



# **Proposed Mill Road Area Conservation Area Draft Appraisal**

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**Cambridge City Council**

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Aims and Objectives

This Character Appraisal seeks to define what is special about the Mill Road area of the Central 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. Once approved, this document will be a 'material' consideration when the Council considers applications for change within, or on the edges of, the Conservation Area.

## 1.2 Summary of Special Interest of the Mill Road Area

The Mill Road 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 Area. This document draws heavily on this earlier Appraisal though with the addition of the Romsey Town area to the east.

The Conservation Area boundary as existing 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". However, this area is now considered to be of enough value to meet these criteria.

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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, and the tree-lined Romsey Recreation ground between Vinery Road and Hemingford Road.

Mill Road itself is a complex multi-ethnic and multicultural mix of commercial, residential, religious, and community uses, in mainly mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> 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 betterpreserved 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 New Street Primary School, a 19<sup>th</sup> 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 proposed Conservation Area, and the protection of their historic detailing, is an issue.

The Romsey Town area covers mainly residential streets which lie at right angles to the north and to the south of the eastern end of Mill Road, one of the earliest roads leading out of the historic core of Cambridge. (The west side of the proposed Conservation Area is bounded by the railway line) The revised boundary takes in Mill Road railway bridge with its murals, and the tree-fringed car park west of Great Eastern Street and the tree fringed area at the junction of Argyle Street and Mill Road. The proposed Conservation Area boundary largely encompasses the extent of terraced housing development as shown on the 1904 Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map. Around this boundary, the streets widen and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century grid pattern changes to more spacious layout of paired houses with much larger gardens, typical of the Inter-War period.

Most of the houses are narrow (one or two bays wide) two storey terraced houses built from brick with slate roofs. They mainly date to between 1880 and 1910, and are interspersed with public houses, industrial buildings, stable blocks, and workshops, many now in residential uses. These buildings are notable for their use of brick, timber joinery, slate roofs, and large chimney stacks, often with their original clay pots. Whilst individual

groups have slightly varied details, their overall form, height and relationship to the street gives the area a cohesive and attractive appearance, assisted by the preservation of many of the original details and materials. Romsey Recreation Ground between Hemingford Road and Vinery Road provides much needed open space for children to play, and has recently been enhanced with a new play area and sitting-out spaces.

Mill Road itself is in varied commercial uses, the businesses being largely based in late 19th century buildings of varying degrees of quality. Several small churches or chapels remain, plus former schools, community buildings and, almost next door to each other, clubrooms for both the Conservatives and the Labour Party. National shops such as the Co-op, SPAR and most recently Tesco are present but not particularly dominant, being mixed in with a large number of locally-owned and run businesses including cafes, restaurants, and take-aways, reflecting the young and often ethnically diverse local population. On the north-eastern edge of the proposed Conservation Area, Brookfields Hospital is still operating providing a variety of services and retains some historic buildings (one is dated 1883) as well as more recent accommodation which is excluded from the proposed Conservation Area boundary. Also excluded is the site immediately to the west of the hospital, where modern commercial buildings have recently been demolished. In 2007 the City Council produced an urban design strategy for this site called the 'Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-Op site, Mill Road, Cambridge Development Brief' which set out some possible development options for it, but to date (April 2011) the site remains contained by hoardings with no sign of any activity.

A variety of issues have been identified as part of the Character Appraisal, including the preservation of the historic terraced housing; the need to review the list of BLIs; the improvement of the shopfronts and the buildings generally in Mill Road; the control of new development; the care and improvement of the green spaces and trees; the control of satellite dishes; the protection of views into, out of and across the proposed Conservation Area; and the improvement of the public realm.

### 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](http://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 Queen's Road and runs along the rear entrances to many Colleges.

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 Mill Road Area

The Conservation Area is defined by Mill Road, an important historic route that 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 the north of 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 the west of 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.

