

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/26/101776

Site Address: SPEEDWELL HOUSE, SPEEDWELL CLOSE, CHANDLER'S FORD

Case Officer: Rebecca Altman

Description: Proposed 2 storey plant room to house Nitrogen Generation plant located in service yard at the rear of the building (revision to application ref. F/25/99212)

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Urban Edge • Employment site • Surface water flood risk on site • Great crested newts – green zone – moderate potential		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Most relevant planning history: • F/25/99212 - Detached 2 storey plant room to the rear of the building – permission 11 June 2025 • F/25/99216 – new external fire escape staircase to facilitate access to new internal mezzanine; new first floor door and re-position of ground floor door – permission 13 May 2025 • F/19/86202 – single-storey extension to facilitate plant room and associated equipment – permission 10 February 2020 • F/19/86194 – alterations to existing roller shutter door, including new personnel door on north east elevation – permission 27 September 2019 • F/19/86201 – erection of new entrance lobby – permission 27 September 2019 • F/18/83890 – new plant gantry including plant container and associated plant at first floor level, supported on steel frame – withdrawn 11 March 2019 • F/13/72366 – change of use from warehouse with ancillary office use (B8) to light industrial with ancillary office use (B1) for CooperVision Manufacturing Ltd only, together with external sprinkler tank, external plant and pumping station and re cladding of external walls – permission 27 June 2013		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One representation received, objecting on the following grounds: - Noise impacts on nearby residents, which is louder in the evenings and nighttime.		
Parish Council:	No comments received.		
Environmental Health:	No objection. The submitted report confirms additional noise mitigation has been completed, and a survey was undertaken on 10-11 th June 2026. The results confirm that noise levels are at least 5dB below background sound levels, which meets required assessment criteria.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 20 th August 2026 – photographs on file		

Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

Relevant National Decision Making Policies (NDMPs) include:

E2 – meeting the need for business land and premises

DP3 – key principles of well designed places

P3 – living conditions and pollution

DM8 – unauthorised development and enforcement

Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036: The most relevant policies are DM1 (general criteria), DM8 (Pollution), and DM15 (safeguarding employment sites).

Assessment:

Site, proposal and background

The application relates to a large industrial building located within the Chandlers Ford Industrial Estate. The building is occupied by CooperVision, which manufactures contact lenses.

In June 2025, planning permission was granted for the construction of a two-storey Nitrogen Generation plant room. This permission was granted subject to a condition for a post-installation noise assessment to be carried out (Condition 3), to ensure that the noise levels set out in the Noise Assessment submitted with the application were being met. The condition was worded as follows:

Within 1 week of the plant room becoming fully operational, a post installation noise survey must be carried out and a report submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate compliance with the noise calculations set out in the Noise Assessment prepared by Sustainable Acoustics, ref. 25-0043-0 R01, dated 4 April 2025. The assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant and shall consider the plant operating at full capacity as well as all the existing plant operating at full capacity, for both daytime and nighttime periods.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby residents and to ensure that the development does not result in an unacceptable increase in noise pollution, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

The plant room was subsequently constructed and a Noise Survey was carried out, but this determined that the required noise levels were not being met. An additional discharge noise event was also identified, which had not been part of the original noise predictions. Additional noise mitigation measures were proposed to seek to rectify the matter and these were implemented in May 2026. The additional mitigation included:

- An absorptive noise barrier around the ground floor louvre in the east façade;
- Blocking off the upper louvre in the east façade from the inside;
- Attenuators fitted to the internal discharge;
- Door seals improved to the acoustic doors in the south façade;
- Sound absorptive material added inside the plant enclosure.

It was also established that the plant room had not been constructed fully in accordance with the original plans (change in orientation and opening positions), and with the additional noise mitigation alterations, the changes were considered materially different to the original approval. A new application was therefore requested to regularise the structure as built. This planning application seeks permission for the plant room as constructed.

The application is submitted in accordance with Section 73A of the Town and County Planning Act, which allows for submission of retrospective applications for development that has already taken place. This includes instances where a development has been carried out without complying with some condition subject to which planning permission was granted.

