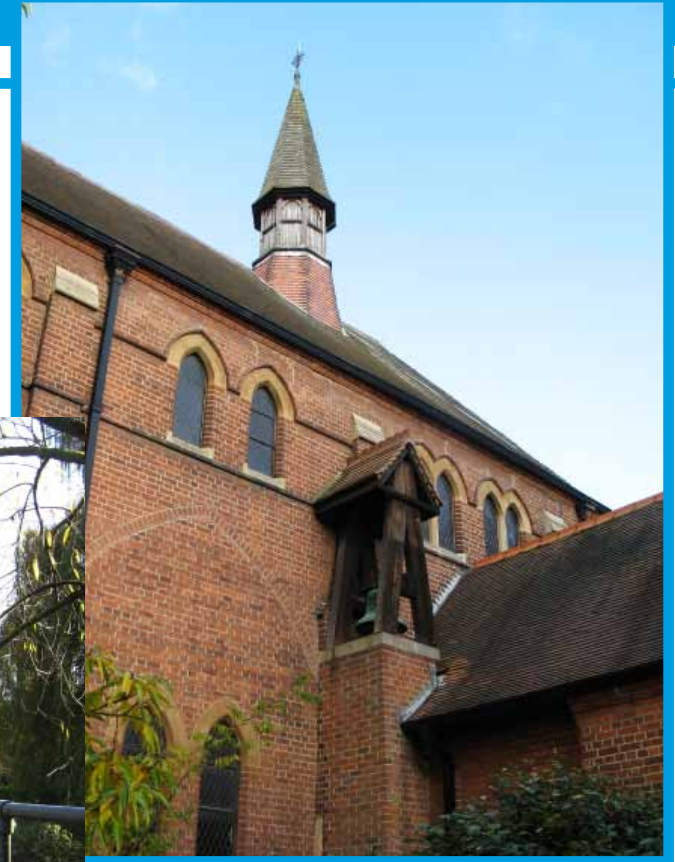


# Newnham Croft

## Conservation Area Appraisal



June 2013

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## 1 Introduction

This Appraisal seeks to define what is special about the Newnham Croft Conservation Area, and to provide information about its landscape, architectural merit and historical development. A campaign to designate Newnham Croft as a Conservation Area was started by local residents in 1997, when a public meeting was held to gauge support for the proposal. The meeting showed almost unanimous support for the idea. As the City Council were unable to take forward proposals

for new Conservation Areas at the time due to other work commitments, the residents formed a working group and under the direction of the Conservation team, prepared a Character Appraisal of the proposed area themselves. The working group included a core of around 20 people, including City and County councilors. That document, and the recommendation for designation, was approved by the Council's Environment Committee on 8 June 1998.

### 1.1 Method

The Conservation Studio, working on behalf of Cambridge City Council, has surveyed the area and assessed the character of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area. This document therefore includes an assessment of the special interest of the Conservation Area, as informed by survey work and the previous Character Appraisal, and provides guidance on measures which may in the future ensure its protection and enhancement, as required by law.

