

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	26/00364/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Maxine Wishart
<u>WARD:</u>	Northwood	<u>PARISH:</u>	
<u>LOCATION:</u>	UNIT C, Acornfield Road, Knowsley Industrial Park		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL OZONE EXTRACT AND CHILLER EXTRACT LOUVRE TO NORTH ELEVATION OF BUILDING		

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION –

Primary Industrial Area

Site Description

The application site comprises the Alfred Knight unit located on the western side of Acornfield Road, Knowsley Industrial Park, Kirkby. The application site comprises of a relatively new industrial unit with associated car parking and service area / concrete apron to the front. Access in to the site for vehicular traffic is taken from Acornfield Road which is one way along this stretch of Acornfield Road. The unit and its car parking / serving areas are enclosed by existing green weld mesh fencing.

The application premises forms part of a development comprising of 3 no. industrial units and associated servicing areas and car parking with access off Acornfield Road and is surrounded by other industrial uses consistent with its industrial park status.

The application premises comprises of an industrial unit with internal laboratories to ground floor and offices to the first floor.

Proposal

The application unit is in use as laboratory facilities involved in the chemical analysis of metalliferous products. This application seeks consent for Phase 1B of development further to planning permission granted in 2023 (Ref: 23/00363/FUL) for Phase 1A to expand the applicant's laboratory facilities on the site.

The proposal is for external plant which is required to service the principal use of the unit was granted planning permission in 2021 (Ref:20/00688/FUL) for the erection of 3 no. industrial /Warehousing units (Use Classes B2/B8) with associated works.

Phase 1B comprises internal alterations to accommodate a further instrument accommodation within the existing building envelope. The works are required to support the continued operational expansion of the facility.

The proposal would involve the installation of plant and external ducting and flue infrastructure which would comprise:

- 300mm diameter Ozone extract

- 1800 x 500mm extract louvre for chiller

The plant and flue would be sited on the northern elevation of the building which overlooks the car park associated with the unit.

Consultations

Environmental Health - No objections in principle subject to a condition relation to fixed plant noise levels.

Health and Safety Executive - Do not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of permission in this case.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 14 neighbours. It has also been advertised by Site Notice. No representations have been received.

Planning History

APP. NO:	20/00114/DEMCON
PROPOSAL:	DEMOLITION OF 4NO BUNKERS (9/3, 9/5, 9/7 & 9/9), 1NO FORMER SECURITY LODGE AND 1NO FORMER TWO STOREY OFFICE BLOCK
DECISION:	Prior approval required and granted
DECISION DATE:	31 March 2020
APP. NO:	20/00688/FUL
PROPOSAL:	THE ERECTION OF 3 NO. INDUSTRIAL/WAREHOUSE UNITS (USE CLASSES B2/B8) WITH ANCILLARY OFFICE SPACE TOGETHER WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ACCESSES, HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED WORKS
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	27 October 2021
APP. NO:	23/00363/FUL
PROPOSAL:	INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL DUCTING, EXTERNAL PLANT, FENCING AND GATES TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	6 July 2023

Relevant Policy

Policy S3 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) of the NPPF states that

Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- a. Policy S4 in the NPPF should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;
- b. Outside settlements, NPPF policy S5 should be applied; and
- c. In all locations, development proposals that accord with both up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.

The site is within a settlement and so NPPF Policy S4 applies.

S4: Principle of development within settlements states:

Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

The Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016, although certain saved policies of Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) remain operational as part of the Statutory Development Plan and are still given weight in reaching a decision. The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan was adopted in 2013 and is also part of the development plan.

The site is allocated as Primarily Industrial Area on the Knowsley Local Plan Policies Map. The relevant adopted policies for the assessment of the application are listed below.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2026)

DM3 - Determining development proposals
 DM6 - Use of planning conditions and obligations
 DM7 - Relationship with other regulatory regimes
 S3 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 S4 - Principle of development within settlements
 E2 - Meeting the need for business land and premises
 DP3 - Key principles for well-designed places
 DP4 - The design process
 P3 - Living conditions and pollution

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

SD1 - Sustainable Development
 CS1 - Spatial Strategy for Knowsley
 CS2 - Development Principles
 CS4 - Economy and Employment
 CS11 - Principal Regeneration Area - Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks
 CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

EC2 - Sites Allocated for Employment Development
 EC3 - Primarily Industrial Areas
 DQ2 - Security in the Built Environment
 ENV2 - Noise and Vibration

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of the Development

The proposal lies within Knowsley Industrial Park and is allocated as a Primary Industrial Area.