The development and growth of Romsey Town mainly took place between 1880 and 1900, and mirrored the development to the west of the railway line as detailed above. Part of the map of 1886 shows, for instance, that Great Eastern Street had been



developed with terraced houses and that the adjoining streets – Cavendish Road, Sedgwick Street, Catherine Street and Thoday Street – had been laid out but only a few houses had been built. Beyond these streets were open fields and allotments, crossed by old footpaths that led to the uninhabited Coldhams Lane and Coldhams Common where coprolites were mined. For each terrace, the width of each house was crucial, for if over 15 foot it was possible to provide a separate front hallway, allowing some privacy to the front parlour. Front bay windows were also added to the more up-market houses, often lived in by train drivers, who earned more than the more lowly railway workers. The 1886 maps also confirm the existence of two large houses, both set back from Mill Road – to the north, The Lodge occupied a large site between Cavendish Road and Sedgwick Street (which appears to have been totally redeveloped in the 1920s), and to the south, Romsey House, which may have given its name to the area. This survives on the corner of Coleridge Road and Mill Road and is currently used as a language school.

From the 1880s (one of the remaining buildings is dated 1882) a site to the north of Mill Road was developed as an Isolation Hospital. Now called Brookfields Hospital, after the small stream which runs across the site, further buildings were incrementally added including the largest building which faces Mill Road. This is built using distinctive polychrome brickwork and appears to date to 1892 – it may have been designed by E Wareham Harry, the Borough Surveyor. Other interesting buildings also date to this period, including the Salisbury Club (for the Conservatives), which was built in 1891 by FA Mullet, with a further section being added to the west in 1909. St Philip's Church in Mill Road is dated 1889, and St Philip's School in Ross Street was built close by between 1894 and 1898 to the designs of W M Fawcett. St Philip's Junior School in Thoday Street was built between 1889 and 1894 by J S Redding and Son, Cambridge. In 1891 a new Methodist Church was built on Mill Road to the designs of W Wren of Cambridge – this was later (1906) substantially extended. Of the commercial buildings, the Royal Standard Public House was built in Mill Road around 1880 and was acquired as a public house from Charles Armstrong-Ors by the Star Brewery in 1892. All of these buildings are already on the City Council's list of BLIs.

The provision of further houses in the next twenty years, along with shops, schools, churches and other facilities, gave the local residents all they needed. As this was the period when Britain's Empire was at its most powerful, many of the new street names reflected the various countries now under British control, such as Suez, Malta, Cyprus and Hobart. By 1921 the area had over 7,000 residents, most of who worked for the railway as drivers, guards, boilermakers, platelayers, fitters, firemen and clerks. Other men worked in the building industry and some of them helped to build the new Labour Party Clubhouse in Mill Road, which was opened by Ramsey Macdonald in 1928. When many of the residents supported the General Strike in 1926, the area became famous for its strong union membership and socialist leanings, and was often referred to as 'Red Romsey'. Whilst it lay close to the City Centre, it felt quite isolated from the University buildings, dons and students, with the line of the railway quite literally creating a barrier.

A General Improvement Area (GIA) was declared in Romsey Town in 1981 to encourage property owners to upgrade their terraced houses including the installation of inside toilets, new bathrooms, damp-proofing, and new roofs. Since then, despite some gentrification, the effect of student lets, and the gradual assimilation of families from a range of ethnic backgrounds, a strong community spirit still survives and is reflected in the support for various local groups including an active Residents' Association.

Today, the Mill Road Area 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 Locations 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 proposed Mill Road Town Area Conservation Area covers the existing the Mill Road and St Matthew's Area section of the Central Conservation Area as well as the continuation of Mill Road beyond the railway bridge to the west.

Activities within the proposed Conservation Area are mainly residential, with commercial uses focused along Mill Road and to a lesser degree, along Norfolk Street, although there is an occasional commercial use (public house, small shop or office group) in the residential back streets. C and D Motors in Hope Street is a small back-street garage in a road where other historic buildings may also have been built for industrial or non-residential uses, such as stables. Mill Road is notable for its wide range of independent shops and other facilities; the addition of a Tesco Metro Store in Mill Road in recent years was controversial. 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, mainly aimed at the night-time economy. Many of the shops are 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. St Philip's Infants School in Ross Street is now a Community Centre, and on Mill Road, the former Methodist Church is now the Romsey Mill Centre. Brookfields Hospital is still operational but only the remaining historic buildings of the large campus lie within the proposed Conservation Area, facing Mill Road. Some of the former industrial buildings have been converted into offices, or are now residential. There are six active churches – St Philip's Church, Mill Road, the Church of Seventh Day Adventists in Hobart Road, the Mill Road Baptist Church, (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 proposed 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, apart from a small stream (now largely culverted) which passes across the northern part of the Brookfields Hospital site. The only change in level is provided by the bridge where Mill Road crosses the railway line on the eastern edge of the proposed Conservation Area.

