

# Technical Guidance Approved Document O – Noise Considerations

(November 2024) (Second issue – supersedes April 2023)

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## Question

Does NHBC require acoustic assessments on all sites to demonstrate compliance with Approved Document O?

## Applicable sites

Building Control Sites Registered with NHBC in England.

## Applicable regions

This Technical Guidance Note applies to England (only).

## Background

Approved Document O requires the designer to consider the usability of any mitigation measure, the document then goes on to flag external noise as a potential issue when considering if windows can be expected to be left open to mitigate overheating.

Paragraph 3.2 of the approved document notes 'In locations where external noise may be an issue (for example, where the local planning authority considered external noise to be an issue at the planning stage), the overheating mitigation strategy should take account of the likelihood that windows will be closed during sleeping hours (11pm to 7am).'

We have been asked for NHBC's view on the guidance in Approved Document O with respect to acoustic assessments.

## Considerations and conclusions

Information provided by a major housebuilder confirmed 58% of sites required an acoustic assessment as a part of the planning process. The data provided covered England & Wales, with all divisions requiring acoustic assessments on a proportion of sites, and again all divisions requiring some mitigation measures.

Any overheating strategy provided to NHBC should clearly set out how noise has been considered on site. The information provided indicates that the presence of external noise is being suitably considered as a potential issue through the planning system, therefore NHBC would not typically require additional acoustic assessments for the purposes of Approved Document O.

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## Transitional arrangements

- These are per the following note in relation to the introduction of Approved Document O in June 2022:
  - **Transitional Arrangements for Approved Documents | NHBC**

## References

- Approved Document O:
  - England – **Approved Document O: Overheating ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))**



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