

Melvyn Middleton  
Planning Inspectorate  
c/o Programme Officer  
louise@poservices.co.uk

**Colin Haigh  
Head of Planning**

Reply To: address as below  
Our Ref:  
Date: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
Direct Tel: 01707 357268  
Email: s.tiley@welhat.gov.uk

Dear Sir

### **Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination**

During the hearing session into HS35, Foxes Lane, Welham Green you requested additional information on noise impacts from the railway on the future residents of the site. In response to that request I enclose a report prepared for the site owner by Soundsolution Consultants.

Soundsolution concludes that there is a “medium risk” from railway noise on future occupants without noise mitigation. Their recommendation is that a boundary scheme treatment is provided in the form of a 2.2m acoustic fence along the western and part of the southern boundary of the site. With this in place the report concludes that any significant adverse noise impacts will be avoided in the finished development so as to accord with overarching planning requirements for new residential development.

One limitation noted in the report is that railway noise is currently affected by the COVID-related reduction in railway timetables. This has been addressed in the report by assuming a +3dB impact on measured noise levels, equating to a theoretical doubling of train activity.

The Council’s Environmental Health Technical Officer has considered the report. He notes the uncertainty arising from the train timetable and considers that it is still very likely that a pre-occupation noise testing condition will need to be attached to any planning permission given the caution associated with the current measurements.

### **Conclusion**

The evidence indicates that noise levels can be managed by the provision of an acoustic fence. However, given the unavoidable uncertainty arising from current timetabling changes there is likely to be a need for further testing which would be conditioned within a planning permission to ensure that the council’s noise standards are met.

Yours faithfully

Sue Tiley  
Planning Policy and Implementation Manager