



<b>Planning Committee Date</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024
<b>Report to Lead Officer</b>	Cambridge City Council Planning Committee Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
<b>Reference</b>	24/01743/FUL
<b>Site</b>	1,3,18,19,21,25,27,28,33,35,39,41,43,44,45,49,51, 57,59,62,65,66,67,69,73,76,77,78,87,88,89,92,96,108,132,132A And 136 Ramsden Square
<b>Ward / Parish</b>	Kings Hedges
<b>Proposal</b>	Addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building, along with the replacement of the UPVC double glazed
<b>Applicant Presenting Officer</b>	Rob Townley (Aran Insulation Limited), Cambridge City Council Phoebe Carter
<b>Reason Reported to Committee</b>	Third party representations Land within ownership of the Council
<b>Member Site Visit Date</b>	N/A
<b>Key Issues</b>	1. Character and appearance
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>APPROVE</b> subject to conditions

## 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 The application seeks planning permission for the addition of external wall insulation to solid wall constructed parts of the buildings along with replacement of the existing UPVC double glazed windows with UPVC triple glazed windows

1.2 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

## 2.0 Site Description and Context

None-relevant	X		
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2.1 The application relates to 37 Council Houses on Ramsden Square. The houses are predominantly two storey brick built semi-detached dwellings with tiled roofs. There are no site constraints. Ramsden Square is a residential road accessed off Kings Hedges Road and Milton Road.

## 3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the addition of external wall insulation to solid wall constructed parts of the buildings along with replacement of the existing UPVC double glazed windows with UPVC triple glazed windows.

3.2 The application is accompanied by supporting information including:

- Drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Insulation Data Sheet
- Photomontages

3.3 The application proposes the external wall insulation to all solid brick external walls to improve the insulation to the buildings along with replacement of the windows to further increase the energy efficiencies of the dwellings.

## 4.0 Relevant Site History

4.1 No relevant site history.

## 5.0 Policy

### 5.1 National

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Environment Act 2021

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Equalities Act 2010

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

## 5.2 **Cambridge Local Plan 2018**

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development

Policy 30: Energy-efficiency improvements in existing dwellings

Policy 35: Human health and quality of life

Policy 55: Responding to context

Policy 56: Creating successful places

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings #

Policy 70: Biodiversity

## 5.3 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

## 6.0 **Consultations**

### 6.1 **County Highways Development Management – No Objection**

6.2 Following a review of the documents provided to the Highways Authority as part of the above planning application, no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal.

### 6.3 **Environmental Health – No Objection**

6.4 The development proposed is acceptable subject to the imposition of the condition regarding construction hours.

## **7.0 Third Party Representations**

7.1 5 representations have been received.

7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

- Character and appearance
  - o Should use brick slips to mitigate harm
  - o Render colour (grey) does not achieve consistent appearance
  - o Colour will contrast with the bricks
  - o Maintenance of the render
  - o Could render incentive be offered to the privately owned dwellings as well to improve uniformity
  - o The aesthetic uniformity of the square will be destroyed
  - o Visually differentiate the Council and Private Households
- Bird Boxes
  - o How many are being added?
- Would not be approved in other parts of the city

7.3 Those in support have raised cited the following reasons:

- Energy improvements to the dwellings

7.4 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

## **8.0 Assessment**

### **8.1 Design, Layout, Scale and Landscaping**

8.2 Policies 55, 56, 57, 58 and 59 seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality, reflects or successfully contrasts with existing building forms and materials and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment.

8.3 Ramsden Square is a residential street and the properties which form part of the application are all council owned dwellings. The character of the street scene is of semi-detached and terraced dwellings of brick form although it is noted that a couple of dwellings, have previously been externally rendered, or partially rendered. It is acknowledged that the change of material will alter the external appearance of the buildings and character of the streetscene, which is predominantly brick. However, Officers consider that with 37 dwellings being rendered it is considered that the external alterations will have little visual impact on the street scene. Furthermore, the insulation will result in an improved energy efficiency of the properties which is supported.

