Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1963/22 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Your Choice Medical, 17 North Road, Lancing, BN15 9AH

Proposal: Retrospective application for installation of a condensing unit for an indoor heat pump to the side (north) elevation.

Date of site visit: Assessment has been assisted using the Applicants plans; Earthlight mapping; and Google 3D of the site

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site & Surroundings:

The property is a three storey, pitched roof, middle of terrace, and is being used as a medical centre. It has a shop front, and customers waiting room to the front. The property is situated within the town centre of Lancing, north of the railway station/crossing.

The neighbouring property to the north appears to be a later addition, also three storey building, which is currently being used by Middleton Estate Agents. There is a passageway between the application site and Middleton Estate Agents, which leads down to a gate, being access to no.'s 19, 23A & 23 North Road, 2 of which are newly built flats.

The area comprises a mixture of commercial (predominantly retail) and residential.

The Proposal:

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the provision of a condensing unit, affixed to the north outside wall of no. 17, positioned approx. 2.16m above the ground level high on the wall, above the gate.

The specifications of the unit show it to be 734mm high x 870mm wide x 320mm deep.

Its colour is matt effect, flat-white with burnished steel/ aluminium.

Consultations:

Environmental Health Public Health Officer:
There are no EH objections to this application

Environmental Health Public Sector Housing Officer:
No comments

Representations: 7no. letters

Objection: 23 North Road; and 23a North Road
Support: 24 North Road; 28 Scholars Walk, Horsham; 44 Brighton Road; North Road (no number); No address given.
Support:

- As a local business owner, I know it is important for customers/clients to feel comfortable in certain environments;
- For the industry that 'Your Choice Medical' is in, it is vital that their clients are in a safe and comforting place;
- As a local business owner with heat/air conditioning installed, I know this will not create noise pollution. I have 5no. units installed on the flat roof of my property and you cannot hear them operating internally or externally;
- I use the clinic for acupuncture treatment and this system is essential for keeping people warm when they are having treatment (or any treatment);
- The system is quiet, efficient and crucial for clients attending the clinic;
- As a patient, I know that the heat pump makes the surgery environment more comfortable for patients;
- The heat pump is a more environmentally friendly and efficient mechanism for heating;
- I am 100% supportive of the heat pump;
- From our experience it does not create any additional noise both internally or externally to the environment.

Objection:

- The unit was installed before planning permission was gained;
- Location of the unit is dangerous and unnecessary to use;
- Its height and location shouldn't be permitted;
- Located just behind the entrance gateway;
- An eye sore;

- It regularly allows water to escape making the alleyway wet.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 1, 15, 19
Supplementary Planning Guidance Sustainable Energy
National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Relevant Planning History: None

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to the proposal which is within a mixed use area. The key concerns are the effects on the existing area and the visual amenities of the locality.

Residential and Visual Amenity

The passageway where the condensing unit has been positioned, is a communal walkway which is the access for no.'s 19, 23 and 23a, which are residential properties.

The condensing unit for an energy efficient heat pump for heating, has already been put into position, and it sits on the upper part of an external wall within a passageway between Middleton Estate Agents and 'Your Choice Medical'. The condensing unit sits above and behind the gate, which again diminishes its ability to be readily viewed from the street.

One of the objections to the condensing unit is that it can drip water, which the objector, who is a resident, is not happy with as it makes the footway of the passageway wet. However, this in itself is not a reason to withhold planning permission.

The use of residual heat/cooling for both domestic and non-domestic users is championed within the Adur Local Plan Policy 19 'Decentralised Energy, Stand-alone Energy Schemes and Renewable Energy.'

The condensing unit is sited high on the wall, above head height, and thereby will not interfere with the traversing of residents through the passageway.

It is also considered to be placed where it has the minimal visual effect onto the residential occupants, and the street scene in general.

Sustainability:

Heating properties by heat pumps are relatively low carbon as they will not be relying on the use of Fossil fuels, and are energy efficient. Thereby it is in

accordance with the SPG: Sustainable Energy (2019), and Policy 19 of the ALP.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to the following condition(s)

1. Approved plans
2. Remove when no longer in use/required.

Informative:

1. Approved without amendment

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

Case Officer: Eve Hearsey Date: 16.03.2023

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 16 March 2023