



Cambridge City Council Planning

Date: Wednesday, 7 October 2026

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ [access the building via Peashill entrance]

Contact: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel:01223 457000

Please note, the link on the webpage to the original report does not work.

The officer's report is included in the report pack on P133.

This link replaces the link to the original officer's report. The report remains unchanged.

6 26/02109/FUL Christs College Library

(Pages 3 - 118)

Planning Members: Porrer (Chair), Smart (Vice-Chair), Clough, Dryden, Fisher, Griffin, Illingworth and Todd-Jones

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26/02109/FUL – Christs College Library, St Andrews Street, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward: Market

Proposal: Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc, provision in the south east range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.

Applicant: Lord Simon McDonald

Presenting officer: Dominic Bush

Reason presented to committee: Officer referral: the application raises complex planning considerations relating to significant heritage assets.

Member site visit date: 5th October 2026

Key issues:

1. Character and Appearance
2. Heritage Impact, and grounds of challenge relating to judicially reviewed application 25/02161/FUL.
3. Residential / Public Amenity
4. Highway Safety

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

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1. Executive summary

Judicial review

- 1.1 The application follows an identical application that was taken to planning committee on the 29th October 2025 and subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 7th November 2025. Following the issuing of the decision, a judicial review was applied for by Christs Lane Action Group (CLAG), challenging the decision on four grounds.

- 1.2 As set out in an Order dated 9th March 2026, Mr Justice Kimblin granted permission for the case to be heard on all four grounds applied for by CLAG, stating that the issues raised were strongly arguable and merited consideration at a full hearing. The case was set down for a one-day substantive hearing in the Planning Court.

Following the Order, the Council, along with Christ's College (the Interested Party), invited the Court to agree to a draft consent order, agreeing to quash the decision on all four grounds and that this process be dealt with quickly, in order that the application could be re-determined in good time. The Claimant (CLAG) has written to the Court, stating that they do not agree to signing the consent order and that the grounds should be considered at a full hearing before the Court. The draft consent order has therefore not been agreed and, despite the Council asking the Courts to unilaterally determine that the planning permission be quashed, the Court has not done so. CLAG still wish to proceed to a full one-day hearing. This is currently scheduled for mid-October 2026. The planning permission still stands until such time as the Court determines otherwise.

- 1.3 In light of the delay in the judicial review proceedings, the applicant has taken the decision to re-submit the application (in identical form) to the Local Planning Authority, so that this can be determined. This is the application which is before members today.

- 1.4 The grounds for the Judicial Review relate to the previous officer report and the decision making process relating to that previous application. The application before members is identical to that previously approved by the Planning Committee but subject to a new officer report and fresh decision making process. The application is not, however, accompanied by a new Listed Building Consent application, as application 25/02162/LBC, which accompanied the previous application, was not subject to judicial review. The Listed Building Consent, which sits alongside the current planning permission, and has not been the subject of legal challenge, is a material consideration.

- 1.5 The grounds of challenge from CLAG's judicial review claim, and the Order of Mr. Justice Kimblin granting permission for it to proceed, are appended to this decision (Appendix 1). The issues raised by those grounds have been addressed in this Officer Report.

- 1.6 The grounds of challenge and how they have been addressed can be summarised as follows:

- 1.7 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 1.8 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.
- 1.9 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 1.10 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.

- 1.11 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would “help to secure the listed building’s optimum viable use.” The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 1.12 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 1.13 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative modes of development.** On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.
- 1.14 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college’s needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.
- 1.15 Officers consider that the legal grounds of challenge pertaining to application 25/02161/FUL have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interested Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely,

although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by the Court.

Application

- 1.16 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing library and its replacement with a contemporary library including social and study space. Further internal and external alterations are proposed including a replacement bridge to the Bodley Library and a temporary kitchen dining facility during the duration of the works.
- 1.17 The application site falls within the Historic Core conservation area with the Christ's College (College) buildings surrounding the First Court being Grade I listed and the entire college grounds being a designated Historic Park and Garden. The application site is located within the city centre of Cambridge and immediately abuts the public highway of Christ's Lane to the southeast with the modern Christ's Lane redevelopment including a mix of retail and residential units on the opposite side of this footpath.
- 1.18 The main part of this scheme is the demolition and replacement of the existing 1970's library building that serves the College. This building is deemed unfit for purpose, with insufficient study spaces, poor accessibility and lack of sufficient insulation. This has led to the College wanting to improve its library facilities, including access provisions for students and visitors, and is why this planning application is coming forward.
- 1.19 This scheme follows two previous consents on the site for the replacement of the existing 1970's library, dating back to 2011 and 2016. Whilst both have since expired and differ from the current proposal, this application seeks to re-establish the principle of a replacement library in this location to meet the current day needs of the students. These historic consents are discussed in more detail in the officer assessment.
- 1.20 The proposal has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with officers and relevant consultees, both internally and externally to evolve the design to its current proposed form. This pre-application process included a Design Review Panel (DRP) on the 13th February 2025 in which positive feedback supporting the proposal was received (Appendix 3)
- 1.21 The proposal (through the previous 2025 application) has also been subject to a member briefing on the 19th May 2025 and Development Control Forum meeting (DCF) on the 11th September 2025 of which

minutes are attached (Appendix 4). Following this DCF meeting, further information was provided regarding the public benefits of the scheme and the impact on Christ's Lane in terms of loss of light. A further DCF request on the application before members today was made by CLAG on 1 July 2026. The request was initially declined because the College were unwilling to participate but that position changed and a further DCF was convened on 29 July 2026. A minutes of that DCF are at Appendix 11.

- 1.22 What is before members is a well thought out new library scheme that follows previous permissions and has, through an extensive pre-application process evolved into a proposal which is credible and that would successfully assimilate into the street scene, its heritage setting and respect neighbouring amenity.
- 1.23 With regards to the principle of development, the site is located within the designated city centre (Policy 10 of the Local Plan) and within an area of protected open space (policy 67). Whilst within an area with a number of highly significant heritage assets, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the criteria of Policy 10 and would meet a demonstrable educational need to justify its setting within an area of protected open space.
- 1.24 In terms of design, the application demonstrates that the proposed development can be achieved in a way that responds to the context of the site and respects its significant heritage constraints. Officers consider that the proposals provide a high-quality design that includes enhancements and benefits to the public realm along Christ's Lane. This includes the removal of the existing 1970's library building which is, itself, considered to be a negative building within the conservation area.
- 1.25 As considered by Historic England and the Council's Conservation officer the proposed replacement library would result in harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming a part of the College site. In the view of officers there is considered to be an overall harmful impact in heritage terms. This harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 1.26 Separately, the proposed development is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area. Despite the undeniable increase in scale and visibility, the improved architectural quality, especially along Christ's Lane is deemed an enhancement, including within important public views.

- 1.27 Through the development, the sustainability credentials of the College site, including the library facilities, are to be significantly improved through the integration of renewable sources of energy in combination with fabric improvements afforded by the replacement library building.
- 1.28 The accessibility of the entire College would also significantly improve as a result of the proposed works. Both within the new library building, as well as the existing kitchen dining facilities, level access is to be provided where possible including the entirety of Bath Court.
- 1.29 Included within this application, following the Development Control Forum, the College have proposed increased public access, including to the proposed library building itself and Bath Court. Access is proposed to the library outside of term times with booking required through the College website. Details of this are recommended to be secured by condition.
- 1.30 The proposed development would meet policy requirements in respect of, biodiversity, trees, drainage and flood risk, contamination and other environmental issues, public art, and all other matters.
- 1.31 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Anglian Water	No comment received	6.1
Conservation Officer	No objection - Harm identified	6.3
Archaeology	No objection	6.10
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.12
County Transport Assessment Team	No comment received	6.13

Designing out crime Officer	No objection	6.15
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.16
Environment Agency	No comment	6.18
Environmental Health	No objection	6.19
Gardens Trust	No comment	6.27
Historic England	No objection – Harm identified	6.31
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.48
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection	6.49
Natural England	No comment received	6.52
Public Art Officer	No objection	6.53
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No comment received	6.54
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.55
S106 Officer	No comment received	6.58
Tree Officer	No objection	6.59
Urban Design Officer	No objection	6.62
Victorian Society	Objects	6.65
Waste Officer	No comment	6.67
Third Party Representations (32)	62 in support and 57 in objection	7.1

Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (2)	Representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group and CPPF	8.1
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Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site is located within the City Centre boundary and comprises the existing Christ's College Library constructed in 1976 with a connection into the historic Bodley Library that faces onto St Andrews Street. The existing library building to be demolished is a two storey structure whose SE external elevation abuts the public right of way of Christ's Lane with the NW side opening out onto Bath Court, an enclosed external courtyard within the College. This application also includes other elements associated with the delivery of essential services the College provides. This includes the kitchen and upper dining hall where alterations are proposed to improve the effectiveness and accessibility for students and staff. There is an additional area of the site within the second court, to the northeast of the Library which is the location of the proposed temporary kitchen dining facilities to be provided during the proposed works.
- 2.2 The existing library building sought to be demolished, as well as those buildings to be retained and altered, form part of the Grade I listed College buildings with the entire site located within the Historic Core conservation area. The College site is also designated as a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden.
- 2.3 Immediately to the SE of the existing library building is the public right of way of Christ's Lane, a portion of which is adopted public highway. Christ's Lane is a heavily used thoroughfare for pedestrians within the city of Cambridge linking the shopping area of the City Centre including the Grand Arcade with Christ's Pieces, Drummer Street bus station and the Grafton Centre shopping area. Christ's Lane is approximately 8 metres in width with retail units on the ground floor on the opposite side, with residential units above at second and third floor, the north and southwestern façades of this building are identified as primary shopping frontages within the Local Plan. Christ's Lane is designated as a Primary Shopping Area, with the application site immediately adjacent, but not within, this area.

- 2.4 Access to the site is primarily through the entrance to the College along St Andrews Street although there is an access directly onto Christ's Lane between the Bodley Library and existing 1970's Library beneath the bridge connection.
- 2.5 The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, the hardstanding area within Bath Court is at low (1 in 1000) risk of surface water flooding with areas of Second Court at up to a high (1 in 30) risk of surface water flooding. There are two TPO protected trees within the First Court of the college with other trees within Bath Court that are not TPO protected but are protected by virtue of being within the Conservation Area. Additionally, the site lies within an area of protected open space, an Air Quality Monitoring Area and a Smoke Control Area.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc provision in the southeast range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.
- 3.2 To facilitate the provision of a new library to meet the needs of students, the existing library building would be demolished. This existing library dating to the 1970's fails to provide the required number of study spaces for the student body, in addition to inadequate accessibility and sustainability credentials. It was therefore determined that in order to meet the current needs of the College and its students, its demolition and replacement was required.
- 3.3 The new replacement library provides a study hub, private and group study space, a main reading room, staff spaces, outdoor terrace and sky gallery over four floors and 1050m² of gross internal area. Whilst the Christ's Lane façade provides a level of privacy to the public realm, the Bath Court façade opens out onto Bath Court itself with timber framing and glazing giving a lighter weight appearance.
- 3.4 Whilst inherently more private, the Christ's Lane elevation provides a backbone to the building with a thick, inhabited wall broken up periodically with window openings and ventilation all with the proposed chimneys extending above. The chimneys provide a rhythm to the façade whilst also

noting the historic examples of college chimneys within the city. Set back from the façade, and not prominent in its scale or siting, a replacement of the existing bridge between the Bodley library and the new proposed library building is sought to reflect the improved architectural quality of this part of the college.

- 3.5 In addition to the replacement library itself, significant landscape improvements are proposed to the open space within Bath Court. This includes levelling this area of the site and providing planting that would significantly improve the quality of this space.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
11/0516/LBC	Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. The demolition of the existing Grillet library (809 sq m) to grade I listed building.	Approved (05.07.2013)
11/0495/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (05.07.2013)
16/0405/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (07.09.2016)
16/0406/LBC	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and	Approved (07.09.2016)

	external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m)	
25/00673/LBC	Internal alterations to Lower Bodley Library Comprising repositioning of free-standing bookcases and installation of rolling rack shelving.	Approved (16.04.2025)
25/02161/FUL	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025) Subject to ongoing judicial review
25/02162/LBC	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025)
25/02161/CONDA	Submission of details required by condition 9 (Tree Protection Methodology) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL.	Discharged in full (17.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDB	Submission of details required by condition 11(Temporary Kitchen and Dining Facility) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (18.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDC	Submission of details required by condition 5 (Listed Building	Discharged in full (04.03.2026)

	Protection) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	
25/02161/CONDD	Submission of details required by condition 10 (salvage and reuse of existing materials) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (12.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDE	Submission of details required by condition 8 (surface water run-off) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDF	Submission of details required by condition 6 (airborne dust) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDG	Submission of details required by condition 7 (demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
25/02161/CONDH	Submission of details required by condition 3 (demolition and construction environmental management plan) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
26/0818/TTCA	5 Day Notice for a removal of a dead Acacia tree within second court of the college.	No Objection
Other relevant sites		
C/04/0632/FP	Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1 (retail) and A3 (food and drinks); 15 residential apartments; the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane; associated highway works, servicing; and landscaping.	Approved (30.09.2025)
25/02660/S73	S73 to vary condition 5 of ref: 19/1674/S73 (S73 to vary condition 17 of planning permission ref C/04/0632 (Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1(retail) and A3 (Food and drink), 15 residential apartments, the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane, associated highway works, servicing, and landscaping) to extend the opening hours of Units 5 and 6) to vary condition 5 to read all servicing, delivery and collections shall be undertaken between the hours of	Approved (06.02.2026)

	0700 to 2300 Monday to Saturday and 10 to 2100 on Sundays, Bank and other public holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.	
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Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 Both 11/0495/FUL and 11/0516/LBC were granted in 2013 for an alternative scheme for the redevelopment of the current library within the site. Both of these permissions lapsed in 2016, three years after the granting of the permission. Subsequently, two identical applications were submitted and approved in 2016. In addition to a replacement library, these previous applications included a glazed atrium covering Bath Court and a large basement area. Whilst all permissions on site for the replacement of the library have since lapsed, the planning history is a material consideration for members and the schemes are discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 4.2 As is set out within the above table, a total of 8 discharge of conditions applications were submitted to the council following the granting of planning permission 25/02161/FUL. These applications approved details of a total of 8 conditions. However, officers consider that these would fall away as approved conditions should the host permission (on which they are based) be quashed.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2026

- 5.2.1 A new version of the NPPF has been issued on 17 August 2026. In regards to this application, the changes to the heritage section (Chapter 20) are the most relevant. As relevant, paragraphs 207-211 which cover 'Proposals affecting heritage assets' and paragraphs 212-221 which cover 'Considering potential impacts' have been replaced with policies HE4 (Securing the conservation of heritage assets), HE5 (Assessing effects on heritage assets), HE6 (Proposals affecting designated heritage assets), and HE9 (Conservation areas) of the new NPPF.
- 5.2.2 Policy S3(1) of the updated NPPF sets out that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within settlements, Policy S4 should be applied
- 5.2.3 S4 (1) states "Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework."
- 5.2.4 S4 (2) adds that "In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:
- (c) Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances
- 5.2.5 Policy HE5(2) states 'assessments of the potential effects of the development proposals on the significance of the heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:
- a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or
 - b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or
 - c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would

occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or

- d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

- 5.2.6 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF sets out that “when considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)” The proposed development, will have an impact on the setting of the highly significant Bodley Library which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ’s College site.
- 5.2.7 HE6(3) then adds “Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.”
- 5.2.8 Policy HE6(4) states that ‘Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.’ HE6(5) states that where a development would cause substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss.
- 5.2.9 The 2026 NPPF also provides advice specifically related to Conservation Areas within HE9.

- 5.2.10 The main alteration regarding heritage assets within the new NPPF is the replacement of the phrase 'less than substantial harm' with 'harm'. However, there is still a differentiation between 'harm' and 'substantial harm'.
- 5.2.11 All consultees and third parties, including both the Council's Conservation Officer, Historic England and CLAG were invited to update their comments in light of the updated NPPF.
- 5.2.12 In addition to heritage, the NPPF's policies on highway safety are also important for this application. Policy TR3(1)(c) highlights that any significant adverse impact on highway safety should be mitigated to an acceptable degree similar to paragraph 115(d) in the previous version. In the 2024 NPPF paragraph 116 stated that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety...' Policy TR6(4) replaces para 116 and whilst worded differently echoes 116 but makes it clearer that development should be refused if it would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed etc.
- 5.2.13 Policy DP3 discusses the key principles of well-designed spaces. DP3(1) states that proposals should respond to their context, including but not limited to the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. And that this should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.
- 5.2.14 Policy DP3(2)(f) now specifically refers to public spaces which is relevant to this application. This policy expands upon inclusivity more than its predecessor paragraph 135(f).
- 5.2.15 L3(1) states that development proposals should "make efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other development, local market conditions, the availability of infrastructure (including that supporting sustainable transport modes) and its scope for improvement, a site's connectivity and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

5.3 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission)

- 5.3.1 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.
- 5.3.2 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.
- 5.3.3 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 joint Local Plan is at a relatively early stage in the plan making process since. The Proposed Submission Local Plan is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.
- 5.3.4 At this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded very limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.3.5 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State is anticipated by the end of December 2026.

5.4 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 6: Hierarchy of centres and retail capacity
Policy 10: The City Centre
Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
Policy 32: Flood risk
Policy 34: Light pollution control
Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
Policy 43: University development
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 57: Designing new buildings
Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings
Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
Policy 60: Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge
Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
Policy 62: Local heritage assets

Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change
Policy 67: Protection of open space
Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
Policy 71: Trees
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management
Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

5.5 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

The Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD – Adopted April 2026

5.6 Other guidance

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Buildings of Local Interest (2005)

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide (2026)

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

5.7 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y (Major development, impacting a conservation area and listed buildings)

Officers wish to clarify that, at CLAG's request, the deadline for receipt of comments from interested parties was extended such that all neighbours and consultees have had at least 21 days to respond to the proposal. Additional time was also given to all notified neighbours and consultees following the updated NPPF to allow comments to be updated reflecting the change in national policy, extending the deadline for comments until the 3rd September.

Whilst all consultees were re-consulted on the 18th August to allow them time to update comments in light of the NPPF update, unless stated below, their updated comments are not changed by the NPPF update.

Anglian Water – No Objection

- 6.1 The application site lies within the catchment of the Cambridge water recycling centre (WRC) which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate additional flows generated by the proposed development.
- 6.2 The proposed development does not, however, propose or initiate an increase in the number of students, researchers or academic staff located within the site nor does it constitute a change in function.
- 6.3 As such we raise no objection to the proposed development as there would be no increase in flows and therefore no additional risk to the WRC. It is recommended that the provided floor risk and drainage strategy report is listed as an approved plan in the case of approval.

Conservation Officer- No Objection

- 6.4 The replacement of the 1974 library has previously been approved and continues to be supported in principle. The building makes a generally negative contribution to the significance of the relevant heritage assets. The proposal is smaller overall than the earlier approved schemes (11/0495/FUL & 16/0405/FUL), omitting the basement and Bath Court roof and thereby avoiding these harmful impacts.
- 6.5 The proposed library is overall considered a high-quality building that would improve the current arrangement and provide numerous

advantages in terms of landscaping, accessibility and sustainability. The new building would be substantial in relation to the size of the plot, with a greater presence than the existing library both within and outside the college.

- 6.6 The four-storey stair tower is however large in relation to the adjacent Bodley Library which is of two storeys with a domestic scale. The stair's impact has been partly mitigated by a setback from Christ's Lane and through the lightness of its design and materiality. There would be an enhanced relationship between the new library and Bodley Library through the increase in space and an improved link between the buildings. However, on balance it is considered the mitigations have not fully overcome the impact of the relative scale and proximity of the stair tower, and this part of the scheme remains harmful to the listed building's setting.
- 6.7 When considered in relation to the existing poor-quality building, the proposed library would be an enhancement to the conservation area when experienced from within or outside the college. Changes to the levels and landscaping in Bath Court, which would largely affect modern features and fabric, and would provide enhancements to the space are not of concern subject to any archaeological considerations. The ramp to second court would cause minimal harm and is supported subject to further details.
- 6.8 The proposed building would have a minimal visual presence from Second Court, within the RPG, but the impact to its significance is considered neutral.
- 6.9 The proposal includes heritage benefits, namely:
- An enhancement to the setting of the grade I listed building when experienced from Bath Court or Christ's Lane due to the increased space between the Bodley Library and proposed library at the lower levels;
 - Wider enhancements to the appearance of Bath Court through the removal of redundant plant and fire escape, improved landscaping and the reopening of a blocked historic doorway to First Court;
 - An enhancement to the Central Conservation Area through the introduction of an architecturally superior building;
 - Sustaining the ongoing use and conservation of the grade I listed building by providing improved, accessible library facilities.

6.10 When considering the above heritage impacts with reference to NPPF paras 208, 212 and 213, the heritage benefits are not considered to fully outweigh the heritage harm. On balance, the harm is considered to be less than substantial at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF para. 215 is engaged.

6.11 Conditions are recommended regarding:

- Details of new walls
- Joinery details
- Rainwater goods
- External material details
- Precise works
- Hard and soft landscaping

Comment following NPPF update

6.12 Updated comments received on the 26 August 2026 reflect the changes within the updated NPPF. The overall position remains, that the development would result in harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings.

6.13 Considering the heritage effects with reference to NPPF policies HE4 (1, 2), HE5 (1-4), HE6 (1-3) and HE9, the positive effects continue to be considered to not fully outweigh the harm identified.

6.14 On balance, the harm is considered to be at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF policy HE6 (4) is engaged.

County Archaeology- No Objection

6.15 Due to the archaeological potential of the site, a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area.

6.16 A condition is therefore recommended regarding a programme of archaeological works/ written scheme of investigation.

6.17 Updated comments received confirm that the initial comments received still align with the standards set out in the NPPF 2026.

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

- 6.18 Following a review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority, the effect of the proposed development upon the Public Highway should be mitigated subject to a condition requiring the submission of a Traffic Management Plan.

County Transport Assessment Team- No comment received

- 6.19 Whilst the County Council Transport Assessment Team have not provided comments on this application, they did provide comments on the previous application (25/02161/FUL).
- 6.20 Their position on the previous application was of no objection due to the fact that the proposal was not considered to result in any increase in trip generation.

Designing Out Crime Officer- No Objection

- 6.21 Despite the context of the site being considered an area of high risk to the vulnerability to crime, it is considered that there is no objection to the proposal subject to a condition regarding secured by design principles.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.22 The application site is located within the urban context of the centre of Cambridge, comprising predominantly buildings or developed/ sealed surfaces. The buildings themselves are assessed as having negligible suitability of bat roosting due to their condition.
- 6.23 The proposal includes ecological enhancement measures which are recommended to be secured by condition along with a further condition to secure mitigation as set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment.

Environment Agency- No Comment

- 6.24 The Environment Agency consider the application is not appropriate for their comment.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.25 The application ref. 25/02161/FUL development was previously reviewed and supported by EQG e.g. in summary no objection subject to the

imposition of recommended conditions and informatives as per our EQG Planning Consultation Memo - dated the 23-07-2025

6.26 As no major / substantive changes or amendments are being proposed as part of this application, we maintain our support for the proposed development e.g. no objection and our previous comments etc remain relevant / valid.

6.27 It is noted that in response to certain Environmental Health / Planning Officer related conditions imposed on planning permission reference 25/02161/FUL, this application includes certain 25/02161/FUL Discharge of Condition documents that have already been relating to the following conditions:

- *Condition 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan)*
- *Condition 6 (Airborne Dust)*
- *Condition 7 (Demolition and construction noise and vibration)*

6.28 The contaminated land risk assessment referred to within comments and submitted with the previous application (25/02161/FUL) does not appear to have been provided as part of this current application. For the avoidance of doubt/ completeness it is recommended that the applicant submits this contaminated land report as part of this application.

6.29 Detailed assessment of environmental health ground has been provided in comments from the environmental health officer on the previous application (25/02161/FUL) as follows;

Environmental Quality

6.30 The Impact of the construction/ demolition phase along with plant noise from the operation of the site, ventilation of kitchen odours and artificial lighting are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions regarding:

- Construction/ demolition hours
- Demolition / construction collections / deliveries
- Plant Noise Impact Assessment
- Artificial Lighting Impact Assessment
- Hours of Deliveries/ collections (during use)
- DCEMP compliance
- Dust compliance
- Construction/demolition noise/vibration & piling compliance

Contaminated Land

- 6.31 The recommendation set out in the provided risk assessment is wholly appropriate for the proposed development and can be secured with the imposition of conditions regarding:
- Materials Management Plan
 - Unexpected Contamination

Air Quality

- 6.32 It is agreed that there will be a beneficial rather than negative impact on air quality and odour. As a result, Local Plan Policy 36 will be complied with subject to an odour compliance condition.

Updated comments

- 6.33 Further comments have been received from the Council's Environmental Health Officer clarifying an identified typographical error relating to the removal of ground to mitigate contaminated land impacts.
- 6.34 Further comments also request a change in trigger of the Material Management Plan condition to **"Prior to the placement of ground-forming materials"**

Gardens Trust - No Objection

- 6.35 It should be noted that the Garden's Trust are proposed to be removed as a statutory consultee under Government Reforms announced on the 17th August. However, given they remain a statutory consultee until secondary legislation is passed, their comments are considered as such.
- 6.36 The development is not situated in, or visible from, the main historic registered gardens of the college, although it is within the registered area that covers the entire College site. Bath Court itself is of low value to the Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and the College as a whole.
- 6.37 The proposed development would give the area of Bath Court a 'walled garden' feel which would be an improvement on its current appearance and use. Although the proposed upper floors would overhang the Court, given the Court's low value as part of the RPG, this would not cause serious harm to the RPG.
- 6.38 Arboricultural impacts of the development as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment provided would be negligible.
- 6.39 Based on this assessment, we have no comments to make on the proposal.

Historic England- No Objection

6.40 Email 8 July 2026 - This application is effectively a resubmission of application 25/02161/FUL. Historic England's advice on the formal application and subsequent amended scheme was detailed in letters dated 29 July and 1 September 2025 respectively. We then stated our lack of objection to the scheme and asked the council to determine the application in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice.

6.41 The proposal subject of the present application remains unchanged from those previously assessed. Consequently we are comfortable to reiterate our position of no objection and do not wish to make any further comments. We refer you to our previous letters of advice for a detailed assessment of the proposals.

Comments received 29 July 2025 (to application 25/02161/FUL) (Appendix 2)

6.42 The current proposals represent a re-examination of the scheme consented in 2011 and renewed in 2016.

6.43 The strong emphasis on sustainability of the new proposals results in a scheme that t[h]reads more lightly on the site; a basement extension is no longer considered. Neither is the glazing of Bath court.

6.44 In order to meet the requirements of the brief and compensate for the loss of the basement, the buildings need to extend further above ground. Heights and relationship with surrounding buildings therefore require careful consideration. Given its position fronting what is now a public lane, the buildings contribution to the streetscape in addition to its relationship with the college as a whole and the building's own proportions need also to be considered.

6.45 The removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college. However, the resulting increased massing brings other instances of harm, as it puts considerable pressure on the surrounding buildings forming Bath Court. The building feels too big, overdominant on this space, particularly in its relationship with the south range of first court and the Bodley Library.

6.46 Similarly, the increased height towards Christ's Lane feels quite large when seen alongside the relatively modest elevations of the college. This

impact is evidenced in the visualisations presented, particularly those looking towards St Andrew's Street.

- 6.47 The introduction of a new primary building of the massing proposed within what historically was a domestic kitchen garden is challenging. Whilst we acknowledge the proposals represent a more contextual approach and the architectural quality of the scheme, we are of the view that the building is too big for its location.
- 6.48 Historic England engaged on pre-application discussions with the College alongside Council officers, where we welcomed the approach taken to revising the granted scheme and its ambitions. We highlighted the architectural quality of the project and its potential for enhancing the character of the conservation area and for delivering greater benefit to the college. We expressed our concerns however about its massing, its relationship with the Bodley library, and made some recommendations in relation to the Christ Lane elevation, which we consider would benefit from simplification.
- 6.49 The treatment to Christ's Lane has also been refined and simplified from the competition and subsequent designs discussed at pre-application stage. The wall level which initially aligned with the Bodley's stringcourse has been now lifted up to turret level. Whilst this simplifies the design and improves the building's own proportions, it feels more overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley and evidences the difficulties to accommodate a building which is too large for what is a very domestic setting.
- 6.50 In relation to the ventilation stacks/new chimneys proposed, we agree that the proportions and relationship of these elements in the historic streetscape are an important consideration and note the comparative analysis included in the Design and Access Statement. However, the role of these new elements within the college needs also to be factored in.
- 6.51 To summarise and conclude, in their present form, the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the listed building, primarily as a result of the excessive bulk of the new building, which we consider would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings.
- 6.52 The proposals would be bulkier than those that were previously granted consent. We also acknowledge the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, we do not wish to object to the application but

would strongly encourage that massing is further reduced so it sits better within this context.

Updated comments following amendments received 1 September 2025
(Appendix 2)

- 6.53 An additional set of plans has been submitted in support of this application. The overall massing of the building remains unchanged but revisions have been introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks and the position of the wash up pod, which were raised in our letter of advice dated 29 July 2025.
- 6.54 The height of the ventilation stacks has been reduced by 90cm; further louvered slots have been added to the side and rear elevations to compensate for the loss ventilation area; this also helps to break up the mass of these elements.
- 6.55 We are of the opinion that if the height of the staircase turret could similarly be slightly reduced, this would better retain the prominence of the reduced chimney/ventilation stacks. This in turn would improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew's Street. We would encourage this is considered.
- 6.56 Overall, Historic England welcomes the revisions introduced to the scheme and retains its position of no objection.

Comments following NPPF updates

- 6.57 Following the updates to the NPPF on the 17 August 2026, further comments were received from Historic England confirming that they are confident their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate. They concluded that they "consider that our existing responses provide a sufficient basis for the Local Planning Authority to assess the proposals in the context of the revised NPPF".

Landscape Officer- No Objection

- 6.58 We raise no objection to the proposal in landscape terms, given some detail remains outstanding, a condition is recommended regarding hard and soft landscaping.
- 6.59 Updated comments received 25 August 2026 confirm that, following the updated NPPF, the position of no objection (subject to conditions) remains.

Lead Local Flood Authority- No Objection

- 6.60 The provided information demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of attenuation, restricting surface water discharge to 2l/s.
- 6.61 The LLFA is supportive of the use of rain gardens and rainwater harvesting as both controlling the rate of surface water run-off and providing water quality treatment.
- 6.62 Conditions are recommended regarding a scheme for surface water drainage and measures to avoid additional surface water run-off.
- 6.63 Updated comments were received from the Lead Local Flood Authority raising an objection to the scheme on the basis that the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities were proposed on non-permeable paving with no information regarding the mitigation of this.
- 6.64 Following clarification, the LLFA have confirmed, within an updated memo that their position, set out within their initial comments (18 June 2026) remains.

Natural England- No comment received

- 6.65 Whilst Natural England have not provided comments on this current application they did on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Within this previous application they raised no objection to the proposal on the basis that it would not have any significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Public Art Officer – No Objection

- 6.66 Limited information has been provided with the application regarding public art within the proposal. A condition is recommended requiring submission of a Public Art Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Comment

- 6.67 As a major application, drainage comments are deferred to the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Sustainability Officer- No Objection

- 6.68 The sustainability approach set out within the provided sustainability statement is welcomed and looks to achieve a high standard of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon emissions reduction within the restrictions of the original buildings historic context.
- 6.69 The applications bespoke sustainability strategy is based upon the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide. The new build element will follow Passivhaus principles with high-performing thermal fabric, good airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recover and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 6.70 Supports the proposed development subject to conditions regarding a bespoke sustainability strategy, rainwater harvesting, water efficiency calculations and water metering.

S106 Officer- No comment received

- 6.71 Whilst not received on this current application, the council's Section 106 officer did provide comments on the previous application (26/02161/FUL). Within their previous comments they requested financial contributions of £20,000 (plus indexation) towards the provision of and improvement of public realm facilities within the vicinity of Christ's Lane.

Tree Officer- No Objection

- 6.72 From an arboricultural perspective there are no objections to this planning application.
- 6.73 The provided Arboricultural Impact Assessment provides sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed demolition and construction works and installation of the temporary kitchen can be undertaken with minimal impact upon existing trees.
- 6.74 The submitted Tree Protection Scheme dated 04/02/2026 provides adequate measures to secure the protection of retained trees, including BS5837:2012 Category B trees, throughout the construction period. Subject to compliance with the provided Tree Protection Scheme there are no arboricultural constraints that would warrant refusal of the application.

Urban Design Officer - No Objection

- 6.75 The design as presented reflects a contextually sensitive response and substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane. The proposal is strongly supported by urban design in its current form in terms of public realm improvement.
- 6.76 The current proposal achieves an elegant and respectful balance through a successful mediation between old and new and is strongly supported.
- 6.77 The use of pixelated brickwork that fuses with the historic fabric and subtly merges with it is supported. It provides the important Christ Lane facing façade with a tactile quality that is appropriate to a setting where people will come in close contact with it.

Victorian Society - Objection

- 6.78 Within their letter dated 06 July 2026 (Appendix 7), re-iterated their objection and advice raised on the previous application (Appendix 3) regarding the scheme, in particular with regard to its scale and massing. Urges the college to consider less-harmful alternatives and/ or minor alterations previously proposed.
- 6.79 The design as it stands gives rise to a low-to-moderate level of less than substantial harm impacting the fabric of the college's Grade-I Listing, but also the setting of the Central (Historic Core) Conservation Area.

Waste Officer – No objection

- 6.80 No objection to the proposal on the assumption that any additional waste created will be incorporated into the existing refuse arrangement for the college.

Design Review Panel Meeting – 13 February 2025

- 6.81 The final report received (Appendix 3) includes the following on the bulk, scale, massing and spatial concept: -
- 6.82 The Panel endorse the concept and strategy of the proposal. There is a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. It is comfortable with the scale and massing. When viewed from this junction, it has a significance and a character of its own.

- 6.83 The dominant chimneys, performing an essential ventilation function are welcome. Some members of the panel expressed the view that they could be taller. That popping up above the ridge line when viewed from First Court within the college would not be a problem. Trying to keep them out of sight was inconsistent with historic precedent.
- 6.84 There are differing views on the impact of the design on Bath Court. It is a tight space and the internal cross section dimensions to accommodate a functioning library have largely determined the form. Bath Court is not a pleasant space at the moment. It is hemmed in by the vertical façade of the existing library with no shelter. The move to open up the ground level space with greater width and a degree of shelter with a cantilever overhang are positive moves that will enhance the space. The dimension between the projecting upper level of the library and the roof opposite will be in the order of 4 metres. This is a concern to some panel members.
- 6.85 There is a tricky balancing act between the needs of the library and the occupiers of the rooms opposite, although the rooms are dual aspect and so daylight is not a problem. However, the façade of the upper levels of the library will be very much in the face of occupiers of the roof top rooms. Material selection and detail are important considerations as the design team acknowledge.
- 6.86 The final report concludes: In conclusion the panel applaud the scheme as an exemplary proposal. As the details develop, the Panel believe the richness will be enhanced.
- 6.87 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.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 119 representations have been received, 62 in support and 57 in objection.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

Planning Principles

- Lack of justification for the number of study spaces provided within the library
- Failure to fully explore the potential for previous schemes to meet the current needs of the College

- Disregard for the potential provision of library facilities within multiple buildings within the College, reducing the required scale within this site.
- The proposal would not provide sufficient public benefits to outweigh the disruption that it would cause.