## 1.2 Location

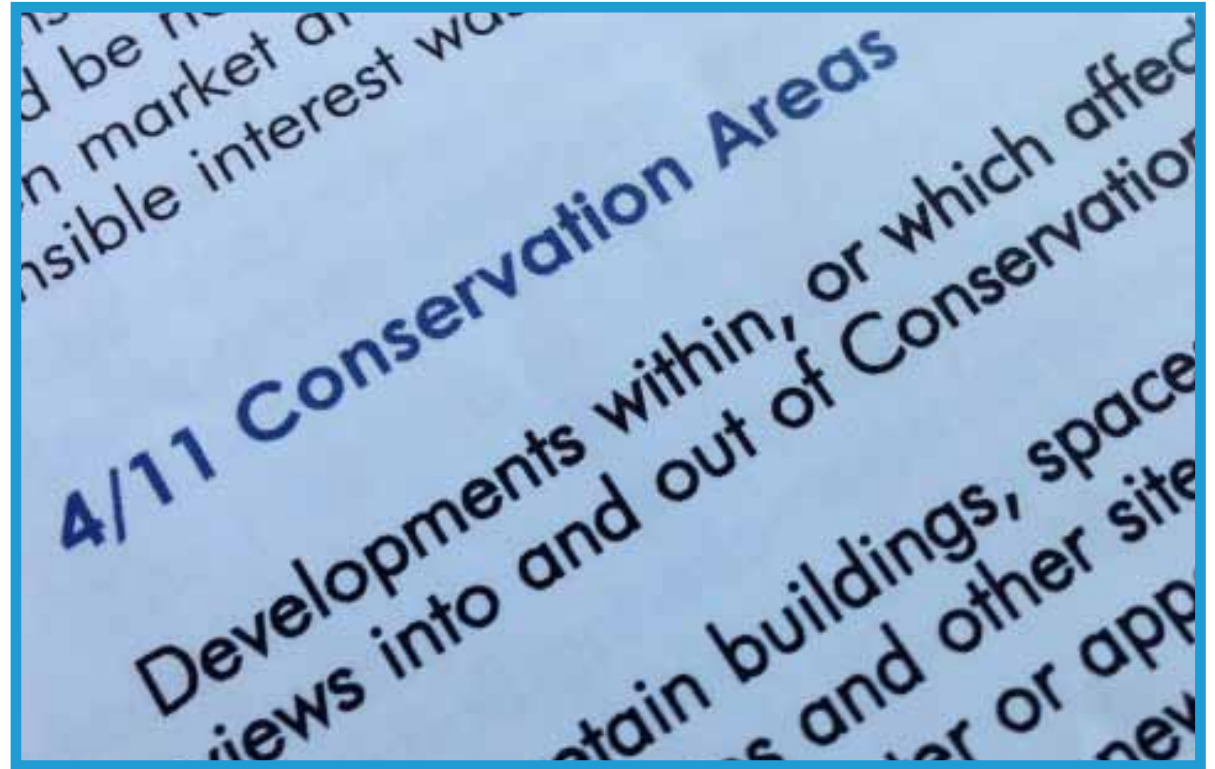
Newnham Croft lies a mile to the south-west of the historic city centre of Cambridge. The area is bounded to the north-west and north by the college buildings, open spaces and spacious houses of the West Cambridge and Cambridge Central Conservation Areas; by the line of the River Cam to the east and south-east, beyond which lies part of the Cambridge Central Conservation Area and the Southacre Conservation Area; and by the water-meadows which lie on either side of the River Cam, which eventually lead to Grantchester, which lies within South Cambridgeshire District, to the south. Barton Road, which connects to the M11 motorway, commences within the Newnham Croft Conservation Area, at the busy junction with Newnham Road and Grantchester Road.



*Lammas Land public park*



*Houses in Hardwick Street*



## 2 The National Planning Context

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Planning Authorities to designate as 'Conservation Areas' any "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

The special character of Conservation Areas means that the control of development is stricter than in other areas. The law requires that all new development in or around Conservation

Areas must 'preserve or enhance' the special character of the area. The siting, scale, height, form, details and building materials for all new development will therefore need to be carefully chosen.

### 2.1 National policies

*The National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), adopted in March 2012, sets out the Government's requirements for the operation of the planning system, and includes planning policies for England

and guidance on how these are expected to be applied. Section 12 of the NPPF *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* is largely an abbreviation of the policies and guidance formerly contained in Planning Policy Statement 5 *Planning and the Historic Environment*. The English Heritage guidance, which accompanied PPS5, is still relevant.

### 2.2 Local policies

The Cambridge Local Plan 2006 sets

out policies and proposals for future development and land use to 2016. The policies of the Local Plan are currently under review with a view to adoption in summer 2014. Further information about Local Plan policies and the major implications of Conservation Area designation can be found on the Council's website.

Potentially, the Newnham Croft Conservation Area may be affected by 'Areas of Major Change' that will see the expansion of Cambridge on its fringes. This, and other matters which may affect future development in the Conservation Area, are discussed later in this document in Chapter 8 *Issues and Recommendations*.



## 3 Summary of Special Interest

### 3.1 General character

The Newnham Croft Conservation Area was largely developed as artisan housing between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and World War I. It contains streets of well preserved two storey Victorian or Edwardian terraced houses, built at a high density with small front gardens and long thin back gardens accessed by pedestrian paths. The occasional non-residential use, including a number of shops and other facilities, have been accommodated with little visual impact

as most of these businesses are located in buildings which were either once houses or retain a residential character. It is notable that architectural styles and details vary slightly, so each street has its own particular character, providing a strong sense of place. These residential streets contrast sharply with the attractive open green spaces around and within the Conservation Area, some left wild and untamed, and others, including Lammas Land, more heavily managed and therefore more urban in character.

This connects to the small group of buildings which lie to the north of The Fen Causeway, between Newnham Road and the River Cam, which are mainly commercial buildings which in terms of their architecture and uses relate far more to the historic core of Cambridge.

The peculiar quality of Newnham Croft lies in the close juxtaposition of the urban and the rural. Excellent shops including a general shop/Post Office, a small Co-op supermarket, a bakery and a butchers/greengrocers lie one street away from



snipe meadows, kingfishers and almost impenetrable woods. Most of the buildings are seen against a background of big trees, many of which are left over from the now-vanished orchards or gardens of big houses, whilst others have sprung up on abandoned meadows and at the bottoms of the present gardens.

