

DRAFT Cambridge Suburbs and Approaches

Barton Road



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barton Road is one of the principle routes out of Cambridge city centre routes to the south west. Until the late 19th century it was lined with fields, orchards, and the occasional farmhouse. Like other approaches to Cambridge, it was developed in the 19th century after the enclosure acts, this development gaining a particular impetus in the late 19th century. A church was built in 1871, initially a daughter church of Grantchester. The establishment of Newnham and Selwyn colleges in land to the north in the 1870s and 1880s, and the building of Fen Causeway in the 1920s acted as further spurs to development.

At the eastern end of Barton Road, land on the north side was developed in the late 19th century at the same time as the land to the north in Newnham, and it shares many of the architectural and design characteristics of Newnham, with large villas in domestic revival style, occupying spacious plots. These offered a taste of *rus in urbe* outside the town centre for dons (now able to marry) and the professional classes. The land on the south side is more heterogeneous and urban in character, with tight-knit late 19th century terraces giving off to the southeast, and several blocks of flats and apartments ranging in date from the early to the late 20th century. Amongst these there are also earlier survivors, and the presence of the church, cheek by jowl with an old pub, gives something of a village quality. This part of the assessment area lacks architectural homogeneity, but not architectural quality. A relatively high level of density is offset by generous planting and landscaping.

Heading further west, the suburban character increases, with large houses of late 19th and, more commonly, early 20th century date. Some of these are detached and semi-detached houses of fairly standard, speculatively-built design, but amongst them are some designs of real quality, displaying a range of Tudor, Georgian and vernacular influences. There are also some good late-20th century Modernist houses. In the western half of the assessment area, the footpaths are wider and planted out with avenues of planes and wide grass verges. Boundaries are typically marked by high hedges or wooden fences, and the houses are set within spacious plots with mature planting and trees. Amidst this residential enclave, Wolfson College has grown from

its beginnings in the 1960s to become a major local presence. Substantial additions have been made to the college, yet the quality of its semi-formal landscape setting remains.

A few houses lie beyond the city boundary to the west, but very quickly we are in open countryside. The rural edges to the west and to the south have been jealously preserved from development for nearly 100 years, and the area retains a strong identity and coherence.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Architectural History Practice Limited (AHP) was commissioned in January 2009 by Cambridge City (the Council) to prepare rapid assessments of Huntingdon Road (with Howes Place), Madingley Road (with Hedgerley Close) and Barton Road (with Barton Close). These appraisals are the first in, and will set the pattern for, a series of rapid and concise studies to provide assessments and understanding of 'local distinctiveness'. The programme reflects Council members' and residents' concerns in relation to major growth proposals and the individual and cumulative impact of the replacement of individual houses with flats.

1.2 The Brief

The brief for this project was issued by the Council in December 2008. The Brief explains the reasons for the assessment, the outputs, the local and national context, a summary of matters to be covered by the characterisation assessment, and resources available from the Council. The project has been undertaken with reference to current guidance from English Heritage on suburban characterisation. The approach adopted is a simplified version of that recommended by English Heritage for Rapid Area Assessments, with rather more emphasis on landscape features and character.

1.3 Authors

This characterisation assessment was prepared by Andrew Derrick, BA Hons, AA Dipl Cons IHBC, Director of AHP and Joanna Moore BA Hons, Associate, with support from Marion Barter, MA IHBC, Director of AHP.

1.4 Acknowledgements

AHP is grateful for assistance and advice offered by officers of the Council during this project, in particular from John Preston, Historic Environment Manager, Tamzin Sale, DTP and Graphic Designer and Matthew Merry, GIS and Graphics Officer.

