

NOISE

PROTOCOL FOR SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR NOISE IMPACTS

1. SCOPE

This protocol provides the criteria for the specialist assessment and minimum report content requirements for the impacts of noise on the environment for activities requiring environmental authorisation. This protocol replaces the requirements of Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations¹.

The assessment and reporting requirements of this protocol are associated with a level of environmental sensitivity identified by the national web based environmental screening tool (screening tool).

The screening tool can be accessed at: <https://screening.environment.gov.za/screeningtool>.

2. SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

Prior to commencing with a specialist assessment, the current use of the land and the potential environmental sensitivity of the site under consideration as identified by the screening tool must be confirmed by undertaking a **site sensitivity verification**.

- 2.1. The site sensitivity verification must be undertaken by an environmental assessment practitioner or a noise specialist, where noise specialist means someone with relevant academic qualifications and with expertise in the domain of acoustic assessments and noise management.
- 2.2. The site sensitivity verification must be undertaken through the use of:
 - (a) a desk top analysis, using satellite imagery;
 - (b) a preliminary on-site inspection; and
 - (c) any other available and relevant information.
- 2.3. The outcome of the site sensitivity verification must be recorded in the form of a report that:
 - (a) confirms or disputes the current use of the land and environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool, such as new developments or infrastructure etc.;
 - (b) contains a motivation and evidence (e.g. photographs) of either the verified or different use of the land and environmental sensitivity; and
 - (c) is submitted together with the relevant assessment report prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

¹ The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, as promulgated in terms of Section 24 (5) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998).

3. SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

TABLE 1: ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING ON NOISE IMPACTS	
1. General Information	
<p>1.1. An applicant intending to undertake an activity identified in the scope of this protocol for which a specialist assessment has been identified on the screening tool:</p> <p>1.1.1. on a site identified as being of:</p> <p>1.1.1.1. “very high” sensitivity for noise, must submit a Noise Specialist Assessment; or</p> <p>1.1.1.2. “low” sensitivity for noise, must submit a Noise Compliance Statement.</p> <p>1.1.2. on a site where the information gathered from the site sensitivity verification differs from the designation of “very high” sensitivity on the screening tool and it is found to be of a “low” sensitivity, a Noise Compliance Statement must be submitted;</p> <p>1.1.3. on a site where the information gathered from the initial site sensitivity verification differs from the designation of “low” sensitivity on the screening tool and it is found to be of a “very high” sensitivity, a Noise Specialist Assessment must be submitted.</p> <p>1.2. If any part of the proposed development footprint falls within an area of “very high” sensitivity, the assessment and reporting requirements prescribed for the “very high” sensitivity apply to the entire footprint excluding linear activities for which noise impacts are associated with construction activities only and the noise levels return to the current levels after the completion of construction activities, in which case a compliance statement applies. In the context of this protocol, development footprint means the area on which the proposed development will take place and includes any area that will be disturbed.</p>	
VERY HIGH SENSITIVITY RATING – Likelihood of a negative noise impact at the receptor.	2. Noise Specialist Assessment <p>2.1. The assessment must be undertaken by a noise specialist on the site being submitted as the preferred site.</p> <p>2.2. The assessment must be undertaken based on a site inspection as well as applying the noise standards and methodologies stipulated in SANS 10103:2008 and SANS 10328:2008 (or latest versions) for residential and non-residential areas as defined in these standards.</p> <p>2.3. A baseline description must be provided of the potential receptors and existing ambient noise levels. The receptors could include places of residence or tranquility that have amenity value associated with low noise levels. As a minimum, this description must include the following:</p> <p>2.3.1. current ambient sound levels recorded at relevant locations (e.g. receptors and proposed new noise sources) over a minimum of two nights and that provide a representative measurement of the ambient noise climate, with each sample being a minimum of ten minutes and taken at two different times of the night (such as early evening and late at night) on each night, in order to record typical ambient sound levels at these different times of night;</p>

