

Date of Meeting	16 December 2010
Application Number	E/10/1419/FUL
Site Address	3 The Park, Erlestoke, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 5TY
Proposal	Retention of air to water heat pump
Applicant	Sarsen Housing Association
Town/Parish Council	Erlestoke Parish Council
Grid Ref	396430 153994
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Karen Guest

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called to committee by the local division member, Cllr Gamble.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the recommendation that the application be approved.

2. Report Summary

The main issues to consider are:

- Whether the proposal would have a detrimental impact on neighbour amenity.
- Whether the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

3. Site Description

The property to which the application relates is one of a pair of semi-detached houses in a cul-de-sac of other similar properties at the eastern end of Erlestoke. If approaching Erlestoke from the Little Cheverell direction, the site can be found by taking the first turning on the right after the church. The property is on the left-hand side and is the end house in a row of 8 semi-detached properties.



Location Plan

4. Planning History

There is no relevant planning history.

5. The Proposal

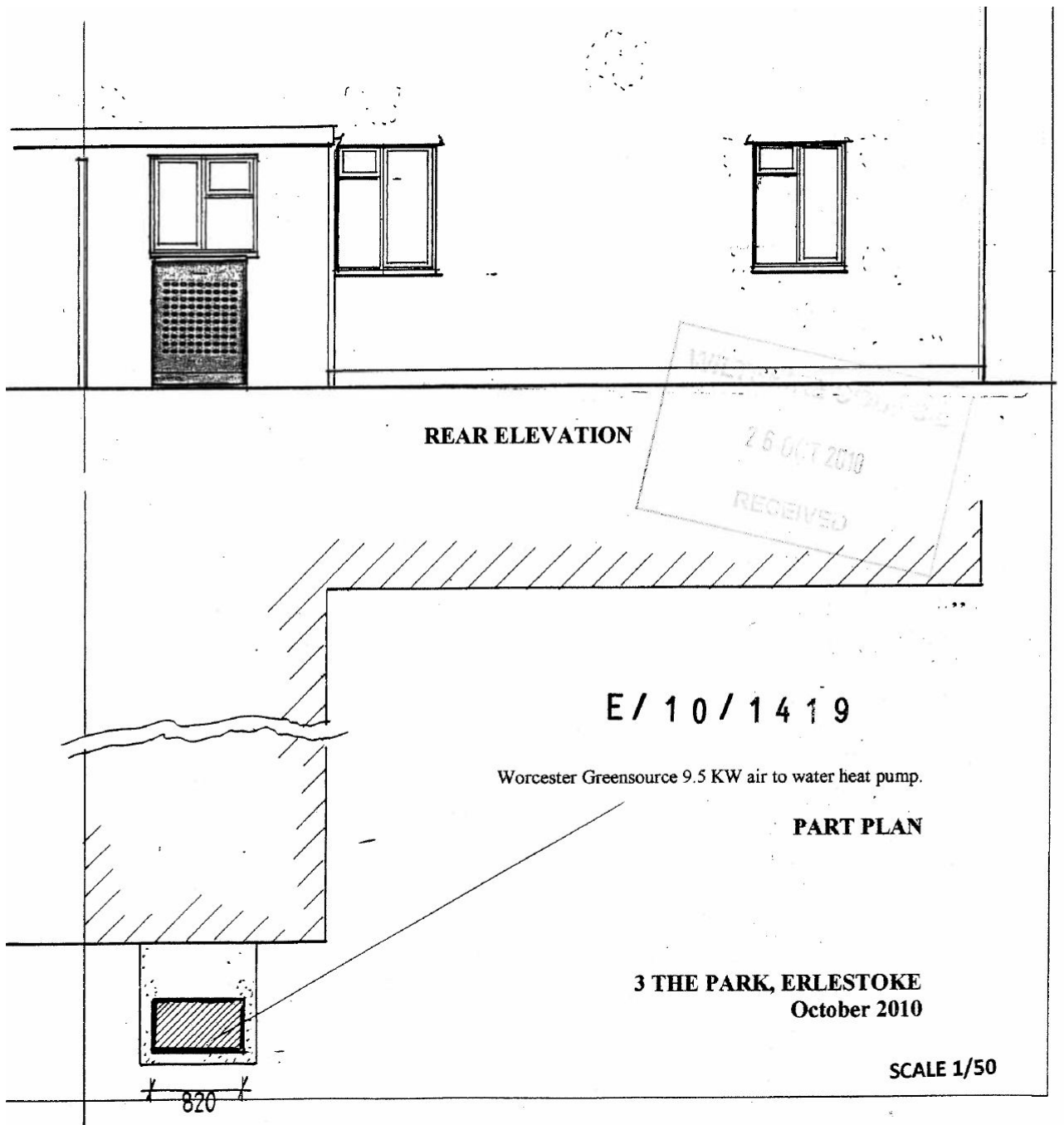
This application is for the retention of a Worcester Bosch air source heat pump, which is positioned immediately to the rear of a single storey rear extension on the boundary with the adjoining semi-detached property. The agent has confirmed in writing that it has been in situ since 12 January 2010. This application is one of 13 planning applications that have been submitted in respect of properties owned by Sarsen Housing Association in the East Hub area. Nine are retrospective applications and four relate to proposed installations.



Site Plan



The unit in situ



6. Planning Policy

The site lies within the Limits of Development for Erlestoke and the designated conservation area. Policy PD1 in the Kennet Local Plan is relevant to the consideration of the application, as is central government policy contained in PPS 5..

7. Consultations

Erlestoke Parish Council – objects to the application:

‘Although the Council has no objection to the siting of the unit, neighbours have complained that the unit is noisy and the Councillors would ask for the abatement of the noise to be taken into consideration during the planning process.’

Wiltshire Council Environmental Health Officer –

‘I have been advised that the external part of the Worcester Greensource 9.5KW heat pump runs at around 49.9dBA at 1metre. Due to the position of the installation I would not expect this sound level to cause a problem for neighbouring residents. However I understand that you have received

some comments regarding the noise.

I visited the site on 16th November at 3pm and witnessed the sound from the heat pump myself. I also took measurements of the sound levels at varying distances from the heat pump with it both on and off. With the residents in attendance I took measurements from the gardens of both number 3 and 4 The Park and also from the bedroom of number 4.

The measurements show that there is no significant difference in the average sound levels of the area when the pump is on compared to when it is off. The heat pump is audible in some parts of the garden of number 4 but is not a significant feature of the acoustic environment.'

8. Publicity

A site notice has been posted and neighbour notification has taken place. One letter of objection has been received, from the occupier of the adjoining property (no. 4 The Park), which raises the following key concerns.

- The noise the air source heat pump makes is annoying.
- The site is designated as a conservation area and is very quiet. We would like to keep it that way.
- The fear is that if several houses had this equipment installed, the noise would be unbearable.

9. Planning Considerations

The main issues in respect of this application are whether the air source heat pump has an adverse impact on residential amenity and upon the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Concerns have been raised by the occupier of the adjoining residential property that the installed air source heat pump causes a noise nuisance. The Council's Environmental Protection Team carried out noise monitoring at numbers 3 and 4 The Park at 15.00 on 16 November 2010. These measurements were taken at varying distances from the heat pump (including from the bedroom of number 4) with it both on and off. They have concluded that the recorded measurements show that there is no significant difference in the average sound levels of the area when the pump is on compared to when it is off. The heat pump is audible in some parts of the garden of number 4 but not from within the property itself. As noise levels from the air source heat pump are similar to existing background noise levels, it is not considered that the development could be considered to have a detrimental impact on the reasonable living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining residential property or other dwellings in the area.

Members may wish to note that of the 13 planning applications that have been submitted in respect of Sarsen owned properties within the East Hub area, 10 have already been approved as no objections were raised by the Council's Environmental Protection Team or from any neighbours or parish councils.

Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

The site lies within the designated conservation area, however, this relatively small installation is situated in the rear garden of the property and is not visible from public viewpoints. It is therefore considered that the character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved.

Conclusion

Officers consider that the noise generated by the air source heat pump is not significant enough to as to cause a noise nuisance. The development is also considered to be acceptable in visual terms. Accordingly, the approval of planning permission is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted, for the following reasons:

The retention of the air source heat pump will not have any adverse impact on the character or

appearance of the conservation Area, nor will it have any significant adverse impacts on the amenity of the adjacent property. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy PD1 of the Kennet Local Plan.

and subject to the condition set out below:.

This decision relates to documents/plans submitted with the application, listed below. No variation from the approved documents should be made without the prior approval of this Council. Amendments may require the submission of a further application. Failure to comply with this advice may lead to enforcement action which may require alterations and/or demolition of any unauthorised buildings or structures and may also lead to prosecution.

Application form, technical specification for Worcester Bosch air source heat pump (including photograph), 1:1250 location plan, 1:500 site plan, 1:50 elevation drawing and 1:50 block plan received on 26 October 2010.

Appendices:

None.

Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:

Application particulars and policy documents.