1.5 The assessment area

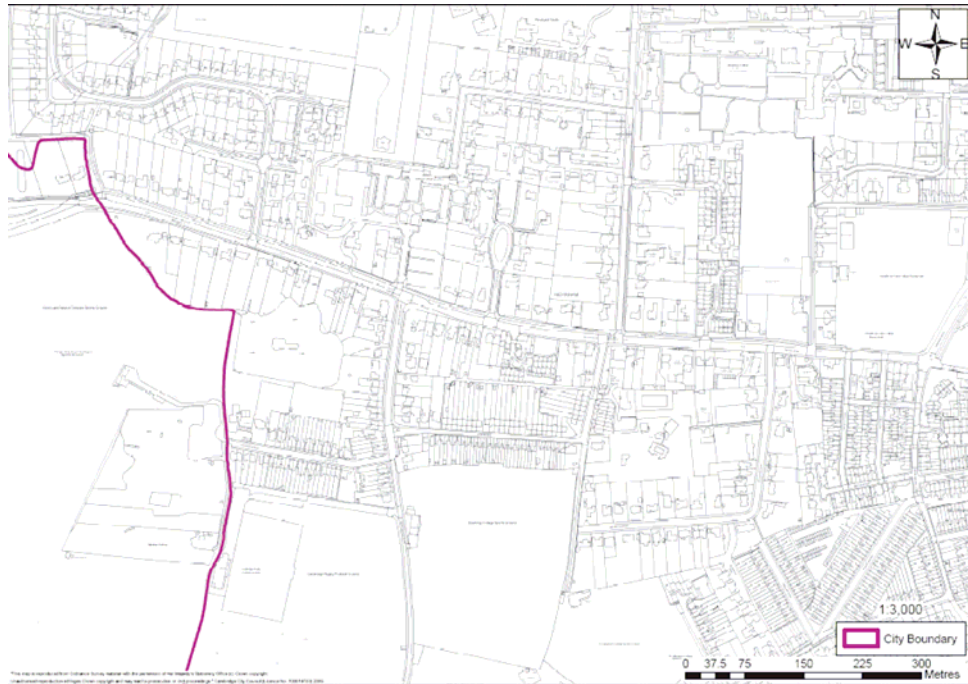


Fig.1: Location of assessment area

The area covered by the assessment is shown in figures 1 and 2. It runs from the City boundary in the east to the junction with Newnham Road in the west, and includes Barton Close.

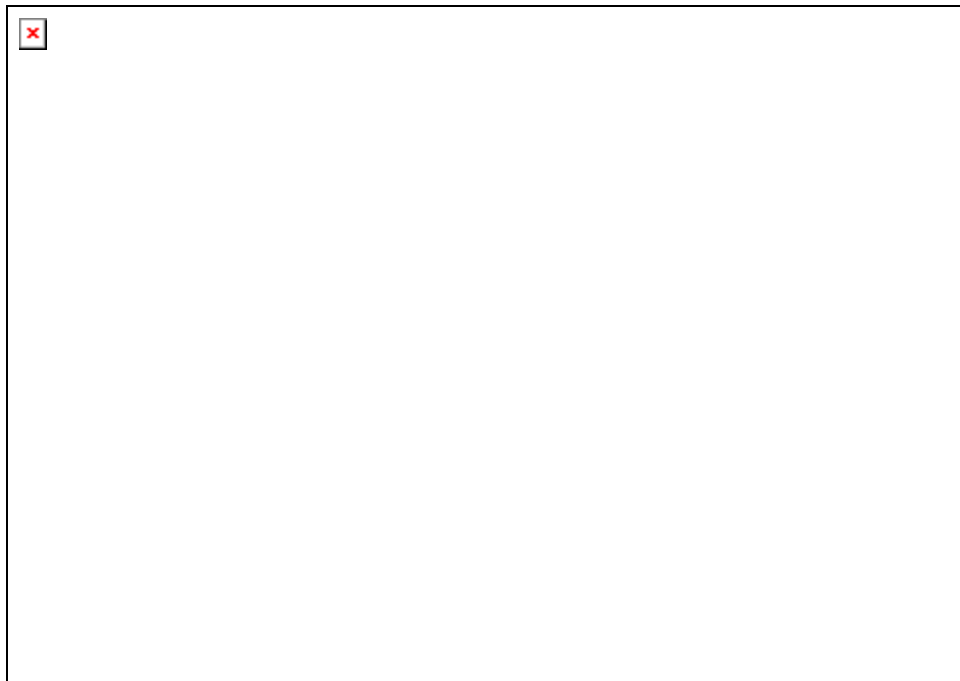


Figure 2: Assessment area, showing Character Areas

The assessment area can be broadly divided into two Character Areas, shown in figure 2. Character Area 1 (outlined in red) encompasses the eastern side of the assessment area from Newnham Road to Grove Road/King's Road. Character Area 2 (outlined in green) lies to the west and is more suburban in character. This is a crude subdivision, for the area is heterogeneous in terms of architectural and landscape character. The subdivision is adopted as an aid to description rather than necessarily to act as a guide to future planning.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Assessment

The assessment involved fieldwork, some desk research and analysis. It provides a summary of the architectural, historical and landscape character of the area, both inherent and in relation to the character of Cambridge as a whole.

2.1.1 Research

Research was carried out at the County Record Office and in the building control records of the City Council. It consisted of a review of historic maps, and a more general review of works on the history of Cambridge, its architecture and development. See the Bibliography for full details.

