

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: H/26/101016

Site Address: 50 CHESTNUT AVENUE, EASTLEIGH, SO50 5AL

Case Officer: Gina Aftanas

Description: Installation of air source heat pump

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within the urban edge Character area appraisal ELAC 15 Bats recorded in the area		

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
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Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None received		
Town Council:	No Comment Received		
Ecology:	No objection subject to informatives being included within the decision notice.		
Environmental Health (pollution):	09/03/2026 Due to the MCS 020(a) assessment reaching above 37db, a Level 1 Assessment is required. Noise Impact Assessments received 15/05/2026 and 28/05/2026 were rejected by the Council's Pollution Team due to insufficient information after a request for a Level 1 Assessment.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: Site visit carried out 20/03/2026 – photographs on file.		

Legislation:
Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states: <i>"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."</i>

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance
Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM8, DM11 and DM14.
Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisal ELAC 15. <u>Character Area Guidance</u> • Maintain the predominant shallow building setbacks and continuous building frontage in order to retain the sense of enclosure provided by existing development. • Minimise the requirement for on-street parking in new development. • Maintain the predominant brick wall plot boundaries. Ensure that the materials applied in new development are similar or complimentary to those prominent in existing development.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the installation of an air source heat pump (ASHP) within the rear garden. The ASHP would measure approximately 1.3m in width, 0.4m in depth and 0.8m in height. The plans indicate it would be sited beneath the existing ground floor window on the north elevation.

Assessment:

Principle

Policy DM4 of the Local Plan generally supports proposals for infrastructure to generate low carbon energy and/or make more efficient use of energy sources, therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle in accordance with the objectives of this policy. The main determining issues are whether the proposal would result in any adverse visual impacts or impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents in terms of noise.

Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a two-storey terrace property located towards the eastern end of Chestnut Avenue in Eastleigh. The property is set back from the road by way of small front garden area, and the rear is fully enclosed utilising fence boundary treatment. The surrounding area is residential in nature featuring house-types of differing styles.

Design and Appearance

The ASHP is considered a modest sized structure, and due to its siting, it would not be visible from the street scene. It is not considered the proposal would have any adverse impact on the appearance of the dwelling or surroundings and would therefore accord with Policy DM1 of the Local Plan and Character Area Appraisal ELAC 15.

Residential Amenity and Noise

The main issue for consideration in this instance is the level of noise created by the proposed air-source heat-pump and how this may impact the amenity of the nearest neighbouring properties. It is required to demonstrate that either the noise generated is acceptable or that it can be suitably mitigated through additional measures, such as acoustic screening.

Whilst some noise information has been provided within the application, it does not give a clear indication of the likely noise impact upon neighbouring properties. This is the concern raised by the Council's Environmental Health Team and is something shared by the case officer. A full detailed Level 1 Assessment has been requested throughout the application process but has not been received. As such, the LPA cannot be satisfied that the proposed unit will not result in any unacceptable disturbance to neighbouring properties or that it could be acceptably mitigated.

Given that it has not been demonstrated that the unit will not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours, the requirements of Local Plan Policies DM1 and DM8 have not been met. As such, the application is recommended for refusal on the grounds of insufficient information.

Ecology

Due to records of bats and hedgehogs near this site, the Council's Ecology Team were consulted as part of the application process. After reviewing the site, they have concluded that there are no potential bat features or habit for hedgehogs in the garden and have no objection to the development, subject to the following informative being included within the decision notice.

- Biodiversity enhancements will be required in accordance with Local Plan policy DM 11 and NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 187d and 192 b.
A bat box and a swift nest box may be appropriate for this building. The Bat Conservation Trust recommends installing a bat brick/box at least 4 m above the ground, away from artificial light sources, sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day, facing south, south-east or south-west.
(<https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/putting-up-your-box>)

Swift nest boxes are best positioned under the eaves or on walls facing north, northeast or north-west out of direct sunlight, five metres above the ground, with clear adjacent airspace so swifts can access them in a high-speed direct flight.

(<https://www.swiftconservation.org/Nestboxes%26Attraction.htm>)

Other Material Considerations

- There will be no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention.
- There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environment Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Conclusion: This application is recommended for refusal.

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☐	REFUSE ☒
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For the reasons set out above, the application is recommended for refusal on the grounds of insufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed air-source-heat-pump will not result in unacceptable disturbance to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.