Design/Character/Heritage/Townscape and Visual Impact

- The proposal is too big for its surroundings, with the site unable to accommodate a building of this size
- The scheme would negatively impact Christ's Lane as a historic public space
- The proposal would result in harm to the Grade 1 listed College buildings
- The replacement building would have a detrimental impact on the Historic Core Conservation Area
- The proposed development does not comply with Policy 61 of the Local Plan as it fails to enhance/ preserve the significance of heritage assets.
- Excessive height of the proposed building that would overwhelm the surrounding buildings of heritage significance
- The scale of the proposed building would increase and exacerbate the "canyoning" along Christ's Lane
- The proposed library would enclose Bath Court with insufficient spacing afforded to the Southern Range of First Court.
- The proposed library would severely obstruct the skyline for users of Christ's Lane
- Lack of public art provision and consideration of enjoyment for pedestrians.
- The provided views with the application do not accurately reflect the appearance of the proposed building from along Christ's Lane.
- Increased scale and massing in comparison to the previous permissions on the site.
- Dismissal of potential to build downwards to reduce the scale of the proposal above ground
- Excessively large chimneys that are out-of-keeping with the vernacular of Cambridge with insufficient justification for their height.
- Requests from statutory consultees to reduce the scale of the proposal
- Greater consideration should be given to preserving/ enhancing Bath Court as an area of open space.
- The archaeological benefits stated through the omission of the basement are highly questionable.

- The applicant has failed to accurately consider the relevance/ assessment of Policy 60 (tall buildings)

Amenity Impacts

- The proposal would block out light to Christ's Lane resulting in detrimental impacts to the businesses along this street
- Construction works and narrowing of Christ's Lane would impact the function of adjacent businesses along Christ's Lane
- the construction works would result in disturbance to those living along Christ's Lane through noise, vibration and dust
- The new building would block views from the residential properties of Christ's Lane.

Environmental

- The sustainability argument for omitting the basement is incomplete and fails to consider the social benefits of a reduced height.
- Underestimation by the college as to the amount of contamination within the site

Highways and transport

- the construction would impact Christ's Lane as a heavily used public thoroughfare including those with mobility issues
- safety impacts from construction traffic using Christ's Lane

Other

- Incomplete public consultation and failure to work constructively with local residents
- Failure of the College to take into account concerns of nearby residents

Judicial Review/ Procedural concerns

- The application should not be determined until the ongoing Judicial Review has been heard in court with the judgement considered as part of this applicaiton.
- The college has circumnavigated procedure by submitting an identical second application
- The applicant's assessment of the heritage impacts is flawed and fails to take into account the Judicial Review and conceded grounds.
- The applicant has obstructed public meeting notes from being published and refused to attend a Development Control Forum
- The applicants have been "lobbying" councillors

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- The current 1970s library no longer meets the needs of students with regards to its study spaces, accessibility and overall quality of space as raised historically by students and staff and presents a barrier for potential students
- The development would result in significantly improved accessibility for all students and staff.
- Providing a building that would meet the needs of multiple future generations, minimising the need for future disruption
- Provision of a new library building that is more sympathetic to the surrounding listed buildings of the College than the existing library
- Wider benefits including accessibility to other parts of the college including dining facilities
- Long term sustainability benefits through the use of renewable energy sources such as Air Source Heat Pumps
- Enhancements to Christ's Lane as a public frontage through the replacement of the current building which provides a negative contribution to the character of the area
- The scale of the proposed building reflects and responds to the scale and appearance of surrounding modern developments.
- Improved kitchen/ cafeteria facilities as a result of the works
- Provision of a variety of study spaces to meet the various, contemporary needs of students including quiet spaces, collaborative areas and flexible environments
- The proposal preserves and enhances the historic buildings of Christ's College
- The proposal is well-integrated into the environment, minimising any adverse impact on neighbouring properties
- Improved safety of Christ's Lane as a public thoroughfare through the introduction of large overlooking windows and increased lighting
- Improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the provision of a bench and gate providing views into Bath Court
- The proposal helps to connect the public space of Christ's Lane to the College grounds
- Neurodiversity affirming design of the proposed library building.
- The development contributes towards the College's ability to provide effective education.
- The avoidance of any additional basement avoids the embodiment and excessive levels of carbon that this would require as well as removing the risk of damage to surrounding listed buildings.

- The proposal is an improvement to what is one of the City's main tourist destinations
- Substantial public benefits arising from the scheme to outweigh any identified heritage harm

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. Member Representations

8.1 None received

9. Local Groups / Petition

- 9.1 Cambridge Past Present and Future have submitted a representation raising concerns with the application for the following reasons:
- The proposal fails to preserve or enhance relevant heritage assets as required by Policy 61 of the Local Plan. The harm identified by Historic England is such that the application fails this test.
 - Historic England have warned that the ventilation stacks/ chimneys are not proportionate with the existing chimneys within Christ's College. This would overwhelm the modest scale of the College's historic streetscape.
 - The minimal public benefits identified fail to outweigh the identified heritage harm including to the Grade 1 listed Bodley Library, Bath Court and the Historic Core Conservation area.

Christ's Lane Action Group

- 9.2 At time of writing a total of more than 70 representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group are published on the public portal for this application.
- 9.3 Included within these representations is a petition received with a total of 75 signatures requesting that a Development Control Forum be held to discuss matters that would overcome objections to the scheme.
- 9.4 Of these, more than 20 are considered to comprise formal representations on the scheme and its determination, with the remainder being either attachments/ enclosures or emails notifying of the representations sent to the following:

- Planning Case officer
- Planning Legal officer/ department
- Planning technical support team
- Historic Environment Team
- The Victorian Society
- Historic England

9.5 Full details of these representations are visible on the public portal however the contents can be summarised as follows:

Process

- Repeated request that determination of this application be deferred until the judgement of the court has been made on the Judicial Review, depriving the decision maker of guidance from the High Court.
- Confirmation sought multiple times from the Council's Legal officer that the assessment of this application identifies and corrects each conceded error raised within the Judicial Review.
- Confirmation sought repeatedly that discharge of conditions under the previous "acknowledged-unlawful" permission would not be relied upon or treated as satisfying conditions under this new application.
- Confirmation sought to clarify the consultation deadline for third parties including clarification on the public portal as to this deadline.
- Raised the failure to consult Historic England as a Statutory Consultee on the application. Including a request that the standard 21-day consultation be extended to 42 days to account for the consultation of Historic England.
- Raised the failure to obtain advice from the National Amenity Society on the application.
- Request made that the applicant provide a BRE 209 (2022) compliant daylight and sunlight assessment and Construction Management plan with an extension to the consultation period to reflect this additional information.
- Failure to notify Nos. 19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane initially when the application was validated.
- Lack of sufficient time within the consultation period for consideration of information provided on the 18th and 24th June.
- Request that the Garden's Trust comments be logged on the portal as statutory advice rather than a public comment.
- Concerns regarding lack of sufficient time afforded between a Development Control Forum and Planning Committee. With a

repeated request that the officer report be published 14 days before any committee meeting.

- Request that the case officer clarify to a third-party, the consultation deadline in light of a previous request to extend their deadline.
- Failure to upload/ misfiling of representations received from CLAG in response to this application.
- Provided their account of the 6th July College meeting including the view provided by the applicant's representatives in relation to the heritage assessment of the scheme.
- Raised a mis-representation of the number of objections received on this application within a public article online. With a request that this be rectified to clarify the number of objections received.
- Raised concerns regarding the incorrect publication date of a letter from the agent of the application to the Victorian Society.
- Concerns raised regarding the wording of a number of conditions attached to the previous permission that should be amended as part of this application.

Legal Matters

- Concerns raised regarding lobbying of members resulting from a letter sent by the College to members with an incomplete view of the application, failing to take account of the grounds of Judicial Review. Repeated request that this letter be uploaded to the application so that it is within the public case file.
- Concerns regarding the legal position to initially decline a Development Control Forum on the basis that the College declined to attend.
- Request why pre-empting the High Court Judgement is considered lawful and prudent.
- Request for a standstill undertaking whilst ongoing matters are resolved.
- Sought a legal view as to why a record of the College's public meeting on the 6th July was withheld from the public record on this application.

Grounds of the ongoing Judicial Review

- Email sent directly to Historic England asking that, if consulted again their response be given with full knowledge of the ongoing Judicial Review. Including the way in which Historic England's comments were presented to committee within the previous application.

- That the grounds of the Judicial Review are directly relevant to the building's bulk and massing and therefore inseparable from this current application.

Heritage

- Email sent directly to the Victorian Society notifying them of the current application, the status of the Judicial Review and requesting that they clarify if their previous comments remain applicable to this current application.
- Significant concerns raised repeatedly regarding the applicant's assessment of heritage harm arising from the scheme including within their covering letter of this new application.
- Confirmation sought that Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990 applies as the proposal would affect a listed building or its setting.
- Email sent directly to the Council's Historic Environment team notifying them of the status of the application, the Judicial Review and the statutory consultee comments received prior to the comment of the Conservation Officer.
- Concern raised regarding the correspondence between the agent, architect and the Victorian Society. Including the failure to re-consult upon the response of the Victorian Society.

Other Matters

- Email direct to the Council's Environmental Health Officer noting an error within their comments with regards to the depth of suggested contaminated land removal. In addition to query regarding trigger of the material management plan condition. Including a request to re-consult following any updated Environmental Health Officer comments.
- Failure of the applicant to provide the Site Investigation Report to assess the impact of the proposal with regards to contaminated land.
- Contradictions regarding the proposal's ability to "maintain pedestrian access" along Christ's Lane during construction works.
- The proposal fails to provide a de-minimis calculation regarding the necessity to provide statutory Biodiversity Net Gain with the application. Including assessment of the temporary facility within the Second Court.
- Additional noise assessment information is required prior to determination of this application.
- Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan as part of this application.

- Contradicting advice from the Council's Tree officer and inconsistent information relating to the temporary kitchen.

9.6 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. Planning background

- 10.1 As planning committee members should be aware, this application has been submitted, as an identical copy of the previous application (ref 25/02161/FUL) that is currently the subject of a Judicial Review and is due to be heard in the Planning Court in October 2026.
- 10.2 Permission has been granted by the High Court for the Judicial Review to proceed to a substantive one-day hearing on all four grounds applied for by CLAG.
- 10.3 Given the delay in the courts for the case to be heard, the applicant decided to submit this current application for determination, which allows the Council the opportunity to directly address all four grounds of legal challenge.
- 10.4 The grounds of challenge raised within the Judicial Review are covered within the executive summary of this report as follows:
- 10.5 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 10.6 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within

the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.

- 10.7 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 10.8 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 10.9 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would "help to secure the listed building's optimum viable use." The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 10.10 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 10.11 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative**

modes of development. On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.

10.12 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college's needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.

10.13 Officers consider that the primary matters of legal contention have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interest Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely, although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by a judge.

The Council's ability to determine the current application

10.14 As referred to above, CLAG and other third-parties have raised concerns that this application should not be determined whilst the previous application (25/02161/FUL) was under judicial review. The grant of planning permission for the previous application remains valid unless and until quashed by the court. The Council has openly indicated to the court that it would be prepared to consent to a quashing of that previous decision based on the grounds raised by CLAG. There is nothing to prevent the applicant from submitting a new (and identical) application in the interim as has been done, and for that to be considered by the Council against that backdrop. Bearing in mind the current context, it remains the case that any subsequent decision on this new application could be liable to be challenged in the normal way. This officer report addresses the grounds of challenge, to avoid any error of law and minimise the risk of further challenge.

11. Assessment

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

- Principle of development
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Heritage assets
- Trees
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Planning obligations
- Other matters
- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

12. Presumption in favour of sustainable development

12.1 The 2026 update to the NPPF introduced within Policy S3, the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. Where development is located within settlements, such as this application within the settlement of Cambridge, Policy S4 of the NPPF should be applied.

12.2 Policy S4 provides that applications within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 2(c) of S4 then adds that the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be outweighed by adverse effects include where proposals would fail to comply with one of the national decision making policies that states development should be refused in specific circumstances.

12.3 The application has been assessed against the NPPF as set out in the following sections of this report. It is not considered that there is any conflict with national decision making policies that would otherwise outweigh the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

13. Principle of Development

- 13.1 The proposed development seeks the replacement of the existing library building with a larger, more modern facility within largely the same footprint forming part of the College site. The site falls within the Cambridge City Centre as defined within the Local Plan Policies map Policy 6. The application therefore falls to be assessed against Policy 10 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.2 Policy 10 states that any new development or redevelopment within the City Centre should:
- a) add to the vitality and viability of the city centre;
 - b) achieve a suitable mix of uses;
 - c) preserve or enhance heritage assets and their setting, open spaces and the River Cam;
 - d) be of the highest quality design and deliver a high-quality public realm; and
 - e) promote sustainable modes of transport
- 13.3 Given that the application is seeking the demolition and replacement of the existing library within the college, the use of the site is not being altered as part of this application. For this reason, it is not considered that criteria (a) and (b) are directly applicable in this instance, and it is not reasonable to conclude that further uses are required within the site given its constrained nature and the need, first and foremost, to re-provide a new library on the site to modern standards. It is in the view of officers, unreasonable to require the provision of additional uses within the site given the needs of the College and its students for library space within the site. No alternatives have been suggested to demonstrate that a mix of uses within the site is realistically achievable.
- 13.4 As will be assessed fully within the Heritage section of this report, the proposed replacement library building is considered to result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Conversely, however, it is considered that the development would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area, with a neutral impact upon the Grade II listed Christ's College RPG. The heritage balance is considered to result in overall harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings and therefore there is conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10. As set out in the planning balance however, it

is considered that the harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library is outweighed by public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 13.5 As will also be discussed in greater detail in the following section of this report, the design of the replacement library is considered to be of the highest quality, taking key notes from relevant buildings within Cambridge. Therefore, subject to a number of conditions, the development is considered to comply with criteria (d) of Policy 10.
- 13.6 The proposed development, as with the existing site, is car free with no designated car parking for users of the library. Given the highly sustainable, central location of the site, it is considered that the development complies with criteria (e) of Policy 10.
- 13.7 Policy 43 of the Local Plan supports university development within the city centre so long as it:
- a. makes effective use of land, including a mix of uses on larger sites to meet the needs of the relevant institution, and
 - b. takes reasonable opportunities to improve circulation for pedestrians and cyclists, together with public realm improvements, reductions in car parking provision and the introduction of active frontages at ground floor level.
- 13.8 The proposed development seeks the replacement of an existing library that is considered by the college to no longer be sufficient to meet the needs of its students or meet its own sustainability and accessibility requirements. Whilst significantly larger than the existing library, the proposed replacement building is considered, in the view of officers to make effective use of the land within a highly sustainable, city centre location. Officers do not consider it feasible to provide a mix of uses on the site due to the requirement of the college for library space within a constrained site, therefore the proposal complies with criteria a. of Policy 43. As will be discussed in later sections of this report, officers also consider that the proposal is compliant with criteria b. of the Policy.
- 13.9 With the above in mind, whilst the proposal would conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy 43 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the overall objectives of the Development Plan. As set out in the Planning Balance, the heritage harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

Protected Open Space

- 13.10 Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 is relevant in the assessment of the application as the entire application site forms an area of protected open space (P&G33). The space is considered to be of recreational and environmental importance with a quality rating of 77.89%.
- 13.11 Policy 67 aims to protect designated open space of environmental and recreational importance. The local plan states that development proposals which would lead to the loss of protected open space will not be permitted unless the open space can be satisfactorily replaced in terms of quality, quantity and access with an equal or better standard than that which is proposed to be lost.
- 13.12 In the case of university and college grounds, such as the application site, it is added that development may be permitted where it meets a demonstrable educational need and does not adversely affect playing fields or other formal sports provision on the site.
- 13.13 Whilst Bath Court is located within the Protected Open space, it is almost entirely paved with hardstanding and extremely limited in its size. Officers do not therefore consider that it provides open space of any significant environmental or recreational importance as set out in Policy 67. The development, which seeks to re-develop this space and provide a higher quality landscaped space, is therefore not considered to conflict with the purpose of Policy 67 with regards to Bath Court.
- 13.14 The open space within Second Court, where the temporary buildings are proposed during construction works, is acknowledged to provide a greater level of importance with regards to Policy 67. It is considered however, that the temporary nature of the structure proposed within this space is such that the development would not result in any permanent impact to, or loss of open space. Condition 9 recommended with this application would ensure that the temporary building required during the works would be removed with the site restored to its original condition.
- 13.15 Officers consider that the applicant has provided sufficient justification setting out the educational need for new and improved library space and study facilities within the college. In addition to the fact that the development would not impact any playing fields or formal sports provision, it is considered that the development would comply with Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.16 Having regard to the enhanced open spaces and relocated recreational facilities, the proposed development is considered to comply with the requirements of policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Tall Buildings, Policy 60 and Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 13.17 It is acknowledged that there has not been any assessment from the applicant with regards to Policy 60 of the Local Plan. The initial text of this policy states that “any proposal for a structure that breaks the existing skyline and/or is significantly taller than the surrounding built form will be considered against the following criteria”. Appendix F of the Local Plan then provides further guidance as to the application of this policy.
- 13.18 The site is located within the historic core, as illustrated by Figure F.1. of Appendix F. Paragraph F.10(i) states that building proposals of six storeys or more (assuming a flat roof with no rooftop plant and a height of 19m above ground level) would automatically trigger the need to address the criteria set out within the guidance. It also states that dependent on the exact location within the historic core, buildings of four to six storeys may also need to be evaluated against the assessment criteria herein, due to proximity to heritage assets and potential impacts on key views.
- 13.19 The proposed replacement library building does not, at its highest point, measure 19 metres in height above ground level. The top of the Chimneys proposed measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level along Christ's Lane, with the top of the parapet roof measuring approximately 13 metres above the same level. Whilst the building is four storeys in height and within close proximity to heritage assets, it remains lower than the adjacent modern Christ's Lane re-development which reaches a height of approximately 15.5 metres. An assessment of the skyline impact in the context of Policy 60 and the proposal in its wider Cambridge setting including long-to-medium distance views, is not necessary in the judgement of officers. This is because of the location, comparative height and context of the proposal not giving rise to any wider skyline or City setting impacts. From such views, because nearby buildings are taller in height than the proposed library, the proposal is very unlikely to give rise to a perceptible break in the skyline.
- 13.20 Appendix F (para F.21) also provides guidance in respect of local and short distance views, which includes Jesus Green and other elevated locations close to the site, including Grand Arcade car park, Castle Mound, Park Street car park (no longer relevant as redeveloped) and the Church of St Mary the Great. Such views are important to protect, but the question as to whether Policy 60 is engaged relative to the scheme before the Council is a matter of judgement. In the view of officers, because of the location and comparative heights of buildings in the immediate context, Policy 60 is not engaged. Whilst there may be short distance

ground level views of the scheme where the built form could be seen to break the immediate skyline above the existing built form of the existing College, this does not in and of itself require a townscape and visual impact assessment to be undertaken to demonstrate compliance with Policy 60.

- 13.21 As such, Officers consider the proposal would not trigger the thresholds as stated under Policy 60 and no townscape visual impact assessment against the prescribed assessment criteria is required. This notwithstanding, the applicants have nonetheless submitted a townscape and visual impact assessment of the scheme, which covers an approximate area of 200m around the site. This is a proportionate response to the scale of the proposal within its immediate context. The assessment provides visualisations of the scheme which are important for understanding its impacts, particularly its heritage setting in the historic core and its relationship to Christ's Pieces, Christs Lane, St Andrew's Street and internally within the College itself. The key views and associated impacts are discussed below with reference to adopted policies 55, 56, 58, 59 and 61 and associated NPPF and NPPG guidance.
- 13.22 The applicant's TVIA summarises that 'the overall form and presence of the building, coupled with its urban and architectural expression, ensures the scheme will be a positive addition to the historic townscape of Cambridge and positively contribute to the visual amenity of those who inhabit and enjoy the City. As such, the proposals are found to deliver overall beneficial effects in relation to the townscape character of the area, and positive impacts to key views within the environs of the building'.

14. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 14.1 The application site comprises the existing library building serving the College, Bath Court which is the space between the library and First Court, in addition to Second Court which is the space proposed for the temporary facilities to be used during the construction phase.
- 14.2 The existing library building forms a part of the Grade I Listed Christ's College site, although the 1970's library itself is far more modern than the First Court buildings and Bodley Library that date back to the 16th Century and 1896 respectively. The existing library structure is considered to be negative with regards to its contribution to the relevant heritage assets and includes a large, relatively blank façade on its main, public facing elevation along Christ's Lane.

- 14.3 Limited elements of the existing site are visible to the public outside of the College grounds, with the southeastern boundary of the site abutting the public highway of Christ's Lane with additional glimpsed views either side of the existing library building. At its highest point, the existing library building measures approximately 5.7 metres in height spanning approximately 27 metres of the length of Christ's Lane. Within the length of this elevation there are a small number of windows in addition to a large, unsightly metal flue projecting out from the elevation and above the building's flat roof.
- 14.4 The current library building includes a bridge linking into the historic Bodley Library at first floor level from the existing library, although the spacing between the two buildings of approximately 1.8 metres gives the sense that the more modern library crowds the historic Bodley. Despite the height of the current library, there are only very limited views from pedestrian level along Christ's Lane of the roofs of First Court, there are however more extensive private views from the raised level residential dwellings and their accesses of the Christ's Lane apartments opposite (see below).
- 14.5 Christ's Lane is a busy public right of way which is used daily by a large number of people linking key parts of the City of Cambridge. To the opposite side of Christ's Lane of the College, is the Christ's Lane redevelopment which is a relatively modern site comprising a mixed use of retail and residential units. Whilst the total height of this adjacent building is higher (approximately 15.5 metres), approximately 10.3 metres in height of the building directly abuts Christ's Lane, with the first floor overhanging the ground floor. The upper floors are set back such that they are not immediately visible above the initial 10.3 metres above ground. The height of the existing library is therefore notably lower in height than the Christ's Lane redevelopment. For clarification, the heights of the buildings have been taken from the provided Short Section DD (003703 P03) with heights calculated from ground level along Christ's Lane.
- 14.6 Internally within the College, sandwiched between the library building and the southern edge of First Court, is Bath Court an external space at most 5 metres in width. This space is also, almost entirely paved with hardstanding, and has numerous differing levels throughout, making its accessibility very poor.
- 14.7 The proposed development seeks the demolition of the existing library building, in addition to smaller portions of the college site, including the wash-up space located at the northeastern end of Bath Court. As will be discussed in greater detail in the Heritage section of this report, there is

no objection to the demolition of this element of the listed building due to its negative contribution to both the setting of historic elements of the Listed Building and the public realm/ conservation area.

- 14.8 The proposed development has been submitted taking into account the views of students from the College and other stakeholders. The current library facilities within the College are lacking in quality and falling below standards. The College buildings, including the existing library present significant accessibility difficulties with multiple variations in floor levels, in addition to an overall lack of sufficient study space, poor installation/ sustainability performance, and an extremely underused outdoor space within Bath Court.
- 14.9 The gross internal area of the new building is proposed at 1050m², compared to 680m² existing, which would be spread out over four floors with a mix of book storage, reading and study spaces.
- 14.10 The siting of the proposed library building encompasses largely the same footprint as the existing building it seeks to replace, being located on the southeastern edge of the College site, retaining and enhancing the quality of Bath Court between it and the buildings of First Court. Indeed, the footprint of the building at ground level is slightly reduced from the existing, primarily as a result of increasing the separation between it and the northeastern elevation of the Bodley Library.
- 14.11 With regards to the proposed library building specifically, given its comparable footprint, the increase in gross internal area is a result of an increase in height above ground level in comparison to the existing building and a cantilevered design. The highest point of the proposed building being the top of the chimneys facing Christ's Lane measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level at the southern end of Christ's Lane, with the top of the parapet roof being 13 metres above ground level. This building height is comparable to that part of the re-development on the southern side of Christ's Lane. The visual impact of this view can be seen within View A of the provided Townscape and Visual Appraisal (TVIA). As shown within existing view from Sidney Street the roof of the adjacent Christ's Lane re-development is visible above the entrance range of the College. Whilst the chimneys and stair lantern of the proposed development would project into view, the bulk of the proposed building would remain hidden from these views below the height of the Christ's Lane redevelopment beyond.
- 14.12 The total length of the proposed building measures approximately 41.5 metres, not including the bridge link to the Bodley Library, running

immediately adjacent to the side of Christ's Lane. The views from along Christ's Lane, in addition to those at either end, along St Andrews Street and Christ's Pieces are considered to be the main public viewpoints of the development, as highlighted within views B, C and D of the provided TVIA. Whilst the College is open to members of the public, the impact of the development on internal views within the college is considered to be less significant in this case.

- 14.13 Concerns regarding the scale and massing of the proposed development upon the public realm, including the impact upon Christ's Lane itself have been raised by third parties. Firstly, when assessing this impact, it is important to note that the length of the proposed building is approximately half of the total length of Christ's Lane, with the northeastern end of the street remaining at the current, lower height. As previously mentioned, the height of the proposed building, whilst a significant increase over the existing library, remains lower than the total height of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, albeit the top levels of the adjacent redevelopment are set back from the frontage.
- 14.14 The perceived impact of the proposed development upon Christ's Lane as a public space is reflected in Views B and E of the TVIA. Both views show the increase in height of the proposed library building. They also show, however, that this height, visually, in comparison to the southern Christ's Lane re-development would not be overly dominant upon the space. View D in particular shows the northeastern end of Christ's Lane where the plant currently visible on the roof is to be removed and the proposal is not considered to be dominant within the views. This impact is helped by the horizontal banding and articulation along the façade that draws the eye along Christ's Lane rather than upwards.
- 14.15 The 2026 updated NPPF, through Policy DP3 clearly sets out principles for development to achieve well-designed places. The Christ's Lane facade of the scheme is considered to significantly enhance the public facing element of the site. This includes introducing a significant number of openings out onto The Lane which would likely improve the safety of the space through passive surveillance, set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(f).
- 14.16 In addition to the design of the proposed building which will be discussed in greater detail later in this section of the report, the scale of the proposed development and its frontage onto Christ's Lane is considered appropriate. Whilst a significant increase above the existing building, the proposal is considered to optimise the site's potential and helps to delineate between public and private areas of the site. As set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(e).

- 14.17 The proposed library building's two primary elevations are those facing onto Christ's Lane and also facing internally into Bath Court. Owing to the nature of the college and the use of the library, the public facing elevation onto Christ's Lane is required to provide a certain level of privacy from public views. As opposed to the existing mainly blank façade, the proposed elevation fronting Christ's Lane has a greater level of articulation creating an interest that is not found in the current site. A 'base' level is established up to the second floor where the façade steps back revealing the depth of the chimneys. A combination of the chimneys and windows within this elevation attempt to take note of other historic college streets and provides a rhythm along the lane.
- 14.18 Integrated within the façade facing Christ's Lane, a bench measuring approximately 25 metres in length is proposed along Christ's Lane. This combined with the other positive features of this public façade is such that the contribution to the public realm is considered by officers to be positive.
- 14.19 Protruding above the second floor, visible behind the historic Bodley Library gable, is the proposed staircase and its glass enclosure rising above the brick façade. Views of this element are increased because of the greater spacing afforded to the Bodley Library and the new proposed bridge link which gives a more lightweight, clear view into Bath Court. In addition to this a replacement gate is proposed into Bath Court from Christ's Lane, the design of which is to be secured through the public art process within a recommended condition.
- 14.20 With regards to the Bath Court elevation, given the internal nature of this side of the site and the proposed garden within Bath Court, a more open façade can be afforded. A large, glazed façade at the lower two levels is located below an overhanging façade utilising a shingle material hung from the timber frame. The light colour of this material is key to ensuring both direct and reflected light reaches the ground level within Bath Court.
- 14.21 Atop the building, facing in the direction of First Court is the "pleated roof" providing light in through the north facing roof pitches and space for PV panels on the south-facing roof pitches. This element of the design is considered to provide an effective solution to meet the user needs of the building whilst also contributing to its sustainability targets and providing an element of architectural interest in its design.
- 14.22 In addition to the library building itself, the application seeks to demolish the existing wash-up room to the northeastern end of Bath Court as a part of improving the accessibility and connectivity of the college buildings.

This element, in combination with the levelling of Bath Court provides level access through the ground floor, including to a lift in place of the existing wash-up to the upper floors of the library and dining halls.

- 14.23 Significant landscape enhancements are proposed to take advantage of the proposed scheme to improve the quality of the space provided within Bath Court. This includes utilising the existing rainwater drainage channel to provide a rain garden and managing the rainwater runoff from the new library building. More broadly, the design of the library building, opening up onto Bath court will give the sense of a cohesive space which is considered to significantly improve the usability of Bath Court as a space for students within the site.
- 14.24 Whilst Bath Court is a relatively narrow space, proposed to be surrounded on all sides by built form, officers, in consultation with the Council's Landscape officers, are comfortable that the proposed landscape strategy is deliverable. Given the importance of this aspect of the proposal to ensuring the quality of the scheme, as recommended, a condition relating to hard & soft landscaping is suggested to be attached to any permission granted.
- 14.25 It is noted that the development includes areas of flat roof, particularly atop the library building towards the Christ's Lane façade. Whilst Policy 31 of the Local Plan requires flat roofs to be either green or brown roofs, in this case, access is required to this entire roof to serve the plant located at this level. It is not considered that, with access required, it is reasonable to require green/ brown roofs by way of condition.
- 14.26 As part of the development, it is necessary to re-locate the current kitchen/ dining facilities for the college to a proposed temporary facility located within Second Court. The extent of the site proposed for this temporary facility is displayed on the proposed site plan although no further details have been provided at this stage of the application. As is commonly the case with temporary construction compounds, it is considered that the precise details of the required facilities can be dealt with by a pre-commencement condition to ensure that its scale and appearance is appropriate and that its siting is temporary.
- 14.27 During the process of this application, views from varying design specialists have been sought including the previous application, for an almost identical proposal being taken to the Design Review Panel (DRP) The DRP response (Appendix 3) which was held during the pre-application discussions concluded that they "applauded the scheme as an exemplary proposal". Panel members also stated that they endorsed the

concept and strategy of the proposal which had a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically along Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. Whilst noting the increase in scale in comparison to the existing library building, the Panel was also "comfortable with the scale and massing" of the proposed library partly due to the design giving the building its own significance and character.

- 14.28 In addition to the feedback from DRP, the Council's own Urban Design Officer has been supportive of the proposed development throughout the process. Echoing the comments from DRP members, the proposed development, in the view of Urban Design officer, "presents a contextually sensitive response and a substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane". More specifically as set out in their comments, the Christ's Lane façade is considered to strike a fine balance between the formality expected of a college and playful at another level with careful placement of windows and integrated seating.
- 14.29 Overall, members should feel confident that the scheme for consideration has evolved following careful consideration of the brief of the College taking into account feedback from numerous design specialists. The resulting scheme has support from both Urban Design Officers and the DRP, albeit some DRP panel members raised concerns regarding the proximity of upper levels within the proposed library to the southeastern wall of the First Court building.
- 14.30 The condition recommended by the Council's Urban Design officer relating to external material details is not considered necessary given a similar condition is recommended to be attached, as requested by the Council's Conservation officer.
- 14.31 Overall, the design of the proposed development is of the highest quality that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant policies 55,56,57,58 and 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

15. Trees

- 15.1 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Protection Scheme (TPS) outlining the impact of the proposed development on any trees within or surrounding the application site. The AIA confirms that a single category B tree is to be pruned to facilitate the proposed development, with three further category B trees that have potential to be affected by the works.

- 15.2 The TPS provided with this application was provided with the previous application (25/02161/CONDA). Given that this discharge of condition application relates to the permission that the Council has agreed to quash, the details within this document are not considered able to be relied upon through a compliance condition.
- 15.3 The two category B trees most likely to be affected by the proposed development are T6 and T10, both Acacia species in close proximity to the temporary kitchen structures proposed within the Second Court.
- 15.4 It is noted, that during the process of this application a 5-day notification was submitted to the council for the removal of T10 on the basis that the tree has died. It was stated that the condition of the tree was therefore posing a safety risk to pedestrians walking in close proximity to this tree. A formal decision notice to this notification has been issued by the Council's Tree Officers confirming no objection to the removal of the tree. The AIA states that as the temporary structures do not require foundations dug into the ground, the weight load of the structures can be spread evenly across its feet, mitigating any impact on the root protection areas of these trees.
- 15.5 In addition to the two trees within Second Court, the existing Palm tree within Bath Court would be in close proximity to both the demolition works of the existing library and construction of its replacement. It is therefore proposed to protect the stem of the tree with plastic piping and wooden hoarding.
- 15.6 The Council's Tree Officer has advised within comments on this application that there is no objection to the assessment set out within the provided Tree Protection Scheme. Comments from CLAG have raised inconsistencies with advice from the Tree Officer in relation to the advice given under 25/02161/CONDA and 25/02161/CONDB. Officers acknowledge that the Tree Officer raised concerns during the discharge of these conditions. However, this application does not seek to approve details of the temporary kitchen, these are to be secured by condition which officers are content is an achievable requirement.
- 15.7 The Tree Officer has requested a compliance condition in accordance with the provided TPS. However, in line with the Council's stance on information provided to discharge conditions on the previous permission (25/02161/FUL), it is recommended, as it was on the previous application that further details regarding the nature of the temporary kitchen and its impact upon surrounding trees and the lawns of Second Court can be

secured by way of an Arboricultural Method Statement/ Tree Protection Plan condition.

- 15.8 Subject to conditions as appropriate, the proposal would accord with policies 59 and 71 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

16. Heritage assets

Legal and Policy Framework

- 16.1 The statutory duties as set out in section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, apply when considering schemes which affect listed buildings or their settings, or when determining a planning application concerning buildings or other land in a Conservation Area.
- 16.2 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal duty for development that affects listed buildings or their settings. In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, “shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”
- 16.3 Section 102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that in considering development which affects a Registered Park and Garden, special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting.
- 16.4 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the statutory duty for a local planning authority, in the exercise of its planning powers with respect to any buildings or other land within a Conservation Area, to “pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
- 16.5 Officers have applied the statutory duties set out above and have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected Listed Buildings, and to preserving or enhancing, the Registered Park and Garden, and the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

- 16.6 Policy HE4 (1) of the NPPF states that “Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. To achieve this, development proposals which would affect the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting should:
- a. Maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation, taking into account the importance of maintaining the assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities including local economies, and the positive contribution they can make to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - b. Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.
- 16.7 Policy HE4(2) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification in accordance with the policies in the Heritage Chapter of NPPF 2026 (Ch. 20)
- 16.8 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that when considering the potential effect of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm or total loss of its significance.
- 16.9 Policy HE6(3) states that any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs (4) to (6) of the policy.
- 16.10 Policy HE6 (4) states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.
- 16.11 Policy HE7 of the NPPF separates decisions on non-designated heritage assets. It states development proposals which would have a positive effect on a non-designated heritage asset should be supported. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal

and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

- 16.12 Policy HE9 of the NPPF states that development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:
- a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and
 - b. Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.
- 16.13 Policy HE9 also adds that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a building or other element which contributes to the character or appearance of a conservation area that is desirable to conserve, the assessment of impact should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole, and the effects of this considered in accordance with policies HE5 and HE6. Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported.
- 16.14 Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 requires development to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets, their setting and the wider townscape, including views into, within and out of the conservation area. It also requires development to provide clear justification for any works that would lead to harm to a heritage asset yet be of substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE6 to weigh harm to the significance of designated heritage assets against public benefits.
- 16.15 Reflecting the statutory duties quoted, considerable importance and weight must be attached to any heritage harm found, with the presumption that the preservation of the significance of these heritage assets is to be preferred.
- 16.16 Policy 62 seeks the retention of local heritage assets and where permission is required, proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a local heritage asset. Where an application for any works would lead to harm or substantial harm to a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be

made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE7.

