Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **AWDM/1276/13** **Recommendation –** Approve

Site: 223 Brighton Road, Lancing

Proposal: Retrospective application for solar panels to garage roof

Date of site visit: 3 December 2013

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings
The application site relates to a semi-detached bungalow on the north side of Brighton Road. The bungalow has a garage at the rear. This is a predominantly residential area comprising of a mix of mainly bungalows to the immediate east and west and with 2-3 storey houses and flats beyond. Willowbrook Park Mobile Home Park is to the immediate north.

Three solar panels have been installed on the flat roof of the garage, angled with an incline and set in from the sides of the roof. The three solar panels together measure approximately 2.75 metres by 1.65 metres and are mounted with the top of the panels set at approximately 0.69m above the garage roof. This application seeks to regularise their installation. As originally submitted screening was included in the application but has since been deleted and so this application relates solely to the solar panels.

Relevant site history
None relevant

Consultations
Lancing Parish Council: *No objection*

Representations
Four letters of representation received objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Height and position intrusive
- View is an eyesore, out of character
- Screening would add to ugly sight, unsightly
- Noise from wind whistling/rattling through them causes disturbance
- Attracts seagulls and pigeons - making nests in it and can attract other vermin
- Panels would be better on the front of the house
- Potential danger if it blows down

Relevant Planning Policies
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to encourage the use of renewable resources and states that Local Planning Authorities should actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings. It recognises that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and states that Local Planning Authorities should approve applications if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

Visual amenity
Whilst the solar panels do sit nearly 70cm above the height of the flat roof of the garage, their number is limited to three and in the position on the garage which is set back from the road frontage, the impact on the visual amenities of the locality is limited. The main impact is apparent when viewed from the applicant's own garden where it is effectively the back of the panels that can be seen from this side but there is not a clear view of this in the public domain, only a restricted view from between buildings from the north east. From the north and south it is a side view that is visible, which is not itself bulky, or the view from the west which is the slope of the front of the panels and does not dominate and is not readily visible when viewed from The Fairway to the north and where visible is viewed against the backdrop of the bungalow itself. As originally submitted the application included proposals for screening. The introduction of trellis to the garage roof to act as a screen could, itself, appear unsightly and so the applicant has agreed to delete this element from the application which would overcome some of the concerns raised in the representations.

Residential amenity
Given the size and position of the solar panels and the relationship with neighbouring dwellings no significant harm is caused to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy.

The solar panels are therefore considered acceptable.

Recommendation

Approve for the reason:-
The development does not detract from the local environment and has taken place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It consequently does not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7) or the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

Subject to Conditions:-

1. This permission relates solely to the roof mounted solar panels as detailed in the approved plans and no screening is approved as part of this application.
2. Permission relates to approved plans:
   Unnumbered site location plan deposited 25 October 2013
   Unnumbered block plan deposited 25 October 2013
   Site photos deposited 26 October 2013
   Brochure extract entitled 'Schletter GmbH' deposited 25 October 2013
   Email of clarification dated 12 December 2013

Informative:

- 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.

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

Case Officer: Rebekah Smith Date: 19 December 2013

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 19 December 2013