Cambridge lies on a gravel ridge over Jurassic clays suitable for brick making, as seen in many of the buildings in the proposed 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. There is evidence of gravel extraction close to the Mill Road area on historic maps.

### **3.3 The Landscape and Urban Setting**

The proposed 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 and Romsey Recreation Ground are the major green spaces 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 north-south line of the railway creates another natural boundary between the Mill Road and Romsey Town areas within the proposed Conservation Area, immediately to the east of York Street, Ainsworth Street and Kingston Street. However, they are to a degree bound together due to their similar plan form, with Mill Road acting as the key main route for both. To the north and south lie areas of Inter-War housing, notable for their semi-detached houses with more spacious gardens. To the east, the proposed Conservation Area is bounded by mixed development and part of the eastern section of the Cambridge Ring Road (the A1134).

Physically attached to the southern part of the proposed 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 proposed Conservation Area retains an essentially urban character with opportunities for wildlife being limited to private gardens; the Mill Road Cemetery, a grade II Historic Park and Garden; as well as the Romsey Recreation Ground next to Vinery Road. 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. Outside the proposed Conservation Area, Barnwell Pit and part of Coldham's Common have been designated as a Site of Natural History Interest and together they support a rich fauna and flora including some rare water plants.

## 4 Spatial Analysis

### 4.1 Layout and Street Pattern

The proposed 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'. Mill Road bends gently in the middle of the section providing some drama to views along the street.

The 1830 and the 1886 maps confirm that many of the streets were laid out along the boundaries of fields which were incrementally developed for housing from the 1860s and 1880s onwards. To the north, the field boundaries bend slightly to the west, a feature that 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. Argyle Street curves slightly, reflecting the line of the old railway line, which is shown on the 1906 map. The original alignment of the railway line from Cambridge to Bury St Edmunds passed along the southern limit of the proposed Conservation Area, providing a barrier which is reflected in the clear demarcation between late 19<sup>th</sup> century and Inter-War development, as shown most clearly in Marmora Road.

It is clear that the main characteristics of the proposed Conservation Area is 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, before the railway bridge, 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, before the railway bridge, where the commercial uses have resulted in the back gardens (where they exist) being lost to car parking or other uses.

Although, many of the streets were developed in a piecemeal or 'pattern book' way by different builders, it is still surprising how consistent they appear. There are virtually no detached or semi-detached properties, apart from the few that have been added in more recent years, such as the semi-detached pairs of Inter-War houses facing Sedgwick Road. The building layout along Mill Road is far more varied, due to the more commercial uses in this part of the proposed Conservation Area.

### 4.2 Open Spaces and Trees

There are three areas of 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 second is the 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 Citylife House; 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.

The third area of significant open space is the public park next to Vinery Road, which contains a large grassed area for sports, a children's playground, and a newly enhanced sitting and gathering space which has been stylishly fitted out with seats and other features. The boundaries of the park are defined by mature trees, which feature in views into the area. A line of mature trees are particularly important in Vinery Road, where they make a major contribution to the setting of the long terrace of historic houses along the eastern side. A few less significant trees can be seen along the edge of the railway line and around the small car park at the end of Great Eastern Street, and at the junction of the railway bridge / Mill Road and Argyle Street.

Trees, flowerbeds, 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 proposed Conservation Area, Petersfield and Donkey's Common, which separate the boundary of this proposed Conservation Area with Gonville Place/East Road are significant in terms of views and ambiance.

Apart from the Cemetery, St Matthew's Piece and Romsey Recreation Ground, 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;
- Along the edge of the railway line; and
- Around the small car park at the end of Great Eastern Street.

