

Probably the city's most historic commercial street.

Trinity Street is a central part of Cambridge's original medieval 'High Street' and links St John's Street with Senate House Hill. The quality of its historic environment is exceptional, with every single building being considered of special historic and architectural interest (and therefore meriting listing). The mixture of college buildings, historic townhouses and shops epitomises the 'town and

gown' history of the city. All the types of buildings provide focal features and landmarks of great interest, although the two colleges, Trinity and Gonville and Caius, which anchor either end of the street have buildings of exceptional historic or architectural interest that illustrate the continuity of the colleges as great patrons of architecture from the C15 to the late C19.



Street view

SIGNIFICANCE - VERY HIGH

General Overview

As a central part of the historic High Street, Trinity Street retains a strong commercial character contributing to the Conservation Area's historic market town character. This includes the mixture of brick fronted and timber framed town houses and numerous high quality historic shop fronts to the ground floors. The widths of building frontages suggest the survival of the medieval burgage plots that the area was divided into. However, these are not as narrow as those further south on King's Parade, many being three bays wide allowing the longer shopfronts for up-market retailers. No. 17 was the Blue Boar Hotel, which has given its name to Blue Boar Court behind. Others may also represent historic inns. The gentle curve of the street's line and enclosure by the buildings that line it create a constantly changing series of channelled views along it with numerous attractive focal features.



No. 17 Trinity Street



No. 32 Trinity Street

The town houses were either reconstructed or re-fronted in the C18 and C19 with a wider use of red brick than found elsewhere on the city's shopping streets, although the more familiar Gault brick is also present. Above ground floor this has left a character of frontages with six-over-six pane vertically rising sash windows normally with flat arched heads of gauged brick. Arthur Shepherd's at No. 32 stands out for the Venetian style windows to the first floor, whilst No. 14 provides a focal feature as a surviving late C16 timber framed frontage, with pargetted plaster infill panels, jetties and bay windows jutting out over the street. The buildings rise to between three and four storeys and form long informal terraces with narrow gaps for side streets that create a strong sense of enclosure to the narrow street. The roofline is varied including a mixture of corniced eaves and parapets, some of which are more decoratively detailed, whilst many buildings have dormer windows above illustrating the use of space above the ground floors as student accommodation.

Wider spaces are provided by the former churchyard of All Saints' Church, which lies at the north end of the street and the space around St Michael's Church which is now used as an open fronted court of Gonville and Caius College. The survival of one of the street's medieval churches (built in the C14) is an important feature that helps to illustrate the street's medieval origins.

However, the street is also at the heart of the city's academic community and many of the buildings on either side of it are owned and occupied (above ground floor level) by the two colleges which dominate it. Indeed, behind the eastern street frontage the entire block is filled by the structure of the Wolfson Building, creating a raised courtyard that communicates with the first floor of the buildings on this side of the street. Nevertheless the 'ziggurat'-style tower of the Wolfson Building is hidden



The eastern frontage of Trinity Street



Trinity College

from view by the continuous building line and thereby the historic market town character of the street is maintained.

At the north end of the street, the forecourt of Trinity College provides another important open space in the street, with a grassed verged, cobbled and tree-lined approach that sets the college buildings apart from the more domestic architecture of the commercial street. Whilst the colleges have many fine compositions, the Great Court of Trinity College has to have among the most spectacular settings within the city. The college, founded by Henry VIII in 1546, combined the properties of King's Hall, founded by Edward III in 1337, and Michaelhouse, as well as several other hostels. King's Hall occupied the college's entire present frontage to Trinity Street by the end of the C15 when the east range was built. This cut across the course of an earlier lane that ran back from the High Street to the river (King's Childer Lane) and contains the Great Gate, which was begun in the C15, although the Great Tower over it was not completed until the early C16. The tower and the medieval college frontage are now major focal features in views of the street. The tower bears both a statue of Henry VIII, as the college's founder, and the coats of arms of Edward III and his descendants, adding colour and both historic and

artistic interest. The replacement of Henry VIII's sceptre with a chair leg, in the early C20, is an undergraduate prank that has become part of the folklore of the university.