2.1.2 Fieldwork

Barton Road was physically assessed on foot in February 2009. The assessment is based on what could be seen from the public highway.

2.1.3 Knowledge Gaps

There are a number of additional lines of research which might produce additional historical information on the history and development of Barton Road such as rate books, insurance and building control records. While further research may provide greater detail and depth to an understanding of how the area developed, it is not anticipated that this will significantly alter the overall findings of this assessment.

2.2 Limitations

AHP were commissioned to assess the architectural and historic character of Barton Road as part of a characterisation assessment, including the heritage significance of the area. The assessment is not in sufficient depth to support potential conservation area designation, although it may provide a useful basis for consideration for designation.

The assessment does not address the state of repair and maintenance of the buildings in the study area in any detail. Neither does it address their thermal performance, repair costs and viability, market value, potential for adaptation, quality in relation to current standards or any other factors that are not directly related to their heritage value.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Brief overview of the development of Cambridge

The city of Cambridge lies at the intersection of four Roman roads, and the Roman settlement developed on the west side of the river Cam in the present Castle Hill area. In Saxon times there was further settlement south of the river. After the Norman Conquest a Castle was built north of the river and several churches and monastic foundations were in existence by the mid-13th century. The major growth of the town dates from the establishment of the University from the 13th century, and at the time of the Reformation there were 15 colleges.

Cambridge did not develop beyond its medieval bounds until the early 1800s, following the Acts of Enclosure. New housing began to appear on the roads leading out of town, including Barton Road. With the arrival of the railway in the 1840s the town expanded as a market town and agricultural centre. Large new areas of housing were built throughout the second half of the 19th century, building off and connecting the historic routes radiating out from the centre. In the first half of the 20th century the town's population grew from 40,000 to 90,000; outlying villages were connected and absorbed as ribbon development spread out from the centre

Early resistance to this growth and the loss of village character in outlying areas was manifested in the establishment of the Cambridge Preservation Trust in 1928, and the protection given to the Gogs, Grantchester, Coton and Madingley. After the Second World War Sir William (later Lord) Holford and H. Myles Wright's *Cambridge Survey and Plan* of 1950 formed the basis of the 1952 County Development Plan, defining the Green Belt and proposing new housing growth on the northern and south-eastern fringes of the town (which became a city in 1951). Population was to be capped at 100,000.

Holford's policy of containment proved unsustainable, and the post-war period has seen continuing pressure for and accommodation of development in and around the city.

The coming years will see significant development in the city, with new housing, associated community facilities, as well as development of land for employment, medical and higher education expansion. Barton Road is not directly affected by any major proposals, although the grounds of Leckhampton House to the north of Wolfson College are identified as a major development site. However, the area will continue to be subject to development pressure, and the Council wishes to ensure that change is accommodated in the most appropriate way, taking account of the sustainability, mixed use, conservation and design objectives set out elsewhere in the Plan. The current assessment will inform the preparation of more detailed policies and guidance.

3.2 The development of Newnham Croft

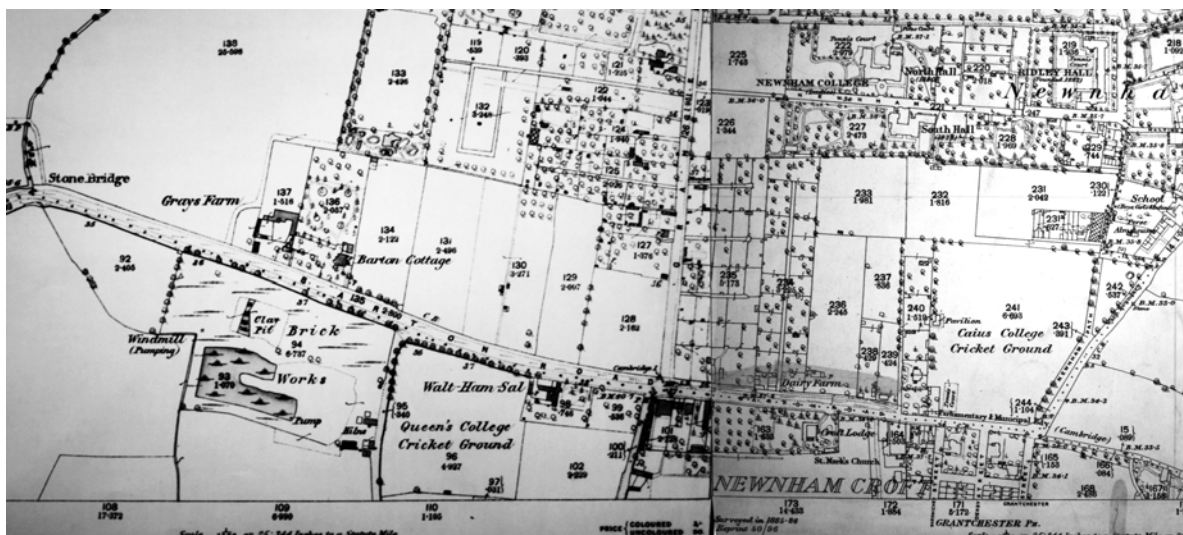


Figure 3: 1st ordnance Survey map, 1888 (detail)

Following the early 19th century enclosure of the Cambridge fields, the area on the south eastern side of the town, partly within the town boundary and partly within the parish of Grantchester, began to be developed. In 1830 only two villas stood there, but by the 1850s over 50 houses had been built by the Barton road. In 1871 a church, initially a daughter church to the parish of Grantchester, was built to serve the growing community of Newnham Croft (croft=farm). About the same time terraces of working men's cottages were laid out at Croft Town, followed by Selwyn Terrace in about 1880. Development was given impetus following the relocation of Newnham College to Sidgwick Avenue in the 1870s and the establishment of Selwyn College in

the 1880s, and with the building of new houses sponsored by King's and other colleges. The first Ordnance Survey Map (figure 3) shows the area in a state of transition – part agricultural (farms, market gardens and orchards), part industrial (the brickworks and windmill to the west), part suburbanised (new detached and smaller properties towards Newnham Road) and part university playing fields. Some of the buildings existing at this time survive today; they include

- the mid-late 19th century pair at 1 and 2 Clare Road
- the Red Bull public house
- the original St Mark's church (now church hall)
- 27 Barton Road
- the then newly-built nos 29 and 31 Barton Road
- the Hat and Feathers public house on the corner with King's Road
- the large L-shaped early 19th century house at no.49-51
- Further west and on the north side, the early-mid 19th century Barton Cottage, now no.78.

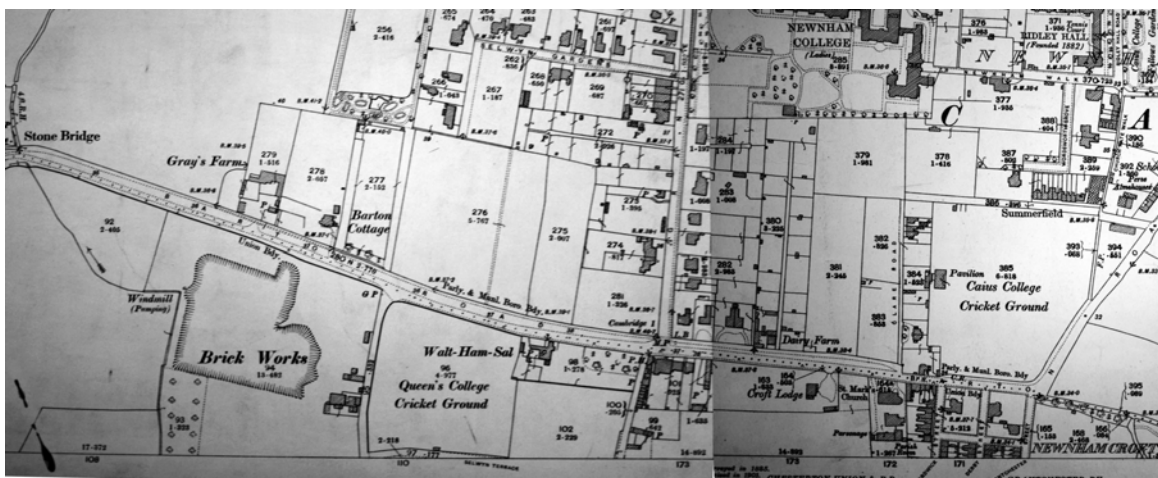


Figure 4: Ordnance Survey map 1903 (detail)

The 1903 Ordnance Survey map (figure 4) shows further development along Grange Road and the new church of St Mark (built in 1901). About this time an important Iron Age burial was found in the garden of Croft Lodge (now the site of Croft Gardens).

In about 1908 King's College began to develop Millington Road with large houses in spacious grounds. Fulbrooke Road (off Grantchester Road) was begun at the same

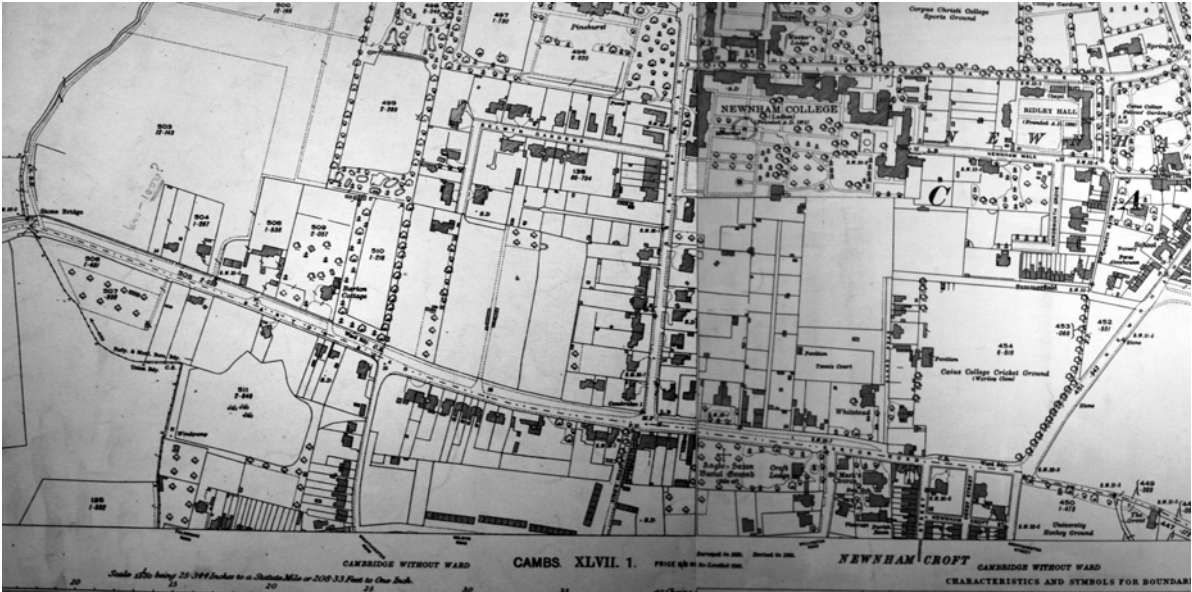


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey map 1927 (detail)



Figure 6: Ordnance Survey map, 1939 (detail)

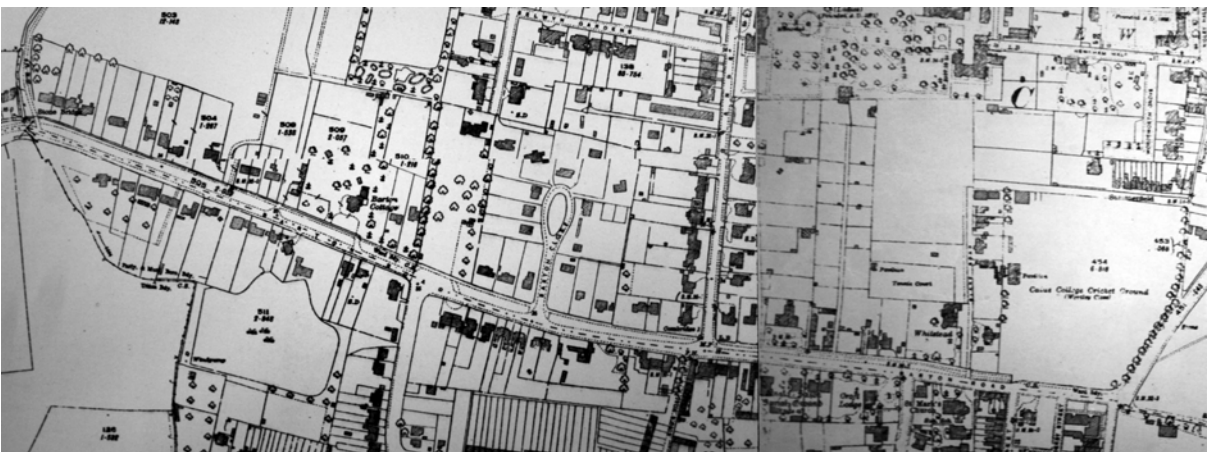


Figure 7: Ordnance Survey map, 1948 (detail)

time. Newnham Croft was incorporated into the Borough of Cambridge in 1911 and in 1918 Newnham became a separate parish, independent of Grantchester. At this time there was much infilling of empty sites, but further growth westwards and southwards was constrained by the existence of college sports fields, themselves separated from Grantchester village by fields. However development of Newnham Croft was given further impetus in the 1920s when the building of Fen Causeway improved traffic connections with the city centre. Lammas Land was enclosed to become a public recreation space. The Ordnance Survey map for 1927 (figure 5) shows the north side of Character Area 2 still largely undeveloped and the beginning of development around the lake formed on the site of the old brickworks. The 1939 Ordnance Survey map (figure 6) shows the increased pace of change in the 1930s, particularly in Character Area 2, with Barton Close laid out and ribbon development along the north side of Barton Road. The 1948 map (figure 7) shows further intensification and development, with new apartment blocks such as Maitland House.