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 proposed Conservation Area, although the Cemetery, St Matthew's Piece and Romsey Recreation Ground do provide some well used public open space. At the western end of Mill Road, close to the railway bridge, a row of 1930s shops is set back slightly from the road and a wide pavement created which does provide some emphasis to the area. This is enhanced by the popular café, which lies within this group. There is a space in Mill Road, repaved and provided with new street furniture since the Mill Road and St Matthews Area Conservation Area 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 give the streetscape some punctuation and provide views along streets. These buildings are notable for both their size and their high quality architectural detailing and are as follows:

- The former New Street Primary School, New Street;
- The Citylife House, 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, Tenison Road;
- Hughes Hall, Wollaston Road;
- Sally Ann's, Mill Road, a large historic building (the former Playhouse) and a BLI;
- The former St Philip's Infants' School, now a Community Centre, Ross Street;
- St Philip's Church, Mill Road;
- The Baptist Church, Mill Road;
- The former Methodist Church, now the Romsey Mill Centre; and
- Brookfields Hospital – front range, Mill Road.

There are two 'negative' focal buildings, both modern:

- The Avis Car Centre, Mill Road;
- The Cambridge Bed Centre, Mill Road

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. This is typical of terraced housing which often terminated with corner shops or public houses. Others have been converted into houses, largely unobtrusively. Good examples are as follows:

- The White Swan on the corner of Mill Road and Kingston Street;
- The Geldart on the junction of Sleaford Street and Ainsworth Street; and
- The Empress Public House on the corner of St Philip's Road and Thoday Street.

### ***Views and vistas***

The flat topography and long residential streets which are lined with similar terraced or semi-detached houses do not allow many views out of the proposed Conservation Area apart from minor vistas to the north, east and south to Inter-War development and 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 railway bridge provides views of the terraced houses and trees which lie next to the railway tracks and former railway sidings. Views across Romsey Recreation Ground are pleasantly framed by mature deciduous trees.

The most obvious views and vistas are marked on the Townscape Appraisal 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 proposed Conservation Area, including street surfaces, pavements, street lighting, street furniture, street name plates and any other features of interest. There are no historic floorscape features apart from a small area of natural stone setts at the entrance to Romsey House, and some granite setts at the northern end of Stockwell Street. However, historic cast iron or enamel street name plates in many locations do add to the interest of the area.

##### ***Street surfaces and pavements***

Modern tarmac is used throughout the proposed Conservation Area for street surfaces, and for many of the pavements in the back streets, although concrete flags and concrete paviors are also evident. Mill Road has been repaved at various times in the past, although the commonest paving material again appears to be concrete slabs or paviors. Some of this paving is in very poor condition. Some historic paving remains on private land, such as in Catharine Street, where the occasional narrow alleyway is paved in blue brick paviors. 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). These were put there as part of a traffic management scheme, which has resulted in many of the roads being sealed off to prevent through traffic. A few probably original late 19<sup>th</sup> century granite setts can be seen at various locations where they are used to create crossovers. Good examples are 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) though generally the kerbs are concrete. However, some narrow (150 mm) granite kerbing remains, sometimes paired with stone gutters of a similar width (e.g. Hope Street). Gutters are also sometimes formed by two rows of granite setts (e.g. Emery Road).

##### ***Street lighting***

Following recommendations in the 1999 Mill Road and St Matthew's Area Conservation Area Appraisal, new street lighting was installed in the eastern section of Mill Road using simple but elegant black steel standards with a 'hockey-stick' style of lamp. This could advantageously be continued along Mill Road into the Romsey Town section of this proposed Conservation Area. 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, in the children's play area/sitting area at the northern end of Ainsworth



Street and some well designed seats and other features in Romsey Recreation Ground. Bus shelters along Mill Road are modern black steel with polycarbonate roofs, very simply detailed and relatively unobtrusive. Improvements to these elements would be very welcome.

### ***Street place names***

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, probably dating to the early 1980s, have been installed in St Philip's Road and Argyle Road, and in other locations, preventing through traffic. These features, which include planters and trees, are somewhat neglected and in need of replacement or improvement. Timber or steel telegraph poles, with trailing telephone wires, are a little obtrusive in several locations.

## 5 The Buildings of the Proposed Conservation Area

### 5.1 Introduction

The historic buildings of the proposed 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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, sometimes on a slightly larger scale, 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, the survival of a number of former warehouses and other industrial buildings, the occasional back-street public house, as well as 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 19<sup>th</sup> century shops, and other commercial premises, provide a lively streetscape and make a major contribution to the economic viability of the immediate area. However, many of these buildings have been adversely affected by the installation of poor quality shopfronts, plastic windows, modern roofing materials and other inappropriate alterations.

