

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 137217/FO/2023
Date registered valid: 20 June 2023
Proposal: Installation of an air source heat pump with acoustic enclosure.
Address: Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
Ward(s): Withington Ward

Applicant: Jigsaw Homes Group
Agent (if any): Miss Jordan Balazs, Cassidy + Ashton Group Ltd
Case officer: Katie Raw
Tel: 0161 234 4164
Email: katie.raw@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 14 August 2023

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 14 July 2023

Standard consultations:

Printed: 30 June 2023 Expired: 21 July 2023

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 30 June 2023 Expired: 21 July 2023

Site notice

Posted: 14 July 2023 Expired: 4 August 2023

Press advert

Published: 4 July 2023 Expired: 18 July 2023

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Withington Conservation Area 1983

Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of area

The application site relates to Sycamore Court located within the south Manchester ward of Withington. The property is used as a residential home for the elderly and comprises of a 2 storey, brick built building set in a broadly L shaped configuration. The property is surrounded by soft landscaping, mature trees and hedgerow. The site that the application relates to specifically is sited to the rear of the building, with an enclosed, external hard landscaped area, with a couple of small soft landscaped areas. Within the site sits a mobility shed and a garden shed.

The north of the site sits adjacent to the Withington Conservation Area.

Description of development

The submitted application seeks planning permission for the installation of an air source heat pump with acoustic enclosure. The air source heat pump (ASHP) would be sited within the enclosed area to the north of the site and would sit within a small section of existing soft landscaping. The ASHP would have approximate dimensions of Height: 1.8 x Length: 1 x Width: 1.2 metres. The ASHP would be covered with a type AA303SX acoustic enclosure with hinged double doors and would sit on a concrete base. The enclosure would have a powder coated

finish and as confirmed by the agent on 25 July 2023, it would be a dark green colouration (RAL No.6005)- <https://www.ralcolorchart.com/ral-classic/ral-6005-moss-green>

The specification of the ASHP to be used would be a Mitsubishi Electric QAHV-N560YA-HBP Monoblock Air Source Heat Pump and the agent provided a product specification to support the application via email on 25 July 2023.

Planning history

Historic planning permission exists for the development of the site, including 018110- Erection of category 2 sheltered residential accommodation comprising 23 single person, 10 two person, 2 three person and 1 five person (Warden) units, with ancillary communal accommodation and landscaping of site- Approved 6 October 1982. Other planning history can be found but are all prior to 2012.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents

Local residents were consulted and no responses were received.

Environmental Health

Environmental Health were consulted and recommend that the following condition is attached to any approval:

NSE6 - External plant/equipment/servicing

a) Externally mounted ancillary plant, equipment and servicing shall be selected and/or acoustically treated in accordance with a scheme designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location. Prior to commencement of the use hereby approved the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority in order to secure a reduction in the level of noise emanating from the site. The scheme shall be implemented in full before the use commences or as otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

b) Prior to the operation of the scheme a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority to validate that the work undertaken throughout the development conforms to the recommendations and requirements in the approved acoustic report. The report shall also undertake post completion testing to confirm that the noise criteria have been met. Any instances of non-conformity with the recommendations in the report shall be detailed along with any measures required to ensure compliance with the agreed noise criteria.

Reason - To minimise the impact of the development and to prevent a general increase in pre-existing background noise levels around the site.

The acoustic report submitted as part of the application provides noise limits for the equipment to be installed. The applicant must ensure that these limits are not exceeded and should the equipment specification change from that stated in the report, then a new assessment will be undertaken.

Withington Civic Society were consulted and no comments were received.

Issues

POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)

The document sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in terms, "For plan-making" and "For decision-taking", (paragraph 11).

Paragraph 8 - Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The following specific policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:

- i. Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places- Reflects upon the importance of design to the built environment and its contribution to sustainable development and making places better for people. With this in mind, the design of the substantive development has been assessed in relation to the quality and cohesion of its composite building, as well as the function and appearance of public and private spaces.
- iii. Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment- States that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 197- In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012.

The Core Strategy is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. It replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. Of relevance are:

Policy DM1 (Development Management); which states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document. The relevant issues are the appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail. The impact; on the surrounding areas; in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area. The effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality and road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.

Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles); which sets out the City Council's Core Development Principles and states that development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice, amongst these include: creating well designed places that enhance or create character, making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents, considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity.

Policy EN3 (Heritage); states that throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

Policy EN4 (Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development); states that the Council will seek to reduce fuel poverty and decouple growth in the economy, growth in CO2 emissions, and rising fossil fuel prices, through the following actions:

All development must follow the principle of the Energy Hierarchy, being designed:

- to reduce the need for energy through design features that provide passive heating, natural lighting and cooling
- to reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features such as improved insulation and glazing to meet residual energy requirements through the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies
- Where possible new development and retrofit projects will be used as a mechanism to help improve energy efficiency and provide low and zero carbon energy supplies to existing buildings.

Policy EN5 (Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure); aims to achieve an increase in the level of decentralised, low and zero carbon energy supplies.

Policy EN6 (Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies); provides a Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies.

Policy EN7 (Energy Infrastructure opportunities low and zero carbon decentralised energy schemes); states that there will be a general presumption in favour of low and zero carbon decentralised energy Schemes.

Policy EN8 (Adaptation to Climate Change); states all new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of the design, layout, siting and function of both buildings and associated external spaces. In achieving developments which are adaptable to climate change.

Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies

Large elements of the UDP have been superseded by the Core Strategy. The following saved policies are of relevance in the consideration of this application:

DC18.1 states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas.

a. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

i) the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
ii) the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;
iii) the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including street trees);

iv) the effect of signs and advertisements;

v) any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

b. The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.

DC26.1 The council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the city. In giving effect to this intention, the council will consider both

(a) the effect of the new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise and
(b) the implications of new development being exposed to exiting noise sources which are effectively outside planning control

Listed Building Act

Section 72 provides an exercise of the power to determine planning applications for land or buildings within a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

ISSUES

Principle of Development

The submitted application seeks planning permission for the installation of an air source heat pump with acoustic enclosure.

The current heating system would be changed to Air Source Heat. Air Source Heat Pumps operate by absorbing heat from the outside air – heat is absorbed at low temperature into a fluid, which is passed through a compressor to increase the temperature, and then transferred into the heating and hot water circuits of a building. The pumps use electricity to operate, however, the heat output is greater than the electricity input, making them an energy efficient method to heat buildings. The pumps use electricity to operate, however, the heat output is greater than the electricity input, making them an energy efficient method of heating.

The proposed ASHP are an efficient heating system and would contribute to the reduction in CO2 emissions from the flats within Sycamore Close, which would also reduce energy bills.

Visual/ Residential Amenity

The ASHP would be sited within a section of external amenity space in connection with Sycamore Close, sited to the northern boundary of the site. This section of the site is set back from Heaton Road and is accessible through a private path against the northern boundary of the site, in connection with Sycamore Close. In addition, the residential property which is sited against the applicant boundary has a blank elevation and so would not be impacted by the proposal. As such, the visual impact would only be felt from residents living in the property itself.

Windows would surround the applicant site to the east and south of the site. However, given the structure would be sited at least 4 metres from habitable windows, would be covered with an acoustic enclosure and encompass only a small section of the amenity space, it would not give rise to any adverse implications to the residents. The addition of the ASHP would not impact the ability for residents and staff members to utilise the space, as is already the case. The colouration chosen of dark green colour finish, RAL no.6005, is thought to help the structure blend into the garden area, to reduce impacts to the residents. Further, the ASHP would be read in conjunction with the existing storage containers on the site and would be sympathetic to the use of this section of amenity space.

In the interests of residential amenity, Environmental Health have requested a pre-commencement condition requiring a noise assessment of the plant to be submitted and approved prior to installation, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Overall, the benefits of carbon reduction from the households is considered to outweigh any harm to visual amenity. It is considered the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Manchester's Core Strategy, including policies DM1, EN4, EN5, EN6, EN7 and EN8, and saved Unitary Development Plan policy DC26.

Design and Appearance

The Air Source Heat Pump is utilitarian in appearance, with a dark green powder coated finish, and a design which benefits its function, similar to that of large air-conditioning. The structure would not appear incongruous within its setting and would not be easily visible from surrounding public vantage points. The benefits associated with the proposed air source heat pumps cannot be achieved without the structure and it is sited in the most suitable location within the site. Therefore, the design and appearance is considered pursuant to Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Sustainability and Carbon Emission Reduction

Pursuant to policies EN4, EN5, EN6, EN7 and EN8, an air source heat pump system can help to lower carbon footprints as it uses a renewable, natural source of heat - air. A heat pump also requires a supplementary source of power, usually electricity, to power the heat pump, so there would still be some resulting CO2 emissions. However overall, the proposed method would be a better long term solution than the existing heat source.