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- 2.3.2. records of the approximate wind speed at the time of the measurement;
 - 2.3.3. mapped distance of the receiver from the proposed development that is the noise source; and
 - 2.3.4. discussion on temporal aspects of baseline ambient conditions.
- 2.4. Assessment of impacts done in accordance to SANS 10103:2008 and SANS 10328:2008 (or latest versions) must include the following aspects which must be considered as a minimum in the predicted impact of the proposed development:
- 2.4.1. characterisation and determination of noise emissions from the noise source, where characterization could include types of noise, frequency, content, vibration and temporal aspects;
 - 2.4.2. projected total noise levels and changes in noise levels as a result of the construction, commissioning and operation of the proposed development for the nearest receptors using industry accepted models and forecasts; and
 - 2.4.3. desired noise levels for the area.
- 2.5. The findings of the **Noise Specialist Assessment** must be written up in a **Noise Specialist Report** that must contain as a minimum the following information:
- 2.5.1. details and relevant qualifications and experience of the noise specialist preparing the assessment including a curriculum vitae;
 - 2.5.2. a signed statement of independence by the specialist;
 - 2.5.3. the duration and date of the site inspection and the relevance of the season and weather conditions to the outcome of the assessment;
 - 2.5.4. a description of the methodology used to undertake the on-site assessment inclusive of the equipment and models used, as relevant, together with results of the noise assessment;
 - 2.5.5. a map showing the proposed development footprint (including supporting infrastructure) with a 50m buffered development envelope;
 - 2.5.6. confirmation from the specialist that all reasonable measures have been considered, or not, in the micro-siting of the proposed development to minimise disturbance of receptors;
 - 2.5.7. a substantiated statement from the specialist on the acceptability, or not, of the proposed development and a recommendation on the approval, or not, of the proposed development;
 - 2.5.8. any conditions to which this statement is subjected;
 - 2.5.9. the assessment must identify alternative development footprints within the preferred site which would be of a "low" sensitivity as identified by the screening tool and verified through the site sensitivity verification and which were not considered;
 - 2.5.10. a motivation must be provided if there were development footprints identified as per paragraph 2.5.9. above that were identified as having a "low" noise sensitivity and that were not considered appropriate;
 - 2.5.11. where identified, proposed impact management outcomes, mitigation measures for noise emissions during the

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	<p>construction and commissioning phases that may be of relative short duration, or any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr); and</p> <p>2.5.12. a description of the assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data.</p> <p>2.6. The findings of the Noise Specialist Assessment must be incorporated into the Basic Assessment Report or the Environmental Impact Assessment Report including the mitigation and monitoring measures as identified for inclusion in the EMPr.</p> <p>2.7. A signed copy of the specialist assessment must be appended to the Basic Assessment Report or Environmental Impact Assessment Report.</p>
<p>LOW SENSITIVITY RATING - No significant noise impact expected at the receptor.</p>	<p>3. Noise Compliance Statement</p> <p>3.1. The compliance statement must be prepared by an environmental assessment practitioner or a noise specialist.</p> <p>3.2. The compliance statement must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.2.1. be applicable to the preferred site and the proposed development footprint;3.2.2. confirm that the site is of “low” sensitivity for noise impacts; and3.2.3. indicate whether or not the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact on the noise receptors of the site. <p>3.3. The compliance statement must contain, as a minimum, the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.3.1. contact details of the environmental assessment practitioner or noise specialist, their relevant qualifications and expertise in preparing the statement, and a curriculum vitae;3.3.2. a signed statement of independence by the environmental assessment practitioner or noise specialist;3.3.3. a map showing the proposed development footprint (including supporting infrastructure) overlaid on the noise sensitivity map generated by the screening tool;3.3.4. confirmation that all reasonable measures have been taken through micro-siting to minimize disturbance to receptors;3.3.5. a substantiated statement from the environmental assessment practitioner or noise specialist on the acceptability, or not, of the proposed development and a recommendation on the approval, or not, of the proposed development;3.3.6. any conditions to which this statement is subjected;3.3.7. where required, proposed impact management outcomes or any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr; and3.3.8. a description of the assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data as well as a statement of the timing and intensity of site inspection observations. <p>3.4. A signed copy of the compliance statement must be appended to the Basic Assessment Report or Environmental Impact Assessment Report.</p>