

Sainsbury's Local
Brunel House
Station Road
Reading
RG1 1LG

**Plant Noise
Guidance**

On behalf of

Sainsbury's

Project Reference: 92407 | Revision: - | Date: 4th June 2024

T: 01252 519881
W: noisesolutions.co.uk
E: hello@noisesolutions.co.uk

Noise Solutions Ltd, 5 Oriel Court, Omega Park, Alton, GU34 2YT Reg no. 3483481



Document Information

Project Name : Sainsbury's Local, Brunel House, Station Rd, Reading
Project Reference : 92407
Report Title : Plant Noise Guidance Report
Doc Reference : 92407/PNG
Date : 4th June 2024

	Name	Qualifications	Initials	Date
Prepared by:	Dean Bowden	BSc(Hons) MIOA	DMB	4 th June 2024
Reviewed and approved by:	Nigel Chandler	BSc(Hons), MIOA	NAC	4 th June 2024
For and on behalf of Noise Solutions Ltd				

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed/ Approved

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Reg no. 3483481 Trading office, 5 Oriel Court, Omega Park, Alton, GU34 2YT

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Executive Summary

Noise Solutions Limited has undertaken an environmental noise survey in Reading to set noise limits for a plant room serving a proposed Sainsbury's at Brunel House on Station Road in Reading.

Plant will be installed within a plantroom, with intake and discharge louvres on the west elevation of the building. The equipment has not been selected at this stage.

Based on the information contained within this report, the following plant noise emission limits apply:

Guidance on maximum plant noise emission limits

Plant	Period	Maximum plant noise emission level (L _{Aeq})
Plantroom louvres (total)	Daytime (07.00 – 23.00 hours)	53dB at 1m (33dBA @ 10m)
	Night-time (23.00 – 07.00 hours)	45dB at 1m (25dBA @ 10m)

Once plant selections are confirmed, a detailed noise impact assessment will be undertaken to determine compliance with local authority emissions criteria. Suitable attenuators will be specified for the plant room louvres, if required, to ensure compliance.

All plant and associated ductwork/pipework will be suitably anti-vibration isolated from the structure. If required following an assessment of the separating floor/ceiling between the plant room and offices above, a suitable acoustic ceiling will be specified.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Noise Solutions Ltd (NSL) has been commissioned to provide guidance on the maximum noise emissions from a plant room serving the proposed Sainsbury's at Brunel House on Station Road in Reading.
- 1.2. This report contains recommendations based on project information available at the time of the assessment and the results of a baseline noise survey. NSL can provide further guidance on receipt of the selected plant details.
- 1.3. To assist with the understanding of this report a glossary of acoustic terms can be found in [Appendix A](#). An in-depth glossary of acoustic terms can be viewed online at www.acoustic-glossary.co.uk.

2.0 Details of development proposals

- 2.1. The proposed Sainsbury's store is to occupy the ground and basement floors of a six-storey commercial building on the west side of Station Road. The upper floors of the building are occupied by offices.
- 2.2. New plant will be located in an internal plantroom with intake and discharge louvres in the west elevation. Plant is likely to comprise an air conditioning (AC) unit and refrigeration plant. The refrigeration plant will run at all times; the AC unit will operate only when the store is open.

3.0 Nearest noise sensitive receptors

- 3.1. The area around the site is a mix of commercial and residential properties.
- 3.2. The nearest noise sensitive premises are residential flats (Receptor R1) and serviced apartments (Receptor R2) located to the rear of the site. Windows of these properties are around 11m away from the proposed louvres with direct line of sight.
- 3.3. Aerial photographs showing the site and surrounding area and noise monitoring locations used in this assessment are presented in [Appendix B](#).

4.0 Existing noise climate

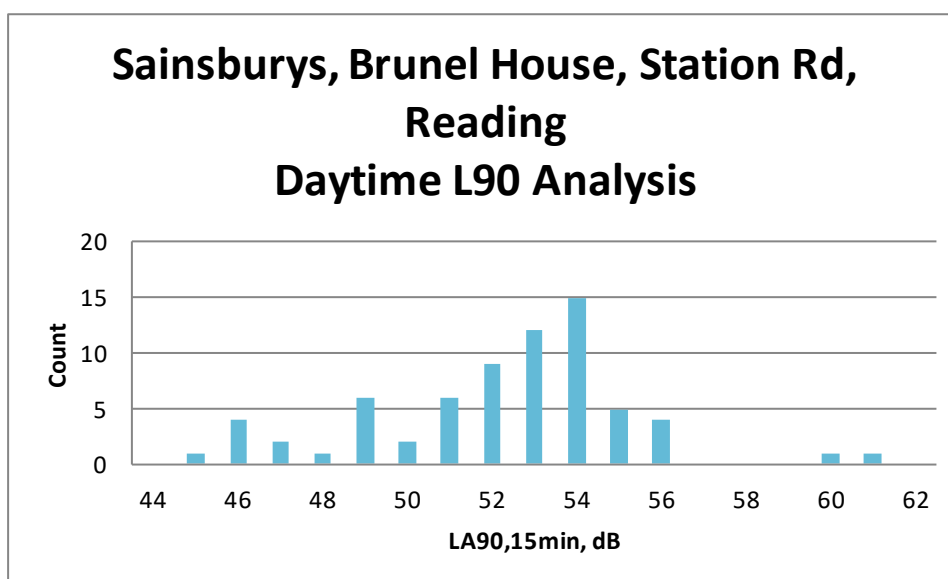
- 4.1. An environmental noise survey was undertaken to establish the typical background sound levels at a location representative of the noise climate outside the façades of the nearest noise sensitive receptors to the proposed plant area during the quietest times at which the plant will operate.

- 4.2. The results of the environmental sound survey are summarised in Table 1 below. The full set of measurement results and details of the survey methodology are presented in [Appendix C](#).

Table 1 Summary of survey results

Measurement period	Range of recorded sound pressure levels (dB)			
	L _{Aeq} (15mins)	L _{Afmax} (15mins)	L _{A10} (15mins)	L _{A90} (15mins)
Daytime (07.00 – 23.00 hours)	53-70	67-94	57-75	45-61
Night-time (23.00 – 07.00 hours)	42-60	57-83	42-60	37-48

Figure 1 Histogram of daytime L_{A90} background sound pressure levels



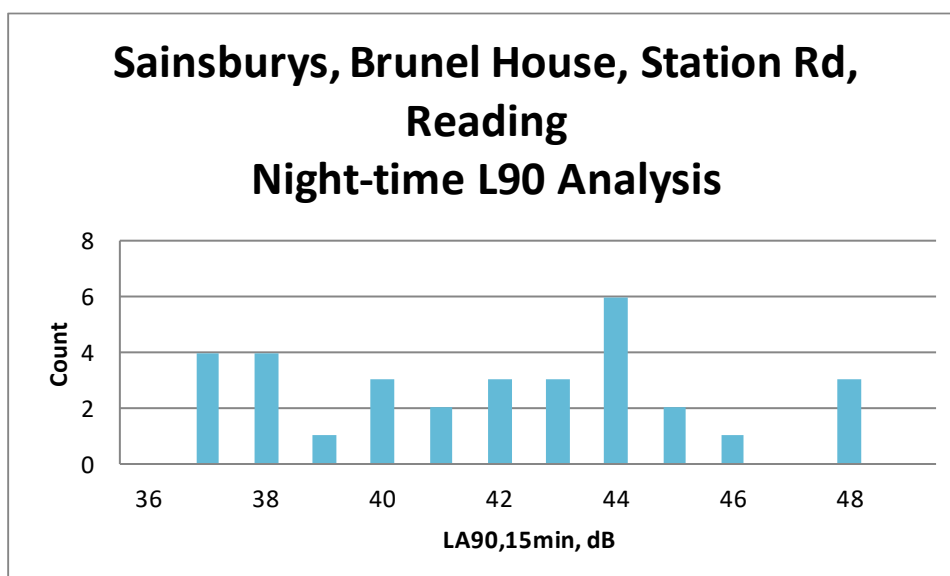
- 4.3. Further statistical analysis has been carried out on the data, and the mean and median values are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Statistical analysis of L_{A90,15min} levels during the daytime period

dB, L _{A90} daytime period	
mean	52
modal	54
median	53

- 4.4. In order to be robust, 48dB has been selected to be representative of the background noise level during the daytime period.