Impacted Heritage Assets and Significance

- 16.17 The application falls within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The proposal directly impacts the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings and the Grade II listed historic parks and garden of Christ's College as well as being within close proximity to the Grade I listed Fellows Building within the College. The application site is also within the setting of the following Grade II listed buildings and the Grade II* listed Lloyds bank: Church of St Andrew the Great, Church of St Andrew the Great War Memorial, No.4-7 St Andrews Street and the College Tutor's House.
- 16.18 Several of the above heritage assets are within proximity to the proposed development but are not considered to be impacted in any way by the proposed development and have therefore been scoped out of any significance assessment.
- 16.19 The first and potentially most directly impacted asset is the Grade I listed buildings of Christ's College surrounding the Entrance Court, southeastern range of Second Court and the Bodley Library. The Bodley Library and southeastern range of First Court are both specifically referenced in the listing description and considered of National (Very High) significance. There are however areas of lower (or no) significance including the eastern half of Bath Court, the existing 1974 library to be demolished and the wall to Christ's Lane. Specifically, the existing 1974 library is listed only by virtue of its attachment to the earlier listed buildings, it is not considered to be of any special historic interest in its own right nor would it be considered to merit listing at even a lower level.
- 16.20 As noted, the application site, including the wider College site is located within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. Whilst the Conservation Area Appraisal 2017 is organised street-by-street, it is clear that the entrance range of the College makes a very strong contribution to the townscape and historic interest of the area. As one of the earliest colleges, and within such a prominent central location, it is not disputed that the College as a whole makes an especially strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 16.21 The opening up of Christ's Lane in 2008 as part of the southern side of Christ's Lane re-development increased the visual prominence of the southeastern gable of the Bodley Library when looking northwards/northwest along St Andrew's Street. This view from St Andrew's Street,

along Christ's Lane is identified as comprising a "key positive view" within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

- 16.22 The existing 1974 library building itself is not considered to provide any positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, largely due to its inactive frontage with the street, as a result of it not being built with the intention of being publicly visible. It is not disputed that the existing building is notably smaller than that proposed, however, officers consider that despite its scale, it is negative in its contribution to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.
- 16.23 The application site forms part of the larger Grade II Registered Park and Garden (RPG) designation of the College, however, it is considered that Bath Court, which did not exist at the time of the designation, does not itself make a significant contribution to the landscape of the College. As has been suggested by the Gardens Trust, the significance of Christ's College as a Registered Park and Garden is largely derived from the formal gardens and courts of the college, including, but not limited to the Fellows Garden, Master's Garden and First, Second and Third Courts. Indeed, the Gardens Trust state in their comments "The Bath Court space is of low value to the RPG and of the college as a whole."
- 16.24 Bath Court itself is not visible from First, Second or Third Court, or from the Fellow's or Master's Gardens. The visibility of the proposed development from the formal gardens within the college would be extremely limited with only the very highest points protruding above the surrounding historic college buildings. As acknowledged by the Gardens Trust, the proposed development is considered to result in a minor enhancement to Bath Court as an element of the RPG. And whilst the upper floors are more prominent to the space, they are not themselves considered to result in any significant harm to Bath Court's low value within the RPG.
- 16.25 Given the insignificant contribution of Bath Court to the Registered Park and Gardens, in addition to the lack of impact upon the more formal landscaped areas of the College, the development is acceptable and is not considered to result in any harm to the Grade II listed Historic Park and Gardens.
- 16.26 When considering the impact of the proposed demolition and replacement of the existing 1974 library, the principle of this in heritage terms has previously been approved (through the Rick Mather scheme(s) 2011 and 2016) and continues to be supported. The existing building makes a negative contribution to the setting of the highly significant listed buildings

such as the Bodley Library, as well as to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 16.27 In comparison to the existing library building, the proposed replacement library is substantial in its size in relation to both the plot and many of the surrounding historic parts of the College. Its presence is therefore greater, both externally and internally within the College.
- 16.28 One area of concern that has been frequently raised by third-parties is the scale and massing of the proposed library building and the relationship of this with Christ's Lane as a popular thoroughfare within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The "Drummer Street and Christ's Lane" appraisal within the Historic Core Conservation Area provides a more detailed assessment of this specific area of the Conservation Area. Overall, the area is considered to make a significant contribution to the overall significance of the Conservation Area with views down Christ's Lane in either direction being identified as "key positive views". Importance is identified within this appraisal of the Christ's Lane redevelopment and the fact that it provides a "gateway to the city centre for bus passengers".
- 16.29 The visual impact of the proposal upon Christ's Lane as an important element of the Conservation Area is in part identified within the provided TVIA. View B and D of the provided TVIA help to visualise the impact of the proposal from either end of Christ's Lane. Officers consider, as is shown within the TVIA that the scale and massing of the proposed building within what is a central location, is entirely appropriate. The Christ's Lane re-development to the south is in total taller than that proposed within this application, with the Conservation Area appraisal stating that other options for the re-development of the College Library providing overlooking and a more august frontage could help to raise the quality of the frontages.
- 16.30 One of the most visually prominent aspects of the development are the five chimneys that face towards Christ's Lane to provide ventilation and lift access for the proposed building. During the previous application, since the subject of judicial review (26/02161/FUL), revised plans were provided reducing the height of these chimneys by approximately 900mm in response to initial comments received from the Council's Conservation Officer, and this is reflected in the proposed plans of this application. No aspect of the judicially reviewed scheme is in any way different to that now before members, including the chimney heights, the very tops of which would only be visible within glimpsed views from the far side of First Court at eye level. The relationship with First Court, including the glimpsed views of the new chimneys, is acceptable.

- 16.31 The chimneys themselves are not considered to be subservient in their scale and design, rather they attempt to contribute to a 'presence' along the lane. Whilst they are a prominent feature within views along Christ's Lane, they remain lower in height than the adjacent Christ's Lane redevelopment. Historic England's latter comments on the previous application acknowledge the reduction in height of the chimneys to that proposed within this application, which helped to break up the massing of this element of the proposal.
- 16.32 This prominence of the proposed development is perhaps most visible in relation to the highly historically significant Bodley Library within views from along St Andrews Street, Christ's Lane and internally within Bath Court. The separation afforded to the Bodley is increasing as a result of the development, from approximately 1.8 metres at first floor level to approximately 3.3 metres within the proposed development, however the height and proximity of the building, particularly the proposed staircase tower is notably increased from approximately 5.7 metres currently to approximately 13 metres to the top of the staircase tower.
- 16.33 The height of the staircase tower has been raised as an issue by both the Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England, with the latter recommending that a reduction in height would improve the relationship of the proposed building to the Bodley Library.
- 16.34 The applicant, however, has chosen to retain the current height of the proposed staircase tower as an alternative means of escape forming part of the fire strategy. Within a cover letter provided with this application, the applicant has reiterated their view that the proposal results in no overall heritage harm, including this element of the scheme.
- 16.35 However, officers are of the view that the impact upon the setting of the Bodley Library from public views along St Andrews Street and Christ's Lane is, in line with the comments from the Council's Conservation officer, Historic England and the Victorian Society, harmful. Specifically, officers consider the level of harm arising from this aspect of the scheme to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library to be low. Officers agree with the view of the consultees that this element of the proposal would appear overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley Library, contrary to the applicant's assessment.
- 16.36 This heritage harm is considered to be restricted to the setting of the Bodley Library which forms a part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Other

elements of the proposed development, including the increased spacing between the Bodley and the proposed building, are considered to mitigate any further harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings. These elements are relevant and must be considered as part of this application. Internal works to the listed buildings that do not require planning permission but may result in enhancements have been considered within the relevant listed building consent application and do not fall for consideration here.

- 16.37 Another notable aspect is the works proposed to Bath Court, the elevation of the proposed library facing towards this space and the impact that this has upon the setting of the buildings on the southern side of First Court.
- 16.38 Whilst the proposed library would enclose Bath Court to a greater extent than the existing library, the high-quality design, combined with enhancements to the landscaping of Bath Court are considered to mitigate the impact of the increase in scale upon the other aspects of the listed buildings such that they do not result in any further harm beyond that identified to the Bodley Library. It is considered that this view is consistent with that of both Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 16.39 Whilst the Council's Conservation Officer considers the proposal would sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed buildings within the College. Officers consider that the proposed development, through the provision of a modern library building would also help to sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities for students, however this is a public benefit of the scheme rather than a direct heritage benefit.
- 16.40 The proposed development is also considered to provide certain other public benefits that are given weight in the planning balance as referred to in Policy HE6 of the NPPF. The development's public facing Christ's Lane façade is considered to be significantly enhanced from that of the existing 1970's library building. Whilst this point is disputed strongly within many third-party comments, both the Council's Urban Design officer and Design Review panel have endorsed this element of the proposal. The Urban Design officer has stated that the façade onto Christ's Lane strikes a fine balance between the formality of a college building and the playfulness of a public facing building, achieving an elegant and respectful balance between new and old elements of the surrounding area.
- 16.41 The Design Review Panel meanwhile reviewed the scheme as part of the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Their report on the scheme

specifically stated that the Panel acknowledged the façade onto Christ's Lane could not be an active frontage with spill out, but there was opportunity to introduce, for example, views up to the ceiling of the building. The Panel stated they were "happy with the design principles of the elevation facing Christ's Lane". Officers consider that this, within a highly visible, public space, would result a tangible public benefit. In addition to the appearance of the façade itself, the provision of a large, integrated public bench and public art in the form of the gate onto Christ's Lane are further, albeit relatively minor, public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 16.42 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF meanwhile adds that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported."
- 16.43 There is an additional consideration that the proposed development would enhance and better reveal the significance of the College's heritage assets more favourably than at present. The proposed library facilities, in addition to an increased physical separation to the Bodley Library, would provide additional, improved facilities that would facilitate the continued use of the Bodley Library for its intended purpose and allow for glimpsed views into the reconfigured Bath Court.
- 16.44 It is fundamental to recognise that there are two separate statutory duties when considering harm to listed buildings and harm to Conservation Areas, falling under sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, respectively. Further, section 102 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires separate consideration of the effects on relevant heritage assets, including Registered Parks and Gardens. Therefore, officers consider it important to clarify that the overall impact upon the listed buildings is identified separately from any impact upon the Conservation Area, and the Registered Park and Garden.
- 16.45 As set out above, officers consider there would be a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library.
- 16.46 The overall impact of the proposed new library building upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is considered to be a positive one. The current uncovered wall now facing onto Christ's Lane is replaced by a façade that balances the need for a "formal" elevation befitting of a college such as Christ's with elements that provide engagement for passers-by. Subject to the conditions requested by the Conservation Officer in their comments, it is considered on balance, that the proposed

library building, despite the increase in scale, would result in an enhancement to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additional conditions, not referred to within the Conservation Officer's comments, relating to the salvage/ re-use of materials and the protection and support the listed buildings are also recommended in line with the previous application.

16.47 In addition, the proposal is considered to result in no adverse harm to the Grade II Registered College Historic Park and Garden as set out above and considered by the Gardens Trust.

16.48 With regards to archaeological potential, the site is indicated to have high archaeological potential with previous investigation nearby finding medieval evidence. As such, in line with the comments from the County Council Archaeology officer, a condition is recommended regarding a programme for archaeological work.

Alternative designs

16.49 CLAG have contested, within Ground 4 of the Judicial Review of the previous application, that insufficient consideration was given to potential alternative designs on the site that could result in less heritage harm.

16.50 Firstly, as set out above, it is important to clarify that officers do not dispute the proposal would result in a level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed Christ's College buildings, specifically the setting of the Bodley Library.

16.51 Three main alternatives have been suggested by third parties as less harmful ways for the College to achieve the updated library facilities that they seek. These alternatives are: the previously consented and now expired Rick Mather scheme; a proposal from CLAG themselves that was put forward as part of the previous application that is subject to Judicial Review; and a version of the College Master Plan that presented other options for a library provision for the College.

16.52 Potential alternative schemes that would result in less harm to identified heritage assets are material considerations. However, the weight given to these alternatives is a matter for the decision maker. Officers consider that that is dependent upon their viability and prospect of implementation.

16.53 Regarding the first of the alternatives put forward, the Rick Mather scheme was granted permission in 2013 and refreshed in 2016. Despite permission having been granted twice, these schemes were never

implemented. The officer recommendation for both schemes does not appear to identify any harm from the proposal to heritage assets. The college have since decided to not proceed with the previous Mather design, the primary reason for which has been stated to be the proposed increase in the size of the basement which those schemes required. This element would have required significant below ground works in close proximity to the sensitive historic fabric of the Grade I listed buildings, as well as having significant sustainability impacts through the requirement for concrete construction.

- 16.54 Plans relating to the previous Mather Scheme are provided in Appendix 8. As explained in that section, the previous Mather scheme is smaller in height than the building proposed within this application. The previous scheme however also enclosed Bath Court within a glazed roof which had the potential to directly impact historic fabric within the walls of the Grade I listed buildings.
- 16.55 Whilst no heritage harm was identified within the officer report of the previous Mather schemes, it is noted that Historic England did raise a number of points within comments submitted that would have improved the impact of the scheme on the Grade I listed college buildings.
- 16.56 It can be noted that comments from Historic England on the 2025 application (received 29 July 2025) refer to the fact that *“the removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college.”*
- 16.57 Updated comments have not been received, nor would it be reasonable to expect them from consultees exploring the possibility of reapplying the Mather scheme. The applicant has made the case that this previous scheme is no longer viable for the College and officers consider that the previous scheme can only be given very limited weight as an alternative to this application.
- 16.58 With regards to the alternative put forward by CLAG, a façade fronting onto Christ’s Lane continues to be provided along with a survey undertaken at the time of the previous application, inviting members of the public to vote in comparison to the applicant’s scheme. The survey results provided state that 71% of those surveyed would support the CLAG alternative as opposed to that put forward by the applicant within this application.
- 16.59 It is unclear to officers if the CLAG design is an alternative that is in any way a realistic starting point for re-imagining the development of the site in

a way that would be more acceptable in planning terms. The CLAG scheme only comprises a single façade of the site and is not therefore an alternative “scheme”. It lacks reference to fulfilling any client requirements and has no evolutionary justification or detailed plans to inform a reasoned judgement as to its credibility. Like the Mather scheme, it is lower in height onto Christ’s Lane. It provides a more traditional approach to the design of the façade onto Christ’s Lane and has more openings onto Christ’s Lane. A comparison of its Christ’s Lane elevation with that proposed within this application is attached as Appendix 9.

- 16.60 However, it is not possible to give it any meaningful planning weight as a viable alternative. As opposed to the Mather scheme, which previously was put forward by the College itself, the CLAG design has never been fully considered by the College. It’s lack of development is a void and an obstacle to the LPA in assisting its fuller consideration as an alternative. As an alternative, it is unclear if it is of any realistic merit capable of meeting the needs of the College and its students.
- 16.61 Given the lack of any meaningful detail, beyond a façade, it is also not possible for officers to consider if the CLAG design would result in any other harm beyond that which can be assessed from a single elevation. For this reason, little to no material weight can be given to this as a viable alternative to the applicant’s proposal.
- 16.62 A further alternative was put forward by CLAG at the Development Control Forum meeting on the 29th July this year. This alternative relates to the College’s Master Plan dating from 2023. CLAG suggest that this masterplan was adopted by the college and itself proposed a smaller library building within the currently proposed location, in addition to additional library facilities elsewhere within the college grounds. It is therefore suggested that this is a viable alternative for the College to pursue.
- 16.63 The College have since provided a response, following the DCF meeting. This letter states that the masterplan suggested two possible sites for the library; the existing Bath Court site or on the Hobson Street carpark. The Governing Body of the College then voted (with only 1 fellow dissenting) to rebuild on the existing site to maximise the use of the historic Bodley Library.
- 16.64 Officers do not consider therefore that the existence of this master plan is evidence of the college suggesting to “break up” the library provision into multiple sites. It is however evidence that there was consideration

previously given to an alternative location for the provision of a new library.

- 16.65 Despite the fact that consideration was given to this alternative by the College previously, officers do not have any information to suggest that an alternative location, such as the Hobson Street car park would be a suitable location now. There is also no information before officers that allows any significant assessment to be made with regards to a library within this alternative location.
- 16.66 Therefore, this too is considered to be afforded very little weight as a viable alternative for the college to the current proposed application.

Overall

Heritage Balance, Benefits and Harms

- 16.67 Historic England's position in response to the application is set out in full within Appendix 2 to the application and summarised within this officer report. Whilst there is a position of no objection, it is clear that reservations remain with the scheme in terms of the scale and massing of the development and the impact of this upon the setting of the Grade I listed College buildings. Ground 1 of the Judicial Review has been addressed, insofar as this report more thoroughly and clearly sets out Historic England's position.

Heritage Benefits

- 16.68 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF states that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported
- 16.69 The proposed development is considered, in line with the view of the Council's conservation officer to result in benefits to relevant heritage assets that fall within the heritage balance as set out in Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 16.70 One such benefit is the enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, due to the increased spacing afforded to the Bodley Library at lower level.

- 16.71 The significantly improved landscaping within Bath Court is considered an enhancement to this particular area of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

Heritage Harm

- 16.72 There is however, in the view of officers, a level of heritage harm arising from the scale and massing of the proposed development. As set out above, this is identified to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library and considered of a low level.
- 16.73 Officers consider that the heritage benefits alone, arising from this scheme, are insufficient to outweigh the substantial weight that must be given to the conservation of the heritage asset arising from the harm identified to the setting of the Grade I listed building. This conclusion is consistent with the comments of Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer and takes a different approach to that of the applicant, which concludes that the overall heritage impact is beneficial, without acknowledging any harm as part of this application. The heritage harm identified and considered by officers is also notably less than the higher level of harm claimed by CLAG and other objectors.
- 16.74 In conclusion, substantial weight should be given to the conservation of any designated heritage asset. There is a level of harm identified to the setting of the highly significant Grade I listed Bodley Library.
- 16.75 Nevertheless, given that a level of overall heritage harm is identified, the application would be in conflict with Policy 61 of the Local Plan. There is, therefore, a requirement, under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal and to ensure accordance with Section 66 of the LBCA 1990 and the special regard that must be given to preserving listed buildings and their setting.
- 16.76 The detailed assessment of public benefits and the balance required under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF is reserved for the planning balance at the end of this report. In summary however, and as dealt with in detail in the planning balance section, officers consider that taken together the economic, social and environmental benefits of the scheme are substantial. In accordance with Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF 2026, these benefits provide clear and convincing justification that outweighs the low level of harm to the setting of designated heritage asset.
- 16.77 All four grounds of judicial challenge have been directly addressed as part of this officer report.

17. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 17.1 The application is supported by a sustainability statement outlining the approach adopted by the application towards sustainable design.
- 17.2 Given the nature of the works proposed, mixing both a new build library with elements of refurbishing existing, historic buildings, a bespoke strategy has been proposed throughout the pre-application process through to this application.
- 17.3 The development specifically seeks to follow Passivhaus principles for the new build element with high performing thermal fabric, airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 17.4 The existing buildings are to be subject to roof insulation with glazing upgrades to the Upper Hall along with moving from gas heating to fully electric air-source heat pumps.
- 17.5 Overall, the targets set out within the provided sustainability statement are, in consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer, considered to be appropriate. They seek to achieve high standards of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon reduction within the constraints of working within historic buildings.
- 17.6 It is considered that the appropriate steps have been followed, taking a hierarchical approach to improving the sustainability performance of the historic buildings within the college. A number of conditions are requested by the Council's Sustainability Officer, relating to:
- Compliance with the provided sustainability statement
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Water efficiency calculations
 - Water metering
- 17.7 All of which are considered to be appropriate and reasonably necessary to ensure that the development provides an acceptable level of environmental sustainability enhancements
- 17.8 The applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and subject to conditions the proposal is compliant with policies 28, 29 and 63 of the Local Plan of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

18. Biodiversity

- 18.1 In accordance with policy and circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', the application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 18.2 This provided assessment concludes that the Statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not triggered in this case given that the permanent works proposed would not impact greater than 25m² of on-site habitat. Given that the majority of the site comprises either existing buildings or sealed surfaces, this is not disputed. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG, that the temporary facilities for use during the construction phase are proposed on the grass within Second Court and would have a footprint of greater than 25m². Given their temporary nature however, and the fact that the grass will be returned to its previous condition, this is not considered to be reasonable to trigger BNG requirement for the proposal.
- 18.3 The submitted report also states that no protected species will be affected by the development. Indeed, all of the buildings are suitably sealed and of construction that would make it unlikely for bat or bird species to use them to roost. Whilst any risk is not considered significant, mitigation measures such as work being undertaken outside of roosting seasons are set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment. This mitigation is suggested to be secured by way of a condition requiring compliance with the provided ecological impact assessment.
- 18.4 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and the conclusions reached within the provided Ecology Assessment. This includes the recommendation that ecological enhancements are sought within the site. Details of which can be secured by way of a condition as recommended.
- 18.5 In consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, subject to an appropriate condition, officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

19. Water management and flood risk

- 19.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding from fluvial sources. Bath Court and parts of Second Court within the College are also at a low risk of surface water flooding.

- 19.2 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy in support of the application. As part of the proposed development, a new sustainable drainage system is proposed to be incorporated helping to manage surface water for storm events up to the 1in100 year level including climate change allowance. It is concluded that surface water from the proposed development can be controlled through the use of attenuation, restricting the flow of surface water to 2l/s.
- 19.3 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has advised that there is no objection to the proposed development, supporting the use of rain gardens for controlling the rate of surface water drainage from the site in addition to providing water quality treatment. Conditions are recommended by the LLFA relating to a scheme of surface water drainage as well as control measures for surface water run-off during construction, both of which would help to mitigate the impact of the development on surface water management within the site.
- 19.4 It should be clarified that comments from the LLFA, received on the 19th August raised an objection following re-consultation. They have however since clarified that, given there was no material change in the application, and that the re-consultation was to allow assessment in light of the updated NPPF, that they retained their position of no-objection.
- 19.5 Anglian Water have been consulted on this application and have raised no objection due to the fact that the proposed development would not result in an increase in the number of staff or students within the site.
- 19.6 There also remains the potential for more modern appliances within the proposed building to reduce flow rates. Officers do not therefore consider that the application would result in any additional risks to the Cambridge Water Recycling Centre or subsequent environmental harm arising from exceedances.
- 19.7 The applicants have suitably addressed the issues of water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions the proposal is in accordance with policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

20. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 20.1 Within the grounds of the College there is limited vehicular access whilst the development proposed is not seeking any alterations to this existing arrangement. Access to the library by students would be from within the college grounds. There is an existing access into Bath Court from Christ's

Lane beneath the bridge linking the Bodley library to the existing library. This entrance is to be retained between the expanded opening between the historic library and that proposed.

- 20.2 The application is supported by a Transport statement and “Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP)” These documents confirm that the proposed development is not expected to result in any meaningful increase in the number of students or staff within the college. Which, combined with the lack of vehicular access to the library is such that the proposals are not considered likely to result in any notable change in traffic movements.
- 20.3 Deliveries to the library kitchen are proposed to remain as existing, from along either Christ’s Lane or Drummer Street between 06:30am and 09:00am. Officers do not consider that the frequency of such deliveries is likely to significantly increase as a result of the proposed development.
- 20.4 The provided DCEMP addresses concerns regarding the construction impacts of the proposed development. These concerns were centered around the safety of pedestrians using the surrounding streets, including along Christ’s Lane itself which is a busy thoroughfare between key parts of the city and the Drummer Street bus station.
- 20.5 It is acknowledged that Christ’s College & Jesus College are the head leaseholders of the land beneath Christ’s Lane, with the County Highways Authority adopting over half of the width of Christ’s Lane as public highway. The division of the path is denoted approximately by the drainage gutter running along Christ’s Lane with the land closest to the College being private land and that closest the re-development of the southern side, being adopted public highway.
- 20.6 The DCEMP sets out the envisaged demolition and construction process for the proposed development. This includes two main points of access to the site, firstly from St Andrews Street, with vehicles parking alongside the College buildings and the other from the western edge of Drummer Street bus station. Whilst the number and specific arrangement has not been finalised at this stage, each area receiving deliveries will be served by an appropriate number of staff/ banksman to ensure safety.
- 20.7 Representations received from CLAG raise contradictions and uncertainty regarding the ability to maintain pedestrian access along Christ’s Lane during construction works. It is noted that the DCEMP provided states that temporary diversions may be required during certain phases of the construction works, including during concrete deliveries.. In any case,

given it is an adopted highway, this would require a Traffic Regulation Order to be agreed with the County Council. Further details of this would also be secured through the recommended DCEMP condition within this report (Condition 3).

- 20.8 The draft schedule provided sets out that early morning deliveries between 06:30-07:00 are proposed to minimise the disruption to bus routes but not too early to inconvenience nearby residents. The full delivery window for the site is proposed from 07:00-23:00, with an attempt to restrict any deliveries after 19:00. Officers acknowledge that the construction access to the site is complex due to its proximity to nearby residential properties but also due to the highway access along St Andrews Street which is a frequently used one-way system through the centre of the city.
- 20.9 The primary point of access for the construction phase is proposed to be from Drummer Street as this would have the least impact upon the existing highway. With only certain instances, including the delivery of concrete requiring the use of the St Andrews Street access.
- 20.10 The DCEMP provided is identical to the document that was provided to discharge condition 3 of the previous permission that is currently under Judicial Review. Officers consider that it must be considered afresh for this application, with no weight able to be given to the previous discharge of condition permission.
- 20.11 Whilst, as set out above, information has been provided regarding the impact of the construction phase upon the surrounding highway and pedestrian safety, it is considered that a condition is necessary with regards to an updated Demolition and Construction Ecological Management Plan. This would ensure that the information requested by the Highways Authority within their comments is received and assessed, in addition to impacts upon neighbouring amenity. Subject to this condition as recommended, the Traffic Management Plan condition recommended by the local highway authority is not deemed necessary with this information required within any DCEMP.
- 20.12 Subject to conditions as applicable, the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

21. Car and cycle provision

- 21.1 As existing, there is no vehicular access to the site within the application boundary. There is a small area of car parking within the College along Hobson Street although this is not considered to be relevant to the proposed development given the lack of additional trips envisaged as a result of the development.
- 21.2 As with car parking, there is no existing cycle parking within the application site with none proposed as part of the application. It is understood that currently students utilise public cycle parking areas within close proximity to the site. Again, given the fact that the proposed development is not expected to result in any increase in student or staff numbers, it is not considered to be reasonable to require any additional cycle parking within the application site.
- 21.3 The proposed parking is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

22. Amenity

Impact upon the residential properties of the southern re-development

- 22.1 Whilst Christ's Lane itself is slightly wider given the overhang of the first floor level of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, the first and second floor of adjacent redevelopment are understood to be separated by approximately 6.5 metres from the southern elevation of the proposed library building. Having visited the residential apartments within the second and third floors of the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it was evident that the closest part of this building to the College and therefore also the proposed library is a shared access deck that runs along the length of the building. It was noted that there were some small tables and chairs set out along this area, however given the residential units all have their own private gardens, it is not considered that this area provides any significant amenity value for the residential units and is rather a means of access.
- 22.2 Having reviewed floor plans of the adjacent neighbouring properties, in addition to visiting the apartments, it is understood that for units 4-10, in addition to front doors, each property has two windows facing north towards the application site serving both a kitchen and bathroom. Each of these units appears relatively open plan at second floor level with large living spaces opening out to private gardens to the south. These properties are also all duplex units with bedrooms located the floor above

with these northern facing windows further set back from Christ's Lane and the proposed library.

- 22.3 Whilst units 4-10 of the Christ's Lane redevelopment are likely to be the most significantly impacted by the proposed development, there are additional units that do not face directly towards the proposed replacement library namely units 1 and 11 at either end of the northern elevation.
- 22.4 The provided daylight & sunlight study concludes that all of the windows assessed with a requirement for daylight pass the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) test with the exception of Window 78. This window is one of the first-floor windows that serves the open plan living space of unit 4. It is not considered that the window is the primary window serving this habitable space which would be the larger opening at the southern side of the property. It is also acknowledged that the existing VSC level of this window is significantly compromised by the overhang above the covered walkway to the north. Specifically, the existing VSC level of the window is 5.1% meaning that the reduction of only 1.7% exceeds the BRE guidance that levels should not fall below 80% of the initial level.
- 22.5 With regards to the Daylight Distribution test (No Skyline Test) this is applied to understand the daylight distribution within buildings, evaluating the areas of rooms where no part of the sky would be visible. In this instance every one of the rooms assessed passed the test meaning that there is less than 20% of the room where the sky is not visible and any existing values have not been reduced to less than 80% of their initial value.
- 22.6 Considering the above, the only window that fails the VSC test is not considered a primary window, which is highlighted by the fact that the room it serves passes the NSL test. This, taken in combination with the fact that the window is already significantly impacted by the overhang above, is such that it is considered the impact of the proposed development from loss of light is acceptable.
- 22.7 CLAG have submitted multiple representations that raise concerns regarding the fact that the provided daylight & sunlight assessment information does not accord with BRE guidance. Officers acknowledge this, however it is considered that the level of information provided is sufficient to assess the impact of the proposed development, which is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

- 22.8 Having visited the neighbouring building, there is no doubt that the proposed replacement library, owing to its height, would be visible from the neighbouring properties within the Christ's Lane re-development. The loss of a view is not a material planning consideration that carries any weight in the planning balance. Whilst the overbearing nature of a proposal is a consideration, in this instance, the distance between the habitable windows of the neighbouring properties and the height of the proposed library is such that the development is not considered to result in an overbearing impact.
- 22.9 There are a number of windows within the southern elevation of the proposed library building that would face towards the neighbouring residential properties of the Christ's Lane redevelopment. Those windows at the third floor level of the proposed library would be at a similar height to the deck access and subsequently the front windows of the neighbouring properties of the southern redevelopment.
- 22.10 The separation distance between the windows of the library and those of the neighbouring properties is approximately 9 metres, with the balustrade of the deck access providing a certain level of screening between the two. Whilst similar in level, the windows within the library do sit lower than those of the residential properties meaning that there would not be a direct line of sight between the two. Therefore, given the deck access between the two, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking and therefore loss of privacy as a result of the proposed development.
- 22.11 In addition to the windows of the proposed library, a garden terrace is also proposed to the eastern edge of the site between the library itself and the Upper Hall. It is noted that concerns have been received relating to the impact of the use of this terrace upon the residential properties within the Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.12 The terrace itself is set back from the Christ's Lane elevation of the site by approximately 3.7 metres. Given the height of the terrace, significantly lower than that of the residential units within the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking from this area towards neighbouring occupants. The potential use of the outdoor area would not be expected to result in any significant noise disturbance above that to be expected from pedestrians along Christ's Lane. Given therefore, the additional distance between the terrace and residential properties of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane the impacts of this element of the proposal are not considered to be significant.

Impact upon the retail units of Christ's Lane

- 22.13 Within the ground and first floors of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane there are a number of different premises along the southern side of Christ's Lane. They are all considered to fall within a form of class E use, including retail, banking, café etc.
- 22.14 BRE guidance within the "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight" (BR209), states that the guidelines within the document "may also be applied to any existing non-domestic building where the occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight; this would normally include schools, hospitals, hotels and hostels, small workshops, and some offices.
- 22.15 Concerns have been raised by multiple third parties with regards to the impact of the development on windows along Christ's Lane that serve these class E units and the subsequent impact that this would have upon the viability of these units.
- 22.16 In this instance, it is not considered, that within units such as those adjacent the site, users would have any significant expectation of daylight. The majority of users of shops or services such as these are likely to only visit for a short period of time before leaving. It is therefore not considered to be reasonable to apply the BRE guidelines and to assess the impact of the proposed development upon these units.

Impact upon Christ's Lane itself

- 22.17 In addition to the impact upon the class E units along Christ's Lane, concerns have also been raised by interested parties regarding the overshadowing of and impact upon the amenity of Christ's Lane.
- 22.18 Christ's Lane's primary function is as a throughfare linking important retail hubs, the city centre and the Drummer Street Bus Station. Given its importance as a means of connection within the city, it is heavily used by pedestrians throughout the day. In addition, as a means of connectivity however, it occasionally hosts pop-up stalls serving food and drink, as well as seating outside of the Starbucks café on the southern side.
- 22.19 In addition to the impact upon the character of this area as assessed previously within this report, consideration must also be given to the impact upon it as an area of amenity.

- 22.20 Whilst officers do not consider that a full assessment is required regarding the impact upon Christ's Lane, additional information has been provided by the applicant in the form of a daylight study highlighting the impact of the proposed development from overshadowing on the lane at summer solstice, spring equinox and winter solstice. It is acknowledged, as has been raised, that a BRE compliant assessment should include analysis at autumn equinox. This is not however considered necessary in this instance given the minor impact that the proposal is considered to have.
- 22.21 The development, and new library building would undoubtedly somewhat enclose part of Christ's Lane as a result of the increase in height. It is not considered however, as shown on the provided shadowing studies, that this increase in height would result in any significant, further overshadowing of Christ's Lane. The Christ's Lane redevelopment, being to the south of Christ's Lane and greater in height would be the primary building impacting the area and itself casts a shadow over the majority of Christ's Lane at ground level. It is also considered that the Lane would retain late afternoon sunlight from the western end of Christ's Lane that would remain unobstructed by the development.
- 22.22 The development proposed would increase the level of shadowing upon the Christ's Lane re-development, however as discussed above, this impact is not deemed significant.
- 22.23 Whilst the impact from overshadowing to Christ's Lane is not considered significant, it is not disputed that the increase in scale from the application would further enclose the northern side of the lane. Notwithstanding the design and appearance considerations given previously in this report, an increase in enclosure would not necessarily be considered to result in amenity harm.
- 22.24 Given the function of Christ's Lane primarily as a pedestrian thoroughfare, the impact of the development upon this space is not considered to be significant or to result in any meaningful harm.
- 22.25 The proposal is compliant with policies 35 and 58 of the Local Plan.

Accessible design

- 22.26 The Design and Access Statement as well as the Planning Access Statement set out the accessibility principles of the proposal and the steps taken to improve over the existing buildings shortcomings.

- 22.27 The existing library building, and wider College site are considered to be extremely inaccessible for a number of reasons, including the lack of level access throughout. Whilst a number of the works to improve accessibility relate to the previous listed building consent, the proposed library building itself would significantly improve accessibility of the college's library facilities.
- 22.28 The library has been designed to tie in with existing levels of its surroundings including mezzanines and split levels being fully accessible. The principal elements of sustainable design includes level landing at all access and egress points, universal and wheelchair- accessible sanitary accommodation on all floors and multi-faith prayer room with independent level access.
- 22.29 The proposed development itself does not seek any physical alterations to Christ's Lane, it would however, have an impact through the construction phase and the façade looking onto Christ's Lane. The construction impacts may result in a minor impact through exacerbating conflict of users along Christ's Lane, however this can be mitigated through the recommended conditions. The proposed design of the library, through the Christ's Lane façade would improve passive surveillance along Christ's Lane, which is considered, despite the increase in height, to improve safety and surveillance along the public thoroughfare including for those who may be more vulnerable to crime or fear of crime.
- 22.30 Overall, it is considered that careful consideration has been given to ensuring that the proposal meets the principles of inclusive design, in accordance with Policy 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and NPPF TR4.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 22.31 The nature of the application site being tightly constrained with neighbouring residential properties nearby is such that the demolition and construction phases of development would have a certain level of impact on the public space of Christ's Lane, as well as the neighbouring residential properties of the southern Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.32 The length of the construction period for the proposed development is not understood to be fully known at this stage. However, as set out in the draft construction management plan, the disruption from the construction works is likely to be focussed around the junction between Christ's Lane and St Andrew's Street as well as Drummer Street Bus Station.

- 22.33 The Council's Environmental Health Team have assessed the application and have raised no objection to the construction phase of the proposed development. The environmental health officer acknowledges previous discharge of conditions applications specifically relating to conditions 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan), 6 (Airbourne Dust) and 7 (Demolition and Construction noise and vibration) of permission 25/02161/FUL and recommends compliance conditions in accordance with previously accepted documents. As discussed previously, officers consider that these previous discharge of condition approvals cannot be relied upon given that they relate to an application under Judicial Review. Therefore, in line with the previous permission conditions are recommended regarding Dust and a demolition/ construction noise and vibration assessment.
- 22.34 CLAG have, within their representations suggested that a scheme demonstrating an acceptable noise impact upon the residential units to the south of Christ's Lane should be provided prior to determination of this application. Whilst noting the previous application approving a Noise and Vibration Assessment, this is to be required through a fresh condition on this application. There is not considered a requirement for this information prior to determination.
- 22.35 CLAG have also raised within multiple representations that the provided Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan document (prepared by Barnes Construction) (DCEMP) specifically states that it was provided for the purpose of discharging condition 3 of the previous permission (25/02161/FUL). And that in the view of CLAG this should not be considered within the assessment of this application, in which case there would be no information relating to the construction management phase.
- 22.36 Officers do not dispute the fact that the DCEMP cannot be relied upon as a document upon which a compliance condition could be recommended. However, the information within the document does include that provided within the "Draft Construction Management Plan" provided with the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Therefore, subject to the same DCEMP condition recommended previously, the impact of the proposal through its construction is considered acceptable.
- 22.37 In line with the comments received from the Environmental Health officer a condition is recommended regarding hours of deliveries and collections to the site relating to its use. Given the proximity of neighbouring properties this is deemed to be necessary to protect their amenity.

