DELEGATED REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10374
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission
Site Address:	Unit G, Chippenham Trade Centre, Bumpers Way, Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate, Chippenham, SN14 6LH
Proposal:	Installation of 4 no. external air source heat pump units.
Recommendation:	That Full Planning Permission is GRANTED with Conditions

PROPOSAL

This application seeks Full Planning Permission for the installation of 4 no. external air source heat pump units on the rear elevation of the building.

The applications set out the following components for which permission and consent are sought:

- Installation of 4 no. external air source heat pumps

The development and works are intended for purposes associated with the occupation and use of Unit G, Chippenham Trade Centre, as a commercial business.

DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Unit G is one of several units within a building situated in the Bumper Farm Industrial Estate. The site is situated on the western edge of the Chippenham Settlement boundary and surrounded by other commercial buildings.

The building is located within the Countryside Character Area of Avon Vale but is not covered by any archaeological or ecological designations.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history for the site which would materially affect consideration of this application.

POLICIES

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the current time the statutory development plan in respect of this application consists of the

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (Adopted January 2015); and the 'saved' policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) 2011 (adopted June 2006).

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies 2015 (WCS):
Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy
Core Policy 42: Standalone Renewable Energy Installations
Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)

ISSUES

The main issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Principle Of Development
- Climate Emergency
- Scale and appearance
- Residential Amenity

CONSULTATION

Chippenham Town Council: No objection.

Public Protection: The ASHPs are going to be located in a commercial zone and are sufficiently distanced away from residential. Public Protection has no further comment to add.

REPRESENTATIONS

Consultation has been carried out and no neighbours or third parties have objected or submitted comments.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

The site is situated within an established industrial estate within the principal settlement of Chippenham. CP1, 2 and 13 of the WCS sets out a settlement and a delivery strategy for Chippenham and confirms that within a principal settlement, the principle of development is considered acceptable. It is considered acceptable subject to assessment of site-specific impacts, related policy considerations and compliance with the other policies contained within the development plan and the guidance and provisions are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Core Policy 43 of the WCS offers policy support to adapting existing buildings for the provision of building-integrated renewable technologies. The Nation Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate a particular need for renewable or low carbon energy.

Climate Emergency:

In February 2019, Wiltshire Council resolved to acknowledge a climate emergency and to seek to make the count of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. CP41 confirms that proposal that aim to retrofit existing buildings, by improving their energy efficiency or by integrating low-carbon or renewable energy technology, should be supported and CP42 applicants will not be required to justify the need for such measures. Even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and achieving a low-carbon future.

An ASHP works by drawing air from the external environment and extracting the thermal energy from it which it then transfers into the building's heating system. This is considered a low-carbon heating system because it does not use fossil fuels nor produce greenhouse gases, unlike a traditional gas boiler for example.

It is considered that this proposal will help reduce the carbon footprint of the existing building and is therefore compliant with CP41 and CP42 and the proposal can be supported.

Scale and appearance

Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development design is expected to be complementary to the locality. CP57 also considered that well-designed development should maximise opportunities for improving energy efficiency and the use of low-carbon and renewable energy technologies, in accordance with CP41.

Good design helps to provide a sense of place, creates, or reinforces local distinctiveness, and promotes community cohesiveness and social wellbeing. The layout and design of new development must also e based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and its wider context and seek to maximise the benefits of the site's characteristics. This will require careful consideration of the site layout as no two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street patterns and features. New development should integrate into its surroundings whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions.

The proposed ASHP units are to be located on the rear elevation and would not be highly visible from the public realm. Where the units can be glimpsed, the proposals will read as an appropriate and modest addition within the commercial area and would not be considered to create an incongruous or unduly prominent feature in this location. However, a condition is recommended so that the air source hear pumps are removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed. Such a condition is considered appropriate and necessary is this instance and to meet the relevant tests.

As such, the scale and appearance of the proposals are considered to be acceptable and comply with Core Policy 57 of the WCS.

Impacts on Neighbouring Amenity

CP57 required that development should ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants//neighbours is acceptable, ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste, or littler). Residential amenity is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and living area within private gardens and this, therefore, needs to be carefully considered accordingly.

The main concern, with regards to the installation of an ASHP on neighbouring amenity, is the noise generated by the unit(s). In this case, given its close proximity to a commercial unit and its location within an established industrial estate and away from residential properties, it is considered that the proposal would unlikely result in any unreasonable harm to the amenity of neighbours. Public Protection have not objection due to the proposal being located in a commercial zone and sufficiently distanced away from residential.

It has been noted that no comments or objections were received by neighbouring properties or third parties.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of amenity, and it would be in compliance with CP57.

CONCLUSION

The potential impacts of this development have been taken into consideration. In terms of the scale and appearance, the proposal would not harm amenity or the character of the dwelling or the area. The proposal is in accordance with the aims of the NPPF, the objectives of the relevant Core Policies in the WCS; CP41, CP42, and CP57. It is therefore recommended that this application be approved with conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Block Plan: DWG No. 10706-103-05; Received 29 November 2023
Existing Plan: DWG No. 10706-103-01; Received 29 November 2023

Site Location Plan: DWG No. 10706-103-06; Received 29 November 2023
Existing Elevations: DWG No. 10706-103-02; Received 29 November 2023
Proposed Plan: DWG No. 10706-103-03; Received 29 November 2023
Proposed Elevations: DWG No. 10706-103-04; Received 29 November 2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 The proposed 4 no. air source heat pump equipment hereby approved shall be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.

REASON: To protect the long-term visual amenity of the area.

INFORMATIVES:

4 Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

5 The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required, it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence. If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.