

2024/0898

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The Barnsley Academy, Farm Road, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3DL

Installation of air source heat pumps (ASHPs)

### Site Description

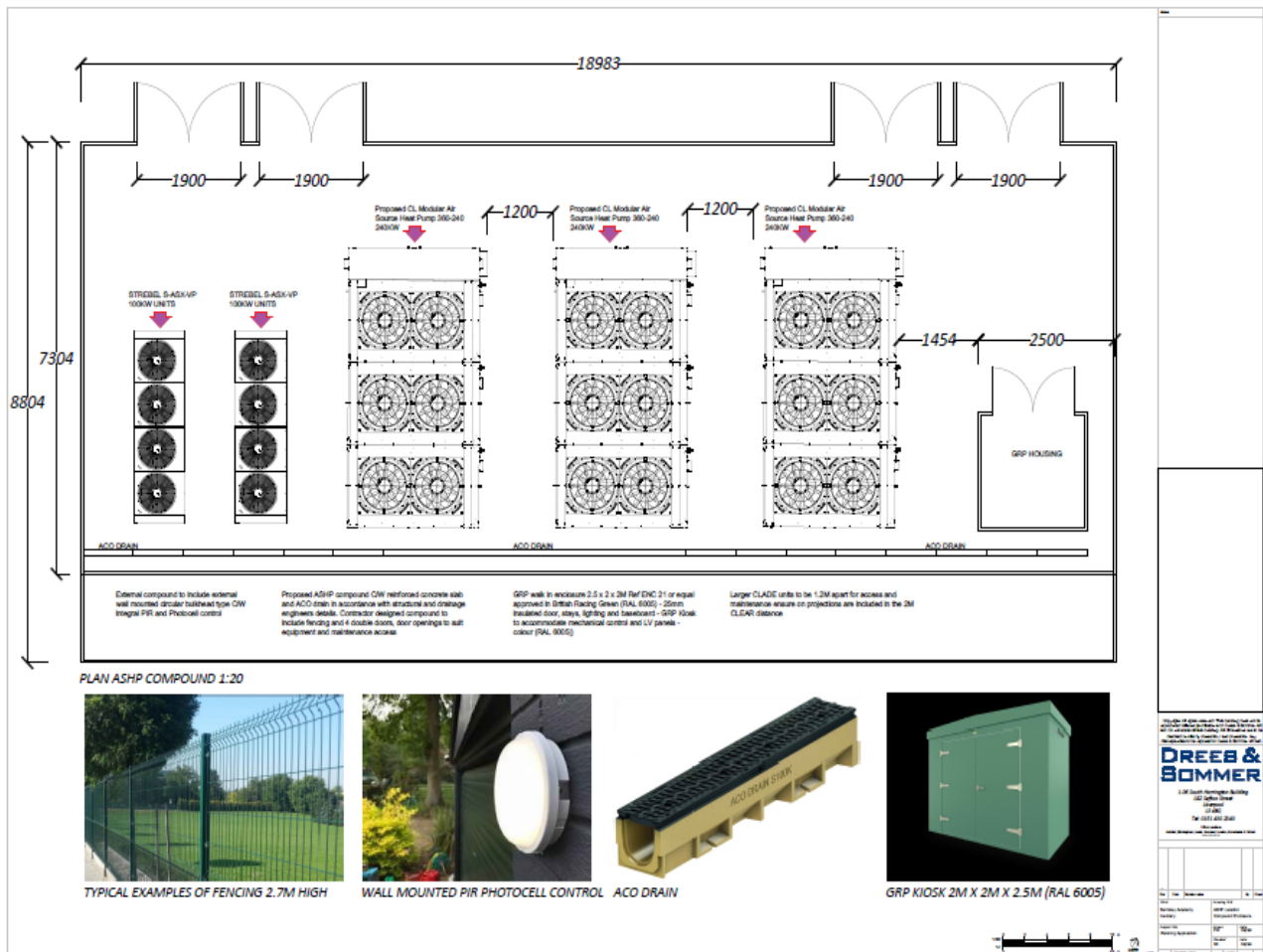
The Barnsley Academy is situated in Kendray and is primarily accessed via Farm Road with a long access leading to the main entrance to the south. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with some commercial uses scattered amongst. The school is set within an area of Green Belt with the proposal site located in the grounds to the southwest of the main school building.

