BRL **design**

Noise Impact Assessment

in support of the planning application

Proposed Development at

Project: Extension to Quba Masjid & Education Centre
Client: Quba Masjid & Education Centre

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1.0 Introduction

This Noise Impact Statement supports the planning application for a proposed extension to an existing Islamic Mosque and Education Centre located within the Golden Crescent Industrial Estate, Hillingdon. The principle purpose for the extension is to accommodate an increase in the provision of community activities and services, while ensuring that any potential impact on the surrounding area, particularly in terms of noise emissions, is carefully assessed and mitigated.

This qualitative noise impact assessment has been prepared to support the planning application for a four-storey extension to the existing Quba Masjid and Education Centre in Hayes. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate potential noise impacts associated with the proposed development, particularly focusing on the small roof terrace included in the design, and to ensure compliance with relevant noise policies and standards. The assessment considers both the impact of existing environmental noise on the proposed development and the potential noise impact of the development on surrounding noise-sensitive receptors.

The extension aims to provide additional space for community activities complementary to the existing mosque functions. Importantly, the hours of operation will remain unchanged from those currently approved for the existing facility, and no amplified call to prayer will be broadcast from the building, in accordance with existing planning restrictions.

2.0 Site Description

The Quba Masjid and Education Centre is situated within an established industrial estate, which predominantly hosts light industrial and commercial uses. The immediate surroundings do not include sensitive residential receptors. However, there are residential properties located approximately 75 metres from the site boundary, albeit such residential amenity is already subject to existing noise levels generated from industrial uses and vehicular traffic from nearby main roads.

3.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development involves:

- A sympathetic extension to replace an existing (former) industrial unit.
- Ancillary space for community functions and educational and leisure activities.
- Associated facilities including improved ablution areas and accessibility provisions.

The proposed hours of use remain aligned with current operations, primarily during:

- Early morning and evening prayers.
- Friday congregational prayers, attracting peak attendance.
- Seasonal and special events (e.g. Ramadan, Eid).

There is no plan to introduce amplified outdoor broadcasts (e.g. for the call to prayer) as part of the extension. The centre will operate exactly as the existing condition, albeit the new spaces will allow for current visitors of the centre to access a wider range of facilities and make better use the building. It is not anticipated for the extension to materially add to the number of weekly visitors, simply that the existing patrons will spend longer at the Centre and make better use of the building, i.e. able to access a wider range of services.

4.0 Assessment Methodology

This assessment is guided by relevant national and local noise policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE). The NPSE sets out the long-term vision of Government noise policy, which aims to "promote good health and good quality of life through the effective management of noise." The policy has three aims:

1. Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life.
2. Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life.
3. Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.

The assessment also considers the guidance provided in the Planning Practice Guidance on Noise (PPG-Noise), which establishes a noise exposure hierarchy based on observed effects:

- No Observed Effect Level (NOEL): Noise is present but not noticeable.
- No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL): Noise can be heard but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude.
- Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL): Noise starts to cause small changes in behaviour and attitude.
- Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL): Noise causes a material change in behaviour.

This assessment follows a qualitative approach as outlined in various guidance documents. A qualitative assessment is based on perception and how noticeable the noise impact is in affecting the amenity value of the noise-sensitive receptors. The assessment considers:

1. The existing noise environment.
2. Potential noise sources associated with the proposed development.
3. Potential changes in noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors.
4. The need for and effectiveness of potential mitigation measures

For external amenity areas such as the proposed roof terrace, relevant guidance suggests that noise levels should ideally not exceed 50-55 dB LAeq. However, as noted in ProPG: Planning & Noise, "Where development is considered necessary or desirable, despite external noise levels above WHO guidelines, the internal target levels may be relaxed by up to 5 dB and reasonable internal conditions still achieved".

5.0 Baseline Noise Environment

Preliminary assessment identifies that ambient noise levels in the area are dominated by industrial operations and traffic from nearby roadways. The mosque's current operation, including limited vehicular movements for staff use and pedestrian activity during prayer times, generates limited noise that has historically not prompted complaints from the surrounding community or regulatory action from the local authority. An existing planning condition (attached to the original permission for the construction of Quba Masjid) prevents amplified outdoor broadcasting, which has been fully complied by the Trustees since the building has been in operation. The Trustees understand their role within the local community and are vigilant to ensure the needs of the community are served.

As this is a qualitative assessment without site-specific noise measurements, the baseline noise environment is described in general terms based on typical conditions for similar urban/suburban locations. For a complete assessment, background noise levels would typically be measured at representative locations around the site during relevant time periods.

The existing Quba Masjid and Education Centre is already established in the area, and the surrounding noise environment is likely influenced by:

1. Road traffic noise from surrounding streets
2. Community noise from existing activities at the mosque and other nearby community facilities
3. General urban/suburban ambient noise
4. Commercial activities in the vicinity (if applicable)

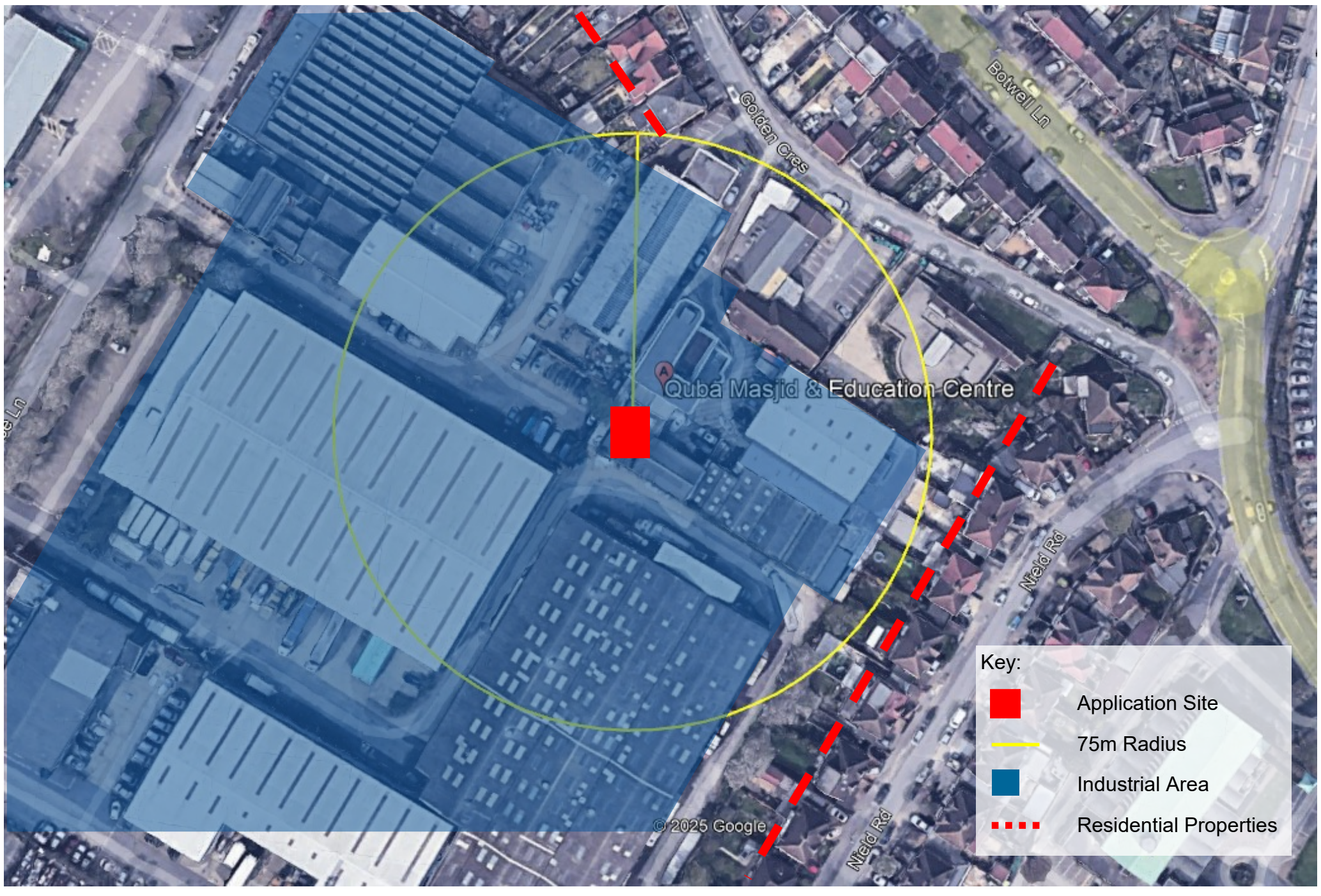

Fig 5.1 - Site plan with 75m radius shown from application site

6.0 Assessment of Existing Noise

The proposed extension, including the roof terrace, will be subject to the existing noise environment in the area. As the extension is to an established facility, the proposed new spaces are likely to be compatible with the existing noise environment. The small roof terrace of approximately 25 square metres will need to provide an appropriate external amenity environment for users.

In accordance with ProPG guidance, external amenity areas that are an intrinsic part of the overall design should ideally have noise levels not exceeding 50-55 dB LAeq. Where these levels cannot be achieved, the development should be designed to achieve the lowest practicable noise levels.

Impact of the Proposed Development on Existing Noise-Sensitive Receptors

Several factors support a conclusion that the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant adverse noise impacts on surrounding noise-sensitive receptors:

1. Hours of operation: The extension will operate within the same hours as the existing facility, meaning no new noise impacts during sensitive nighttime periods.
2. No amplified call to prayer: The restriction on amplified call to prayer will continue, eliminating a potential source of noise that might otherwise affect the surrounding area.
3. Scale and nature of activities: The extension is designed to accommodate additional community activities complementary to the existing mosque functions. Such activities typically generate moderate levels of noise from people talking, movement, etc., rather than high-impact noise sources like amplified music or industrial processes.
4. Small roof terrace: At approximately 40 square metres, the roof terrace is relatively small, limiting the number of people who can use it simultaneously and consequently the noise levels generated.

The primary potential noise sources associated with the development include:

1. People entering and leaving the extended facility
2. Voices and general activity noise from users of the roof terrace
3. Any mechanical or electrical plant associated with the extension (e.g., air conditioning units, ventilation systems)

In terms of the noise exposure hierarchy established in PPG-Noise, the impact of the proposed development on surrounding receptors is likely to be at or below the No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL), where noise may be perceptible but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude among those affected.

For the purpose of this planning application, it considered necessary to provide a qualitative assessment only, primarily due to:

- The industrial estate's nature provides a buffer against noise-sensitive receptors.
- Peak periods of use are intermittent and time-limited (e.g. 30–45 minutes during Friday prayers).
- Acoustic containment of prayer spaces will be ensured through appropriate building fabric and design.

7.0 Mitigation Measures

Although significant adverse noise impacts are not anticipated, the following mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that noise from the development is minimised:

7.1 Engineering Measures:

1. Any mechanical or electrical plant associated with the extension should be designed and selected to ensure that the cumulative noise level at the nearest noise-sensitive premises does not exceed the existing background noise level.
2. Building fabric and glazing should be specified to provide appropriate sound insulation to contain activity noise within the building layout.

7.2 Layout Measures:

1. The roof terrace should incorporate perimeter screening (e.g., solid balustrades or acoustic barriers) to minimise noise breakout, particularly toward any nearby residential properties.
2. Access to the roof terrace should be via lobbied doorsets to minimise noise transmission when doors are opened.

7.3 Management Measures:

1. Implementation of a Noise Management Plan for the operation of the extended facility, particularly focusing on the use of the roof terrace.
2. Time restrictions on use of outside areas - these time restrictions to align with the existing planning conditions.
3. Clear signage on the roof terrace reminding users to be mindful of neighbours and keep noise to a reasonable level.
4. Regular monitoring of noise levels and prompt response to any complaints.

8.0 Conclusion

This qualitative noise impact assessment has considered potential noise impacts associated with the proposed four-storey extension to Quba Masjid and Education Centre in Hayes, with particular attention to the small roof terrace included in the design.

To mitigate any potential adverse noise impact, the following measures will be adopted:

- The hours of operation will remain unchanged.
- No amplified call to prayer will be permitted
- The roof terrace is small in size (approximately 40 square metres) and access will be limited.

The purpose of the extension is to provide additional community activities. It is concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant adverse noise impacts on surrounding noise-sensitive receptors. With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, noise levels can be maintained at or below the No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL) as defined in the PPG-Noise guidance.

The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable from a noise perspective and in accordance with the aims of the Noise Policy PPG, which seeks to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life, and to mitigate and minimise adverse impacts.

To ensure that these conclusions remain valid, it is recommended that the mitigation measures outlined in this assessment are implemented and maintained throughout the operation of the extended facility. The applicant is committed to ensure the operation of the Centre is in line with the planning conditions as set out for the construction of the existing building, and is fully aware of their obligations to their neighbours. It is anticipated, the approval of this planning application will be accompanied by planning condition(s) aligned to existing condition(s) associated with the existing consent, that protects the amenity of nearby properties.