Plant Noise

- 22.38 The proposed development, in order to meet the proposed sustainability targets is proposed to include plant room at first, second and third floors, with the noise generating units located on the rooftop. Specifically, the noise generating units comprise 2No. Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and 4No. Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery units (MVHR).
- 22.39 As set out in the provided noise impact assessment, the proposed ASHPs are significantly louder than the proposed MVHR units and therefore dictate the noise environment of the proposed development. It is also confirmed that both ASHPs will operate between 06:00-23:00, ASHP 2 will not operate between 23:00-06:00 whilst ASHP 1 will be operating in Super Silent Mode.
- 22.40 The provided noise impact assessment concludes that the noise levels at the site are dictated by road traffic primarily from along St Andrews Street as well as pedestrian traffic including along Christ's Lane.
- 22.41 There is no objection, in line with comments from the Environmental Health officer to the conclusion within the Noise Assessment, that the site is suitable for the development proposed, including the relevant plant.
- 22.42 A condition requiring specific noise assessment relating to proposed plant to include insulation/ mitigation to be provided prior to the installation of any plant is considered to be reasonable and necessary to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Odour

- 22.43 Forming part of the application is the refurbishment of the College kitchens including changes to the internal layout which will require alterations to the existing ventilation system. Additionally, during the construction phase, a temporary building to house the kitchens and dining facilities is proposed within the Second Court of the college.
- 22.44 The proposed chimneys projecting above the library building provide a route for exhaust from the proposed kitchen facilities. Whilst the reduction in the height of the chimneys is considered preferable in design terms, it is acknowledged as highlighted by the Environmental Health Officer, that this may compromise their effectiveness for ventilation.
- 22.45 Overall, however, despite the reduction in height of the chimneys, the odour impact assessment and proposed mitigation is considered to be

acceptable such that no significant odour impacts are envisaged. A condition requiring compliance with the provided odour assessment is considered to be required to ensure that the impact in this regard is acceptable.

Artificial Lighting

- 22.46 Limited information has been provided regarding the details of any artificial lighting within the application site. Given the potential sensitivity with nearby residential properties, a condition requiring an impact assessment and lighting scheme is required prior to the installation of any artificial lighting.

Contaminated Land

- 22.47 Whilst there is no specific historic use that makes the site potentially contaminated, it is a brownfield site and therefore a contaminated land risk assessment has been undertaken. As was raised by the Environmental Health Officer, this document had not initially been provided with this application. It has since been provided during the process of the application.
- 22.48 The conclusion of this assessment is that 600mm of Made Ground is removed within the landscaped areas of Bath Court and replaced with clean topsoil. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG that the Council's Environmental Health Officer referred to the removal of 60mm of Made Ground and replacement with topsoil, as opposed to the 600mm referred to in the applicant's report. However, updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer confirmed that this was a typographical error. The information within the report is correct and therefore can be relied upon to form a recommendation.
- 22.49 In line with the comments received from the council's Environmental Health Officer comments, there is no objection to this recommendation within the report. A condition relating to unexpected contamination along with another requiring provision of a materials management plan are considered to be appropriate and necessary in this instance.
- 22.50 Updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer also requested a change in the trigger of the Material Management Plan condition to "Prior to the placement of ground forming materials". This updated trigger is earlier than that previously requested and tightens the control over management of potentially contaminated land. The trigger of the condition

recommended is prior to development above ground which is considered to tighten the control afforded by the condition requirements.

Air Quality

- 22.51 An Air Quality Assessment has been provided in support of the application along with a construction dust risk assessment.
- 22.52 The operational use of the site is not considered to raise any concerns with regards to air quality. As discussed, details of Dust Management is required to be provided via a condition.

Summary

- 22.53 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 of the Local Plan. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Local Plan.

23. Other matters

23.1 Public Art

- 23.2 As part of the proposed development a bench is incorporated into the design of the Christ's Lane façade to provide seating for members of the public using Christ's Lane. Whilst a public element of the scheme, this element is a functional output of the proposed development and its design. It is not therefore considered public art.

- 23.3 There is however, increased scope to provide a form of public art within the gate providing access from Bath Court to Christ's Lane. The gate would remain closed to the public as it is currently, however there is considered to be a design solution that could be found to allow views through into Bath Court.

- 23.4 As details of the design of this gate have not been provided at this stage, a condition is recommended requiring details of public art to be provided prior to commencement of development above ground level. Subject to this condition the proposal would comply with the requirements of the Cambridge City Public Art SPD.

23.5 Crime

- 23.6 Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding the impact that the proposed development may have upon the safety of pedestrians using Christ's Lane, especially at night. Whilst the proposal would increase the height of the façade along Christ's Lane, it is considered that the perceived surveillance would be increased by virtue of the number of windows within the façade facing onto Christ's Lane.
- 23.7 The Police liaison officer has commented on the development raising no objection, with a condition recommended regarding "secured by design". Given that officers do not consider the development would result in any notable reduction in safety, it is deemed that this condition is not required.

Waste

- 23.8 Comments have been received from the Council's Shared Waste Officer raising no objection to the proposed development. This is on the assumption that the waste disposal for the proposal can be absorbed within the existing refuse arrangement for the wider college site. Officers have no reason to dispute this with the level of waste created from the increase in floor area not deemed to significantly increase the pressure on waste storage and collection.

Public Access

- 23.9 Third-parties including Christ's Lane Action Group have continuously raised concerns regarding the potential for the proposed development to benefit the college as a private body, thereby reducing the number of public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 23.10 Following the DCF meeting on the 29 July 2026 the College have provided a letter (Appendix 10) detailing increased public access as part of this application.
- 23.11 Currently, whilst the College provides public access outside of Christmas week and exam term, there is however currently no access to Bath Court or the library. As set out in the letter from the College, the proposal includes opening up of Bath Court to the public whenever the College is currently open.
- 23.12 The College have also proposed opening up the interior of the proposed library building as part of this application. Two 30-minute tours are proposed 3 days of the week for every week outside of the College term time for members of the public with booking via the College website. In addition, the other two days of the week, outside of College term time, the

library would be open to groups of students/ pupils from Cambridgeshire schools for tours and quiet study. This access would be for groups of up to 30 children with visits lasting for up to 90 minutes, provided during school hours.

- 23.13 It is considered that sufficient information has been provided at this stage of the application to allow the public access provided as part of this application to be given weight as a public benefit. To ensure that this is provided, maintained and effectively managed a condition is recommended requiring submission of a public access management plan.

24. Third party representations

- 24.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Conflicting deadlines/ lack of sufficient consultation time to consider the proposal and its additional information	Clarification has been sent to all notified neighbours clarifying the consultation deadline, including updating the expiry date on the portal. Sufficient time has also been given to consider all information, including that provided during the process of the application.
Failure to consult No.19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane	Notification was sent to all of these properties and an additional commercial unit along St Andrew's Street on the 1 st July
Garden Trust's consultee comments are incorrectly filed on the portal	This arises from the way that the comments were received from the Garden Trust. They do now appear as a "Consultee Comment" under "Documents" on the portal.
Applicant's view of the heritage impacts including that raised at the Public meeting held by the College on the 6 th July.	The Officer assessment is set out in this report, which is acknowledged to differ from that of the applicant.
Mis-representation of officer presentation within the press	Following clarification, this public mis-representation of the number of comments received was corrected.
Lobbying of members by the applicant from a letter sent on the 11 th June.	Members should be aware of their duty when sitting on planning committee including that they must not be pre-determined prior to making a decision.
Refusal to publish CLAG record of the 6 th July public meeting.	An initial record provided by CLAG was declined to be uploaded at the request of the applicant.

	However a subsequent version of this record was received and is uploaded to the public file.
Failure to consult upon the response of the Victorian Society to the agent and architect following their email to the Victorian Society.	It is acknowledged that the agent and architect of the application contacted the Victorian Society during the application to explain their difference in opinion regarding the heritage assessment of the scheme. A response was received from the Victorian Society, and published on the website on the 23rd July. It is not considered that this response from the Victorian Society required any re-consultation and in any instance sufficient time has passed to allow review of this on the portal.
Incorrect publication dates of letters/ responses received	Officers are of the view that all representations are uploaded against dates that reflect when they were uploaded.
Incorrect/ inaccurate imagery provided within the supporting documents relating to the height of the chimneys	Whilst officers acknowledge the height of the chimneys within the Design and Access Statement, as well as the Townscape Visual Impact Assessment do not reflect the proposed height of the chimneys. The plans to be approved do accurately reflect the proposed height of the chimneys.
Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan	There was no condition placed upon the previous application, or requirement for submission of a Traffic Management Plan. The details of this were included within the requirements under Condition 3 of 25/02161/FUL as is recommended in this instance.
Contradicting information regarding the proposed temporary kitchens	Whilst it is noted that the supporting documents show differing information relating to the temporary kitchens. No details of this are required or to be secured as part of this application. Details are recommended within condition 9 of this report.
Requested a significant number of changes to conditions attached to the previous permission (25/02161/FUL)	Condition 15 of this report has been amended to change the implementation trigger reflecting that the proposal is not residential development. All other conditions are considered by officers to meet the relevant tests as set out in the NPPF and PPG.

Table 3 Officer response to third party/ local group representations

25. Planning obligations (S106)

- 25.1 Whilst no comments have been received from the Council's Section 106 officer as part of this application, they were received on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). The comments on the previous application requested financial contributions totalling £20,000 (plus indexation) through a S106 agreement towards the provision of and/or improvement of the public realm facilities at and in the vicinity of Christ's Lane.
- 25.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. If the planning obligation does not pass the tests then it is unlawful. The tests are that the planning obligation must be:
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) directly related to the development; and
 - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 25.3 Policy 85 states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported/permitted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
- 25.4 Officers acknowledge that the proposed development would result in a notable increase in the gross internal area of the library facilities within the site. However, this increase in floor area is to update the library facilities for the college and its existing number of students. It is not considered that the proposal is expected to result in any increase in the number of students or staff within the college.
- 25.5 As a result, given the number of people accessing the site is not expected to increase, financial contributions are not considered to be reasonably related to the scale of the proposal. In any instance, the proposal itself seeks certain improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the façade, public bench and public art.
- 25.6 Whilst the construction phase would result in a certain level of impact upon Christ's Lane, this would be restricted to a temporary period of time and not therefore suitable justification for the requested financial contributions.

- 25.7 As will be set out in the planning balance of this report, officers consider that the requested contributions are not required in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms, as required by test a) of the CIL legislation.
- 25.8 Overall, therefore, the financial contributions requested by the S106 officer are not considered to be required as they would not meet the necessary CIL tests and as such would not be lawful and would therefore not meet the threshold of Policy 85 of the Cambridge Local Plan.

26. Planning balance

- 26.1 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).
- 26.2 Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF relating to the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” are relevant to this application given its location within the settlement of Cambridge. S4 sets out that proposals within settlements, such as this, should be approved “unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.”
- 26.3 The proposal is not considered to conflict with any Policies within the NPPF that state that “development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances” (S4(2)(c)).
- 26.4 The proposed development would undeniably result in a degree of heritage harm, and other harm (see below). There is therefore a requirement to assess this harm against the benefits of the scheme. The following planning balance will initially set out the balance of heritage harm vs heritage benefits applying the statutory duties under Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990. Then the planning balance addressed through the three objectives which sustainable development should seek to achieve, as set out in Chapter 1, Paragraph 17 of the NPPF (economic, social and environmental).

Heritage Balance

Harm

- 26.5 Applying the statutory duty under Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, the scale and siting of the proposed

replacement library, specifically the staircase tower, would be prominent within views and adversely affect the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Substantial weight should be given the conservation of this designated heritage asset. Here, the proposal would cause a low level of harm to the significance of the listed building, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Even though in officers' view the harm would be of a low level, this still attracts considerable importance and weight for the decision maker in forming a view in the planning balance. It is notable that heritage harm has been identified by Historic England, the Conservation Officer, the Victorian Society, CLAG and other third parties, albeit of varying levels.

26.6 The proposed development, through an extensive pre-application process and through the previous applications themselves, has been amended to help to mitigate the level of harm that would arise to relevant heritage assets. This includes a reduction in the height of the proposed chimneys following conservation officer and Historic England comments.

26.7 Nevertheless, there is a level of harm identified to the setting of the Bodley Library. A degree of heritage harm arises from the space requirements of the College and its students in the circumstances of this application. For example, the large staircase turret that is highly visible within the setting of the Bodley provides a form of fire escape to the upper levels and therefore has a minimum height requirement.

26.8 The operational requirements for the College and its students in terms of a library and study space also provides partial explanation for the heritage harm that is identified. In order to meet the current requirements for such a facility, a building of this scale is required. This is highlighted by the previous Rick Mather schemes that were comparable in scale, albeit with a basement extension as opposed to the additional floor space above ground proposed within this scheme. In the view of officers, the choice of the applicant to no longer pursue the basement has been sufficiently justified.

Benefits

26.9 The proposed development is, in line with comments from the Council's Conservation Officer, considered to result in a number of benefits/enhancements to relevant heritage assets, namely:

26.10 The proposal is considered to result in an enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College building when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, as a result of the increased

separation between the Bodley Library and the proposed library at its lower levels.

- 26.11 The proposal would also provide wider enhancements to Bath Court through significantly improved landscaping and removal of redundant plant. This would result in enhancements to this area of the Historic Core Conservation Area (applying s.72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990) and Christ's College RPG (applying s.102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023).

Overall Planning Balance

- 26.12 Considering the identified heritage harm under Policies HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the NPPF, the above heritage benefits alone are not deemed sufficient to outweigh the heritage harm. However, under Policies S4 and HE6(4) of the NPPF the wider public benefits of the proposal should be weighed against the harm arising from the scheme, including the heritage harm set out above.

Summary of harm

- 26.13 Officers have had regard to the statutory duty set out in section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in considering this application have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected nearby Grade I listed buildings at Christ's College. In the view of officers, the proposal would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library which forms a part of the overall Grade I listed Buildings surrounding the entrance court, within the southeast range of second court.
- 26.14 The construction phase of the proposed development would lead to a level of noise and disturbance for both occupants of nearby residential properties and Christ's Lane itself as a public thoroughfare. Officers consider that these impacts can be mitigated through the use of suitably worded conditions as recommended by the Local Highways Authority and Environmental Health Officer. These conditions will enable officers to ensure the protection of neighbouring amenity and minimise the impact upon access along Christ's Lane.
- 26.15 The increase in scale of development within the application would, as highlighted within the provided documentation, increase the visual dominance along Christ's Lane. This increased visual intrusion is not itself

considered to result in any harm however, with mitigation provided through a significantly enhanced public facing façade.

26.16 With regards to daylight impacts, officers acknowledge that the retail units along Christ's Lane would experience a reduction in daylight. However, this harm is not considered so significant to be unacceptable. BRE guidance states that guidelines within BRE209 may also be applied to non-domestic buildings where occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight. In this case, given the use of the adjacent units is for retail, officers consider that such an expectation does not exist and therefore the harm to their occupants is limited.

26.17 The nature of the proposed development, comprising the demolition and rebuild of the existing library building would involve a level of environmental harm through the construction phase. Whilst a whole life carbon assessment will be carried out at various design stages, initial assessments have been made and provided with the application. The total upfront carbon resulting from the construction of the new building is estimated at 438 kgCO₂e/m. Whilst the demolition of the existing building increases carbon costs, significant measures have been identified by the applicant to reduce the overall environmental impact of the scheme, including where possible the re-use of existing buildings and materials.

Substantial weight is given to the overall level of harm arising from the proposal.

Summary of benefits

Economic

26.18 There would be new employment associated with the construction phase of the development which would also help to support local services and facilities in terms of the multiplier effect, together with increased spending in the area. The applicants have not robustly dealt with this aspect of the proposal and as such, the economic benefits of the proposed development are afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance.

Social

26.19 The development would represent an enhancement to its surrounding context in townscape and placemaking terms. Through an extensive pre-application process and refinements, the scheme is considered to successfully respond to the street context by improving its architectural quality and material choice in compliance with policies 55, 56, 57 and 59

of the Local Plan. This enhancement extends to the public realm along Christ's Lane, where the development is considered to improve the relationship when assessed against the existing library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme. The design and appearance of the proposed development would also comply with the principles for well-designed places set out in Policy DP3 of the NPPF. The proposal would not therefore conflict with this national decision-making policy.

- 26.20 The redevelopment of the site, proposed within this application, whilst enhancing its surrounding context, would also be considered to make effective use of the land as set out within Policy L3 of the NPPF. Whilst tightly constrained by significant heritage assets, the increase in density of development within the site is considered to be appropriate with the applicant providing appropriate justification of the need for additional library and study facilities for its students.
- 26.21 Following the Development Control Forum on the 29 July 2026, the College has formally proposed public accessibility within the new library building and Bath Court (appendix 10). Whilst Christ's is one of the few currently public accessible colleges within Cambridge, neither Bath Court nor the library to be demolished are open to the public. By introducing public access to both the proposed library and Bath Court, members of the public would be able to experience firsthand the proposed development and areas of the Grade I listed College. Details of times and management of public access resulting from this development are to be secured by way of condition 32 which is necessary to ensure that weight can be given to this as a public benefit.
- 26.22 The proposed development provides a tangible benefit to Christ's Lane through the provision of a public bench where there is currently no public seating available. This bench is incorporated into the physical façade of the proposed library, extending approximately 25m in length and would be a permanent feature of the lane.
- 26.23 The proposed development would significantly improve the accessibility of the library and study facilities within the College as well as the surrounding Bath Court. Step free access is proposed to all parts of the building, in addition to level access throughout Bath Court. Within the building a multi-faith prayer room and a range of study spaces helps to meet the needs of the entire student body. Given that there is proposed public access to the new library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme.

- 26.24 The provision of a replacement gate between Bath Court and Christ's Lane, to be secured through a public art condition would help to improve the appreciation of Bath Court from the public realm as well as contributing a positive feature to the public façade of the scheme.
- 26.25 The provision of an updated library facility for students of the College would help to support and sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities.
- 26.26 The social benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 26.27 Environmental
- 26.28 The proposed design of the development would positively enhance the townscape by creating a high quality architectural and sustainable building.
- 26.29 Enhancements to the local environment would arise, including the use of efficient and sustainable construction methods, water conservation measures, incorporation of renewable technologies and rainwater storage. Thereby providing a highly sustainable building and reducing surface water flood risk within the site. Whilst the proposed library building is primarily a private building for use by college students, public access is now proposed at certain times of the year. Furthermore, officers consider that the proposed library enables energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed, as per Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. In this instance that is a public benefit resulting from the proposal as supported by Policies 28, 57 and 63 of the Cambridge Local Plan.
- 26.30 The environmental benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

Overall conclusion

- 26.31 Officers have carefully considered the development against the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the NPPF 2026 and the statutory duties in sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of the LURA 2023. Whilst acknowledging representations that consider the level of harm to heritage assets to be significant and wider ranging, officers consider that the scheme would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed Christ's College Buildings surrounding the Entrance Court. This harm is

not considered to be outweighed by the heritage benefits arising from the scheme.

- 26.32 Weighed against this heritage harm is an array of economic, social and environmental public benefits including the creation of temporary construction jobs, townscape and public-realm enhancements, significant sustainability and accessibility improvements and increased public access into the college including the proposed library building. These benefits attract significant weight, consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable development.
- 26.33 As requested by third-parties and CLAG, consideration has been given to alternative methods for the college to provide the required library facilities claimed to result in less heritage harm. Officers do not consider however, that any of the alternatives carry any notable weight as a material consideration in forming a decision on the merits of the proposal.
- 26.34 Applying the heritage balance under NPPF Policy HE6(4) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development within Policy S3 of the NPPF, officers conclude that the public benefits clearly and convincingly outweigh the substantial weight afforded to the identified low level of harm to designated heritage assets. Ultimately, there is clear and convincing justification for the heritage and other harm identified. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms.
- 26.35 Having assessed the proposal against the statutory development plan, the NPPF, NPPG guidance, and applying the statutory duties under section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of LURA 2023, and taking into account of the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

27. Recommendation

- 27.1 **Approve** subject to:
-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

28. 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) Prior to the commencement of development, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It shall include/ adhere to the following:

a) A phasing programme.

b) Contractor's parking and access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to and from the site, their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures.

c) Control of dust, mud and debris on the highway.

d) Construction and demolition (except for loading and unloading) shall be carried out only between 0800 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless in accordance with agreed emergency procedures for deviation.

e) Delivery hours for muck away, demolition and construction purposes. The hours submitted for approval shall include an assessment of the daily number and type of vehicles required and an assessment as to how vehicles would safely access / exit the site include tracking / swept path analysis. The submission should include a highway safety and residential amenity audit /

assessment to support the proposed times and include provision for banks person(s). The delivery times shall be carried out only within the agreed hours and shall at no time should any deliveries take place after 1300 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority in advance.

f) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours.

g) Dust management and wheel washing measures in accordance with the provisions of IAQM, 2016 and 2018;

h) Use of concrete crushers and mitigation measures;

i) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.

j) Screening and hoarding details.

k) Consideration of sensitive receptors.

l) A Community Liaison Plan to inform the community in respect of:

- the construction required to facilitate the development
- contractor point of contact, complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures

m) Membership of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To safeguard the safety, health and quality of life of existing residential occupiers and users of the City centre in accordance with policies 35, 36 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 4) No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:
- a. the statement of significance and research objectives;

- b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
- c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
- d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

Reason: To ensure that before any demolition and or development commences that an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been implemented before development commences. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 61).

- 5) No works shall commence until details of how the listed building is to be properly protected and supported during the carrying out of the works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved means of protection and support shall be implemented without damage to the fabric of the building and its windows and shall remain in place until the works are completed

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 6) No development shall commence until a scheme to minimise the spread of airborne dust from the site including subsequent dust monitoring during the period of demolition and construction, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 7) No development (including demolition, enabling works or piling shall commence until a demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment

associated with the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The assessment shall be in accordance with the provisions of BS 5228:2009 Code of Practice for noise and vibration on construction and open sites and include details of any piling and mitigation/monitoring measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise or vibration. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved measures.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 8) No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 31 and 32).

- 9) Prior to commencement of development, including demolition, and in accordance with BS5837 2012, a phased tree protection methodology in the form of an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority before any tree works are carried out and before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purpose of development (including demolition).

In a logical sequence the AMS and TPP will consider all phases of construction in relation to the potential impact on trees and detail tree works, the specification and position of protection barriers and ground protection and all measures to be taken for the protection of any trees from damage during the

course of any activity related to the development, including supervision, demolition, foundation design (allowing for tree root growth and accounting for heave and subsidence), storage of materials, ground works, installation of services, erection of scaffolding and landscaping.

The development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved AMS and TPP.

Reason: To ensure that trees to be retained will be protected from damage during any construction activity, including demolition Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71 and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

- 10) No demolition, hereby permitted, shall be undertaken, until details for the careful salvage and reuse of existing materials have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the reuse of historic materials wherever possible (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 11) No development shall commence (including demolition) to the existing kitchen/ dining facilities until details of the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details provided should include the timespan for which the facilities are required and how the land will be restored to its original condition.

The approved development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development would be acceptable with regards to its impact on relevant heritage assets and protected trees within the site, in accordance with Policies 61, 62 and 71 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

12) No development above ground level to the new library building shall take place until an ecological enhancement scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of bat and bird box installation, hedgehog provisions and other ecological enhancements. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation or in accordance with a timescale agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan policies 57, 59 and 70 and the Greater Cambridge Planning Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2022).

13) No development above ground level, other than demolition, (or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority), shall commence until a Public Art Delivery Plan (PADP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PADP shall include the following:

- a) Details of the public art and artist commission;
- b) Details of how the public art will be delivered, including a timetable for delivery;
- c) Details of the location of the proposed public art on the application site;
- d) The proposed consultation to be undertaken;
- e) Details of how the public art will be maintained;
- f) How the public art would be decommissioned if not permanent;
- g) How repairs would be carried out;
- h) How the public art would be replaced in the event that it is destroyed;

The approved PADP shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetabling. Once in place, the public art shall not be moved or removed otherwise than in accordance with the approved maintenance arrangements.

Reason: To provide public art as a means of enhancing the development and (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56 and the Cambridge City Council Public Art SPD (2010)).

- 14) No development shall take place above ground level, except for demolition, until details of all the materials for the external surfaces of buildings and ground surfaces to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Samples of the materials shall be made available on site for inspection by officers. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 15) No development above ground level to the new library building, or to Bath Court other than demolition, shall commence until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:

- a) proposed finished levels or contours; car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) hard surfacing materials;
- c) Street furniture and artifacts (including refuse and cycle storage);
- d) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- e) boundary treatments indicating the type, positions, design, and materials of boundary treatments to be erected (including gaps for hedgehogs);
- f) an implementation programme.

The development shall be fully carried out in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting of any trees or shrubs, or 5 years from the commencement of development in respect of any retained trees and shrubs, they are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or

become seriously damaged or diseased, replacement trees and shrubs of the same size and species as originally planted shall be planted at the same place in the next available planting season, or in accordance with any variation agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57, 59 and 69).

- 16) No development above base course to the new library building (other than demolition and enabling/ utility diversion works) shall take place until a detailed scheme for the approved rainwater harvesting and recycling strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include relevant drawings showing the location of the necessary infrastructure required to facilitate the water reuse. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 17) No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Drainage Strategy Report Parts 1&2 prepared by Smith and Wallwork engineers (ref:0346-SAW-ZZ-ZZ-RP-C-0001) dated 16th May 2025 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full accordance with the approved details prior to commencement of the use hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policies 31 and 32)

18) No new walls shall be constructed until the drawings to a scale of 1:20 providing details of the roof/wall junctions, including eaves, fascias and soffits, wall/floor junctions and wall/wall junctions have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This includes junctions between historic and new work. Construction of walls shall thereafter take place only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

19) No new, replacement or altered joinery shall be installed, nor existing historic joinery removed, until drawings at a scale of 1:20 of all such joinery (doors and surrounds, windows and frames, sills, skirtings, dado rails, staircases and balustrades, etc.) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

20) No rainwater goods shall be installed until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Rainwater goods shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

21) No work shall commence on the relevant areas until details of the following items have been submitted for the prior, written approval of the Local Planning Authority:

(a) Details of first floor landing alterations including timber samples, to be inspected and agreed on site with the conservation officer, and junctions with new work and existing panelling

(b) Details of alterations to panelling

(c) Details of photovoltaic panels showing relationship to roof

- (d) Details of vents, flues and extracts
- (e) Details of signage
- (f) Details of external lighting
- (g) Details of gates and railings
- (h) Details of structural alterations to listed building

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 22) Prior to the installation of any artificial lighting an artificial lighting impact assessment and scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Internal lighting within the proposed covered Library Court shall also be considered. The scheme shall include details of any artificial lighting of the site and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels at proposed and existing residential properties shall be undertaken (horizontal / vertical isolux contour light levels and calculated glare levels). Artificial lighting on and off site must meet the Recommended Maximum Values of Light Parameters for the Control of Obtrusive Light contained within the 'Institute of Lighting Professionals - Guidance Note 01/21: the Reduction of Obtrusive Light - GN01/21', (or as superseded). Any mitigation measures to reduce and contain potential artificial light spill and glare as appropriate shall be detailed.

The artificial lighting scheme as approved shall be fully implemented before the use hereby permitted is commenced and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 34)

- 23) No operational plant, machinery or equipment shall be installed until a noise impact assessment of and any noise insulation/mitigation as required for the said plant, machinery or equipment has been submitted to and approved in

writing by the local planning authority. The noise impact assessment shall also consider any plant rooms. Any required noise insulation/mitigation shall be carried out as approved and retained as such.

Due regard shall be given to the recommendations detailed in the submitted 'Plant Noise Assessment New Library, Christ's College, Cambridge Report reference: RP01-24365-R3, Revision 3 dated the 23 May 2025', by Cass Allen.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 24) Prior to development above ground level, a Materials Management Plan (MMP) detailing the removal of Made Ground and its replacement with validated clean topsoil (as per the recommendations of the Site Investigation Report by Lucion, ref: 125396, dated Feb 2025) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that no unsuitable material is brought onto the site in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 33).

- 25) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until a post construction statement confirming that the provisions as set out in the Sustainability Statement (Skelly & Couch, 1685-SAC-RPT REV 2) have been fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting principles of sustainable construction and efficient use of buildings (Cambridge Local Plan Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 26) Prior to the occupation of the proposed development, or as soon as reasonably practicable after occupation, evidence in the form of the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority. Such evidence shall demonstrate the achievement of no less than 5 Wat01 credits. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the agreed details set out within the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

27) Prior to first occupation a comprehensive water metering and monitoring system shall be commissioned and installed within the building to quantify at least daily: the total volume of mains water used, the total volume of greywater reclaimed, and the total volume of rainwater used. No occupation shall occur until such time as the local planning authority has been notified through an independent verification report that the water metering and monitoring system has been installed and is fully functional. The metering and monitoring system shall be retained in a fully functioning operational use at all times and for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction in accordance with Policy 28 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020, the Written Ministerial Statement on Addressing water scarcity in Greater Cambridge: update on government measures (March 2024) Joint Ministerial Statement on addressing Water Scarcity in Greater Cambridge.

28) If unexpected contamination is encountered during the development works which has not previously been identified, all works shall cease immediately until the Local Planning Authority has been notified in writing. Thereafter, works shall only restart with the written approval of the Local Planning Authority following the submission and approval of a Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation Report

and a Phase 3 Remediation Strategy specific to the newly discovered contamination.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Intrusive Site Investigation Report and Remediation Strategy.

Reason: To ensure that any unexpected contamination is rendered harmless in the interests of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33).

- 29) Service deliveries to and dispatches / collections from the development as approved including refuse / recycling collections during the operational phase shall only be permitted between the hours of 07:00 - 22:00 hours Monday to Friday and 09:00 - 1900 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 30) The kitchen ventilation / extraction and discharge system shall be constructed, installed, commissioned and maintained thereafter in accordance with the submitted 'CHRIST COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE, NEW LIBRARY AND KITCHENS: Odour Assessment, Revision V1, 16/05/2025', by Greenavon Ltd. The ventilation system should be cleaned and serviced at regular intervals in accordance with manufacturers / installers recommendations, to prevent a build-up of grease and other odorous substances in the system.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 31) Prior to the occupation of the development, the ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in "*Ecological Impact Assessment (SWECO, 65213378-SWE-ZZ-XX-T-J-0001)*" The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 57, 59 and 70)

32) The replacement library shall not open for study use until such time as a scheme for public access to it and Bath Court has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme, based upon the following principles set out in the letter submitted by the Turley, dated 5th August 2026, shall include opening hours and details of security measures.

- 2 x 30 minute organised tours of the library, including the Bodley Library
- Bookable study/ tours for students or pupils of Cambridgeshire schools on 2 days of the week.
- Extension of open public access within The College to include Bath Court.
- No charge for public access to the site.

The approved scheme for public access shall come into operation at the same time as the replacement library's first use for study and thereafter the replacement library and Bath Court shall remain open for public access in accordance with the approved scheme.

Public access shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved management plan unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure the proposed development is provided as a publicly accessible space whilst maintaining privacy for the College. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 56 and 57)

Informatives

- 1) Partial discharge of the condition can be applied for once the fieldwork at Part c) has been completed to enable the commencement of development. Part d) of the condition shall not be discharged until all elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

- 2) To satisfy and discharge Environmental Health conditions relating to artificial lighting, contaminated land, noise / sound, air quality and odours / fumes, any assessment and mitigation shall be in accordance with the scope, methodologies and requirements of relevant sections of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, (Adopted January 2020) <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/greater-cambridge-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd> and in particular section 3.6 - Pollution and the following associated appendices:

6: Requirements for Specific Lighting Schemes

7: The Development of Potentially Contaminated Sites in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire: A Developers Guide

8: Further technical guidance related to noise pollution

- 3) To satisfy the plant noise insulation condition, the rating level (in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019) from all plant, equipment and vents etc (collectively) associated with this application should be less than or equal to the existing background sound level (LA90) at the boundary of the premises subject to this application and having regard to noise sensitive premises.

If noise sensitive premises are located within the site boundary, then the glazing of the premises and/or amenity areas will also be a location for the rating level of all plant not to exceed the existing background sound level (LA90).

Tonal/impulsive sounds and other sound characteristics should be eliminated or at least considered in any assessment and should carry an additional correction (rating penalty) in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019. This is to prevent unreasonable disturbance to other premises. This requirement applies both during the day (0700 to 2300 hrs over any one-hour period) and night time (2300 to 0700 hrs over any one 15 minute period).

It is recommended that the agent/applicant submits an acoustic prediction survey/report in accordance with the principles of BS4142:2014+A1:2019

“Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound” or similar, concerning the effects on amenity rather than likelihood for complaints. Noise levels shall be predicted at the application boundary having regard to neighbouring premises.

Whilst our requirements are for the rating level not to exceed the background sound level at the application site boundary, if the plant is roof mounted and nearby noise sensitive receivers are in closer proximity than the site boundary and / or the site boundary is afforded shielding from the application building parapet, the nearest noise sensitive receiver would be the required assessment location.

It is important to note that a full BS4142:2014+A1:2019 assessment is not required, only certain aspects to be incorporated into an acoustic assessment as described within this informative.

Such a survey / report should include: a large scale plan of the site in relation to neighbouring premises; sound sources and measurement / prediction points marked on plan; a list of noise sources; details of proposed noise sources / type of plant such as: number, location, sound power levels, frequency spectrums, directionality of plant, noise levels from duct intake or discharge points; details of noise mitigation measures (attenuation details of any intended enclosures, silencers or barriers); description of full acoustic calculation procedures; noise levels at a representative sample of noise sensitive locations and hours of operation.

Any report shall include raw measurement data so that conclusions may be thoroughly evaluated and calculations checked.

- 4) As the premises may have kitchens providing cooked food for staff / students / the public or facilities for food preparation or similar or the applicant is reminded that under the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises will need to be registered with Cambridge City Council. In order to avoid additional costs it is recommended that the applicant ensure that the kitchen,

food preparation and foods storage areas comply with food hygiene legislation, before construction starts. Contact the Commercial Team at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890, email : commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information and advice.

- 5) Surface water and groundwater bodies are highly vulnerable to pollution and the impact of construction activities. It is essential that the risk of pollution (particularly during the construction phase) is considered and mitigated appropriately. It is important to remember that flow within the watercourse is likely to vary by season and it could be dry at certain times throughout the year. Dry watercourses should not be overlooked as these watercourses may flow or even flood following heavy rainfall.
- 6) Prior to final handover of the development, the developer must ensure that appropriate remediation of all surface water drainage infrastructure has taken place, particularly where the permanent drainage infrastructure has been installed early in the construction phase. This may include but is not limited to jetting of all pipes, silt removal and reinstating bed levels. Developers should also ensure that watercourses have been appropriately maintained and remediated, with any obstructions to flows (such as debris, litter and fallen trees) removed, ensuring the condition of the watercourse is better than initially found. This is irrespective of the proposed method of surface water disposal, particularly if an ordinary watercourse is riparian owned.
- 7) The applicant should consider ensuring that the development meets the criteria for “secured by design”
- 8) Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S106 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991. Contact Development Services Team 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 9) Protection of existing assets - A public sewer is shown on record plans within the land identified for the proposed development. It appears that development

proposals will affect existing public sewers. It is recommended that the applicant contacts Anglian Water Development Services Team for further advice on this matter. Building over existing public sewers will not be permitted (without agreement) from Anglian Water.

- 10) Building near to a public sewer - No building will be permitted within the statutory easement width of 3 metres from the pipeline without agreement from Anglian Water. Please contact Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 11) The developer should note that the site drainage details submitted have not been approved for the purposes of adoption. If the developer wishes to have the sewers included in a sewer adoption agreement with Anglian Water (under Sections 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991), they should contact our Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2 at the earliest opportunity. Sewers intended for adoption should be designed and constructed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption guide for developers, as supplemented by Anglian Water's requirements
- 12) Due to the site being within 6km of Cambridge City Airport the crane operator is required to submit all crane details such as maximum height, operating radius, name and phone number of site manager along with installation and dismantling dates to the CAA Airspace Coordination and Obstacle Management Service (ACOMS) system.
- 13) Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist.