Noise

The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Red Acoustics. The assessment shows that noise from the proposed plant would comply with the local authority's usual requirements. Environmental Health considered this report and with regards to the acoustic condition, Environmental Health were satisfied that the report could be acceptable to discharge part A of the condition. Part B cannot be discharged as a verification report is required. This is reflected within the condition of any approval granted.

Given a pre-commencement of use condition and verification condition shall be attached, the proposed installations are not considered to give rise to any harmful impacts with regards to noise and disturbance in accordance with policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Withington Conservation Area

The Withington conservation area principally consists of a linear shopping centre with some nearby housing at a point where one of the main radial road routes from the city centre branches: the junction of Wilmslow Road, Palatine Road, Burton Road and Parsonage Road. Of particular concern in conservation area is the need to ensure that building designers consider new development in its context. There is a variety of building materials used in Withington Village, such as brick, stone, and brick with stone dressings. Roofs are usually of slate.

The applicant site, Sycamore Close, sits just to the south of the Conservation Area boundary. The site is bounded by the edge of the Conservation Area. As none of the properties within the Conservation Area could look onto the structure, no impact would be caused to the Conservation Area.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a

decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

The proposal was assessed with regards to policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies, Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan and other material considerations. Officers have worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner and appropriate conditions have been placed on the approval granted.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

-Drawing- Existing & Proposed- Plans and Elevations, numbered P01, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 8 June 2023.

-Correspondence- Covering Letter, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 8 June 2023.

-Noise Impact Assessment- Red Acoustics Noise Impact Assessment, ref R2188-REP01-JW, 14 April 2023', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 8 June 2023.

-Application Form, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 28 June 2023.

-Drawing- Proposed- Acoustic Enclosure Type AA303SX to Single-Sided Intake Chiller/ ASHP, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

-Correspondence- Agent Confirming Colouration of Acoustic Enclosure, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

-Supporting Information- ASHP Specification, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to saved policies DC26 of the Manchester City Councils Unitary Development Plan and policy DM1 & SP1 of Manchester's Local Development Framework: The Manchester Core Strategy.

3) The development shall be constructed only using the approved materials:

-Drawing- Proposed- Acoustic Enclosure Type AA303SX to Single-Sided Intake Chiller/ ASHP, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

-Correspondence- Agent Confirming Colouration of Acoustic Enclosure, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

-Supporting Information- ASHP Specification, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25 July 2023.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, pursuant to policy DM1 of Manchester's Core Strategy.

4 a) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted 'Red Acoustics Noise Impact Assessment, ref R2188-REP01-JW, 14 April 2023', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 8 June 2023, in relation to securing a reduction in the level of noise emanating from the site. The scheme shall be implemented in full before the use commences or as otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

b) Prior to the operation of the scheme a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority to validate that the work undertaken throughout the development conforms to the recommendations and requirements in the approved acoustic report. The report shall also undertake post completion testing to confirm that the noise criteria have been met. Any instances of non-conformity with the recommendations in the report shall be detailed along with any measures required to ensure compliance with the agreed noise criteria.

Reason - To minimise the impact of the development and to prevent a general increase in pre-existing background noise levels around the site, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health
Withington Civic Society

Flat 4, 4 Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PX
Flat 1, 4 Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PX
8 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
5 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
34 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
30 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
29 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
26 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
23 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
21 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
19 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
16 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
14 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
10 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
Flat 3, 4 Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PX
Flat 2, 4 Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PX
3 Swinbourne Grove, Manchester, M20 4PP
1 Swinbourne Grove, Manchester, M20 4PP
37 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
36 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
35 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
31 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
3 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
28 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
27 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
25 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
24 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
22 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
20 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
2 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
18 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
17 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
15 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
12 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
11 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
1 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
9 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
7 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
6 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
4 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
33 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
32 Sycamore Close, Heaton Road, Manchester, M20 4PH
427A Wilbraham Road, Manchester, M20 4AF
427B Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AF

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M
Conservation Area - Withington Conservation Area 1983
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA