

## PLANNING ADVICE NOTE - AN6

### AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS

Planning permission is required for the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump unless the proposed unit meets all the criteria of one of the following exemptions:

Class 1 (26) – Installation of an air source heat pump or air conditioning unit in relation to a dwelling-house

Class 4 (7) - Installation of an air source heat pump or air conditioning unit in relation to a non-domestic building  
These are available to view through the planning and building control link at [www.gov.gg](http://www.gov.gg)

There are no exemptions for Flats or a building containing flats or where a building is protected.

Should planning permission be required the main material considerations in the determination of a planning application will be:

#### ***Effect on neighbour amenity***

Heat pumps incorporate a fan and compressor that will generate a degree of background noise under normal operation. **ASHPs can produce relatively high levels of noise which can potentially cause noise nuisance to neighbouring property. The dominant frequencies within the noise are typically low frequencies (i.e. 50 – 200 Hertz (Hz)) which travel further and can potentially be heard as an annoying hum within buildings, particularly through the night.**

- The likely effect of the proposed ASHP on the reasonable enjoyment of neighbouring properties is a statutory planning consideration.
- The potential for noise nuisance is a significant problem with some proposals for ASHPs and can potentially make an application unacceptable. The level of impact is likely to be greater where an operating ASHP is located in close proximity to neighbouring residential properties.
- Applicants requesting permission to install ASHPs will need to give very careful consideration to the proposed siting to ensure that potential for noise nuisance to neighbours will not result.
- In order to be able to consider an application efficiently and avoid delays whilst further information is requested, the following details should be supplied with your application.
  - Manufacturers' specifications of the proposed unit including noise levels at which the unit will operate
  - Distance to the closest noise sensitive property (this may be the boundary of a domestic garden);
  - Evidence that the noise level the proposed pump would operate at would have no increase on the lowest background noise level at any time (this is generally at night); this may require you to commission a survey of background noise levels; and
  - Details of any proposed attenuation measures to reduce the impact of the air source heat pump.

- Applicants may wish to consider enlisting the assistance of an acoustic consultant to ensure that their application provides the necessary level of information. The Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation have a list of qualified acoustic consultants as a reference point.
- Any measurement and assessments must be made in accordance with British Standard 4142:1997.
- Applicants are strongly advised to contact the Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation (01481 221161) prior to the submission of an application for an ASHP to discuss the noise specifications and characteristics of the proposed unit(s) and to ensure that appropriate supporting information is submitted.

The application including all supporting information is made to and determined by the Development & Planning Authority although we may consult the Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation in relation to noise.

### ***Visual impact***

- The visual impact of a proposal for an ASHP must be considered. Important considerations include design, character and amenity and whether the proposal is within a Conservation Area, is in the setting of a protected building or involves works to a protected building. There is a duty under the Law to pay special attention to the desirability of (1) preserving the setting of a protected building and (2) preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area.
- In any particular case the decision will depend upon factors such as the precise design of the proposal, its siting, height and its degree of prominence from the road or other public areas.
- Within Conservation Areas the impact of proposals on the character and appearance of the area is of greater importance. However, this would not necessarily prevent permission being given for an appropriately sited ASHP which would not have a significant impact on the character or appearance of the area concerned.
- Outside the Conservation Areas, a particularly prominent or obtrusive siting, for example on or close to the front elevation of a house or in close proximity to a road, might still result in refusal of permission and so very careful consideration must be given to the proposed siting.

### ***Effect on protected buildings and other historic buildings or buildings of character***

- In the case of protected buildings or other historic buildings or buildings of character, the impact of the proposal, not only on the area or locality concerned, but also more specifically on the building itself must be considered.
- The attachment of a modern ASHP to the structure and its consequent effect on the architectural or historic interest of such a building could be the main issue of concern. Such concerns might be overcome, for example, by choosing a free-standing location for such equipment providing it did not have an adverse impact on the setting of the building.
- Where ASHPs are proposed to be attached to a protected building, it is particularly important that any associated works form part of the application.

*An EIA application would not be required for the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump.*

## How to apply for planning permission to install an ASHP

Information on how to make a planning application is available on the States website at [www.gov.gg](http://www.gov.gg). Planning Application forms and the Schedule of Fees can also be found on the website. Please refer to the list above for what information should be submitted as part of your planning application to prevent delays in deciding an application.

## Other Permissions and Consents

You may need other permissions or consents in relation to any works you intend to carry out. This may include a Building Licence issued under the Building Regulations.

In relation to the Building Regulations, the installation of an ASHP is not in itself considered to be Building Work and is therefore not controllable, but the installation or alteration of the property services that the ASHP is connected to is controlled; a good example being an unvented hot water storage vessel. In addition, it may be appropriate to seek advice as to the adequacy of any structure that the ASHP is to be fixed to. If strengthening work is deemed to be necessary, then this work will also be controllable under the Building Regulations and an application will need to be made for this work in the normal way.

You and/or your agent will need to contact the relevant bodies to determine whether those permissions and consents are required.

Contact Us For further information or advice at:  
The Office *of the* Development & Planning Authority  
Sir Charles Frossard House  
La Charroterie  
St Peter Port GY1 1FH

Telephone 01481 226200      E-mail [planning@gov.gg](mailto:planning@gov.gg)

Have you visited our website?

Go to [www.gov.gg](http://www.gov.gg) for additional guidance material and other planning information, or to submit a pre- application query.

This note is issued by the Development & Planning Authority to assist with the understanding of the assessment of applications in relation to certain types of development. It represents the Authority's interpretation of certain provisions of the legislation and is not intended to be exhaustive or a substitute for the full text of the legislation copies of which are available from the Greffe. Electronic copies are also available at [www.guernseylegalresources.gg](http://www.guernseylegalresources.gg) Substantive queries concerning the legislation should be addressed to the Authority by email at [Planning@gov.gg](mailto:Planning@gov.gg). The Authority does not accept any liability for loss or expense arising out of the provision of, or reliance on, any advice given. You are recommended to seek advice from an independent professional advisor where appropriate.