Figure 2 Histogram of night-time L_{A90} background sound pressure levels



- 4.5. Further statistical analysis has been carried out on the data and the mean and median values are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Statistical analysis of $L_{A90,15min}$ levels during the night-time period

dB, L_{A90} night-time period	
mean	42
modal	44
median	42

- 4.6. In order to be robust, 38dB has been selected to be representative of the background sound level during the night-time period.
- 4.7. Therefore, the following values are considered representative of the existing background sound pressure levels at nearby noise sensitive premises:
- 48dB L_{A90} during the daytime period; and
 - 38dB L_{A90} during the night-time period.

5.0 Plant noise design criteria

Reading Borough Council

- 5.1. For similar applications for fixed plant, Reading Borough Council usually applies the following Condition:

The rating level of the plant/equipment hereby approved, L_Ar,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to sensitive facades, shall be at least 10 dB below the existing background sound level, L_A90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally, in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and Policy DM4 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)"

- 5.2. The reference to "rating" and "L_Ar,Tr" implies that the assessment is to be made using the methodology set out in BS 4142:2014.

BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound

- 5.3. BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 is intended to be used to assess the likely effects of sound on people residing in nearby dwellings. The scope of BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 includes "sound from fixed plant installations which comprise mechanical and electrical plant and equipment".
- 5.4. The procedure contained in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 is to quantify the "specific sound level", which is the measured or predicted level of sound from the source in question over a one hour period for the daytime and a 15 minute period for the night-time. Daytime is defined in the standard as 07:00 to 23:00 hours, and night-time as 23:00 to 07:00 hours.
- 5.5. The specific sound level is converted to a rating level by adding penalties on a sliding scale to account for either potentially tonal or impulsive elements. The standard sets out objective methods for determining the presence of tones or impulsive elements, but notes that it is acceptable to subjectively determine these effects.
- 5.6. The penalty for tonal elements is between 0dB and 6dB, and the standard notes: "Subjectively, this can be converted to a penalty of 2 dB for a tone which is just perceptible at the noise receptor, 4 dB where it is clearly perceptible, and 6 dB where it is highly perceptible."
- 5.7. The penalty for impulsive elements is between 0dB and 9dB, and the standard notes: "Subjectively, this can be converted to a penalty of 3 dB for impulsivity which is just perceptible at the noise receptor, 6 dB where it is clearly perceptible, and 9 dB where it is highly perceptible."
- 5.8. The assessment outcome results from a comparison of the rating level with the background sound level. The standard states:
- *Typically, the greater this difference, the greater the magnitude of the impact.*

- *A difference of around +10 dB or more is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact, depending on the context;*
 - *A difference of around +5 dB is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context;*
 - *The lower the rating level is relative to the measured background sound level, the less likely it is that the specific sound source will have an adverse impact or a significant adverse impact. Where the rating level does not exceed the background sound level, this is an indication of the specific sound source having a low impact, depending on the context.*
- 5.9. The standard does state that "adverse impacts include, but are not limited to, annoyance and sleep disturbance. Not all adverse impacts will lead to complaints and not every complaint is proof of an adverse impact."
- 5.10. The standard goes on to note that: "Where background sound levels and rating levels are low, absolute levels might be as, or more, relevant than the margin by which the rating level exceeds the background. This is especially true at night."
- 5.11. In addition to the margin by which the Rating Level of the specific sound source exceeds the Background Sound Level, the 2014 edition places emphasis upon an appreciation of the context, as follows:
- "An effective assessment cannot be conducted without an understanding of the reason(s) for the assessment and the context in which the sound occurs/will occur. When making assessments and arriving at decisions, therefore, it is essential to place the sound in context."*
- 5.12. BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 requires uncertainties in the assessment to be considered, and where the uncertainty is likely to affect the outcome of the assessment, steps should be taken to reduce the uncertainty.

Low background sound levels

- 5.13. Due to the exceptionally low prevailing environmental noise levels measured during the survey night-time period, it is suggested that the plant noise design criteria at the nearest residences should be capped at 30dBA. This proposed criterion is based on guidance found in Section 11 of BS 4142:2014 which states:

Where background sound levels and rating levels are low, absolute levels might be as, or more, relevant than the margin by which the rating level exceeds the background. This is especially true at night.

- 5.14. A plant noise level of 30dBA at the façade would result in an internal noise level of 15dBA, which is likely to be lower than self-generated noise internally (for example, from domestic refrigerators). This assumption is based on guidance found in BS 8233:2014, which states that approximately 15dB of insulation is provided by a partially open window.

Proposed criteria

- 5.15. Based on the above criteria the noise rating level for the proposed plant at the nearest residential windows should be at least 10dB below the existing representative background sound level, with a lower limit of 30dBA, and should therefore not exceed the limits in the table below.

Table 4 Plant noise emissions limits at the nearest noise sensitive receptor

Period	Cumulative plant noise rating level, dB(A)
Daytime (07.00 – 23.00 hours)	38
Night-time (23.00 – 07.00 hours)	30

- 5.16. The above limits have not been approved by the local authority at this stage.

6.0 Plant louvre noise limits

- 6.1. Cumulative noise levels from the proposed plantroom louvres should not exceed the following limits to demonstrate compliance with the criteria detailed in Table 4.

Table 5 Guidance on maximum plant louvre noise emission limits

Plant	Period	Maximum plant noise emission level (L _{Aeq})
Intake and discharge louvres (total)	Daytime (07.00 – 23.00 hours)	53dB at 1m (33dBA @ 10m)
	Night-time (23.00 – 07.00 hours)	45dB at 1m (25dBA @ 10m)

- 6.2. Based on experience of previous Sainsbury's plant selections, suitable atmospheric-side silencers are likely to be required internally of the plant room louvres in order to demonstrate compliance with the above limits.

Uncertainties

- 6.3. Where possible, uncertainty in the above assessments has been minimised by taking the following steps:
- The meter and calibrator used have a traceable laboratory calibration and the meter was field calibrated before and after the measurements.

- Uncertainty in the calculated impacts has been reduced by the use of a well-established calculation method.
- Care was taken to ensure that the measurement positions were representative of the noise climate outside the nearby residential dwellings and not in positions where higher noise levels were present.

6.4. The following should be taken into account during the design of the refrigeration systems:

- The local authority is anticipated to require details of the proposed plant and a noise impact assessment report as part of the planning process.

Noise and vibration transmission

- 6.5. Subject to review of the construction of the separating floor between the plantroom and the offices above, it is likely that a mass-layer ceiling will be required to control airborne sound transmission to acceptable levels.
- 6.6. To control structure-borne noise and vibration transmission, all plant must be suitably isolated from the building structure.

