

**DRAFT
MILL ROAD AND
ST MATTHEW'S
CONSERVATION
AREA CHARACTER
APPRAISAL**

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THE MILL ROAD AND ST MATTHEW'S CONSERVATION AREA – CHARACTER APPRAISAL

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THE MILL ROAD AND ST MATTHEW'S CONSERVATION AREA – CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and objectives

This Character Appraisal seeks to define what is special about the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area, and to provide detailed information about its spaces, buildings, landscape, public realm, and other positive features. It also identifies its negative features and provides guidance on enhancement opportunities. Because it has been subject to public consultation and has been approved by the (fill-in name of relevant committee) on the (fill-in date), it will be a 'material' document when the Council considers applications for change within, or on the edges of, the Conservation Area.

1.2 Summary of the Special Interest of the Mill Road and St Matthews Conservation Area

The Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area forms part of the 'Cambridge Conservation Area No. 1 – Central' which was originally designated in 1969. The Mill Road and St Matthew's area was added in 1993, when other adjoining parts of Cambridge (the Glisson Road, Station Road and Riverside areas) were also included.

In 1999 the City Council produced a Conservation Area Appraisal for the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area, and this document draws heavily on this earlier Appraisal.

The Conservation Area boundary is taken as including all of the land covered by the 1999 Appraisal, which sits to the north and south of the Petersfield section of Mill Road, a long mixed-use street which leads eastwards out of the City Centre. At the time of designation in 1993, and again in the 1999 Appraisal, it was considered that the Romsey end of Mill Road beyond the railway bridge did not meet the statutory Conservation Area criteria of an "area of special architectural or historic interest"; the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area was defined by the railway bridge.

The late development of this part of Cambridge means that this area was mainly fields until the 1860s or 1870s when a grid pattern of streets, stretching off at right angles to Mill Road, was first established. A large number of the buildings are individually dated, with the 1880s or 1890s being noted on many of the properties. Churches, schools, a library and other community buildings soon followed, with purpose-built shops along Mill Road and small corner shops in other locations. Many of the streets also had a public house and some employment-related premises, although these tend to be more prevalent amongst the terraced housing.

Overall, the Conservation Area provides an example of a well-detailed and well preserved Victorian suburb, with only a few examples of modern infill. To the north of Mill Road, the terraced houses face directly onto the pavement, with gardens almost completely hidden. Around the Collier Road area and to the south of Mill Road, principally along St Barnabas Road, are examples of more prestigious mid to late 19th century housing, but this time provided by larger semi-detached houses, set back from the road. Within the Conservation Area are two smaller sub-areas of terraced houses which both have a unique quality – firstly, around Norfolk Terrace and Blossom Street in the north, and around Covent Garden and Mill

Street in the south. At various locations are buildings or spaces in complementary uses – the Primary School off Norfolk Street, St Matthew's Church off St Matthew's Street, Anglia Ruskin University (which sits on the eastern edge of the Conservation Area), and Hughes Hall (Cambridge University's oldest graduate College) and the adjoining Fenner's Cricket Ground. The principal open space is the large Victorian Cemetery which lies in the middle of the northern part of the Conservation Area, providing intriguing glimpses of trees and landscape from various locations.

Mill Road itself is a complex multi-ethnic and multicultural mix of commercial, residential, religious, and community uses, in mainly mid to late 19th century buildings lining the pavements on either side. St Barnabas' Church is the largest and most impressive building, although the listed former library, now occupied by the Indian Community and Cultural Association, is another outstanding building with terracotta and red brick elevations. The buildings in Mill Road provide a good variety of mostly independent shops, cafes, and bars or public houses, although it is noticeable that many of the smaller public houses in the back streets (at one time there must have been one on almost every street corner) remain, supported by the many students who live in the adjoining properties. The road acts as a major route into and out of the City Centre, and the close proximity of the railway station to the southern boundary of the Conservation Area also provides a certain amount of activity, both pedestrian and vehicular.

There are only four listed buildings in the Conservation Area – St Matthew's Church, the Cemetery Lodge, the former Library in Mill Road, and Hughes Hall. Eight tombstones in the Cemetery are also individually listed. However, many of the better preserved and more prestigious houses (for instance, in the Collier Road area, Mortimer Road, and also in St Barnabas' Road) are designated as Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs). Throughout the Conservation Area there are also a number of warehouses and other former industrial buildings, now largely used for offices or as homes. These buildings provide some punctuation to the long rows of terraced houses and, occasionally, are set back from the street around a courtyard.

A variety of issues have been identified as part of the Character Appraisal. Modern development has impinged in a number of places, most notably the new housing off Sturton Street, Ditchburn Place, and St Barnabas Court, and the design and siting of any further development must be carefully controlled. A large City Council Depot off Mill Road, backing onto the railway line which forms the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area, is surprisingly discreet but redevelopment of this large key site is possible at some stage. Although a Conservation Plan has already been produced, the continued protection of the Cemetery and its flora and fauna must be ensured. The former Brunswick Primary School, a 19th century building with a large modern extension, is boarded up and a new use needs to be found quickly before the historic building deteriorates any further. Following the 1999 Appraisal, a number of enhancements were carried out in Mill Road, including the replacement of shopfronts, but a range of additional improvements are urgently needed to support the continued economic viability of the area. Finally, the preservation of the many unlisted historic houses and cottages in the Conservation Area, and the protection of their historic detailing, is an issue.

1.3 National and local planning policy

Conservation Areas are defined as ‘*areas of architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*’ in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Local Planning Authorities are required by the Act to identify the parts of their area that should be designated as Conservation Areas and to formulate and publish proposals to preserve or enhance them. Local authorities must submit proposals for the protection and enhancement of Conservation Areas for public consultation (this can be achieved via the Council’s website) and they must also have regard to any views expressed by people responding to this consultation.

Broadly, the effects of designation are:

- Conservation Area Consent must be obtained from the local planning authority or Secretary of State prior to the substantial or total demolition of any building or structure within a Conservation Area, with some exceptions;
- The local planning authority must consider the desirability of *preserving or enhancing* the character or appearance of the Conservation Area when assessing planning applications for change in Conservation Areas;
- Permitted development rights are slightly different in Conservation Areas;
- Permission is required from the planning authority to fell or lop a tree over a certain size.

Central government policy relating to listed buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: *Planning and the historic environment*.

Local planning policy is contained within the Cambridge Local Plan which sets out policies and proposals for future development and land use in Cambridge. This is incrementally being replaced by the emerging Local Development Framework – for more information look at the Council’s website: www.cambridge.gov.uk

2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 A brief history of Cambridge

Cambridge is located at the highest navigable point of the River Cam from Kings Lynn via the River Ouse. A Roman settlement developed on a gravel ridge looking over the river to the south at the meeting point of four important roads. By the 2nd century a sizeable town had developed on an enclosed area of about 25 acres, the site being reused later by the Anglo-Saxons. In about 1068 William the Conqueror built a castle (of which only the motte remains), this leading to the rapid growth of the settlement, including the provision of churches – St Giles, St Peter's and St Bene't's Churches all retain Norman features. Monastic foundations soon followed, including the Augustinians priory of 1092 and the Benedictine nunnery of 1135 (now Jesus College). Other foundations were also established and many remain in some form or another as present-day Colleges. Cambridge became important for its markets and guilds, as well as a centre for learning, which may have been the result of a migration of monks and scholars from Oxford in 1209 linked to an increasing demand throughout the 13th century for well trained administrators, who were needed for secular rather than ecclesiastical posts. Most of the teaching was done in a single complex of buildings, now called the Old Schools, which included the Divinity School, Law and Arts School, and the Library, completed in 1475. Initially the students were housed in rented accommodation but from the late 14th century individual Colleges, usually grouped around a court, were built so that by 1474 there were 12 in all, rising to 15 at the time of the Reformation. The founders of these Colleges were kings (Edward III, Henry VI, and Henry VIII), queens and other members of the royal families, aristocrats and powerful civil servants. The new buildings were initially constructed in a clunch-faced rubble (unlike Oxford, which used locally quarried Oolitic limestone), but from the 14th century onwards brick became the material of choice.

Outside the University and College buildings, much of medieval Cambridge has been demolished and redeveloped apart from small groups of buildings, such as the ones at the junction of Bridge Street and Northampton Street. A change of building style started in the mid 16th century and then developed in the 17th century into a rejection of the Gothic in preference for Italian-based motifs, such as mullioned and transomed windows and more classical details, following the example of Christopher Wren's buildings in Oxford and London. Later, in the 18th century, the buildings followed the Palladian principles of Lord Burlington, such as James Burrough's Fellow's Building at Peterhouse. In 1600 Cambridge had just 265 students in comparison to Oxford's 305, but by 1830 the numbers were 440 to 405, confirming Cambridge's increased capacity as more Colleges were built, including Downing College of 1807. Further buildings were added during the 19th century as Cambridge became an important centre for the study of the Arts, such as the University Library (1837) and the Fitzwilliam Museum (also 1837). In 1870 some 605 students completed their studies and by 1900 there were over 1,000, leading to the provision of a large number of new University buildings, some of them on the former water meadows to the west of the Backs, an area that is defined by Queens' Road and runs along the rear entrances to many Colleges, in what is now the West Cambridge Conservation Area.