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 along 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, including a number of mainly late 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings which were built for religious, educational, commercial or community uses which were larger and more prestigious than these smaller houses are included on the list of BLIs. Only four buildings within the proposed Conservation Area are statutorily listed. 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 proposed Conservation Area - St Matthew's Church, the Cemetery Lodge, the former free 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 BLIs, which although having no statutory protection, have been given greater prominence due to the guidance 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 proposed Conservation Area vary in size and detail but the majority were built as family houses, either in terraced or semi-detached form or built to provide amenities for local residents. 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.

The residential BLIs are as follows:

***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 were 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 are 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.

### ***St Philip's Church, Mill Road***

The church was built in 1889 (datestone) to the designs of E P Loftus-Brock of London, using gault brick (now weathered to a mid-brown). It is a striking corner building with a tall gable facing Mill Road, below which are three Gothic pointed windows, surrounded by polychromatic brickwork decoration. The steeply pitched roof is covered in hand-made clay tiles, and a bell tower with a tall spire is an important feature in views along the road. A modern timber single storey porch, painted bright red, has been added to the Mill Road elevation.

### ***St Philip's Vicarage, No. 242 Mill Road***

The Vicarage was built in 1903 by Coulson and Lofts of Cambridge. The much altered building sits opposite the church and has been converted into a shop, now the Romsey Town Post Office. Two storeys high, it is built using gault brick with some red brick decoration to create narrow string courses or eaves details. The windows are modern.

### ***Romsey House, No. 274 Mill Road***

Romsey House is a substantial detached late 19th century neo-Tudor building, built from red brick with timber-framing. It retains a steeply pitched clay tiled roof with tall brick chimney stacks. The windows, which appear to be original, are mainly mullioned and transomed with leaded lights.

### ***Royal Standard House Public House, No. 288-290 Mill Road***

The Royal Standard, now a restaurant, is a stuccoed building of c1879-81 with a later single storey outshot to the front, possibly reflecting the purchase of the building from Charles Armstrong-Ors by the Star Brewery in 1892. The sash windows have two lights to each sash, and above, there are steeply pitched slate roofs with decorative clay ridge tiles. A carved barge board to the prominent front gable is a feature of note.

### ***Brookfields Hospital, Mill Road***

The earliest building on the site appears to date to 1882, and is a single storey ward building set back from road. The principal building, facing Mill Road, dates to 1892, and is built from gault brick with red brick dressings, tall chimney stacks in matching brickwork, and a pitched slate roof. The side, front and rear elevations are of irregular design, but united by careful detailing. The building was designed by E Wareham Harry, the Borough Surveyor, with additions of 1914, designed by Julian Julian, also a Borough Surveyor. Chart and Sons of Reading were involved in this later stage. Other interesting details include the mullioned and transomed windows, and a variety of casements. A large terracotta crest is prominently located in the gable overlooking Mill Road, and it would be helpful if the derivation of this crest could be researched.

### ***Mill Road Baptist Church, Mill Road***

This church was built in 1885 to the designs of Searle and Hayes, London. It is a plain symmetrical brown brick double height building on a corner plot, the most important feature of which is a small bell tower on the steeply pitched slated roof, which provides a



focus to views along Mill Road. Facing Stockwell Street, there are five double height windows, and there is a large first floor window on the front elevation with a full width single storey entrance porch below.

#### ***Romsey Mill Centre, Mill Road***

This former Methodist Church dates to 1891 and has been converted to the Romsey Mill Centre and Sure Start Nursery. The original church was designed by W Wren and built by Coulson and Lofts, Cambridge. An extension was added in 1906. The Centre is an asymmetrical building on a prominent corner plot and it is built from gault brick with red brick dressings. The double height windows have been replaced in uPVC.

#### ***Romsey Town Labour Club, Mill Road***

The Labour Club is a single storey red brick building on a corner site. It retains a stone cornice with the wording 'Romsey Town Labour Club', and some Venetian windows to either side of front entrance with rubbed red brick arches. A decorative stone cartouche lies over the panelled double front doors, and the flat roof hidden by a parapet. It was designed by E W Bond.