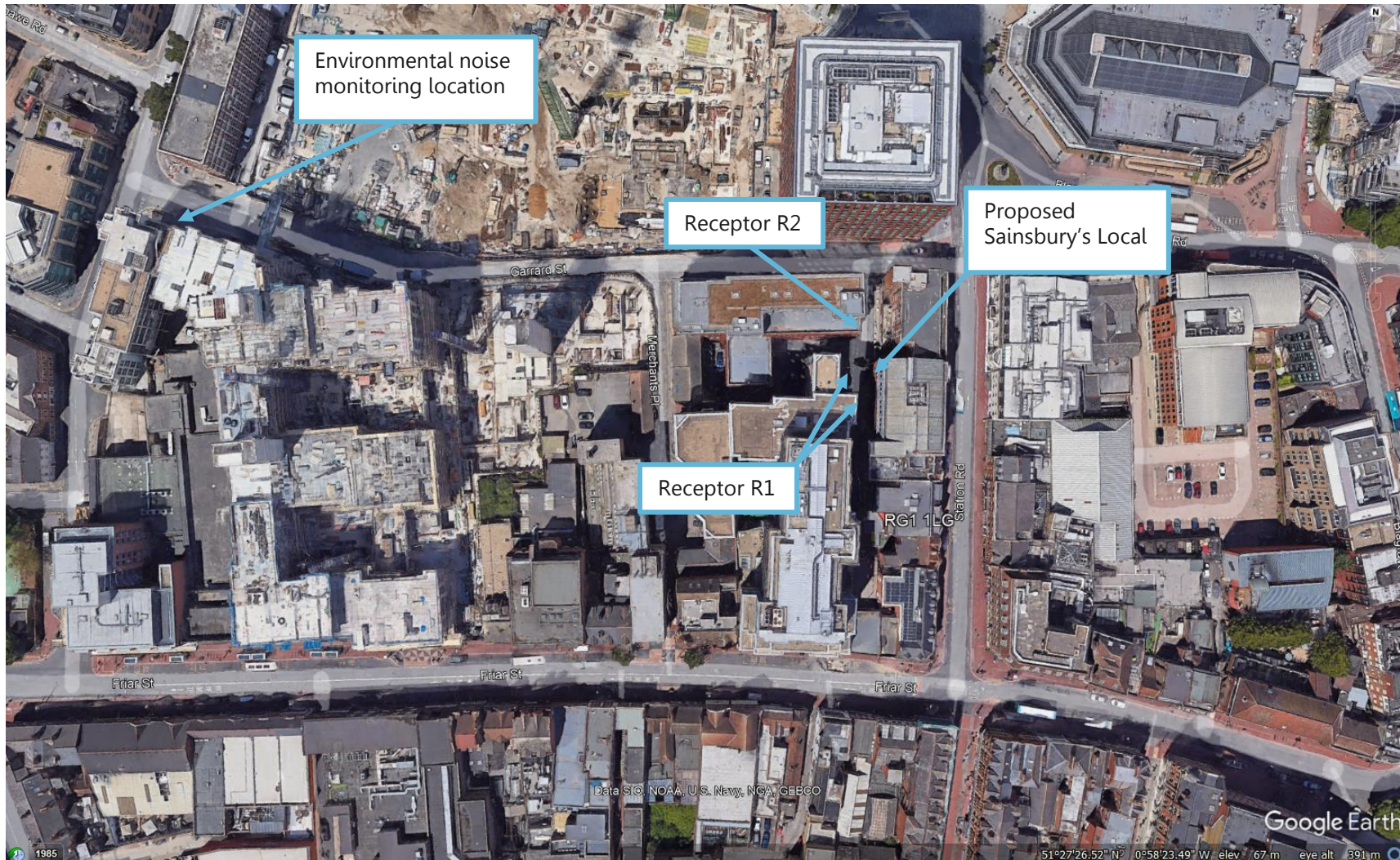
7.0 Summary

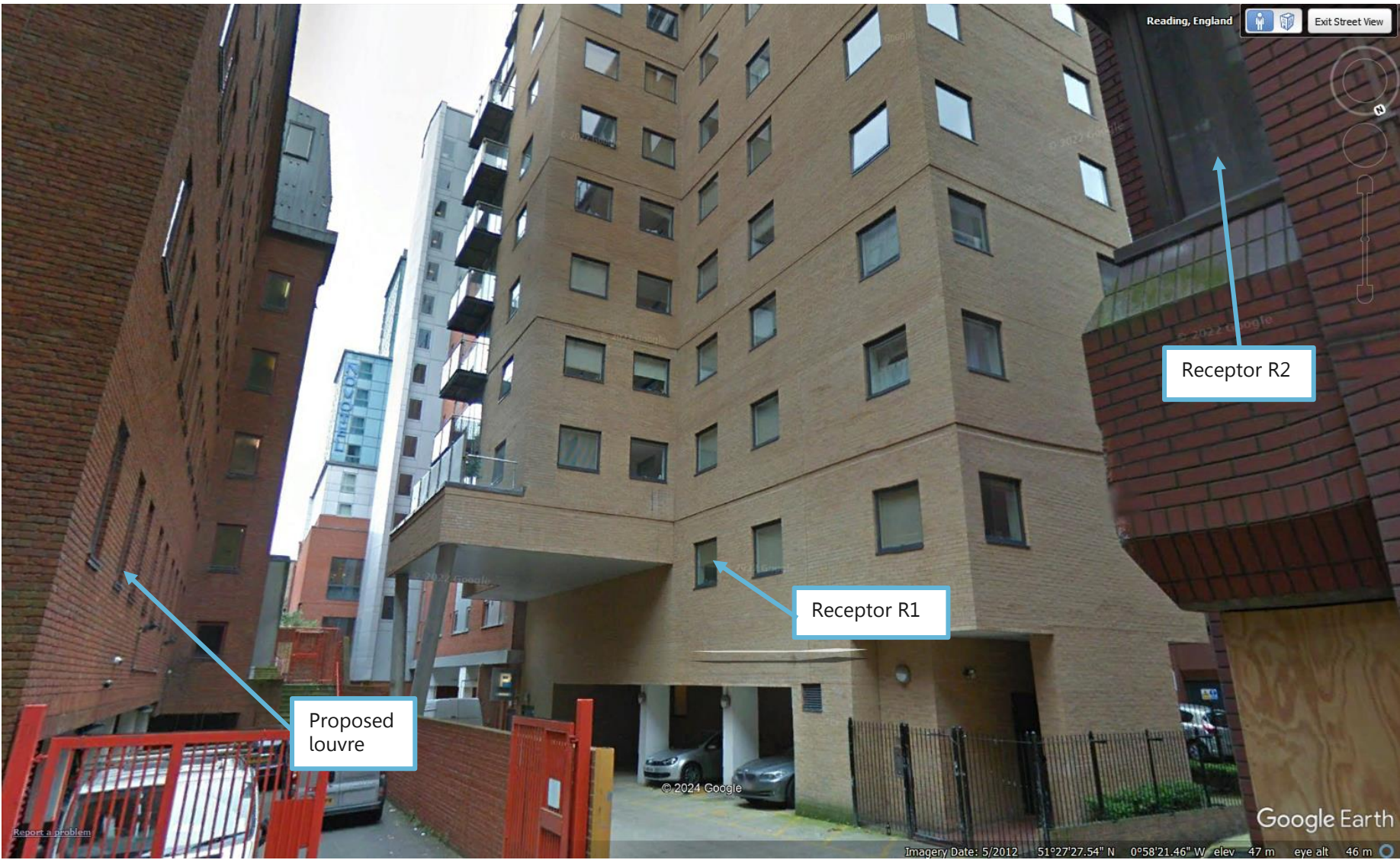
- 7.1. Noise Solutions Ltd has been commissioned to provide guidance on the maximum noise emissions from a plant room serving the proposed Sainsbury's at Brunel House on Station Road in Reading.
- 7.2. An environmental noise survey has been undertaken to establish the existing prevailing noise levels at locations representative of the noise climate outside the nearest noise sensitive receptors to the proposed plant area.
- 7.3. Guidance on the maximum noise emissions from the proposed plant has been provided. NSL should be consulted once the final layout/selections have been confirmed.