- 8.4 Officers note the third party objections to the alteration of materials and the proposed colour of the render to grey, as set out within the Design and Access Statement. It is therefore considered necessary for the colour of the render to be conditioned to ensure that a more suitable render colour is proposed.
- 8.5 Comments have been received setting out that this would not be accepted in other parts of the city. The application is one of a wider scheme of improvements to the energy efficiency of dwellings and the scheme has started to be implemented across the city.
- 8.6 Windows and doors are proposed to be replaced with triple glazing. The proposed windows and doors are of a similar appearance to the existing designs and therefore are considered to be acceptable, and would fall within the remit of the General Permitted Development Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A.
- 8.7 Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56 and 58.
- 8.8 Highway Safety and Car Parking**
- 8.9 Policy 80 supports developments where access via walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised and is accessible for all. Policy 81 states that developments will only be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable transport impact.
- 8.10 Para. 115 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 8.11 The Local Highways Authority have assessed the application and no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal. Given the siting and location no conditions have been recommended in this instance.
- 8.12 Given the minimal increase in depth of the proposed render it is not considered to alter the existing parking arrangements to the dwellings.
- 8.13 The proposal accords with the objectives of policy 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.
- 8.14 Amenity**
- 8.15 Policy 35, 50, 52, 53 and 58 seek to preserve the amenity of neighbouring and / or future occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance,

overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing and through providing high quality internal and external spaces.

8.16 Neighbouring Properties

8.17 The development would result in the external elevations of the houses moving marginally closer to the boundaries but it is considered that this would not affect residential amenity. A site visit has been undertaken.

8.18 Given the adjacent context, location, size, and design of the proposal it is unlikely to give rise to any significant amenity impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight, enclosure or other environmental impacts. The proposal is compliant with Policies 30, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

8.19 Construction and Environmental Impacts

8.20 Policy 35 guards against developments leading to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise and disturbance. Noise and disturbance during construction would be minimized through conditions restricting construction hours and collection hours to protect the amenity of future occupiers. These conditions are considered reasonable and necessary to impose.

8.21 The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposal and they have not raised any objections subject to conditions relating to construction hours which are considered reasonable to protect the amenities of nearby residential properties. The proposal adequately respects the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 35.

**8.22 Biodiversity**

8.23 The Environment Act 2021 and the Councils' Biodiversity SPD (2022) requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach is embedded within the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and policy 70. Policy 70 states that proposals that harm or disturb populations and habitats should secure achievable mitigation and / or compensatory measures resulting in either no net loss or a net gain of priority habitat and local populations of priority species.

8.24 It is noted, from third party comments that have been received, that several of the properties have bird boxes. Confirmation has been received from the agent that any proposed works would be carried out outside of the nesting season and that the bird boxes will be reinstated.

8.25 To ensure that the bird boxes are reinstated, and a biodiversity increase is achieved, it is considered reasonable to add a condition regarding bird

boxes to any permission granted. Taking the above into account, the proposal is compliant Policy 70 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).

8.26 Summary

8.27 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants and is considered that it is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 35 and 58.

**8.28 Third Party Representations**

8.29 The third party comments have all been assessed within the above sections of the Officer Report.

**8.30 Planning Balance**

8.31 Planning decisions 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).

8.32 Whilst the proposed development would alter the existing streetscene with a change of materials the overall benefit of the scheme, with significant improvements to the insulation of the properties, is considered in this instance to outweigh the harm.

8.33 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

**9.0 Recommendation**

9.1 **Approve** subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

**10.0 Planning Conditions**

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

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 No development shall take place above ground level until details of the render to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55 and 58 (for extensions)).

4 The materials to be used in the windows and doors, hereby permitted, shall follow the specifications in accordance with the details specified within the Window and Door Replacement Specification Document unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55 and 58.

5 No development above ground level shall commence until a scheme for the provision of nest boxes has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of box numbers, their specification and location.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 70)