#### ***The Salisbury Club, Mill Road***

This is a three bay building, each bay different but linked by the common use of red brick. The two older bays on the left have large gables, and the third much smaller bay, on the right, has a flat roof and parapet – it probably dates to the 1920s. The original bay on the east end is dated 1891 and was designed by F A Mullet of Cambridge. Called Salisbury House, it retains an ornate gable of five bays, with sweeping copings decorated with ball finials. Below is a central pair of front doors, panelled, and Georgian-style fanlight. There are arched window heads, but the windows on the right have been replaced and made much larger with much smaller original windows on the left, with small panes and slim glazing bars. Brick pilasters add some interest to the facade. The gable in the centre dates to 1909 and is less ornate but it retains its original window openings and double doors.

#### ***Ross Street Community Centre, Ross Street***

This was built as an Infants' School in 1894 and 1898 – the architect was W M Fawcett. The rather rambling single storey building is constructed from gault brick with steeply pitched slate roofs with some modern alterations. The windows have all been changed to uPVC. (St Philip's Junior School in Thoday Street was built at a similar time, and was also a BLI, but has been demolished and replaced with School Court).

#### ***No. 21 St Philip's Road***

This long thin house was formerly called Argyle Villa and is shown on the 1886 map at a time when there were very few other buildings in the area. It was built for A. Sainty, a Great Eastern Railway inspector. The two storey one bay building is constructed from brown brick with a single mullioned and transomed window to the front at ground floor level. The principal feature is the tile hung gable above. The front door is set back from the street on the side elevation, and retains a small open porch with slate roof.

### **5.4 Positive buildings**

In addition to the BLIs, a large number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map 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 provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive

contribution to the special interest of the proposed Conservation Area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, they are excluded. In the proposed Conservation Area, most of these buildings date to the mid to late 19th century and were built as houses, mainly in terraced form.

The identification of these buildings follows advice provided within English Heritage's Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, which provides, at Appendix 2, 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 proposed Conservation Area, and any applications for demolition should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings.

### ***Materials and details***

The majority of the buildings in the proposed Conservation Area are terraced two storey houses built between 1880 and the early 20th century. They are mainly one bay wide, the larger versions with ground floor canted bay windows and a separate hallway providing access to the rooms at the back of the house. The most common facing material is yellow or white gault brick, sometimes enlivened by the use of red brick, which is used to pick out lintels, string courses, corner quoins, or eaves (Suez Road has some particularly striking examples of polychromatic brickwork). Stone lintels are often painted to contrast with the adjoining brick with decorative features such as ogee curved edges and trefoil motifs. Painted render is also common.

The continuous roofs face the street, often without party wall separation, and are covered in slate. Because these houses have relatively low floor to ceiling heights, they are characterised by low eaves which sit only just above the first floor windows. The original brick stacks with clay pots also remain on most of the houses in the proposed Conservation Area. Most of these are decorated with no more than a few courses of corbelled-out brickwork to prevent weathering.

Windows are almost always two over two timber vertically sliding sashes and the front doors are similarly timber of varying designs – panelled (two or four is most common) or simply boarded. Some of these panelled doors have very heavy mouldings. The front doors usually lead straight off the adjoining pavement although a few of the houses have very small front gardens. Many old bootscrapers remain next to the front doors, no longer in use. Great Eastern Street, which retains two long terraces of houses dating to the 1860s or 1870s, provides some examples of flat fronted, gault brick houses with many original front doors remaining. These have two long panels each, with deep mouldings, and a plain fanlight above. It is notable that most of the residential properties in the proposed Conservation Area retain their original joinery, roof materials, and brickwork or render facing.

The buildings along Mill Road are much more varied than the buildings in the residential streets to either side, due to their more mixed uses, although there are some well detailed terraced properties, such as the group opposite Brookfields Hospital, which may have been built for hospital workers. Many of the shops in Mill Road are located in buildings which may once have been in residential use, which have been converted into shops at a later date. Build-outs, to create more ground floor retail space, can be seen in some locations. This retains a more domestic scale to the shopping area, which has few historic buildings of any size apart from the Baptist Church, St Philip's Church and the Romsey Mill Centre. The shopfronts are very varied and often feature modern brightly coloured fascias and lighting. As with the residential streets, the use of gault brick, usually a yellow or light brown colour, is almost universal. Unlike the residential properties, the buildings along Mill Road have been very altered, and the use of uPVC or other modern equivalents for windows is commonplace.

