

Drummer Street and Christ's Lane

Drummer Street accommodates the city's bus station, which dominates views and activity. It also forms part of the setting of Christ's Pieces and the medieval and later grounds of Emmanuel College, emphasising its origins as one the city's historic extra-mural streets.

Set between the open space of Christ's Pieces and the buildings and gardens of Emmanuel College, this is a busy street with an open character that is dominated by the structure and activity of Cambridge Bus Station. The trees and greenery of the parks and gardens on either side, along with college boundary walls and railings, contribute to the sense of enclosure, whilst the buildings of Emmanuel College, which include the Gothic Revival North Court by Leonard Stokes and J. L. Pearson's Jacobean Revival Emmanuel House

(which overlaps the junction of Drummer Street and Parker Street) create a strong late C19 architectural character. Christ's Lane has been reopened through redevelopment of Bradwell's Court and is now an attractive route from St Andrew's Street to Christ's Pieces lined with shops on the south east side. However, its frontage formed by buildings of Christ's College is long and inactive formed of blank elevations of kitchens and other late C20 college buildings that are due to be redeveloped for a new library.



Drummer Street

SIGNIFICANCE - SIGNIFICANT

General Overview

Drummer Street has probably been in existence since the Middle Ages, running along the north side of the Dominican priory within whose grounds Walter Mildmay founded Emmanuel College in the C16, preserving the medieval boundaries and green open space beyond that forms the southern side of a large part of the road (a Grade II* Registered Garden). The college boundary walls are of C18 construction but follow the alignment of the medieval monastic enclosure and include the north entrance at the junction with Emmanuel Road.



North side of Drummer Street - Christ's Pieces



Emmanuel College boundary walls

Emmanuel Road.

The north side preserves the open setting of Christ's Pieces, part of the medieval endowment of Christ's College, which is now a municipal park with a strong Victorian character. The park's public conveniences are housed in a single storey building with hipped roof with an early C20 character that suits the edge-of-park setting.

Historically, the west end of the street ran from the narrow route of Christ's Lane along the backs of long tenement plots fronting St Andrew's Street. By the late C19, these had been developed for a mixture of tightly parked yards of artisan housing as well as larger, more prestigious town houses. Major change in early



Emmanuel College North Court

C20 included the clearance of a large part of the latter area for the building of Emmanuel College North Court, which has an austere Gothic Revival character and rises to three storeys. A bus turning loop was also added at the west end of the street in the early C20, which was updated later in the century through the addition of a large canopy to create Cambridge Bus Station. Construction of Bradwell's Court in the 1960s removed the last elements of the former tight urban grain. This has



Christ's Lane looking to St Andrew's Road



Cambridge Bus Station



Canopy detail to Cambridge Bus Station



Bradwell's Court redevelopment

recently been redeveloped creating a high quality modern frontage to Drummer Street and Christ's Lane as a fitting entrance to the city centre from the bus station.

Christ's and Emmanuel College buildings provide some overlooking to the public spaces but are generally inaccessible from the street, while the high walls and railings provide a strong boundary that marks the division between the private and publically-accessible spaces. The buildings' facades have been adversely affected by dirt and grime, which may be due to the high amount of traffic along the street – this may be seen as a negative factor but equally contributes to their character as historic buildings.

Townscape Elements

The large roundabout at the east end of the street emphasises the highway, but is necessary for the safe movement of the buses. The road surface is generally in good condition with good quality stone kerbs.

Drummer Street is often extremely busy due to the presence of the bus station, students, and shoppers using the retail units in the Christ's Lane development which is an attractive shopping area. There is also heavy pedestrian traffic across Drummer Street from Christ's Lane and over Christ's Pieces towards the Grafton Shopping Centre.

- The western leg of the street is enclosed to the south by the buildings of North Court, the Christ's Lane development and Christ's College. A small square has been formed at the western end of the street as part of the Christ's Lane development with high quality paving and a sculptural curving fence to the rear of the bus station. The eastern leg of the street has a more open feel with views over the C18 college walls to trees in the historic gardens beyond.



Western end of the street, including sculptural fence

- Varied roofscape and detailed windows of North Court add interest.
- The conspicuously modern form of the bus station canopy is relieved by trees on the edge of Christ's Pieces, which tower over it.
- The tall trees on the edge of Christ's Pieces also provide enclosure to the south side of the street and help to channel views along it towards Parker Street.
- At its eastern end the street is enclosed by the high wall of Emanuel College on the south side, with a notable tree leaning over the wall and creating an attractive point in the street scene, and by the tall tree line along the edge of the park on its north side. The park edge is further

defined by the park railings which are painted black, although in the past they were a more cheerful green.

- Christ's Lane has an attractive active frontage of the new shops framed in limestone that reflects the character of the positive buildings of Christ's College at the entrance to the lane. Windows of rooms above the ground floor provide further overlooking.



Limestone shopfronts

- Attractive Yorkstone paving has provided a positive public realm to the newly opened lane, with a larger square in the north where it meets Drummer Street.

Streetscape Enhancement

Cleaning the façade of Emmanuel College North Court would enhance the building's presence and help to reduce the visual dominance of the bus station.

Redevelopment Opportunities

Bradwell's Court has now been redeveloped, providing a suitably designed elevation to Christ's Pieces and framing the public square, which forms a gateway to the city centre for bus passengers. This has also opened up Christ's Lane as a wide pedestrian route, linking the historic core of Cambridge to Christ's Pieces and forming part of the route between the city centre and the Grafton Shopping Centre.

The bus station also provides potential for further enhancement by creating a less intrusive structure that reflects the high quality materials of the city centre and the more natural forms of the trees within the parkland. Any changes should also seek to improve travellers' convenience and increase the efficiency of the station. The location and design of the long-distance coach stops could also be improved as they are not always convenient for users.

The north west side of Christ's Lane is made up of a mixture of the listed buildings that form part of Christ's College entrance court, built in early C16 along with much less significant mid C20 kitchen and other ancillary buildings that have doors opening onto the lane but otherwise generally blank elevations. The servicing of the kitchens includes a large steel flue that appears very incongruous alongside both the Tudor period buildings and the new buildings of the Christ's Lane development. One scheme for redeveloping the C20 buildings to provide a new frontage to the lane, including the new college library has already received consent whilst other options that provide overlooking and a

more august frontage to the lane could help to raise the quality of the frontages.

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
Christ's Lane development	none	2008	4	stone and glass	flat	Panter Hudspith	
Bus station	none	1991	N/A	steel / glass			
Emmanuel College gardens	Registered Grade II* Park and Garden						
Emmanuel College: boundary wall	Listed Grade II	c1800 medieval origin	N/A	originally stone, refaced in grey Gault brick			
Emmanuel College: North Court	Listed Grade II	1910-14	4	stone / brick	tiled	Leonard Stokes	
Railings of North Court	Listed Grade II	1910-14	N/A	cast-iron			
Emmanuel College: The Bath House	Listed Grade II	Uncertain, by 1688	Rectangular shape, stone curb to edge				Filled from the lake, which is filled from Hobson's Stream
Emmanuel House (actually on Parker Street)	Listed Grade II	1893-4	3	red brick / stone dressings	red clay plain tile, steeply pitched, parapet gables, complex plan	J. L. Pearson	
1 Emmanuel Road	BLI	Late C19	3	gault brick, red brick extension	slate / hipped		
2 Emmanuel Road	Positive building	late C19	3	Gault brick with red brick single storey extension	hipped / slate		
3 Emmanuel Road	Listed Grade II	Mid C19	2	grey gault brick	probably slate / parapet		
Public Conveniences	Positive building	Modern	1				