

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	26/00374/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Maxine Wishart
<u>WARD:</u>	Northwood	<u>PARISH:</u>	
<u>LOCATION:</u>	41 Simonswood Lane, Northwood, Kirkby		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	INSTALLATION OF AN AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP TO THE REAR OF THE DWELLING		

Site Description

The application property is located within an established residential area of Kirkby on the western side of Simonswood Lane. The property is a two-storey terraced dwelling which sits within a row of 13 dwellings and is flanked to the right by No. 43 and to the left by No. 39 Simonswood Lane. The site is surrounded by other residential dwellings to the north, south and west with Liverpool Football Club located opposite the host property.

Proposal

The proposed development would involve the installation of an air source heat pump (ASHP) to the rear of the property. It would be located on an existing patio area adjacent to an existing boundary fence along the common boundary with the adjoining neighbour, No. 39 Simonswood Lane.

The ASHP unit would be located 1m from the rear elevation of the host property and sited 250mm off the common boundary with the neighbouring property, No. 39. The unit would have dimensions of 860mm at its widest; 580mm at its deepest; at its highest point it would be 1130mm above ground level which would sit 670mm below the height of the boundary fence.

Consultations

Environmental Health - No objections subject to the unit being installed on anti-vibration mounts.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 5 neighbours. No representations have been received.

Planning History

None.

Relevant Policy

Policy S3 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) of the NPPF states that:

Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- a. Policy S4 in the NPPF should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;
- b. Outside settlements, NPPF policy S5 should be applied; and
- c. In all locations, development proposals that accord with both up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.

The site is within a settlement and so NPPF Policy S4 applies.

S4: Principle of development within settlements states:

Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

The Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016, although certain saved policies of Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) remain operational as part of the Statutory Development Plan and are still given weight in reaching a decision. The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan was adopted in 2013 and is also part of the development plan.

The site is allocated Primarily Residential Area on the Knowsley Local Plan Policies Map. The relevant adopted policies for the assessment of the application are listed below.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

DM3 - Determining development proposals
DM6 - Use of planning conditions and obligations
S3 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
S4 - Principle of development within settlements
CC2 - Mitigation of climate change
CC3 - Adaptation to climate change
DP3 - Key principles for well-designed places
DP4 - The design process
P3 - Living conditions and pollution

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles
CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
CS22 - Sustainable and Low Carbon Development

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas

H8 - Extensions and alterations to Residential Properties
ENV2 - Noise and Vibration

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

ASSESSMENT

The main considerations for this application are:

- Principle of development
- Mitigation of Climate Change
- Design and Visual Amenity
- Neighbouring Amenity

Principle of Development

The principle of the installation of an ASHP on the application site in a Primarily Residential Area is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with relevant planning policies and guidance as discussed below.

Mitigation of Climate Change

NPPF Policy CC2(2)(Mitigation of climate change) states that substantial weight must be given to the benefits of improving energy efficiency of existing buildings and / or drawing energy from district heat networks, renewable and low carbon sources including through the installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights) where this would be achieved through proposals for development.

Policy CS2 of the Local Plan seeks to deliver sustainable communities and create healthy environments in Knowsley, in line with national policy. Principle 2 of Policy CS2 expects that development principles reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the effects of climate.

Policy CS22 of the Local Plan aims to encourage provision of appropriate renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure.

The proposed ASHP would provide significant environmental benefits through heating from electricity, as opposed to gas and contribute to the Council's aim of lowering carbon emissions.

Conclusion - Mitigation of Climate Change

The proposal would involve renewable energy that would improve the energy

efficiency of the host property and contribute to the Council's aim of lowering carbon emissions. The development is therefore in accordance with Policy CC2 of the NPPF and Policies CS2 and CS22 of the Local Plan.

Design and Visual Amenity

NPPF Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places) requires development proposals to *respond appropriately to their context, including the history, character and features of the site and its setting, so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings...*

Local Plan Policy CS2 states that new development will be expected to enhance local character and promote quality of place and good quality design. Policy CS19 also sets out several criteria that developments will be expected to conform to so that they enhance local distinctiveness and the identity and accessibility of new places.

Policy H5 (2) of the UDP states that new development within Primarily Residential Areas (or proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of existing buildings) which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development (either by itself or in conjunction with other developments) would not:

- a) *Have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance, overlooking, visual intrusion, smells, fumes, on-street parking or other causes; or*
- b) *Adversely affect the character or street scene of the area.*

The proposal is for a small sized ASHP unit of a standard design typical of a domestic use. It would be located within the rear garden which is enclosed by fencing to at least a height of 1.8m. There would be very limited public vantage points and the unit would not be visible within the street scene.

It is considered that the proposed development would not appear as an incongruous feature in this domestic setting. As such, the proposal would not harm the visual amenity in relation to the host dwelling or the surrounding area and is acceptable regarding in terms of its design and appearance.

Conclusion Visual Amenity

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the ASHP would be sited to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the dwelling and would not harm visual amenity and accords with the NPPF, Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Local Plan and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

Neighbouring Amenity

The main issue would be the effect of the development on the living conditions of occupiers of the neighbouring properties together with that of the host dwelling, particularly in regard to noise and vibration. It is considered that the properties most likely to be affected by the proposed development would be Nos. 39 and 43 Simonswood Lane which flank the host property.

NPPF Policy P3 requires that development should, amongst other issues, avoid exposure to noise for occupiers and users. Development proposals should *mitigate*

and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise, not result in levels of noise exposure which would have a significant observed adverse effect...

Saved Policy ENV2 of the UDP states that development that will either cause an unacceptable increase in noise or vibration levels or itself be subject to unacceptable noise or vibration from an existing source will not be permitted. Where developments are permitted, conditions may be attached to the planning permission to ensure effective noise insulation or other required mitigation measures are carried out.

Policy CS2 and CS19 together seek to ensure that developments maintain a good standard of amenity for all of land and buildings, existing residents, business occupiers and future occupiers.

The supporting information indicates that the ASHP would be positioned 250mm from the shared boundary with No. 39 and approximately 1m from the rear elevation. The ASHP would be located 6.15m from the common boundary with No. 43 Simonswood Lane. Other properties to the rear are sited on Glegside Road, a distance of approx. 21m would remain between and the principal rear elevation of those properties and the proposed ASHP.

Given its siting, it is considered that the proposed ASHP would not give rise to unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of having an overbearing effect or harm to outlook.

In terms of noise, the application is supported by a MCS20(a) Heat Pump Sound Calculator assessment. The assessment indicates that the noise that emanating from the ASHP would be 37.6 decibels. That rate is slightly higher than the permitted development noise limit of 37 dB LAeq,5mins as set out in relevant guidance for permitted development rights (Schedule 2, Part 14, Class G of the GPDO) - ((Microgeneration Installation Standard: MC20 (a)). The additional 0.6dB is a marginal exceedance in comparison to the permissible noise limit which under .

A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been submitted to support the application which demonstrates that in terms of external impact, the worst-case Rating Level (37 dB) would be achieved which is lower than the prevailing ambient daytime noise levels (40–55 dB) and within the prevailing ambient nighttime noise levels (35–45 dB). In regard to internal amenity, the indoor noise level (27 dB) would be within the BS 8233 sleep protection limit (30 dB).

The NIA concludes that the assessment demonstrates that the proposed installation would be to acceptable levels to ensure that there would be no detrimental noise impacts. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the NIA and accepts the information provided. They have recommended that the unit is installed on anti-vibration mounts to help reduce noise levels to the adjacent properties and this can be secured through the implementation of a condition.

Conclusion – Residential Amenity

On balance, it is considered that subject to the aforementioned condition, the proposal would have an acceptable impact upon residential amenity and would be in accordance with the NPPF, Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Local Plan and Saved Policies H5 and ENV2 of the Knowsley Replacement UDP.

Conclusion

The proposed ASHP would involve renewable energy that would provide significant environmental benefits improving the energy efficiency of the host property and contributing to the Council's aim of lowering carbon emissions. The development would not have unacceptable impacts on surrounding residents in terms of the visual impacts or that from noise disturbance.

The development therefore complies with the NPPF, Local Plan Policies and Saved Policies of the UDP.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) The air source heat pump hereby approved shall be installed with anti-vibration mounts prior to first being brought into use and the anti-vibration mounts shall thereafter be retained and maintained at all times that the air source heat pump remains in operation.

Reason: In the interest of the amenity of neighbouring properties and to comply with the NPPF (2026), Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policies H5 and ENV2 of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
28/09/2026			NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DATED - 28 SEPTEMBER 2026)
31/07/2026	-	-	LOCATION PLAN
31/07/2026	03	-	SITE PLAN AS PROPOSED
31/07/2026	04	-	ELEVATIONS AS PROPOSED
31/07/2026	-	-	COSY 6 OPERATIONAL CLEARANCES / DATA SHEET
31/07/2026	-	-	MCS 020(A) HEAT PUMP SOUND CALCULATOR

Signed Case Officer¹: M Wishart

Signed Authorising Officer²: Jo Sheridan

Date: 30/09/2026

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

² I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed