

Attachment D

Acoustic Technical Report Addendum

King St SEP criteria

To: City of Sydney
From: Acoustic Studio
Project: City of Sydney Special Entertainment Precinct
Date: 3 June 2026

Background

Acoustic Studio has previously assisted the City of Sydney to determine suitable sound criteria for the City's Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs) and has prepared a Technical Report - *City of Sydney Special Entertainment Precinct Acoustic Technical Report* (v1.5), dated 03/03/2026. The Technical Report provides relevant background, literature and data review, site observations and measurements, and the final sound criteria for all City of Sydney SEPs. However, the King St SEP is a unique precinct at the boundary of the City of Sydney and Inner West Council. The two Councils have a resolution to align the sound criteria for King St SEP so that residents and venues can have more certainty and consistency and have worked together to develop a set of bespoke sound criteria. It is also a strategic vision of both Councils for activity levels to grow on King St, hence the criteria should be set to support an increase in the number of venues and the level of activity.

This Memo outlines the agreed criteria for the King St SEP and relevant justification for the changes from the general SEP approach and should be read in conjunction with the Technical Report.

Inner West Criteria and Report

Renzo Tonin & Associates (RTA) has been engaged by Inner West Council to conduct precinct-specific measurements in King St SEP and surrounds, which led to their proposed criteria, detailed in *Inner West Council – King Street Special Entertainment Precinct Acoustic Study* (r1), dated 03/03/2026. Inner West Council also has Enmore Road special entertainment precinct nearby with established criteria. The Inner West proposed criteria are generally higher than the City of Sydney proposed criteria, and prompted review of both sets of criteria to achieve alignment.

The focus is on the Sound Category Areas (SCAs) fronting King St, because they are the main limiting criteria due to generally high shielding from buildings and low entertainment levels at the back of venues.

We have reviewed the acoustic measurements conducted by RTA, which complemented our own measurements to establish a more detailed picture of the background noise environment in the area. The measurement results show that the central King St frontage, approximately bounded by Church St/Whateley St and Enmore Rd/Newman St, generally has a higher background and ambient noise level than north and south King St. This has supported dividing the areas fronting King St into two separate SCAs: SCA KS1 (central King Street) and SCA KS2.

Criteria Alignment

Table 1 outlines the steps to achieve alignment between the Inner West proposed dBA criteria and CoS SCA1 dBA criteria which ACS had recommended for King St receivers. The main changes are in the Late Night period, where it has been further divided into the time period between midnight and 2am (new "Late Night" period) and between 2am

and 7am (new “Early Morning” period), to reflect the background and ambient noise patterns in King St where the first two hours after midnight are still relatively activated with patron activities inside some venues and on the street, particularly in central King St area and on weekends.

Table 1 Criteria alignment steps and justification

Time period	Day of the week	Changes from CoS SCA1 criteria	Justification
Day and Evening	All days	SCA KS1 no change SCA KS2 decreased by 3 dB (adopting Inner West proposed criteria)	Minimal differences between proposed Inner West and CoS criteria. Minor changes do not have significant impact.
Early Night	Weekdays	No change	-
	Weekends	SCA KS1 increased by 2 dB SCA KS2 no change	The increase is supported by slightly higher background noise in SCA KS1 areas and a higher tolerance from the residents on weekends.
Late Night (midnight to 2am)	Weekdays	SCA KS1 increased by 5 dB SCA KS2 increased by 2 dB	A 3 dB increase is supported by higher background and ambient noise before 2am in SCA KS1. It is expected that venues will close their doors after midnight as part of noise emissions controls, however some patrons will enter and exit during this time. Therefore a further 2 dB is allowed for in comparison to post-2am criteria, to allow for some door open time when patrons enter and leave venues without having to decrease the internal music level. Ambient levels are higher before 2am, hence the impact is manageable.
	Weekends	SCA KS1 increased by 7 dB SCA KS2 increased by 5 dB	A 3-5 dB increase is supported by higher background and ambient noise before 2am (5 dB in SCA KS1 and 3 dB in SCA KS2). It is expected that venues will close their doors after midnight as part of noise emissions controls, however some patrons will enter and exit during this time. Therefore a further 2 dB is allowed for in comparison to post-2am criteria, to allow for some door open time when patrons enter and leave venues without having to decrease the internal music level. Ambient levels are higher before 2am, hence the impact is manageable.
Early Morning (2am to 7am)	Weekdays	No change	-
	Weekends	SCA KS1 increased by 5 dB SCA KS2 no change	The increase is supported by higher background noise in SCA KS1 areas.

