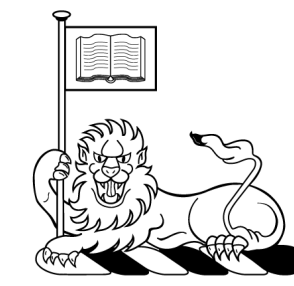


Churchill College Asset Refurbishment and Decarbonisation Project

Public Consultation: 12 November 2025



CHURCHILL COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

The Project

In early 2025, the College approved moving forward with plans for building refurbishment and decarbonisation. We plan to improve and upgrade our student accommodation and other buildings for the comfort of our students, fellows, staff and visitors while at the same time removing the use of gas and significantly reducing our carbon emissions.

Design work is now underway, focused on West Court and the Sheppard Flats as the first projects, but developing the site wide plans and seeking outline planning consent for all works. Ongoing review of the early projects will feed into subsequent works as we seek to bring forward refurbishment and decarbonisation over the next 5-10 years.

With a science-focus at the heart of the College’s founding principles, addressing climate challenges through innovation and new technology in the context of grade II Listed Buildings is key to our approach.

The project comprises four interrelated work streams contributing to a comprehensive transformation of the College’s estate:

1. Asset Refurbishment
2. Remodelling
3. Fabric Thermal Upgrade
4. Heat Decarbonisation



Project Benefits

The benefits of the project include updating the buildings to be fit for the next 60 years, as well as responding to the changing use patterns and needs. It also offers significant sustainability benefits. Delivering these work-streams simultaneously also means there is:

- A holistic and integrated approach to planning fabric upgrades and decarbonisation in line with Historic England’s Whole Building
- Accelerated improvements in occupant comfort and building performance
- Early reductions in energy use, carbon emissions, and operating costs
- Improved cost efficiency (avoiding multiple site and logistics costs)
- Reduced disruption to College life during the works
- A streamlined approach to planning and heritage engagement and approvals.

Through a combined approach of energy demand reduction, electrification, and renewable energy integration, the College aims to significantly enhance building performance and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2035. This aligns with the University of Cambridge’s wider ambition to reach absolute zero carbon emissions from energy use by 2048.

Project And Heritage Information

The College values the heritage of its buildings and they are without doubt some of the finest examples of 1960s brutalist architecture in Cambridge and the UK. This is reflected more widely too as the buildings have Grade II listed status. Proposed works are intended to respect the buildings’ heritage and will be guided by both our site-wide Heritage Appraisal produced by Purcell in 2021, local conservation officers, Historic England and expert groups such as the Twentieth Century Society.

Planned works minimise that which may affect the external appearance of our buildings but are also mindful of key internal features too. We will refurbish and restore our original window frames where possible, simply replacing the original single glazing with high performing, thin vacuum glazing with minimal visual appearance change.

Low temperature air source heat pumps will work similarly to the current system, allowing us to retain the bay window seats but providing some cooling in the summer. We will seek to install modern internal or cavity wall insulation to external walls only, preserving the building fabric.

Any re-modelling works will be carefully considered and reviewed to make sure that the functional benefit is of minimal detriment to the heritage of the buildings. We need to reflect changing demands and requirements and are confident that we can do this well, retaining the pride we have in our wonderful student rooms.



Planning Engagement & Strategy

The College and Project Team have been engaged in positive discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) at Greater Cambridge since July 2025.

The Project Team has also engaged Historic England regarding the proposals and they have been in attendance at meetings with the LPA. Discussions with The Twentieth Century Society took place in November 2025.

The pre-application process to date has been positive and the proposals have benefited from input from Historic England and Officers at the LPA. The intention is that the planning application to secure the main decarbonisation project will be submitted in December 2025 to secure the main decarbonisation works (both heating and hot water) will be submitted in December 2025. This will also include the introduction of new glazing across the College. The project will then be delivered in phases, starting with West Court in Summer 2026.

In advance of construction work starting on the individual phases, separate Listed Building Consent (LBC) applications will be submitted to secure the internal refurbishment and modelling works including the introduction of en suite shower rooms, and the reconfiguring of communal areas.

The approach to West Court then sets a strategy for the remaining courts. West Court will also provide a test-bed for the College in terms of use patterns and efficacy of design as well as energy performance information from the fabric upgrade and decarbonisation strategy.