If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/diversions

Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

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26/02109/FUL – Christs College Library, St Andrews Street, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward: Market

Proposal: Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc, provision in the south east range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.

Applicant: Lord Simon McDonald

Presenting officer: Dominic Bush

Reason presented to committee: Officer referral: the application raises complex planning considerations relating to significant heritage assets.

Member site visit date: 5th October 2026

Key issues:

1. Character and Appearance
2. Heritage Impact, and grounds of challenge relating to judicially reviewed application 25/02161/FUL.
3. Residential / Public Amenity
4. Highway Safety

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

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Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

Judicial review

- 1.1 The application follows an identical application that was taken to planning committee on the 29th October 2025 and subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 7th November 2025. Following the issuing of the decision, a judicial review was applied for by Christs Lane Action Group (CLAG), challenging the decision on four grounds.

- 1.2 As set out in an Order dated 9th March 2026, Mr Justice Kimblin granted permission for the case to be heard on all four grounds applied for by CLAG, stating that the issues raised were strongly arguable and merited consideration at a full hearing. The case was set down for a one-day substantive hearing in the Planning Court.

Following the Order, the Council, along with Christ's College (the Interested Party), invited the Court to agree to a draft consent order, agreeing to quash the decision on all four grounds and that this process be dealt with quickly, in order that the application could be re-determined in good time. The Claimant (CLAG) has written to the Court, stating that they do not agree to signing the consent order and that the grounds should be considered at a full hearing before the Court. The draft consent order has therefore not been agreed and, despite the Council asking the Courts to unilaterally determine that the planning permission be quashed, the Court has not done so. CLAG still wish to proceed to a full one-day hearing. This is currently scheduled for mid-October 2026. The planning permission still stands until such time as the Court determines otherwise.

- 1.3 In light of the delay in the judicial review proceedings, the applicant has taken the decision to re-submit the application (in identical form) to the Local Planning Authority, so that this can be determined. This is the application which is before members today.

- 1.4 The grounds for the Judicial Review relate to the previous officer report and the decision making process relating to that previous application. The application before members is identical to that previously approved by the Planning Committee but subject to a new officer report and fresh decision making process. The application is not, however, accompanied by a new Listed Building Consent application, as application 25/02162/LBC, which accompanied the previous application, was not subject to judicial review. The Listed Building Consent, which sits alongside the current planning permission, and has not been the subject of legal challenge, is a material consideration.

- 1.5 The grounds of challenge from CLAG's judicial review claim, and the Order of Mr. Justice Kimblin granting permission for it to proceed, are appended to this decision (Appendix 1). The issues raised by those grounds have been addressed in this Officer Report.

- 1.6 The grounds of challenge and how they have been addressed can be summarised as follows:

- 1.7 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 1.8 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.
- 1.9 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 1.10 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.

- 1.11 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would “help to secure the listed building’s optimum viable use.” The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 1.12 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 1.13 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative modes of development.** On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.
- 1.14 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college’s needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.
- 1.15 Officers consider that the legal grounds of challenge pertaining to application 25/02161/FUL have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interested Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely,

although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by the Court.

Application

- 1.16 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing library and its replacement with a contemporary library including social and study space. Further internal and external alterations are proposed including a replacement bridge to the Bodley Library and a temporary kitchen dining facility during the duration of the works.
- 1.17 The application site falls within the Historic Core conservation area with the Christ's College (College) buildings surrounding the First Court being Grade I listed and the entire college grounds being a designated Historic Park and Garden. The application site is located within the city centre of Cambridge and immediately abuts the public highway of Christ's Lane to the southeast with the modern Christ's Lane redevelopment including a mix of retail and residential units on the opposite side of this footpath.
- 1.18 The main part of this scheme is the demolition and replacement of the existing 1970's library building that serves the College. This building is deemed unfit for purpose, with insufficient study spaces, poor accessibility and lack of sufficient insulation. This has led to the College wanting to improve its library facilities, including access provisions for students and visitors, and is why this planning application is coming forward.
- 1.19 This scheme follows two previous consents on the site for the replacement of the existing 1970's library, dating back to 2011 and 2016. Whilst both have since expired and differ from the current proposal, this application seeks to re-establish the principle of a replacement library in this location to meet the current day needs of the students. These historic consents are discussed in more detail in the officer assessment.
- 1.20 The proposal has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with officers and relevant consultees, both internally and externally to evolve the design to its current proposed form. This pre-application process included a Design Review Panel (DRP) on the 13th February 2025 in which positive feedback supporting the proposal was received (Appendix 3)
- 1.21 The proposal (through the previous 2025 application) has also been subject to a member briefing on the 19th May 2025 and Development Control Forum meeting (DCF) on the 11th September 2025 of which

minutes are attached (Appendix 4). Following this DCF meeting, further information was provided regarding the public benefits of the scheme and the impact on Christ's Lane in terms of loss of light. A further DCF request on the application before members today was made by CLAG on 1 July 2026. The request was initially declined because the College were unwilling to participate but that position changed and a further DCF was convened on 29 July 2026. A minutes of that DCF are at Appendix 11.

- 1.22 What is before members is a well thought out new library scheme that follows previous permissions and has, through an extensive pre-application process evolved into a proposal which is credible and that would successfully assimilate into the street scene, its heritage setting and respect neighbouring amenity.
- 1.23 With regards to the principle of development, the site is located within the designated city centre (Policy 10 of the Local Plan) and within an area of protected open space (policy 67). Whilst within an area with a number of highly significant heritage assets, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the criteria of Policy 10 and would meet a demonstrable educational need to justify its setting within an area of protected open space.
- 1.24 In terms of design, the application demonstrates that the proposed development can be achieved in a way that responds to the context of the site and respects its significant heritage constraints. Officers consider that the proposals provide a high-quality design that includes enhancements and benefits to the public realm along Christ's Lane. This includes the removal of the existing 1970's library building which is, itself, considered to be a negative building within the conservation area.
- 1.25 As considered by Historic England and the Council's Conservation officer the proposed replacement library would result in harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming a part of the College site. In the view of officers there is considered to be an overall harmful impact in heritage terms. This harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 1.26 Separately, the proposed development is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area. Despite the undeniable increase in scale and visibility, the improved architectural quality, especially along Christ's Lane is deemed an enhancement, including within important public views.

- 1.27 Through the development, the sustainability credentials of the College site, including the library facilities, are to be significantly improved through the integration of renewable sources of energy in combination with fabric improvements afforded by the replacement library building.
- 1.28 The accessibility of the entire College would also significantly improve as a result of the proposed works. Both within the new library building, as well as the existing kitchen dining facilities, level access is to be provided where possible including the entirety of Bath Court.
- 1.29 Included within this application, following the Development Control Forum, the College have proposed increased public access, including to the proposed library building itself and Bath Court. Access is proposed to the library outside of term times with booking required through the College website. Details of this are recommended to be secured by condition.
- 1.30 The proposed development would meet policy requirements in respect of, biodiversity, trees, drainage and flood risk, contamination and other environmental issues, public art, and all other matters.
- 1.31 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Anglian Water	No comment received	6.1
Conservation Officer	No objection - Harm identified	6.3
Archaeology	No objection	6.10
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.12
County Transport Assessment Team	No comment received	6.13

Designing out crime Officer	No objection	6.15
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.16
Environment Agency	No comment	6.18
Environmental Health	No objection	6.19
Gardens Trust	No comment	6.27
Historic England	No objection – Harm identified	6.31
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.48
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection	6.49
Natural England	No comment received	6.52
Public Art Officer	No objection	6.53
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No comment received	6.54
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.55
S106 Officer	No comment received	6.58
Tree Officer	No objection	6.59
Urban Design Officer	No objection	6.62
Victorian Society	Objects	6.65
Waste Officer	No comment	6.67
Third Party Representations (32)	62 in support and 57 in objection	7.1

Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (2)	Representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group and CPPF	8.1
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Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site is located within the City Centre boundary and comprises the existing Christ's College Library constructed in 1976 with a connection into the historic Bodley Library that faces onto St Andrews Street. The existing library building to be demolished is a two storey structure whose SE external elevation abuts the public right of way of Christ's Lane with the NW side opening out onto Bath Court, an enclosed external courtyard within the College. This application also includes other elements associated with the delivery of essential services the College provides. This includes the kitchen and upper dining hall where alterations are proposed to improve the effectiveness and accessibility for students and staff. There is an additional area of the site within the second court, to the northeast of the Library which is the location of the proposed temporary kitchen dining facilities to be provided during the proposed works.
- 2.2 The existing library building sought to be demolished, as well as those buildings to be retained and altered, form part of the Grade I listed College buildings with the entire site located within the Historic Core conservation area. The College site is also designated as a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden.
- 2.3 Immediately to the SE of the existing library building is the public right of way of Christ's Lane, a portion of which is adopted public highway. Christ's Lane is a heavily used thoroughfare for pedestrians within the city of Cambridge linking the shopping area of the City Centre including the Grand Arcade with Christ's Pieces, Drummer Street bus station and the Grafton Centre shopping area. Christ's Lane is approximately 8 metres in width with retail units on the ground floor on the opposite side, with residential units above at second and third floor, the north and southwestern façades of this building are identified as primary shopping frontages within the Local Plan. Christ's Lane is designated as a Primary Shopping Area, with the application site immediately adjacent, but not within, this area.

- 2.4 Access to the site is primarily through the entrance to the College along St Andrews Street although there is an access directly onto Christ's Lane between the Bodley Library and existing 1970's Library beneath the bridge connection.
- 2.5 The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, the hardstanding area within Bath Court is at low (1 in 1000) risk of surface water flooding with areas of Second Court at up to a high (1 in 30) risk of surface water flooding. There are two TPO protected trees within the First Court of the college with other trees within Bath Court that are not TPO protected but are protected by virtue of being within the Conservation Area. Additionally, the site lies within an area of protected open space, an Air Quality Monitoring Area and a Smoke Control Area.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc provision in the southeast range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.
- 3.2 To facilitate the provision of a new library to meet the needs of students, the existing library building would be demolished. This existing library dating to the 1970's fails to provide the required number of study spaces for the student body, in addition to inadequate accessibility and sustainability credentials. It was therefore determined that in order to meet the current needs of the College and its students, its demolition and replacement was required.
- 3.3 The new replacement library provides a study hub, private and group study space, a main reading room, staff spaces, outdoor terrace and sky gallery over four floors and 1050m² of gross internal area. Whilst the Christ's Lane façade provides a level of privacy to the public realm, the Bath Court façade opens out onto Bath Court itself with timber framing and glazing giving a lighter weight appearance.
- 3.4 Whilst inherently more private, the Christ's Lane elevation provides a backbone to the building with a thick, inhabited wall broken up periodically with window openings and ventilation all with the proposed chimneys extending above. The chimneys provide a rhythm to the façade whilst also

noting the historic examples of college chimneys within the city. Set back from the façade, and not prominent in its scale or siting, a replacement of the existing bridge between the Bodley library and the new proposed library building is sought to reflect the improved architectural quality of this part of the college.

- 3.5 In addition to the replacement library itself, significant landscape improvements are proposed to the open space within Bath Court. This includes levelling this area of the site and providing planting that would significantly improve the quality of this space.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
11/0516/LBC	Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. The demolition of the existing Grillet library (809 sq m) to grade I listed building.	Approved (05.07.2013)
11/0495/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (05.07.2013)
16/0405/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (07.09.2016)
16/0406/LBC	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and	Approved (07.09.2016)

	external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m)	
25/00673/LBC	Internal alterations to Lower Bodley Library Comprising repositioning of free-standing bookcases and installation of rolling rack shelving.	Approved (16.04.2025)
25/02161/FUL	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025) Subject to ongoing judicial review
25/02162/LBC	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025)
25/02161/CONDA	Submission of details required by condition 9 (Tree Protection Methodology) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL.	Discharged in full (17.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDB	Submission of details required by condition 11(Temporary Kitchen and Dining Facility) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (18.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDC	Submission of details required by condition 5 (Listed Building	Discharged in full (04.03.2026)

	Protection) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	
25/02161/CONDD	Submission of details required by condition 10 (salvage and reuse of existing materials) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (12.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDE	Submission of details required by condition 8 (surface water run-off) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDF	Submission of details required by condition 6 (airborne dust) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDG	Submission of details required by condition 7 (demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
25/02161/CONDH	Submission of details required by condition 3 (demolition and construction environmental management plan) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
26/0818/TTCA	5 Day Notice for a removal of a dead Acacia tree within second court of the college.	No Objection
Other relevant sites		
C/04/0632/FP	Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1 (retail) and A3 (food and drinks); 15 residential apartments; the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane; associated highway works, servicing; and landscaping.	Approved (30.09.2025)
25/02660/S73	S73 to vary condition 5 of ref: 19/1674/S73 (S73 to vary condition 17 of planning permission ref C/04/0632 (Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1(retail) and A3 (Food and drink), 15 residential apartments, the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane, associated highway works, servicing, and landscaping) to extend the opening hours of Units 5 and 6) to vary condition 5 to read all servicing, delivery and collections shall be undertaken between the hours of	Approved (06.02.2026)

	0700 to 2300 Monday to Saturday and 10 to 2100 on Sundays, Bank and other public holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.	
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Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 Both 11/0495/FUL and 11/0516/LBC were granted in 2013 for an alternative scheme for the redevelopment of the current library within the site. Both of these permissions lapsed in 2016, three years after the granting of the permission. Subsequently, two identical applications were submitted and approved in 2016. In addition to a replacement library, these previous applications included a glazed atrium covering Bath Court and a large basement area. Whilst all permissions on site for the replacement of the library have since lapsed, the planning history is a material consideration for members and the schemes are discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 4.2 As is set out within the above table, a total of 8 discharge of conditions applications were submitted to the council following the granting of planning permission 25/02161/FUL. These applications approved details of a total of 8 conditions. However, officers consider that these would fall away as approved conditions should the host permission (on which they are based) be quashed.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2026

- 5.2.1 A new version of the NPPF has been issued on 17 August 2026. In regards to this application, the changes to the heritage section (Chapter 20) are the most relevant. As relevant, paragraphs 207-211 which cover 'Proposals affecting heritage assets' and paragraphs 212-221 which cover 'Considering potential impacts' have been replaced with policies HE4 (Securing the conservation of heritage assets), HE5 (Assessing effects on heritage assets), HE6 (Proposals affecting designated heritage assets), and HE9 (Conservation areas) of the new NPPF.
- 5.2.2 Policy S3(1) of the updated NPPF sets out that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within settlements, Policy S4 should be applied
- 5.2.3 S4 (1) states "Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework."
- 5.2.4 S4 (2) adds that "In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:
- (c) Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances
- 5.2.5 Policy HE5(2) states 'assessments of the potential effects of the development proposals on the significance of the heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:
- a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or
 - b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or
 - c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would

occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or

- d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

- 5.2.6 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF sets out that “when considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)” The proposed development, will have an impact on the setting of the highly significant Bodley Library which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ’s College site.
- 5.2.7 HE6(3) then adds “Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.”
- 5.2.8 Policy HE6(4) states that ‘Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.’ HE6(5) states that where a development would cause substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss.
- 5.2.9 The 2026 NPPF also provides advice specifically related to Conservation Areas within HE9.

- 5.2.10 The main alteration regarding heritage assets within the new NPPF is the replacement of the phrase 'less than substantial harm' with 'harm'. However, there is still a differentiation between 'harm' and 'substantial harm'.
- 5.2.11 All consultees and third parties, including both the Council's Conservation Officer, Historic England and CLAG were invited to update their comments in light of the updated NPPF.
- 5.2.12 In addition to heritage, the NPPF's policies on highway safety are also important for this application. Policy TR3(1)(c) highlights that any significant adverse impact on highway safety should be mitigated to an acceptable degree similar to paragraph 115(d) in the previous version. In the 2024 NPPF paragraph 116 stated that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety...' Policy TR6(4) replaces para 116 and whilst worded differently echoes 116 but makes it clearer that development should be refused if it would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed etc.
- 5.2.13 Policy DP3 discusses the key principles of well-designed spaces. DP3(1) states that proposals should respond to their context, including but not limited to the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. And that this should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.
- 5.2.14 Policy DP3(2)(f) now specifically refers to public spaces which is relevant to this application. This policy expands upon inclusivity more than its predecessor paragraph 135(f).
- 5.2.15 L3(1) states that development proposals should "make efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other development, local market conditions, the availability of infrastructure (including that supporting sustainable transport modes) and its scope for improvement, a site's connectivity and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

5.3 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission)

- 5.3.1 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.
- 5.3.2 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.
- 5.3.3 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 joint Local Plan is at a relatively early stage in the plan making process since. The Proposed Submission Local Plan is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.
- 5.3.4 At this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded very limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.3.5 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State is anticipated by the end of December 2026.

5.4 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 6: Hierarchy of centres and retail capacity
Policy 10: The City Centre
Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
Policy 32: Flood risk
Policy 34: Light pollution control
Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
Policy 43: University development
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 57: Designing new buildings
Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings
Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
Policy 60: Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge
Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
Policy 62: Local heritage assets

Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change
Policy 67: Protection of open space
Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
Policy 71: Trees
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management
Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

5.5 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

The Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD – Adopted April 2026

5.6 Other guidance

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Buildings of Local Interest (2005)

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide (2026)

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

5.7 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y (Major development, impacting a conservation area and listed buildings)

Officers wish to clarify that, at CLAG's request, the deadline for receipt of comments from interested parties was extended such that all neighbours and consultees have had at least 21 days to respond to the proposal. Additional time was also given to all notified neighbours and consultees following the updated NPPF to allow comments to be updated reflecting the change in national policy, extending the deadline for comments until the 3rd September.

Whilst all consultees were re-consulted on the 18th August to allow them time to update comments in light of the NPPF update, unless stated below, their updated comments are not changed by the NPPF update.

Anglian Water – No Objection

- 6.1 The application site lies within the catchment of the Cambridge water recycling centre (WRC) which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate additional flows generated by the proposed development.
- 6.2 The proposed development does not, however, propose or initiate an increase in the number of students, researchers or academic staff located within the site nor does it constitute a change in function.
- 6.3 As such we raise no objection to the proposed development as there would be no increase in flows and therefore no additional risk to the WRC. It is recommended that the provided floor risk and drainage strategy report is listed as an approved plan in the case of approval.

Conservation Officer- No Objection

- 6.4 The replacement of the 1974 library has previously been approved and continues to be supported in principle. The building makes a generally negative contribution to the significance of the relevant heritage assets. The proposal is smaller overall than the earlier approved schemes (11/0495/FUL & 16/0405/FUL), omitting the basement and Bath Court roof and thereby avoiding these harmful impacts.
- 6.5 The proposed library is overall considered a high-quality building that would improve the current arrangement and provide numerous

advantages in terms of landscaping, accessibility and sustainability. The new building would be substantial in relation to the size of the plot, with a greater presence than the existing library both within and outside the college.

- 6.6 The four-storey stair tower is however large in relation to the adjacent Bodley Library which is of two storeys with a domestic scale. The stair's impact has been partly mitigated by a setback from Christ's Lane and through the lightness of its design and materiality. There would be an enhanced relationship between the new library and Bodley Library through the increase in space and an improved link between the buildings. However, on balance it is considered the mitigations have not fully overcome the impact of the relative scale and proximity of the stair tower, and this part of the scheme remains harmful to the listed building's setting.
- 6.7 When considered in relation to the existing poor-quality building, the proposed library would be an enhancement to the conservation area when experienced from within or outside the college. Changes to the levels and landscaping in Bath Court, which would largely affect modern features and fabric, and would provide enhancements to the space are not of concern subject to any archaeological considerations. The ramp to second court would cause minimal harm and is supported subject to further details.
- 6.8 The proposed building would have a minimal visual presence from Second Court, within the RPG, but the impact to its significance is considered neutral.
- 6.9 The proposal includes heritage benefits, namely:
- An enhancement to the setting of the grade I listed building when experienced from Bath Court or Christ's Lane due to the increased space between the Bodley Library and proposed library at the lower levels;
 - Wider enhancements to the appearance of Bath Court through the removal of redundant plant and fire escape, improved landscaping and the reopening of a blocked historic doorway to First Court;
 - An enhancement to the Central Conservation Area through the introduction of an architecturally superior building;
 - Sustaining the ongoing use and conservation of the grade I listed building by providing improved, accessible library facilities.

6.10 When considering the above heritage impacts with reference to NPPF paras 208, 212 and 213, the heritage benefits are not considered to fully outweigh the heritage harm. On balance, the harm is considered to be less than substantial at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF para. 215 is engaged.

6.11 Conditions are recommended regarding:

- Details of new walls
- Joinery details
- Rainwater goods
- External material details
- Precise works
- Hard and soft landscaping

Comment following NPPF update

6.12 Updated comments received on the 26 August 2026 reflect the changes within the updated NPPF. The overall position remains, that the development would result in harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings.

6.13 Considering the heritage effects with reference to NPPF policies HE4 (1, 2), HE5 (1-4), HE6 (1-3) and HE9, the positive effects continue to be considered to not fully outweigh the harm identified.

6.14 On balance, the harm is considered to be at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF policy HE6 (4) is engaged.

County Archaeology- No Objection

6.15 Due to the archaeological potential of the site, a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area.

6.16 A condition is therefore recommended regarding a programme of archaeological works/ written scheme of investigation.

6.17 Updated comments received confirm that the initial comments received still align with the standards set out in the NPPF 2026.

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

- 6.18 Following a review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority, the effect of the proposed development upon the Public Highway should be mitigated subject to a condition requiring the submission of a Traffic Management Plan.

County Transport Assessment Team- No comment received

- 6.19 Whilst the County Council Transport Assessment Team have not provided comments on this application, they did provide comments on the previous application (25/02161/FUL).
- 6.20 Their position on the previous application was of no objection due to the fact that the proposal was not considered to result in any increase in trip generation.

Designing Out Crime Officer- No Objection

- 6.21 Despite the context of the site being considered an area of high risk to the vulnerability to crime, it is considered that there is no objection to the proposal subject to a condition regarding secured by design principles.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.22 The application site is located within the urban context of the centre of Cambridge, comprising predominantly buildings or developed/ sealed surfaces. The buildings themselves are assessed as having negligible suitability of bat roosting due to their condition.
- 6.23 The proposal includes ecological enhancement measures which are recommended to be secured by condition along with a further condition to secure mitigation as set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment.

Environment Agency- No Comment

- 6.24 The Environment Agency consider the application is not appropriate for their comment.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.25 The application ref. 25/02161/FUL development was previously reviewed and supported by EQG e.g. in summary no objection subject to the

imposition of recommended conditions and informatives as per our EQG Planning Consultation Memo - dated the 23-07-2025

6.26 As no major / substantive changes or amendments are being proposed as part of this application, we maintain our support for the proposed development e.g. no objection and our previous comments etc remain relevant / valid.

6.27 It is noted that in response to certain Environmental Health / Planning Officer related conditions imposed on planning permission reference 25/02161/FUL, this application includes certain 25/02161/FUL Discharge of Condition documents that have already been relating to the following conditions:

- *Condition 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan)*
- *Condition 6 (Airborne Dust)*
- *Condition 7 (Demolition and construction noise and vibration)*

6.28 The contaminated land risk assessment referred to within comments and submitted with the previous application (25/02161/FUL) does not appear to have been provided as part of this current application. For the avoidance of doubt/ completeness it is recommended that the applicant submits this contaminated land report as part of this application.

6.29 Detailed assessment of environmental health ground has been provided in comments from the environmental health officer on the previous application (25/02161/FUL) as follows;

Environmental Quality

6.30 The Impact of the construction/ demolition phase along with plant noise from the operation of the site, ventilation of kitchen odours and artificial lighting are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions regarding:

- Construction/ demolition hours
- Demolition / construction collections / deliveries
- Plant Noise Impact Assessment
- Artificial Lighting Impact Assessment
- Hours of Deliveries/ collections (during use)
- DCEMP compliance
- Dust compliance
- Construction/demolition noise/vibration & piling compliance

Contaminated Land

- 6.31 The recommendation set out in the provided risk assessment is wholly appropriate for the proposed development and can be secured with the imposition of conditions regarding:
- Materials Management Plan
 - Unexpected Contamination

Air Quality

- 6.32 It is agreed that there will be a beneficial rather than negative impact on air quality and odour. As a result, Local Plan Policy 36 will be complied with subject to an odour compliance condition.

Updated comments

- 6.33 Further comments have been received from the Council's Environmental Health Officer clarifying an identified typographical error relating to the removal of ground to mitigate contaminated land impacts.
- 6.34 Further comments also request a change in trigger of the Materials Management Plan condition to **"Prior to the placement of ground-forming materials"**

Gardens Trust - No Objection

- 6.35 It should be noted that the Garden's Trust are proposed to be removed as a statutory consultee under Government Reforms announced on the 17th August. However, given they remain a statutory consultee until secondary legislation is passed, their comments are considered as such.
- 6.36 The development is not situated in, or visible from, the main historic registered gardens of the college, although it is within the registered area that covers the entire College site. Bath Court itself is of low value to the Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and the College as a whole.
- 6.37 The proposed development would give the area of Bath Court a 'walled garden' feel which would be an improvement on its current appearance and use. Although the proposed upper floors would overhang the Court, given the Court's low value as part of the RPG, this would not cause serious harm to the RPG.
- 6.38 Arboricultural impacts of the development as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment provided would be negligible.
- 6.39 Based on this assessment, we have no comments to make on the proposal.

Historic England- No Objection

6.40 Email 8 July 2026 - This application is effectively a resubmission of application 25/02161/FUL. Historic England's advice on the formal application and subsequent amended scheme was detailed in letters dated 29 July and 1 September 2025 respectively. We then stated our lack of objection to the scheme and asked the council to determine the application in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice.

6.41 The proposal subject of the present application remains unchanged from those previously assessed. Consequently we are comfortable to reiterate our position of no objection and do not wish to make any further comments. We refer you to our previous letters of advice for a detailed assessment of the proposals.

Comments received 29 July 2025 (to application 25/02161/FUL) (Appendix 2)

6.42 The current proposals represent a re-examination of the scheme consented in 2011 and renewed in 2016.

6.43 The strong emphasis on sustainability of the new proposals results in a scheme that t[h]reads more lightly on the site; a basement extension is no longer considered. Neither is the glazing of Bath court.

6.44 In order to meet the requirements of the brief and compensate for the loss of the basement, the buildings need to extend further above ground. Heights and relationship with surrounding buildings therefore require careful consideration. Given its position fronting what is now a public lane, the buildings contribution to the streetscape in addition to its relationship with the college as a whole and the building's own proportions need also to be considered.

6.45 The removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college. However, the resulting increased massing brings other instances of harm, as it puts considerable pressure on the surrounding buildings forming Bath Court. The building feels too big, overdominant on this space, particularly in its relationship with the south range of first court and the Bodley Library.

6.46 Similarly, the increased height towards Christ's Lane feels quite large when seen alongside the relatively modest elevations of the college. This

impact is evidenced in the visualisations presented, particularly those looking towards St Andrew's Street.

- 6.47 The introduction of a new primary building of the massing proposed within what historically was a domestic kitchen garden is challenging. Whilst we acknowledge the proposals represent a more contextual approach and the architectural quality of the scheme, we are of the view that the building is too big for its location.
- 6.48 Historic England engaged on pre-application discussions with the College alongside Council officers, where we welcomed the approach taken to revising the granted scheme and its ambitions. We highlighted the architectural quality of the project and its potential for enhancing the character of the conservation area and for delivering greater benefit to the college. We expressed our concerns however about its massing, its relationship with the Bodley library, and made some recommendations in relation to the Christ Lane elevation, which we consider would benefit from simplification.
- 6.49 The treatment to Christ's Lane has also been refined and simplified from the competition and subsequent designs discussed at pre-application stage. The wall level which initially aligned with the Bodley's stringcourse has been now lifted up to turret level. Whilst this simplifies the design and improves the building's own proportions, it feels more overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley and evidences the difficulties to accommodate a building which is too large for what is a very domestic setting.
- 6.50 In relation to the ventilation stacks/new chimneys proposed, we agree that the proportions and relationship of these elements in the historic streetscape are an important consideration and note the comparative analysis included in the Design and Access Statement. However, the role of these new elements within the college needs also to be factored in.
- 6.51 To summarise and conclude, in their present form, the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the listed building, primarily as a result of the excessive bulk of the new building, which we consider would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings.
- 6.52 The proposals would be bulkier than those that were previously granted consent. We also acknowledge the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, we do not wish to object to the application but

would strongly encourage that massing is further reduced so it sits better within this context.

Updated comments following amendments received 1 September 2025
(Appendix 2)

- 6.53 An additional set of plans has been submitted in support of this application. The overall massing of the building remains unchanged but revisions have been introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks and the position of the wash up pod, which were raised in our letter of advice dated 29 July 2025.
- 6.54 The height of the ventilation stacks has been reduced by 90cm; further louvered slots have been added to the side and rear elevations to compensate for the loss ventilation area; this also helps to break up the mass of these elements.
- 6.55 We are of the opinion that if the height of the staircase turret could similarly be slightly reduced, this would better retain the prominence of the reduced chimney/ventilation stacks. This in turn would improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew's Street. We would encourage this is considered.
- 6.56 Overall, Historic England welcomes the revisions introduced to the scheme and retains its position of no objection.

Comments following NPPF updates

- 6.57 Following the updates to the NPPF on the 17 August 2026, further comments were received from Historic England confirming that they are confident their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate. They concluded that they "consider that our existing responses provide a sufficient basis for the Local Planning Authority to assess the proposals in the context of the revised NPPF".

Landscape Officer- No Objection

- 6.58 We raise no objection to the proposal in landscape terms, given some detail remains outstanding, a condition is recommended regarding hard and soft landscaping.
- 6.59 Updated comments received 25 August 2026 confirm that, following the updated NPPF, the position of no objection (subject to conditions) remains.

Lead Local Flood Authority- No Objection

- 6.60 The provided information demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of attenuation, restricting surface water discharge to 2l/s.
- 6.61 The LLFA is supportive of the use of rain gardens and rainwater harvesting as both controlling the rate of surface water run-off and providing water quality treatment.
- 6.62 Conditions are recommended regarding a scheme for surface water drainage and measures to avoid additional surface water run-off.
- 6.63 Updated comments were received from the Lead Local Flood Authority raising an objection to the scheme on the basis that the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities were proposed on non-permeable paving with no information regarding the mitigation of this.
- 6.64 Following clarification, the LLFA have confirmed, within an updated memo that their position, set out within their initial comments (18 June 2026) remains.

Natural England- No comment received

- 6.65 Whilst Natural England have not provided comments on this current application they did on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Within this previous application they raised no objection to the proposal on the basis that it would not have any significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Public Art Officer – No Objection

- 6.66 Limited information has been provided with the application regarding public art within the proposal. A condition is recommended requiring submission of a Public Art Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Comment

- 6.67 As a major application, drainage comments are deferred to the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Sustainability Officer- No Objection

- 6.68 The sustainability approach set out within the provided sustainability statement is welcomed and looks to achieve a high standard of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon emissions reduction within the restrictions of the original buildings historic context.
- 6.69 The applications bespoke sustainability strategy is based upon the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide. The new build element will follow Passivhaus principles with high-performing thermal fabric, good airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recover and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 6.70 Supports the proposed development subject to conditions regarding a bespoke sustainability strategy, rainwater harvesting, water efficiency calculations and water metering.

S106 Officer- No comment received

- 6.71 Whilst not received on this current application, the council's Section 106 officer did provide comments on the previous application (26/02161/FUL). Within their previous comments they requested financial contributions of £20,000 (plus indexation) towards the provision of and improvement of public realm facilities within the vicinity of Christ's Lane.

Tree Officer- No Objection

- 6.72 From an arboricultural perspective there are no objections to this planning application.
- 6.73 The provided Arboricultural Impact Assessment provides sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed demolition and construction works and installation of the temporary kitchen can be undertaken with minimal impact upon existing trees.
- 6.74 The submitted Tree Protection Scheme dated 04/02/2026 provides adequate measures to secure the protection of retained trees, including BS5837:2012 Category B trees, throughout the construction period. Subject to compliance with the provided Tree Protection Scheme there are no arboricultural constraints that would warrant refusal of the application.

Urban Design Officer - No Objection

- 6.75 The design as presented reflects a contextually sensitive response and substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane. The proposal is strongly supported by urban design in its current form in terms of public realm improvement.
- 6.76 The current proposal achieves an elegant and respectful balance through a successful mediation between old and new and is strongly supported.
- 6.77 The use of pixelated brickwork that fuses with the historic fabric and subtly merges with it is supported. It provides the important Christ Lane facing façade with a tactile quality that is appropriate to a setting where people will come in close contact with it.

Victorian Society - Objection

- 6.78 Within their letter dated 06 July 2026 (Appendix 7), re-iterated their objection and advice raised on the previous application (Appendix 3) regarding the scheme, in particular with regard to its scale and massing. Urges the college to consider less-harmful alternatives and/ or minor alterations previous proposed.
- 6.79 The design as it stands gives rise to a low-to-moderate level of less than substantial harm impacting the fabric of the college's Grade-I Listing, but also the setting of the Central (Historic Core) Conservation Area.

Waste Officer – No objection

- 6.80 No objection to the proposal on the assumption that any additional waste created will be incorporated into the existing refuse arrangement for the college.

Design Review Panel Meeting – 13 February 2025

- 6.81 The final report received (Appendix 3) includes the following on the bulk, scale, massing and spatial concept: -
- 6.82 The Panel endorse the concept and strategy of the proposal. There is a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. It is comfortable with the scale and massing. When viewed from this junction, it has a significance and a character of its own.

- 6.83 The dominant chimneys, performing an essential ventilation function are welcome. Some members of the panel expressed the view that they could be taller. That popping up above the ridge line when viewed from First Court within the college would not be a problem. Trying to keep them out of sight was inconsistent with historic precedent.
- 6.84 There are differing views on the impact of the design on Bath Court. It is a tight space and the internal cross section dimensions to accommodate a functioning library have largely determined the form. Bath Court is not a pleasant space at the moment. It is hemmed in by the vertical façade of the existing library with no shelter. The move to open up the ground level space with greater width and a degree of shelter with a cantilever overhang are positive moves that will enhance the space. The dimension between the projecting upper level of the library and the roof opposite will be in the order of 4 metres. This is a concern to some panel members.
- 6.85 There is a tricky balancing act between the needs of the library and the occupiers of the rooms opposite, although the rooms are dual aspect and so daylight is not a problem. However, the façade of the upper levels of the library will be very much in the face of occupiers of the roof top rooms. Material selection and detail are important considerations as the design team acknowledge.
- 6.86 The final report concludes: In conclusion the panel applaud the scheme as an exemplary proposal. As the details develop, the Panel believe the richness will be enhanced.
- 6.87 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.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 119 representations have been received, 62 in support and 57 in objection.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

Planning Principles

- Lack of justification for the number of study spaces provided within the library
- Failure to fully explore the potential for previous schemes to meet the current needs of the College

- Disregard for the potential provision of library facilities within multiple buildings within the College, reducing the required scale within this site.
- The proposal would not provide sufficient public benefits to outweigh the disruption that it would cause.

Design/Character/Heritage/Townscape and Visual Impact

- The proposal is too big for its surroundings, with the site unable to accommodate a building of this size
- The scheme would negatively impact Christ's Lane as a historic public space
- The proposal would result in harm to the Grade 1 listed College buildings
- The replacement building would have a detrimental impact on the Historic Core Conservation Area
- The proposed development does not comply with Policy 61 of the Local Plan as it fails to enhance/ preserve the significance of heritage assets.
- Excessive height of the proposed building that would overwhelm the surrounding buildings of heritage significance
- The scale of the proposed building would increase and exacerbate the "canyoning" along Christ's Lane
- The proposed library would enclose Bath Court with insufficient spacing afforded to the Southern Range of First Court.
- The proposed library would severely obstruct the skyline for users of Christ's Lane
- Lack of public art provision and consideration of enjoyment for pedestrians.
- The provided views with the application do not accurately reflect the appearance of the proposed building from along Christ's Lane.
- Increased scale and massing in comparison to the previous permissions on the site.
- Dismissal of potential to build downwards to reduce the scale of the proposal above ground
- Excessively large chimneys that are out-of-keeping with the vernacular of Cambridge with insufficient justification for their height.
- Requests from statutory consultees to reduce the scale of the proposal
- Greater consideration should be given to preserving/ enhancing Bath Court as an area of open space.
- The archaeological benefits stated through the omission of the basement are highly questionable.

