Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1189/13 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Ricardo UK Ltd, Shoreham Technical Centre, Old Shoreham Road, Lancing, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5FG

Proposal: Application for variation of condition 2 of AWDM/0441/13 to replace acoustic louvres with standard louvres

Date of site visit: Visited previously under AWDM/0441/13

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

Planning permission was granted in June 2013 for the construction of a Vehicle Emissions Research Centre (VERC) on the east side of the Ricardo site, adjacent to the River Adur (AWDM/0441/13). Condition 2 of that permission required that:

"The external louvres shall be Noico Acoustic Louvres, finished in Plastisol coated galvanised steel, colour RAL7035 (light grey), as specified by email on 4 June 2013, and they shall be installed in accordance with the approved details before the building hereby approved is first used."

This application seeks to vary that condition to enable non-acoustic standard aluminium louvres to be used instead. Work on the construction of the building has commenced.

Consultations

Adur & Worthing Councils: The ***Environmental Health*** officer had initial concerns about the effectiveness of the proposed standard louvres when compared with the noise reduction offered by the acoustic louvres. However, after reading the noise assessment and spectral data provided by the applicant's noise consultants no objection is raised.

Lancing Parish Council: No objections

Representations

No representations received

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AC1, AC4, AE18, AB25

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

Permission has been granted for the building with louvres to screen the external plant. The only consideration therefore is whether the alternative louvres now proposed will provide the same or a better level of noise protection than the previously approved louvres.

Visual amenity

The proposed louvres will have a similar appearance to the approved and will not have a material impact visually.

Residential amenity

The site is sufficiently distant from residential properties to not have an adverse impact on light or outlook. The nearest dwellings are on the other side of the river, approximately 240m to the east on Steyning Road. The proposed building will test vehicle emissions and noise from the test activities is not anticipated to be any louder than a car running normally. Noise from the external plant at the east end of the building will be attenuated by the proposed louvred screen and the submitted acoustic report concludes that the proposed standard louvres will not have a worse effect on residential amenity than the approved acoustic louvres.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has advised that he applied the attenuation provided by the acoustic louvres on four pieces of plant to see what difference this would make. He found that up to 9dB(A) reduction was provided; the greatest reduction being offered in the mid range frequency spectrum at which the human ear is most sensitive. The approved louvres are therefore clearly effective.

The applicant argues that without these acoustic louvres the rating level would still be a negative figure and therefore, based on the noise rating methodology used, unlikely to cause complaint.

The EHO would prefer the' belt and braces' approach to noise control that the acoustic louvres would provide in controlling noise from the development, i.e. he would be more confident in the predicted outcome of the modelling. However, given the result of the assessment and having viewed the spectral data he has withdrawn his initial objection.

It should be noted that BS4142 is not a methodology for determining nuisance and in the event that noise from the development does give rise to justified complaint then the Council will be obliged to deal with this matter as a Statutory Nuisance and may require maintenance of the plant or acoustic louvres at a later date.

A condition is to be imposed to require noise levels at the nearest dwelling to be no worse than existed before the plant was installed. On this basis, it is considered that the non acoustic louvres would be acceptable and an effective means of controlling noise from the development.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development would help meet the need for economic and environmental regeneration without detracting to an unacceptable degree from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the landscape of the South Downs National park or to the open character of countryside within which the premises are located, without generating additional vehicular traffic, without compromising airport safety and without causing harm to residential amenity. It consequently does not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AC1, AC4, AE18, AB25) or the National Planning Policy Framework

Subject to Conditions:-

1. 5 year time limit
2. External louvres to be installed as approved
3. Protect existing trees on site
4. New tree planting to be agreed prior to occupation
5. Full contaminated land remediation
6. Development to be carried out in accordance with FRA
7. No external lighting without consent
8. Approved plans

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

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.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 29 November 2013

Authorised by: PDevonport Date: 29.11.13