The most significant post-war development has been the growth of Wolfson College, established in 1965 as the University College. The campus incorporated some pre-existing buildings, but has expanded considerably with new build. Residential developments have included some important modern houses backing onto Newnham Lake, site of the old brickworks.

4. BARTON ROAD: CHARACTERISATION

4.1 Character and appearance

Barton Road is approached from the City from the Newnham Road and Fen Causeway. The open spaces of the Gonville and Caius College playing field, Lammas Land and the grazing marshland around the Fen Causeway provide a series of open spaces and a green buffer that give Newnham Croft its separate visual identity. Similarly, the approach from the west is through farmland and Green Belt land, while land to the south consists of protected open spaces and fields. Newnham Croft therefore has its own distinct character and identity, albeit subsumed by Newnham to the north. Barton Road is the main route running through the settlement, and a major route out of the city, connecting with outlying villages to the south west and the M11. Although much of the development along the road is of 20th century date and suburban in character, and there is some higher density development of the interwar and post-war years, the place nevertheless retains something of a village character, particularly around the church and Red Bull public house.

4.2 Character Area 1

South side

The approach to Barton Road from the city is flanked by the open spaces to left and right. On the south side at the eastern end there is a concentration of dense late-19th century terraced development in the streets giving off to the south and east. At this point (and up to and including the church of St Mark), Barton Road forms part of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area, designated by the Council in 1998.

The street frontage at this point is dominated by the stylish apartment blocks of Maitland House (DATE? Not shown on 1948 OS! ARCHITECT?). These two storey blocks have glazed pantile roofs, curving first floor balconies and original Crittall windows with horizontal panes giving a sleek, *Moderne* appearance, evocative of an ocean liner. Maitland House is set behind a low wall on the street frontage amidst communal gardens laid mainly to lawn, with some mature trees around the

perimeter. Cherwell Court follows, a three storey 1960s apartment block, brick and with a rather fortified air, making a powerful statement on the corner. Again, this is set back from the road behind a low wall, within communal gardens and mature planting. These blocks are on the site of former large detached dwellings. After Hardwick Street, a slightly older and more villagey character asserts itself, with the lower painted brick and slate terraced group around the Red Bull public house. Adjoining this, and set well back from the road within a landscaped churchyard containing a war memorial, is St Mark's church, built at the beginning of the 20th century from designs by R. Philip Day, Surveyor to the Archdiocese of Canterbury. It is a local landmark, in the Transitional Early English/Decorated Gothic style, red brick with stone dressings, with an apsidal east end and spirelet on the main ridge. At the west end, an elegant narthex and porch are recent additions by Freeland Rees Roberts Architects. Behind the church is the vicarage and the original iron and timber church of 1871, by R. R. Rowe (who designed or restored a number of Cambridge churches) and retained as a parish hall. Pevsner describes its 'amazing detached bell-tower of blackened timber, like a windmill' (photo?).

Millington Road is not shown on the 1903 Ordnance Survey map, having been laid out in 1908. It is characterised by large detached houses in large plots, several of them by the noted interwar Cambridge architect H. C. Hughes, and is notable as a street which continues to be lit by gaslight. The tone is set by no.1, occupying the corner with Barton Road, a substantial Queen Anne Revival house with steep hipped roof and dormer (ARCHITECT? HUGHES?). In contrast, Croft Lodge (occupying the other corner and continuing the Barton Road frontage, and on the site of the original Croft Lodge, which occupied a substantial plot extending as far as no.27, see figure 4) is a three storey (1960s? 70s?) block of flats, architecturally undistinguished, but placed behind a beech hedge in a mature landscaped setting. Nos 19 and 21 are interwar detached houses in the revived domestic style, contrasting with Croft Gardens (DATE? Shown on 1939 map. ARCHITECT?), similar in date and character to Maitland House, and consisting of three blocks arranged around a central court planted out with topiarised yews. The buildings retain their distinctive green pantile roofs but unfortunately have lost their original metal windows.