### Planning History

B/05/1153/WB - Development of City Academy for 1250 pupils and Barnsley Full Service Provision (with environmental statement) (Approve with Conditions)

2013/0520 - Erection of 2no. open sided steel canopies (Approve with Conditions)

### Proposed Development



The applicant is seeking approval the installation of air source heat pumps. The air source heat pumps will be located to the southwest of the site between the site boundary and the access road. They are to be situated on a concrete base enclosed by weld mesh fencing and a gate for access.

## **Policy Context**

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting on 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

## **Local Plan Allocation – Green Belt**

To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission the decision on the application must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

**Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt** – In accordance with the NPPF, the erection of new buildings within the green belt will be classed as ‘inappropriate’ development with sites in the green belt being protected from such. Exceptions to this are:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs; and
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land).

All such buildings will still be considered in terms of their impact on the openness of the green belt and whether they cause other harm. In accordance with the NPPF and as set out in GB1, the Council will not allow proposals for ‘inappropriate’ development in the Green Belt unless it can be shown that there are very special circumstances that justify setting aside local and national policy.

**Policy GD1: General Development** – Development will be approved if there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

**Policy D1: High quality design and place making** – Development is expected to be of a high-quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

**Policy Poll1: Pollution Control** – Development will be expected to demonstrate that it is not likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in air, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution which would unacceptably affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people. Developers will be expected to minimise the effects of any possible pollution and provide mitigation measures where appropriate.

**Policy I2: Educational and Community Facilities** – Development for the provision of schools, educational facilities and other community facilities will be supported. Such uses will be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the sites and premises are no longer required by the existing or an alternative community facility.

**Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity** – Development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough.

### National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The core of this is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that align with the Local Plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In respect of this application, relevant sections include:

- Section 12: Achieving well designed places
- Section 13: Protecting Green Belt land

### **Consultations**

The LPA's Biodiversity Officer was consulted and raised no objections subject to conditions.

Education Services were consulted and raised no objections.

Pollution Control were consulted and raised no objections subject to conditions.

Stairfoot Ward Councillors were consulted and raised no objections.

Worsbrough Ward Councillors were consulted and raised no objections.

### **Representations**

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and a site notice posted, no comments were received.

### **Assessment**

#### Principle of Development

The site is situated within the Green Belt as allocated within the Local Plan. The NPPF states a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt, with certain exceptions which include limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

It is considered that the building can be considered as limited infilling as it is sited within the grounds of the Barnsley Academy and within close proximity to the main school building and therefore there is no greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. In addition, the proposal is to upgrade this essential facility and is considered to be in compliance with policies GB1 of the Local Plan. The proposed development is to upgrade the existing facility for the benefit of the school as such the proposal is therefore also acceptable in terms of Local Plan Policy I2.

#### Impact Upon the Green Belt and Visual Amenity

The proposal involves the erection of a new building within the Green Belt; however, it is deemed an essential building for the existing school. The heat pumps and fence compound are of a relatively low impact design and set within the boundaries of the existing school grounds. Therefore, the development will not significantly affect the street scene due to not being visible within it nor the openness of the Green Belt due to its view in relation to the wider school development in accordance with policy GB1 of the Local Plan.

The air source heat pumps are located at a non-prominent position within the site, enclosed in a compound towards the southwest of the main school building. The air source heat pumps are enclosed by a fence which is deemed acceptable in terms of materials for the school setting. The fencing and the air source heat pump is considered to have a minimal impact on the appearance or character of the area. The proposed development is therefore not considered to be contrary to Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making and is considered acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

#### Residential Amenity

The closest residential properties are a significant distance away from the site of the compound (approximately 75 metres) and therefore they will not be significantly affected by the proposal. Additionally, these properties are adjacent a play area. The proposal includes the installation of air source heat pumps which can increase noise generation and general disturbance to neighbouring properties however given the above distance this is not deemed to be impactful. Colleagues in Pollution Control have been consulted and raised no objections based on the data provided. The noise level will be controlled via a condition on approval of the planning application. The proposal is considered to be in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and is acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

#### Highway Safety

There will be no impact upon highway safety.

#### **Recommendation**

**Approve with conditions**