

I just reviewed the previous comments from my colleague Stuart Wedgbury and noted that there were discussions with the applicant on the installation of an acoustic fence to mitigate the impact from the air source heat pump, is this approach no longer being considered? It is also noted that the alternative unit, although quieter, does not meet the applicant's criteria in terms of efficiency and cost/benefit.

Regarding the latest comments from the applicant, he has presented a well-structured argument in favour of the installation of the air source heat pump. I would like to provide the following observations:

1. While the applicant makes a valid point about the distinction between permitted development and full planning applications, it is important to emphasize that the noise level remains a critical consideration for the LPA. The fact that the noise exceeds the MCS guideline by only 2 dB suggests a minor deviation, but it still exceeds the recommended limit. Additionally, the MCS assessment is rather generic as does not take into account for factors such as the spectral content/frequency, vibrations or any tonal characteristics of the noise, all of which could potentially increase the actual noise levels produced by the unit.
2. The applicant provides evidence that the ambient noise level from road traffic in the area is higher than the noise produced by the heat pump, and therefore the heat pump's noise would not be noticeable or disruptive. These sources of information are informative and only consider road noise sources, they don't reflect the actual background conditions of the site. To consider this argument an assessment of the background noise levels should be carried out.
3. The applicant notes that the heat pump will primarily operate in winter, when windows are likely closed, reducing the likelihood of noise disturbances. However, if the air source heat pump is also intended for hot water production, it could be in use throughout the year, including during hot weather when windows are more likely to be open. This could increase the potential for noise disturbances.

In summary, while the applicant's arguments are thoughtful and address several key points, the concerns about noise impact, particularly without a site-specific noise assessment, remain significant. Having said that, I am happy to agree with the proposed installation of the air source heat pump conditioned to:

() Prior to the installation of the proposed air source heat pump, a noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning

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Authority. The Assessment shall include an assessment of noise emissions by the proposed air source heat pump against background noise levels and any necessary mitigation measures to ensure that the noise impact of the air source heat pump does not exceed acceptable levels. The installation of the proposed air source heat pump shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that nearby residential dwellings would not be adversely impacted by noise, in accordance with Policy DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

Finally, I would like to stress that even though ASHPs may comply with the MC20 standards, it is not uncommon for them to generate complaints after installation. If an ASHP causes a statutory noise nuisance despite meeting these standards, the council is legally obligated to take action to address and mitigate the nuisance.

I trust the above information is of assistance. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Best regards,

Yacklin

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Pollution Control Specialist

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