

**LONDON CITY AIRPORT
AIRCRAFT NOISE SURVEY
PINTAIL CLOSE**

Report to

**Tessa Simpson
Head of Environment and Technical Operations
City Aviation House
London City Airport
The Royal Docks
London E16 2PB**

**A11327_12_RP013_1.0
30 Apr 2020**

121 Salusbury Road
London NW6 6RG
T 020 7625 4411
F 020 7625 0250
mail@bickerdikeallen.com
www.bickerdikeallen.com

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Partners (members)
David Charles, Philippa Gavey, Giles Greenhalgh, Roger Jowett, David Trew



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Appendix 1: Glossary of Acoustic Terminology

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This report has been redacted to remove identifiable details of the survey location to comply with GDPR

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bickerdike Allen Partners LLP (BAP) have been commissioned by London City Airport (LCA) to carry out a survey to monitor aircraft noise at a residential property on Pintail Close in Beckton. The survey was undertaken from 5th March 2020 to 21st March 2020.

This property is located around 1.2 km north of the western end of the airport runway. This report provides a summary of the noise measurements relating to aircraft activity.

A glossary of acoustic terminology is provided in Appendix 1.

2.0 SURVEY DETAILS

2.1 Methodology

A long-term unattended noise monitor was set up in the back garden of a residential property on Pintail Close, where environmental noise measurements were carried out in general accordance with BS 7445-1:2003¹.

This monitor recorded noise data continuously for 17 days between approximately 11:00 am on 5th March and 4:00 pm on 21st March. This period was chosen as a mixture of westerly and easterly winds were forecast for the period, meaning measurements could be taken for both runway 09 and runway 27 aircraft operations at LCA.

2.2 Equipment

The equipment used for the long-term survey was a Norsonic Type 140 sound level meter, with the microphone mounted on a tripod approximately 3 m above the ground, and clear of reflecting surfaces. The monitor installation is shown in Figure 1. The monitor was checked for correct calibration at the start and end of the measurements, and no significant drift was observed.

¹ British Standards Institute, BS 7445-1:2003 Description and measurement of environmental noise, 2003

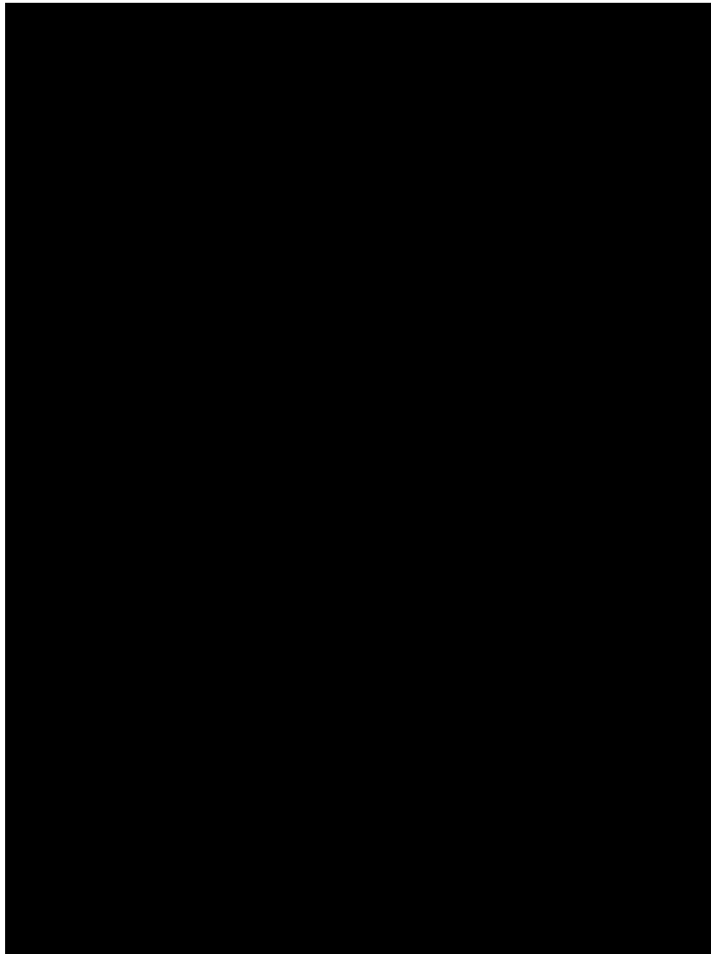


Figure 1: Noise Monitor Location

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Flight Tracks

LCA has provided BAP with the aircraft movement data and flight track data for the monitoring period. BAP have reviewed the flight tracks and found that, as the property is located directly north of the western end of the runway, aircraft departing LCA from both runway ends and arriving aircraft using runway 09 all pass equally close to the property. The exception is arrivals using runway 27 which do not fly close to the property.

3.2 Noise Measurements

The noise monitoring data was processed by BAP to correlate the measured noise levels with the aircraft movement data, provided by the airport.

The loudest aircraft events were caused by aircraft departing LCA using runway 27. Departures from runway 09 are on the ground when nearest the property and therefore the noise from these is largely shielded by intervening buildings. Arrivals using runway 09 are sometimes detectable, but as arrivals are generally much quieter than departures, it is not possible to determine the specific noise levels for them due to other non-aircraft noise events.

During the 17-day measurement period there were 923 departures from runway 27. Of these 671 (73%) were correlated with a noise event at the monitor. Generally the louder aircraft types such as the Embraer E170 and E190 were correlated more regularly. Around 95% of E190 departures were correlated with a noise event.

The higher correlation rate of the Embraer aircraft is also due to them tending to take off earlier on the runway than other aircraft types. This results in them being at a slightly higher altitude as they pass the property, which reduces the screening effect of intervening buildings.

The correlated aircraft noise events are summarised in Table 1.

Aircraft Type	No. Correlated	Average[†] L_{Amax} (dB)
Embraer E170	134	76
Embraer E190	449	79
Other Aircraft	64	74
Overall	671	77

[†] Arithmetic average.

Table 1: Summary of Noise Results

4.0 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The average maximum noise level for individual LCA aircraft (westerly departures) during the measurement period was 77 dB L_{ASmax} . The most common and loudest aircraft type among the LCA aircraft was the Embraer E190, which averaged 79 dB L_{ASmax} .

Aircraft noise in the UK, and at LCA, is commonly assessed in terms of the $L_{Aeq,16h}$ metric for the average “summer” day, which is the average noise level produced by aircraft over the 16-hour daytime period (07:00 to 23:00) for the 92-day “summer”, defined as 16th June to 15th September inclusive. This is consistent with LCA’s sound insulation scheme eligibility criteria, and is the metric used to rate community response to air noise in the UK, as recommended by the Government². As LCA operates from 06:30 to 22:30, the full extent of operations is deemed as daytime for this purpose.

The survey period was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with fewer flights than normal operating. However the fleet mix was broadly similar, so the spread of noise levels from individual flights is considered representative. Over the survey period there were an average of 130 flights per day, compared to around 228 on average in the 2019 summer period. During the 17-day measurement period, 83% of the departures used runway 27. The long-term average (5 year) runway usage at LCA has 67% of aircraft using runway 27.

The average daytime noise level of the aircraft movements over the 17-day measurement period was 47 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$. Allowing for the greater number of flights in summer 2019 and the average long term runway usage would result in a noise level of 48 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ for LCA aircraft.

This means that the aircraft noise level at the survey location is significantly below LCA’s sound insulation scheme First Tier eligibility criterion of 57 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ daytime aircraft noise level. It is however recognised that some people will be annoyed by levels lower than this, and conversely that others may find higher noise levels acceptable².

² Department for Transport, Aviation Policy Framework, 2013

5.0 SUMMARY

BAP have measured the noise levels at a residential property on Pintail Close over a 17-day period. The average aircraft noise level measured over the 17 days was 47 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$. Allowing for the greater number of flights in summer 2019 and the average long term runway usage would result in a level of 48 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$. This level is significantly below LCA's sound insulation scheme First Tier eligibility criterion of 57 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$ daytime aircraft noise level.

