**Frequently Asked Questions – Noise Insulation Works**

***1. Am I eligible for the scheme?***

Under Regulation 3 of the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975 there is a duty on the highway authority to offer insulation or provide grants in respect of a new road, or a road for which a new carriageway has been constructed, if the following 4 requirements are fulfilled:

**1**. The relevant noise level (ie. the combined noise from the new highway together with other traffic in the vicinity) must be at least 68 dB(A) LA10 (18-hour); and

**2**. The relevant noise level must be at least 1dB(A) more than the prevailing noise level, which is defined as the total traffic noise level existing immediately before the highway works were begun; and

**3**. The new road(s) must contribute at least 1dB(A) to the relevant noise level; and

4. The property must be within 300m of the carriageway forming part of the scheme.

Some buildings are not eligible under the Regulations even though they meet the above 4 criteria. For example if a building is subject to a compulsory purchase, closing, demolition or clearance order are not eligible, nor are houses that have been occupied after the date the new road opens.

Only dwellings or other buildings used for residential purposes that meet the above criteria are an “eligible building” under the Regulations. Also, only certain rooms are eligible for noise insulation works. These are bedrooms and living rooms, which have a qualifying window or door in a side of the building at which all the noise criteria are met. The Regulations only apply to habitable rooms so exclude bathrooms, toilets, hallways, utility areas and smaller kitchens that do not include a living or dining area.

***2. What are the Noise Insulation Works?***

The insulation installation usually consists of:

• Secondary glazing for qualifying living room and bedroom windows – please note that this is not double glazing;

• Supplementary ventilation (a powered ventilator unit and passive permanent vent);

• Installation of venetian blinds on south facing qualifying windows;

• Insulation treatment for qualifying external doors

Depending on the type of window you already have, **secondary glazing** will usually comprise another pane of glass in its own frame (wood, metal or plastic) 100-200mm inside the existing window. This can be opened for cleaning or ventilation.

Secondary glazing works best when closed – so **additional ventilation** is usually required. The package includes an electric ventilator fan in a slim metal cover, fitted inside the room in question, to an outside wall (a 150-200mm hole is drilled through the wall, through which the fan draws in air from the outside).

On a south facing window secondary glazing may make the room too hot. You will be given the option of having venetian blinds installedbetween the main window and the secondary glazing to avoid this.

Where an external door exists on an eligible facade a **“secondary” door** to improve noise insulation can be installed. If the design of your house prevents this, other methods can be used, such as a sealing strip between the existing door and its frame to improve the noise insulation properties of the existing door.

***3. Who does the noise insulation works and on what terms?***

After Nottinghamshire County Council (‘the Council’) has conducted a survey and the details of the insulation for your property are agreed with you, the Council will either offer to do the work at their expense, or offer grant aid for you to you to carry out the works. The Council asks you to ensure that you provide adequate access for the survey and installation.

In the cases where The Council offers you a grant so that you can have the work done yourself. The grant would be made on the following conditions:

• You must first obtain 3 independent written quotations;

• The amount of the grant will be the lower of your chosen estimate and the actual cost if you choose not to take up the lowest estimate;

• The Council may pay 10% of the estimated cost in advance, and the balance will be paid when the work is satisfactorily completed.

• The work must be completed within 12 months of any advance payment. If this condition is not met no further grant will be paid, and any payments already made to you will have to be repaid to the Council. If you do not re-pay any payments when requested, the Council may take legal action to recover this sum as a debt in the civil courts.

• You must obtain the consent of any other person or body that may be required to permit the carrying out of insulation work (e.g. your landlord if you are a tenant, or any consents required from your local authority).

Please note that the Scheme cannot be used for work needed to remedy existing building defects.

The scheme also covers the making good of the existing fabric and decoration (not including curtains) after the installation of secondary glazing, ventilation equipment and second doors, including the adaptation of any existing pelmet and curtain rack.

***4. What is the procedure for getting noise insulation works?***

The procedure comprises 7 steps.

i) The Council will carry out an assessment of all eligible properties where consent has been granted to undertake a survey.

ii) The Council will then notify owners or occupiers of buildings which, on the basis of the assessment, the Council considers qualify under the scheme, and you will be sent an application form at this stage.

iii) If you receive such a notice and application form, you should complete and return the form to the Council if you wish to apply for noise insulation work. The Council will then assess your application and if acceptable notify you in writing.

iv) The Council will then arrange to visit you to discuss the application with you generally; view your home; take any necessary measurements; and identify any special issues or requirements.

v) The Council will then assess your case in detail and, if it is accepted, notify you of any further survey likely to be needed at your house. The Council will also let you have details of the noise insulation work it thinks should be done at your property and offer to do this.

vi) The Council or its agent will then install the noise insulation works in your property. Alternatively, if you have applied for a grant for the works and you have complied with the requirements of Section 3 above; the Council will agree to pay for the works if satisfactorily completed before the cut-off date or within 12 months where an advanced 10% payment is made.

vii) If you apply for a grant the Council will then pay the balance of the monies to you as set out above so that you can pay the contractor. Alternatively, if the Council or its agent has done the work, the Council pays for the noise insulation works.

***5. Is secondary glazing the same as double glazing?***

No. Secondary glazing is a separate pane of glass installed 100 – 200 mm inside the existing window, and the existing window remains in place. Double glazing consists of two panes of glass in the same casing, typically around 20mm apart which replace the existing window.

***6. What if I already have double glazing?***

The noise assessments are based on the expected noise immediately outside the building so the type of glazing you currently have installed would not affect your eligibility under the scheme. You are not obliged to accept the offer of insulation if you do not think you need it. The Council will provide advice as to the effectiveness of any currently installed double glazing in terms of attenuation of external noise compared to the offer of secondary glazing. You may, at your own discretion, and accepting the reduced level of noise attenuation, choose only to have ventilation units and blinds installed if you wish.

***7. Can I just have thermal double glazing installed instead of secondary glazing?***

No. The Council will not be offering to install double glazing as an alternative to secondary glazing as there is a potential shortfall in the sound insulation performance of thermal double glazing. Secondary glazing can be installed alongside existing single glazed or double glazed units.

***8. What if I choose not to accept the offer of noise insulation works but later change my mind?***

A decision to accept an offer of noise insulation must be made within a specific timeframe. An offer must be accepted no later than 6 months after the date it is made in writing to you **or** prior to the cut-off date which is 1 year after road opening whichever comes later. In the latter case, you will receive notice of the cut-off date if you have not already accepted an offer of noise insulation. If you initially choose not to accept the offer of noise insulation, but later change your mind when the road has opened, you must make your claim in writing prior to the cut-off date. Any claims received after the cut-off date will not be eligible and will not be accepted.

***9. Can I choose to accept some of the works in the offer but not others?***

Yes. When you receive your offer this will detail the works offered and which rooms are eligible. You may choose to accept the offer for some or all of the rooms listed, but if you decide not to treat some rooms, you will not be eligible to add these rooms later once works have been undertaken or a grant for the works has been issued.

Secondary glazing cannot be provided without additional ventilation where required to comply with the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975 as it is important to maintain a fresh air supply into your home. You may however elect not to take up the offer of secondary glazing, but still have the ventilation installed to provide an alternative ventilation source for the eligible rooms without the need to open your existing windows.

***10. Can I take the grant and not do the works?***

No. If a grant is offered and you accept it, you must have the works carried out to the specification in the offer. Otherwise you must repay the grant and if you do not do so the Council may issue civil proceedings to recover the debt.

***11. What if my landlord / tenant does not want the work carried out, but I do?***

The Council will try to reach agreement between all parties where possible. In any event, the party wishing to have the work carried out is requested to do all that they reasonably can to reach agreement with all other interested parties that can influence whether or not the work can be carried out. We will do our best to help you reach agreement with your landlord/tenant. If this is not possible the Council will need to take legal advice on whether it can proceed with the installation where consent of the landlord/tenant is refused.

***12. If the works are undertaken does the Council have a duty to maintain/repair the works?***

No. There will be no obligation to repair, maintain or make any payments in respect of repairing or maintaining any equipment installed under the scheme. There is no obligation on the Council to pay for running costs, which will be minimal for mechanical ventilation units. However, if equipment such as a ventilation unit fails through no fault of the resident or tenant, this will be repaired or replaced as necessary by the Council within 12 months of installation or the road opening.

**13. What do I need to do?**

In the majority of cases, eligible residents will receive a notice and application form from the Council. Once you receive a notice, you simply complete and return the form if you wish to apply for noise insulation works.

If you do not receive a notice, but think you may be eligible (e.g. because your neighbours have received notices) or if you have a particular reason for believing you will be adversely affected by road traffic noise even though you are not eligible for the scheme, please contact the Council at the address given below, and they will then consider your position individually.

**14. If your question has not been answered:**

Please call 0115 9774227; or

Email us at: tom.boylan@viaem.co.uk ; or

Write to us at:

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