Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DISC/24/0041
Management Department, Durrants House, Durrants Drive, Faygate, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4GB

DESCRIPTION:
Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 2 to approved application DC/23/1752

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/23/1752	Relocation of Air Source Heat Pumps	Application Permitted on 19.12.2023

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Planning Application ref: DC/23/1752 granted consent on 19.12.2023 for the relocation of air-source heat-pumps to an external position within the 'Durrants Village' development. Permission was granted subject to conditions, with an approval of details reserved by Condition 2 attached to ref: DC/23/1752 now sought.

Condition 2

Condition 2 reads as follows:-

*"**Regulatory Condition:** Within a period of 3-months following the date of this decision, full details of all screen planting, as detailed on the approved landscape arrangement plans (refs: HT-A-03 Rev A, HT-B-03 Rev A, HT-C-03 Rev A, HT-D-03 Rev A, HT-E-03 Rev A and HT-F-01 Rev A), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include:*

- *Details of all existing trees and planting to be retained*
- *Details of all proposed trees and planting, including schedules specifying species, planting size, densities and plant numbers;*

The approved screen planting shall, subsequently, be implemented within the first planting season following the installation of each respective heat-pump unit. Any proposed or retained screen planting, which within a period of 5 years, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation."

In response to the above condition the applicant has provided landscape plans and soft-landscaping specifications confirming the extent of loss of existing planting in order to accommodate heat-pump units, proposed replacement planting and additional planting where possible.

The submitted details demonstrate that the proposals would see heat-pump units installed to incorporate a 50cm offset between units and existing vegetation for maintenance/access purposes. This arrangement, for the majority of heat-pump units, would see vegetation retained to the side of

relocated units, but not to the front of existing units. This arrangement reflects the unavailability of sufficient space to retain/replace planting whilst maintaining a 50cm offset.

The submitted landscaping plans, though, do demonstrate that planting will either be retained and/or replaced to the front of existing units where sufficient space does exist, with the proposals also demonstrating the introduction of more extensive planting to a good number of plots where sufficient space is available and layouts permit.

In terms of the retention of existing planting and extent of new/replacement planting it is considered that the proposals represent a pragmatic and proportionate response to the constraints of the site and accord with indicative landscaping details approved at applications stage. Those indicative details acknowledged that some loss of existing planting would prove inevitable to accommodate the relocated heat-pump units, which could not be fully compensated with regard to the confined site arrangement in certain locations.

The proposed planting schedule shows that replacement/additional planting would consist of 5x different varieties of hardy evergreen shrub, with individual plants to be planted at a range of 1m-1.5m in height and maintained at ~1.5m in height. This proposed arrangement would not fully obscure heat-pump units and their respective enclosure, though, would likely significantly lessen the visual impact of units where planting can be retained/introduced in providing a screening effect.

The Council's Landscape team have responded to raise no objection to the proposals, but have recommended some improvements to the proposed planting scheme in order to achieve greater biodiversity benefit. The requested improvements have been put to the applicants, who have responded to advise that proposed species have been selected for their resilience to cold-air flows (necessary in direct adjacency to heat-pump units) and for their density. These factors were identified as important within the officers report and within discussions with the applicants prior to determination, such that the proposed planting scheme is considered acceptable even if alternative planting could deliver a superior biodiversity benefit.

Overall it is considered that the details of proposed soft-landscaping demonstrate that the adverse visual effects of heat-pump units would be lessened (relative to the absence of any soft-landscaping), and that maximum opportunity to replace, retain and introduce planting has been explored. The submitted details, therefore, are considered to satisfy the requirements of HDPF Policies 32 and 33 and are recommended to be discharged accordingly.

Other Matters:

The Council's initial determination pursuant to ref: (DC/23/1752) included an assessment that the possibility of significant effect associated with the approved development upon the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar could be 'screened out'. The Council's ability to approve details reserved by condition, therefore, is not considered to be in conflict with the Authority's duties pursuant to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended), and with particular regard to the principles established by the High Court within *Fry* [2023].

Recommendation: Application Permitted

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. 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, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DISC/24/0041

(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 1 of 6	3001 P02	19.03.2024
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 2 of 6	3002 P02	19.03.2024
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 3 of 6	3003 P02	19.03.2024
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 4 of 6	3004 P02	19.03.2024
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 5 of 6	3005 P02	19.03.2024
Plans	Planting Plan - Sheet 6 of 6	3006 P02	19.03.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Giles Holbrook Date: 30.04.2024

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 02/05/2024