HUGHES HALL
CAMBRIDGE

ABOUT HUGHES HALL



Hughes Hall is the oldest graduate college at the University of Cambridge.

It was founded in 1885 as the Cambridge Training College for Women Teachers, with the aim of educating female teachers at a time when opportunities for women in higher education were limited. The College was named after its first Principal, Elizabeth Phillips Hughes, and became known as Hughes Hall in 1949.

In May 2025, we celebrated 140 years of educating women — and later men — from around the world. Today, Hughes Hall is one of only three Cambridge colleges dedicated to mature students.

The College provides a vital social, academic and pastoral support system for older, more independent students. It attracts outstanding international scholars and supports advanced education and research that helps to sustain the University's position as a global top five institution.









907 students
171 undergraduate, 736 postgraduate

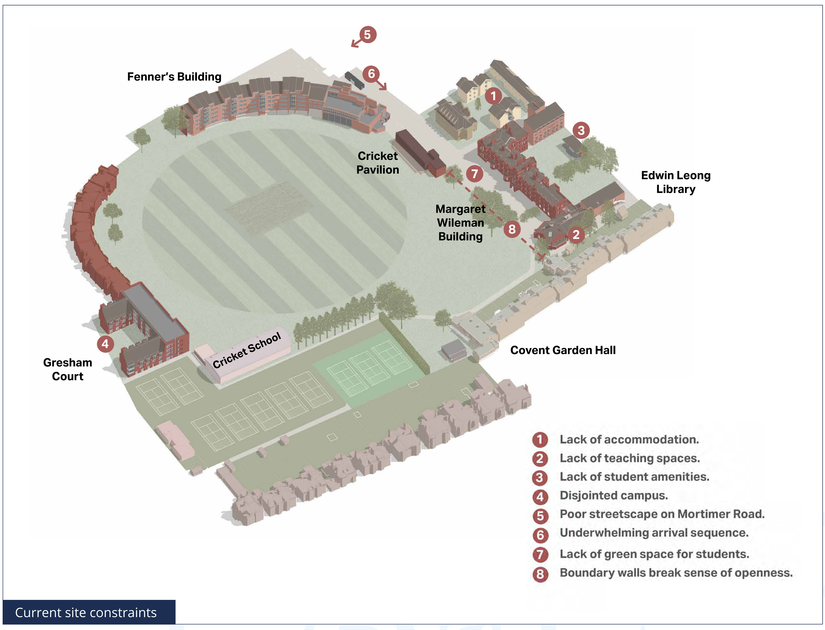
Our students and Fellows come from more than 80 countries

Over 250 Fellows and senior members
from established professors directing world-class research to world leaders in business and policy

www.hughes.cam.ac.uk/renewing-hughes

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BACKGROUND TO THE ESTATE RENEWAL PROJECT



Current site constraints

Hughes Hall is an inspiring place to study, work and visit, but the campus has become increasingly fragmented, with accommodation, teaching and social areas dispersed across the site.

Guided by our lead architect, Feilden Fowles, we are developing a comprehensive plan to bring accommodation, teaching and social spaces together to create a high-quality and sustainable campus.

We plan to:

- Enhance and increase academic spaces and on-site student accommodation, so more students can benefit from a supportive community environment and reduce the need for students to rely on the private rental market in Cambridge.
- Revitalise Covent Garden Hall to create a space that can be enjoyed by the College, the local community and University Sport.
- Develop new and enhanced garden spaces for students, accessible to the College's immediate neighbours – ensuring the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Contribute to the College's goal of being net zero carbon by 2038.
- Improve the entrance to the College along Mortimer Road and Wollaston Road with a new, permanent Porters' Lodge.







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A REVITALISED COVENT GARDEN HALL



Hall and proposed extension

Proposed Air Source Heat Pumps

Proposed entrance

Proposed immediate neighbour access



Proposed demolition areas

Proposed demolition

The proposal is to sensitively refurbish and restore the building, remove more recent extensions that detract from its character, and introduce a new single-storey extension to create a versatile, accessible, and multi-functional event space.

The plans shown outline our concept, which will:

- Refurbish the main hall, create a new foyer and provide a small external “spill-out” space to support summer events.
- Ensure inclusive access for all users, with level access provided to the entrance via a gently graded footpath connecting to existing routes.
- Introduce a new, access-controlled pedestrian route from Covent Garden, incorporating CCTV surveillance and an intercom system linked directly to the main Porters’ Lodge.
- Retain and integrate the existing Norway Maple tree within the wider landscape proposals.
- Upgrade the original building fabric to modern standards, improving both thermal and acoustic performance.
- Remove gas heating and introduce new technologies, including photovoltaic panels, air-source heat pumps and rainwater harvesting.
- Enhance the setting of the building and deliver new, usable green space, with further detail provided under the “Increased Greening and Landscaping” section.

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THE PROPOSALS

The plans on this board set out our overall proposals for Covent Garden Hall.

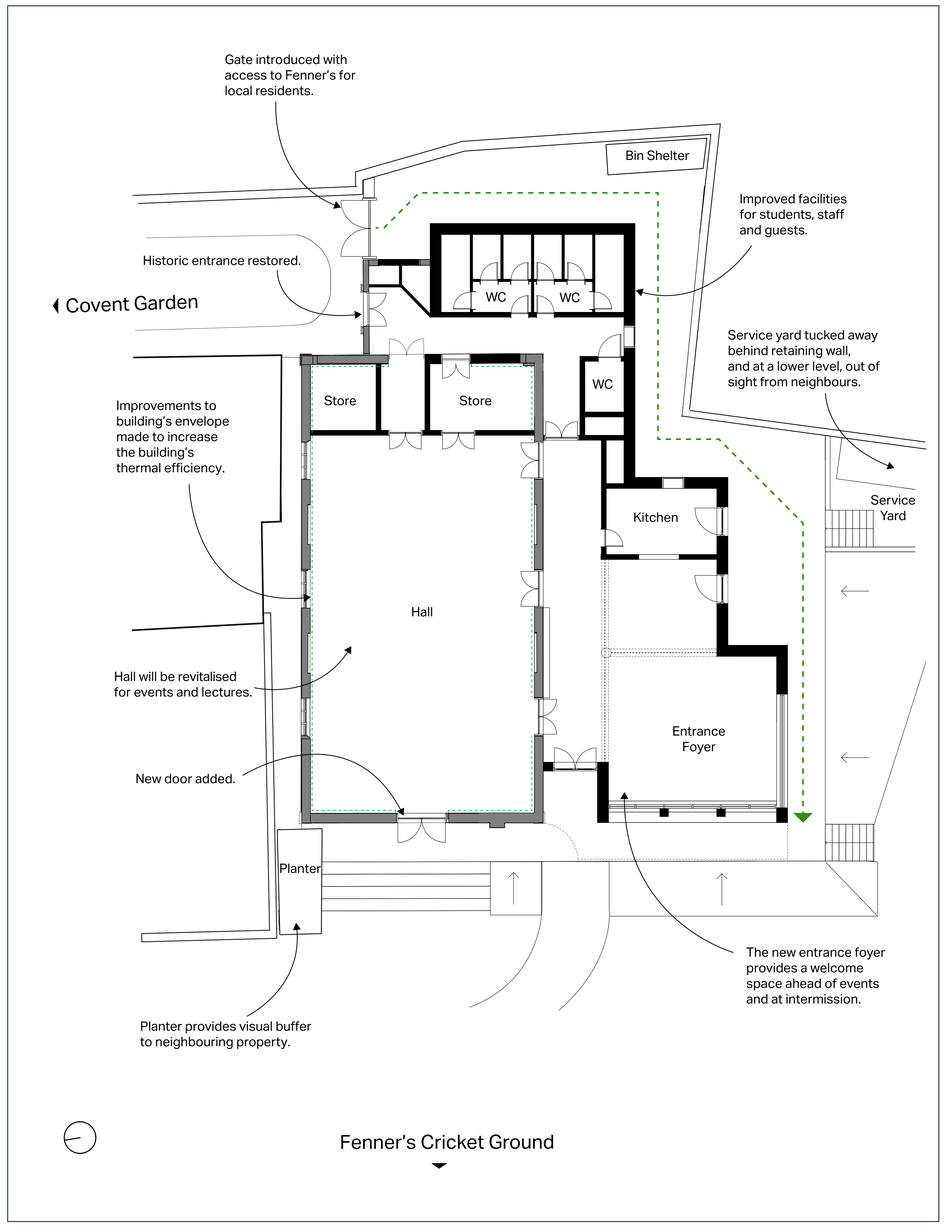
The planning application will not change the building's use but will restore and future-proof a building of local interest so it continues as a College facility for the benefit of the College, the wider community and University Sport.

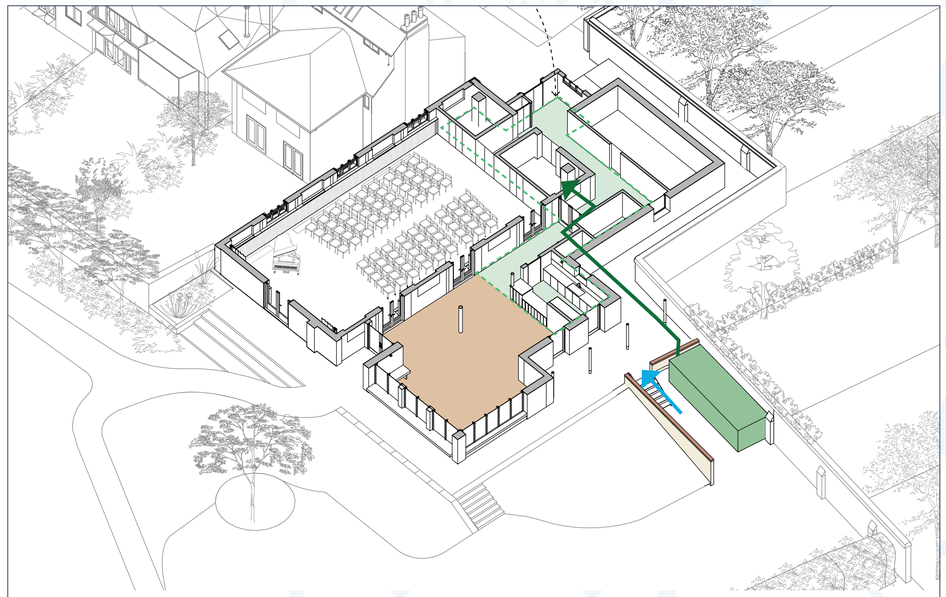
COMMUNITY HIRE

We are committed to working with the wider community and local council to facilitate community use of Covent Garden Hall.

We will continue to engage with the community on how the building could be booked and used by the community.

We would welcome views on how the building could be managed and used in a way that works for all users.





A service yard is provided for the Air Source Heat Pump and plant equipment. The yard is screened on the College side by a wall, ensuring it remains out of view from neighbouring properties and the College.

KEY

SERVICES INTEGRATED AT LOW LEVEL BENEATH FLOOR

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INDICATIVE VIEWS

This board provides illustrative views of the proposals, showing how Covent Garden Hall will look once completed.



View towards Covent Garden Hall and foyer entrance



View from Fenner's Cricket Pitch



View of Interior of Hall



The current state of the building



The current state of the building



The current state of the building

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SITE-WIDE LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

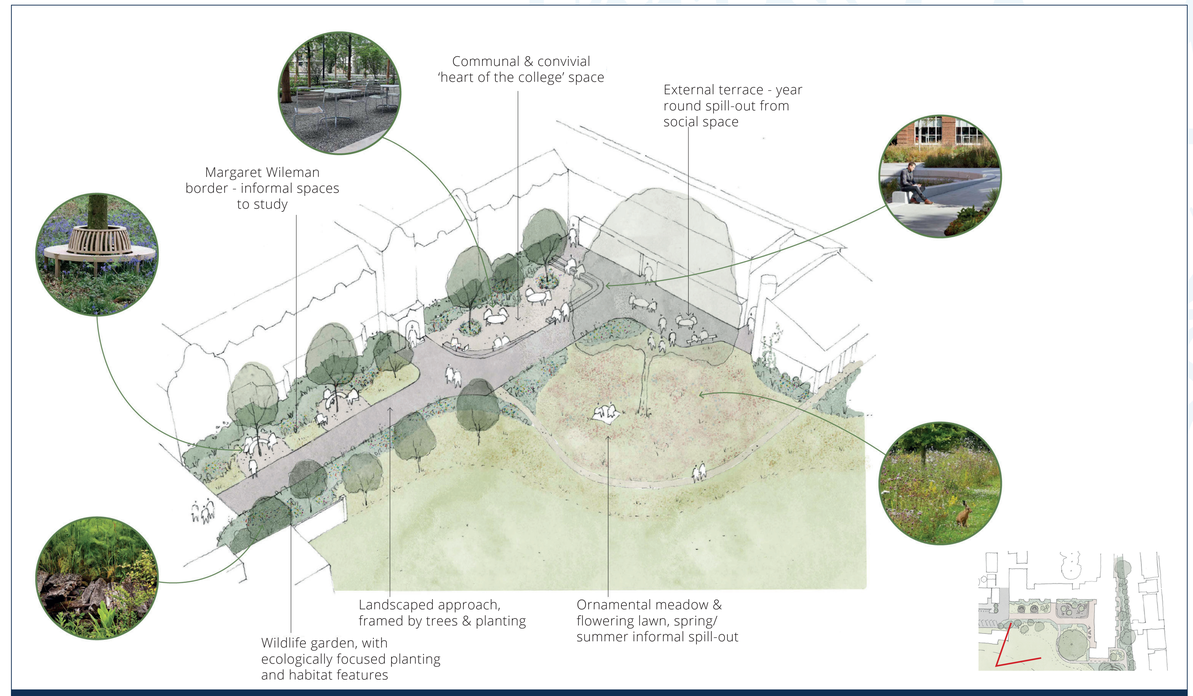
The landscape proposals will create more diverse and better quality open space, introducing a variety of new habitats and foraging opportunities for birds, small mammals and insects. It will also give the College and immediate neighbours access to a richer, more diverse landscape.