### 3.2 Landscape setting

Newnham Croft is characterised by its open spaces as much as its buildings, with more than half the Conservation Area being parkland, fields or woodland, which surround the built-up area except on the west, where the boundary abuts the back gardens of the houses in Millington Road. These include the more formal public parkland of Lammas Land, with its shrubberies, bowling-green and mown grass, to the wild, purposely-untamed woodland and marshland of the Paradise Nature Reserve. Further south are the wider open spaces of the playing fields and Grantchester Meadows. The south-eastern boundary of the Conservation Area is provided by the River Cam, with further green spaces beyond, kept as a wild flower meadow, grazing pastures and plough land. These features all contribute to the tranquil setting of the Conservation Area.

### 3.3 Archaeology

Evidence for Iron Age and Roman occupation has been found in the

adjoining Southacre Conservation Area, as have burials which have been dated to the Anglo-Saxon period. Within Newnham Croft, some of the roads follow the lines of ancient tracks, and fence and hedges also sometimes follow early field boundaries. The slight variations in the ground level in some gardens betray the original sites of gravel pits.

### 3.4 Historical development

The origins of Newnham Croft can be traced to the middle ages when a 'croft' was an area of private land not within the open field system. Newnham crofts were partly in Grantchester and partly in Cambridge. The crofts appear on maps of the 1660s produced by George Skinner for King's and Corpus Christi Colleges when access to the river followed the present line of Grantchester Street and continued along a roadway which is now marked by the modern Grantchester Meadows footpath. A further map for King's College, by A. Watford in 1795, showed how little had changed in the last 150 years or so since Skinner's map. The only building of this earlier period which remains appears to be Paradise House, located on an island in the river, which apparently dates to c1780 although its appearance is more of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.



*The Grove, Driftway*



*No. 109 Grantchester Meadows*

By the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area began to develop with a market garden where Owlstone Croft now stands. A gravel pit was dug in the area of Eltisley Avenue, the road later appearing in Baker's map of 1830 as a diagonal footpath to the river. A house called Paradise Garden, buildings on Barton Road, and a large villa called Croft Lodge are also marked. Owlstone Croft was added in c1880 and The Grove, facing what is now Lammas Land, may be slightly earlier. Both properties are clearly shown on the 1888 map.

The development of the Derby Street area began in the 1850s and the map of 1888 confirms that by this time, larger detached houses had been built on the south side of Barton Road, with terraced houses behind these properties along the east side of Hardwick Street, on either side of Derby Street, on the west side of Grantchester Street, and on the south side of Merton Street, with just four houses (now Nos. 8, 20, 12 and 14) on the north side. One of these two houses facing Barton Road is marked as the 'Union Building' on the 1903 map, so was presumably used as a parish workhouse. There had also been some sporadic development along Grantchester Meadows by 1888 – what are now Nos. 103/105, 113, and possibly 115 appear to have been built. The original St Mark's Church is also marked on the same site as the present building, and it is still shown

on the 1903 map, squeezed in between the new church and the new parsonage. It appears on the 1957 map as a 'Church school' but has since been demolished. The 1903 map also confirms that there had been some limited development in Grantchester Meadows but otherwise the area had changed very little since 1888.

The biggest changes came between 1903 and the 1920s, and the map of 1927 confirms that properties in South Green Road, Eltisley Avenue, Marlowe Road, the southern end of Grantchester Street, and most of Owlstone Road had all been built. Stylistically these date to the late Edwardian period, so it is likely that they were built between 1903 and World War I. Nos. 1-15 (odd) Owlstone Road are the latest, and date to 1912. In 1915 a new school was also provided in Chedworth Street which was demolished and replaced with another in the late 1980s. A Grade II listed gas lamp in South Green Road (privately owned), similar to listed street lights in nearby Millington Road, is an interesting survival of this period and was presumably once replicated elsewhere in the Conservation Area. During the 1920s and the 1930s, the field on the south side of the track which continues Grantchester Meadows towards the footpath was regularly flooded in the winter to create a skating rink. The lamp standard which still rather bizarrely remains in the middle of this field (now called Skaters Field) is the

sole reminder of this use and should be preserved.

Grantchester Meadows was completed by the 1930s and the rest of the century has seen infilling and the redevelopment of the school and some of the open sites, including the addition of Lammas Field. This is an interesting development of a former hockey pitch in the 1970s by the Granta Housing Association, and has provided a group of single storey houses off Grantchester Street, with courtyard gardens and a very private character which is largely accessed by pedestrian-only footpaths.



