



26/01081/FUL – 9, 11, 15 and 17 Ashfield Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward: East Chesterton

Proposal: Addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Ellie O'Donnell

Reason presented to committee: Cambridge City Council is the applicant

Key issues:

1. Principle of development
2. Design, layout, scale and landscaping
3. Amenity

Recommendation: Approve, subject to conditions

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Permission is sought for the application of insulated external render to the elevations of Nos. 9, 11, 15 and 17 Ashfield Road, Cambridge. The render would be painted a pale grey colour ('Ash Grey' by Johnstone's).
- 1.2 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approves the application, subject to conditions.

Consultee	Response	Paragraph reference
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.1
Environmental Health	No objection	6.2

Table 1: Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site lies within a highly residential part of East Chesterton, Cambridge. The site comprises four maisonette flats (Nos. 9, 11, 15 and 17) on the south-western side of Ashfield Road. The street is characterised by two-storey, semi-detached dwellings with brickwork and rendered elevations, concrete rooftiles, and white uPVC window and door fittings.
- 2.2 The site is not in, or adjacent to, a conservation area and there are no listed buildings, Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs), or non-designated heritage assets within the vicinity. There are two high-amenity value trees in the front garden, although these are not protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The site is in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is not susceptible to surface and groundwater flooding.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 Addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building.

4. Relevant site history

No relevant history.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

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

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation – December 2025 to January 2026)

5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the latest stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District. The draft JLP was published for formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.

5.2.2 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF, but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

5.2.3 Consultation on a Regulation 19 draft plan is anticipated in Summer/Autumn 2026.

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use

Policy 30: Energy-efficiency improvements in existing dwellings

Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration

Policy 55: Responding to context

Policy 56: Creating successful places

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings

Policy 81: Highway Safety

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Yes

Site notice – No

Press notice – No

County Highways Development Management – No objection

6.1 The proposal would have no impact on the safety of highway users.

Environmental Health – No objection

6.2 Subject to a condition for construction activities to take place only between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 on Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturday. No construction or demolition works shall take place on any Sunday or Bank Holiday.

7. Third party representations

No representations were received.

8. Assessment

8.1 From the consultation responses received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:

- Principle
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Amenity

9. Principle of development

9.1 Policy 1 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) sets out that the Local Planning Authority will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development proposals will be supported unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole,

or b) Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

- 9.2 Policy 30 states that extensions and/or alterations to existing dwellings should be accompanied by cost-effective improvements to their energy efficiency. This may include the installation of cavity wall or loft insulation, the replacement of F- and G-rated boilers, heating controls upgrades, and the application of draught stripping on openings.
- 9.3 The proposal sees the application of insulated external render to the front, side and rear elevations to Nos. 9–17 (odd) Ashfield Road. The works would improve the energy efficiency of the buildings, as per NPPF para. 11 and Policies 1 and 30 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).

10. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 10.1 Policies 55, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) 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.
- 10.2 The application seeks permission to apply external insulated render to the front, side, and rear elevations to Nos. 9–17 (odd) Ashfield Road. The render would be painted a pale grey shade (Johnstone's Ash Grey) and would complement the light-coloured render at No. 29 Ashfield Road and Nos. 61–65 and 76–78 Eastfield, among others along the street. The proposed paint would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the street and shall be secured by condition.
- 10.3 The proposal complies with Policies 55, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) subject to the imposition of the above condition.

11. Amenity

- 11.1 Policy 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) permits extensions and/or alterations to existing buildings provided they do not unacceptably overlook, overshadow or visually dominate neighbouring properties.
- 11.2 No objections have been received from neighbouring occupiers and a site visit has been undertaken. 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.
- 11.3 The application site is within a highly residential area. In order to protect neighbouring amenity during the construction period, a condition will be attached to ensure that no demolition or construction works relating to the development are carried out on any Sunday or Bank Holiday, nor before 08:00 hours or after 18:00 hours on any days, nor on any Saturday before 08:00 hours or after 13:00 hours.

12. Planning balance

- 1.12 As part of the proposal the applicants set out that External Wall Insulation (EWI) render aims to improve the insulative properties of the building wall envelope and that the proposal would help mitigate existing damp issues. In so doing, the proposed retrofit would reduce the carbon emissions of the dwellings, by reducing the demand for heating. It would also create a better regulated internal temperature and, in turn, work to reduce energy bills to residents. This work is in line with the Council's vision of lowering carbon emissions and aids its target of meeting net zero targets in the future. The proposal is compliant with policies 1, 28 and 30 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 which support improved sustainable development standards and energy efficiency in existing dwellings.
- 1.13 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours. The proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 58 and 59 of the Local Plan 2018. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies 35 of the Local Plan 2018, subject to condition 4 recommended below.
- 1.14 In applying the planning balance, any perceived visual discord associated with the application of the render system is significantly outweighed by the sustainability benefits arising from the proposal.

13. Recommendation

- 13.1 **Approve**, subject to conditions.

14. 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. The external surfaces to the development hereby approved shall be finished in Johnstone's Ash Grey #EDF2EE painted render 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, in accordance with Policy 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

4. No construction or demolition work shall be carried out and no plant or power operated machinery operated other than between the following hours: 0800 hours and 1800 hours on Monday to Friday, 0800 hours and 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties, in accordance with Policy 35 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