- The applicant has failed to accurately consider the relevance/ assessment of Policy 60 (tall buildings)

Amenity Impacts

- The proposal would block out light to Christ's Lane resulting in detrimental impacts to the businesses along this street
- Construction works and narrowing of Christ's Lane would impact the function of adjacent businesses along Christ's Lane
- the construction works would result in disturbance to those living along Christ's Lane through noise, vibration and dust
- The new building would block views from the residential properties of Christ's Lane.

Environmental

- The sustainability argument for omitting the basement is incomplete and fails to consider the social benefits of a reduced height.
- Underestimation by the college as to the amount of contamination within the site

Highways and transport

- the construction would impact Christ's Lane as a heavily used public thoroughfare including those with mobility issues
- safety impacts from construction traffic using Christ's Lane

Other

- Incomplete public consultation and failure to work constructively with local residents
- Failure of the College to take into account concerns of nearby residents

Judicial Review/ Procedural concerns

- The application should not be determined until the ongoing Judicial Review has been heard in court with the judgement considered as part of this application.
- The college has circumnavigated procedure by submitting an identical second application
- The applicant's assessment of the heritage impacts is flawed and fails to take into account the Judicial Review and conceded grounds.
- The applicant has obstructed public meeting notes from being published and refused to attend a Development Control Forum
- The applicants have been "lobbying" councillors

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- The current 1970s library no longer meets the needs of students with regards to its study spaces, accessibility and overall quality of space as raised historically by students and staff and presents a barrier for potential students
- The development would result in significantly improved accessibility for all students and staff.
- Providing a building that would meet the needs of multiple future generations, minimising the need for future disruption
- Provision of a new library building that is more sympathetic to the surrounding listed buildings of the College than the existing library
- Wider benefits including accessibility to other parts of the college including dining facilities
- Long term sustainability benefits through the use of renewable energy sources such as Air Source Heat Pumps
- Enhancements to Christ's Lane as a public frontage through the replacement of the current building which provides a negative contribution to the character of the area
- The scale of the proposed building reflects and responds to the scale and appearance of surrounding modern developments.
- Improved kitchen/ cafeteria facilities as a result of the works
- Provision of a variety of study spaces to meet the various, contemporary needs of students including quiet spaces, collaborative areas and flexible environments
- The proposal preserves and enhances the historic buildings of Christ's College
- The proposal is well-integrated into the environment, minimising any adverse impact on neighbouring properties
- Improved safety of Christ's Lane as a public thoroughfare through the introduction of large overlooking windows and increased lighting
- Improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the provision of a bench and gate providing views into Bath Court
- The proposal helps to connect the public space of Christ's Lane to the College grounds
- Neurodiversity affirming design of the proposed library building.
- The development contributes towards the College's ability to provide effective education.
- The avoidance of any additional basement avoids the embodiment and excessive levels of carbon that this would require as well as removing the risk of damage to surrounding listed buildings.

- The proposal is an improvement to what is one of the City's main tourist destinations
- Substantial public benefits arising from the scheme to outweigh any identified heritage harm

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. Member Representations

8.1 None received

9. Local Groups / Petition

- 9.1 Cambridge Past Present and Future have submitted a representation raising concerns with the application for the following reasons:
- The proposal fails to preserve or enhance relevant heritage assets as required by Policy 61 of the Local Plan. The harm identified by Historic England is such that the application fails this test.
 - Historic England have warned that the ventilation stacks/ chimneys are not proportionate with the existing chimneys within Christ's College. This would overwhelm the modest scale of the College's historic streetscape.
 - The minimal public benefits identified fail to outweigh the identified heritage harm including to the Grade 1 listed Bodley Library, Bath Court and the Historic Core Conservation area.

Christ's Lane Action Group

- 9.2 At time of writing a total of more than 70 representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group are published on the public portal for this application.
- 9.3 Included within these representations is a petition received with a total of 75 signatures requesting that a Development Control Forum be held to discuss matters that would overcome objections to the scheme.
- 9.4 Of these, more than 20 are considered to comprise formal representations on the scheme and its determination, with the remainder being either attachments/ enclosures or emails notifying of the representations sent to the following:

- Planning Case officer
- Planning Legal officer/ department
- Planning technical support team
- Historic Environment Team
- The Victorian Society
- Historic England

9.5 Full details of these representations are visible on the public portal however the contents can be summarised as follows:

Process

- Repeated request that determination of this application be deferred until the judgement of the court has been made on the Judicial Review, depriving the decision maker of guidance from the High Court.
- Confirmation sought multiple times from the Council's Legal officer that the assessment of this application identifies and corrects each conceded error raised within the Judicial Review.
- Confirmation sought repeatedly that discharge of conditions under the previous "acknowledged-unlawful" permission would not be relied upon or treated as satisfying conditions under this new application.
- Confirmation sought to clarify the consultation deadline for third parties including clarification on the public portal as to this deadline.
- Raised the failure to consult Historic England as a Statutory Consultee on the application. Including a request that the standard 21-day consultation be extended to 42 days to account for the consultation of Historic England.
- Raised the failure to obtain advice from the National Amenity Society on the application.
- Request made that the applicant provide a BRE 209 (2022) compliant daylight and sunlight assessment and Construction Management plan with an extension to the consultation period to reflect this additional information.
- Failure to notify Nos. 19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane initially when the application was validated.
- Lack of sufficient time within the consultation period for consideration of information provided on the 18th and 24th June.
- Request that the Garden's Trust comments be logged on the portal as statutory advice rather than a public comment.
- Concerns regarding lack of sufficient time afforded between a Development Control Forum and Planning Committee. With a

repeated request that the officer report be published 14 days before any committee meeting.

- Request that the case officer clarify to a third-party, the consultation deadline in light of a previous request to extend their deadline.
- Failure to upload/ misfiling of representations received from CLAG in response to this application.
- Provided their account of the 6th July College meeting including the view provided by the applicant's representatives in relation to the heritage assessment of the scheme.
- Raised a mis-representation of the number of objections received on this application within a public article online. With a request that this be rectified to clarify the number of objections received.
- Raised concerns regarding the incorrect publication date of a letter from the agent of the application to the Victorian Society.
- Concerns raised regarding the wording of a number of conditions attached to the previous permission that should be amended as part of this application.

Legal Matters

- Concerns raised regarding lobbying of members resulting from a letter sent by the College to members with an incomplete view of the application, failing to take account of the grounds of Judicial Review. Repeated request that this letter be uploaded to the application so that it is within the public case file.
- Concerns regarding the legal position to initially decline a Development Control Forum on the basis that the College declined to attend.
- Request why pre-empting the High Court Judgement is considered lawful and prudent.
- Request for a standstill undertaking whilst ongoing matters are resolved.
- Sought a legal view as to why a record of the College's public meeting on the 6th July was withheld from the public record on this application.

Grounds of the ongoing Judicial Review

- Email sent directly to Historic England asking that, if consulted again their response be given with full knowledge of the ongoing Judicial Review. Including the way in which Historic England's comments were presented to committee within the previous application.

- That the grounds of the Judicial Review are directly relevant to the building's bulk and massing and therefore inseparable from this current application.

Heritage

- Email sent directly to the Victorian Society notifying them of the current application, the status of the Judicial Review and requesting that they clarify if their previous comments remain applicable to this current application.
- Significant concerns raised repeatedly regarding the applicant's assessment of heritage harm arising from the scheme including within their covering letter of this new application.
- Confirmation sought that Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990 applies as the proposal would affect a listed building or its setting.
- Email sent directly to the Council's Historic Environment team notifying them of the status of the application, the Judicial Review and the statutory consultee comments received prior to the comment of the Conservation Officer.
- Concern raised regarding the correspondence between the agent, architect and the Victorian Society. Including the failure to re-consult upon the response of the Victorian Society.

Other Matters

- Email direct to the Council's Environmental Health Officer noting an error within their comments with regards to the depth of suggested contaminated land removal. In addition to query regarding trigger of the material management plan condition. Including a request to re-consult following any updated Environmental Health Officer comments.
- Failure of the applicant to provide the Site Investigation Report to assess the impact of the proposal with regards to contaminated land.
- Contradictions regarding the proposal's ability to "maintain pedestrian access" along Christ's Lane during construction works.
- The proposal fails to provide a de-minimis calculation regarding the necessity to provide statutory Biodiversity Net Gain with the application. Including assessment of the temporary facility within the Second Court.
- Additional noise assessment information is required prior to determination of this application.
- Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan as part of this application.

- Contradicting advice from the Council's Tree officer and inconsistent information relating to the temporary kitchen.

9.6 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. Planning background

- 10.1 As planning committee members should be aware, this application has been submitted, as an identical copy of the previous application (ref 25/02161/FUL) that is currently the subject of a Judicial Review and is due to be heard in the Planning Court in October 2026.
- 10.2 Permission has been granted by the High Court for the Judicial Review to proceed to a substantive one-day hearing on all four grounds applied for by CLAG.
- 10.3 Given the delay in the courts for the case to be heard, the applicant decided to submit this current application for determination, which allows the Council the opportunity to directly address all four grounds of legal challenge.
- 10.4 The grounds of challenge raised within the Judicial Review are covered within the executive summary of this report as follows:
- 10.5 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 10.6 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within

the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.

- 10.7 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 10.8 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 10.9 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would "help to secure the listed building's optimum viable use." The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 10.10 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 10.11 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative**

modes of development. On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.

- 10.12 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college's needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.
- 10.13 Officers consider that the primary matters of legal contention have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interest Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely, although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by a judge.

The Council's ability to determine the current application

- 10.14 As referred to above, CLAG and other third-parties have raised concerns that this application should not be determined whilst the previous application (25/02161/FUL) was under judicial review. The grant of planning permission for the previous application remains valid unless and until quashed by the court. The Council has openly indicated to the court that it would be prepared to consent to a quashing of that previous decision based on the grounds raised by CLAG. There is nothing to prevent the applicant from submitting a new (and identical) application in the interim as has been done, and for that to be considered by the Council against that backdrop. Bearing in mind the current context, it remains the case that any subsequent decision on this new application could be liable to be challenged in the normal way. This officer report addresses the grounds of challenge, to avoid any error of law and minimise the risk of further challenge.

11. Assessment

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

- Principle of development
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Heritage assets
- Trees
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Planning obligations
- Other matters
- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

12. Presumption in favour of sustainable development

12.1 The 2026 update to the NPPF introduced within Policy S3, the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. Where development is located within settlements, such as this application within the settlement of Cambridge, Policy S4 of the NPPF should be applied.

12.2 Policy S4 provides that applications within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 2(c) of S4 then adds that the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be outweighed by adverse effects include where proposals would fail to comply with one of the national decision making policies that states development should be refused in specific circumstances.

12.3 The application has been assessed against the NPPF as set out in the following sections of this report. It is not considered that there is any conflict with national decision making policies that would otherwise outweigh the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

13. Principle of Development

- 13.1 The proposed development seeks the replacement of the existing library building with a larger, more modern facility within largely the same footprint forming part of the College site. The site falls within the Cambridge City Centre as defined within the Local Plan Policies map Policy 6. The application therefore falls to be assessed against Policy 10 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.2 Policy 10 states that any new development or redevelopment within the City Centre should:
- a) add to the vitality and viability of the city centre;
 - b) achieve a suitable mix of uses;
 - c) preserve or enhance heritage assets and their setting, open spaces and the River Cam;
 - d) be of the highest quality design and deliver a high-quality public realm; and
 - e) promote sustainable modes of transport
- 13.3 Given that the application is seeking the demolition and replacement of the existing library within the college, the use of the site is not being altered as part of this application. For this reason, it is not considered that criteria (a) and (b) are directly applicable in this instance, and it is not reasonable to conclude that further uses are required within the site given its constrained nature and the need, first and foremost, to re-provide a new library on the site to modern standards. It is in the view of officers, unreasonable to require the provision of additional uses within the site given the needs of the College and its students for library space within the site. No alternatives have been suggested to demonstrate that a mix of uses within the site is realistically achievable.
- 13.4 As will be assessed fully within the Heritage section of this report, the proposed replacement library building is considered to result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Conversely, however, it is considered that the development would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area, with a neutral impact upon the Grade II listed Christ's College RPG. The heritage balance is considered to result in overall harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings and therefore there is conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10. As set out in the planning balance however, it

is considered that the harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library is outweighed by public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 13.5 As will also be discussed in greater detail in the following section of this report, the design of the replacement library is considered to be of the highest quality, taking key notes from relevant buildings within Cambridge. Therefore, subject to a number of conditions, the development is considered to comply with criteria (d) of Policy 10.
- 13.6 The proposed development, as with the existing site, is car free with no designated car parking for users of the library. Given the highly sustainable, central location of the site, it is considered that the development complies with criteria (e) of Policy 10.
- 13.7 Policy 43 of the Local Plan supports university development within the city centre so long as it:
- a. makes effective use of land, including a mix of uses on larger sites to meet the needs of the relevant institution, and
 - b. takes reasonable opportunities to improve circulation for pedestrians and cyclists, together with public realm improvements, reductions in car parking provision and the introduction of active frontages at ground floor level.
- 13.8 The proposed development seeks the replacement of an existing library that is considered by the college to no longer be sufficient to meet the needs of its students or meet its own sustainability and accessibility requirements. Whilst significantly larger than the existing library, the proposed replacement building is considered, in the view of officers to make effective use of the land within a highly sustainable, city centre location. Officers do not consider it feasible to provide a mix of uses on the site due to the requirement of the college for library space within a constrained site, therefore the proposal complies with criteria a. of Policy 43. As will be discussed in later sections of this report, officers also consider that the proposal is compliant with criteria b. of the Policy.
- 13.9 With the above in mind, whilst the proposal would conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy 43 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the overall objectives of the Development Plan. As set out in the Planning Balance, the heritage harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

Protected Open Space

- 13.10 Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 is relevant in the assessment of the application as the entire application site forms an area of protected open space (P&G33). The space is considered to be of recreational and environmental importance with a quality rating of 77.89%.
- 13.11 Policy 67 aims to protect designated open space of environmental and recreational importance. The local plan states that development proposals which would lead to the loss of protected open space will not be permitted unless the open space can be satisfactorily replaced in terms of quality, quantity and access with an equal or better standard than that which is proposed to be lost.
- 13.12 In the case of university and college grounds, such as the application site, it is added that development may be permitted where it meets a demonstrable educational need and does not adversely affect playing fields or other formal sports provision on the site.
- 13.13 Whilst Bath Court is located within the Protected Open space, it is almost entirely paved with hardstanding and extremely limited in its size. Officers do not therefore consider that it provides open space of any significant environmental or recreational importance as set out in Policy 67. The development, which seeks to re-develop this space and provide a higher quality landscaped space, is therefore not considered to conflict with the purpose of Policy 67 with regards to Bath Court.
- 13.14 The open space within Second Court, where the temporary buildings are proposed during construction works, is acknowledged to provide a greater level of importance with regards to Policy 67. It is considered however, that the temporary nature of the structure proposed within this space is such that the development would not result in any permanent impact to, or loss of open space. Condition 9 recommended with this application would ensure that the temporary building required during the works would be removed with the site restored to its original condition.
- 13.15 Officers consider that the applicant has provided sufficient justification setting out the educational need for new and improved library space and study facilities within the college. In addition to the fact that the development would not impact any playing fields or formal sports provision, it is considered that the development would comply with Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.16 Having regard to the enhanced open spaces and relocated recreational facilities, the proposed development is considered to comply with the requirements of policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Tall Buildings, Policy 60 and Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 13.17 It is acknowledged that there has not been any assessment from the applicant with regards to Policy 60 of the Local Plan. The initial text of this policy states that “any proposal for a structure that breaks the existing skyline and/or is significantly taller than the surrounding built form will be considered against the following criteria”. Appendix F of the Local Plan then provides further guidance as to the application of this policy.
- 13.18 The site is located within the historic core, as illustrated by Figure F.1. of Appendix F. Paragraph F.10(i) states that building proposals of six storeys or more (assuming a flat roof with no rooftop plant and a height of 19m above ground level) would automatically trigger the need to address the criteria set out within the guidance. It also states that dependent on the exact location within the historic core, buildings of four to six storeys may also need to be evaluated against the assessment criteria herein, due to proximity to heritage assets and potential impacts on key views.
- 13.19 The proposed replacement library building does not, at its highest point, measure 19 metres in height above ground level. The top of the Chimneys proposed measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level along Christ’s Lane, with the top of the parapet roof measuring approximately 13 metres above the same level. Whilst the building is four storeys in height and within close proximity to heritage assets, it remains lower than the adjacent modern Christ’s Lane re-development which reaches a height of approximately 15.5 metres. An assessment of the skyline impact in the context of Policy 60 and the proposal in its wider Cambridge setting including long-to-medium distance views, is not necessary in the judgement of officers. This is because of the location, comparative height and context of the proposal not giving rise to any wider skyline or City setting impacts. From such views, because nearby buildings are taller in height than the proposed library, the proposal is very unlikely to give rise to a perceptible break in the skyline.
- 13.20 Appendix F (para F.21) also provides guidance in respect of local and short distance views, which includes Jesus Green and other elevated locations close to the site, including Grand Arcade car park, Castle Mound, Park Street car park (no longer relevant as redeveloped) and the Church of St Mary the Great. Such views are important to protect, but the question as to whether Policy 60 is engaged relative to the scheme before the Council is a matter of judgement. In the view of officers, because of the location and comparative heights of buildings in the immediate context, Policy 60 is not engaged. Whilst there may be short distance

ground level views of the scheme where the built form could be seen to break the immediate skyline above the existing built form of the existing College, this does not in and of itself require a townscape and visual impact assessment to be undertaken to demonstrate compliance with Policy 60.

- 13.21 As such, Officers consider the proposal would not trigger the thresholds as stated under Policy 60 and no townscape visual impact assessment against the prescribed assessment criteria is required. This notwithstanding, the applicants have nonetheless submitted a townscape and visual impact assessment of the scheme, which covers an approximate area of 200m around the site. This is a proportionate response to the scale of the proposal within its immediate context. The assessment provides visualisations of the scheme which are important for understanding its impacts, particularly its heritage setting in the historic core and its relationship to Christ's Pieces, Christs Lane, St Andrew's Street and internally within the College itself. The key views and associated impacts are discussed below with reference to adopted policies 55, 56, 58, 59 and 61 and associated NPPF and NPPG guidance.
- 13.22 The applicant's TVIA summarises that 'the overall form and presence of the building, coupled with its urban and architectural expression, ensures the scheme will be a positive addition to the historic townscape of Cambridge and positively contribute to the visual amenity of those who inhabit and enjoy the City. As such, the proposals are found to deliver overall beneficial effects in relation to the townscape character of the area, and positive impacts to key views within the environs of the building'.

14. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 14.1 The application site comprises the existing library building serving the College, Bath Court which is the space between the library and First Court, in addition to Second Court which is the space proposed for the temporary facilities to be used during the construction phase.
- 14.2 The existing library building forms a part of the Grade I Listed Christ's College site, although the 1970's library itself is far more modern than the First Court buildings and Bodley Library that date back to the 16th Century and 1896 respectively. The existing library structure is considered to be negative with regards to its contribution to the relevant heritage assets and includes a large, relatively blank façade on its main, public facing elevation along Christ's Lane.

- 14.3 Limited elements of the existing site are visible to the public outside of the College grounds, with the southeastern boundary of the site abutting the public highway of Christ's Lane with additional glimpsed views either side of the existing library building. At its highest point, the existing library building measures approximately 5.7 metres in height spanning approximately 27 metres of the length of Christ's Lane. Within the length of this elevation there are a small number of windows in addition to a large, unsightly metal flue projecting out from the elevation and above the building's flat roof.
- 14.4 The current library building includes a bridge linking into the historic Bodley Library at first floor level from the existing library, although the spacing between the two buildings of approximately 1.8 metres gives the sense that the more modern library crowds the historic Bodley. Despite the height of the current library, there are only very limited views from pedestrian level along Christ's Lane of the roofs of First Court, there are however more extensive private views from the raised level residential dwellings and their accesses of the Christ's Lane apartments opposite (see below).
- 14.5 Christ's Lane is a busy public right of way which is used daily by a large number of people linking key parts of the City of Cambridge. To the opposite side of Christ's Lane of the College, is the Christ's Lane redevelopment which is a relatively modern site comprising a mixed use of retail and residential units. Whilst the total height of this adjacent building is higher (approximately 15.5 metres), approximately 10.3 metres in height of the building directly abuts Christ's Lane, with the first floor overhanging the ground floor. The upper floors are set back such that they are not immediately visible above the initial 10.3 metres above ground. The height of the existing library is therefore notably lower in height than the Christ's Lane redevelopment. For clarification, the heights of the buildings have been taken from the provided Short Section DD (003703 P03) with heights calculated from ground level along Christ's Lane.
- 14.6 Internally within the College, sandwiched between the library building and the southern edge of First Court, is Bath Court an external space at most 5 metres in width. This space is also, almost entirely paved with hardstanding, and has numerous differing levels throughout, making its accessibility very poor.
- 14.7 The proposed development seeks the demolition of the existing library building, in addition to smaller portions of the college site, including the wash-up space located at the northeastern end of Bath Court. As will be discussed in greater detail in the Heritage section of this report, there is

no objection to the demolition of this element of the listed building due to its negative contribution to both the setting of historic elements of the Listed Building and the public realm/ conservation area.

- 14.8 The proposed development has been submitted taking into account the views of students from the College and other stakeholders. The current library facilities within the College are lacking in quality and falling below standards. The College buildings, including the existing library present significant accessibility difficulties with multiple variations in floor levels, in addition to an overall lack of sufficient study space, poor installation/ sustainability performance, and an extremely underused outdoor space within Bath Court.
- 14.9 The gross internal area of the new building is proposed at 1050m², compared to 680m² existing, which would be spread out over four floors with a mix of book storage, reading and study spaces.
- 14.10 The siting of the proposed library building encompasses largely the same footprint as the existing building it seeks to replace, being located on the southeastern edge of the College site, retaining and enhancing the quality of Bath Court between it and the buildings of First Court. Indeed, the footprint of the building at ground level is slightly reduced from the existing, primarily as a result of increasing the separation between it and the northeastern elevation of the Bodley Library.
- 14.11 With regards to the proposed library building specifically, given its comparable footprint, the increase in gross internal area is a result of an increase in height above ground level in comparison to the existing building and a cantilevered design. The highest point of the proposed building being the top of the chimneys facing Christ's Lane measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level at the southern end of Christ's Lane, with the top of the parapet roof being 13 metres above ground level. This building height is comparable to that part of the re-development on the southern side of Christ's Lane. The visual impact of this view can be seen within View A of the provided Townscape and Visual Appraisal (TVIA). As shown within existing view from Sidney Street the roof of the adjacent Christ's Lane re-development is visible above the entrance range of the College. Whilst the chimneys and stair lantern of the proposed development would project into view, the bulk of the proposed building would remain hidden from these views below the height of the Christ's Lane redevelopment beyond.
- 14.12 The total length of the proposed building measures approximately 41.5 metres, not including the bridge link to the Bodley Library, running

immediately adjacent to the side of Christ's Lane. The views from along Christ's Lane, in addition to those at either end, along St Andrews Street and Christ's Pieces are considered to be the main public viewpoints of the development, as highlighted within views B, C and D of the provided TVIA. Whilst the College is open to members of the public, the impact of the development on internal views within the college is considered to be less significant in this case.

- 14.13 Concerns regarding the scale and massing of the proposed development upon the public realm, including the impact upon Christ's Lane itself have been raised by third parties. Firstly, when assessing this impact, it is important to note that the length of the proposed building is approximately half of the total length of Christ's Lane, with the northeastern end of the street remaining at the current, lower height. As previously mentioned, the height of the proposed building, whilst a significant increase over the existing library, remains lower than the total height of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, albeit the top levels of the adjacent redevelopment are set back from the frontage.
- 14.14 The perceived impact of the proposed development upon Christ's Lane as a public space is reflected in Views B and E of the TVIA. Both views show the increase in height of the proposed library building. They also show, however, that this height, visually, in comparison to the southern Christ's Lane re-development would not be overly dominant upon the space. View D in particular shows the northeastern end of Christ's Lane where the plant currently visible on the roof is to be removed and the proposal is not considered to be dominant within the views. This impact is helped by the horizontal banding and articulation along the façade that draws the eye along Christ's Lane rather than upwards.
- 14.15 The 2026 updated NPPF, through Policy DP3 clearly sets out principles for development to achieve well-designed places. The Christ's Lane facade of the scheme is considered to significantly enhance the public facing element of the site. This includes introducing a significant number of openings out onto The Lane which would likely improve the safety of the space through passive surveillance, set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(f).
- 14.16 In addition to the design of the proposed building which will be discussed in greater detail later in this section of the report, the scale of the proposed development and its frontage onto Christ's Lane is considered appropriate. Whilst a significant increase above the existing building, the proposal is considered to optimise the site's potential and helps to delineate between public and private areas of the site. As set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(e).

- 14.17 The proposed library building's two primary elevations are those facing onto Christ's Lane and also facing internally into Bath Court. Owing to the nature of the college and the use of the library, the public facing elevation onto Christ's Lane is required to provide a certain level of privacy from public views. As opposed to the existing mainly blank façade, the proposed elevation fronting Christ's Lane has a greater level of articulation creating an interest that is not found in the current site. A 'base' level is established up to the second floor where the façade steps back revealing the depth of the chimneys. A combination of the chimneys and windows within this elevation attempt to take note of other historic college streets and provides a rhythm along the lane.
- 14.18 Integrated within the façade facing Christ's Lane, a bench measuring approximately 25 metres in length is proposed along Christ's Lane. This combined with the other positive features of this public façade is such that the contribution to the public realm is considered by officers to be positive.
- 14.19 Protruding above the second floor, visible behind the historic Bodley Library gable, is the proposed staircase and its glass enclosure rising above the brick façade. Views of this element are increased because of the greater spacing afforded to the Bodley Library and the new proposed bridge link which gives a more lightweight, clear view into Bath Court. In addition to this a replacement gate is proposed into Bath Court from Christ's Lane, the design of which is to be secured through the public art process within a recommended condition.
- 14.20 With regards to the Bath Court elevation, given the internal nature of this side of the site and the proposed garden within Bath Court, a more open façade can be afforded. A large, glazed façade at the lower two levels is located below an overhanging façade utilising a shingle material hung from the timber frame. The light colour of this material is key to ensuring both direct and reflected light reaches the ground level within Bath Court.
- 14.21 Atop the building, facing in the direction of First Court is the "pleated roof" providing light in through the north facing roof pitches and space for PV panels on the south-facing roof pitches. This element of the design is considered to provide an effective solution to meet the user needs of the building whilst also contributing to its sustainability targets and providing an element of architectural interest in its design.
- 14.22 In addition to the library building itself, the application seeks to demolish the existing wash-up room to the northeastern end of Bath Court as a part of improving the accessibility and connectivity of the college buildings.

This element, in combination with the levelling of Bath Court provides level access through the ground floor, including to a lift in place of the existing wash-up to the upper floors of the library and dining halls.

- 14.23 Significant landscape enhancements are proposed to take advantage of the proposed scheme to improve the quality of the space provided within Bath Court. This includes utilising the existing rainwater drainage channel to provide a rain garden and managing the rainwater runoff from the new library building. More broadly, the design of the library building, opening up onto Bath court will give the sense of a cohesive space which is considered to significantly improve the usability of Bath Court as a space for students within the site.
- 14.24 Whilst Bath Court is a relatively narrow space, proposed to be surrounded on all sides by built form, officers, in consultation with the Council's Landscape officers, are comfortable that the proposed landscape strategy is deliverable. Given the importance of this aspect of the proposal to ensuring the quality of the scheme, as recommended, a condition relating to hard & soft landscaping is suggested to be attached to any permission granted.
- 14.25 It is noted that the development includes areas of flat roof, particularly atop the library building towards the Christ's Lane façade. Whilst Policy 31 of the Local Plan requires flat roofs to be either green or brown roofs, in this case, access is required to this entire roof to serve the plant located at this level. It is not considered that, with access required, it is reasonable to require green/ brown roofs by way of condition.
- 14.26 As part of the development, it is necessary to re-locate the current kitchen/ dining facilities for the college to a proposed temporary facility located within Second Court. The extent of the site proposed for this temporary facility is displayed on the proposed site plan although no further details have been provided at this stage of the application. As is commonly the case with temporary construction compounds, it is considered that the precise details of the required facilities can be dealt with by a pre-commencement condition to ensure that its scale and appearance is appropriate and that its siting is temporary.
- 14.27 During the process of this application, views from varying design specialists have been sought including the previous application, for an almost identical proposal being taken to the Design Review Panel (DRP) The DRP response (Appendix 3) which was held during the pre-application discussions concluded that they "applauded the scheme as an exemplary proposal". Panel members also stated that they endorsed the

concept and strategy of the proposal which had a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically along Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. Whilst noting the increase in scale in comparison to the existing library building, the Panel was also "comfortable with the scale and massing" of the proposed library partly due to the design giving the building its own significance and character.

- 14.28 In addition to the feedback from DRP, the Council's own Urban Design Officer has been supportive of the proposed development throughout the process. Echoing the comments from DRP members, the proposed development, in the view of Urban Design officer, "presents a contextually sensitive response and a substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane". More specifically as set out in their comments, the Christ's Lane façade is considered to strike a fine balance between the formality expected of a college and playful at another level with careful placement of windows and integrated seating.
- 14.29 Overall, members should feel confident that the scheme for consideration has evolved following careful consideration of the brief of the College taking into account feedback from numerous design specialists. The resulting scheme has support from both Urban Design Officers and the DRP, albeit some DRP panel members raised concerns regarding the proximity of upper levels within the proposed library to the southeastern wall of the First Court building.
- 14.30 The condition recommended by the Council's Urban Design officer relating to external material details is not considered necessary given a similar condition is recommended to be attached, as requested by the Council's Conservation officer.
- 14.31 Overall, the design of the proposed development is of the highest quality that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant policies 55,56,57,58 and 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

15. Trees

- 15.1 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Protection Scheme (TPS) outlining the impact of the proposed development on any trees within or surrounding the application site. The AIA confirms that a single category B tree is to be pruned to facilitate the proposed development, with three further category B trees that have potential to be affected by the works.

- 15.2 The TPS provided with this application was provided with the previous application (25/02161/CONDA). Given that this discharge of condition application relates to the permission that the Council has agreed to quash, the details within this document are not considered able to be relied upon through a compliance condition.
- 15.3 The two category B trees most likely to be affected by the proposed development are T6 and T10, both Acacia species in close proximity to the temporary kitchen structures proposed within the Second Court.
- 15.4 It is noted, that during the process of this application a 5-day notification was submitted to the council for the removal of T10 on the basis that the tree has died. It was stated that the condition of the tree was therefore posing a safety risk to pedestrians walking in close proximity to this tree. A formal decision notice to this notification has been issued by the Council's Tree Officers confirming no objection to the removal of the tree. The AIA states that as the temporary structures do not require foundations dug into the ground, the weight load of the structures can be spread evenly across its feet, mitigating any impact on the root protection areas of these trees.
- 15.5 In addition to the two trees within Second Court, the existing Palm tree within Bath Court would be in close proximity to both the demolition works of the existing library and construction of its replacement. It is therefore proposed to protect the stem of the tree with plastic piping and wooden hoarding.
- 15.6 The Council's Tree Officer has advised within comments on this application that there is no objection to the assessment set out within the provided Tree Protection Scheme. Comments from CLAG have raised inconsistencies with advice from the Tree Officer in relation to the advice given under 25/02161/CONDA and 25/02161/CONDB. Officers acknowledge that the Tree Officer raised concerns during the discharge of these conditions. However, this application does not seek to approve details of the temporary kitchen, these are to be secured by condition which officers are content is an achievable requirement.
- 15.7 The Tree Officer has requested a compliance condition in accordance with the provided TPS. However, in line with the Council's stance on information provided to discharge conditions on the previous permission (25/02161/FUL), it is recommended, as it was on the previous application that further details regarding the nature of the temporary kitchen and its impact upon surrounding trees and the lawns of Second Court can be

secured by way of an Arboricultural Method Statement/ Tree Protection Plan condition.

- 15.8 Subject to conditions as appropriate, the proposal would accord with policies 59 and 71 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

16. Heritage assets

Legal and Policy Framework

- 16.1 The statutory duties as set out in section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, apply when considering schemes which affect listed buildings or their settings, or when determining a planning application concerning buildings or other land in a Conservation Area.
- 16.2 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal duty for development that affects listed buildings or their settings. In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, “shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”
- 16.3 Section 102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that in considering development which affects a Registered Park and Garden, special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting.
- 16.4 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the statutory duty for a local planning authority, in the exercise of its planning powers with respect to any buildings or other land within a Conservation Area, to “pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
- 16.5 Officers have applied the statutory duties set out above and have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected Listed Buildings, and to preserving or enhancing, the Registered Park and Garden, and the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

- 16.6 Policy HE4 (1) of the NPPF states that “Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. To achieve this, development proposals which would affect the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting should:
- a. Maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation, taking into account the importance of maintaining the assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities including local economies, and the positive contribution they can make to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - b. Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.
- 16.7 Policy HE4(2) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification in accordance with the policies in the Heritage Chapter of NPPF 2026 (Ch. 20)
- 16.8 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that when considering the potential effect of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm or total loss of its significance.
- 16.9 Policy HE6(3) states that any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs (4) to (6) of the policy.
- 16.10 Policy HE6 (4) states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.
- 16.11 Policy HE7 of the NPPF separates decisions on non-designated heritage assets. It states development proposals which would have a positive effect on a non-designated heritage asset should be supported. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal

and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

- 16.12 Policy HE9 of the NPPF states that development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:
- a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and
 - b. Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.
- 16.13 Policy HE9 also adds that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a building or other element which contributes to the character or appearance of a conservation area that is desirable to conserve, the assessment of impact should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole, and the effects of this considered in accordance with policies HE5 and HE6. Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported.
- 16.14 Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 requires development to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets, their setting and the wider townscape, including views into, within and out of the conservation area. It also requires development to provide clear justification for any works that would lead to harm to a heritage asset yet be of substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE6 to weigh harm to the significance of designated heritage assets against public benefits.
- 16.15 Reflecting the statutory duties quoted, considerable importance and weight must be attached to any heritage harm found, with the presumption that the preservation of the significance of these heritage assets is to be preferred.
- 16.16 Policy 62 seeks the retention of local heritage assets and where permission is required, proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a local heritage asset. Where an application for any works would lead to harm or substantial harm to a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be

made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE7.