Dean Chapman

for Bickerdike Allen Partners LLP

Duncan Rogers

Acoustic Consultant

David Charles

Partner

APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY OF ACOUSTIC TERMINOLOGY

The Decibel, dB

The unit used to describe the magnitude of sound is the decibel (dB) and the quantity measured is the sound pressure level. The decibel scale is logarithmic and it ascribes equal values to proportional changes in sound pressure, which is a characteristic of the ear. Use of a logarithmic scale has the added advantage that it compresses the very wide range of sound pressures to which the ear may typically be exposed to a more manageable range of numbers. The threshold of hearing occurs at approximately 0 dB (which corresponds to a reference sound pressure of 2×10^{-5} Pascals) and the threshold of pain is around 120 dB.

The sound energy radiated by a source can also be expressed in decibels. The sound power is a measure of the total sound energy radiated by a source per second, in watts. The sound power level, L_w is expressed in decibels, referenced to 10^{-12} watts.

Frequency, Hz

Frequency is analogous to musical pitch. It depends upon the rate of vibration of the air molecules that transmit the sound and is measure as the number of cycles per second or Hertz (Hz). The human ear is sensitive to sound in the range 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz (20 kHz). For acoustic engineering purposes, the frequency range is normally divided up into discrete bands. The most commonly used bands are octave bands, in which the upper limiting frequency for any band is twice the lower limiting frequency, and one-third octave bands, in which each octave band is divided into three. The bands are described by their centre frequency value and the ranges which are typically used for building acoustics purposes are 63 Hz to 4 kHz (octave bands) and 100 Hz to 3150 Hz (one-third octave bands).

A-weighting

The sensitivity of the ear is frequency dependent. Sound level meters are fitted with a weighting network which approximates to this response and allows sound levels to be expressed as an overall single figure value, in dB(A).

Environmental Noise Descriptors

Where noise levels vary with time, it is necessary to express the results of a measurement over a period of time in statistical terms. Some commonly used descriptors follow.

Statistical Term	Description
$L_{Aeq,T}$	The most widely applicable unit is the equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level ($L_{Aeq,T}$). It is an energy average and is defined as the level of a notional sound which (over a defined period of time, T) would deliver the same A-weighted sound energy as the actual fluctuating sound.
$L_{Amax,T}$	The maximum A-weighted sound pressure level, normally associated with a time weighting, F (fast), or S (slow)

Sound Transmission in the Open Air

Most sources of sound can be characterised as a single point in space. The sound energy radiated is proportional to the surface area of a sphere centred on the point. The area of a sphere is proportional to the square of the radius, so the sound energy is inversely proportional to the square of the radius. This is the inverse square law. In decibel terms, every time the distance from a point source is doubled, the sound pressure level is reduced by 6 dB.

Road traffic noise is a notable exception to this rule, as it approximates to a line source, which is represented by the line of the road. The sound energy radiated is inversely proportional to the area of a cylinder centred on the line. In decibel terms, every time the distance from a line source is doubled, the sound pressure level is reduced by 3 dB.

Factors Affecting Sound Transmission in the Open Air

Reflection

When sound waves encounter a hard surface, such as concrete, brickwork, glass, timber or plasterboard, it is reflected from it. As a result, the sound pressure level measured immediately in front of a building façade is approximately 3 dB higher than it would be in the absence of the façade.

Screening and Diffraction

If a solid screen is introduced between a source and receiver, interrupting the sound path, a reduction in sound level is experienced. This reduction is limited, however, by diffraction of the sound energy at the edges of the screen. Screens can provide valuable noise attenuation, however. For example, a timber boarded fence built next to a motorway can reduce noise levels on the land beyond, typically by around 10 dB(A). The best results are obtained when a screen is situated close to the source or close to the receiver.

Meteorological Effects

Temperature and wind gradients affect noise transmission, especially over large distances. The wind effects range from increasing the level by typically 2 dB downwind, to reducing it by typically 10 dB upwind – or even more in extreme conditions. Temperature and wind gradients are variable and difficult to predict.