The chapel of Trinity College breaks forward from the building line of the east range, projecting towards the street, and forms another major focus in the street scene. The stone for the building came from the Franciscan Friary that is now the location of Sidney Sussex College. This provides a graphic illustration of the impact of Henry VIII's reformation of the church in England on the academic institutions of the city. The development of Great Court behind this frontage during the rule of Thomas Neville as Master (1593-1615) must have involved nearly as much demolition as construction. Braun's map of Cambridge of 1572 reveals buildings projecting back from the east range into what would become the great open space of the court, whilst the east and south ranges were almost complete and the chapel and Master's Lodge (presumably forming the hall at that time) were also complete. Neville's west range also retained parts of the hall of Michaelhouse. The accommodation



Trinity College Chapel

ranges of Michaelhouse and Physick Hostel were partly retained, but largely rebuilt during Neville's re-planning of the college to form Great Court's south range, with their gates in-filled and the new Queen's Gate constructed as a centrepiece.

The great additions by Dr Neville were the Great Hall and Old Library. The raised entrance of the Great Hall and steps up to it, the great bay window lighting the dais and spired louvre (or vent) crowning the roof provide a series of features that attract the eye and reflect the details of the hall of a great house or palace of the period. They represent the height of the Gothic style in the late C16 and early C17 before the introduction of more classical styles from Italy in the early C17. The fountain house in the centre of the court is also part of Dr. Neville's design and provides a foil to the surrounding buildings, forming



The fountain house of Trinity College

an attractive and historic foreground feature in views from which the eye then moves to the surrounding historic buildings. The Royal Commission for Historic Monuments of England describes it as "... the only important surviving example of this kind in England".

Whewell's Court on the east side of Trinity Street is also part of the college, added in the mid-C19 and designed by A. Salvin. Its stone facing, spire roofed corner turret, parapetted half dormers and the two-storey oriel window over the pointed arched entrance (not to mention traceried



No. 27 Trinity Street

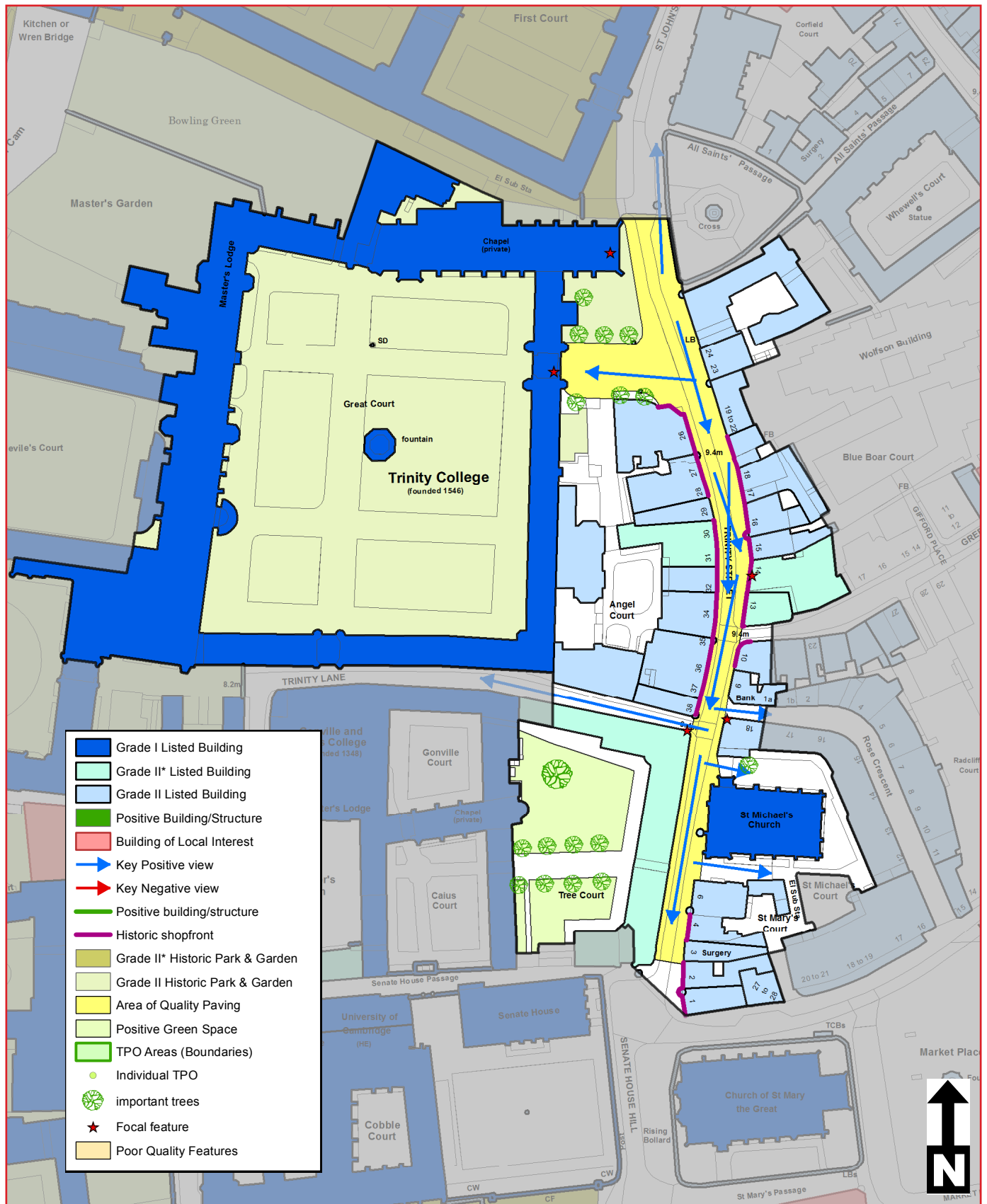
windows) are all Gothic revival details that help to unite it with the older college buildings. It was remodeled in the early C20 by Caroe, who was probably also responsible for the stone fronted building at No. 27 that helps to form an entrance to the more commercial section of the street.