Impacted Heritage Assets and Significance

- 16.17 The application falls within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The proposal directly impacts the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings and the Grade II listed historic parks and garden of Christ's College as well as being within close proximity to the Grade I listed Fellows Building within the College. The application site is also within the setting of the following Grade II listed buildings and the Grade II* listed Lloyds bank: Church of St Andrew the Great, Church of St Andrew the Great War Memorial, No.4-7 St Andrews Street and the College Tutor's House.
- 16.18 Several of the above heritage assets are within proximity to the proposed development but are not considered to be impacted in any way by the proposed development and have therefore been scoped out of any significance assessment.
- 16.19 The first and potentially most directly impacted asset is the Grade I listed buildings of Christ's College surrounding the Entrance Court, southeastern range of Second Court and the Bodley Library. The Bodley Library and southeastern range of First Court are both specifically referenced in the listing description and considered of National (Very High) significance. There are however areas of lower (or no) significance including the eastern half of Bath Court, the existing 1974 library to be demolished and the wall to Christ's Lane. Specifically, the existing 1974 library is listed only by virtue of its attachment to the earlier listed buildings, it is not considered to be of any special historic interest in its own right nor would it be considered to merit listing at even a lower level.
- 16.20 As noted, the application site, including the wider College site is located within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. Whilst the Conservation Area Appraisal 2017 is organised street-by-street, it is clear that the entrance range of the College makes a very strong contribution to the townscape and historic interest of the area. As one of the earliest colleges, and within such a prominent central location, it is not disputed that the College as a whole makes an especially strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 16.21 The opening up of Christ's Lane in 2008 as part of the southern side of Christ's Lane re-development increased the visual prominence of the southeastern gable of the Bodley Library when looking northwards/northwest along St Andrew's Street. This view from St Andrew's Street,

along Christ's Lane is identified as comprising a "key positive view" within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

- 16.22 The existing 1974 library building itself is not considered to provide any positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, largely due to its inactive frontage with the street, as a result of it not being built with the intention of being publicly visible. It is not disputed that the existing building is notably smaller than that proposed, however, officers consider that despite its scale, it is negative in its contribution to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.
- 16.23 The application site forms part of the larger Grade II Registered Park and Garden (RPG) designation of the College, however, it is considered that Bath Court, which did not exist at the time of the designation, does not itself make a significant contribution to the landscape of the College. As has been suggested by the Gardens Trust, the significance of Christ's College as a Registered Park and Garden is largely derived from the formal gardens and courts of the college, including, but not limited to the Fellows Garden, Master's Garden and First, Second and Third Courts. Indeed, the Gardens Trust state in their comments "The Bath Court space is of low value to the RPG and of the college as a whole."
- 16.24 Bath Court itself is not visible from First, Second or Third Court, or from the Fellow's or Master's Gardens. The visibility of the proposed development from the formal gardens within the college would be extremely limited with only the very highest points protruding above the surrounding historic college buildings. As acknowledged by the Gardens Trust, the proposed development is considered to result in a minor enhancement to Bath Court as an element of the RPG. And whilst the upper floors are more prominent to the space, they are not themselves considered to result in any significant harm to Bath Court's low value within the RPG.
- 16.25 Given the insignificant contribution of Bath Court to the Registered Park and Gardens, in addition to the lack of impact upon the more formal landscaped areas of the College, the development is acceptable and is not considered to result in any harm to the Grade II listed Historic Park and Gardens.
- 16.26 When considering the impact of the proposed demolition and replacement of the existing 1974 library, the principle of this in heritage terms has previously been approved (through the Rick Mather scheme(s) 2011 and 2016) and continues to be supported. The existing building makes a negative contribution to the setting of the highly significant listed buildings

such as the Bodley Library, as well as to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 16.27 In comparison to the existing library building, the proposed replacement library is substantial in its size in relation to both the plot and many of the surrounding historic parts of the College. Its presence is therefore greater, both externally and internally within the College.
- 16.28 One area of concern that has been frequently raised by third-parties is the scale and massing of the proposed library building and the relationship of this with Christ's Lane as a popular thoroughfare within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The "Drummer Street and Christ's Lane" appraisal within the Historic Core Conservation Area provides a more detailed assessment of this specific area of the Conservation Area. Overall, the area is considered to make a significant contribution to the overall significance of the Conservation Area with views down Christ's Lane in either direction being identified as "key positive views". Importance is identified within this appraisal of the Christ's Lane redevelopment and the fact that it provides a "gateway to the city centre for bus passengers".
- 16.29 The visual impact of the proposal upon Christ's Lane as an important element of the Conservation Area is in part identified within the provided TVIA. View B and D of the provided TVIA help to visualise the impact of the proposal from either end of Christ's Lane. Officers consider, as is shown within the TVIA that the scale and massing of the proposed building within what is a central location, is entirely appropriate. The Christ's Lane re-development to the south is in total taller than that proposed within this application, with the Conservation Area appraisal stating that other options for the re-development of the College Library providing overlooking and a more august frontage could help to raise the quality of the frontages.
- 16.30 One of the most visually prominent aspects of the development are the five chimneys that face towards Christ's Lane to provide ventilation and lift access for the proposed building. During the previous application, since the subject of judicial review (26/02161/FUL), revised plans were provided reducing the height of these chimneys by approximately 900mm in response to initial comments received from the Council's Conservation Officer, and this is reflected in the proposed plans of this application. No aspect of the judicially reviewed scheme is in any way different to that now before members, including the chimney heights, the very tops of which would only be visible within glimpsed views from the far side of First Court at eye level. The relationship with First Court, including the glimpsed views of the new chimneys, is acceptable.

- 16.31 The chimneys themselves are not considered to be subservient in their scale and design, rather they attempt to contribute to a 'presence' along the lane. Whilst they are a prominent feature within views along Christ's Lane, they remain lower in height than the adjacent Christ's Lane redevelopment. Historic England's latter comments on the previous application acknowledge the reduction in height of the chimneys to that proposed within this application, which helped to break up the massing of this element of the proposal.
- 16.32 This prominence of the proposed development is perhaps most visible in relation to the highly historically significant Bodley Library within views from along St Andrews Street, Christ's Lane and internally within Bath Court. The separation afforded to the Bodley is increasing as a result of the development, from approximately 1.8 metres at first floor level to approximately 3.3 metres within the proposed development, however the height and proximity of the building, particularly the proposed staircase tower is notably increased from approximately 5.7 metres currently to approximately 13 metres to the top of the staircase tower.
- 16.33 The height of the staircase tower has been raised as an issue by both the Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England, with the latter recommending that a reduction in height would improve the relationship of the proposed building to the Bodley Library.
- 16.34 The applicant, however, has chosen to retain the current height of the proposed staircase tower as an alternative means of escape forming part of the fire strategy. Within a cover letter provided with this application, the applicant has reiterated their view that the proposal results in no overall heritage harm, including this element of the scheme.
- 16.35 However, officers are of the view that the impact upon the setting of the Bodley Library from public views along St Andrews Street and Christ's Lane is, in line with the comments from the Council's Conservation officer, Historic England and the Victorian Society, harmful. Specifically, officers consider the level of harm arising from this aspect of the scheme to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library to be low. Officers agree with the view of the consultees that this element of the proposal would appear overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley Library, contrary to the applicant's assessment.
- 16.36 This heritage harm is considered to be restricted to the setting of the Bodley Library which forms a part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Other

elements of the proposed development, including the increased spacing between the Bodley and the proposed building, are considered to mitigate any further harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings. These elements are relevant and must be considered as part of this application. Internal works to the listed buildings that do not require planning permission but may result in enhancements have been considered within the relevant listed building consent application and do not fall for consideration here.

- 16.37 Another notable aspect is the works proposed to Bath Court, the elevation of the proposed library facing towards this space and the impact that this has upon the setting of the buildings on the southern side of First Court.
- 16.38 Whilst the proposed library would enclose Bath Court to a greater extent than the existing library, the high-quality design, combined with enhancements to the landscaping of Bath Court are considered to mitigate the impact of the increase in scale upon the other aspects of the listed buildings such that they do not result in any further harm beyond that identified to the Bodley Library. It is considered that this view is consistent with that of both Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 16.39 Whilst the Council's Conservation Officer considers the proposal would sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed buildings within the College. Officers consider that the proposed development, through the provision of a modern library building would also help to sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities for students, however this is a public benefit of the scheme rather than a direct heritage benefit.
- 16.40 The proposed development is also considered to provide certain other public benefits that are given weight in the planning balance as referred to in Policy HE6 of the NPPF. The development's public facing Christ's Lane façade is considered to be significantly enhanced from that of the existing 1970's library building. Whilst this point is disputed strongly within many third-party comments, both the Council's Urban Design officer and Design Review panel have endorsed this element of the proposal. The Urban Design officer has stated that the façade onto Christ's Lane strikes a fine balance between the formality of a college building and the playfulness of a public facing building, achieving an elegant and respectful balance between new and old elements of the surrounding area.
- 16.41 The Design Review Panel meanwhile reviewed the scheme as part of the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Their report on the scheme

specifically stated that the Panel acknowledged the façade onto Christ's Lane could not be an active frontage with spill out, but there was opportunity to introduce, for example, views up to the ceiling of the building. The Panel stated they were "happy with the design principles of the elevation facing Christ's Lane". Officers consider that this, within a highly visible, public space, would result a tangible public benefit. In addition to the appearance of the façade itself, the provision of a large, integrated public bench and public art in the form of the gate onto Christ's Lane are further, albeit relatively minor, public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 16.42 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF meanwhile adds that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported."
- 16.43 There is an additional consideration that the proposed development would enhance and better reveal the significance of the College's heritage assets more favourably than at present. The proposed library facilities, in addition to an increased physical separation to the Bodley Library, would provide additional, improved facilities that would facilitate the continued use of the Bodley Library for its intended purpose and allow for glimpsed views into the reconfigured Bath Court.
- 16.44 It is fundamental to recognise that there are two separate statutory duties when considering harm to listed buildings and harm to Conservation Areas, falling under sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, respectively. Further, section 102 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires separate consideration of the effects on relevant heritage assets, including Registered Parks and Gardens. Therefore, officers consider it important to clarify that the overall impact upon the listed buildings is identified separately from any impact upon the Conservation Area, and the Registered Park and Garden.
- 16.45 As set out above, officers consider there would be a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library.
- 16.46 The overall impact of the proposed new library building upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is considered to be a positive one. The current uncovered wall now facing onto Christ's Lane is replaced by a façade that balances the need for a "formal" elevation befitting of a college such as Christ's with elements that provide engagement for passers-by. Subject to the conditions requested by the Conservation Officer in their comments, it is considered on balance, that the proposed

library building, despite the increase in scale, would result in an enhancement to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additional conditions, not referred to within the Conservation Officer's comments, relating to the salvage/ re-use of materials and the protection and support the listed buildings are also recommended in line with the previous application.

- 16.47 In addition, the proposal is considered to result in no adverse harm to the Grade II Registered College Historic Park and Garden as set out above and considered by the Gardens Trust.
- 16.48 With regards to archaeological potential, the site is indicated to have high archaeological potential with previous investigation nearby finding medieval evidence. As such, in line with the comments from the County Council Archaeology officer, a condition is recommended regarding a programme for archaeological work.

Alternative designs

- 16.49 CLAG have contested, within Ground 4 of the Judicial Review of the previous application, that insufficient consideration was given to potential alternative designs on the site that could result in less heritage harm.
- 16.50 Firstly, as set out above, it is important to clarify that officers do not dispute the proposal would result in a level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed Christ's College buildings, specifically the setting of the Bodley Library.
- 16.51 Three main alternatives have been suggested by third parties as less harmful ways for the College to achieve the updated library facilities that they seek. These alternatives are: the previously consented and now expired Rick Mather scheme; a proposal from CLAG themselves that was put forward as part of the previous application that is subject to Judicial Review; and a version of the College Master Plan that presented other options for a library provision for the College.
- 16.52 Potential alternative schemes that would result in less harm to identified heritage assets are material considerations. However, the weight given to these alternatives is a matter for the decision maker. Officers consider that that is dependent upon their viability and prospect of implementation.
- 16.53 Regarding the first of the alternatives put forward, the Rick Mather scheme was granted permission in 2013 and refreshed in 2016. Despite permission having been granted twice, these schemes were never

implemented. The officer recommendation for both schemes does not appear to identify any harm from the proposal to heritage assets. The college have since decided to not proceed with the previous Mather design, the primary reason for which has been stated to be the proposed increase in the size of the basement which those schemes required. This element would have required significant below ground works in close proximity to the sensitive historic fabric of the Grade I listed buildings, as well as having significant sustainability impacts through the requirement for concrete construction.

- 16.54 Plans relating to the previous Mather Scheme are provided in Appendix 8. As explained in that section, the previous Mather scheme is smaller in height than the building proposed within this application. The previous scheme however also enclosed Bath Court within a glazed roof which had the potential to directly impact historic fabric within the walls of the Grade I listed buildings.
- 16.55 Whilst no heritage harm was identified within the officer report of the previous Mather schemes, it is noted that Historic England did raise a number of points within comments submitted that would have improved the impact of the scheme on the Grade I listed college buildings.
- 16.56 It can be noted that comments from Historic England on the 2025 application (received 29 July 2025) refer to the fact that *“the removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college.”*
- 16.57 Updated comments have not been received, nor would it be reasonable to expect them from consultees exploring the possibility of reapplying the Mather scheme. The applicant has made the case that this previous scheme is no longer viable for the College and officers consider that the previous scheme can only be given very limited weight as an alternative to this application.
- 16.58 With regards to the alternative put forward by CLAG, a façade fronting onto Christ’s Lane continues to be provided along with a survey undertaken at the time of the previous application, inviting members of the public to vote in comparison to the applicant’s scheme. The survey results provided state that 71% of those surveyed would support the CLAG alternative as opposed to that put forward by the applicant within this application.
- 16.59 It is unclear to officers if the CLAG design is an alternative that is in any way a realistic starting point for re-imagining the development of the site in

a way that would be more acceptable in planning terms. The CLAG scheme only comprises a single façade of the site and is not therefore an alternative “scheme”. It lacks reference to fulfilling any client requirements and has no evolutionary justification or detailed plans to inform a reasoned judgement as to its credibility. Like the Mather scheme, it is lower in height onto Christ’s Lane. It provides a more traditional approach to the design of the façade onto Christ’s Lane and has more openings onto Christ’s Lane. A comparison of its Christ’s Lane elevation with that proposed within this application is attached as Appendix 9.

- 16.60 However, it is not possible to give it any meaningful planning weight as a viable alternative. As opposed to the Mather scheme, which previously was put forward by the College itself, the CLAG design has never been fully considered by the College. It’s lack of development is a void and an obstacle to the LPA in assisting its fuller consideration as an alternative. As an alternative, it is unclear if it is of any realistic merit capable of meeting the needs of the College and its students.
- 16.61 Given the lack of any meaningful detail, beyond a façade, it is also not possible for officers to consider if the CLAG design would result in any other harm beyond that which can be assessed from a single elevation. For this reason, little to no material weight can be given to this as a viable alternative to the applicant’s proposal.
- 16.62 A further alternative was put forward by CLAG at the Development Control Forum meeting on the 29th July this year. This alternative relates to the College’s Master Plan dating from 2023. CLAG suggest that this masterplan was adopted by the college and itself proposed a smaller library building within the currently proposed location, in addition to additional library facilities elsewhere within the college grounds. It is therefore suggested that this is a viable alternative for the College to pursue.
- 16.63 The College have since provided a response, following the DCF meeting. This letter states that the masterplan suggested two possible sites for the library; the existing Bath Court site or on the Hobson Street carpark. The Governing Body of the College then voted (with only 1 fellow dissenting) to rebuild on the existing site to maximise the use of the historic Bodley Library.
- 16.64 Officers do not consider therefore that the existence of this master plan is evidence of the college suggesting to “break up” the library provision into multiple sites. It is however evidence that there was consideration

previously given to an alternative location for the provision of a new library.

- 16.65 Despite the fact that consideration was given to this alternative by the College previously, officers do not have any information to suggest that an alternative location, such as the Hobson Street car park would be a suitable location now. There is also no information before officers that allows any significant assessment to be made with regards to a library within this alternative location.
- 16.66 Therefore, this too is considered to be afforded very little weight as a viable alternative for the college to the current proposed application.

Overall

Heritage Balance, Benefits and Harms

- 16.67 Historic England's position in response to the application is set out in full within Appendix 2 to the application and summarised within this officer report. Whilst there is a position of no objection, it is clear that reservations remain with the scheme in terms of the scale and massing of the development and the impact of this upon the setting of the Grade I listed College buildings. Ground 1 of the Judicial Review has been addressed, insofar as this report more thoroughly and clearly sets out Historic England's position.

Heritage Benefits

- 16.68 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF states that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported
- 16.69 The proposed development is considered, in line with the view of the Council's conservation officer to result in benefits to relevant heritage assets that fall within the heritage balance as set out in Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 16.70 One such benefit is the enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, due to the increased spacing afforded to the Bodley Library at lower level.

- 16.71 The significantly improved landscaping within Bath Court is considered an enhancement to this particular area of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

Heritage Harm

- 16.72 There is however, in the view of officers, a level of heritage harm arising from the scale and massing of the proposed development. As set out above, this is identified to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library and considered of a low level.
- 16.73 Officers consider that the heritage benefits alone, arising from this scheme, are insufficient to outweigh the substantial weight that must be given to the conservation of the heritage asset arising from the harm identified to the setting of the Grade I listed building. This conclusion is consistent with the comments of Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer and takes a different approach to that of the applicant, which concludes that the overall heritage impact is beneficial, without acknowledging any harm as part of this application. The heritage harm identified and considered by officers is also notably less than the higher level of harm claimed by CLAG and other objectors.
- 16.74 In conclusion, substantial weight should be given to the conservation of any designated heritage asset. There is a level of harm identified to the setting of the highly significant Grade I listed Bodley Library.
- 16.75 Nevertheless, given that a level of overall heritage harm is identified, the application would be in conflict with Policy 61 of the Local Plan. There is, therefore, a requirement, under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal and to ensure accordance with Section 66 of the LBCA 1990 and the special regard that must be given to preserving listed buildings and their setting.
- 16.76 The detailed assessment of public benefits and the balance required under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF is reserved for the planning balance at the end of this report. In summary however, and as dealt with in detail in the planning balance section, officers consider that taken together the economic, social and environmental benefits of the scheme are substantial. In accordance with Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF 2026, these benefits provide clear and convincing justification that outweighs the low level of harm to the setting of designated heritage asset.
- 16.77 All four grounds of judicial challenge have been directly addressed as part of this officer report.

17. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 17.1 The application is supported by a sustainability statement outlining the approach adopted by the application towards sustainable design.
- 17.2 Given the nature of the works proposed, mixing both a new build library with elements of refurbishing existing, historic buildings, a bespoke strategy has been proposed throughout the pre-application process through to this application.
- 17.3 The development specifically seeks to follow Passivhaus principles for the new build element with high performing thermal fabric, airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 17.4 The existing buildings are to be subject to roof insulation with glazing upgrades to the Upper Hall along with moving from gas heating to fully electric air-source heat pumps.
- 17.5 Overall, the targets set out within the provided sustainability statement are, in consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer, considered to be appropriate. They seek to achieve high standards of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon reduction within the constraints of working within historic buildings.
- 17.6 It is considered that the appropriate steps have been followed, taking a hierarchical approach to improving the sustainability performance of the historic buildings within the college. A number of conditions are requested by the Council's Sustainability Officer, relating to:
- Compliance with the provided sustainability statement
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Water efficiency calculations
 - Water metering
- 17.7 All of which are considered to be appropriate and reasonably necessary to ensure that the development provides an acceptable level of environmental sustainability enhancements
- 17.8 The applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and subject to conditions the proposal is compliant with policies 28, 29 and 63 of the Local Plan of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

18. Biodiversity

- 18.1 In accordance with policy and circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', the application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 18.2 This provided assessment concludes that the Statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not triggered in this case given that the permanent works proposed would not impact greater than 25m² of on-site habitat. Given that the majority of the site comprises either existing buildings or sealed surfaces, this is not disputed. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG, that the temporary facilities for use during the construction phase are proposed on the grass within Second Court and would have a footprint of greater than 25m². Given their temporary nature however, and the fact that the grass will be returned to its previous condition, this is not considered to be reasonable to trigger BNG requirement for the proposal.
- 18.3 The submitted report also states that no protected species will be affected by the development. Indeed, all of the buildings are suitably sealed and of construction that would make it unlikely for bat or bird species to use them to roost. Whilst any risk is not considered significant, mitigation measures such as work being undertaken outside of roosting seasons are set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment. This mitigation is suggested to be secured by way of a condition requiring compliance with the provided ecological impact assessment.
- 18.4 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and the conclusions reached within the provided Ecology Assessment. This includes the recommendation that ecological enhancements are sought within the site. Details of which can be secured by way of a condition as recommended.
- 18.5 In consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, subject to an appropriate condition, officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

19. Water management and flood risk

- 19.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding from fluvial sources. Bath Court and parts of Second Court within the College are also at a low risk of surface water flooding.

- 19.2 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy in support of the application. As part of the proposed development, a new sustainable drainage system is proposed to be incorporated helping to manage surface water for storm events up to the 1in100 year level including climate change allowance. It is concluded that surface water from the proposed development can be controlled through the use of attenuation, restricting the flow of surface water to 2l/s.
- 19.3 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has advised that there is no objection to the proposed development, supporting the use of rain gardens for controlling the rate of surface water drainage from the site in addition to providing water quality treatment. Conditions are recommended by the LLFA relating to a scheme of surface water drainage as well as control measures for surface water run-off during construction, both of which would help to mitigate the impact of the development on surface water management within the site.
- 19.4 It should be clarified that comments from the LLFA, received on the 19th August raised an objection following re-consultation. They have however since clarified that, given there was no material change in the application, and that the re-consultation was to allow assessment in light of the updated NPPF, that they retained their position of no-objection.
- 19.5 Anglian Water have been consulted on this application and have raised no objection due to the fact that the proposed development would not result in an increase in the number of staff or students within the site.
- 19.6 There also remains the potential for more modern appliances within the proposed building to reduce flow rates. Officers do not therefore consider that the application would result in any additional risks to the Cambridge Water Recycling Centre or subsequent environmental harm arising from exceedances.
- 19.7 The applicants have suitably addressed the issues of water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions the proposal is in accordance with policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

20. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 20.1 Within the grounds of the College there is limited vehicular access whilst the development proposed is not seeking any alterations to this existing arrangement. Access to the library by students would be from within the college grounds. There is an existing access into Bath Court from Christ's

Lane beneath the bridge linking the Bodley library to the existing library. This entrance is to be retained between the expanded opening between the historic library and that proposed.

- 20.2 The application is supported by a Transport statement and “Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP)” These documents confirm that the proposed development is not expected to result in any meaningful increase in the number of students or staff within the college. Which, combined with the lack of vehicular access to the library is such that the proposals are not considered likely to result in any notable change in traffic movements.
- 20.3 Deliveries to the library kitchen are proposed to remain as existing, from along either Christ’s Lane or Drummer Street between 06:30am and 09:00am. Officers do not consider that the frequency of such deliveries is likely to significantly increase as a result of the proposed development.
- 20.4 The provided DCEMP addresses concerns regarding the construction impacts of the proposed development. These concerns were centered around the safety of pedestrians using the surrounding streets, including along Christ’s Lane itself which is a busy thoroughfare between key parts of the city and the Drummer Street bus station.
- 20.5 It is acknowledged that Christ’s College & Jesus College are the head leaseholders of the land beneath Christ’s Lane, with the County Highways Authority adopting over half of the width of Christ’s Lane as public highway. The division of the path is denoted approximately by the drainage gutter running along Christ’s Lane with the land closest to the College being private land and that closest the re-development of the southern side, being adopted public highway.
- 20.6 The DCEMP sets out the envisaged demolition and construction process for the proposed development. This includes two main points of access to the site, firstly from St Andrews Street, with vehicles parking alongside the College buildings and the other from the western edge of Drummer Street bus station. Whilst the number and specific arrangement has not been finalised at this stage, each area receiving deliveries will be served by an appropriate number of staff/ banksman to ensure safety.
- 20.7 Representations received from CLAG raise contradictions and uncertainty regarding the ability to maintain pedestrian access along Christ’s Lane during construction works. It is noted that the DCEMP provided states that temporary diversions may be required during certain phases of the construction works, including during concrete deliveries.. In any case,

given it is an adopted highway, this would require a Traffic Regulation Order to be agreed with the County Council. Further details of this would also be secured through the recommended DCEMP condition within this report (Condition 3).

- 20.8 The draft schedule provided sets out that early morning deliveries between 06:30-07:00 are proposed to minimise the disruption to bus routes but not too early to inconvenience nearby residents. The full delivery window for the site is proposed from 07:00-23:00, with an attempt to restrict any deliveries after 19:00. Officers acknowledge that the construction access to the site is complex due to its proximity to nearby residential properties but also due to the highway access along St Andrews Street which is a frequently used one-way system through the centre of the city.
- 20.9 The primary point of access for the construction phase is proposed to be from Drummer Street as this would have the least impact upon the existing highway. With only certain instances, including the delivery of concrete requiring the use of the St Andrews Street access.
- 20.10 The DCEMP provided is identical to the document that was provided to discharge condition 3 of the previous permission that is currently under Judicial Review. Officers consider that it must be considered afresh for this application, with no weight able to be given to the previous discharge of condition permission.
- 20.11 Whilst, as set out above, information has been provided regarding the impact of the construction phase upon the surrounding highway and pedestrian safety, it is considered that a condition is necessary with regards to an updated Demolition and Construction Ecological Management Plan. This would ensure that the information requested by the Highways Authority within their comments is received and assessed, in addition to impacts upon neighbouring amenity. Subject to this condition as recommended, the Traffic Management Plan condition recommended by the local highway authority is not deemed necessary with this information required within any DCEMP.
- 20.12 Subject to conditions as applicable, the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

21. Car and cycle provision

- 21.1 As existing, there is no vehicular access to the site within the application boundary. There is a small area of car parking within the College along Hobson Street although this is not considered to be relevant to the proposed development given the lack of additional trips envisaged as a result of the development.
- 21.2 As with car parking, there is no existing cycle parking within the application site with none proposed as part of the application. It is understood that currently students utilise public cycle parking areas within close proximity to the site. Again, given the fact that the proposed development is not expected to result in any increase in student or staff numbers, it is not considered to be reasonable to require any additional cycle parking within the application site.
- 21.3 The proposed parking is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

22. Amenity

Impact upon the residential properties of the southern re-development

- 22.1 Whilst Christ's Lane itself is slightly wider given the overhang of the first floor level of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, the first and second floor of adjacent redevelopment are understood to be separated by approximately 6.5 metres from the southern elevation of the proposed library building. Having visited the residential apartments within the second and third floors of the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it was evident that the closest part of this building to the College and therefore also the proposed library is a shared access deck that runs along the length of the building. It was noted that there were some small tables and chairs set out along this area, however given the residential units all have their own private gardens, it is not considered that this area provides any significant amenity value for the residential units and is rather a means of access.
- 22.2 Having reviewed floor plans of the adjacent neighbouring properties, in addition to visiting the apartments, it is understood that for units 4-10, in addition to front doors, each property has two windows facing north towards the application site serving both a kitchen and bathroom. Each of these units appears relatively open plan at second floor level with large living spaces opening out to private gardens to the south. These properties are also all duplex units with bedrooms located the floor above

with these northern facing windows further set back from Christ's Lane and the proposed library.

- 22.3 Whilst units 4-10 of the Christ's Lane redevelopment are likely to be the most significantly impacted by the proposed development, there are additional units that do not face directly towards the proposed replacement library namely units 1 and 11 at either end of the northern elevation.
- 22.4 The provided daylight & sunlight study concludes that all of the windows assessed with a requirement for daylight pass the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) test with the exception of Window 78. This window is one of the first-floor windows that serves the open plan living space of unit 4. It is not considered that the window is the primary window serving this habitable space which would be the larger opening at the southern side of the property. It is also acknowledged that the existing VSC level of this window is significantly compromised by the overhang above the covered walkway to the north. Specifically, the existing VSC level of the window is 5.1% meaning that the reduction of only 1.7% exceeds the BRE guidance that levels should not fall below 80% of the initial level.
- 22.5 With regards to the Daylight Distribution test (No Skyline Test) this is applied to understand the daylight distribution within buildings, evaluating the areas of rooms where no part of the sky would be visible. In this instance every one of the rooms assessed passed the test meaning that there is less than 20% of the room where the sky is not visible and any existing values have not been reduced to less than 80% of their initial value.
- 22.6 Considering the above, the only window that fails the VSC test is not considered a primary window, which is highlighted by the fact that the room it serves passes the NSL test. This, taken in combination with the fact that the window is already significantly impacted by the overhang above, is such that it is considered the impact of the proposed development from loss of light is acceptable.
- 22.7 CLAG have submitted multiple representations that raise concerns regarding the fact that the provided daylight & sunlight assessment information does not accord with BRE guidance. Officers acknowledge this, however it is considered that the level of information provided is sufficient to assess the impact of the proposed development, which is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

- 22.8 Having visited the neighbouring building, there is no doubt that the proposed replacement library, owing to its height, would be visible from the neighbouring properties within the Christ's Lane re-development. The loss of a view is not a material planning consideration that carries any weight in the planning balance. Whilst the overbearing nature of a proposal is a consideration, in this instance, the distance between the habitable windows of the neighbouring properties and the height of the proposed library is such that the development is not considered to result in an overbearing impact.
- 22.9 There are a number of windows within the southern elevation of the proposed library building that would face towards the neighbouring residential properties of the Christ's Lane redevelopment. Those windows at the third floor level of the proposed library would be at a similar height to the deck access and subsequently the front windows of the neighbouring properties of the southern redevelopment.
- 22.10 The separation distance between the windows of the library and those of the neighbouring properties is approximately 9 metres, with the balustrade of the deck access providing a certain level of screening between the two. Whilst similar in level, the windows within the library do sit lower than those of the residential properties meaning that there would not be a direct line of sight between the two. Therefore, given the deck access between the two, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking and therefore loss of privacy as a result of the proposed development.
- 22.11 In addition to the windows of the proposed library, a garden terrace is also proposed to the eastern edge of the site between the library itself and the Upper Hall. It is noted that concerns have been received relating to the impact of the use of this terrace upon the residential properties within the Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.12 The terrace itself is set back from the Christ's Lane elevation of the site by approximately 3.7 metres. Given the height of the terrace, significantly lower than that of the residential units within the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking from this area towards neighbouring occupants. The potential use of the outdoor area would not be expected to result in any significant noise disturbance above that to be expected from pedestrians along Christ's Lane. Given therefore, the additional distance between the terrace and residential properties of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane the impacts of this element of the proposal are not considered to be significant.

Impact upon the retail units of Christ's Lane

- 22.13 Within the ground and first floors of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane there are a number of different premises along the southern side of Christ's Lane. They are all considered to fall within a form of class E use, including retail, banking, café etc.
- 22.14 BRE guidance within the "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight" (BR209), states that the guidelines within the document "may also be applied to any existing non-domestic building where the occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight; this would normally include schools, hospitals, hotels and hostels, small workshops, and some offices.
- 22.15 Concerns have been raised by multiple third parties with regards to the impact of the development on windows along Christ's Lane that serve these class E units and the subsequent impact that this would have upon the viability of these units.
- 22.16 In this instance, it is not considered, that within units such as those adjacent the site, users would have any significant expectation of daylight. The majority of users of shops or services such as these are likely to only visit for a short period of time before leaving. It is therefore not considered to be reasonable to apply the BRE guidelines and to assess the impact of the proposed development upon these units.

Impact upon Christ's Lane itself

- 22.17 In addition to the impact upon the class E units along Christ's Lane, concerns have also been raised by interested parties regarding the overshadowing of and impact upon the amenity of Christ's Lane.
- 22.18 Christ's Lane's primary function is as a throughfare linking important retail hubs, the city centre and the Drummer Street Bus Station. Given its importance as a means of connection within the city, it is heavily used by pedestrians throughout the day. In addition, as a means of connectivity however, it occasionally hosts pop-up stalls serving food and drink, as well as seating outside of the Starbucks café on the southern side.
- 22.19 In addition to the impact upon the character of this area as assessed previously within this report, consideration must also be given to the impact upon it as an area of amenity.

- 22.20 Whilst officers do not consider that a full assessment is required regarding the impact upon Christ's Lane, additional information has been provided by the applicant in the form of a daylight study highlighting the impact of the proposed development from overshadowing on the lane at summer solstice, spring equinox and winter solstice. It is acknowledged, as has been raised, that a BRE compliant assessment should include analysis at autumn equinox. This is not however considered necessary in this instance given the minor impact that the proposal is considered to have.
- 22.21 The development, and new library building would undoubtedly somewhat enclose part of Christ's Lane as a result of the increase in height. It is not considered however, as shown on the provided shadowing studies, that this increase in height would result in any significant, further overshadowing of Christ's Lane. The Christ's Lane redevelopment, being to the south of Christ's Lane and greater in height would be the primary building impacting the area and itself casts a shadow over the majority of Christ's Lane at ground level. It is also considered that the Lane would retain late afternoon sunlight from the western end of Christ's Lane that would remain unobstructed by the development.
- 22.22 The development proposed would increase the level of shadowing upon the Christ's Lane re-development, however as discussed above, this impact is not deemed significant.
- 22.23 Whilst the impact from overshadowing to Christ's Lane is not considered significant, it is not disputed that the increase in scale from the application would further enclose the northern side of the lane. Notwithstanding the design and appearance considerations given previously in this report, an increase in enclosure would not necessarily be considered to result in amenity harm.
- 22.24 Given the function of Christ's Lane primarily as a pedestrian thoroughfare, the impact of the development upon this space is not considered to be significant or to result in any meaningful harm.
- 22.25 The proposal is compliant with policies 35 and 58 of the Local Plan.

Accessible design

- 22.26 The Design and Access Statement as well as the Planning Access Statement set out the accessibility principles of the proposal and the steps taken to improve over the existing buildings shortcomings.

- 22.27 The existing library building, and wider College site are considered to be extremely inaccessible for a number of reasons, including the lack of level access throughout. Whilst a number of the works to improve accessibility relate to the previous listed building consent, the proposed library building itself would significantly improve accessibility of the college's library facilities.
- 22.28 The library has been designed to tie in with existing levels of its surroundings including mezzanines and split levels being fully accessible. The principal elements of sustainable design includes level landing at all access and egress points, universal and wheelchair- accessible sanitary accommodation on all floors and multi-faith prayer room with independent level access.
- 22.29 The proposed development itself does not seek any physical alterations to Christ's Lane, it would however, have an impact through the construction phase and the façade looking onto Christ's Lane. The construction impacts may result in a minor impact through exacerbating conflict of users along Christ's Lane, however this can be mitigated through the recommended conditions. The proposed design of the library, through the Christ's Lane façade would improve passive surveillance along Christ's Lane, which is considered, despite the increase in height, to improve safety and surveillance along the public thoroughfare including for those who may be more vulnerable to crime or fear of crime.
- 22.30 Overall, it is considered that careful consideration has been given to ensuring that the proposal meets the principles of inclusive design, in accordance with Policy 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and NPPF TR4.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 22.31 The nature of the application site being tightly constrained with neighbouring residential properties nearby is such that the demolition and construction phases of development would have a certain level of impact on the public space of Christ's Lane, as well as the neighbouring residential properties of the southern Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.32 The length of the construction period for the proposed development is not understood to be fully known at this stage. However, as set out in the draft construction management plan, the disruption from the construction works is likely to be focussed around the junction between Christ's Lane and St Andrew's Street as well as Drummer Street Bus Station.

- 22.33 The Council's Environmental Health Team have assessed the application and have raised no objection to the construction phase of the proposed development. The environmental health officer acknowledges previous discharge of conditions applications specifically relating to conditions 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan), 6 (Airbourne Dust) and 7 (Demolition and Construction noise and vibration) of permission 25/02161/FUL and recommends compliance conditions in accordance with previously accepted documents. As discussed previously, officers consider that these previous discharge of condition approvals cannot be relied upon given that they relate to an application under Judicial Review. Therefore, in line with the previous permission conditions are recommended regarding Dust and a demolition/ construction noise and vibration assessment.
- 22.34 CLAG have, within their representations suggested that a scheme demonstrating an acceptable noise impact upon the residential units to the south of Christ's Lane should be provided prior to determination of this application. Whilst noting the previous application approving a Noise and Vibration Assessment, this is to be required through a fresh condition on this application. There is not considered a requirement for this information prior to determination.
- 22.35 CLAG have also raised within multiple representations that the provided Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan document (prepared by Barnes Construction) (DCEMP) specifically states that it was provided for the purpose of discharging condition 3 of the previous permission (25/02161/FUL). And that in the view of CLAG this should not be considered within the assessment of this application, in which case there would be no information relating to the construction management phase.
- 22.36 Officers do not dispute the fact that the DCEMP cannot be relied upon as a document upon which a compliance condition could be recommended. However, the information within the document does include that provided within the "Draft Construction Management Plan" provided with the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Therefore, subject to the same DCEMP condition recommended previously, the impact of the proposal through its construction is considered acceptable.
- 22.37 In line with the comments received from the Environmental Health officer a condition is recommended regarding hours of deliveries and collections to the site relating to its use. Given the proximity of neighbouring properties this is deemed to be necessary to protect their amenity.