## 6 Character Areas

### 6.1 Introduction

The Mill Road Area is a large mainly residential 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.

There are two main Character Areas (with smaller sub character areas which are defined in the text), which are as follows:

- Character Area 1: Mill Road and St Matthews Area; and
- Character Area 2: Romsey Town Area.

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

### 6.2 Character Area 1: Mill Road and St Matthews Area

The residential streets on each side of Mill Road form a separate sub character area. In addition, the prevalence of commercial buildings along Mill Road has provided this central part of the proposed 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 sub-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. These sub character areas are characterised as follows.

#### *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 were built, the former New Street 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 Citylife House;
- 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; and
- 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 sub 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 Character 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 sub 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); and
- 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; and
- 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; and
- 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.

It should be noted that there are other types of buildings within this area as well as residential, including educational buildings.

#### 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 New Street Primary School (original buildings) is a Building-at-Risk which is the subject of proposed development of the site and re-use of the original buildings; and
- 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; and
- 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.

### ***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; and
- 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; and
  - 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; and



- 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 Free Library, and also on the side elevation of No. 105 Mill Road, next to Mickey Flynn's;
- 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; and
- The planting in the paved area next to the public toilets is in need of some attention.

### ***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 building 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 Road – these are either listed or are BLIs;
- All of the buildings appear to be in residential uses; and
- Private and tranquil character which contrasts with the busy bustle of traffic and pedestrians along Mill Road.

#### Layout and plots

This sub 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 sub 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 sub character area.

### ***Residential streets to south of Mill Road***

#### Summary of the historical development of the area

This almost entirely residential sub 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; and
- 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 sub character area is defined by Mill Road in the north, the University Cricket Ground (Fenners) 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 sub 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 sub 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; and
- 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 and three paired windows above, 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, 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 bays, with sash windows and red brick decoration to the gault brick elevation – terracotta eaves details are important; and
- 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 bays, 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 bays 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 bays 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; and
- All of the roofs are slate with prominent chimneystacks.

#### *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 bays with sash windows; and
- Slate roofs face the street with large brick chimneystacks 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 roof slopes; and
- Some overhead cables and dominant telegraph poles.

### **6.3 Character Area 2: Romsey Town Area**

#### Summary of the historical development of the area

The development and growth of Romsey Town mainly took place between 1880 and 1900, and mirrored similar development closer to the City to the west of the railway line, an area which is now the Mill Road and St Matthew's Conservation Area. The area lies along the line of Mill Road, which was an important historic route that led out of the City Centre towards the eastern edge of Cambridge. The area surrounding was still predominantly fields until the Inclosure Act of 1807, after which new roads were incrementally laid out at right angles to the main road, although most of these did not appear until the 1880s or even later. A map of 1886 shows that terraced houses had been constructed on Great Eastern Street, and while the adjoining streets – Cavendish Road, Sedgwick Street, Catharine Street and Thoday Street – had been laid out, only a few properties had actually been developed. At this time, beyond these streets, open fields and allotments spread, crossed by old footpaths that then led to the uninhabited Coldhams Lane and Coldhams Common.

The provision of further houses in the next twenty years, along with shops, schools, churches and other facilities, gave the local residents all they needed. This provision of further housing led to an increase in the population to over 7,000 in 1921; most of whom worked for the railway. Another popular profession in the area was in the building industry, and many of these workers helped to build the new Labour Party Clubhouse. During the General Strike in 1926, because of the support for it in the local proximity, the area became famous for its strong union membership and socialist leanings, and was often referred to as 'Red Romsey'. Whilst lying close to the City Centre, the area is quite isolated from the University buildings, dons and students, with the line of the railway creating a visual barrier between the two areas.

A General Improvement Area (GIA) was declared in Romsey Town in 1981 to encourage property owners to upgrade their terraced houses including the installation of inside toilets, new bathrooms, damp-proofing, and new roofs

#### Key characteristics

- Two storey terraced houses, often only one bay wide, with a simple slated roof facing the street;
- Development over a relatively short period of time which means that the buildings display very similar details and materials;
- Slightly higher status building examples have single or double height canted bay windows and are slightly wider;
- Long lines of buildings lying directly on the back of the pavement;
- Cohesive streets;
- Long, thin back gardens of regular size, sometimes accessed by a narrow alley;
- No detached or semi-detached properties apart from a few more recent developments; and
- Building layout on Mill Road more varied due to more commercial use, though properties still two storeys high and very close to the back of the pavement and terraced.