Appendix A Acoustic terminology

Parameter	Description
Ambient Noise Level	The totally encompassing sound in a given situation at a given time, usually composed of a sound from many sources both distant and near ($L_{Aeq,T}$).
Decibel (dB)	A scale for comparing the ratios of two quantities, including sound pressure and sound power. The difference in level between two sounds s_1 and s_2 is given by $20 \log_{10} (s_1/s_2)$. The decibel can also be used to measure absolute quantities by specifying a reference value that fixes one point on the scale. For sound pressure, the reference value is $20\mu\text{Pa}$. The threshold of normal hearing is in the region of 0 dB and 140 dB is the threshold of pain. A change of 1 dB is only perceptible under controlled conditions.
dB(A), L_{Ax}	Decibels measured on a sound level meter incorporating a frequency weighting (A weighting) which differentiates between sounds of different frequency (pitch) in a similar way to the human ear. Measurements in dB(A) broadly agree with people's assessment of loudness. A change of 3 dB(A) is the minimum perceptible under normal conditions, and a change of 10 dB(A) corresponds roughly to halving or doubling the loudness of a sound. The background noise in a living room may be about 30 dB(A); normal conversation about 60 dB(A) at 1 metre; heavy road traffic about 80 dB(A) at 10 metres; the level near a pneumatic drill about 100 dB(A).
Fast Time Weighting	Setting on sound level meter, denoted by a subscript F, that determines the speed at which the instrument responds to changes in the amplitude of any measured signal. The fast time weighting can lead to higher values than the slow time weighting when rapidly changing signals are measured. The average time constant for the fast response setting is 0.125 (1/8) seconds.
Free-field	Sound pressure level measured outside, far away from reflecting surfaces (except the ground), usually taken to mean at least 3.5 metres
Façade	Sound pressure level measured at a distance of 1 metre in front of a large sound reflecting object such as a building façade.
$L_{Aeq,T}$	A noise level index called the equivalent continuous noise level over the time period T. This is the level of a notional steady sound that would contain the same amount of sound energy as the actual, possibly fluctuating, sound that was recorded.
$L_{max,T}$	A noise level index defined as the maximum noise level recorded during a noise event with a period T. L_{max} is sometimes used for the assessment of occasional loud noises, which may have little effect on the overall L_{eq} noise level but will still affect the noise environment. Unless described otherwise, it is measured using the 'fast' sound level meter response.
$L_{10,T}$	A noise level index. The noise level exceeded for 10% of the time over the period T. L_{10} can be considered to be the "average maximum" noise level. Generally used to describe road traffic noise. $L_{A10,18h}$ is the A-weighted arithmetic average of the 18 hourly $L_{A10,1h}$ values from 06:00-24:00.
$L_{90,T}$	A noise level index. The noise level that is exceeded for 90% of the measurement time interval, T. It gives an indication of the lower levels of fluctuating noise. It is often used to describe the background noise level and can be considered to be the "average minimum" noise level and is a term used to describe the level to which non-specific noise falls during quiet spells, when there is lull in passing traffic for example.

