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PRESS RELEASE

ProPG: Planning & Noise – a joint initiative from the ANC, IOA and CIEH

Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise (ProPG: Planning & Noise) is being prepared in response to the recent changes in the planning system and requests from practitioners for additional technical guidance on the management of noise within the planning system.

This initiative is being overseen by a steering group consisting of representatives of the Association of Noise Consultants (ANC), Institute of Acoustics (IOA) and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). The ProPG: Planning & Noise will be subject to peer review and wide consultation amongst the membership of the various relevant professional bodies. It is anticipated that it will be published in its final form early in 2015.

The preparation of the ProPG responds to recent developments in the field such as the National Planning Policy Framework, relevant Government Planning Practice Guidance and the Noise Policy Statement for England. The drafting of the ProPG is being undertaken by Colin Grimwood who has many years of experience in contributing to national and local guidance and policy on this topic.

The aims of the ProPG are to give good practice advice to Local Planning Authorities in England and to developers' professional advisers on the application of the land-use planning process to encourage good acoustic design. The working group have determined that the initial focus of the ProPG should be on new noise-sensitive development, in particular housing; however similar advice on noise-generating development may follow in due course.

Practitioners will be aware that the previous policy and technical advice on planning and noise matters which was contained in PPG 24 has been cancelled. New concepts such as 'LOAEL and SOAEL' have been introduced to the assessment, management and control of noise via the planning system. However whilst new policy objectives have been introduced, supporting technical advice and guidance is largely missing and Government has advised that it does not intend to provide such technical guidance. This is leading to uncertainty for developers, regulators and their advisers alike regarding the approach to take. In the absence of clear guidance there is an increased risk that development may be mistakenly refused, constrained or approved thus adding to the number of disputes and appeals that can slow down the operation of the planning system at a time when the provision of new housing is high on the political agenda.

The steering group would like to appeal to members of the ANC, IOA and CIEH, and indeed to all practitioners in this field, to provide information that will help to ensure the ProPG: Planning & Noise reflects current practice. In particular, the steering group would welcome:

- (i) Examples of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) on noise that have been produced under the new, post PPG24, planning regime.
- (ii) Examples of good acoustic design in new residential developments, including both individual building and larger scale measures.
- (iii) Examples of decisions by Planning Inspectors relating to the consideration of noise in new residential developments that have been made under the new planning regime.

It is intended that these examples, with suitable acknowledgement, will be included in the ProPG to help meet an overall aim of improving the quality and consistency of our approach to noise under the new planning regime.

In the longer term, the steering group are considering establishing other mechanisms to encourage, support and recognise good acoustic design in new residential development. Members' views on this proposal would also be welcome. Please send examples of SPDs, good acoustic design and Planning Inspector decisions to: info@theanc.co.uk