#### Layout and plots

This Character Area is defined by the almost grid pattern of streets that mainly lie almost at right angles to Mill Road, which in turn forms the central feature of the layout. Many of the streets were originally laid out along the boundaries of fields, which were gradually developed for housing from the 1880s onwards. The layout of Argyle Street illustrates the

path of the old railway line. This provided transport between Cambridge and Bury St Edmunds largely creating a barrier to development, as discussed previously.

The terraced 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.

#### Townscape and streetscape features

The principal townscape feature of this Character Area is provided by the long lines of two storey terraced houses lying, located on or very close to the back of the pavement in terraced form.

#### The buildings

The buildings within this Character Area are mainly residential in use. There are a number of commercial buildings, though these are mainly focused along Mill Road with the occasional commercial use (public house, small shop or office group) in the residential back streets. As such, there are relatively few variations in scale and detailing. For each terrace, the width of each house was crucial, for if over 15 foot, it was possible to provide a separate front hallway, thereby allowing some privacy to the front parlour. Front bay windows were also added to the more up-market houses, often lived in by train drivers, who earned more than the more lowly railway workers.

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

##### Buildings:

- The residential properties have been well preserved but are threatened by the use of modern materials and details, including inappropriate windows and front doors;
- Many of the original slate roofs are now in need of replacement;
- Some large roof extensions considered to be negative have been allowed in the past as well as some over-dominant roof lights; and
- Painting of brickwork.

##### Spatial:

- The former Robert Sayle Warehouse and Co-Op site remains vacant and surrounded by hoardings;
- The pressure for inappropriate extensions and alterations to the residential properties;
- A number of large advertising hoardings;
- 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 with dominant telegraph poles and trailing wires; and
- The care of the trees in the public park.

##### Mill Road:

- Vacant shops in a number of locations;

- Poor quality shopfronts, some using garish colours and poor quality signage;
- Poor quality external 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; and
- The shopping area needs to be enhanced and a sense of place instigated through a series of improvements.



## 7 Issues

### 7.1 Principle Issues

The principal issues for the Mill Road Area Conservation Area appear to be:

#### ***Protecting the character of unlisted buildings***

There are many unlisted family dwellings in the proposed 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 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. It is in need of comprehensive improvements to address issues such as the bad condition of some of the buildings, the poor quality shopfronts, the use of modern materials and details for the windows and roofs, the removal of dominant satellite dishes, the poor quality public realm, and the repair or possibly even the redevelopment of several individual buildings.

#### ***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 proposed 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 at roof level and highly visible. There are also some late 20th century buildings, which may at some stage benefit from being replaced, including the Cambridge Bed Centre and Avis Car Centre.

#### ***The care and improvement of the trees***

Mature trees make a very special contribution to the character and appearance of the proposed Conservation Area in a limited number of places, most notably in Romsey Recreation Ground. There are also a number of trees, sometimes singly or in small groups, on private land. Proposed Conservation Area designation provides protection for all trees over a certain size, although specific protection can be provided 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 proposed Conservation Area.

### ***Satellite dishes***

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 proposed Conservation Area, probably erected before the area was designated as a proposed Conservation Area. However, they have a negative impact on the environment.

### ***Protection of the views***

Views within the proposed Conservation Area tend to be limited to vistas along streets, or can be found in Romsey Recreation Ground, where they focus on the many mature trees. Views across, into and out of the proposed Conservation Area are important and need to be protected.

### ***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; and
- The former Free Library, Mill Road.

### ***Public realm proposals***

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

- The traffic calming measures in the back streets are now in need of improvement;
- 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;
- The putting underground of overhead wires, and the removal of telegraph poles;
- The protection of the historic street name plates; and
- The retention of the historic street signs.

## 8 Contact Details

For further information about Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas, contact:

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## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Appendix 1: Proposed Mill Road Character Areas



**9.2 Appendix 2: Mill Road Townscape Analysis 1**



**9.3 Appendix 3: Mill Road Townscape Analysis 2**