NPPF Policy E2 (Meeting the need for business land and premises) states that:

1. To support business growth, substantial weight should be given to:

a. The economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt; especially where this would support the economic vision and strategy for the area, the implementation of the Industrial Strategy...

Saved Policy EC3 of the Knowsley UDP indicates that these are where industrial, business or warehousing uses are the predominant existing land uses and have a key role to play in providing jobs. The proposed development would be consistent with the aims of saved Policy EC3.

Policy CS4 of the Local Plan: Core Strategy seeks to support proposals which deliver economic growth and improve accessibility to a range of jobs. This policy makes provision for delivery of employment uses within Knowsley Industrial Park (including Knowsley Business Park and identifies the site as an appropriate location for business and industry uses covered by Use Classes B1 (now referred to as Class E(g)) and uses classes B2 and B8.

Given the proposal would involve works that would facilitate the expansion of the existing operations on the site it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable.

Design Considerations

NPPF Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places) states that:

1. Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets...

Local Plan Policy CS2 states that new development will be expected to enhance local character and promote quality of place and good quality design. Policy CS19

also sets out several criteria that developments will be expected to conform to so that they enhance local distinctiveness and the identity and accessibility of new places.

Saved Policy EC3 of the UDP seeks, amongst other matters, to ensure that development proposals preserve and enhance the industrial area.

The proposal would involve the installation of plant and external ducting and flue infrastructure which would comprise:

- 300mm diameter Ozone extract
- 1800 x 500mm extract louvre for chiller

The proposed ozone extract flue would be positioned on the northern elevation. An extract fan would be installed internally and external ductwork would penetrate the external elevation of the building at a height of approximately 3.9m above ground level. It would be mounted and project around 1.2m from the elevation and rise vertically for approximately 10.7m, extending approx. 3m above the eaves and 1.2m above the ridge of the building.

The proposed louvre would be installed on the northern elevation at a height of approximately 3.5m above ground level approx. 4.3m to the left of the ozone extract flue. This elevation already contains a number of existing louvres. The equipment would be positioned between two existing personnel doors within the front elevation of the building that faces onto the car parking area.

The proposed plant would be similar in design and appearance to the equipment currently installed on the rear (southern) elevation of the premises. That installation benefits from a level of visual screening from mesh fencing and by being positioned at the rear of the building with an industrial unit being located behind the application site. This arrangement helps to reduce the prominence of the existing equipment within the wider streetscene.

The northern elevation of the building however, is highly visible from Acornfield Road and the proposed plant would be prominent on the front elevation of the building and clearly visible from the surrounding public highway and public vantage points.

The existing building is finished in external cladding which is coloured Merlin Grey (RAL 180 40 05), with upper sections finished Goosewing Grey (RAL 080 70 05) and Grey White (RAL 9002). The proposed external ductwork would have a galvanised finish, similar to that approved to the rear of the premises (Phase 1A) and set against the grey elevation. Due to its location, height and galvanised metal finish appearance, the proposed plant would inevitably be a noticeable feature within the street scene. Nevertheless, the type of plant proposed is a common feature within an industrial estate setting and is characteristic of plant typically found in such commercial and industrial environments.

Conclusion - Design Considerations

On balance, having regard to the application site being located within an industrial estate where similar plant and associated equipment is prevalent the development would be viewed in the context of its surroundings and would not appear incongruous or out of keeping with the established character of the industrial estate and the equipment would support the continued operation of the applicant in this location.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would have an acceptable visual impact

and would comply with the NPPF, Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan and saved Policy EC3 of the UDP.

Environmental Considerations

NPPF Policy P3 (Living conditions and pollution) requires that

1. Development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. In assessing the potential effects of pollution, consideration should be given to the potential sensitivity of the site, and its intended occupiers and users, as well as that of the environment and population in the surrounding area (including where certain groups could be particularly vulnerable to its effects, such as children and older people).

2. Within this context development proposals should:

a. Provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and the quality of life. Where necessary suitable mitigation measures should be incorporated to secure acceptable living conditions;

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...

Noise

NPPF Policy P3 requires that development should, amongst other issues, avoid exposure to noise for occupiers and users. Development proposals should *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...*

Saved Policy ENV2 of the UDP states that development that will either cause an unacceptable increase in noise or vibration levels or itself be subject to unacceptable noise or vibration from an existing source will not be permitted. Where developments are permitted, conditions may be attached to the planning permission to ensure effective noise insulation or other required mitigation measures are carried out.

