

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/21/0239

Site Address: Citizens Advice Building
Post Office Lane
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8BE

Development: Erect 3 air conditioning units to the west and northern elevations

Case Officer: Marlene Ferreira

Site Visit: 5th August 2021

Application Expiry Date: 2nd September 2021

Consultation reply date expired: 2nd August 2021

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a detached three storey flat roof building, located off Post Office Lane, in the town centre. The red brick premises is currently occupied by Citizens Advice Bureau.

It lies within the town centre and town centre conservation area, as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016 - 2031.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission to install 3 air conditioning condenser units to the rear of the premises. Two of the units (one at ground floor and one at first floor) would be mounted on the rear elevation of the premises and one (at first floor level) would be mounted on the side northern elevation of the three storey rear projection.

Each of the units would measure approximately 1.05 metres wide, 0.3 metres deep and 1 metre in height. These would be mounted on galvanised steel brackets and contained within a lockable steel guard/cage.

The models of the proposed external condenser units are as follows:

Toshiba RAV-GM801ATP-E
Max Sound Pressure 52 dB(A)
Max Sound Power 69 dB(A)

Toshiba RAV-GM561ATP-E
Max Sound Pressure 48 dB(A)
Max Sound Power 65 dB(A)

Toshiba MCY-MHP0506HT-E1
Max Sound Pressure 58 dB(A)
Max Sound Power 75 dB(A)

The units would be in operation from Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:30pm.

PLANNING HISTORY

The following planning history is recent and relevant to this application site:

P/17/0065 – Erection of adverts – Approved: 11th April 2017

P/16/0182 – Refurbish existing windows and replacement of windows (upvc) to the front, rear and side elevations, including replacement steel doors (to side and rear elevation only) and other external works including in-filling of windows – Approved: 8th August 2016

P/16/0176 – Erection of signage to the front elevation – Approved: 5th August 2016

CONSULTATION

Environmental Health Manager No objection.

Ecology Officer No objection.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order (Wales) 2012, letters were sent to nearby occupiers and two site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site. No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

- Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

National Planning Policies

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021)

Local Planning Policies

- Merthyr Tydfil Replacement local Development Plan 2016-2031

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries
Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking
Policy CW1 – Historic Environment

Other Guidance

- The Merthyr Tydfil Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (June, 2009)

This document states that the preservation of the conservation area is a priority and identifies Listed Buildings, locally listed buildings and buildings that are considered to add positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It should be noted that the building under consideration is not a listed or locally listed building and has not been recognised as a positive building within the appraisal.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider under the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed air conditioning condenser units, in terms of their siting, scale and design, would be considered an acceptable form of development with regards their impact on the appearance of the building and on the character of the conservation area. Their impact upon residential amenity and ecology is also a primary consideration.

The air conditioning condenser units seek to provide adequate temperatures and fresh air flow to serve circulation spaces throughout the building. The units are of a similar scale and design to other existing condenser units already serving the building and other nearby premises. These would be located on the rear of the premises and combined with the existing units, would bring the total number to 4 units. The combined number of units would therefore not be considered excessive for this building. Indeed, there are other nearby premises of a smaller scale, with a similar number of units. Furthermore, given their siting at the rear of the property, the units would not be viewed from the front of the premises. The siting of the condenser units are therefore not considered to have any significant adverse impact upon the appearance of the building or the character or appearance of the conservation area and would be considered acceptable within this context. The proposal would therefore comply with LDP Policy SW11.

In respect of residential amenity, it is noted that the premises is sited within the town centre and does not adjoin any residential properties. As such, it is not considered that the noise emitted from the air conditioning condenser units, which would amount to a max sound pressure between 48dB(A) to 58dB(A) and a max sound power between 65dB(A) and 75 dB(A), would not result in any significant disturbance to nearby occupiers. Indeed, the Council's Environmental Health Manager has considered the proposal and has not raised an objection. The proposal would therefore not have any significant adverse impact upon nearby occupiers and would therefore comply with LDP Policy SW11.

In respect of ecology, the Council's Ecologist has concluded that survey work would not be required in respect of this proposal. However, in accordance with the Environmental Wales Act (2016), the installation of a bat box has been requested. In this instance, given that the development relates to only minor external alterations, it would not be reasonable to impose a condition to require the installation of a bat box.

CONCLUSION

The proposal, due to the reasons discussed above, is therefore considered acceptable and in compliance with relevant policies and guidance.

Finally, the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

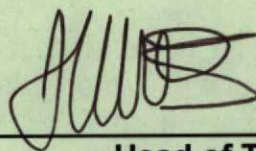
Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Project no: 9071, Drawing no:12, received: 8th July 2021;
- Project no: 9071, Drawing no:14, received: 8th July 2021;
- Toshiba, Product Bulletin, New R-32 Digital Inverter Products, received: 11th August 2021

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

2/9/21