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Date: 16 March 2022

Development Management

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Offices
Campus East
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
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AL8 6AE

Dear Sir / Madam,

**REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AN AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP AT CAMPUS WEST,
WELWYN GARDEN CITY**

On behalf of our client, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (the applicant), we write to submit this revised application for the installation of an air source heat pump at Campus West, Welwyn Garden City. The submission has been made via the Planning Portal and the reference number is PP-11121968.

As officers will be aware, permission was granted on the 17 December 2021 (LPA Ref: 6/2021/1788/FULL). This application seeks a slight change to the permitted development. This application seeks to slightly adjust the steel frame location and the 3m acoustic fencing (albeit retained within the same vicinity) to accommodate an existing cable tray and pipework.

The proposed change will have limited visual impact compared to the approved application because of the acoustic screening. In terms of noise impact, the proposed change would not have any material impact on the approved noise assessment given the very small change to the units positioning and as such the approved Noise Impact Assessment is still relevant for this application.

Table of Approved and Amended Application Documents

| Plan Reference / Document | Approved | Amended |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Location Plan | Location Plan, dated 22 July 2021 | No Change |
| Block Plan | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9160, dated 22 July 2021 | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9160, Rev 1 |
| Roof Level Mechanical Services ASHP Equipment Details | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9152, dated 22 July 2021 | No Change |

| Plan Reference / Document | Approved | Amended |
|---|--|---|
| Proposed Plans and Elevations | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9150 Rev 3, dated 17 September 2021 | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9150 Rev 5, dated 21.02.2022 |
| Roof Level Proposed Mechanical and Electrical Services Layout | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9153 Rev 1, dated 12 November 2021 | P4252-PESP-AZ-RF-DR-ME-58-9153 Rev 2, dated 16.03.2022 |
| Plant Noise Assessment – Campus West | June 2021 Update | No Change |

Supporting Statement

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set up a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to provide grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures. The scheme forms part of the Governments pledge to deliver the UK target of achieving net zero by 2050. It is available for capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within public sector non-domestic buildings, to deliver the following objectives:

- Deliver stimulus to the energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation sectors, supporting jobs.
- Deliver significant carbon savings within the public sector.

Welwyn Hatfield Council has been successful in its bid to BEIS and has been awarded grant funding for 3 decarbonisation projects to replace the gas fired boilers with combined air source heat pump and water source heat pump systems at 3 of its sites, including Campus West. Overall, the measures seek to achieve a significant reduction in CO2 emissions across the 3 sites, contributing towards the Council’s own pledge to reach its goal of net zero emissions by 2030.

Campus West is one of the sites to be upgraded. Planning permission has previously been granted for the installation a roof mounted air source heat pumps to be installed at the site (LPA Ref: 6/2021/1788/FULL), however this application seeks to slightly reposition the unit and the acoustic barrier to accommodate existing plant equipment located on the roof.

The ASHP remains in the same location and would not have an increased impact on the amenity or visual impact when compared to the approved scheme.

The proposed unit has not changed and will have a light grey finish to blend with the other roof-based plant and skyline. It will not be prominent from the street scene. There will be minimal visual impact arising from the proposal and it will not result in a discordant addition to the Campus West building.

The site is located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. Section 16 of the 2021 NPPF ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ is broadly consistent with Policy SADM15 ‘Heritage’ of the Emerging Local Plan. Also of relevance, and consistent with the NPPF, are Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005) which seek to provide a good standard of design in all new development and require that all new development respects and relates to the character and context of the area in which it is to be sited. Given the location of the small-scale structure at roof level, set within the context of existing plant and set back from the eaves line, the impact upon the Conservation Area as a whole is considered to be acceptable with no policy conflict. The proposal would also comply with the provisions of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which seeks to preserve the Conservation Area.

Adopted Policy D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance aim to preserve the amenity of neighbouring properties. The Plant Noise Assessment undertaken by Hepworth Acoustics states that mitigation is required to ensure the plant noise level at the nearest dwelling is acceptable and therefore propose a 3m acoustic barrier around the ASHP, in addition, they propose that the ASHP does not operate during night-time hours (i.e.23:00 – 07:00). This will ensure that the plant noise is controlled to within an acceptably low level.

The proposal is supported by the 2021 NPPF on tackling climate change. NPPF Paragraph 152 directs local planning authorities to recognise the valuable contribution that small-scale projects can make towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions and should approve this type of application where its impacts can be made acceptable. Overall, the impact upon the visual character and amenity of neighbouring properties will be negligible and planning permission should be granted.

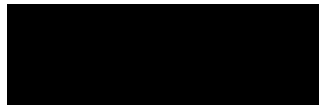
Officers will note the application drawing includes an array of Photovoltaic Panels which form part of the decarbonisation project for the building. However, this PV array benefits from Permitted Development Rights under Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J of the General Permitted Development Order 2015, as amended. Accordingly, these do not form part of this application for planning permission

Conclusion

This resubmission seeks only a minor amendment from the approved application (LPA Ref: 6/2021/1788/FULL). The slight change in location is required to accommodate the existing plant equipment and will not have any greater impact on the visual appearance or amenity than the permitted development.

We trust that this is sufficient information to determine the application; however, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments in relation to this application.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Associate Planning Director.

Chloe French MRTPI
Associate Planning Director