After Croft Gardens, and set so far back in its long narrow plot within a well-treed and front garden setting as to barely register in the streetscape, is no.27, an earlier survival. This is of early-mid 19th century character, with painted brickwork, a hipped slate roof, glazing bar sash windows and hoodmoulds over the ground floor openings (photo). Buildings previously occupying the front garden of this property (shown on earlier maps) have been demolished. There is a remarkable contrast between the architectural and townscape reticence of this house and its neighbours to the west, the large, bold, red brick and eccentrically detailed late-Victorian town houses occupying the street frontage at nos. 29 and 31 (no. 29, The Red House, is dated 1885 in a lintel) (photo). Adjoining this, no.31 is a modern three storey apartment block with two gable ends towards the street. It is set back with a hedge, leaving exposed the flank wall of The Hat and Feathers, which has a narrow frontage to Barton Road and a longer return elevation to King's Road, continued by a high garden wall. The building takes the corner well, with a hipped roof and an entrance in the splay on the corner.

North side

The playing field to Gonville and Caius College is a large open space at the west end of Barton Road. It has a western backdrop of tall, mature trees in Clare Road, and on its western side is an attractive brick and tiled cricket pavilion with three plastered gables a central recessed verandah. Clare Road is a cul-de-sac of semi-rural character. At its entrance, no 2 Barton Road is a post-war detached house and garage, replacing an earlier 20th century house closer to the street frontage; further up on the right at nos. 1 and 2 Clare Road is a mid-late 19th century pair of three storey town houses with ground floor bay windows. The more suburban character continues with two large detached houses in the Old English style with timber framed gables at nos 10 and 12, set behind hedges and timber fences and gates. In marked contrast, St Mark's Court, which follows, is a post war development of two storey flats of a density and grain untypical of the area. The prevailing character resumes with nos.22 and 24, a pair of circa 1900 with double height bays under a hipped and dormered roof, set within large front gardens with a semicircular drive, and with good original timber gate piers to no.22 (photo). Along with no.26, a

detached late 19th century house with a portico and no. 2 Grove Road, these belong with the late 19th and early 20th century development of Grove Road, characterised by substantial detached houses in large plots.

4.3 Character Area 2

North side

No development is shown here on the Ordnance Survey Map for 1903 other than the older properties at Burton Cottage and Gray's Farm to the west. This part of Barton Road was developed from the early years of the 20th century on, and most of the buildings are interwar in date. The prevailing character is immediately more suburban than that to the east, with a wider footpath and grass verge with an avenue of plane trees. Architecturally, the change is less pronounced; the house at no 1 Grove Road and the long pair at nos.28 and 30 Barton Road are slightly later in date than the properties immediately to the east in Character Area 1, but are similar in character. No.1 is in the Queen Anne style, while 28 and 30 Barton Road have a more Arts and Crafts character, with roughcast walls and continuous leaded light casement windows under the eaves. They are included in the local list (Architect? Date?).

After this, numbers 32 and 34 (not shown on the 1939 map) are the first of the inter-war and post-war properties along the north side; these are typically brick built, with prominent roof forms and stacks, metal or casement windows, large gardens and attached garages.

Barton Close was laid out in the 1930s as a cul-de-sac around a central island, which is now maintained in a semi-wild state. Wide footpaths with grass verges skirt the perimeter, and some properties have high beech hedges on the boundary. The earliest houses were nos. 1, 3 and 6, symmetrical brick-built houses with metal windows (some replaced) and hipped pantile roofs. Later houses tend to be more informal in composition and larger e.g. the rebuilt no. 3.

Nos 38, 40 and 42 Barton Road are similar in date and character to the properties in Barton Close; good details include a swept copper roof over the porch of no.40. There follow the buildings of Wolfson College, placed in extensive landscaped grounds behind railings on the street frontage, and the last major development in the assessment area. The College site incorporates some pre-existing buildings and an avenue which framed one side of the approach (or was this newly-planted on the same line?) to the main administrative building of 1972-77. West of this, no.72 (Morrison House) and no.74 (Williams House) are 1930s houses now in use by the college. Also subsumed within the grounds of the college is no.78, the former Barton Cottage, an early-mid 19th century grey gault three bay brick house, listed grade II. The house is set well back from the road behind iron railings; the stone gate piers with ball finials and iron gates are separately listed. Beyond this is the Chancellors Centre of Graduate Study, a major new building with a projecting domed centrepiece by Brewer Smith and Brewer, 2003-4.

