

Description	Former Novartis Site, Parsonage Rd, Horsham, RH12 5AA Planning Application Ref DC/25/0629 Response to officer comments on noise
Date	23 June 2025
Issued by	N D Treby BEng(Hons) FIOA MAES
Issued to	William McKay, Lovell
Ref No	NDT7242/21324

This technical note is a response to the noise and vibration comments and recommendations issued by Lee Money, of the Environmental Health Department at Horsham District Council on 6th June 2025.

- The Officer's recommendation is "No Objection, Approve with Conditions." All other comments should be considered in this context.
- Officer comments regarding noise during the construction phase are understood and can be controlled as part of the CEMP. Condition 5 addresses this.
- With regards to Officer comments on internal noise, it is recognised that the acoustic report details appropriate glazing treatments.

The Officer has stated that the need for ventilation and the prevention of overheating must be considered.

- With regards to ventilation, Table 6 of the acoustic report sets out the acoustic requirements for glazing and ventilators.

This is designed to ensure the internal noise levels set out in BS 8233 are satisfied with windows closed and ventilators open.

This approach is advocated in Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise (ProPG) – New Residential Development, ANC/IOA/CIEH, May 2017 which states that *"Where it is not possible to meet internal target levels with windows open, internal noise levels can be assessed with windows closed, however any façade openings used to provide whole dwelling ventilation (e.g. trickle ventilators) should be assessed in the "open" position."*

- With regards to overheating mitigation, the Officer advises that overheating risks have not been considered in detail, and should be considered as part of the design.

The establishment of overheating risks, and the design of mitigation is covered by the Building Regulations Approved Document O (ADO), and so is not a requirement for planning. The consideration of overheating risk is a matter for specialist overheating designers and is not a requirement for the acoustician. ADO only requires consideration of the noise constraints during overheating mitigation at night and the acoustician can advise on those noise constraints.

To assist the designers, the acoustic report sets out the acoustic constraints on the use of open windows during overheating mitigation at night. Section 4.1.2 of the acoustic report, particularly Table 7, gives the extent to which windows can be open whilst also achieving the internal acoustic criteria of ADO. The overheating assessor will then use this information to establish whether additional cooling is required, and this will form part of the Building Regulations submission.

I consider suggested Condition 6 unnecessary. If the principle of the condition is to be retained, the wording and criteria will need further consideration and revision as it is currently not necessary, precise or reasonable:

- Overheating is addressed in ADO, and so the suggested condition is unnecessary and unreasonable;
- The Acoustics Ventilation and Overheating Guide referenced does not contain quantifiable standards so is not precise;
- The reference to achieving BS 8233 criteria during overheating mitigation contradicts the methodology of Acoustics Ventilation and Overheating Guide and so is not precise or reasonable;

The retention of this condition may require the client to consider overheating mitigation during the daytime period.

- With regards to Officer comments on noise in external amenity spaces, the officer advises that the report has identified some amenity spaces where noise levels exceed guidelines.

The officer advises that, in their view, "it is likely this can be overcome through appropriate acoustic boundary treatments". Whilst boundary treatments may be able to provide screening, the non-acoustic aspect of any such treatments will need to be carefully considered (such as visual impact).

The officer also advises that C07, C10, C11 and C15 balconies may have opportunities to improve the acoustic characteristics through appropriate design and insulation measures. However, I am not aware of any measures that would materially reduce noise levels.

The officer identifies that where further mitigation is not feasible, occupiers of these blocks should be provided with access to quieter amenity spaces within the development. As indicated on the noise model in Appendix C of the report, large sections of the central area of the site have noise level within BS 8233 guidelines for amenity space,

BS 8233 notes that in external amenity areas "*...it is also recognized that these guideline values are not achievable in all circumstances where development might be desirable. In higher noise areas, such as city centres or urban areas adjoining the strategic transport network, a compromise between elevated noise levels and other factors, such as the convenience of living in these locations or making efficient use of land resources to ensure development needs can be met, might be warranted.*"

Therefore, I consider suggested Condition 7 to be unnecessary and unreasonable. The requirements of the condition are more onerous than BS 8233 (which permits noise levels in excess of BS 8233 guidelines in external amenity areas), and there is no guarantee that boundary treatments to achieve the necessary acoustic reductions would be permissible in all non-acoustic regards (such as visual impact). This does not align with the officer's view in the text which allows for access to quieter areas to be available as an alternative, as discussed above. If the principle of the condition is to be retained, then it should be worded to require a submission of boundary treatments to be made, but without the requirement for every garden to meet $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ 55 dB.

In summary, we welcome the overall view that there is no objection to the scheme. The matters of concern raised by the Officer are overheating, which is addressed by the Building Regulations, and noise in gardens where the Officer's intent is met by the scheme as currently designed. As such, Conditions 6 and 7 are not necessary. If the principle of the conditions is considered necessary by the LPA, we will be pleased to work with them to agree suitable precise and reasonable wording.