At the southern end of the street, the long frontage of Gonville and Caius College's Tree Court adds to the gothic features of the street's institutional architecture with gargoyles and pinnacles providing a highly decorative roofline above the ashlar stone building frontage. The building is described as being in 'French Chateau' style employing Baroque details, such as scrolled brackets to the square oriel windows, a mansard roofed turret, and transom and mullioned 'crossed' windows. It provides another dramatic entrance building to the street, wrapping around to the frontage of Senate House Hill, where its five storey tower forms an attractive focal feature. The college's Michael Court building across the street also provides a stone frontage with rich ornamental detailing, including statuary and transom and mullioned windows with traceried arches in a Tudor Revival style. The building has an attractive frontage to the street, the gap between it and St Michael's Church also provides glimpsed views of the building wrapping around the court beyond allowing a rear glimpse from the street into the enclosed world of the colleges.



Trinity College's Whewell Court

The street is a busy place, dominated by pedestrians (although often in competition with cyclists) now that access for motor vehicles is rigidly controlled. The streetscape has been enhanced by a comprehensive public realm scheme that emphasises the pavements through use of large riven stone slabs, over the carriageway, which is surfaced in brick pavers. Lighting is by the attractive 1950s Richardson Candles, which are a distinctive feature of the city centre. These are mounted on brackets from the buildings due to the narrowness of the street.



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Townscape Elements

- With exception of Trinity College Great Court East Range and Gate House, all buildings stand on back of footway creating a strong sense of enclosure to the narrow street.
- The buildings include a mixture of historic college buildings and townhouses with ground floor shops. These are differentiated by, among other details, the use of stone for construction of the college buildings and medieval church and brick or timber and plaster for the townhouses.
- Overall impression is of very tightly defined street of three to four storey buildings, creating a series of unfolding and channelled views along the frontages and out to the more open spaces at Senate House Hill and St John's Street.
- At either end of the street, stone built buildings create strong gateway features including the dramatic and rhythmic detailed façade of Gonville and Caius College's Tree Court, which provides a strong positive aesthetic to the foreground of views south towards King's Parade.
- Glimpsed views along narrow side streets illustrate the historic status of Trinity Street as the High Street with these narrower routes as subsidiary. These include the long view along Trinity Lane with its strong rhythm of chimneystacks illustrating the distinctive arrangement of the C16 accommodation ranges.
- The views down the side streets to the east are restricted by bends in these roads creating tantalising glimpses of frontages that disappear out of view.
- Skyline features are very good with variations in roof heights, gables, dormers and sheer drama of Tree Court amongst the best in the city.
- There is little greenery in the street other than the trees at the entrance to Trinity College and those just to the north in All Saints' Churchyard. A small amount of greenery is also seen in the area around St Michael's Church.
- The building-mounted Richardson Candle street lighting creates an eerie character at night.
- The street has been enhanced by a sensitive paving scheme in addition to the restriction of traffic through installation of rising bollards that makes it a more attractive pedestrian environment and encourages its use as a shopping area.
- The carriageway is surfaced in brindle concrete pavers with red granite kerbs and setts to the loading bays. The footway is surfaced in York stone slabs; some riven, some sawn. Sunken gullies & blocked slot drains have recently been repaired

