



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra Noise Policy Update

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Today's content

- Introductions
- Defra Noise and Statutory Nuisance Team:
 - Policy context
 - Projects
- Discussion and questions

Introductions

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Defra's role in noise management 1/2

- Defra has overall lead responsibility for policy on noise management in England under the Noise Policy Statement for England which aims to:
 - *“promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development”.*

Defra's role in noise management 2/2

- To achieve this, we work with departments including:
 - **Department for Transport (DfT)** - Transport noise
 - **Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC)** - Planning issues; local government Covid response and recovery
 - **Department for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)** - Product standards and energy strategy
 - **UK Health Security Agency (formerly PHE)** - Noise health effects/WHO Guidelines

IGCB(N)

- In October 2018 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published its Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region.
- In response, the government convened the Interdepartmental Group on Costs and Benefits Noise Subject Group (IGCB(N)) – a group of experts and policy officials from across government which provides advice and analysis relating to the quantification and valuation of the impacts of environmental noise.
- The IGCB(N) has been reviewing evidence published on a range of noise sources and potential health outcomes since the WHO systematic evidence review cut-off date.
- Will consider whether the findings need to be reflected in the updates to its current recommendations on valuing noise impacts.

Soundscape valuation project – in partnership with Leeds University

- Concept of soundscape offers a holistic approach to achieving a positive, healthy sound environment in the context of location.
- Defra is providing input into a Leeds University programme looking at valuing soundscape.
- Valuation of these positive impacts may in future allow policy decisions in a range of areas, including transport and planning, to be taken on a better-informed basis.

The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006

- Defra is responsible for implementing the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 which requires, every five years:
 - Making strategic noise maps to estimate people's exposure to noise from major roads, railways and airports, as well as noise inside agglomerations (large urban areas, including from industry).
 - Developing and adopting action plans based on the results of noise mapping, aimed at tackling the areas worst affected.
- Round 4 mapping data to be completed by summer 2022; action plans 2023.
- There are similar requirements in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Building the evidence base

- The UK's exit from the EU may provide the opportunity to pursue a more bespoke approach to noise management in the future.
- Any new approach will need to be based on sound evidence of the noise situation across the country.
- We are in the process of building an expansive and flexible noise mapping model, which will allow us to meet our current obligations as well as enable more detailed analysis to inform policy development.

Noise Modelling System: Objective and vision

Objective

- The objective is to develop a model which will meet statutory requirements as well as providing noise levels and exposure data in a way that is agile enough to enable end users to manage noise in a cost-effective and efficient manner.
- End users include, but are not restricted to Local Authorities, Highways and Rail Authorities.

Vision

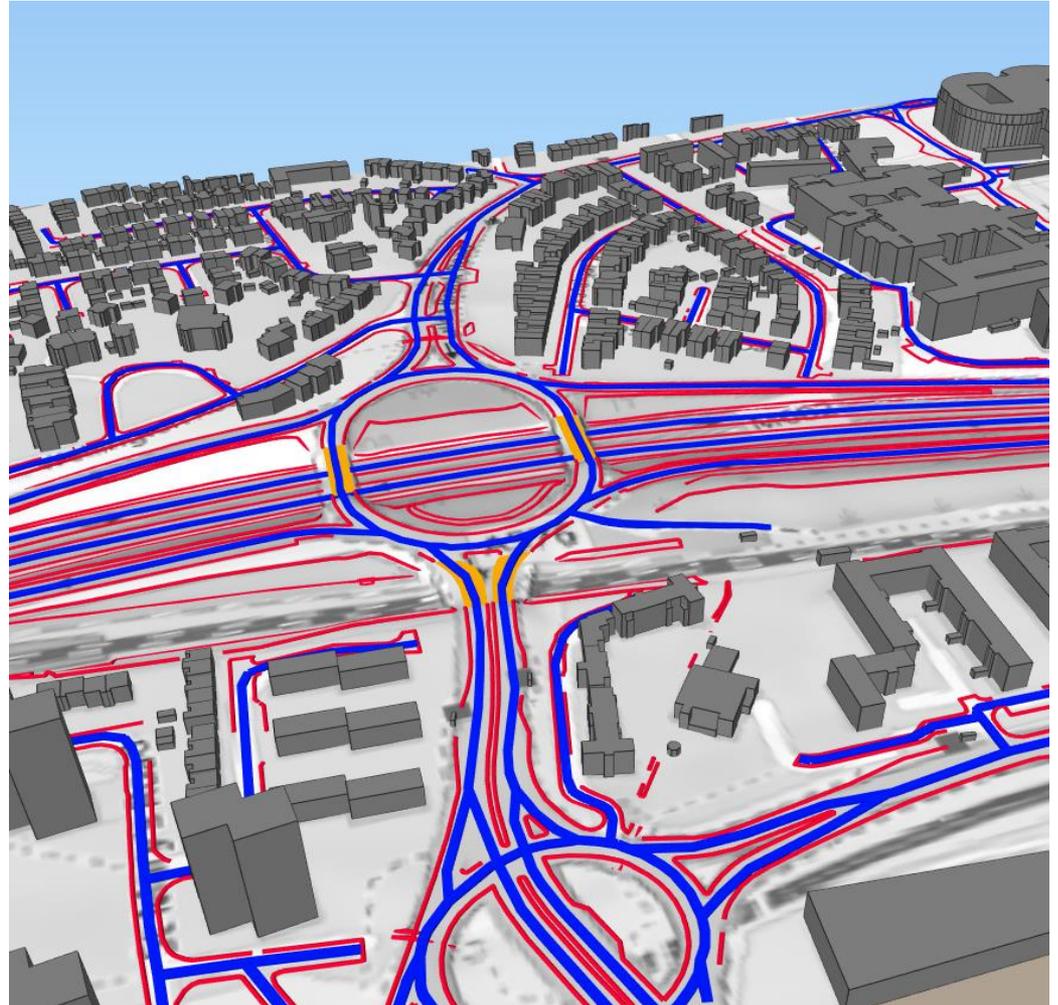
- The vision is to allow multiple users to contribute, model and extract data for a variety of purposes - including carrying out scenario planning.
- The model is intended to remain useful for government and other users of data beyond this round of mapping, ensuring consistency and reliability.

Noise modelling process

Noise modelling uses computer technology to construct a geospatial model of the country.

Noise source data is imported into the model in order to assess noise levels by location.

The initial noise data will come from **two sources** – road and rail transport.



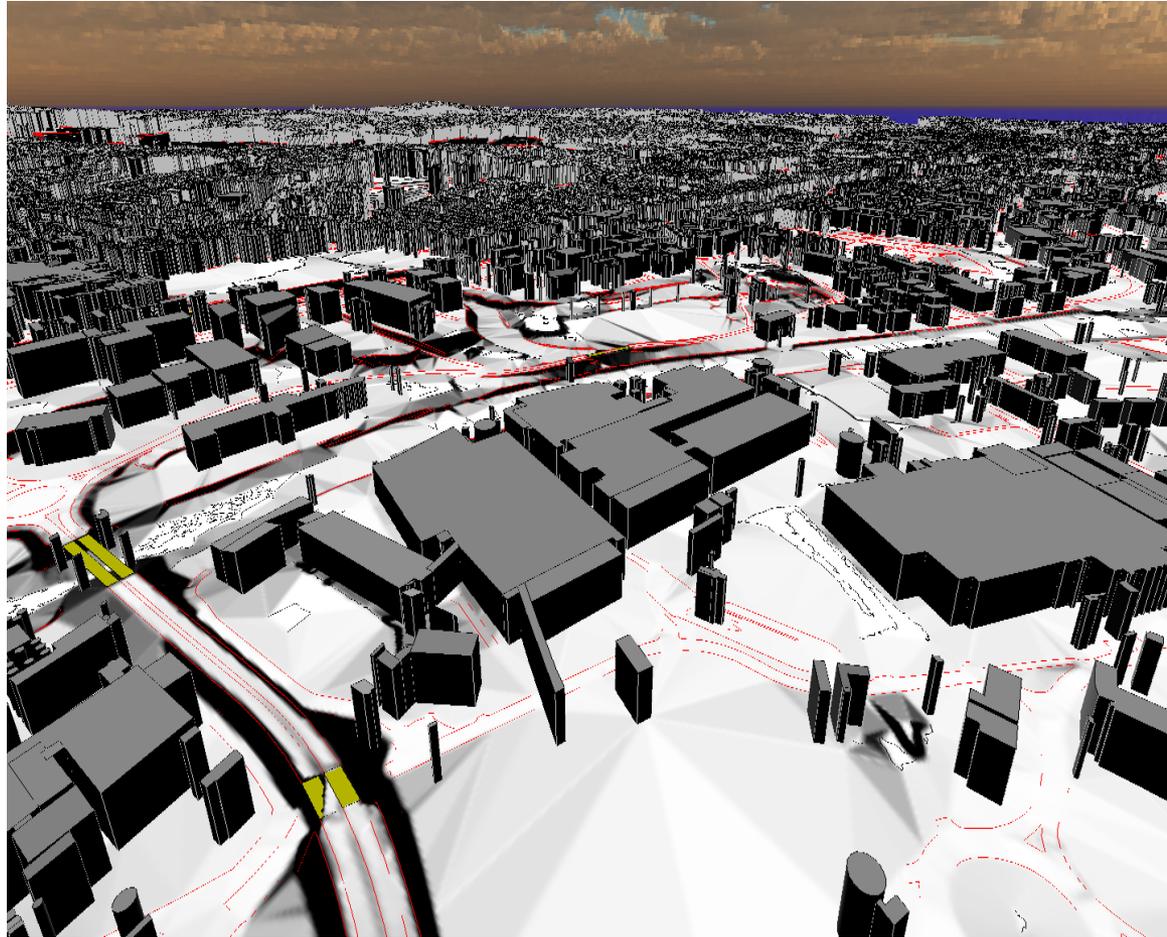
Benefits of the model

The model is being designed in a way that will achieve the following benefits:

- **Accuracy** – The model will demand stringent evaluation of accuracy to ensure good data quality.
- **Coverage** – The new model will go beyond the requirements of the Regulations to map more roads and railways and to lower levels than previous rounds, increasing its usefulness locally.
- **Interactivity** – The model will enable users to upload other datasets – for example, for areas where greater detail is available; or to evaluate synergies with other policy areas (e.g. multiple pollutants; other environmental / health risks).

Noise model portal

- A Public Portal will be created in a way that enables different levels of end user access.
- End users will include:
 - Defra
 - Designated public sector users (including Local Authorities) who can access enhanced functions, provided they have the correct licences in place
 - The general public, who will be able to view the results



Data outputs

Noise contour maps will be created to measure:

- Dwelling exposure statistics
- People in dwellings exposure statistics
- Potential for health impact assessment

In addition to the statutory obligation under Environmental Noise (England) Regulations the model will be used to generate data for:

- Public Health Outcomes Framework statistics
- The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan noise exposure indicator
- Bespoke purposes for individual users

Potential uses

The model will be made available to public sector end users to facilitate scenario planning. For example:

A local authority is assessing a planning application for a new housing development next to a nature reserve, which is an area of tranquillity.

The officer uses the model to assess potential changes in the local sound environment in order to understand the impact of the planning decision.

Q&A

Any questions?