26/03441/FUL – 7 Ditton Fields

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Abbey

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

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Laura Horan

Member site visit date: N/A

Key issues: 1. Principle and Carbon reduction

2. Design/Visual Impact

3. Residential Amenity

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

1. Reason for Referral

1.1 This is a Council Own-Interest Application. To ensure openness, transparency and probity in the decision-making process, the application is reported to Planning Committee in accordance with the National Scheme of Delegation and the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Scheme of Delegation.

1.2 **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

AI may have been used as an administrative tool to assist in the drafting and formatting of this report. It has not been used to assess the planning merits of the application or to exercise professional planning judgement. The analysis, conclusions and recommendation are those of the case officer.

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2. Executive summary

2.1 The application property is 7 Ditton Fields, Cambridge, which is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling located within a residential setting.

2.2 The application seeks planning permission for the rendering of No.7 Ditton Fields using an EWI propriety render system.

2.3 This application is being presented to the Planning Committee due to the applicant being the Local Authority – Cambridge City Council.

2.4 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 prosed increase in external footprint to be relatively minor and would not significantly change the visual prominence of the dwelling.

2.5 The Environmental Health Officer and the Local Highways Authority have been consulted on the application and neither raise any objections to the proposed works.

2.6 No third-party representations have been received.

2.7 The proposal would result in a property that is better insulated thereby reducing its carbon footprint. Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application.

Consultee	**Response**
Environmental Health	No objection
Local Highways Authority	No objection

3. Site description and context

3.1 The application property is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling located within a residential setting, finished in red facing brick. The character of the street scene is predominantly two storey semi-detached or terraced properties, which are a mixture of Council owned and private properties with dwellings finished in red facing brick or light-coloured render.

3.2 To the north, east, south, and west of the site are residential dwellings.

3.3 There are no site constraints.

4. The proposal

4.1 Planning permission is sought for the addition of external wall insulation to solid wall constructed parts of the building.

5. Relevant site history

5.1 None relevant.

Relevant Neighbour History

5.2 25/00564/FUL - Addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building. A condition will be required for the final top coat colour to be chosen – Permitted

5.3 25/00564/CONDA - Submission of details required by condition 3(External Wall Render) of planning permission 25/00564/F – Discharge Condition in Full.

6. Policy

6.1 National policy

- National Planning Policy Framework 2026
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guide 2021
- Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045

6.1.1 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. 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. At this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

NPPF 2026

6.1.2 The updated NPPF (2026) is a material consideration which must be considered where it is relevant to a planning application. It is intended to create a clearer, more rules-based planning system, accelerate housing delivery, support economic growth, and make planning decisions more predictable. The NPPF introduces a suite of national Development Management decision making policies. This includes applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in Policies S3 and S4, which require approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the decision-making policies in the Framework.

6.1.3 For the purposes of decision making, Annex A of the NPPF states that Development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in the Framework should be given very limited weight.

6.1.4 A review of the adopted Local Plan policies has been undertaken in the context of the updated NPPF. This has found that most policies in both adopted plans remain broadly consistent with national policy and can be given weight until replaced by policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

6.2 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policies 28 & 29: Renewable and low carbon energy
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

6.3 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

6.4 Other guidance

- None relevant

7. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – N

Environmental Health Officer - No Objection

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

Local Highway Authority - No Objection

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

8. Third party representations

8.1 No third-party representations have been received.

9. Member Representations

9.1 No member representations have been received.

10. Local Groups / Petition

10.1 No Local Groups / Petitions have been received.

10.2 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.

11. Assessment

Decision Making Principles

11.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF sets out the Government's policies for plan making and for making decisions on development proposals. It is a material consideration of considerable importance. In making decisions, the NPPF should be read alongside policies in the development plan. It advises that proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.

12. Principle of Development

12.1 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.

12.2 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.

12.3 The proposal sees the application of insulated external render to the solid wall parts of the building's construction. The works would improve the energy efficiency of the dwelling, reduce heating requirements and help with lowering carbon emissions. The proposal complies with Policies 1 and 30 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).

13. Design and Visual Impact

13.1 This FUL application proposes the addition of external wall insulation to the solid wall constructed parts of the building. 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 colour being proposed is Soft Rose.

13.2 Ditton Fields comprises an outer ring estate road connecting to Newmarket Road on each end with multiple internal estate roads linked with one another. 7 Ditton Fields is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling, finished in red facing brick. Properties along Ditton Fields are two storey semi-detached or terraced style dwellings with red facing brick. Some properties within the locale have already benefitted from insulated render. In addition, an application was permitted under Ref. 25/00564/FUL to render an additional 87 properties along Ditton Fields in a 'Soft Rose' colour, including the attached neighbouring property (No.5 Ditton Fields). As such, it is not considered an additional property being rendered would significantly alter the character and appearance of the street scene.

13.3 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 and is consistent with NPPF, policies L2, DP3, and N3 which promote the efficient use of land, high-quality and context-responsive design and the creation of attractive, healthy and sustainable places.

14. Amenity and Highways

14.1 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.

14.2 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.

14.3 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 accords with policies 35, 56, and 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and is consistent with NPPF Policies DP3 and P2.

14.4 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. Highway Safety and Transport Impacts

14.5 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.

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

15. Planning Balance

Decision-Making Framework

15.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF 2026 is a material consideration of considerable importance and should be read alongside the Development Plan.

15.2 The proposal has been assessed against the adopted Development Plan, relevant supplementary planning documents, consultee responses, representations received and all other material considerations. Officers have also assessed the proposal against the relevant national decision-

making policies contained within the NPPF 2026, including Policies DP3, TR6, and CC2 where relevant to the development proposed.

Benefits of the Proposal

15.3 The proposal would provide the following benefits which attract positive weight in the planning balance:

- Climate resilience improvement, lowering of carbon footprint.

15.4 This benefit attracts substantial weight in favour of the proposal.

Harm and Areas of Policy Conflict

15.5 No harm is found to arise from the proposal.

Overall Planning Balance

15.6 Having considered the Development Plan as a whole, the relevant provisions of the NPPF 2026, all consultation responses and other material considerations, officers conclude that the proposal accords with the Development Plan and is broadly consistent with the relevant national decision-making policies of the NPPF.

15.7 Officers recommend that planning permission should be **GRANTED**.

Recommendation

15.8 That the Committee resolves to **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to**:**

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

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 City Local Plan 2018