Plant Noise

- 22.38 The proposed development, in order to meet the proposed sustainability targets is proposed to include plant room at first, second and third floors, with the noise generating units located on the rooftop. Specifically, the noise generating units comprise 2No. Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and 4No. Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery units (MVHR).
- 22.39 As set out in the provided noise impact assessment, the proposed ASHPs are significantly louder than the proposed MVHR units and therefore dictate the noise environment of the proposed development. It is also confirmed that both ASHPs will operate between 06:00-23:00, ASHP 2 will not operate between 23:00-06:00 whilst ASHP 1 will be operating in Super Silent Mode.
- 22.40 The provided noise impact assessment concludes that the noise levels at the site are dictated by road traffic primarily from along St Andrews Street as well as pedestrian traffic including along Christ's Lane.
- 22.41 There is no objection, in line with comments from the Environmental Health officer to the conclusion within the Noise Assessment, that the site is suitable for the development proposed, including the relevant plant.
- 22.42 A condition requiring specific noise assessment relating to proposed plant to include insulation/ mitigation to be provided prior to the installation of any plant is considered to be reasonable and necessary to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Odour

- 22.43 Forming part of the application is the refurbishment of the College kitchens including changes to the internal layout which will require alterations to the existing ventilation system. Additionally, during the construction phase, a temporary building to house the kitchens and dining facilities is proposed within the Second Court of the college.
- 22.44 The proposed chimneys projecting above the library building provide a route for exhaust from the proposed kitchen facilities. Whilst the reduction in the height of the chimneys is considered preferable in design terms, it is acknowledged as highlighted by the Environmental Health Officer, that this may compromise their effectiveness for ventilation.
- 22.45 Overall, however, despite the reduction in height of the chimneys, the odour impact assessment and proposed mitigation is considered to be

acceptable such that no significant odour impacts are envisaged. A condition requiring compliance with the provided odour assessment is considered to be required to ensure that the impact in this regard is acceptable.

Artificial Lighting

- 22.46 Limited information has been provided regarding the details of any artificial lighting within the application site. Given the potential sensitivity with nearby residential properties, a condition requiring an impact assessment and lighting scheme is required prior to the installation of any artificial lighting.

Contaminated Land

- 22.47 Whilst there is no specific historic use that makes the site potentially contaminated, it is a brownfield site and therefore a contaminated land risk assessment has been undertaken. As was raised by the Environmental Health Officer, this document had not initially been provided with this application. It has since been provided during the process of the application.
- 22.48 The conclusion of this assessment is that 600mm of Made Ground is removed within the landscaped areas of Bath Court and replaced with clean topsoil. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG that the Council's Environmental Health Officer referred to the removal of 60mm of Made Ground and replacement with topsoil, as opposed to the 600mm referred to in the applicant's report. However, updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer confirmed that this was a typographical error. The information within the report is correct and therefore can be relied upon to form a recommendation.
- 22.49 In line with the comments received from the council's Environmental Health Officer comments, there is no objection to this recommendation within the report. A condition relating to unexpected contamination along with another requiring provision of a materials management plan are considered to be appropriate and necessary in this instance.
- 22.50 Updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer also requested a change in the trigger of the Material Management Plan condition to "Prior to the placement of ground forming materials". This updated trigger is earlier than that previously requested and tightens the control over management of potentially contaminated land. The trigger of the condition

recommended is prior to development above ground which is considered to tighten the control afforded by the condition requirements.

Air Quality

22.51 An Air Quality Assessment has been provided in support of the application along with a construction dust risk assessment.

22.52 The operational use of the site is not considered to raise any concerns with regards to air quality. As discussed, details of Dust Management is required to be provided via a condition.

Summary

22.53 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 of the Local Plan. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Local Plan.

23. Other matters

23.1 Public Art

23.2 As part of the proposed development a bench is incorporated into the design of the Christ's Lane façade to provide seating for members of the public using Christ's Lane. Whilst a public element of the scheme, this element is a functional output of the proposed development and its design. It is not therefore considered public art.

23.3 There is however, increased scope to provide a form of public art within the gate providing access from Bath Court to Christ's Lane. The gate would remain closed to the public as it is currently, however there is considered to be a design solution that could be found to allow views through into Bath Court.

23.4 As details of the design of this gate have not been provided at this stage, a condition is recommended requiring details of public art to be provided prior to commencement of development above ground level. Subject to this condition the proposal would comply with the requirements of the Cambridge City Public Art SPD.

23.5 Crime

- 23.6 Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding the impact that the proposed development may have upon the safety of pedestrians using Christ's Lane, especially at night. Whilst the proposal would increase the height of the façade along Christ's Lane, it is considered that the perceived surveillance would be increased by virtue of the number of windows within the façade facing onto Christ's Lane.
- 23.7 The Police liaison officer has commented on the development raising no objection, with a condition recommended regarding "secured by design". Given that officers do not consider the development would result in any notable reduction in safety, it is deemed that this condition is not required.

Waste

- 23.8 Comments have been received from the Council's Shared Waste Officer raising no objection to the proposed development. This is on the assumption that the waste disposal for the proposal can be absorbed within the existing refuse arrangement for the wider college site. Officers have no reason to dispute this with the level of waste created from the increase in floor area not deemed to significantly increase the pressure on waste storage and collection.

Public Access

- 23.9 Third-parties including Christ's Lane Action Group have continuously raised concerns regarding the potential for the proposed development to benefit the college as a private body, thereby reducing the number of public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 23.10 Following the DCF meeting on the 29 July 2026 the College have provided a letter (Appendix 10) detailing increased public access as part of this application.
- 23.11 Currently, whilst the College provides public access outside of Christmas week and exam term, there is however currently no access to Bath Court or the library. As set out in the letter from the College, the proposal includes opening up of Bath Court to the public whenever the College is currently open.
- 23.12 The College have also proposed opening up the interior of the proposed library building as part of this application. Two 30-minute tours are proposed 3 days of the week for every week outside of the College term time for members of the public with booking via the College website. In addition, the other two days of the week, outside of College term time, the

library would be open to groups of students/ pupils from Cambridgeshire schools for tours and quiet study. This access would be for groups of up to 30 children with visits lasting for up to 90 minutes, provided during school hours.

- 23.13 It is considered that sufficient information has been provided at this stage of the application to allow the public access provided as part of this application to be given weight as a public benefit. To ensure that this is provided, maintained and effectively managed a condition is recommended requiring submission of a public access management plan.

24. Third party representations

- 24.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Conflicting deadlines/ lack of sufficient consultation time to consider the proposal and its additional information	Clarification has been sent to all notified neighbours clarifying the consultation deadline, including updating the expiry date on the portal. Sufficient time has also been given to consider all information, including that provided during the process of the application.
Failure to consult No.19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane	Notification was sent to all of these properties and an additional commercial unit along St Andrew's Street on the 1 st July
Garden Trust's consultee comments are incorrectly filed on the portal	This arises from the way that the comments were received from the Garden Trust. They do now appear as a "Consultee Comment" under "Documents" on the portal.
Applicant's view of the heritage impacts including that raised at the Public meeting held by the College on the 6 th July.	The Officer assessment is set out in this report, which is acknowledged to differ from that of the applicant.
Mis-representation of officer presentation within the press	Following clarification, this public mis-representation of the number of comments received was corrected.
Lobbying of members by the applicant from a letter sent on the 11 th June.	Members should be aware of their duty when sitting on planning committee including that they must not be pre-determined prior to making a decision.
Refusal to publish CLAG record of the 6 th July public meeting.	An initial record provided by CLAG was declined to be uploaded at the request of the applicant.

	However a subsequent version of this record was received and is uploaded to the public file.
Failure to consult upon the response of the Victorian Society to the agent and architect following their email to the Victorian Society.	It is acknowledged that the agent and architect of the application contacted the Victorian Society during the application to explain their difference in opinion regarding the heritage assessment of the scheme. A response was received from the Victorian Society, and published on the website on the 23rd July. It is not considered that this response from the Victorian Society required any re-consultation and in any instance sufficient time has passed to allow review of this on the portal.
Incorrect publication dates of letters/ responses received	Officers are of the view that all representations are uploaded against dates that reflect when they were uploaded.
Incorrect/ inaccurate imagery provided within the supporting documents relating to the height of the chimneys	Whilst officers acknowledge the height of the chimneys within the Design and Access Statement, as well as the Townscape Visual Impact Assessment do not reflect the proposed height of the chimneys. The plans to be approved do accurately reflect the proposed height of the chimneys.
Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan	There was no condition placed upon the previous application, or requirement for submission of a Traffic Management Plan. The details of this were included within the requirements under Condition 3 of 25/02161/FUL as is recommended in this instance.
Contradicting information regarding the proposed temporary kitchens	Whilst it is noted that the supporting documents show differing information relating to the temporary kitchens. No details of this are required or to be secured as part of this application. Details are recommended within condition 9 of this report.
Requested a significant number of changes to conditions attached to the previous permission (25/02161/FUL)	Condition 15 of this report has been amended to change the implementation trigger reflecting that the proposal is not residential development. All other conditions are considered by officers to meet the relevant tests as set out in the NPPF and PPG.

Table 3 Officer response to third party/ local group representations

25. Planning obligations (S106)

- 25.1 Whilst no comments have been received from the Council's Section 106 officer as part of this application, they were received on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). The comments on the previous application requested financial contributions totalling £20,000 (plus indexation) through a S106 agreement towards the provision of and/or improvement of the public realm facilities at and in the vicinity of Christ's Lane.
- 25.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. If the planning obligation does not pass the tests then it is unlawful. The tests are that the planning obligation must be:
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) directly related to the development; and
 - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 25.3 Policy 85 states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported/permitted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
- 25.4 Officers acknowledge that the proposed development would result in a notable increase in the gross internal area of the library facilities within the site. However, this increase in floor area is to update the library facilities for the college and its existing number of students. It is not considered that the proposal is expected to result in any increase in the number of students or staff within the college.
- 25.5 As a result, given the number of people accessing the site is not expected to increase, financial contributions are not considered to be reasonably related to the scale of the proposal. In any instance, the proposal itself seeks certain improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the façade, public bench and public art.
- 25.6 Whilst the construction phase would result in a certain level of impact upon Christ's Lane, this would be restricted to a temporary period of time and not therefore suitable justification for the requested financial contributions.

- 25.7 As will be set out in the planning balance of this report, officers consider that the requested contributions are not required in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms, as required by test a) of the CIL legislation.
- 25.8 Overall, therefore, the financial contributions requested by the S106 officer are not considered to be required as they would not meet the necessary CIL tests and as such would not be lawful and would therefore not meet the threshold of Policy 85 of the Cambridge Local Plan.

26. Planning balance

- 26.1 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).
- 26.2 Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF relating to the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” are relevant to this application given its location within the settlement of Cambridge. S4 sets out that proposals within settlements, such as this, should be approved “unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.”
- 26.3 The proposal is not considered to conflict with any Policies within the NPPF that state that “development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances” (S4(2)(c)).
- 26.4 The proposed development would undeniably result in a degree of heritage harm, and other harm (see below). There is therefore a requirement to assess this harm against the benefits of the scheme. The following planning balance will initially set out the balance of heritage harm vs heritage benefits applying the statutory duties under Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990. Then the planning balance addressed through the three objectives which sustainable development should seek to achieve, as set out in Chapter 1, Paragraph 17 of the NPPF (economic, social and environmental).

Heritage Balance

Harm

- 26.5 Applying the statutory duty under Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, the scale and siting of the proposed

replacement library, specifically the staircase tower, would be prominent within views and adversely affect the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Substantial weight should be given the conservation of this designated heritage asset. Here, the proposal would cause a low level of harm to the significance of the listed building, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Even though in officers' view the harm would be of a low level, this still attracts considerable importance and weight for the decision maker in forming a view in the planning balance. It is notable that heritage harm has been identified by Historic England, the Conservation Officer, the Victorian Society, CLAG and other third parties, albeit of varying levels.

26.6 The proposed development, through an extensive pre-application process and through the previous applications themselves, has been amended to help to mitigate the level of harm that would arise to relevant heritage assets. This includes a reduction in the height of the proposed chimneys following conservation officer and Historic England comments.

26.7 Nevertheless, there is a level of harm identified to the setting of the Bodley Library. A degree of heritage harm arises from the space requirements of the College and its students in the circumstances of this application. For example, the large staircase turret that is highly visible within the setting of the Bodley provides a form of fire escape to the upper levels and therefore has a minimum height requirement.

26.8 The operational requirements for the College and its students in terms of a library and study space also provides partial explanation for the heritage harm that is identified. In order to meet the current requirements for such a facility, a building of this scale is required. This is highlighted by the previous Rick Mather schemes that were comparable in scale, albeit with a basement extension as opposed to the additional floor space above ground proposed within this scheme. In the view of officers, the choice of the applicant to no longer pursue the basement has been sufficiently justified.

Benefits

26.9 The proposed development is, in line with comments from the Council's Conservation Officer, considered to result in a number of benefits/enhancements to relevant heritage assets, namely:

26.10 The proposal is considered to result in an enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College building when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, as a result of the increased

separation between the Bodley Library and the proposed library at its lower levels.

- 26.11 The proposal would also provide wider enhancements to Bath Court through significantly improved landscaping and removal of redundant plant. This would result in enhancements to this area of the Historic Core Conservation Area (applying s.72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990) and Christ's College RPG (applying s.102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023).

Overall Planning Balance

- 26.12 Considering the identified heritage harm under Policies HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the NPPF, the above heritage benefits alone are not deemed sufficient to outweigh the heritage harm. However, under Policies S4 and HE6(4) of the NPPF the wider public benefits of the proposal should be weighed against the harm arising from the scheme, including the heritage harm set out above.

Summary of harm

- 26.13 Officers have had regard to the statutory duty set out in section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in considering this application have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected nearby Grade I listed buildings at Christ's College. In the view of officers, the proposal would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library which forms a part of the overall Grade I listed Buildings surrounding the entrance court, within the southeast range of second court.
- 26.14 The construction phase of the proposed development would lead to a level of noise and disturbance for both occupants of nearby residential properties and Christ's Lane itself as a public thoroughfare. Officers consider that these impacts can be mitigated through the use of suitably worded conditions as recommended by the Local Highways Authority and Environmental Health Officer. These conditions will enable officers to ensure the protection of neighbouring amenity and minimise the impact upon access along Christ's Lane.
- 26.15 The increase in scale of development within the application would, as highlighted within the provided documentation, increase the visual dominance along Christ's Lane. This increased visual intrusion is not itself

considered to result in any harm however, with mitigation provided through a significantly enhanced public facing façade.

26.16 With regards to daylight impacts, officers acknowledge that the retail units along Christ's Lane would experience a reduction in daylight. However, this harm is not considered so significant to be unacceptable. BRE guidance states that guidelines within BRE209 may also be applied to non-domestic buildings where occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight. In this case, given the use of the adjacent units is for retail, officers consider that such an expectation does not exist and therefore the harm to their occupants is limited.

26.17 The nature of the proposed development, comprising the demolition and rebuild of the existing library building would involve a level of environmental harm through the construction phase. Whilst a whole life carbon assessment will be carried out at various design stages, initial assessments have been made and provided with the application. The total upfront carbon resulting from the construction of the new building is estimated at 438 kgCO₂e/m. Whilst the demolition of the existing building increases carbon costs, significant measures have been identified by the applicant to reduce the overall environmental impact of the scheme, including where possible the re-use of existing buildings and materials.

Substantial weight is given to the overall level of harm arising from the proposal.

Summary of benefits

Economic

26.18 There would be new employment associated with the construction phase of the development which would also help to support local services and facilities in terms of the multiplier effect, together with increased spending in the area. The applicants have not robustly dealt with this aspect of the proposal and as such, the economic benefits of the proposed development are afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance.

Social

26.19 The development would represent an enhancement to its surrounding context in townscape and placemaking terms. Through an extensive pre-application process and refinements, the scheme is considered to successfully respond to the street context by improving its architectural quality and material choice in compliance with policies 55, 56, 57 and 59

of the Local Plan. This enhancement extends to the public realm along Christ's Lane, where the development is considered to improve the relationship when assessed against the existing library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme. The design and appearance of the proposed development would also comply with the principles for well-designed places set out in Policy DP3 of the NPPF. The proposal would not therefore conflict with this national decision-making policy.

- 26.20 The redevelopment of the site, proposed within this application, whilst enhancing its surrounding context, would also be considered to make effective use of the land as set out within Policy L3 of the NPPF. Whilst tightly constrained by significant heritage assets, the increase in density of development within the site is considered to be appropriate with the applicant providing appropriate justification of the need for additional library and study facilities for its students.
- 26.21 Following the Development Control Forum on the 29 July 2026, the College has formally proposed public accessibility within the new library building and Bath Court (appendix 10). Whilst Christ's is one of the few currently public accessible colleges within Cambridge, neither Bath Court nor the library to be demolished are open to the public. By introducing public access to both the proposed library and Bath Court, members of the public would be able to experience firsthand the proposed development and areas of the Grade I listed College. Details of times and management of public access resulting from this development are to be secured by way of condition 32 which is necessary to ensure that weight can be given to this as a public benefit.
- 26.22 The proposed development provides a tangible benefit to Christ's Lane through the provision of a public bench where there is currently no public seating available. This bench is incorporated into the physical façade of the proposed library, extending approximately 25m in length and would be a permanent feature of the lane.
- 26.23 The proposed development would significantly improve the accessibility of the library and study facilities within the College as well as the surrounding Bath Court. Step free access is proposed to all parts of the building, in addition to level access throughout Bath Court. Within the building a multi-faith prayer room and a range of study spaces helps to meet the needs of the entire student body. Given that there is proposed public access to the new library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme.

- 26.24 The provision of a replacement gate between Bath Court and Christ's Lane, to be secured through a public art condition would help to improve the appreciation of Bath Court from the public realm as well as contributing a positive feature to the public façade of the scheme.
- 26.25 The provision of an updated library facility for students of the College would help to support and sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities.
- 26.26 The social benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 26.27 Environmental
- 26.28 The proposed design of the development would positively enhance the townscape by creating a high quality architectural and sustainable building.
- 26.29 Enhancements to the local environment would arise, including the use of efficient and sustainable construction methods, water conservation measures, incorporation of renewable technologies and rainwater storage. Thereby providing a highly sustainable building and reducing surface water flood risk within the site. Whilst the proposed library building is primarily a private building for use by college students, public access is now proposed at certain times of the year. Furthermore, officers consider that the proposed library enables energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed, as per Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. In this instance that is a public benefit resulting from the proposal as supported by Policies 28, 57 and 63 of the Cambridge Local Plan.
- 26.30 The environmental benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

Overall conclusion

- 26.31 Officers have carefully considered the development against the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the NPPF 2026 and the statutory duties in sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of the LURA 2023. Whilst acknowledging representations that consider the level of harm to heritage assets to be significant and wider ranging, officers consider that the scheme would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed Christ's College Buildings surrounding the Entrance Court. This harm is

not considered to be outweighed by the heritage benefits arising from the scheme.

- 26.32 Weighed against this heritage harm is an array of economic, social and environmental public benefits including the creation of temporary construction jobs, townscape and public-realm enhancements, significant sustainability and accessibility improvements and increased public access into the college including the proposed library building. These benefits attract significant weight, consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable development.
- 26.33 As requested by third-parties and CLAG, consideration has been given to alternative methods for the college to provide the required library facilities claimed to result in less heritage harm. Officers do not consider however, that any of the alternatives carry any notable weight as a material consideration in forming a decision on the merits of the proposal.
- 26.34 Applying the heritage balance under NPPF Policy HE6(4) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development within Policy S3 of the NPPF, officers conclude that the public benefits clearly and convincingly outweigh the substantial weight afforded to the identified low level of harm to designated heritage assets. Ultimately, there is clear and convincing justification for the heritage and other harm identified. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms.
- 26.35 Having assessed the proposal against the statutory development plan, the NPPF, NPPG guidance, and applying the statutory duties under section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of LURA 2023, and taking into account of the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

27. Recommendation

- 27.1 **Approve** subject to:
-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

28. 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) Prior to the commencement of development, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It shall include/ adhere to the following:

a) A phasing programme.

b) Contractor's parking and access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to and from the site, their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures.

c) Control of dust, mud and debris on the highway.

d) Construction and demolition (except for loading and unloading) shall be carried out only between 0800 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless in accordance with agreed emergency procedures for deviation.

e) Delivery hours for muck away, demolition and construction purposes. The hours submitted for approval shall include an assessment of the daily number and type of vehicles required and an assessment as to how vehicles would safely access / exit the site include tracking / swept path analysis. The submission should include a highway safety and residential amenity audit /

assessment to support the proposed times and include provision for banks person(s). The delivery times shall be carried out only within the agreed hours and shall at no time should any deliveries take place after 1300 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority in advance.

f) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours.

g) Dust management and wheel washing measures in accordance with the provisions of IAQM, 2016 and 2018;

h) Use of concrete crushers and mitigation measures;

i) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.

j) Screening and hoarding details.

k) Consideration of sensitive receptors.

l) A Community Liaison Plan to inform the community in respect of:

- the construction required to facilitate the development
- contractor point of contact, complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures

m) Membership of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To safeguard the safety, health and quality of life of existing residential occupiers and users of the City centre in accordance with policies 35, 36 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 4) No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:

- a. the statement of significance and research objectives;

- b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
- c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
- d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

Reason: To ensure that before any demolition and or development commences that an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been implemented before development commences. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 61).

- 5) No works shall commence until details of how the listed building is to be properly protected and supported during the carrying out of the works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved means of protection and support shall be implemented without damage to the fabric of the building and its windows and shall remain in place until the works are completed

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 6) No development shall commence until a scheme to minimise the spread of airborne dust from the site including subsequent dust monitoring during the period of demolition and construction, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 7) No development (including demolition, enabling works or piling shall commence until a demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment

associated with the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The assessment shall be in accordance with the provisions of BS 5228:2009 Code of Practice for noise and vibration on construction and open sites and include details of any piling and mitigation/monitoring measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise or vibration. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved measures.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 8) No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 31 and 32).

- 9) Prior to commencement of development, including demolition, and in accordance with BS5837 2012, a phased tree protection methodology in the form of an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority before any tree works are carried out and before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purpose of development (including demolition).

In a logical sequence the AMS and TPP will consider all phases of construction in relation to the potential impact on trees and detail tree works, the specification and position of protection barriers and ground protection and all measures to be taken for the protection of any trees from damage during the

course of any activity related to the development, including supervision, demolition, foundation design (allowing for tree root growth and accounting for heave and subsidence), storage of materials, ground works, installation of services, erection of scaffolding and landscaping.

The development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved AMS and TPP.

Reason: To ensure that trees to be retained will be protected from damage during any construction activity, including demolition Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71 and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

- 10) No demolition, hereby permitted, shall be undertaken, until details for the careful salvage and reuse of existing materials have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the reuse of historic materials wherever possible (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 11) No development shall commence (including demolition) to the existing kitchen/ dining facilities until details of the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details provided should include the timespan for which the facilities are required and how the land will be restored to its original condition.

The approved development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development would be acceptable with regards to its impact on relevant heritage assets and protected trees within the site, in accordance with Policies 61, 62 and 71 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

12) No development above ground level to the new library building shall take place until an ecological enhancement scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of bat and bird box installation, hedgehog provisions and other ecological enhancements. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation or in accordance with a timescale agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan policies 57, 59 and 70 and the Greater Cambridge Planning Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2022).

13) No development above ground level, other than demolition, (or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority), shall commence until a Public Art Delivery Plan (PADP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PADP shall include the following:

- a) Details of the public art and artist commission;
- b) Details of how the public art will be delivered, including a timetable for delivery;
- c) Details of the location of the proposed public art on the application site;
- d) The proposed consultation to be undertaken;
- e) Details of how the public art will be maintained;
- f) How the public art would be decommissioned if not permanent;
- g) How repairs would be carried out;
- h) How the public art would be replaced in the event that it is destroyed;

The approved PADP shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetabling. Once in place, the public art shall not be moved or removed otherwise than in accordance with the approved maintenance arrangements.

Reason: To provide public art as a means of enhancing the development and (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56 and the Cambridge City Council Public Art SPD (2010)).

- 14) No development shall take place above ground level, except for demolition, until details of all the materials for the external surfaces of buildings and ground surfaces to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Samples of the materials shall be made available on site for inspection by officers. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 15) No development above ground level to the new library building, or to Bath Court other than demolition, shall commence until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:

- a) proposed finished levels or contours; car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) hard surfacing materials;
- c) Street furniture and artifacts (including refuse and cycle storage);
- d) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- e) boundary treatments indicating the type, positions, design, and materials of boundary treatments to be erected (including gaps for hedgehogs);
- f) an implementation programme.

The development shall be fully carried out in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting of any trees or shrubs, or 5 years from the commencement of development in respect of any retained trees and shrubs, they are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or

become seriously damaged or diseased, replacement trees and shrubs of the same size and species as originally planted shall be planted at the same place in the next available planting season, or in accordance with any variation agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57, 59 and 69).

- 16) No development above base course to the new library building (other than demolition and enabling/ utility diversion works) shall take place until a detailed scheme for the approved rainwater harvesting and recycling strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include relevant drawings showing the location of the necessary infrastructure required to facilitate the water reuse. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 17) No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Drainage Strategy Report Parts 1&2 prepared by Smith and Wallwork engineers (ref:0346-SAW-ZZ-ZZ-RP-C-0001) dated 16th May 2025 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full accordance with the approved details prior to commencement of the use hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policies 31 and 32)

18) No new walls shall be constructed until the drawings to a scale of 1:20 providing details of the roof/wall junctions, including eaves, fascias and soffits, wall/floor junctions and wall/wall junctions have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This includes junctions between historic and new work. Construction of walls shall thereafter take place only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

19) No new, replacement or altered joinery shall be installed, nor existing historic joinery removed, until drawings at a scale of 1:20 of all such joinery (doors and surrounds, windows and frames, sills, skirtings, dado rails, staircases and balustrades, etc.) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

20) No rainwater goods shall be installed until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Rainwater goods shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

21) No work shall commence on the relevant areas until details of the following items have been submitted for the prior, written approval of the Local Planning Authority:

(a) Details of first floor landing alterations including timber samples, to be inspected and agreed on site with the conservation officer, and junctions with new work and existing panelling

(b) Details of alterations to panelling

(c) Details of photovoltaic panels showing relationship to roof

- (d) Details of vents, flues and extracts
- (e) Details of signage
- (f) Details of external lighting
- (g) Details of gates and railings
- (h) Details of structural alterations to listed building

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 22) Prior to the installation of any artificial lighting an artificial lighting impact assessment and scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Internal lighting within the proposed covered Library Court shall also be considered. The scheme shall include details of any artificial lighting of the site and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels at proposed and existing residential properties shall be undertaken (horizontal / vertical isolux contour light levels and calculated glare levels). Artificial lighting on and off site must meet the Recommended Maximum Values of Light Parameters for the Control of Obtrusive Light contained within the 'Institute of Lighting Professionals - Guidance Note 01/21: the Reduction of Obtrusive Light - GN01/21', (or as superseded). Any mitigation measures to reduce and contain potential artificial light spill and glare as appropriate shall be detailed.

The artificial lighting scheme as approved shall be fully implemented before the use hereby permitted is commenced and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 34)

- 23) No operational plant, machinery or equipment shall be installed until a noise impact assessment of and any noise insulation/mitigation as required for the said plant, machinery or equipment has been submitted to and approved in

writing by the local planning authority. The noise impact assessment shall also consider any plant rooms. Any required noise insulation/mitigation shall be carried out as approved and retained as such.

Due regard shall be given to the recommendations detailed in the submitted 'Plant Noise Assessment New Library, Christ's College, Cambridge Report reference: RP01-24365-R3, Revision 3 dated the 23 May 2025', by Cass Allen.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 24) Prior to development above ground level, a Materials Management Plan (MMP) detailing the removal of Made Ground and its replacement with validated clean topsoil (as per the recommendations of the Site Investigation Report by Lucion, ref: 125396, dated Feb 2025) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that no unsuitable material is brought onto the site in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 33).

- 25) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until a post construction statement confirming that the provisions as set out in the Sustainability Statement (Skelly & Couch, 1685-SAC-RPT REV 2) have been fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting principles of sustainable construction and efficient use of buildings (Cambridge Local Plan Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 26) Prior to the occupation of the proposed development, or as soon as reasonably practicable after occupation, evidence in the form of the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority. Such evidence shall demonstrate the achievement of no less than 5 Wat01 credits. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the agreed details set out within the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 27) Prior to first occupation a comprehensive water metering and monitoring system shall be commissioned and installed within the building to quantify at least daily: the total volume of mains water used, the total volume of greywater reclaimed, and the total volume of rainwater used. No occupation shall occur until such time as the local planning authority has been notified through an independent verification report that the water metering and monitoring system has been installed and is fully functional. The metering and monitoring system shall be retained in a fully functioning operational use at all times and for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction in accordance with Policy 28 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020, the Written Ministerial Statement on Addressing water scarcity in Greater Cambridge: update on government measures (March 2024) Joint Ministerial Statement on addressing Water Scarcity in Greater Cambridge.

- 28) If unexpected contamination is encountered during the development works which has not previously been identified, all works shall cease immediately until the Local Planning Authority has been notified in writing. Thereafter, works shall only restart with the written approval of the Local Planning Authority following the submission and approval of a Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation Report

and a Phase 3 Remediation Strategy specific to the newly discovered contamination.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Intrusive Site Investigation Report and Remediation Strategy.

Reason: To ensure that any unexpected contamination is rendered harmless in the interests of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33).

- 29) Service deliveries to and dispatches / collections from the development as approved including refuse / recycling collections during the operational phase shall only be permitted between the hours of 07:00 - 22:00 hours Monday to Friday and 09:00 - 1900 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 30) The kitchen ventilation / extraction and discharge system shall be constructed, installed, commissioned and maintained thereafter in accordance with the submitted 'CHRIST COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE, NEW LIBRARY AND KITCHENS: Odour Assessment, Revision V1, 16/05/2025', by Greenavon Ltd. The ventilation system should be cleaned and serviced at regular intervals in accordance with manufacturers / installers recommendations, to prevent a build-up of grease and other odorous substances in the system.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 31) Prior to the occupation of the development, the ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in "*Ecological Impact Assessment (SWE CO, 65213378-SWE-ZZ-XX-T-J-0001)*" The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 57, 59 and 70)

32) The replacement library shall not open for study use until such time as a scheme for public access to it and Bath Court has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme, based upon the following principles set out in the letter submitted by the Turley, dated 5th August 2026, shall include opening hours and details of security measures.

- 2 x 30 minute organised tours of the library, including the Bodley Library
- Bookable study/ tours for students or pupils of Cambridgeshire schools on 2 days of the week.
- Extension of open public access within The College to include Bath Court.
- No charge for public access to the site.

The approved scheme for public access shall come into operation at the same time as the replacement library's first use for study and thereafter the replacement library and Bath Court shall remain open for public access in accordance with the approved scheme.

Public access shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved management plan unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure the proposed development is provided as a publicly accessible space whilst maintaining privacy for the College. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 56 and 57)

Informatives

- 1) Partial discharge of the condition can be applied for once the fieldwork at Part c) has been completed to enable the commencement of development. Part d) of the condition shall not be discharged until all elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

- 2) To satisfy and discharge Environmental Health conditions relating to artificial lighting, contaminated land, noise / sound, air quality and odours / fumes, any assessment and mitigation shall be in accordance with the scope, methodologies and requirements of relevant sections of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, (Adopted January 2020) <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/greater-cambridge-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd> and in particular section 3.6 - Pollution and the following associated appendices:

6: Requirements for Specific Lighting Schemes

7: The Development of Potentially Contaminated Sites in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire: A Developers Guide

8: Further technical guidance related to noise pollution

- 3) To satisfy the plant noise insulation condition, the rating level (in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019) from all plant, equipment and vents etc (collectively) associated with this application should be less than or equal to the existing background sound level (LA90) at the boundary of the premises subject to this application and having regard to noise sensitive premises.

If noise sensitive premises are located within the site boundary, then the glazing of the premises and/or amenity areas will also be a location for the rating level of all plant not to exceed the existing background sound level (LA90).

Tonal/impulsive sounds and other sound characteristics should be eliminated or at least considered in any assessment and should carry an additional correction (rating penalty) in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019. This is to prevent unreasonable disturbance to other premises. This requirement applies both during the day (0700 to 2300 hrs over any one-hour period) and night time (2300 to 0700 hrs over any one 15 minute period).

It is recommended that the agent/applicant submits an acoustic prediction survey/report in accordance with the principles of BS4142:2014+A1:2019

“Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound” or similar, concerning the effects on amenity rather than likelihood for complaints. Noise levels shall be predicted at the application boundary having regard to neighbouring premises.

Whilst our requirements are for the rating level not to exceed the background sound level at the application site boundary, if the plant is roof mounted and nearby noise sensitive receivers are in closer proximity than the site boundary and / or the site boundary is afforded shielding from the application building parapet, the nearest noise sensitive receiver would be the required assessment location.

It is important to note that a full BS4142:2014+A1:2019 assessment is not required, only certain aspects to be incorporated into an acoustic assessment as described within this informative.

Such a survey / report should include: a large scale plan of the site in relation to neighbouring premises; sound sources and measurement / prediction points marked on plan; a list of noise sources; details of proposed noise sources / type of plant such as: number, location, sound power levels, frequency spectrums, directionality of plant, noise levels from duct intake or discharge points; details of noise mitigation measures (attenuation details of any intended enclosures, silencers or barriers); description of full acoustic calculation procedures; noise levels at a representative sample of noise sensitive locations and hours of operation.

Any report shall include raw measurement data so that conclusions may be thoroughly evaluated and calculations checked.

- 4) As the premises may have kitchens providing cooked food for staff / students / the public or facilities for food preparation or similar or the applicant is reminded that under the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises will need to be registered with Cambridge City Council. In order to avoid additional costs it is recommended that the applicant ensure that the kitchen,

food preparation and foods storage areas comply with food hygiene legislation, before construction starts. Contact the Commercial Team at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890, email : commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information and advice.

- 5) Surface water and groundwater bodies are highly vulnerable to pollution and the impact of construction activities. It is essential that the risk of pollution (particularly during the construction phase) is considered and mitigated appropriately. It is important to remember that flow within the watercourse is likely to vary by season and it could be dry at certain times throughout the year. Dry watercourses should not be overlooked as these watercourses may flow or even flood following heavy rainfall.
- 6) Prior to final handover of the development, the developer must ensure that appropriate remediation of all surface water drainage infrastructure has taken place, particularly where the permanent drainage infrastructure has been installed early in the construction phase. This may include but is not limited to jetting of all pipes, silt removal and reinstating bed levels. Developers should also ensure that watercourses have been appropriately maintained and remediated, with any obstructions to flows (such as debris, litter and fallen trees) removed, ensuring the condition of the watercourse is better than initially found. This is irrespective of the proposed method of surface water disposal, particularly if an ordinary watercourse is riparian owned.
- 7) The applicant should consider ensuring that the development meets the criteria for “secured by design”
- 8) Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S106 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991. Contact Development Services Team 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 9) Protection of existing assets - A public sewer is shown on record plans within the land identified for the proposed development. It appears that development

proposals will affect existing public sewers. It is recommended that the applicant contacts Anglian Water Development Services Team for further advice on this matter. Building over existing public sewers will not be permitted (without agreement) from Anglian Water.

- 10) Building near to a public sewer - No building will be permitted within the statutory easement width of 3 metres from the pipeline without agreement from Anglian Water. Please contact Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 11) The developer should note that the site drainage details submitted have not been approved for the purposes of adoption. If the developer wishes to have the sewers included in a sewer adoption agreement with Anglian Water (under Sections 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991), they should contact our Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2 at the earliest opportunity. Sewers intended for adoption should be designed and constructed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption guide for developers, as supplemented by Anglian Water's requirements
- 12) Due to the site being within 6km of Cambridge City Airport the crane operator is required to submit all crane details such as maximum height, operating radius, name and phone number of site manager along with installation and dismantling dates to the CAA Airspace Coordination and Obstacle Management Service (ACOMS) system.
- 13) Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist.

If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/diversions

Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

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