Policy CS2 and CS19 together seek to ensure that developments maintain a good standard of amenity for all of land and buildings, existing residents, business occupiers and future occupiers.

The applicant's agent has submitted, by email, further clarification in relation to noise from the proposed plant. It is noted that the applicant's agent has advised no further manufacturer-specific information is available to refine the acoustic data already provided to the LPA. The applicant has considered undertaking measurements of the instrument extraction system on site; however, their consultant has indicated that it would not be possible to obtain meaningful isolated measurements due to the higher background noise generated by the adjacent chiller and Air Handling Unit.

The Council's Environmental Health Team have reviewed the proposal and raise no objection in principle. However, they recommend that a fixed plant noise condition be imposed to ensure that noise generated by the proposed equipment remains at an acceptable level and does not result in unacceptable impacts on the amenities of nearby occupiers.

Air Quality

The application indicates that the proposed process falls within the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Ionising Radiations Regulations 2019 (IRR17) which the applicant rigorously adheres too. This also applies to the earlier approved plant and equipment.

NPPF Policy DM7 (Relationship with other regulatory regimes) states that:

1. Development proposals should be assessed on the basis of whether they would be an acceptable use of land. Matters which are controlled by separate regulatory regimes may, in the context of a particular development proposal, be a material consideration where they have land-use implications. Decision-makers should assume, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, that those separate regimes will operate effectively.

2. Planning decisions should not seek to duplicate or extend controls imposed by separate regulatory regimes other than where there is a development plan policy in place applying optional technical standards for the development proposed (see policy PM13)...

The Council's Environmental Health Team have not raised any concerns regarding air quality. Given the above, it is not considered that the LPA needs to consider this matter further as the applicant will be required to adhere to other regulatory controls regarding emissions from the proposed plant.

Conclusion – Environmental Considerations

Subject to the inclusion of a condition controlling the noise levels of the plant, the proposal is considered to accord with the NPPF, Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Local Plan and saved Policies ENV2 and EC3 of the UDP.

Highway Considerations

There would be no impacts on existing access arrangements or parking provision within the application site as a consequence of the proposed development.

Furthermore, the proposal would not generate additional vehicle movements and therefore there would be no adverse impacts on highway safety.

Conclusion – Highways Considerations

The proposed development would not have detrimental impacts on highway or pedestrian safety. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered acceptable in highway terms and would not conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework or Policies CS2, CS7 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan.

Other Matters

Biodiversity Net Gain

BNG does not apply to developments, known as the 'de minimis' exemption, that impact less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat within the red line boundary
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows

The application red line boundary does not exceed the above threshold and would result in elevational works to provide plant and not result in the loss of any land. Furthermore the land to the front of the site is sealed surface which has a pre-biodiversity value of zero.

Conclusion - BNG

BNG does not apply to this proposal.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to have acceptable impacts on visual amenity, noise - subject to the recommended condition, air quality and highway safety. The proposal is considered to be acceptable subject to a relevant noise limitation condition and the proposal is considered to comply with the NPPF (2026), Policies CS2, CS4, CS7 and CS19 of the Local Plan and Saved Policies EC3 and ENV2 of the Knowsley Replacement UDP and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) Fixed plant and equipment associated with the development shall be designed to a level that is at least 5dB(A) below the existing LA90 background noise level as measured during the relevant time-period. Any tonal, impulsive and/or irregular noise would be addressed by imposing a penalty as per the methodology set out in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019, Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound. Noise limits for fixed plant are to apply at a position 1 metre from the closest affected window of the nearest noise sensitive property.

Reason: To safeguard local amenity and ensure background noise levels do not increase in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy ENV2 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
18/09/2026	Project Ref: 308-06	-	Item 11. Flues & Ventilation Extraction Details - Erection of external plant/machinery in relation to Phase 1B internal re-modelling works
18/09/2026	-	-	Manufacturer's Technical Details and Specifications - Ruck AL 315 D4 01 154132
30/07/2026	AL(9)01	-	LOCATION PLAN
30/07/2026	AL(2)01	REV B	PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN
30/07/2026	AL(E)01	REV B	
30/07/2026	-	-	DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Signed Case Officer¹:

M Wishart

Signed Authorising Officer²:

Jo Sheridan

Date:

29/08/2026

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

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