



25/02162/LBC – Christ's 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 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.

Applicant: Mr Simon McDonald

Presenting officer: Dominic Bush

Reason presented to committee: Application raises special planning policy or other considerations/ Third-party representations

Member site visit date: 27th October 2025

Key issues: 1. Impact upon Listed Buildings

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Local groups / petition
9	Planning background
10	Assessment
11	Heritage assets
12	Third party representations
13	Planning balance
14	Recommendation
15	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application seeks Listed Building Consent 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 between the Bodley Library and a temporary kitchen dining facility during the duration of works.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The predominant aspect of this scheme is the demolition and replacement of the existing 1970's library build that serves the College. This building is deemed to not be fit for purpose, with insufficient study spaces, poor accessibility and lack of sufficient insulation. This has led to the College wanting to improve the library facilities for its students and this planning application coming forward.

- 1.4 This application follows two previous consents on the site for the replacement of the existing 1970's library. 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.
- 1.5 The proposals have 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 1)
- 1.6 The proposal has also been subject to a member briefing on the 19th May 2025 and Development Control Forum meeting (DCF) on the 11th September 2025. Following this DCF meeting further information has been provided regarding the public benefits of the scheme and the impact on Christ's Lane in terms of loss of light.
- 1.7 What is before members is therefore a well thought out scheme that follows previous permissions and has, through an extensive pre-application process evolved into a scheme which is a credible proposal of merit that would successfully assimilate into the street scene, its heritage setting and respect neighbouring residential amenity.
- 1.8 In August 2025, the application was subject to a revision made in response to concerns raised by officers, consultees and the communities. A 15 working day re-consultation was undertaken. Whilst a further overview of the application can be found in the following sections of this report, in brief, the changes reduced the height of the proposed chimneys facing onto Christ's Lane and altered the kitchen wash-up layout within the Grade I listed College buildings.
- 1.9 It is considered that the proposed replacement library would result in harm at the lower end of less than substantial to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming a part of the College site. It is, however, considered that the enhancements to the setting of other elements of the listed buildings, and enhancements to the conservation area are such that overall, the proposal is considered to be neutral in its heritage impact.
- 1.10 Overall, therefore, it is not considered that there is any significant identifiable harm that would arise as a result of the proposed development. Whilst the overall heritage impact is considered to be

neutral, there are public benefits that can be secured through the development.

Table 2 Consultee summary

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation Officer	No objection	6.1
Historic England	No objection	6.7
National Amenity Society	No objection	6.11
Third Party Representations (32)		7
Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (2)		8

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 which southern external elevation abuts the public right of way of Christ's Lane with the western side opening out onto Bath Court, an enclosed external courtyard within the College. This application also includes other elements of the college including the kitchen and upper dining hall which form part of the Grade I listed buildings and vary in their age. There is an additional area of the site within the red line boundary at the second court, to the north east 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 retained but to be 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 south of the existing library building is the public right of way of Christ's Lane, of which approximately the northern most 2 meters is in the ownership of the College with the remainder being highways land. Christ's Lane is a heavily used thoroughfare for pedestrians within the city of Cambridge linking the shopping area of the Grand Arcade with Christ's Pieces, Drummer Street bus station and the Grafton Centre. Christ's Lane is approximately 8 metres in width with a number of retail units at the ground floor on the opposite southern side, with residential units above at first and second floor. Christ's Lane is designated as a Primary Shopping Area within the site 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 1970s 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 which areas of Second Court are 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 The application seeks Listed Building Consent for the 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.
- 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. Whilst 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
- 3.6 Application amendments
- 3.7 The application was amended with a 15 working day re-consultation sent out on the 28th August. The alterations included reducing the height of the proposed chimneys by 900mm in response to both Historic England and Conservation Officer consultee comments. This change is such that when viewed from the far side of First Court only the very top of the chimneys would be visible, in turn reducing the impact upon the setting of this element of the Grade I listed building. The amendments also revised the kitchen wash-up arrangement, moving this potentially harmful element of the kitchen to a less significant part of the Grade I listed building.
- 3.8

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
11/0516/LBC	Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South	Approved (05.07.2013)

	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.	
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)
16/0406/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 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 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)
25/00673/LBC	Internal alterations to Lower Bodley Library Comprising repositioning of free-standing	Approved (16.04.2025)

	bookcases and installation of rolling rack shelving.	
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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. All permissions on site for the replacement of the library have since lapsed.

5. Policy

5.1 Legislation and National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2024

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

5.2 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

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

5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

The following SPDs were adopted to provide guidance to support previously adopted Development Plan Documents that have now been superseded by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. These documents are still material considerations when making planning decisions, with the weight in decision making to be determined on a case-by-case basis:

Listed Buildings SPD – Adopted 2009

5.4 Other guidance

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

Buildings of Local Interest (2005)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y (Affecting a Conservation Area and Listed Building.)

Conservation Officer- No Objection

Comments 22.07.2025 (Amendments/ further information required)

- 6.1 It is considered the quality and proportions of the design could be maintained with shorter chimneys. Lowering the chimneys slightly would also help to further minimise where they are visible from First Court and From Sidney Street, views which are considered less sensitive to the change proposed.
- 6.2 Should a wash-up in the old buttery be justified then a different design and layout is considered necessary, as the proposed internal 'pod' subdivision is considered clumsy and harmful. It is not accepted that it should be treated as a temporary, reversible intervention, as in reality it would be there for decades.
- 6.3 Comments 18.09.2025 (No objection)
- 6.4 Following the reduction in height of the proposed chimneys and revision of the internal kitchen layout the previous concerns raised have been satisfactorily addressed.
- 6.5 The scale of the building within its plot is considered to result in a degree of harm to the setting of the listed Christ's College buildings. It is considered however that this harm is mitigated by the enhancements to the other aspects of the listed buildings, the enhancement of the Conservation Area along Christ's Lane and the benefit of the works helping to secure the viable use of the buildings.

- 6.6 Overall, there is no objection to the proposal subject to conditions regarding:
- Protection and support (Attached to FUL application)
 - Salvage and reuse of materials (Attached to FUL application)
 - New walls (Attached to FUL application)
 - Joinery details (Attached to FUL application)
 - Timber frame repairs
 - Rainwater goods (Attached to FUL application)
 - Details/ sample of external materials (Attached to FUL application)
 - Precise details (Attached to FUL application)
 - Recording of building post works

Historic England- No Objection

Comments 29.07.2025 (Concerns raised)

- 6.7 There are concerns regarding the scale and massing of the proposed replacement library building feeling too big and over dominant on Bath Court.
- 6.8 It is also considered that the conversion of a prominent room to a kitchen wash-up would strongly affect the character of the space within the building.

Comments 01.09.2025 (No Objection)

- 6.9 The changes made introducing louvered slots and reducing the height of the chimneys helps to break up the massing of these elements. The re-location of the wash up area allowing better retention of a historic part of the building.
- 6.10 Overall, a position of no objection is retained, with the suggestion that the height of the staircase turret is reduced.

National Amenity Society- No Objection

- 6.11 Changes are recommended to reduce the height and massing of the proposed structure improving its relationship with the Bodley Library. It is also considered that the initial, taller height of the chimneys is preferable as it helps to break up the bulk of the form.

Design Review Panel Meeting 13th February 2025

- 6.12 The final report received states the following: -

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.

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. 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.

In conclusion the panel applaud the scheme as an exemplary proposal. As the details develop, the Panel believe the richness will be enhanced.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 Three representations have been received, 1 in objection and 1 raising neutral comments.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Excessive scale of the proposed development
 - Impact from excavation
 - Impact upon neighbouring amenity
 - Heritage Impacts
 - Failure to explore other alternative sites within the College
 - Over-development of the site
- 7.3 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. Local Groups / Petition

- 8.1 Christ's Lane Action Group has submitted a petition objecting to the proposed development and requesting amendments with regards to the following grounds:
- Mitigation of the proposed building height and scale.
 - Reduce the mass and height of the proposed building to respect its heritage surroundings, and to respect the conservation context.
 - Introduce permeability and active frontage to contribute positively to Christ's Lane, and to satisfy the Cambridge Local Policy 2018 regarding retail frontage.
 - Consider design elements from the earlier 2011/2016 proposals that were more sympathetic to the setting.
- 8.2 A petition has also been received in support of the application on the basis of the following:
- High quality design of the proposed replacement building.
 - Provision of additional and improved study spaces for students of the college.
 - Improved accessibility.
 - Improved sustainability performance.
 - Enhancement to the Christ's Lane streetscape.
- 8.3 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.

9. Planning background

- 9.1 It is important to note that previous planning permissions have been granted at the site for alternative replacement library buildings. Initially granted in 2013 with an identical permission also granted in 2016, both permissions have since expired and therefore carry no weight in the planning assessment.
- 9.2 Prior to this application, the applicant has engaged with the Local Planning authority through an extensive pre-application process including multiple meetings, Design Review Panel, a briefing to planning committee members in addition to a Development Control Forum during the live application.

10. Assessment

- 10.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:
- Heritage Impacts

11. Heritage assets

- 11.1 The application falls within the Historic Core Conservation Area. With the proposal directly impacting 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.
- 11.2 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.
- 11.3 The first and potentially most directly impacted asset is the Grade I listed buildings of Christ's College surrounding the Entrance Court, south-eastern 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 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.
- 11.4 A representation received from a Heritage Consultant on behalf of the Christ's Lane Action Group (CLAG) has claimed that in their view the existing 1970's library building is neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the adjacent heritage assets. 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. Whilst as stated by the CLAG consultant the existing building is notably smaller than that proposed, officers considered that it is negative in its contribution to relevant heritage assets.

- 11.5 Firstly, when considering the impact of the proposed demolition and replacement of the existing library, the principle of this in heritage terms has previously been approved and continues to be supported. The existing building makes negative contribution to the setting of the highly significant listed buildings such as the Bodley Library.
- 11.6 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.
- 11.7 One of the most visually prominent aspects of the development are the five chimneys that face towards Christ's Lane. During the application revised plans have been provided reducing the height of these chimneys by approximately 900mm in response to initial comments received from the Council's Conservation Officer. Following this revision, the very tops of the chimneys would only be visible within glimpsed views from the far side of First Court at eye level. Throughout the pre-application and application process the original height had been considered an acceptable height to limit any impact of this element upon the setting of the Grade I listed buildings with the glimpsed views not considered to harm the setting of the First Court range of buildings.
- 11.8 Whilst the recent letter received from CLAG states that there is an impact resulting from the height of the chimneys on the setting of the Bodley Library when viewed from along St Andrews Street. The chimneys themselves are not considered to attempt 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 Bradwell's Court re-development. Both the Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England officer are in agreement that this change improves the impact of the proposal such that the chimneys themselves would not result in any harm to the setting of the Bodley Library.
- 11.9 This prominence of the proposed development is perhaps most visible in relation to the highly significant Bodley Library within views from along St Andrews Street, Christ's Lane and internally within Bath Court. Whilst the separation afforded to the Bodley is increasing as a result of the development, the height and proximity of the building, particularly the staircase tower is notably increased.

- 11.10 The height of the staircase tower has been raised as an issue by both the internal Conservation Officer and the Historic England officer, with the latter recommending that a reduction in height would improve the relationship of the proposed building to the Bodley Library.
- 11.11 The applicant however has chosen to retain the current height of the proposed staircase tower. The impact that this increase in scale would have 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, considered to result in harm, on the lower end of less than substantial scale, to the setting of the Grade I listed building.
- 11.12 This harm is however, considered to be restricted to the setting of the Bodley Library which forms a part of the single, overall Grade I listed Christ's College site. Other elements of the proposed development, including the increased spacing between the Bodley are considered to mitigate any further harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings.
- 11.13 One 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. The recent letter received on behalf of CLAG states that they consider the proposal to result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the norther range of Bath Court.
- 11.14 Whilst the proposed library would somewhat 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.
- 11.15 As set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF, any less than substantial harm to heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 11.16 The proposed development has been submitted taking into account the views of students. 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. Officers

consider therefore, that, by proposing a significant increase and improvement in the library facilities available to students within the College site, it is bringing the library of the College up to date with the current requirements of the students. As considered through paragraph 215, officers consider that the proposed development would help to secure the ongoing use of the listed buildings for their intended, educational use.

