

and consequently the amount of green space to be found in domestic gardens at different times and in different places.

There are also opportunities to incorporate green spaces and vegetation into urban morphological analysis. One particularly fruitful area of study could be the extent to which the trees and hedges that form part of the landscape prior to urban development are incorporated into the new urban landscape, and more generally how vegetation is retained, removed or replaced when development or redevelopment takes place. A second area of study could be to consider the pattern of urban vegetation as an aggregate feature in relation to the town plan. From aerial photographs of residential areas it may initially be difficult to distinguish between the vegetation cover that is provided by street trees and that which is provided by trees and shrubs within the curtilage of domestic gardens. Further analysis of the age and species of this vegetation may identify differences between street trees and garden trees or highlight their similarity. Such studies could inform a morphological understanding of the relationship between the streets and the plots in terms of their layout and their design. It could also enable hypotheses to be developed regarding how vegetation contributes to urban landscape character: for example, is it the quantity of vegetation or its mix of species that most distinguishes one area from another?

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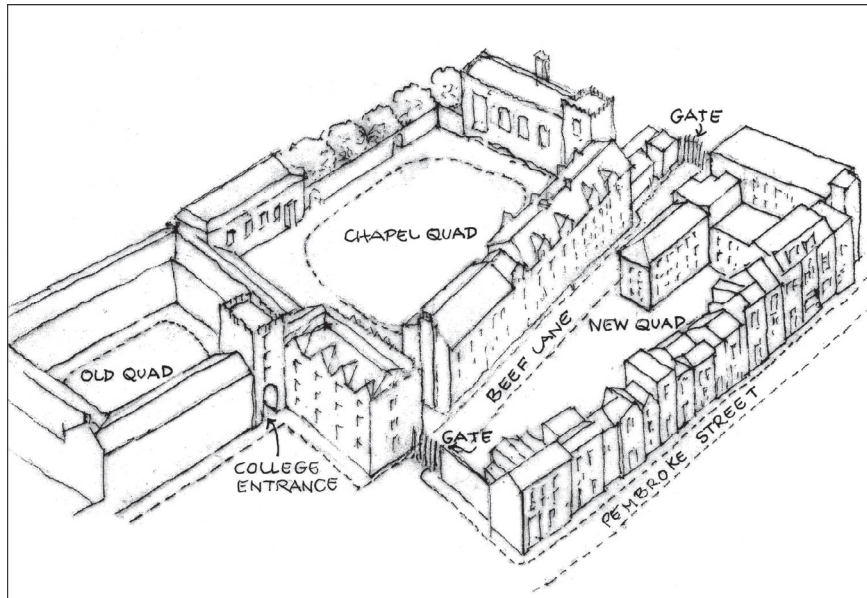
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## Urban landscapes of deception

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In the UK, architect planners of an earlier generation became aware of urban form particularly through the work of Cullen and the Townscape school. Following their town planning instruction, they sought to influence urban form through land-use allocations and quantitative means, such as density and floor-space ratios. As an architect

planner, the work of the Caniggian school of architects and the Conzenian school of geographers was to me a revelation. It offered deeper approaches that explored underlying structures at different levels of resolution. It also emphasized the long life of built forms when compared to the transience of the uses within the buildings.



**Figure 1. Pembroke College, showing Pembroke Street, closed Beef Lane and retained burgage frontage buildings accessed from the rear across a new quadrangle.**

Half a century after the Civic Amenities Act in England, which established conservation areas and acknowledged the heritage value of *groups* of structures as opposed to individual objects, it is opportune to reflect on the results of the dominance of concern with formal matters as opposed to those of activities. Oxford city centre is noted for the quality of its built heritage. Functionally it is dominated by a university comprised of autonomous colleges which, for over a century, have sought to expand from their essentially monastic enclosures by acquiring adjacent property. Pembroke College has done this by buying all the properties along the north side of Pembroke Street which line the south wall of the College. All the houses on what were burgages have been carefully conserved in their diversity of materials, colours and construction details. Once all the properties along this side of the street were acquired, the College was able to close Beef Lane, the narrow rear access to the burgages, and turn that space into a new private college quadrangle giving access to the rear of houses on Pembroke Street (Figure 1). To control access to these the front doors were sealed, even though they were retained, some without door handles (Figure 2). Where they have been retained the handles are festooned with cobwebs because they cannot be used from the street. Of course, all colleges with their monastic antecedents are a form of

gated community but here a gated community has been extended but faked to retain the appearance of a street.

The hidden transformation of Pembroke Street is a particularly striking example of the process whereby the physical form of the city in all its diversity has been retained but its diversity of use has been reduced to the point where Oxford is becoming an educational monoculture. House prices have soared because the economic power of the University and the colleges far exceeds that of private house buyers and the city has difficulty in expanding into its protected green belt. The annexation of the dwellings in a street-block is not confined to the medieval city core but is also taking place in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century suburbs where street-blocks of detached houses have been acquired and internal private streets have been created complete with street lighting (Samuels, 2018).

From a conservation point of view the planning policies have been successful – the burgages and buildings of a historic street have been retained. However, if a street does not have entrances, can it still be considered that element of urban form whose essence must be that of a public space where people emerge from their private realms into contact with a wider public world? Perhaps it is no longer enough to focus on the urban form



**Figure 2. Street façade Pembroke Street.**

without considering the social and visual significance of its configuration and how this affects the relation between public and private space and the impact of its retention on wider social and planning aspects.

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## Understanding place in Serbia

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This Viewpoint follows two previous contributions to *Urban Morphology*. The first raised a central research topic in urban morphology – the problem of understanding the significance, character and identity of 'place'. This is a field of enquiry that in many ways characterizes the position of urban morphology at the overlap of the various disciplines involved in space creation and management (Samuels, 2010). In the UK it was noted that there is a loose relationship between the principles of historical area protection proposed by English Heritage, a statutory agency, and planning practice. Soon after, Bienstman (2011)

drew attention to the lack of practical guidance for integrating the various disciplines in the approach of the State Service for Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands.

With a very different history from these two northern European countries, Serbia's cultural heritage exhibits layers of the various civilizations that have inhabited the Balkan peninsula from ancient to modern times – Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman to the modern European, including the Socialist era. Cultural heritage protection is covered by a hierarchy of linked organizations with, at the top, the National Institute for the Protection