OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/01053/HHFUL Householder (Full)

Proposal: Installation of stand alone air source heat pump to side

Location: 8 The Paddocks Hilton Huntingdon

Applicant: Kathleen Hodgson

Grid Ref: 528984 266730

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

8 The Paddocks is a two-storey detached dwelling located within a residential area in Hilton.

This application seeks permission for the installation of a stand alone air source heat pump to the side.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (19 December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2019 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP 11: Design Context
LP 12: Design Implementation
LP 14: Amenity

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles - Part 3.7 Building Form

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1300459FUL - Erection of extension and enlarge existing extension following demolition of existing conservatory - Permission

CONSULTATIONS

Hilton Parish Council were consulted but no comments were received at the time of determination.

Environmental Protection Officer - initial comments were requesting further information about the ASHP including information about potentially distinctive sound characteristics such as tonality or intermittency of operation. Further information with regards to the sound power level and tonality and other sound characteristics was received from the application to the Local Planning Authority on 20th August 2025.
Subsequent comments from Environmental Health were received on 21st August to state they are now satisfied that the sound level would be acceptable.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design and Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity
- Environmental benefits

Design and Visual Amenity

Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

A product specification has been submitted which states the model of Air Source heat Pump proposed to be used. The appearance of the freestanding unit is typical, with a fan unit covered by a dark grey/black cover. The unit is 970mm tall, 1380mm length and 460mm deep.

The proposed heat pump would be of a typical specification for a development of this nature, small in scale and given its discreet siting to the east side of the dwellinghouse which is shielded by a low fence with shrubs and would not be visible from any public vantage points. Therefore, it is considered that there will be no significant impact on design of the host dwelling or on the general character of the area.

As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its scale and design and therefore would be in accordance with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan in this regard.

Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

No letters of objection were received by neighbouring properties throughout the course of the application. The proposed ASHP would be sited to the eastern side of the application site with the closest neighbour, Tyto House on St Ives Road sited to the north-east. The sites are separated by an area of green space.

Due consideration has been given to the impacts of the proposal on the neighbouring properties. During the course of the application, the noise levels were considered by the environmental health team, and details have been submitted during the application. Although the unit will create a noise level of 62dB(A) it has been fully assessed by the environmental health Officer and it is considered to be acceptable and would not cause significantly detrimental harm to neighbouring amenity from noise.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable noise impacts for the host property or any neighbouring properties.

Furthermore, given the small scale of the proposal, it would not result in any detrimental overbearing or overshadowing impacts on any neighbouring properties (1.1m high).

Overall, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, noise, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

Environmental Benefits

Air source heat pumps are an eco friendly heating option, that reduce carbon emissions, cut down on fossil fuel reliance and operate at high efficiency, when compared to more traditional gas/oil heating systems. Therefore the environmental benefits of this proposal are recognised and will help contribute to meeting the challenge of climate change and supporting the transition to net zero, endorsed by the NPPF, in particular para 167.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon residential amenity.
* Supports the provision of low carbon heating improvements, to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Robyn Kerrigan**