As shown in the plan on the left, our proposal removes the existing boundary wall in front of the Margaret Wileman Building to create accessible open space, with fixed seating for informal gatherings and biodiverse, sensory planting to create a calm, inviting environment.

The landscape around Covent Garden Hall will also be enhanced, creating a series of connected spaces for people and nature that link the Hall and proposed immediate neighbour access from Covent Garden to the new open space in front of the Margaret Wileman Building.



Site wide landscape strategy



Proposed central courtyard

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IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOUR ACCESS TO FENNER'S

Through this project we would like to improve access for our immediate neighbours to Fenner's - balancing Fenner's open character with the need to maintain safety and security across the cricket ground, wider College estate and surrounding neighbourhood.

As previously outlined, we would like to introduce a new access-controlled pedestrian route from Covent Garden, incorporating CCTV surveillance and an intercom system linked directly to the main Porters' Lodge.

We welcome your feedback on the initial proposals shown and we are keen to ensure that any access arrangements are developed transparently and in close consultation with immediate neighbours and University Sport.

- The proposal would provide for daytime access between 9am and 5pm for the College and immediate neighbours.
- Access will be controlled via an intercom system, with College Porters maintaining a list of immediate neighbours' contact details.
- Security lighting and CCTV will be installed to maintain the security of the area for both students and residents.
- Boundary treatments for neighbours with gardens bordering the access route will be discussed and agreed with those residents, to ensure clear and mutually acceptable arrangements are in place.



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SUSTAINABILITY

The refurbishment and extension of Covent Garden Hall will contribute directly to our goal of becoming net zero carbon by 2038.

The proposals will:



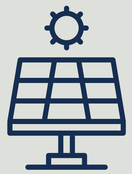
Reuse and adapt the existing building, retaining materials that have already been used, lowering construction waste and conserving embodied carbon.



Use a lightweight timber structure for the new foyer extension, keeping the building's embodied carbon footprint low.



Introduce a new green roof, supporting local wildlife and biodiversity.



Remove gas heating and introduce air source heat pumps and solar panels.



Upgrade the existing building fabric, reducing heat loss and improving energy efficiency. The project will also support natural airflow through passive ventilation, making the building more comfortable to use and more cost effective to run over time.



Inclusion of rainwater harvesting to capture and reuse rain falling on the roofs to reduce the building's water demand and integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) strategies to manage surface water within the landscape.

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THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you for visiting us today.

Please spend a few minutes sharing your views by completing a feedback form. Your input and ideas are valuable as we take forward our designs.

By hand: put your completed form in the feedback box provided, or hand to a member of the team.

Post: use the Freepost envelope provided or send direct to Freepost CONSULTATION REPLY (no further address or stamp required).

Email: pavilion@hughes.cam.ac.uk.

Online: visit www.hughes.cam.ac.uk/renewing-hughes/feedback to complete an online form.

Phone: 0800 689 5209

The consultation is open for your feedback until **Tuesday 23 June** (midnight).

What happens next?

We hope to submit a separate planning application for Covent Garden Hall by 31 July 2026.

A further consultation event will be held on the 30 June to update you on the wider masterplan, including Mortimer Court, Wileman Court and the landscaping proposals.

January / February 2026
First full consultation meeting

March 2026
Second consultation meeting

9 June 2026
Covent Garden Hall specific consultation

30 June 2026
Third consultation meeting to update on wider masterplan

Late July 2026
Covent Garden Hall planning application submission

September 2026
Submission of main campus planning application