



26/02195/FUL – 3,10, 11, 12, The Grove, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 1TJ

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: East Chesterton

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

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Laura Horan

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 4 Council owned properties within The Grove, Cambridge.
- 1.2 The 4 properties this application relates to are semi-detached properties.
- 1.3 This proposal consists of rendering the Council owned properties within The Grove using an EWI propriety render system.
- 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). Officers consider the proposed increase in external footprint to be relatively minor and would not significantly change the visual prominence of the dwellings.
- 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
Environmental Health	No objection	6.1
Local Highways Authority	No objection	6.2

2. Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The application site relates to 4 Council owned properties within The Grove, Cambridge. Properties located within The Grove consists of both council owned flats, houses and private houses in a mixture of flats, semi-detached and terraced properties. It is primarily a residential street that has properties with brick external facades. There are properties in the wider area on other residential streets where the external façade has either been painted or rendered with a white or cream render/paint finish. Properties on neighbouring streets (Cam Causeway, Franks Lane etc) exemplify dwellings that have already had external wall insulation completed.
- 2.2 The properties this application relates to are semi-detached properties. The properties are two-storey, of solid masonry construction with a brick external finish. The roofs have been covered with contoured roof tiles, fenestrations are UPVC windows with double glazed units with a mixture of composite and timber doors.
- 2.3 This proposal consists of rendering four Council owned properties within The Grove using an EWI propriety render system, and the installation of replacement triple glazed windows. To externally insulate the render solid constructed wall areas of Cambridge City Council owned properties at 3, 10, 11 and 12 The Grove, Cambridge as part of its carbon reduction plans. These works are to be undertaken to the solid wall parts of the building's construction.
- 2.4 The replacement UPVC frames to include triple glazed glazing units and External Wall Insulation (EWI) render aims to improve the insulative properties of the building and wall envelope. In addition to helping to mitigate existing damp issues. Retrofitting EWI will reduce the carbon emissions of the houses, by reducing the use of heating. It will also create a better regulated internal temperature and, in turn, work to reduce energy bills to the residents.

- 2.5 A rendered finish would enlarge the external footprint of the building by the thickness of the product (approximately 120mm per wall rendered area). This render finish will be a colour chosen from the PPG Johnstone Stormshield paint chart as Ash Grey, Chime or Ellastone. Officers consider the proposed increase in external footprint to be relatively minor and would not significantly change the visual prominence of the dwellings.

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 UPVC double glazed windows with UPVC triple glazed windows.

4. Relevant site history

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)

Planning Policy Statement – Green Belt protection and intentional unauthorised development August 2015

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 next 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 endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP has – at the time of writing - proceeded to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 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 draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF, but represents an early 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.

5.3 **Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development

Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation

Policy 30: Energy-efficiency improvements in existing dwellings

Policy 32: Flood risk

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 82: Parking management

Policy 83: Aviation development

Policy 84: Telecommunications

Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – N

6.1 Environmental Health – No objection

No concerns raised regarding the proposals in terms of potential Environmental Health impacts. No objections and no relevant conditions to recommend.

6.2 Local Highways Authority – No objections

No significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal should it gain benefit of Planning Permission

7. Third party representations

7.1 None

8. Member Representations

8.1 No member representations have been received

9. Local Groups / Petition

9.1 No Local Groups/Petitions have been received

9.2 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:

- Design/Visual Impact
- Residential Amenity

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 sees the application of insulated external render and triple glazed window installation where required. 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 the solid wall constructed parts of the building, along with the replacement of UPVC double glazed windows with UPVC triple glazed windows. 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 being proposed are Ash Grey, Ellastone or Chime (PPG Johnstones Stormshield detailed specification).
- 12.3 The properties which form part of the application are four council owned dwellings set around the street. Whilst the proposed painted external render finish will alter the character of the dwellings on the street scene, given there is some existing painted render on the properties in the wider area, the addition of this proposed external render is not considered significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the dwellings and area. The replacement triple glazed window installation isn't considered to alter the appearance of the dwellings significantly. Officers therefore do

not consider this to be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwellings and area.

- 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 house moving marginally closer to the boundaries but it is considered that this would not affect residential amenity. The proposed replacement triple glazed windows would be replacing existing windows, meaning there would be no new forms of overlooking. No objections have been received from neighbouring occupiers. 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. The proposal is compliant with Policies 30, 56 and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018)
- 13.2 The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposal, and they have not raised any objections. There are no concerns regarding the proposals in terms of potential Environmental Health impacts and no relevant conditions to recommend. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy 35 of the 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 has been consulted on the proposal, and they have raised no objections. Following a review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority as part of the planning application, no

significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal should it gain benefit of Planning Permission.

- 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 triple glazed window installation 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 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.
- 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.

Summary

- 15.4 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.

16. Recommendation

16.1 Approve subject to:

- the planning conditions as set out in Section 14 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)).

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

