

PLANNING REF : 243244
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Pitts Lane
:
: RG6 1BT
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Ian Raine
DATE SUBMITTED : 25/03/2025

COMMENTS:

It is noted that the Acoustic Report has been revised.

The report still states that the nearest outdoor amenity space at 38 Pitts Lane is five metres from any plant. This is incorrect. The nearest outdoor amenity space at 38 Pitts Lane is approximately three metres from plant. Note that it is assumed that the reference to the outdoor living area at 36 Pitts Lane is an error and should read 38 Pitts Lane as references elsewhere are to 38 Pitts Lane. It also still fails to recognise the windows at ground and first floor on the south elevation of 38 Pitts Lane at the rear are facing and in direct acoustic line of sight with the plant on the east elevation of 36 Pitts Lane.

The report now includes a section on noise mitigation. Since there have been no changes in the design, it is unclear why this was not included in the original report. The report's conclusions have also changed.

The report now appears to say that noise mitigation measures must be implemented to meet design criteria. No such statement was made in the original report. Since nothing in the design has changed, this gives little confidence in the accuracy of the report.

The original report stated the unit on the east elevation "must operate in low noise mode". The revised report states that "all three units to operate in silent mode". One presumes that "silent mode" is different from "low noise mode". "Silent mode" implies no noise would be generated by the units, which will only occur if the units are off.

Air conditioning units that are set to operate in low noise or silent mode will be less effective at cooling than they would be operating in normal mode as compressor and fan speeds are reduced. The overall cooling capacity of the units will be reduced. Operating in low noise or silent mode requires the occupier to ensure the units are set to operate in that mode. This cannot be guaranteed. If the cooling capacity in low noise or silent mode is found to be insufficient, it is highly likely the occupier will switch to normal mode.

It is noted that the report concludes that with noise mitigation measures in the impact will be low. "Low impact" is not "no impact". The report therefore acknowledges there will be an impact that would not exist should there be no air conditioning units. As I have stated previously, there is no necessity or requirement in the UK for domestic properties to be fitted with air conditioning. Since there is no requirement and air conditioning should be considered to be purely a luxury item, it is reasonable that it may be considered acceptable only if there is no impact on neighbouring properties.

The noise mitigation measures require that the occupier only operates the units in silent mode. It is not reasonable to rely entirely on the occupier to ensure the units operate only in low noise or silent mode. If operating in this mode does not achieve the desired cooling effect, it is highly likely the units will be switched to operate in "normal" mode. From the acoustic report it is clear that this would create an unacceptable level of noise.

I maintain my objection and repeat my original request that should the authority be minded to approve the application, a condition should be included that there should be no increase in ambient or background noise level at the property boundary at any time.