*Lammas Field*

During the late 1950s, after being used as a school and, since 1946, for nurses' accommodation, Owlstone Croft was developed for student housing by Queens'

College, adding substantial extensions to the 19<sup>th</sup> century villa and building new blocks within the grounds. Some of these have recently been demolished, reinstating some of the original garden setting to the historic building.

a suburb of Cambridge, it retains the character of a separate village, with its own shops, church, school and inns and a strong sense of community.



***Owlstone Croft***

Historically, the Newnham Croft area was mostly developed with modestly-sized terraced houses to provide homes for artisans, college servants and trades people, but since World War II the character of the area has changed, with the houses being bought by professional people and academics, or adapted as student accommodation. There remains a core of local people, however, who remember the area's earlier history. Today, although the area functions as



## 4 Spatial Analysis

The Newnham Croft Conservation Area has five areas of distinct character, according to landscape features, architecture and use. These character areas are:

- Newnham Road and The Fen Causeway
- Lammas Land
- Paradise Nature Reserve
- The principal residential streets
- St Catharine's College Sports

Field and the fields down to the River Cam

These areas are described in greater detail below, and include a summary of the key positive and negative features of each.

### 4.1 Newnham Road and The Fen Causeway

The Newnham Croft Conservation Area includes this small section of buildings which have a far more urban character

than the rest of the Conservation Area, despite the close proximity of the River Cam and the adjoining water meadows to the east (Sheep's Green). The current Conservation Area boundary also cuts through the principal Listed Building, the former mill which is now the Bella Italia Restaurant. Changes to the Conservation Area boundary, to exclude this small area from the Newnham Croft Conservation Area and include it in the Cambridge Central Conservation Area (to which it more logically belongs), are included in

## section 8 *Issues and Recommendations.*

The buildings in this part of the Conservation Area are enclosed by a triangle created by Newnham Road, The Fen Causeway and the former mill leat which drains the Mill Pit pond into the River Cam. From the roundabout at its junction with The Fen Causeway, Newnham Road curves round to the Granta public house, past the pond and then straightens out to the Queen's Road junction. The portion of the road nearest to the roundabout is very narrow before the road widens out after the Granta. On the west side of Newnham Road, within the Cambridge Central Conservation Area, are several groups of Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest including the Perse Almshouses (Grade II). A Shell petrol-filling station, which tends to dominate the road junction, is a negative feature.



**1930s flats (Causeway)**

The Fen Causeway, formerly Coe Fen Lane, was constructed in the late 1920s after fierce local opposition to link Newnham village with Trumpington and to provide a southern bypass to the City Centre. Facing Fen Causeway and the mill leat frontage are three blocks of 1930s apartments built in the Art Deco style and providing 42 units. Called simply 'Causeway', these are now Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs). The frontage onto The Fen Causeway is brick built with uneven three storey bays picked out in white. The flat roofs are hidden by a false mansard in pantiles. Each set of flats is entered by a porch in 1930s 'cinema' style in white with red ochre coloured double front doors. The frontage onto the mill leat is also red brick with bays picked out in white paint. Further similarly detailed porches to this block are situated on the back elevations, facing away from the road. In front of these buildings, facing The Fen Causeway, is a deep grass verge which has been planted with cherry trees and silver birches – these are important in long views along the street and link to the planting in Lammas Land on the opposite side of the road.

On the east side of Newnham Road there is a notable group of purpose-built shops (Nos. 45-51) with offices above, accessed by separate front doors, with those to Nos. 47 and 49 retaining their original neo-Tudor boarded doors. These date to c1900 and retain three original



**Nos. 45-51 odd Newnham Road**

shopfronts, with central entrances and fluted pilasters to either side (No. 49 Cambridge Book and Print Gallery, No. 47 CD Designer Style Hire, and No. 45 Domenico Di Martino Hairdressers). These shopfronts must be preserved, and signage carefully controlled, in the future. The buildings are three storeys high and are built using purple brick with red brick detailing. The attic floor has original arched and pedimented dormer windows, although modern skylights have been added to No. 51. Some of the original timber sash windows have been detrimentally replaced in uPVC. No.49 has an arched door with a stained glass window. These buildings are proposed to be included on the Council's list of (BLIs). Beyond Nos. 49 and 51, and accessed through a carriageway, is a small late 19<sup>th</sup> century mews, now turned into a variety of commercial and residential uses, and a probably 1980s office development

(Gwen Raverat House), a bulky three storey building of little architectural merit.

Nos. 39-43 are a similar brick two storey block, with a first floor across the entrance into Andersons Court and an entrance to Gwen Raverat House. The windows have glazing bars, and the whole is built of the same purple brick with the window quoins and string courses picked out in red brick. However, this group lacks the mansard roof of its neighbour, and also has no shopfronts, so it is not proposed to include it as a BLI.

Next door, and terminating the terrace, are Nos. 33, 35 and 37 Newnham Road, which appear to date to the 1920s or even later. No. 37 (The Rice Boat) is a flat-roofed single storey structure of little merit. Nos. 35 and 37 are two storeys high, with neo-Tudor details including false timber framing to the first floors. No. 33 retains more prominent gables which face down the street and are therefore relatively prominent, but none of these buildings can be said to make a particularly positive contribution to the street scene. The current Conservation Area boundary cuts through Nos. 37 and 39 and returns towards the mill leat, again bisecting the former mill, now the Bella Italia restaurant. The principal visual feature at this point is the outstanding view over the Mill Pit pond towards the open water meadows of Sheep's Green and the River Cam.



*Bella Italia restaurant, the former mill*



*View over the former mill pond*

The Bella Italia restaurant faces the mill pond, and is a former corn mill, built in 1853, with its mill wheel still visible

inside the building with the leat running underneath it. It was later extended and used as a factory, hence the tall chimney to the rear. Listed Grade II, it is a largely three storey building of Gault brick with sash windows with glazing bars. In front of the restaurant there is a sitting-out area which leads to a bridge over the mill leat. It is paved with Staffordshire blue pavers and defined by tall cast iron bollards. This also provides access to a pleasant pathway which runs along the edge of the leat and reconnects to The Fen Causeway. A white painted timber palisade fence protects pedestrians from falling into the pond, and suits the location. In many locations, there are extremely attractive views over the mill pond and over the surrounding river meadows and trees which are of special note.

*Key positive features:*

- Newnham Road is tightly defined by high quality historic buildings, some of them listed, on both sides;
- The former mill, now Bella Italia restaurant, is listed Grade II;
- Nos. 45-51 (odd) Newnham Road should be BLIs, due to their high quality shopfronts;
- Attractive views over Sheep's Green and Mill Pit pond;
- The trees and open green spaces of Sheep's Green; and

- Causewayside are well detailed and relatively unaltered 1930s flats with Art Deco details, and are also BLIs, although their bulk and visual impact is somewhat at odds with the more domestic scale of the buildings in Newnham Road.

*Key negative features:*

- Gwen Raverat House is a large 1980s office building of little merit, although its impact is lessened by its somewhat hidden location in the former mews to Nos. 39-51 Newnham Road;
- The visually dominant modern petrol-filling station on the west side of Newnham Road, in the adjoining Conservation Area;
- The busy traffic at the junction of Newnham Road and The Fen Causeway, which causes difficulties for both pedestrians and cyclists;
- The visually dominant car parking around Gwen Raverat House and at the back of the Bella Italia restaurant, which can be glimpsed from the public footpath on the other side of the mill leat;
- Nos. 33, 35 and 37 Newnham Road are poor quality 1920s (or later) buildings; and
- The poor quality pavements,

public seating, street lights and litter bins.

## 4.2 Lammas Land

Lammas Land was formed from fields which were levelled and turned into a public park in 1925. It is a well-used recreation area with randomly placed trees and is managed as a public park. The former 1920s public toilets have been imaginatively reused as a bicycle repairs workshop. Today it is a wide open green space, with avenues of trees along its boundaries facing The Fen Causeway and Newnham Road. Further trees, in both groups and planted individually, make a major contribution to the character of the space.



***South-west corner of Lammas Land***

Of note, although its visual impact is relatively muted, is the early 19<sup>th</sup> century building, The Grove, which lies on the southern edge of Lammas Land and is accessed via The Driftway. A BLI, a full

description is included at Appendix 2. This has a large garden and field which in effect is the southern boundary to Lammas Land and continues the sense of greenery and open space beyond the access road to the public car park mentioned above. This road retains the character of a country lane due to the soft hedging boundaries and the mature trees within Lammas Land and the similarly numerous trees within the garden and field attached to The Grove. The high brick wall to part of the garden to The Grove is another feature of note. Serving the adjoining Lammas Field development, Lammas Field Pavilion is the offices of the Granta Housing Association and is probably also 1970s in date. The building is also accessed from The Driftway but is set back from the road, so although modern it is well concealed in views across Lammas Field.

The large paddling pool is a wonderful example of old-style council provision, providing a constant source of pleasure to children during the hot summer months and at other times. It has also been used in the past as an excellent miniature boating lake although at the time of survey (November 2012) it was empty. Less attractive are the adjoining public conveniences which now have a fortress-like appearance due to the threat of vandalism. A kiosk opens in summer to cater for the large numbers of visitors who are attracted by the facilities,

including tennis courts, a bowling green, and a large children's play ground.



*View towards the paddling pool*

There are visual reminders that the mill race was previously used as a bathing place for children - boys where the foot/cycle bridge crosses it, and girls on the opposite bank to the car park. The high fences which shielded the girls and women (who swam in the main river) have long since gone. The men's swimming facility on both sides of the main river (also previously fenced) has now been reduced and converted to a learner pool and canoe club building.

*Key positive features:*

- Large, open green space with

many mature trees;

- Popular facilities for the public, particularly the paddling pool;
- Well detailed park-style metal fencing facing The Fen Causeway and Newnham Road;
- Attractive views from these roads into the park, although the many mature trees do provide some cover;
- Attractive views across the park and out over the mill leat to Sheep's Green and the River Cam;
- A path and cycle track across the park links to a controlled crossing by the bridge over The Fen Causeway and is a very well used facility;
- Views of the listed Perse Almshouses opposite the junction of The Fen Causeway and Newnham Road;
- Simple timber park seating; and
- The ducks, swans and other wildlife on the mill leat and Sheep's Green.

*Key negative features:*

- Busy traffic along both The Fen Causeway and Newnham Road;
- The poor appearance of the public conveniences;

- Poor quality street lighting;
- Some of the trees in the park may require removal and/or new planting; and
- The Bowls Club needs some maintenance.

**4.3 Paradise Nature Reserve**

The 2.17 hectare Reserve is located between Newnham Croft School, Owlstone Croft and the River Cam. The Reserve is owned and managed by Cambridge City Council and is one of eight similar reserves around the City. A Management Plan was produced in 2001 which details a number of proposed actions. A public car park serves the Reserve and Lammas Land and is accessed from The Driftway, which leads from the junction of Newnham Road with Barton Road and Grantchester Street. This is popular with walkers and other residents although the opening times are controlled to prevent commuters using it to park their cars all day. Speed humps help to control the speed of the traffic.





**The River Cam forms the boundary to the Conservation Area and runs alongside the Nature Reserve**



**Board-walk in the Nature Reserve**

Whilst it is close to Lammas Land, the Reserve has no visual connection to it although there is a well used public footpath which runs southwards along

the mill leat next to Lammas Land towards the Reserve. The leat connects to the River Cam just to the south of the car park, almost at the beginning of the Reserve. The footpath then runs along the river bank and provides extensive views across the Cam to the water meadows and woodland on the opposite bank. Eventually, the pathway turns away from the river and connects to the end of Grantchester Street.

The river at this point is in its natural state, which is no bad thing: rotting oak piles, overhanging willows, and the occasional bank collapse do no harm and are a pleasant contrast to more formal and zealously managed areas of open space. The Reserve was once a meadow which has been allowed to turn into woodland, with huge willows and towering alders. In its informal, unkempt state this area is very attractive to walkers and anglers. It still has some open areas with fen plants such as *Stachys palustris*, and an important collection of different species of willow. It should be maintained and not allowed to get further overgrown: the Wildlife Trust has this in hand. A programme of repollarding willows is admirable and should be continued, including new pollarding where appropriate. New pollard trees should be started along the river bank to replace those that have fallen into the river. The muddy paths (the nearest rough ground to the middle of Cambridge) should not

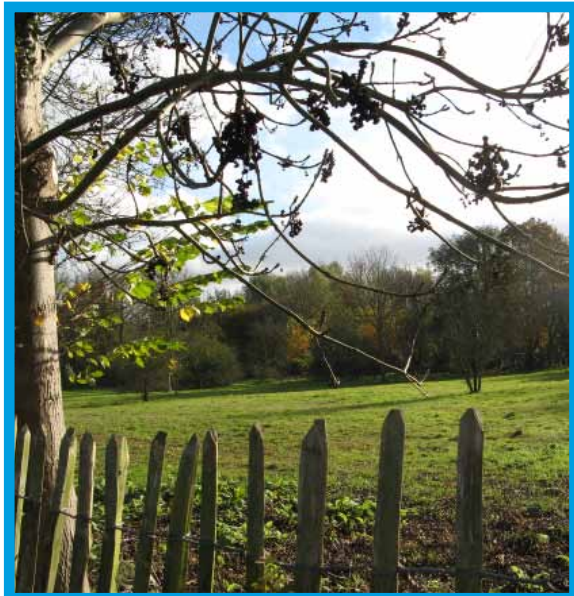
be levelled or hardened but board-walks have been installed in places to prevent erosion of the river bank.



**View over the River Cam from the Nature Reserve**

Trees within the Reserve include willow, alder, ash, horse chestnut and hawthorn. Wildlife includes shrews, bats, grass snakes, and many types of bird including black caps, tree creepers, sedge warblers, siskins and snipe.

The disused field to the east of The Grove is turning into an elm wood with suckers from the elms which used to fringe The Driftway. This should be welcomed. All of the land associated with The Grove is covered by a group TPO.



*Field to the east of The Grove*

*Key positive features:*

- The Paradise Nature Reserve is a good example of a semi-marshland habitat;
- Popular local facility;
- Peaceful location next to the River Cam;
- Attractive views across the river and into the woodland; and
- Well managed and provides educational opportunities.

*Key negative features:*

- The public car park is ill-maintained, the recycling centre attracts litter, and the use of this facility brings further traffic to the

already over-loaded junction of Newnham Road, Barton Road and Grantchester Street; and

- Ash die-back could be a problem in the future.

#### 4.4 The principal residential streets

This section includes all of the built-up streets which were largely developed between the 1850s and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century on a street-by-street basis, with each street having slightly different designs although there is a strong architectural cohesion due to the more or less ubiquitous use of two storey terraced forms. These houses are generally well preserved so that the windows, front doors and roof materials and details are all original. Most of the houses also have small front gardens, rather than sitting tight on the back of the pavement, which softens the views along each street and provides opportunities for good quality railings or brick walls. The layout of the streets reflect 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century footpaths and field boundaries, although the line of Grantchester Street and Grantchester Meadows may be earlier. The oldest terraced properties are generally to the north, closest to the City, although three detached houses, all dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century remain – Owlstone Croft, Paradise House and The Grove. Typical of the

Conservation Area, and one of its most attractive characteristics, are the positive views along these streets which often terminate in trees or woodland. Similarly, the gaps between the houses are often notable for the way the properties frame shorter views or glimpses of mature trees or woodland.

#### Barton Road

Part of the northern boundary of the Conservation Area is marked by a short section of Barton Road. All of the properties date to after 1900 apart from The Red Bull Public House, which is mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The buildings start in the west with Maitland House, a 1930s block of flats which fills in the whole plot between Grantchester Street and Derby Street and is a BLI, Cherwell Court at the end of Derby Street (another development of flats, probably dating to the 1980s), and the St John's Ambulance building which fronts Newnham Croft Street and adjoins Hardwick Street. Finally there are two important historic buildings, the Red Bull Public House and St Mark's Church, with its notable parsonage behind. The church is a BLI, and it is suggested later in this document that the parsonage is also designated as such. Mature trees around the church are also of note, and in the back garden of the vicarage most of them are also covered by TPOs. Long views westwards along Barton Road take in the trees in the front garden of

Maitland House and the tall hedge on the opposite side of the road which conceals the Gonville and Caius College playing field.



*View westwards along Barton Road*



*View eastwards along Barton Road*

The Red Bull is a pleasant hostelry which was probably built as a short terrace of

four houses in c1850. Next door, St Mark's Church and its parsonage were built in 1900 to replace a 1870s wooden structure that was retained until at least the late 1950s as a church school. The church makes an important contribution to the community life of its parish and the St Mark's Community Centre's classes, clubs and other activities are well attended by Newnham Croft residents as well as people living some way from the area.

*Key positive features:*

- Attractive views along the road, taking in the belfry to St Mark's Church and the many mature trees, some of which are covered by TPOs;
- St Mark's Church, a BLI, and its parsonage and hall;
- The Red Bull Public House dating to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century;
- Maitland House, a notable block of 1930s flats, extremely well preserved and a BLI;
- Views towards Lammas Land;
- The former driveway to the public house retains its original stone setts which have been covered in part by tarmacadam; and
- Some granite setts in the road gutters, and narrow stone kerbing.

*Key negative features:*

- Busy traffic;
- Poor quality street nameplates and modern street lighting;
- The highly visible car parking area next to Cherwell Court;
- The view of the poorly designed 1960s Ambulance Station; and
- Concrete paver footways.

**Hardwick Street**

Hardwick Street runs from Barton Road to Merton Street with Newnham Croft Street joining it on its east side. It is a pleasant, mainly residential street although the only visible greenery are the trees which are set back in the grounds of the St John's Ambulance Station. The street was laid out from the 1850s onwards, but because it was incrementally built, and not developed as a whole, there are variations in the height of buildings, particularly on the east side. The majority of the buildings are two storey terraced cottages, two windows wide, with slate roofs facing the street. The earlier houses on the east side are all set against the back edge of the pavement, whilst the post-1903 properties on the west side have small front gardens, some with low walls.



