

Noise impact from Multi Use Games Areas: A Local Authority Perspective

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Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) or All Weather Pitch (AWP)



Local Authority obstacles

- Political forces- e.g. Councillors making promises to the community
- Other conflicting planning constraints
- Relevant information provided- construction materials and how the facility is to be used
- Planning conditions-have their limitations
- Ongoing issues-nuisance/anti-social behaviour

What were Local Authorities doing?

- Surveyed 348 Local Authorities (included County, Unitary, London Borough, Metropolitan and District)
- 73% responded
- Variety of responses...

Question 1

Does your local authority have specific criteria for the assessment of noise from MUGAs under the new/old planning regime or for nuisance investigations? If so what are they?

Method applied	Authority type				
	County	Unitary	Metropolitan	London Borough	District
Specific policy	0	0	1	0	0
Consult other party	5	0	0	0	0
General test of statutory nuisance	0	9	1	3	20
BS4142	1	1	2	0	0
BS4142 with L _{Amax}	0	0	0	0	1
Combined WHO guidelines and BS4142	0	0	1	0	2
PPG24	1	2	0	0	0
Sport England guidance	1	0	1	0	1
Fields in Trust guidance/6 acre standard	0	0	0	0	5
WHO guidelines	0	1	0	0	0
Combined BS4142, clay target shooting guidance and WHO guidelines	0	2	0	0	0
Combined Sport England guidance and WHO guidelines	0	0	0	0	1
Best technique available	0	0	1	0	1

Question 2

Do you recommend that conditions relating to noise control be attached to any planning permission granted for MUGAs within your area? If so are these specific to MUGAs? Please give examples where possible.

Answer 2

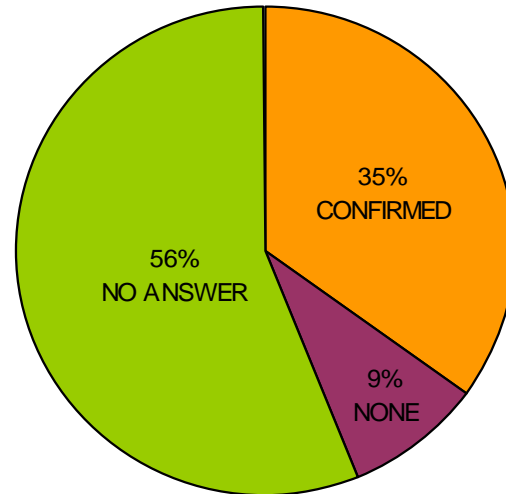
- 50% thought conditions were unenforceable
- Consider conditions relating to mitigation measures
 - Fencing/bunds
 - Buffer zones
 - Construction materials
- Some required noise assessments but didn't give specifics on how they expected them to be undertaken

Question 3

How many MUGAs do you have in your area? Where possible give planning application references and/or location details.

Answer 3

- 56% of authorities couldn't provide me with an answer
- 9% had no MUGAs
- 35% (90 authorities) identified a total of 605 MUGAs



Question 4

Have you received any noise complaints about MUGA facilities in the last 5 years?

- If yes how many?
- What were the main noise sources being complained about?
- How many complaints were substantiated?
- Have any complaints led to noise abatement notices, planning enforcement or legal proceedings?

Answer 4

- 16 unitary, 4 county, 42 district
= 62 authorities had received complaints
- Overall there were 177 complaints received
- Noise from shouting/swearing, balls hitting the fence/access gates/rebound boards and whistles
- 56 substantiated
- 5 noise abatement notices served under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

Question 5

Would an assessment methodology and/or criteria and noise limits specifically for MUGAs be useful to your authority.

Answer 5

Of those who responded

- 60% unitary/metropolitan and district councils said yes
- 33% county councils said yes
- “No” answers from authorities who say that there are already measures in place and there have been no repercussions for them so far.
- Concerns about how guidance would be applied

Parameters tested

Based on BS4142:1997, Clay target shooting guidance, WHO guidelines on community noise

Monitoring/modelling at the noise sensitive receptor should be tested against the following conditions:

- 1. LAeq, 15min not to exceed the LA90, 5min by more than 5db**
- 2. LAeq, 15min should not exceed 55db**
- 3. Average LAmax not to exceed 60db (Mean log average of the 10 loudest events from at least three separate 15 minute measurement periods)**

Also made notes on likelihood of nuisance based on noise witnessed during monitoring

Factors influencing noise impact

- Rebound boards vs mesh fencing vs no fencing
- How the MUGA is used
 - Training vs matches
 - Children vs adults
- Whistles
- Spectators



The results

- The use of more than one condition was deemed necessary in order to give a fair representation of the noise from the MUGA when considering nuisance potential
- None of the parameters gave satisfactory results in isolation
- The combined approach resulted in good correlation with the subjective assessment of potential nuisance

Looking forward

- Ball impact noise is a significant factor and needs to be a consideration in any assessment methodology
- Investment and acknowledgement from the manufacturers that noise is a potential problem.
- Address the lack of guidance available to consultants and LA's for a consistent approach.

Summary

- A number of techniques/parameters have been explored
 - LAeq (1 sec, 15 min, 1 hr) -Character -LAmx
 - LAeq 50-55dB -Tonality
 - Measurement at 10m from sideline/receptor positions
- Noise sources- Ball impact, whistles, people noise
- Impact dependent on- construction, type of facility, use and sport
- Noise mitigation measures- bunds/barriers, fencing material, separation zones, times of use
- Measurement-needs to be detailed and specific to the proposal