NDMP DM8 sets out guidance on how Local Planning Authority should assess retrospective applications for unauthorised development, stating that if there is evidence that the unauthorised development was intentional, this fact should be given substantial weight when considering whether to grant planning permission. In this case, there was a previous planning permission for the development and there is no evidence to suggest that the deviations in relation to appearance and noise levels were intentional.

Principle of the proposal

NDMP E2 states that to support business growth, substantial weight should be given to the economic benefit of proposals which allow businesses to expand and/or adapt. Policy DM15 of the Local Plan also supports development associated with existing industrial uses. The plant room allows nitrogen generation on site rather than being delivered, which improves the efficiency of the unit's operations. The principle of the proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

Noise impacts

The main determining factor in this application is whether the revised design of the plant room with its additional noise mitigation measures, results in an acceptable level of noise generation that would not harm the amenities of nearby residents.

Policy DM8 of the Local Plan and NDMP P3 set out requirements relating to pollution and the need to ensure no adverse impacts as a result of development. In relation to noise, NDMP P3 specifically states that development proposals should:

2, b) Not give rise to, or contribute to an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree. Where possible, opportunities should be taken to reduce pollution affecting the wider area (such as through traffic and travel management or improved external lighting);
d) Mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise, not result in levels of noise exposure which would have a significant observed adverse effect, and maintain the character of tranquil areas (those areas that have remained relatively undisturbed by noise from human sources and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason).

The application is supported by a Post Remedial Work Noise Assessment (dated 16 June 2026). This sets out the details and results of a noise survey that was carried out following installation of additional noise mitigation measures on the plant building. This report has been reviewed in detail by the Council's Environmental Health Officer, alongside previous Noise Impact Assessments, to determine whether the nitrogen plant as installed is generating an acceptable level of noise so as not to harm the amenities of nearby residents.

It is acknowledged that results of the Post Remedial Work Noise Assessment differ from those outlined in the Noise Assessment prepared for the previous planning application and which were subject to the previous Condition 3. However, the Council's Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that the latest noise assessment has been carried out in accordance with a recognised industry standard (BS 4142:2014+A1:2019), and the resulting noise levels (including the discharge event) remain at least 5dB below background sound levels, which is an appropriate level to prevent an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the nearest residential properties.

The proposal is determined to accord with the requirements of Policy DM8 of the Local Plan and NDMP P3.

Design and appearance

NDMP DP3 and Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan require new development to be appropriate for their context, in respect of matters such as scale, layout and use of materials.

In terms of footprint and overall scale, the plant room is significantly smaller than the main building on the site. It is located in the rear car park and is constructed of materials that complement those used on existing buildings and structures. The alterations from the originally permitted design and the additional noise mitigation installations are not considered to have significantly impacted on its overall appearance within the context of the site. It is only readily visible from within the industrial estate, and is not considered to have any adverse visual impacts on the wider area. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with NDMP DP3 and Policy DM1 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

The proposal is exempt from the requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain as it did not impact on any existing habitat, being located on an existing hard surfaced area. For the same reason it would also not impact on great crested newts. The development is therefore not considered to have any adverse impacts on ecology.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. The proposed development has been designed to make the site operations more efficient and to minimise pollution impacts, in line with climate change objectives.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Conclusion: The nitrogen plant as constructed is acceptable in terms of visual impacts and noise impacts, and complies with the relevant national and local planning policies.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans numbered:

- 2088-02 Rev. A – Proposed Location and Block Plans
- 2088-03 Rev. A – Existing Site Plan
- 2088-51 Rev. D – Proposed Site Plan
- 2088-52 Rev. E – Proposed Ground & First Floor Plans, Elevations

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

The plant hereby approved shall be operated and maintained in accordance with the approved Post Remedial Work Noise Assessment (Sustainable Acoustics, ref. 25-0043-2 R02, 16 June 2026). The associated noise mitigation measures specified shall be retained and maintained in an effective condition for so long as the plant is in use.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby residents and to ensure that the development does not cause unacceptable noise pollution, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).