- 11.17 In addition to securing the optimum viable use of the site, the proposed development is considered to provide certain public benefits that are given weight in the planning balance as referred to in paragraph 215. The development's public facing Christ's Lane façade is considered to be significantly enhanced from that of the existing 1970's library building. 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 is a further, albeit relatively minor public benefit arising from the scheme.
- 11.18 Paragraph 219 of the NPPF meanwhile adds that "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."
- 11.19 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 book storage 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.
- 11.20 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. Likewise, 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 being neutral is identified separately from any impact upon the conservation area, and the Registered Park and Garden.

- 11.21 A number of conditions have been requested by the Council's Conservation Officer requiring additional details of the proposed works. Whilst all of the conditions are considered to be relevant and necessary, those requested relating to the recording of the listed building and timber frame works are recommended to be attached to the relevant Listed Building Consent application as opposed to this FUL application.
- 11.22 Kitchen facilities
- 11.23 In addition to the works set out above that are considered to require planning permission and therefore also assessed within the planning application, there are a number of aspects of the proposal that do not require planning permission but do directly impact the existing listed buildings and therefore require listed building consent.
- 11.24 One specific aspect that this applies to is the internal alterations to the kitchen dining facilities. This includes the electrification of the entire kitchen, whilst the layout remains roughly un-changed, the existing kitchen wash-up is to be removed as part of the levelling of Bath Court, requiring its re-provision internally.
- 11.25 Initial comments received from the Council's Conservation Officer, objected to locating this new wash-up room within a historic room facing out onto Second Court with a pod inserted into the room to attempt to protect any historic fabric. Amendments have since been provided revising the location of the proposed wash-up away from this sensitive area to a location that is considered to be appropriate. Following this change, the kitchen alterations are supported by both Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer and would not result in any harm to historic fabric.
- 11.26 1913 Building
- 11.27 Other internal alterations are proposed to the 1913 building to the north of Christ's Lane abutting the existing library building to the north-eastern end. Whilst this building is more modern, it forms part of the Grade I listed College buildings, although is diminished in its historic significance. The works to this building are restricted to internal changes to its floor plans to facilitate a more rational layout at ground and first floor in addition to the removal of the existing roof to allow for an upward extension forming part of the new library building. It is acknowledged that this element of the scheme would result in the "loss" of historic fabric, however, it is on balance, considered to be acceptable in heritage terms due to the less

significant fabric impacted and its facilitation of improved efficiency of the buildings.

11.28 Upper Hall and Landing Area

11.29 Within the proposed works is a new lift core from Bath Court at ground level up into the Upper Hall. A new connection is then proposed to this lift through the Old Combination Room requiring the removal of a section of wall within a cupboard, in the same location as was shown as providing an access route for proposals from 1957. Given that the existing cupboard doors are to be retained for use in-situ, it is not considered that this aspect would result in any loss of historic fabric or material harm.

11.30 Level access is then proposed to be provided from the list to the upper hall and the half-landing leading into the old combination room. Whilst this would obscure historic fabric, the process is considered to be fully reversible which is deemed to mitigate any harm from this aspect. A new staircase is also proposed adjacent to the new lift core leading into the upper hall, following opening up works, the brickwork that would require removal for this is modern and of no historic interest. A corresponding proposal is to remove the existing staircase into the upper hall to facilitate and reinstate the independent use of the old combination room whilst allowing for improved accessibility.

11.31 Within the upper hall itself, there are proposals to improve the existing serving area and more significantly, to remove existing acoustic ceiling to reveal the timber king post roof structure. This roof will then be insulated with any repairs undertaken and double and secondary glazing provided. This element of the scheme is therefore considered to result in an enhancement to the significance of the listed building, revealing a historic element of the upper hall.

11.32 Access works

11.33 Within Second Court, it is proposed to introduce a new, low level access ramp within the southern corner to facilitate improved accessibility into this part of the College. The ramp has been designed such that its installation would not result in any physical or permanent impact to historic fabric within the building that it leads to. Whilst this aspect would result in very minor harm to the setting of the range of buildings within Second Court, its benefits, providing improved accessibility are sufficient to justify this.