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
1	Listed Grade II	early C19	3 + attics	gault brick	mansard / slate		
2	Listed Grade II	early C19	4	brick with stucco G/F	parapet		
3	Listed Grade II	C18 reconstruction of C16 building	3	red brick	mansard / slate		
4, 5 & 6	Listed Grade II	1850	3 + attic	red brick (blue-brick diaper)	plain tiled		
St Michael's Church	Listed Grade I	c1327	N/A	rubble with barnock stone dressings	slate	restored 1848-50 by Gilbert Scott	
No. 18 Rose Crescent:	Listed Grade II	1901-3	3+ basement + attic	ashlar faced	tile	Sir Aston Webb	Gonville & Caius: St Michael's Court
9	Listed Grade II	late C18	3 + attic	buff brick	cornice & parapet / slate & tile		

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
10	Listed Grade II	mid / late C19	3 + attic	Gault brick	slate		
13	Listed Grade II*	late C18 (1783?)	4	red brick	parapet		
14	Listed Grade II*	late C16	3 + attic	timber-framed & plastered	tiled		
15	Listed Grade II	1st half C18	3 + attics	red brick	tile		
16 & 16a	Listed Grade II	1840	4	brick with stone dressings	slate	initials: InW on rainwater head	
17 & 18	Listed Grade II	C18	4	painted brick	parapet		
19	Listed Grade II	early C20	3 + attic	buff brick with red brick dressings	mansard / tiled		
20 & 21	Listed Grade II	early C18	3	dark brown mottled brick / red brick dressings	tile		
23 & 24	Listed Grade II	early C18	3 + attics	brick	tile		
Trinity College: Whewell's Court	Listed Grade II	1856-60	3	stone-faced	slate	A Salvin; partly remodelled 1908 by W D Caroe	
All Saints' Garden		C19					the site of the original All Saints' Church
Railings round churchyard of Church of All Saints	Listed Grade II	C18	N/A	cast-iron			
Cross in the churchyard of Church of All Saints	Listed Grade II	1880	N/A	stone - inscriptions commemorate the church (demolished in 1875) & various literary figures & benefactors of the Parish			
Trinity College: the Chapel	Listed Grade I	1567	N/A	refaced in ashlar C19	modern slate	restored 1832 by Edward Blore	1706-17 repaired & refitted
Trinity College: Great Court east range	Listed Grade I	c1490-1535	3 / 2 + attics	ashlar / brick with stone dressings	stone slate & clay tiles		
26	Listed Grade II	1906	3 + roof storey	stone and pebble-dash	slated	probably by Caroe	much modified early C17 style
27 & 28	Listed Grade II	rebuilt 1910	3	brick	parapet		C18 style
29	Listed Grade II	mid C18	3 + attics	brick	tile		
30 & 31	Listed Grade II*	C18	3 + attics	purple-red brick / red brick dressings	tile		
32	Listed Grade II	mid C18	3 + attics	brick	tile		
33 & 34	Listed Grade II	1st half C18	3	red brick	slate		
35-37	Listed Grade II	1861 / 1894	3 + attics	red brick with stone dressings	mansard / slate		
38	Listed Grade II	late C18	3 + attics	red brick	parapet / tile		
Gonville & Caius: Tree Court	Listed Grade II*	1870	3 (tower 5)	ashlar-faced	westmorland slate	Alfred Waterhouse	French Chateau style tower
6 Richardson Candle wall mounted lamps	Listed Grade II	1957	Lantern has simple cast-iron capping and base, wall mounted via a pair of plain metal brackets at either end			Sir Albert Richardson	Attached to Nos. 16, 19, 24, 27, 35 and 38