By the mid 20th century the city's population had risen to about 90,000 from about 38,000 in 1900. Much new housing was added between the wars and from the 1950s, new Colleges, and extensions to existing Colleges, were also constructed, mostly designed by prestigious architects. In the early 21st century, Cambridge has become not only an important University city but also a focus for tourism with an estimated four million visitors a year. In the last thirty

years or so, Cambridge has also developed an international reputation for scientific research and development.

2.2 The development of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is defined by Mill Road, an important historic route which leads out of the City Centre towards the eastern edge of Cambridge. The area was still fields until the Inclosure Act of 1807, after which new roads were incrementally laid out at right angles to Mill Road, although most of these did not appear until the 1860s or even later.

Mill Road is so named because it led out of the City towards a windmill which was located somewhere near the present site of Mill Street. Ditchburn Place, the oldest surviving building on Mill Road (and surprisingly not listed) was built in 1838 as the Parish Workhouse, and at about the same time some terraced houses were built in the Covent Garden area around the site of the windmill on the south side of Mill Road. What is now the Cemetery was then in use as the University Cricket Ground, the land being converted to a cemetery in 1848, involving the demolition of the Barnwell New Church. The construction of the first railway line to Cambridge in 1845 (the Eastern Counties line, later the Great Eastern) also had an impact on the area, with the new station being located just to the south of the Conservation Area.

However, development was, at least initially, surprisingly slow. By 1859 the only buildings along Mill Road were provided by a short stretch of properties to the east of Covent Garden. There were a few buildings on the north side, with the Eagle Foundry on the site of the present Council Depot, with a row of cottages on the south side which stood in virtual isolation. To the north of Mill Road in the St Matthew's area, Norfolk Street was established with, to the north, a number of streets of small cottages which were demolished in the 1960s.

Most of the new residential development appears to have started from the 1870s onwards when the former Barnwell Open Fields were purchased by Joseph Sturton from the Geldart family, both of whom are commemorated in the street names. St Matthew's Church was built to the designs of Richard Reynolds Rowe in 1866, initially to serve the residential streets which already existed to the west. The Emery Street area was developed from the 1870s onwards on land owned by Corpus Christi College. Flower Street, Blossom Street and the site of what is now Anglia Ruskin University, were all developed on land which had once been used as a large nursery garden. To the south of Mill Road, St Barnabas' Church was completed in 1880, and at about the same time St Barnabas Road was laid out on land belonging to Gonville and Caius College, which owned most of the land in this part of Cambridge. The southern boundary of the area was built up when Devonshire Road was extended after 1890.

Most of the buildings along Mill Road were therefore provided in the 1880s and 1890s (some retain date plaques confirming the date of construction) and although there are several long rows of terraced houses, mainly on the north-west side, other groups of commercial buildings were also purpose-built with ground floor shops below residential accommodation. There were also a number of buildings in industrial uses, principally the Eagle Brewery and Bolton's Warehouse in Tenison Road. The Library was built in 1897 and Dales Brewery, in Gwydir Street, was added in the early 1900s. Hughes Hall was built in 1894. The former Playhouse (now Sally Ann's) was opened in 1913 as the first purpose-built cinema in Cambridge, and the Bath House was added to Gwydir Street (close to the junction with Mill Road) in 1927 as a public bathing facility. The former workhouse was converted to a maternity Hospital in 1946,

and then more recently converted yet again, and substantially extended, to become Ditchburn Place Sheltered Housing.

Today, Mill Road remains an important local centre with a rich cultural and ethnic mix.. There has been a change in the balance between the day time and night-time economies, with some shops having been replaced by takeaways and other food outlets. The Bath House was saved from demolition in 1968 by the St Matthew's Neighbourhood Association and Friends of the Earth and is now in community use. The adjoining residential streets are popular and provide a variety of house sizes, whilst the close proximity of the City Centre and railway station add to the attractions of the area.

3 LOCATION AND SETTING

3.1 Location and activities

Cambridge is located in south Cambridgeshire close to the junction of the M11 from London and the A14, which connects Felixstowe to Kettering and further west. The Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area is located between the City Centre and the eastern section of the ring road, to the north-west of Cambridge Station.

Activities within the Conservation Area are mainly residential with commercial uses focused along Mill Road and, to a lesser degree, along Norfolk Street. One of the special features of Mill Road is the way in which the vast majority of its shop units have stayed the same size, rather than being combined. There are many cafes, bars and restaurants along Mill Road, mainly aimed at the night-time economy. Many of the shops are independently owned, by families rather than by larger national chains, providing a special character to the area which is further enhanced by the rich ethnic mix. A number of historic public houses can be found within the residential streets, clearly built as part of the initial phase of expansion in the late 19th century. These are particularly supported by the many students who live in the immediate area, as well as providing an important community focus. Educational uses are evident around the western side of the Conservation Area, namely at Anglia Ruskin University Campus (which largely lies outside the designated area) and at Hughes Hall, an impressive detached building which lies just within the Conservation Area next to the Fenner's Cricket Ground. Some of the former industrial buildings have been converted into offices, or are now residential. There are three churches (St Barnabas, St Matthew's, and the King's Church in Tenison Road), and the Abu Bakr Siddiq Islamic Centre in Mawson Road. St Matthew's Primary School is located just within the Conservation Area, parts of which are a BLI.

3.2 Topography and geology

The Conservation Area lies on flat, low lying land to the east of the City Centre and to the east and south of the River Cam. There are no special topographical features of any note, the only change in level being provided by the bridge where Mill Road crosses the railway line on the eastern edge of the Conservation Area.

Cambridge lies on a gravel ridge over Jurassic clays which produce a clay which is suitable for brick making, as seen in many of the buildings in the Conservation Area. In the past, a band of gault clay which lies along the west bank of the River Cam also produced the 'white' bricks which are commonly associated with parts of East Anglia, as well as the local pantiles of varied hues including yellows, browns, pinks and greys. To the south of Cambridge, the southern and eastern parts of the county are chalky, providing the flint, chalk rubble and chalk blocks (in the form of clunch) which was used for some of the early University buildings, bricks gradually taking precedent from the mid 15th century onwards. Flints can still be seen in some of the boundary walls of the Conservation Area. Collyweston stone slates are also evident on many of the roofs in Cambridge. There is evidence of gravel extraction close to the Mill Road area on historic maps.

3.3 The landscape and urban setting

The Conservation Area lies in an urban setting to the east of the City Centre, separated from it by the large open green space of Parker's Piece and Gonville Place/East Road, a very busy route which diverts traffic away from the historic core. To the west side of East Road are

further terraced houses of the 19th century, with a large area of 1960s development (Staffordshire Street etc.) to the immediate east of St Matthew's Church. Anglia Ruskin University provides a variety of modern buildings, mostly of no special merit, which butt up to the western boundary of the Cemetery. The Cemetery is the major green space within the area. Inter-war housing and industrial estates lie to the north with St Matthew's Gardens, a large residential development of the 1990s, creating a logical boundary to the more historic area just to the east of St Matthew's Place and Abbey Walk. The long line of the railway creates another natural boundary to the Conservation Area immediately to the east of York Street, Ainsworth Street and Kingston Street, and beyond the railway line lies Romsey Town, another area of late 19th and early 20th century housing which was developed later in a less cohesive way. The railway also creates a boundary further south, beyond Devonshire Road. Physically attached to the southern part of the Conservation Area are further late 19th century houses in the southern end of Glisson Road, Lyndewode Road, Tenison Road, and Tenison Avenue, which all lie within the adjoining part of the Central Cambridge Conservation Area.

3.4 Biodiversity

The Conservation Area retains an essentially urban character with opportunities for wildlife being limited to private gardens and the Mill Road Cemetery which is a grade II Historic Park and Garden. A Conservation Plan for the Cemetery was published in 2004 and gives details on the area's ecological importance as a City Wildlife Site and its management practice. It also has policy aims and objectives which bring in the Vision for the Site. This includes management which reflects the special character of the area, and the exploitation of its potential as a local resource and green open space. For more information on the management of the biodiversity of the Cemetery, please refer to the Conservation Plan.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Layout and street pattern

The Conservation Area encompasses an almost grid pattern of streets which mainly lie almost at right angles to Mill Road, which forms the central feature of the layout and which dates to the Roman period. This runs in a roughly east-west direction and on crossing the East Road/Gonville Place junction continues straight into the City Centre as 'Parkside'. The 1830 map confirms that many of the streets were laid out along the boundaries of fields which were incrementally developed for housing from the 1860s onwards. To the north, the field boundaries bend slightly to the west, a feature which is reflected in the modern orientation of Gwydir Street, Sturton Street and York Street/Ainsworth Street. The line of the 1845 railway has also dictated street and building layout, for instance, on the east side of Devonshire Road, where much of the land was used for railway sidings and other industrial uses such as a timber yard.

In the northern part of the Conservation Area, the dominant building type is the two storey terraced house, creating long lines of buildings lying directly at the back of the pavement. To the south of Mill Road, and in the Collier Road area, the houses are still built in groups but tend to be semi-detached with small front gardens. Although many of the streets were developed in a piecemeal way by different builders, it is surprising how cohesive they appear, implying a degree of control by the landowner. Most of the properties have long, thin back gardens of regular size, sometimes accessed by a narrow back alley. This rhythm is broken along the south side of Mill Road, where the commercial uses have resulted in the back gardens (where they exist) being lost to car parking or other uses.

4.2 Open spaces and trees

There are only two open spaces of any significance in the Conservation Area, which is principally made up of residential streets. The first is the Cemetery with its large mature trees, varied tombstones (some of them listed) and winding pathways, which is well used by the local community as a pleasant place to walk and relax in. The other public open space is St Matthew's Piece which is located on the eastern side of Sturton Street. This also retains a large number of mature trees, grass, more winding pathways as well as a children's play area. It lies next to the Chinese Community Centre, a single storey black glazed modern building of some architectural interest. A much smaller playground with some trees, has been created at the junction of Ainsworth Street and Sleaford Street. A well landscaped garden, open to the public but on private land, lies in front of the former workhouse, now part of the Ditchburn Place Sheltered Housing development. Trees, flower beds, and public seating are carefully cared for but are separated from the public pavement by railings and gates, which are presumably locked at night. Although not within this Conservation Area, Petersfield and Donkey's Common, which separate the boundary of this Conservation Area with Gonville Place/East Road are significant in terms of views and ambiance.

Apart from the Cemetery and St Matthew's Piece, mature trees are also important to the streetscape in the following locations:

- On the north side of Vicarage Terrace
- On the south side of Hooper Street, next to the boundary with the Council Depot
- Carefully pruned trees and bushes which create a formal avenue to either side of the wide pathway leading up the Cemetery from Mill Road

- Along the west side of Mortimer Road, just outside the Conservation Area
- Trees along the east side of Devonshire Road, again just outside the Conservation Area

Whilst tree species vary, most of the 'public' trees tend to be London plane trees, horse-chestnuts, or silver birch. There are no examples of 19th century 'specimen' trees in the Conservation Area. The most significant groups of trees are marked on the Townscape Analysis Map but because of the difficulties in obtaining access to private land, it is possible that some significant garden trees have not been recorded. All trees over a certain size are automatically protected in the Conservation Area from inappropriate lopping or felling.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

Focal points and focal buildings

There are no particular focal points in the Conservation Area, although the Cemetery and St Matthew's Piece public park do provide some well used public open space. There is a paved space in Mill Road, repaved and provided with new street furniture since the last Appraisal in 1999, which provides a visual link between Mill Road and the public car park which serves shoppers and is accessed from Gwydir Street. Mill Road in its entirety provides a linear focal point to the Conservation Area due to the varied shops, multiple uses, busy traffic and many pedestrians.

Whilst none of the residential houses stand out in any noticeable way, there are a number of buildings, all in other uses, which do give the streetscape some punctuation and provide a focal point in views along streets. These buildings are notable for both their size and their high quality architectural detailing and are as follows (from the north):

- The former Brunswick Primary School, Young Street
- The Chinese Community Centre, Sturton Street
- St Matthew's Church, St Matthew's Street
- St Matthew's Primary School, Caroline Place
- The former Dales Brewery, Gwydir Street
- The Bath House and its tall red brick chimney, Gwydir Street
- Bharat Bhavan (the former Free Library), Mill Road
- St Barnabas' Church, Church Hall and former School, Mill Road
- Bolton's Warehouse, Tenison Road
- The Salvation Army building, also in Tenison Road
- Hughes Hall, Wollaston Road
- Sally Ann's, Mill Road, a large historic building (the former Playhouse) and a BLI

Whilst there are too many to mention individually, there are also a number of well detailed public houses, many of which sit at the junction of two streets to give them greater prominence. The White Swan on the corner of Mill Road and Kingston Street, and the Geldart on the junction of Sleaford Street and Ainsworth Street, are both good examples.

Views and vistas

The flat topography and long residential streets which are lined with similar terraced or semi-detached houses do not allow any views out of the Conservation Area apart from vistas from the west end of Mill Road towards the City Centre. Views tend to be fairly constrained as a result and focus purely on the long rows of houses, terminating perhaps in one of the 'focal

buildings' defined above. Views or sometimes glimpses of the trees in the Cemetery are particularly important in Emery Street, Perowne Street, and Norfolk Terrace.

The most obvious important views and vistas are marked on the Townscape Analysis Map, but there are lesser views in many other locations which are of equal significance in their contribution, so the omission of any particular view or vista does not mean that it is of no importance.

4.4 The public realm

The 'public realm' covers the public open space between the buildings in the Conservation Area, including street surfaces, pavements, lighting, furniture, name plates and any other features of interest. Within the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area, nearly all of these are the responsibility of the County Council. There are no historic floorscape features apart from some small areas of sandstone paving or granite setts. However, cast iron or enamel street name plates in many locations do add to the interest of the area.

Street surfaces and pavements

Modern tarmacadam is used throughout the Conservation Area for street surfaces, and for many of the pavements in the back roads, although concrete flags and paviors are also evident. Mill Road has been repaved at various times in the past, although the most common paving material again appears to be concrete slabs or paviors, with small areas of traditional sandstone flagstones occurring along the south side of the road. Some of the paving is in very poor condition. Small planters (with walls of varying heights) can be seen at the Mill Road end of some of the streets to the north (Kingston Street, Emery Street, Mackenzie Road, Guest Road, and Willis Road). A few probably original late 19th century granite setts can be seen at various locations where they are used to create crossovers. Good examples are the setts in the entrance to No. 25 Collier Road, or the setts and sandstone crossovers to the former St Barnabas School and No. 59 St Barnabas Road. There are some examples of sandstone gutters and kerbing (e.g. Abbey Walk) but generally the kerbs are concrete. Gutters are also sometimes formed by two rows of granite setts (e.g. Emery Road).

Street lighting

Following recommendations in the 1999 Appraisal, new street lighting was installed in Mill Road using simple but elegant black steel standards with a 'hockey-stick' style of lamp. In the back streets, street lighting is provided by a variety of modern standards, often made from steel with a glass lantern and dating stylistically to the 1970s or 1980s. In some locations, such as Norfolk Street, lights are fixed directly to the buildings.

Street furniture

Simple stainless steel public benches, seats, bollards, bicycle racks, and railings, can be seen outside the public toilets and Mickey Flynn's in Mill Road, part of the post-1999 enhancements. Litter bins tend to be black cast aluminium in a standard style which can be seen all over Cambridge. There are varied modern seats in the Cemetery, in St Matthew's Piece and in the children's play area/sitting area at the northern end of Ainsworth Street. Bus shelters along Mill Road are modern black steel with polycarbonate roofs, very simply detailed and relatively unobtrusive.

Street signs

Many of the original cast iron street name plates remain fixed to corner buildings. They are painted white with black lettering and edging. Some examples of the use of enamel also

remain, each letter being an individual piece with a white letter on a black background. These are an important feature and whilst they have been replaced in many locations by modern name plates on timber posts, they add to the richness of the streetscene and the owners of the buildings on which they are located should be encouraged to look after them.

Other features

Traffic calming measures have been installed in some of the streets, including blocking roads to prevent through traffic. This was one of the measures taken following declaration of the St Matthews General Improvement Area in 1974. An example is in Kingston Street, which has involved the cutting-off of the through route at the northern end of the street. Timber or steel telegraph poles, with trailing telephone wires, are a little obtrusive in several locations.

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Introduction

The historic buildings of the Conservation Area are mainly in residential use as family homes rather than flats, with nearly all of the streets being notable for their long terraces or groups of mid to late 19th century houses. According to their location, these vary in terms of their overall size and details, although most of them are two storeys high. The development of the Conservation Area in a relatively short period of time means that these buildings display very similar details and materials, providing the cohesive frontages which make the area of special interest. Further buildings were built for employment-related uses or to provide shops or community buildings. Of note are the many public houses which are still functioning in the back streets, and the survival of a number of former warehouses and other industrial buildings which together provide the residential streets with variety and interest. Along Mill Road, the purpose-built late 19th century shops, and other commercial premises, provide a lively streetscape and make a major contribution to the economic viability of the immediate area.

The predominant building type is therefore the modest two storey terraced house, often only one bay wide, with a simple slated roof facing the street. Most of these are found on the north side of Mill Road, with the larger more prestigious semi-detached houses on the south side or in a group around Collier Road. Research by Jon Harris suggests that Richard Reynolds Rowe, Cambridge City surveyor and architect of the Corn Exchange, had a strong guiding influence on many of these buildings. The best of these higher status houses are included on the list of Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs). Only four buildings within the Conservation Area are statutorily listed (see below). There are just two buildings which stand out as being completely different to the rest of the buildings due to their siting, size, use and architectural detailing – Hughes Hall in Wollaston Road (listed grade II), and the adjoining Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road – the only example of University College buildings in the Conservation Area.

More detailed descriptions of the listed buildings and BLIs are provided in the sections below.

5.2 Listed buildings

As previously mentioned, there are just four listed buildings in the Conservation Area - St Matthew's Church, the Cemetery Lodge, the former New Library in Mill Road, and Hughes Hall. Eight tombstones in the Cemetery are also individually listed.

St Matthew's Church, St Matthew's Street (grade II)

The church was built in 1866 to the designs of Richard Reynolds Rowe. It is built using Cambridge gault brick with red brick dressings and steeply pitched slate roofs. The plan form is based on a Greek cross and consists of an octagonal core with four radiating arms.

The Lodge, Mill Road Cemetery (grade II)

The Lodge was originally built as the mortuary chapel for the Cemetery and is now a house. The single storey plus attic building is faced in knapped flints with limestone quoins and dressings, and wooden casement windows, and the steeply pitched roofs are covered in modern clay tiles with a central chimney stack. The inscription over the door reads "Parochial Burial Ground Consecrated November 7 1848".

Eight tombstones in the Cemetery (all listed grade II)

These commemorate a number of local people from a variety of backgrounds, including James Rattee, a notable woodcarver and architectural sculptor, James Reynolds, one of the last stagecoach drivers who died in c1868, and Harmann Bernard, for many years a Hebrew teacher at the University of Cambridge.

Bharat Bhavan (former Free Library), Mill Road (listed grade II)

This red brick and terracotta neo-Baroque building is dated 1897 and although single storey, is a large imposing building with Corinthian pilasters, mullioned and transomed windows, and a notable elevation facing Mill Road with a pediment in which the words 'Free Library' are picked out. Of note is the liberal use of terracotta details in the form of tiles, swags, capitals, string courses, and window surrounds. A large multi-panelled door faces the side street (which once provided access to the Eagle Foundry) and is the main entrance, the opening given greater prominence due to the gable above. A timber and lead cupola is an original feature. This building is in very poor condition despite being in use as a (non City Council) community centre.

Hughes Hall, Wollaston Road (listed grade II)

Hughes Hall was built between 1894 and 1895 in the Neo-Dutch style to the designs of W M Fawcett, a Cambridge architect who was responsible for many other University buildings. The substantial three storey building is constructed using red brick with canted bay windows on the ground floor, with sash windows above. The roof is partially concealed by a balustraded parapet with shaped dormers breaking through the eaves above each of the 12 windows. A terracotta porch is perhaps the building's most notable feature.

5.3 Buildings of Local Interest

Cambridge City Council maintains a list of Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) which although having no statutory protection, have been given greater prominence due to the guidance which has recently been published in PPS 5 which affects all 'heritage assets' (including BLIs). This provides advice on their preservation and the protection of their setting. The BLIs in the Conservation Area (of which there are 149) vary in size and detail but the majority were built as family houses, either in terraced or semi-detached form. The most cohesive groups are in the Collier Road area and in St Barnabas Road. There are also a number of BLIs which are in non-residential uses, including a school, community buildings, several former warehouses and other industrial buildings, and a group of purpose-built shops in Mill Road. Unless otherwise mentioned, most of these buildings appear to have been built between 1870 and 1900.

The residential BLIs are:

Nos. 33-38 (consec.) Abbey Walk

Nos. 33-38 are a row of two storey houses, two windows wide, built from gault brick with red brick string courses at window head height on both floors. The slated roofs are topped by substantial stacks with red clay pots. Two terracotta ball finials decorate the eaves to No. 35. The terrace has been carefully extended with three additional houses in recent years in matching style.

Nos. 1-13 (odd) Collier Road

Nos. 1-3 have two storey bay windows, gault brick (or rendered) elevations, and slate roof (the same details as Nos. 19, 21 and 23 Willis Road). Nos. 5-13 are red and white gault brick

with two storey square bay windows topped by a half-timbered gable, with sash windows below with twelve panes over one. Post 1886.

Nos. 29-39 (odd) Collier Road

An almost continuous terrace of two storey houses built using red brick with white brick chimneys. The roofs are covered in slate with decorative red terracotta ridge tiles. The principal feature is provided by a three window wide ground floor bay window to each property, all with sashes, which are reflected in the three sash windows which lie immediately above. Post 1886.

Nos. 1-23 (odd) Guest Road

This cohesive terrace of three storey houses is built from gault brick with red brick string courses and window heads. Every other house has a three storey gable, with a canted bay window to the ground floor and a slightly smaller canted bay window to the first (an unusual feature) both bays being roofed in slate. The windows are sashes or mullioned and transomed (ground floor bays only). The roofs are slated with original dormer windows to the houses which do not have the gabled second floor. Each front door has a small open porch with slate roof supported on timber corbels. Post 1886.

Nos. 1-5 (odd) Mackenzie Road

A short terrace of three two storey houses built from gault brick with red brick eaves details, string courses, and corner details. Each house has a large two storey bay built of stone with timber one-over-one sash windows separated by simple columns of stone. The roofs face the street and are slated with prominent chimney stacks, again decorated with red brick string courses. Most of the red clay pots appear original. The houses are set back slightly from the pavement with low front boundary walls in brick. Post 1886.

Nos. 126-134 (even) Mill Road

This group of terraced two storey Gothic houses were built as railway workers' accommodation, and are shown on the 1859 map. They are constructed using a yellow brick with slate roofs and small and larger gables. The windows are timber casements, although most have been changed, and the front doors face the adjoining road bridge with elliptical brick arches over the openings. The window and door openings are defined by brick quoins in matching brickwork. The roofs are a particular feature of the group, being at almost eye level from the adjoining road bridge, with tall brick chimneys set at an angle to the ridge with red clay pots.

Nos. 1-8 Mortimer Road

These very substantial houses, now used as flats, were possibly designed by Richards Reynolds Rowe, architect of St Matthew's Church. They are shown on the 1886 map, and consist of four pairs of three storey plus basement semi-detached houses, of buff brick with tiled roofs, tall chimneys, and sash windows (apart from casements to the original dormers). Their height, roof form, and fanlights over the front doors all provide references to 19th century Gothic detailing, but the window and door arches are semi-circular rather than pointed. The very wide front doors have Gothic-style fanlights and are unusually contrived from two doors, each with two raised and fielded panels. There are stone dressings to the bays, with more stone pilasters between the grouped three-light first floor windows. Low brick walls separate the front gardens. They are now used as flats so may well have been built as halls of residence rather than as houses.

Nos. 11a-51 odd St Barnabas Road

These three storey semi-detached pairs of houses are all built from gault brick with two storey stone canted bays, with sash windows which originally (as some have been changed) had glazing bars to the upper sashes only. The roofs are slate with central and side chimneys. Long views along the street are particularly notable for the rhythm of the gables, on both sides of the road.

Nos. 20-62 (even) St Barnabas Road

An almost continuous group of two storey houses built from red brick with two storey stone canted bays with simple one over one sash windows. The roofs are slated and each bay has a hipped roof which sits into the main roof slope. They are very similar to Nos. 19, 21 and 23 Willis Road and Nos. 1 and 3 Collier Road)

No. 59 St Barnabas Road

This was once the vicarage to St Barnabas' Church. It is detached and built from gault brick with red brick dressings, a slated roof, and simple chimney stacks with some original clay pots. A ground floor bay window faces the street, with an entrance to the side.

No. 67 Tenison Road

This single storey house is dated 1900 and has a single gable end of considerable presence which closes the view along Wilkin Street. It is built from gault brick with red brick details to the window surrounds, corners and eaves.

Nos. 83-91 (odd) Tenison Road

This slightly varied group of mainly detached houses (Nos. 89/91 are in fact the only pair) are built using buff brick with red brick detailing, including door and window heads. Nos. 89/91 each has a two storey stone canted bay with decorated parapet, and the slate roof includes rows of fishscale slates to add interest. The detached houses have a gable facing the road, and the slate roofs have red terracotta ridge tiles. All of these houses sit back from the pavement with front gardens defined by red and buff brick walls, all original.