11.34 Other internal works

- 11.35 Internally, within the south-east range of Second Court, it is proposed to make a number of modest changes to the existing plan form primarily comprising the creation of a new door opening, removal of a dividing wall and removal of toilet facilities. A number of opening up works were undertaken with agreement from the Council's Conservation Officer, this confirmed that the location of the proposed door opening comprises modern brick beneath a plaster finish and would not therefore result in harm or loss of historic fabric.
- 11.36 The existing dividing wall was discovered to be a lath and plaster construction, although visually this appeared to be a later construction. Subsequently, there is no objection to the removal of this wall.
- 11.37 Of the conditions requested by the Council's Conservation Officer, those relating to monitoring of the listed building and timber frame works will be attached to any listed building consent as opposed to the FUL planning permission. The remaining conditions also relate to the building of the new library which requires planning permission and therefore are relevant to the FUL planning application.
- 11.38 Overall
- 11.39 In conclusion, great weight should be given to the conservation of any designated heritage asset. Whilst there is a level of harm identified to the highly significant Grade I listed Bodley Library, this harm, at the lower end of the less than substantial scale, is considered to have been clearly and convincingly justified. Additionally, as concluded by the Council's Conservation Officer, the development of new increased library facilities would help to secure the listed building's optimum viable use. The overall impact upon the relevant listed buildings is therefore considered to be neutral and would preserve their special historic and architectural interest in accordance with Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.
- 11.40 In line with comments received from Historic England and the Council's Conservation officer, who raise no objection to the development, the development is not considered to result in any overall harm to the relevant heritage assets, applying paragraph 215 of the NPPF. Officers consider that the scheme does provide public benefits through the enhancements to the Christ's Lane façade and provision of integrated seating along Christ's Lane.
- 11.41 In accordance with local and national policies, as well as section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, special regard must be

given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, including their settings. The statutory duties carry considerable importance and weight when weighing any harm against any benefits or countervailing factors. Overall, the development is considered to preserve the setting and significance of the listed buildings. It is therefore compliant with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, and Policy 61 of the Local Plan.

12. Third party representations

- 12.1 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
Impacts upon neighbouring amenity	This does not form part of the assessment for listed building consent. It has however been assessed under the associated FUL application.
Failure to explore alternative sites	The applicant has provided site selection information; this has been assessed within the associated FUL planning application.

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

13. Planning balance

- 13.1 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).

13.2 Summary of Harm

- 13.1 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 the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Great weight should be given the conservation of this designated heritage asset. Here, the proposal would cause less than substantial (on the lower end of the scale) harm to the significance of the listed building.

13.2 Summary of Benefits

- 13.3 Notwithstanding this harm, the development of new, increased library facilities provides clear and convincing justification and helps to secure the optimum viable use of the building. Despite the harm to the listed

Bodley Library, the development would result in enhancements to other elements of the Grade I listed College buildings, including but not limited to Bath Court. Overall, the development is considered to preserve the significance and setting of the relevant listed buildings.

- 13.4 Overall, therefore, the development's impact upon heritage assets is considered to be neutral with no overall harm, and there would be no conflict with development plan policy on heritage. All specific LB alterations requiring consent are acceptable.
- 13.5 The provision of public art in the form of the gate onto Christ's Lane, and the bench within the Christ's Lane façade are public benefits arising as a result of the proposed development. These are attributed limited positive weight in the planning balance.
- 13.6 Overall, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan, and there are no material considerations which indicate that permission should be refused (having taken into account the NPPF and NPPG guidance in particular). Having taken 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 subject to conditions.

14. Recommendation

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

15. Planning conditions

1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. The listed building shall be fully recorded before and during works by means of drawings, photographs and written report to Level 2 as set out in Historic England's Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice 2016. Copies of the final, completed report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the County Historic Environment Record within one year of the completion of works.

Reason: To ensure that the listed building is properly recorded both before and during works.

4. No works to install new or alter existing timber framing, or remove any member or part member of the timber frame, floor joists or roof timber, shall commence until details including a justification, methodology of repair and drawings at a scale of 1:20 showing the extent of any repairs to the timber frame (including jointing, pegging, junctions, chamfering, moulding, weathering, 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).