Nos 84 and 84A are two modern houses, 84 lying to the rear of the site. They are followed by two pairs of 1930s semis with hipped roofs and large front gardens, the pair at 86A and 86B being the more altered of the two. (Why is 88 locally listed?) Gough Way then leads off to the north, a post war development of two-storey suburban houses. There is a red pillar box on the verge to the left. From no.94 to no. 112 (Bin Brook and the city boundary), the character is of large detached houses set well back from the road on deep plots. Some of these are pre-war in date (occasionally much altered, e.g. no.106) and some are post-war replacements. They include a fine Neo-Regency house at no.94 with a canted bay and hipped slate roof , the neo-vernacular (but altered) no. 96 (locally listed – why?) and two good 1930s house with hipped roofs at nos. 104 and 112, the latter with a swept lead hood over the central front entrance.

South side

Proceeding east from the city boundary, nos 111-79 form part of the interwar ribbon development along Barton Road. No.111 is a slightly more Neo-Georgian version of no.112, and no.83 is a later replacement, set well back from the road in a wide plot.

The other properties are unremarkable and many have been altered with modern replacement UPVC windows, dormers etc. The exception is no.89 (photo), a later interloper in marked contrast to its interwar neo-Tudor and neo-Georgian neighbours; a spare flat roofed house, single storey and deep on plan with an internal court, built in 1974-75 by Austin Lord: Smith for the Heffer family. It is one of a group of properties whose back gardens extend back to Newnham Lake, on the site of the old brickworks. No 77 is a substantial recent house (flats?), red brick and non-specifically historicist in design. No.75 on the corner facing Grantchester Road is a substantial early 20th century house of free Classical design, gault brick with stone dressings. Adjoining this at nos. 2 and 2A Grantchester Road is a pair of houses of 1963-4 by Colin St John Wilson, no. 2 designed for the architect's own occupation. The upper floor is of white cast-stone blocks and is supported on irregularly-spaced square pillars, leading through to a courtyard with an abstract sculpture by Eduardo Paolozzi (not seen. Still there?). *The Architect and Building News* for 7 July 1965 described these as 'two of the best houses produced in this country within the last few years'; they are listed grade II.

The group stretching from nos 73-55A (odd) consists of large detached and semi-detached houses of early 20th century date, the most substantial of these being the red brick pair at nos 71-73. No 49/51 is an L-shaped early 19th century survival presenting a blind elevation to the street, with a timber doorcase on the eastern return and glazing bar sash windows, some with external shutters, on this and the other elevations. Connected to this is the successful addition of no.53, with an archway beneath leading to Archway Court, a sympathetic 1970s development of flats in the former garden of the property, by Dry Halasz Dixon Partnership. The long east elevation of no 49 looks onto the landscaped setting of Archway Court, with a pedestrian path from the street, and mature trees and planting. Finally, 37-41 is an early 20th century Neo-Georgian group, three blocks facing a small front garden area, with glazing bar sash windows and hipped tile roofs with prominent stacks, dormers and overhanging eaves.

5. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

The relative significance of buildings and landscape features in the study area has been assessed according to the following five categories (to be read in conjunction with the coloured map at appendix 1):

- **Protected:** buildings, features, trees or spaces that are protected by way of listing, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or being within a conservation area. Listed buildings in the assessment areas are 78 Barton Road (with the gatepiers separately listed), and nos. 2 and 2A Grantchester Road. The south side of Barton Road at its eastern end up to and including St Mark's church forms part of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area, designated by the Council in 1998. Buildings protected by listing in are coloured orange on the map at appendix 1, while TPOs are shown on the map attached at appendix 2.
- **Local List:** buildings, landscape features or spaces of clear local interest. Although not afforded statutory protection, these make a positive contribution to the street scene and should be retained unless it can be demonstrated that removal or development would be of greater benefit to the character of setting of adjoining buildings and spaces or that there are overriding social or economic factors. Locally listed buildings are coloured yellow on the map at appendix 1.
- **Positive value:** buildings, features or spaces of clear local interest, but not yet included in the local list, or of lesser quality than local list buildings, or altered superficially. They are identified in blue on the map at appendix 1.
- **Neutral:** buildings, features or spaces which although of little individual merit, combine with other buildings and spaces to create a townscape of value. These are identified in purple on the map at appendix 1.
- **Negative value:** buildings, features or spaces which have an adverse impact, and where redevelopment or removal is positively encouraged. These are identified in dark red on the map at appendix 1.

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Websites

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APPENDIX 1: Character Area 1 Significance Assessment

APPENDIX 2: Tree Preservation Orders