



**26/01400/FUL – 30, 34, 36, 46, 50, 52, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 84, 87, 88, 89, 92, 93, 96, 100, 101, 103, 105, 106, 108, 112, 113, 115, 116, 120, 122, 124, 132, 134
Brooks Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HR**

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Romsey

Proposal: *Addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building, along with the replacement of the UPVC double glazed windows with replacement UPVC triple glazed windows*

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Pierre Labat

Reason presented to committee: Applicant is the Local Authority

Member site visit date: N/A

Key considerations: 1. Design/Visual Impact
2. Residential Amenity

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

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1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application site relates to 34 Council owned properties on Brooks Road, Cambridge.
- 1.2 The properties this application relates to are a mixture of terraced, end-of-terrace and semi-detached two storey homes.
- 1.3 This proposal consists of rendering the Council owned properties within Brooks road using an EWI propriety render system, along with triple glazing of existing UPVC windows.
- 1.4 This application is being presented to the Planning Committee due to the applicant being the Local Authority – Cambridge City Council.
- 1.5 A rendered finish would enlarge the external footprint of the building by the thickness of the product (approximately 120mm per wall rendered area). The colour chosen for the proposed render would be informed by existing rendered property within the locality. Officers consider the proposed increase in external footprint and colour-changes to be relatively minor, this would not significantly change the visual prominence of the dwellings nor alter local character.

- 1.6 Officers therefore recommend that the application be **approved**, subject to conditions as listed below.

Table 2 Consultee summary

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment / Other	Paragraph Reference
Local Highways Authority	No objection subject to operating hour condition	6.1
Environmental Health	No objection	6.2

2. Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The application site relates to 34 Council owned properties within Brooks Road, Cambridge. The road that links the significant East Cambridge traffic axis of Perne Road and Coldhams land is mainly residential, featuring various set back properties.
- 2.2 The various built forms for the locality include terraced, semi detached and end-of-terrace properties. Here the properties to be developed do not feature clear uniform design safe for their two-storey standing and relatively tight density.
- 2.3 The housing on Brooks Road includes both private and council-owned houses. The latter have been described as energy inefficient by the applicant and in need of development to meet the provisions of the Local Plan.
- 2.4 There are not notable site constraints for development within the locality. The area already features examples of rendered homes and there is no significant aesthetic value to the present housing design.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 The applicant has submitted a FUL application for the addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building, along with the replacement of the UPVC double glazed

4. Relevant site history

- 4.1 None relevant.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions (Annex A)

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

5.2.1 The Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan 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.

5.2.2 Following the Proposed Submission Local Plan was published for public consultation (under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 3 August and 25 September 2026.

5.2.3 In line with Policy DM4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The Proposed Submission Local Plan is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2026. Whilst the joint Local Plan is at an advanced stage in the plan making process, the Regulation 19 consultation is yet to be completed. Therefore, at this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

5.3 **Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 30: Energy-efficiency improvements in existing dwellings

Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration

Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust

Policy 55: Responding to context

Policy 56: Creating successful places

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings

Policy 81: Highway Safety

5.4 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – N

6.1 **Local Highways Authority**

No objection, subject to conditions (servicing/delivery hours)

6.2 **Environmental Health**

No objections

7. Third party representations

7.1 The occupier of No.95 Brooks Road raise an objection to the development on the following grounds:

- Impact on character and historical fabric (see: Design/Visual Impact)
- Obstructive impact on passageways (see: Residential Amenity)

8. Member Representations

- 8.1 No member representations have been received

9. Local Groups / Petition

- 9.1 No Local Groups/Petitions have been received

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.

10. Assessment

- 10.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the main considerations are as follows:

- Principle
- Design/Visual Impact
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Matters

11. Principle of development

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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.

- 11.3 The proposal seeks to improve insulation via the application of external render and improvement of existing fenestration. The works would improve the energy efficiency of the buildings, as per Policies 1 and 30 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).

12. Design and Visual Impact

- 12.1 Policies 55, 56, 58 and 59 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 and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment.
- 12.2 This FUL application proposes the addition of external wall insulation to solid wall constructed parts of the buildings, with no change of use to the properties. A rendered finish which will enlarge the external footprint of the building by the thickness of the product (approximately 120mm per wall rendered area). The finished render colours proposed are Aran, Ellastone, Chime and Ash Grey (PPG Johnstones Stormshield detailed specification). The chosen colours seek to match the existing rendered homes within the locality to preserve a uniform appearance.
- 12.3 It is recognized that a large-scale rendering of the properties on Brooks Road would result in a noticeable departure in appearance for the local area. The locality does not however benefit from any notable preservation framework as it does not sit within a conservation area. One may also note the cited efforts to have the proposed render match the existing context where render has already been applied to neighbouring properties. It is argued here that rationale and benefits of improved energy efficiency for the developed homes, combined with efforts to preserve the local character, would be sufficient to find the disappearance of the original brickwork negligible here.
- 12.4 It is therefore considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable level of impact on the existing properties, street scene or surrounding areas. Therefore, it would comply with policies 55, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

13. Residential Amenity

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.

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 On the impact of the render's thickness upon the accessibility of passageways: the applicant confirmed that between properties they would prefer 60mm insulation boards with a 10mm render to maintain suitable access. "The reduced thickness insulation installed to the passageway walls allows both the council property to be insulated but also allows for the private homeowner in the future to also have this wall insulated whilst maintaining a minimum 900 mm gap within the passageway itself². This clarification grants reassurance that the proposed rendering will not negatively impact the enjoyment and use of the concerned properties
- 13.3 The Environmental Health Officer has also been consulted on the proposal and they have not raised any objections,
- 13.4 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.
- 13.5 The proposal is compliant with Policies 30, 35, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

14. Highway Matters

- 14.1 Policy 81 states that developments will only be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable transport impact and Policy TR6 of the NPPF seeks to protect the safety of the public highway.
- 14.2 The Local Highways Authority have been consulted on the proposal and they have raised no objections subject to the condition that construction or delivery vehicles servicing the sites be regulated under set hours to ensure no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway.

- 14.3 The proposal is compliant with Policies 81 Cambridge City Local Plan (2018) and Policy TR6 of the NPPF.

15. Planning Balance

- 15.1 As part of the proposal the applicants set out that External Wall Insulation (EWI) render and fenestration triple glazing aim 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.
- 15.2 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.
- 15.3 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.

16. Recommendation

- 16.1 **Approve** subject to conditions:
- the planning conditions as set out in Section 17 of this report with delegated authority to officers to carry through amendments to those conditions and informatives (including additional / revised conditions as appropriate and necessary), prior to the issuing of the planning permission.

17. 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 materials to be used in the external construction of the development, hereby permitted, shall follow the specifications in accordance with the details specified within the approved documents/application form; 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 (for extensions)).

4. No demolition, construction or delivery vehicles with a gross weight in excess of 3.5 tonnes should service the sites other than between the hours of 09.30hrs 15:30hrs, Monday to Saturday. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of Highway Safety. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 82).

Background papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- Cambridge Local Plan 2018
- Cambridge Local Development Framework SPDs