

Flaws in the officer report: Heritage Harms and Benefits?

HERITAGE HARMS

Officer report “low level of harm” to Bodley Library (Grade I)
 (“less than substantial harm”, 10.8, 16.35-6, 16.72, 16.74-5)

 “no harm” identified to Conservation Area (1.22, 10.7-8)

 “The heritage harm identified and considered by officers is also notably less than the higher level of harm claimed by CLAG and other objectors.”

Conservation Officer stair tower harmful to Bodley, no harm to Conservation Area

Historic England Increased massing - building too big, overdominant on space (6.45)

 More overbearing in relation to Bodley
 Building too big for its location (6.46-7)

Victorian Society low-to-moderate harm to Grade I building
 low-to-moderate harm to Conservation Area

Cambridge Past Present and Future

Harm to setting of Bodley and Bath Court

Harm to Conservation Area

CLAG Independent Appraisal (Alec Forshaw)

Greater height and bulk adjacent to Bodley

Too large

Tall buildings policy engaged

“The proposed chimneys on Christ’s Lane, viewed obliquely from both directions, will coalesce to form an overpowering mass of masonry, rising 14 metres sheer from pavement level, which will overwhelm the townscape, quite unlike the more spindly and refined precedents elsewhere in central Cambridge.”

Loss of view of Cupola on Hall

Less-than-substantial harm at the upper end of the scale to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library

Less-than-substantial harm at the middle of the scale to the setting of the Grade I listed north range of Bath Court

Less-than-substantial harm at the lower/middle of the scale to the character and appearance of the Central/Historic Core Conservation Area including the St Andrew's Street and Drummer Street/Christ's Lane sub-areas

Less-than-substantial harm at the lower end of the scale to historic fabric in the Grade I listed kitchen and Upper Hall areas

Heritage benefits?????

Applicants' "heritage gain" - misleading photos

Officer report replacement of negative building with architectural quality, BUT

- the Street Analysis doesn't identify the existing buildings as negative - just "much less significant".
- The existing building's roofline continues the Bodley's string course, so complementing, not detracting from it.

Drummer St and Christs Lane Historic Core appraisal Street Analysis - "much less significant mid c 20 and other ancillary buildings that have doors opening on to the lane but otherwise generally blank elevations. 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 pf the frontages."

Conclusion (Alec Forshaw)

"In my judgement it therefore follows that the townscape impact of the proposed development is not a public benefit. Good design, in any event, is a basic requirement of all development, and not in itself a public benefit. In my opinion the proposals cause harm, not improvement, to the townscape. The provision of benches or planting to Christ's Lane is a very minor matter, on land outside the ownership of the applicant, and something that could be easily provided without reliance on the proposal.

Incorporating the requirement of paragraph 212 of NPPF that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets (and even more so when the heritage assets of very high significance), it is my opinion that the public benefits do not outweigh the harm."

EXISTING AND PROPOSED - COMPARISONS

Existing as presented in application
Note roofline aligns with Bodley string course

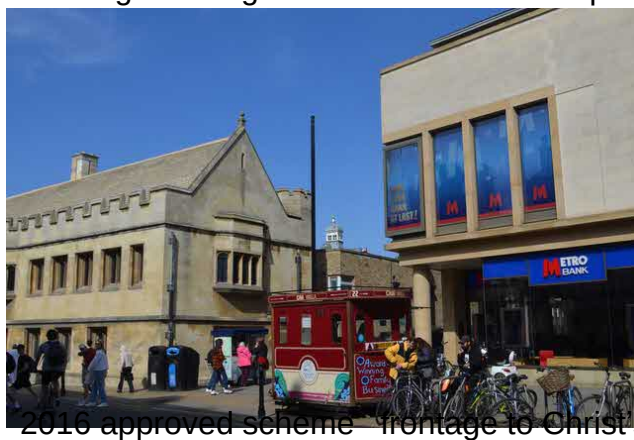


Existing showing view to Christ's Hall cupola

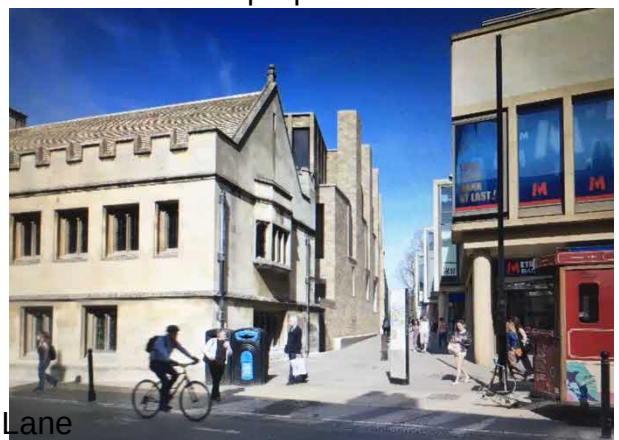
2016 approved scheme



2025-6 proposals



2016 approved scheme - frontage to Christ's Lane



2025-6 proposals - frontage to Christ's Lane