Other SCAs

For the other SCAs (SCA2, 3, and 4), the “Reasonable Amenity” approach (see Section 6 of the Technical Report) has been selected by the City of Sydney in King St SEP. In addition, SCA2 has been modified to form a new SCA KS3, with higher sound criteria on the weekends in Early Night and new Late Night periods to account for higher background and ambient noise levels and to be more consistent with adjacent SCA KS1.

For SCA3 and 4, different weekend/weekday criteria were deemed not necessary because our modelling shows that the base criteria are able to be achieved at most receivers on both weekends and weekdays. This avoids unnecessarily complicating the criteria.

For SCA KS3, SCA3 and SCA4, a 2 dB increase has been allowed for the new Late Night period (before 2am) to allow for some door open time when patrons leave venues without having to decrease the internal music level. Ambient levels are also high before 2am in the areas not fronting King St, hence the impact is manageable.

Resulting Criteria

The final SCA allocations are shown in Figure 1, and Table 2 provides the final criteria for King St SEP, with the SCA KS1 and SCA KS2 criteria agreed by both City of Sydney Council and Inner West Council. The criteria are specifically tailored for King St SEP in consideration to its unique context and noise environment, while still ensuring both the enabling of entertainment activities and the protection of residents' amenity.

Compared to previous applicable criteria in the area (City of Sydney DCP and L&GNSW LA10 criteria), the new criteria allow for higher sound levels from venues (even when the 3dB cumulative adjustment is applied). The criteria are easier for venues to follow due to the fixed levels (no need for background noise monitoring) and single assessment location (external in most situations).

Realistic scenarios have been tested to ensure that the King St SEP criteria allows for live music at most venues at most times, while the impact from internal entertainment levels inside residential receivers is reasonable and manageable. In particular, the criteria allow for the following operations in the majority of scenarios on King St:

- Outdoor dining until midnight (limited to 11pm on weekdays by trading hours in the Precinct Management Plan)
- Live music with venue doors open until midnight
- Live music with venue doors closed after midnight (average doors/seals, with occasional opening for access/egress)

The map displays the Sound Category Areas (SCA) for the Newtown area in NSW. The legend indicates the following categories:

- SEP boundaries (dashed line)
- Sound Category Area
 - SCA KS1 (dark red)
 - SCA KS2 (pink)
 - SCA KS3 (light pink)
 - SCA3 (yellow)
 - SCA4 (blue)
 - Other areas (grey)

Memo

Table 2 King St SEP final criteria

Sound category area (SCA)	Days of the week	Day/Evening (7am–10pm)					Early night (10pm–midnight)					Late night (midnight–2am)					Early morning (2am–7am)				
		dBA	Octave bands – dB				dBA	Octave bands – dB				dBA	Octave bands – dB				dBA	Octave bands – dB			
			31.5	63	125	250		31.5	63	125	250		31.5	63	125	250		31.5	63	125	250
SCA KS1	Sun 6pm–Thu 6pm	68	67	69	69	69	60	63	64	64	64	55	59 ¹	55	55	56	50	59 ¹	52	52	50
	Thu 6pm–Sun 6pm	68	67	69	69	69	65	65	67	67	67	57	59 ¹	57	57	57	55	59 ¹	55	55	56
SCA KS2	Sun 6pm–Thu 6pm	65	65	67	67	67	60	63	64	64	64	52	59 ¹	52	52	50	50	59 ¹	52	52	50
	Thu 6pm–Sun 6pm	65	65	67	67	67	63	65	67	67	67	55	59 ¹	55	55	56	50	59 ¹	52	52	50
SCA KS3	Sun 6pm–Thu 6pm	63	61	61	61	61	55	56 ²	55	55	56	47	56 ²	46 ²	46	46	45	56 ²	46 ²	44	44
	Thu 6pm–Sun 6pm	63	61	61	61	61	60	56 ²	58	58	59	50	56 ²	49	49	49	47	56 ²	46 ²	46	46
SCA3	Any day	58	60	60	59	58	50	56 ²	52	52	51	42	56 ²	46 ²	43 ²	44	40	56 ²	46 ²	43 ²	38
SCA4	Any day	53	56 ²	56	53	53	45	56 ²	49	46	46	37	56 ²	46 ²	43 ²	33	35	56 ²	46 ²	43 ²	31

Notes 1-2: If these levels are exceeded, an optional third octave-band assessment may be carried out, and compliance with the corresponding third octave-band levels provided in Table 11 of the Technical Report will demonstrate compliance.