup>. The revised *BS4142:2014 – Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound* supersedes the previous *BS 4142:1997 – Method for Rating Industrial Noise affecting Mixed Residential and Industrial areas*, which is withdrawn from 31 October 2014 and should not be referred to in casework.
2. The standard (which is widely referred to in planning hearings/inquiries):
  - Helps assess sound levels at proposed new residential premises;
  - Enables the investigation of complaints by determining sound levels;

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<sup>1</sup> Including: a) sound from industrial and manufacturing processes; b) sound from fixed installations comprising of mechanical/electrical plant and equipment; c) sound from loading/unloading of goods and materials at industrial and/or commercial premises; and d) sound from mobile plant and vehicles forming a key part of the overall sound from the premises/process e.g. forklift trucks, train or ship movements.

- Reduces the likelihood of financial penalties;
- Supports current UK planning guidance<sup>2</sup> and Environment Agency Guidance.

## Background

3. The revised Standard has been updated since the last revision in 1997 to take account of changes in acoustic instruments and increased knowledge concerning subjective response to sound, together with advances in technology and improvements to accuracy of assessments. Sections of the Standard have also been revised to improve clarity.
4. Key changes are that the Standard now applies to commercial sound and lists what it doesn't apply to<sup>3</sup> (including other sources that fall within the scope of other guidance, e.g. wind turbines where ETSU applies). Other points to note are:
  - Sets out clear priorities to be followed in measuring background and specific sound levels and now allows for acoustic characteristics<sup>4</sup> when rating noise levels;
  - Corrections for the character of the noise are more explicit;
  - Night-time reference interval is 15 minutes, rather than 5 minutes;
  - Basis for assessing impacts has changed – a difference between rating level and background sound level or more than 10dB is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the situation; 5dB difference likely to be indication of adverse Impact, depending on the situation – the inclusion of 'situation' is important as revised BS4142 includes useful factors to take into account in this regard;
  - The Annexes provide useful worked examples;
  - Supports current planning policy in England and Wales.

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<sup>2</sup> In England [paragraph 123 of the NPPF](#) and the [Planning Practice Guidance on Noise](#) set out planning policy and guidance; and the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) sets out the Governments general policy on noise and the management of noise. In Wales planning policy and guidance is set out in [Section 13.13 of Planning Policy Wales](#) and [Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) 11: Noise \(1997\)](#); Section 2 of the [Noise Action Plan for Wales](#) provides a useful overview of the position regarding the regulation of noise in Wales.

<sup>3</sup> a) recreational activities (incl. motorsport); b) music and other entertainment; c) shooting grounds; d) construction and demolition; e) domestic animals; f) people; g) public address systems for speech; and h) other sources within the scope of other standards/guidance. The standard is also not intended to be applied to the derivation of indoor sound levels arising from sound levels outside, or the assessment of indoor sound levels. The standard is not applicable to assessment of low frequency noise

<sup>4</sup> Character correction method detailed in chapter 9.

5. An electronic copy of the revised Standard is available from the library for casework purposes. Any hard copies of parts/all of the Standard that have been obtained for use must be destroyed and the electronic copy deleted once the case has been completed. Copyright law prevents the retention of the Standard beyond that period.

6. Please contact XXXX if you have any queries on this Note.

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