Nos. 1-17 (odd) Willis Road

Nos. 1-17 (odd) are substantial three storey terraced houses, the largest in the Conservation Area apart from the semi-detached houses in neighbouring Mortimer Road. They are built from gault brick with red brick dressings to the two storey bay windows, above which are gabled upper floors. Red brick is also used for string courses, cill details, arched door heads, and window lintels. The roofs are covered in natural slate with terracotta ridge tiles and large chimney stacks which often retain red clay chimney pots. The front doors are six panelled and heavily moulded.

Nos. 19, 21 and 23 Willis Road

Nos. 19, 21 and 23 Willis Road are a two storey terraced group built from gault brick with two storey canted bay windows with stone surrounds, including pilasters with foliage capitals. The roofs are covered in natural slate, with substantial chimney stacks and decorative ridge tiles, and the eaves are defined by several courses of terracotta. Post 1886.

Nos. 2-16 (even) Willis Road

These four pairs of three storey houses are similar to the BLIs opposite (Nos. 1-17 (odd)) and are also built from gault brick with red brick or terracotta dressings. They have ground floor canted bay windows, defining a slightly projecting bay, with a gable above to the attic floor. Each house also has an original dormer window with one sash window in each. The ground

floor entrances are protected by projecting porches with a timber balustrade supported on timber corbels providing protection from the elements. Nos. 2/4 and 10/12 are the same, with their front entrances to either side of the building, with Nos. 6/8 and 14/16 being 'halls-adjointing' in plan. The front doors have three glazed panels above three moulded panels (the glazing may be a modern alteration). Post 1886.

Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road

This large pair of symmetrical houses may have been designed by E S Prior and is built using buff brick with yellow brick window heads. The building is two (tall) storeys high with four sash windows to each house, set in slightly protruding bays. These sashes have thick glazing bars and rounded heads. There is an attic floor lit by original dormers, also with sash windows. The roof is covered in clay tiles.

The non-residential BLIs are:

St Matthew's Primary School, Caroline Place

Including remaining buildings of original Barnwell, East Road Boys, Girls and Infants Schools, former St Matthews Infants School and teacher's house converted into four houses. It is built with yellow brick elevations, circular windows, and timber gable details. An early 20th century brick building, considered as positive, remains in the grounds.

Former Dales Brewery, Gwydir Road

This building has two components, the taller being three storeys high and two windows wide, with a ground floor entrance and what appears to be a shopfront – all with original cast iron windows. The roof appears to be flat, with a wrought iron balustrade with the word 'Dales' picked out. Next to this building is a smaller, two storey building which has a pitched roof and end gable facing the street, arched headed windows and a similar front door and shopfront detail. The building appears to date to c1900 and was built using red brick with blue bricks for the window heads, door heads and string courses.

Former Bath House, Gwydir Street

The Bath House was built in 1927 as the City of Cambridge Public baths "for the use of cleanly citizens without baths". It is constructed from red brick with stone dressing and is single storey with a pitched tiled roof. A tall brick chimney at the back of the building confirms where the original boiler was located.

No. 2 Mackenzie Road

This appears to be an industrial building which seems to date from the 1920s. It is built from painted brick with red brick detailing picked out. The fenestration is irregular with no original windows, and the roof is flat and hidden by a plain parapet. There are no chimneys.

Sally Ann's, Mill Road

This building opened in 1913 as the Playhouse, the first purpose-built cinema in Cambridge. It has now been stripped of its elaborate façade and towers (and the 1960s frontage is now something of an eyesore) but it retains internal features including the proscenium arch. The side wall to Covent Garden has graffiti left by waiting queues.

Nos. 32 and 34 Mill Road

This pair of three storey buildings is constructed from gault brick with curved glass oriel windows with four sashes in each to the first floor. Twinned sashes sit in the raised gable dormers, which break through the eaves, on the second floor. A band of red brick decorates

these eaves, above which is a pitched slate roof with axial stacks. Each building retains all, or nearly all, of its original shopfront though No. 34 is the best preserved. These buildings are the same design as Nos. 24 and 26 Mill Road, which unfortunately do not retain their shopfronts.

No. 84 Mill Road (Pippa's Blinds)

Very little remains of this shopfront – it is suggested that it is removed from the list of BLIs.

Nos. 90a (Lloyds Bank)

This two storey building was built as a bank and is located on a prominent corner site. It was constructed using gault brick on the first floor with stone facing to the ground floor. Sash windows with arched heads and one corner oriel window to the first floor, with large mullioned and transomed windows to the ground floor. Corner entrance with arched head. Machine tiled roof and tall stacks with original clay pots.

92– 104a Mill Road

Row of matching terraced purpose-built shops with striking three storey elevations defined by first and second floor gabled bays with timber-framed detailing. Carved barge boards to gables. Gault brick with red brick string courses to the first floor. Slate roofs above. No. 94 is the only one of the group which retains its original joinery, though this is in poor condition.

St Barnabas' Church, former Institute and former school, Mill Road and St Barnabas Road

The church was built in 1869 and extended in 1888. The architects were W Basset-Smith and T Talbot Bury. The building has gault brick elevations with Gothic pointed windows and a steeply pitched slated roof. There is no tower or spire. The adjoining Institute faces St Barnabas Road with a gable, and is two storeys high and sits back from the road creating a courtyard. The single storey school, of similar design and materials, is located around the back of the church accessed from St Barnabas Road.

Ditchburn Place, Mill Road

This building was opened in 1838 as the Union Workhouse for Cambridge, and is one of the oldest buildings in the Conservation Area. It is built from gault brick with sash windows in a simple Georgian style, with a shallow pitched slate roof above. A gable faces Mill Road with the date 1838 on a plaque. This building became the Maternity Hospital in 1946 and closed in 1983. It was recently converted and extended to become part of the Ditchburn Place Sheltered Housing complex.

Mill Road Cemetery – Headstones, memorial and boundary wall

As previously mentioned, the Cemetery Lodge is listed grade II and eight of the tombstones are also listed grade II. Further memorials and headstones are included in the list of BLIs as they are of considerable interest and provide a link to the area's past and its people, though more detailed survey work is needed. The brick boundary wall which encloses the Cemetery is an integral part of its character.

Salvation Army Citadel, Tenison Road

This simple red brick building has a prominent gable facing Tenison Road. The entrance is contained by the gable and defined by a rendered over-sized doorcase with an entablature supported on giant corbels, with half-round glazed windows above. The building is principally made up of a double height hall.

Bolton's Warehouse, Tenison Road

Bolton's Warehouse is a simple three storey building with a gable facing Tenison Road. The detailing is very similar to Dales Brewery in Gwydir Street, with gault brick elevations enlivened by the use of red brick string courses, arched window heads, bay dividers, and eaves details. The windows appear to be the original cast iron with small panes. Stylish wooden doors to the two loading bay windows on the front elevation suggest that the building has been converted, possibly into two flats.

5.4 Positive buildings

In addition to the listed buildings and BLIs, a large number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Character Area Townscape Appraisal Maps as being positive buildings of townscape merit. Buildings identified as being positive will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provide the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, they are excluded. In the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area, most of these buildings date from the mid to late 19th century and were built as houses, mainly in terraced form. The survival and continued preservation of these properties, in a relatively unaltered form, is discussed further in the Management Plan.

The identification of these buildings follows advice provided within English Heritage's *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. Appendix 2 has a helpful list of criteria. A general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and any applications for demolition should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. This implies therefore that all buildings marked as positive on the Character Area Townscape Analysis Map will be retained in the future unless a special case can be made for demolition.

6 CHARACTER AREAS

6.1 Introduction

The Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area is a large, mainly residential, Conservation Area which was built in a relatively short time between the 1860s and the 1900s. This has provided a remarkably cohesive townscape but there are subtle variations of building type, including variations of scale, orientation, and the quality of the detailing. It is considered therefore that the residential streets on each side of Mill Road form a separate Character Area which can be divided into smaller sub-areas. In addition, the prevalence of commercial buildings along Mill Road has provided this central part of the Conservation Area with a completely different character to the residential back streets which lie on either side. Mortimer Road and Wollaston Road create a separate Character Area which relates more in terms of use, building form, and layout to the rest of the Central Conservation Area which covers the main University buildings in the City Centre.

The four principal Character Areas (with smaller sub-areas which are defined in the text) are as follows:

- Residential streets to the north of Mill Road
- Mill Road
- Mortimer Road and Wollaston Road
- Residential streets to south of Mill Road

This Chapter therefore defines the special interest of each Character Area, and considers the area's negative features as well as identifying buildings and sites where enhancement opportunities exist. Each Character Area will be considered under the following headings:

- Summary of the historical development of the area
- Key characteristics
- Layout and plots
- Townscape and streetscape features
- The buildings
- Negative features/issues, including sites or buildings for enhancement

6.2 Residential streets to the north of Mill Road

Summary of the historical development of the area

This residential area was largely developed between the 1860s and 1900 on land which was then in use as fields or nurseries, although Norfolk Street was established by the early 19th century and Ditchburn Place was built on the north side of Mill Road in 1838. Barnwell Free Church was located close to the cricket field in the 1830s but was demolished in 1848 when the land was converted into a cemetery. Cemetery Lodge was built at this date as was the original chapel. The coming of the railway in 1845 led to incremental demand for new housing, and the Eagle Foundry was established close to the railway by 1859. St Matthew's Church was built in 1866, and the Emery Street area was developed from the 1870s onwards on land owned by Corpus Christi College. From the 1870s onwards the former Barnwell Open Fields were also developed by the Sturton family. Flower Street, Blossom Street and the site of what is now Anglia Ruskin University, were all built on land which had once been used as a large nursery garden. Two schools have been built, the former Brunswick Primary School of

the late 19th century (which is now vacant), and St Matthew's Primary School. In the last 30 years or so a number of infill residential developments have been constructed, largely without any adverse impact on the surrounding Conservation Area.

Key characteristics

- Late 19th century residential suburb with continuous lines of terraced houses providing cohesive frontages
- These buildings are remarkably consistent in their overall form and detailing, with concealed back gardens
- Collier Road, Guest Road, Willis Road and Mackenzie Road contain larger houses, set back from the road, which are mainly BLIs
- Emery Road, Emery Street and Perowne Street is another residential area of quality
- Norfolk Road is a mixed area with shops, public houses, and other commercial uses as well as residential properties
- St Matthew's Church, the Cemetery Lodge, and eight tombstones, are the only listed buildings or structures
- Two areas of important public open space – the Cemetery and St Matthew's Piece, which adjoins an interesting modern building used as the Chinese Community Centre
- These two open spaces both contain a variety of mature trees which are important in long and short views
- St Matthew's Primary School is a BLI
- The Ditchburn Place Sheltered Housing scheme incorporates the former Workhouse as well as a number of modern blocks, accessed from Mill Road.

Layout and plots

This Character Area is defined by the east-west routes of Norfolk Street in the north and Mill Road in the south. The development of the area from the 1860s onwards resulted in roads being laid out roughly at right angles to Mill Road, following old field boundaries in places. The railway line forms a strong north-south boundary which defines the eastern edge of the Conservation Area.

The terraced houses sit on the back of the pavement in long continuous rows, with concealed back gardens of regular size. Plots are therefore similarly sized and regularly laid out, with narrow alleys in places providing access. Corner plots sometimes contain public houses and the occasional workshop or warehouse (possibly converted) remains.

Townscape and streetscape features

The principal townscape feature of this part of the Conservation Area is provided by the long rows of well detailed terraced houses of very similar scale and design. The exceptions are in the Collier Road area, where the houses are larger and with more varied details and materials. Historic street names in cast iron or enamel add to the interest of the area – the only example of historic street paving is in Collier Road (granite setts to a crossover), although there are some brick paved access pathways through the terraced houses on private land.

The buildings

The residential properties within this Character Area fall principally into three types:

- Terraced houses sitting on the back of the pavement (all the streets to the north and east of the Cemetery)
- Slightly larger houses, set back from the pavement (Emery Street)
- More substantial houses in Collier Road, Willis Road, Guest Road and Mackenzie Road, most of which are BLIs

Their typical characteristics are:

Terraced houses sitting on the back of the pavement (all the streets to the north and east of the Cemetery)

- Well preserved late 19th century terraced houses still in single occupation
- Some of the buildings retain original date plaques e.g. Sturton Street (1869 and 1878) and Gwydir Street (1879)
- Regular width and height (usually one bay and two storeys)
- Use of pale yellow or white gault brick, sometimes painted or rendered
- One or two windows usually to the first floor, with front door straight off the pavement
- Simple pitched roofs face the street with prominent chimney stacks, often with decorative banding in contrasting brickwork and varied clay pots, sometimes castellated
- Use of natural slate
- Low eaves height sitting immediately above the first floor window lintels
- No party walls through these roofs
- Some of the houses are set back from the road (e.g. Sturton Street and Sleaford Road) and this allows the addition of simple ground floor canted bays
- Windows are almost entirely timber sashes, usually two panes over two
- Stone lintels are often painted to contrast with the adjoining brick with decorative features such as ogee curved edges and trefoil motifs
- Many original timber front doors, usually four panelled
- Cast iron boot scrappers can be seen on many of the houses
- Some old shopfronts remain, no longer in use

Slightly larger houses, set back from the pavement (Emery Street)

- Cohesive well preserved late 19th century terraced houses still in single occupation
- Set back from the pavement with hedges and low gault brick front boundary walls defining small front gardens
- Regular width and height (usually two bays and two storeys)
- Use of yellow gault brick, sometimes painted or rendered
- Simple pitched roofs face the street with prominent chimney stacks, often retaining their original clay pots
- Use of natural slate, sometimes interrupted by modern roof lights
- No party walls through these roofs
- The eaves are defined by two courses of bricks, laid to angle
- One or two windows usually to the first floor, with ground floor canted bay windows with pierced parapets, all built in stone

- Windows are almost entirely timber sashes, usually two panes over two
- Stone lintels are often painted to contrast with the adjoining brick with decorative features such as ogee curved edges and trefoil motifs
- Many original front doors, usually with two long panels, with heavy mouldings
- Survival of paved brick passages to rear gardens and red and black tiled front paths to street

More substantial houses in Collier Road, Willis Road, Guest Road and Mackenzie Road, most of which are BLIs

These have been described in some detail in Chapter 5 The Buildings of the Conservation Area section 5.3 *Buildings of Local interest*.

Positive, negative and neutral issues, including sites or buildings for enhancement

Buildings:

- Some of the unlisted terraced houses have been adversely affected by the use of modern materials and details, such as uPVC windows and front doors
- Many of the original slate roofs are now in need of replacement
- Some over-dominant roof lights
- Painting of brickwork
- The loss of front boundaries and gardens to create car parking areas
- The former Brunswick Primary School (original buildings) is a Building-at-Risk
- The single storey sheds with pantiled roofs in Perowne Street are Buildings-at-Risk

Spatial:

- The pressure for new development
- The preservation of the historic street name plates
- The demand for on-street car parking
- Poor quality public realm including damaged pavements, untended planters, and damaged street signs
- A certain amount of untidy wirescape
- Dominant telegraph poles and trailing wires
- The care of the trees in the two main open green spaces – the Cemetery and St Matthew's Piece

Economic:

- Vacant shops in the Norfolk Street area

Conservation Area boundary:

- A small extension to include the historic buildings in Stone Street is suggested

6.3 Mill Road

Summary of the historical development of the area

Mill Road may have been one of the main Roman routes out of the City. In the early 19th century it was surrounded by fields with a working mill to the immediate south, around the

current location of Mill Street. The Union Workhouse of 1838 was built to the north of the road, and the railway workers' cottages in the 1850s, following the new railway which arrived in 1845. Most of the buildings along Mill Road were added between the 1870s and 1900, after St Barnabas' Church was constructed in 1869. The Free Library, a listed building, was built in 1897. Whilst the uses along the south side of the road are mainly commercial, with a variety of shops, cafes, and other facilities, along the north-west side of the road are long terraces of houses, mostly in residential use although a few have become offices of varying types. To the north-east, the Bath House lies next to the paved area which faces Mill Road and which acts as an informal 'centre'. (Following recommendations in the 1999 Appraisal, improvements were provided to the public toilets, car parking area, shopfronts and street lighting.)

Key characteristics

- Important commercial street which serves a large hinterland
- Mostly small family-owned shops with a great variety of services
- Most of the buildings date to between 1870 and 1900 and some are BLIs
- Varied groups of terraced properties mainly two storeys high, usually set on the back of the pavement
- Some historic shopfronts remain
- St Barnabas Church, Lloyds Bank and the Bath House form a group, with the adjoining paved area being provided with modern stainless steel street furniture and planting
- Cohesive residential terraces along the north-west side only

Layout and plots

The layout of the area is simply described as a long straight road with wide pavements and buildings generally located at the back, apart from the residential properties on the north-west side which sit back slightly from the road (about one to two metres) with brick walls and hedging shielding them from the busy traffic. The plots are of a similar width, confirming the focused development of the area, with gardens to houses on the north side of the road, and more altered curtilages on the south, where car parking areas, access roads and secondary buildings have been inserted.

Townscape and streetscape features

Mill Road contains continuous frontages of mainly historic buildings, two or three storeys high. St Barnabas' Church is the greatest (positive) interruption to this rhythm. Gables are particularly important at the eastern entrance to the Conservation Area as viewed from the railway bridge. Generally the frontages are considered to be positive although there has been some very limited infilling and some of the original buildings have been heavily altered. Mature trees next to the Bath House and outside St Barnabas' Church are important in views along the street. The bridge over the railway line has been decorated with various pictures and the phrase 'Respect and diversity in our community'.

The buildings

The street is largely composed of groups of matching commercial properties, clearly developed in an incremental way, but of largely similar scale. The great majority of shopfronts remain at their original size, and very few have been amalgamated; the survival of the original frontages reinforces the rhythm and character of the street. Most of the buildings are built using gault brick with slate roofs, sometimes gabled. Red brick is used for decoration such as

window heads, string courses and corner details. Decorative rather than functional timber framing can also be seen on many of the first floor front elevations, above the shopfronts.

On the north-west side of the street, there are five groups of very similar mainly terraced houses, two storeys high, Nos. 55 -81 with ground floor canted bays, sash windows, and slated roof facing the road. The eaves are all decorated with three courses of red brick, one course of which is usually arranged in a saw-tooth pattern. Whilst gault brick is the most common material, painted render is also used. The occasional building, most notably shown on Nos. 41 and 43 Mill Road, is three storeys high. Nos. 27 to 39 have two storey canted bay windows with foliage capitals to the pilasters and heavily moulded five panelled front doors (where they remain). Some of these buildings are in use as flats. Nos. 3 to 25 are slightly larger, and relate more to the buildings around the corner in Willis Road which are BLIs. They are two or three storeys high with stone two storey bay windows with red brick or terracotta string courses and eaves details. Of note is the subtle injection of Gothic detailing, such as the pointed arches over the recessed front doors, the arcading over the sashes in the bay windows, and the use of polychromatic brickwork for some of the window arches.

Positive, negative and neutral issues, including sites or buildings for enhancement

Buildings:

- Shopfronts – there are some good examples of historic shopfronts, but many of the original ones have either been stripped out or have been altered
- A previous grant scheme paid for some new more appropriate shopfronts but much remains to be done
- Problems include:
 - Over-deep fascias
 - Poor quality signage
 - Garish colours for signage, shopfronts, and joinery generally
 - Over-dominant lighting
- Some of the shops are aimed at the ‘night-time’ economy so do not open during the day
- Pressure for security shutters on the shopfronts
- Most of the original sash or casement windows on the front elevations have been replaced in uPVC
- Many of the slate roofs and the front elevations generally are in poor condition
- Some visible satellite dishes on front elevations or roof slopes
- The former Free Library is occupied but in need of sensitive repair
- Sally-Ann’s would also benefit from enhancements, possibly including the rebuilding of the modern ground floor extension which faces Mill Road

Spatial:

- Overlarge advertising hoarding on the side elevation of ‘Emporium’ No. 117 Mill Road, opposite the New Library, and also on the side elevation of No. 105 Mill Road, next to Mickey Flynns
- Busy traffic along Mill Road, with limited controlled crossings (one controlled crossing near the junction with Mortimer Road, one Belisha crossing and a further crossing opportunity by the traffic lights at the end of St Barnabas Road)
- Poor quality pavements
- The planting in the paved area next to the public toilets is in need of some attention

6.4 Mortimer Road and Wollaston Road

Summary of the historical development of the area

This area is shown on the historic map of the 1870s as a single large field, with the University Sports and Cricket Ground immediately to the south. The line of Mortimer Road and Wollaston Road is marked as a track but there are no buildings. Nos. 1-8 consec Mortimer Road were built by 1886, and Hughes Hall was completed in 1895. Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road may date to the early 20th century. A separate much larger Hughes Hall was built on part of the adjoining Cricket Field (Fenner's Field) within the last thirty years.

Key characteristics

- Small but spaciouly laid out area of two streets
- Views over the adjoining Cricket Field towards lines of trees
- Other views through openings in Hughes Hall to grassed area beyond, and over Donkey Common, next to Parkside Pool
- Only three buildings or building groups, all of the highest quality – Hughes Hall, Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road, and Nos. 1-8 Mortimer – these are either listed or are BLIs
- All of the buildings appear to be in residential uses
- Private and tranquil character which contrasts with the busy bustle of traffic and pedestrians along Mill Road

Layout and plots

This Character Area comprises two straight roads at right angles to each other. Mortimer Road is also at right angles to Mill Road. The BLIs along Mortimer Road are set back a little from the road and laid out in regular plots with a common building line, plot width and depth, and back boundary. Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road, and Hughes Hall, are built on the same alignment and set back from the road. Both have large gardens, although those behind Nos. 1 and 2 have been developed with smaller residential units (Chancellors Court) which can be glimpsed through the gap between Nos. 1 and 2 and Hughes Hall.

Townscape and streetscape features

The most obvious townscape feature in this Character Area is the dominance of Nos. 1-8 Mortimer Road, as they are a large, cohesive group which was clearly designed to provide some visual impact. The two buildings in Wollaston Road are also large, but are somewhat tucked away down the road, which is gated (although during the day public access is possible).

The buildings

Hughes Hall is listed grade II and was built between 1894 and 1895 in the Neo-Dutch style to the designs of W M Fawcett. Nos. 1 and 2 Wollaston Road may have been designed by E S Prior and probably date to the early 20th century. Nos. 1-8 Mortimer Road were possibly designed by Richards Reynolds Rowe and may date to the 1880s.

More detailed descriptions of these buildings can be found in Chapter 5 section 5.2 *Listed buildings* and section 5.3 *Buildings of Local Interest*.

Positive, negative and neutral issues, including sites or buildings for enhancement

- There are no obvious negative features or issues in this Character Area.

6.5 Residential streets to south of Mill Road

Summary of the historical development of the area

This almost entirely residential Character Area contains some very early buildings which were shown on the 1830 map along what is now Covent Garden – Nos. 20-30 remain. A mill and orchard are shown on the same map immediately to the east, otherwise the area is fields. By the 1870s more buildings had been added in Mill Street, Cross Street, Caius Street (later to become Mawson Road) and Union Terrace (later to become Tenison Road). St Barnabas' Church, completed in 1869, provided the spiritual focus. The main period for development was between 1880 and 1900, when terraced houses were added in Mawson Road and along the west side of Tenison Road (some properties are dated 1885), and higher status semi-detached houses along the east side of Tenison Road and on both sides of St Barnabas Road. The 1886 map shows a Gospel Meeting Room at the northern end of Union Terrace which has subsequently become the Abubakr Siddiq Islamic Centre. Devonshire Road, which lay next to the Midland Goods Yard in the 1870s, was extended towards the southern end of Tenison Road in the late 19th century. St Barnabas Court is a development of terraced houses off the southern end of St Barnabas Road permitted in 2002.

Key characteristics

- Late 19th century residential suburb with continuous lines of terraced or semi-detached houses providing cohesive frontages
- The Covent Garden area was developed first and some of the houses date to before 1830
- The buildings are remarkably consistent in their overall form and detailing, with concealed back gardens
- There are four areas of varying character – Covent Garden, Mill Street and Cross Street; Mawson Road and Tenison Road; St Barnabas Road; and Devonshire Road
- The narrowest streets are in the Covent Garden/Mill Street area
- Most of the buildings in St Barnabas Road and a few in Tenison Road are BLIs
- There are some other uses such as small-scale commercial or educational premises in the Covent Garden area and in Tenison Road
- King's Church in Tenison Road is dated 1895
- Relatively peaceful character despite the close proximity of Mill Road and Cambridge Railway Station
- No public open space apart from the green at the junction of Tenison Road and Lyndewode Road, which is also notable for the large mature trees which feature in views along the streets
- Trees are also important along the eastern side of Devonshire Road, from where there are limited views over the cycle-bridge which links this part of Cambridge with Romsey Town

Layout and plots

This Character Area is defined by Mill Road in the north, the University Cricket Ground and the larger houses in Glisson Road (which fall within the adjoining Conservation Area) to the west, and the railway line and associated sites (the former Midlands Good Yard, now a timber

yard) to the east. The southern boundary is not obvious, as the residential streets (Glisson Road, Lyndewode Road, and Tenison Road) continue towards the Railway Station. These roads are all laid out at (roughly) right angles to Mill Road, and are largely parallel to each other, with linking streets creating a grid pattern.

The terraced or semi-detached houses sit on the back of the pavement, or with small front gardens, in long continuous rows, with concealed back gardens of regular size. Plots are therefore similarly sized and regularly laid out, with narrow alleys in places providing access. Larger front gardens can be seen in St Barnabas Road and along the east side of Tenison Road, where the houses and plots are generally more generously sized. There are three public houses which are located on corners and which therefore create a break in the streetscape, namely the Six Bells in Covent Garden, the Salisbury Arms in Tenison Road, and the Live and Let Live in Mawson Road.

Townscape and streetscape features

The principal townscape feature of this Character Area is provided by the long rows of well detailed terraced or semi-detached houses, with groups of buildings of very similar scale and design. The houses in St Barnabas Road and along the east side of Tenison Road are notably larger in terms of width and floor to ceiling heights, with more elaborate external (and presumably internal) detailing. Historic street names in cast iron or enamel add to the interest of the area. There is some historic street paving (granite setts and sandstone slabs) in St Barnabas Road. Along Tenison Road, the streetscape is more varied due to the greater variation in building type and uses.

The buildings

The buildings within this Character Area are mainly in residential use but there are variations in scale and detailing according to location.

Buildings in Covent Garden, Mill Street and Cross Street

- Cohesive early to late 19th century development of two storey cottage-style properties mainly in terraced form
- Use of gault brick almost throughout with stone or brick lintels (red or gault brick)
- Shallow pitched slated roofs facing the street
- No party walls visible at roof level
- Substantial brick stacks with some original clay pots
- Small front gardens and ground floor bay windows to some properties
- Nos. 20-30 Covent Garden appear to be the earliest houses and date to the early 19th century with multi-paned sash windows
- Similar scaled properties in Mill Street with half-round fanlights
- Otherwise the predominant window type is the two-over-two sash and casement
- Variety of both historic and modern front doors, including two panelled timber with heavy mouldings
- Some variation in uses with offices, a public house and other commercial premises, all reasonably low key

Buildings in Mawson Road and Tenison Road

- Larger terraced houses creating continuous frontages, generally set back slightly from the road providing an opportunity for low brick walling, hedging and small trees

- Use of red or gault brick with decorated stone lintels – some properties have been painted, usually a pastel colour
- Ground floor canted stone bay windows and three windows above, the paired windows divided by column pilaster with foliage decoration
- No. 13 Mawson Road is an extremely well preserved property with decorative brick banding below the eaves in red and white brick and all of its original joinery
- Simple roofs face the street and are covered in slate – some of these have original dormers
- Other terraced houses have two storey stone bay windows with red brick lintels, string courses, and decoration to the chimney stacks
- Original front doors remain in many houses, such as the those to No. 72 Mawson Road – three glazed panels above two raised and fielded panels, the glazing being provided by very decorative leaded lights which match the glazing in the fanlights above
- The scale of the properties decreases closer to Mill Road
- Tenison Road contains three continuous terraces of two storey houses along the west side, two windows wide, the ground floor canted bay windows, sash windows, and slate roofs facing the street
- On the east side, the houses are larger and more mixed, including Nos. 83-91 which are BLIs
- Further north, the houses have two storey canted bay windows, with sash windows and red brick decoration to the gault brick elevation – terracotta eaves details are important
- Bolton's warehouse and the Salvation Army Citadel are the most dominant buildings in the northern part of Tenison Road

Buildings in St Barnabas Road

- Well preserved cohesive development dating to between 1880 and 1900
- Most of the very substantial buildings are semi-detached or terraced BLIs apart from Nos. 64-82 even
- Nos. 64-82 even are semi-detached pairs, two storeys high, with double height stone bay windows, sash windows, six panelled front doors, and foliage decoration to window pilasters and door surrounds
- Nos. 28-62 are three storeys high with gabled roof dormers and two storey bay windows (BLIs)
- Nos. 11a-51 odd are semi-detached pairs, with tall gables containing attic rooms half timbered decoration, mullioned and transomed windows and canted two storey bays – they are faced in red brick with roughcast to the first floor (BLIs) – other houses in the group are faced in gault brick with two storey stone bay windows with sash windows, the upper sash being divided into six or eight panes
- Some of the houses have half-round gables over paired sash windows, with white painted architraves and bay windows which contrast with the deep red brick
- Other have Dutch red brick gables with stone window frames and string courses
- At the southern end of the road, the non-BLIs are notable for the use of half-timbered gables which are important in views along the street
- All of the roofs are slate with prominent chimney stacks

Buildings in Devonshire Road

- Fairly continuous and cohesive two storey terrace on the west side of the road, two storeys high, with stock brick elevation and red brick eaves details
- Set back very slightly from the road, with low brick boundary walls and some planting
- Two or three windows wide
- Ground floor canted bay windows with sash windows
- Slate roofs face the street with large brick chimney stacks with clay pots

The BLIs in this Character Area have been described in some detail in Chapter 5 The Buildings of the Conservation Area section 5.3 *Buildings of Local interest*.

Positive, negative and neutral issues, including sites or buildings for enhancement

- Some of the houses have been adversely affected by the use of modern materials and details, particularly in Devonshire Road – this includes uPVC windows and front doors, roof lights, the use of artificial slate for the roofs, the painting of brickwork, and the loss of front boundaries or the use of modern materials like concrete blockwork
- Loss of front gardens in St Barnabas Road for car parking, and the use of modern materials instead of the traditional brick for front boundaries e.g. black metal railings or wooden palisade fencing
- Some visible satellite dishes on front elevations or front roofslopes
- Some overhead cables and dominant telegraph poles

7 ISSUES

7.1 Principal issues

The principal issues for the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area appear to be:

- *Conservation Area boundary review*

Following a careful review of the existing boundary of the Conservation Area, a small extension to include historic buildings in Stone Street in the north-east of the Conservation Area is proposed.

- *Protecting the character of unlisted buildings*

There are many unlisted family dwellings in the Conservation Area which are of very high architectural value but which are vulnerable to unsympathetic changes under a householder's Permitted Development Rights. These include the right to replace windows or front doors using modern materials such as uPVC. The loss of original roof materials, the creation of car parking in front gardens, and the painting of previously unpainted brickwork are further issues.

- *Statutory list and Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs)*

The Conservation Area contains a very high number of BLIs but very few statutorily listed buildings. Further additions to both lists may need to be made in the future, particularly since the new PPS5 gives greater significance to BLIs.

- *Preserving and enhancing the unique character of the Mill Road shopping area*

Mill Road was built mainly between 1880 and 1900 and contains a high concentration of unlisted but positive buildings. Despite past initiatives, it is in need of further comprehensive improvements, to address issues such as the poor condition of some of the buildings, the poor quality shopfronts, unauthorised satellite dishes, the poor quality public realm, and the repair or possibly even the redevelopment of several individual buildings. It has been noted how satellite dishes can be seen on the front elevations or front roof slopes of many of the buildings in the Conservation Area, presumably erected without planning permission.

- *Preserving and enhancing the unique character of Norfolk Street*

Norfolk Street is marked on the 1830s map and contains mixed development along the southern side, with commercial uses concentrated towards East Road and the City Centre. Uses include public houses and shops, and there are further shops in the 1960s and later development which now lies on the northern side of the road. This area is generally rather fragmented and some of the commercial premises are vacant. Improvements to the buildings, public realm, traffic management, and general appearance of the area are all needed.

- *The control of new development*

There are few development opportunities in the Conservation Area due to the layout of the street and buildings, with continuous terraces of groups of houses lining the streets. However, there have been a number of extensions to these buildings, some of them undertaken in a

modern but stylish manner, as can be seen in the Covent Garden area. There are also some late 20th century buildings which may at some stage benefit from being replaced.

- *The care and improvement of the trees*

In certain locations, mostly in the Cemetery and in St Matthew's Piece, trees make a very special contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There are also a number of trees, sometimes singly or in small groups, on private land. In addition to the usual protection which Conservation Area designation provides for all trees over a certain size, some are covered by individual Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). The continued protection, enhancement and, where necessary, the replacement of these trees, is an issue for the future management of the Conservation Area.

- *Protection of the views*

Views within the Conservation Area tend to be limited to vistas along streets, or can be found around the Cemetery or St Matthew's Piece, where they focus on the many mature trees. Views across, into and out of the Conservation Area are important and need to be protected. This is covered by Policy of the Cambridge Local Plan.

- *Buildings at Risk*

The following buildings are considered to be 'at risk':

- The former Brunswick Primary School, Young Street
- The single storey pantiled sheds in Perowne Street
- The former Free Library, Mill Road
- *Public realm proposals*

The greatest opportunity for publically funded enhancements can be seen in the Mill Road area, with few opportunities in the residential back streets apart from:

- A general need to improve the pavements, replacing concrete paving and improving tarmacadam pavements where they have been left marked by trenching for utility providers
- A general need to improve street lighting (only Mill Road has had new street lighting)
- The undergrounding of overhead wires, and the removal of telegraph poles
- The protection of the historic street name plates

3 CONTACT DETAILS

For further information about historic buildings and Conservation Areas, contact:
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