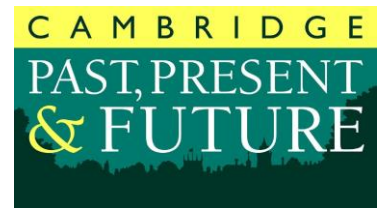


Joanna Cheffins
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By email to:

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21/02/2022

Dear Joanna

Response to Wolfson Collete Masterplan (Sept 2021)

Cambridge Past, Present & Future is Cambridge's largest civic society. We are a charity run by local people who are passionate about where they live. We operate in the greater Cambridge area and working with our members, supporters and volunteers we:

- Are dedicated to protecting and enhancing the green setting of Cambridge for people and nature.
- Care about Cambridge and are an independent voice for quality of life in the strategic planning of Greater Cambridge.
- Are working to protect, celebrate and improve the important built heritage of the Cambridge area.
- Own and care for green spaces and historic buildings in and around the city for people and nature, including Wandlebury Country Park, Coton Countryside Reserve, Cambridge Leper Chapel & Barnwell Meadows, Bourn Windmill and Hinxtton Watermill.

A member of Cambridge Past, Present & Future has brought your recent Masterplan to our attention.

As Cambridge's independent charity that cares for the City's heritage and green spaces, we have read the masterplan with interest.

The masterplan makes no mention of the fact that Wolfson College lies within the West Cambridge Conservation Area for which there is a [Conservation Area Appraisal](#) (Cambridge City Council, May 2011). The Appraisal (page 41) mentions the college buildings and that the car park by Barton Road is "not a particularly interesting feature". The Conservation Area Appraisal also identifies large open spaces as part of the special character of the Conservation Area and we note that the current Barton Road frontage of the college comprises a large area of open space.

In the college masterplan the proposed alterations to the frontage and bringing the threshold forward have the potential to address the impact of the car park and to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. However, to achieve this the architecture of the new buildings fronting onto Barton Road need to be of the highest quality design, respecting the college's prominent location at the entrance to the Conservation Area. We also note that although the car park will be reduced it will still remain and the remaining part is that which is most visible to the public. We would encourage you to consider whether this can be addressed.

We are concerned that the large area of green open space fronting Barton Road will be significantly reduced and broken up by your proposals and that this presents a risk of harm to the Conservation Area. It is not clear how you intend to address this.

Trees make a very special contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. We note that some of the new buildings that would be close to Barton Road would require the loss of some trees and would impact on other trees (eg requiring pruning or impact on roots, etc). This is a concern and we would encourage you to revisit how you can avoid this.

We note and support the sustainability principles but we would hope and expect that the college would commit to improving its grounds for biodiversity anyway, in line with <https://www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/about-wolfson/environment-and-sustainability>. That being the case, we are not convinced that the proposed development will bring about a genuine increase in biodiversity over and above what the college would do anyway in its response to the biodiversity crisis. Therefore we would encourage you to consider off-site biodiversity net gain provision in order to demonstrate a genuine commitment from the college to achieve a gain in biodiversity from the development itself.

I trust that you will take our comments into consideration as you develop your plans.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Nicholas
Principal Planning Officer