Appendix B Photograph of site showing areas of interest





Appendix C Environmental sound survey

Details of sound survey

- C.1 Measurements of the existing background sound levels were undertaken between 12.15 hours on Thursday 23rd May and 13.15 hours on Friday 24th May 2024.
- C.2 The sound level meter was programmed to record the A-weighted L_{eq} , L_{90} , L_{10} and L_{max} noise indices for consecutive 15-minute sample periods for the duration of the noise survey.

Measurement position

- C.3 The representative measurement position was located on a lamppost on Garrard Street (location indicated on the site plan in [Appendix B](#)). This was the nearest available lamppost location to the site.
- C.4 In accordance with BS 7445-2:1991 '*Description and measurement of environmental noise – Part 2: Guide to the acquisition of data pertinent to land use*', the measurements were undertaken under free-field conditions.

Equipment

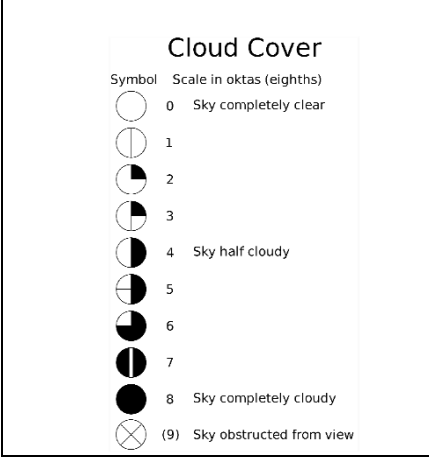
- C.5 Details of the equipment used during the survey are provided in the table below. The sound level meter was calibrated before and after the survey; no significant change (+/-0.1 dB) in the calibration level was noted.

Environmental noise survey

Description	Model / serial no.	Calibration date	Calibration certificate no.
Class 1 Sound level meter	Svantek 977D / 99472	07/02/2024	Factory conformation certificate
Condenser microphone	Microtech MK255 / 26247		
Preamplifier	Svantek SV12L / 144643		
Calibrator	Svantek SV33B / 148015	06/03/2024	Factory conformation certificate

Weather Conditions

- C.6 Weather conditions were determined both at the start and on completion of the survey. It is considered that the meteorological conditions were appropriate for environmental noise measurements. The table below presents the weather conditions recorded on site at the beginning and end of the survey.

Weather Conditions				
Measurement Location	Date/Time	Description	Beginning of Survey	End of Survey
As indicated on Appendix B	12.15 23 May – 13.15 24 May 2024	Temperature (°C)	16	15
 Cloud Cover Symbol Scale in oktas (eighths) 0 Sky completely clear 1 2 3 4 Sky half cloudy 5 6 7 8 Sky completely cloudy (9) Sky obstructed from view		Precipitation:	No	No
		Cloud cover (oktas - see guide)	7	6
		Presence of fog/snow/ice	No	No
		Presence of damp roads/wet ground	No	No
		Wind Speed (m/s)	3	2
		Wind Direction	W	NW
		Conditions that may cause temperature inversion (i.e. calm nights with no cloud)	No	No

Results

- C.7 The results of the environmental survey are considered to be representative of the background sound pressure levels at the façades of the nearest noise sensitive receptors during the quietest times at which the plant will operate. The noise climate during setup and collection was dominated by construction works, however, analysis of the survey data suggests the nearby construction site did not operate at night. The noise climate in the absence of construction noise was dominated by road traffic. The results of the survey are presented in a time history graph overleaf.

Sainsburys, Brunel House, Station Rd, Reading

Thursday 23 - Friday 24 May 2024