**Hardwick Street**



**Hardwick Street**

The rhythm of the terraced housing is punctuated at each end by larger, non-residential buildings, with the Red Bull public house and its garden to the north, facing the poorly designed, modern Ambulance Station. To the south is the purpose-built Newnham Social Club

building, dating to 1909 and of some social significance. It is faced in Gault brick with red brick dressings, which match the details on some of the other properties in the street. The windows are largely modern. Within its grounds is a modern, slate-roofed house built in brick sympathetic to the clubhouse building but not particularly appropriate within the larger group of terraced houses with their strong vertical emphasis. Opposite, on the east side of Hardwick Street, is a recently constructed building comprising two dwellings in reclaimed bricks on the site of a former perfume factory.

Looking southwards, the Social Club building effectively masks the end of the street, whilst looking northwards, the end of the street is demarcated by the beech hedge surrounding the playing field on the opposite side of Barton Road and by the more distant vista of the Darwin College hostel.

The house materials vary. The earliest houses on the east side of the road are flat fronted with no front gardens. Some are built from Gault brick with two over two sash windows and panelled front doors, with many examples of original joinery remaining. Positive features include the inset boot scrapers and cast iron coal-chute covers. On the west side of the street, the houses are later, and are built from red brick with ground floor canted bay windows faced in stone and

capped by battlemented parapets. There are very small front gardens. A similar style cottage is also evident, but faced in Gault rather than red brick, with the parapets to the ground floor bay windows being flat but decorated with a row of incised circles. Stained glass fanlights over some of the front doors are of note.

*Key positive features:*

- Well detailed terraced houses dating to the mid to late-19<sup>th</sup>, and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- High survival of original details and traditional materials; and
- The Newnham Social Club, dating to 1909.

*Key negative features:*

- The cohesive qualities of the street have been somewhat marred by the painting of the original brickwork of the houses over the years;
- No. 18 Merton Street is a modern building which turns the corner into Hardwick street and is somewhat out of character due to its three (rather than two) storeys, small horizontal windows, and elaborate window head detail;
- Parked cars, yellow lines at the ends of the road, telephone poles, overhead wires and television aerials are obtrusive features;

- The tarmac pavements, particularly on the east side, are patched, uneven and unsightly, and the carriageway and kerbs merit attention;
- The car park and back garden area of the Red Bull public house – this would benefit from improved landscaping;
- The modern St John's Ambulance building on the east side is completely out of character to the rest of the street being bulkier and much lower than the houses; and
- Outside the club, on the pavement, is a large cable junction box which could be made less obtrusive by being painted a more suitable colour.

### **Derby Street**

Derby Street runs north-south from Barton Road to Merton Street. The view to the north takes in Gonville and Caius College playing field, bordered with a beech hedge, and the Darwin College hostel. The road curves slightly to the east at the south end so that the view centres on the new house built on the formerly vacant plot in Merton Street. This sits back slightly from the road, with a roofline and brick chimney stack which is in keeping with the historical form of development. The first floor is clad in

green-painted timber boarding, and is cantilevered over the ground floor to create two parking spaces. The street divides into two – the less cohesive northern section, with buildings dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and beyond the junction with Newnham Croft Road, the far more satisfactory southern section, which is lined with mid 19<sup>th</sup> century two storey terraced cottages, similar to the cottages on the east side of Hardwick Street.



***Derby Street***

The first block of the northern end, on the west side, is taken up with the side view of Cherwell Court, which fronts onto Barton Road with trees planted in the main area. Opposite, Maitland House presents a tidy but plain facade. Beyond it is the western frontage of the development facing Grantchester Street which includes the Co-operative Society store. This section was the temporary home of the Co-op and it retains the blank green nameplate running the length of both flanks.



***Derby Stores and Post Office***

Beyond Newnham Croft Street the road is faced on both sides by rows of cottages of various dates, broken by three alleyways and one tunnel. The lintels to the front doors vary, being semi-circular with matching fanlights or horizontal with rectangular fanlights; the latest developments have no fanlights. The roof line is seldom constant for more than three houses; there is a front dormer above the only remaining garage at No. 17. Brickwork varies but is generally the local yellow or grey Gault, frequently painted or sometimes rendered (not always successfully). The two shops, Derby Stores Post Office on the corner of Newnham Croft Street and the bakery at Hope Cottage (No. 7) are focal points of the community. The Post Office has an early shopfront but there is no visibility into the premises, a rather regrettable feature.

Features of interest are the Sun Insurance plaque (recently erected) over the door of No. 9 and the pleasing alterations to the garage frontage and window above at Kirwee Cottage now divided as nos. 18a, 18 and 18b.

*Key positive features:*

- The southern section of the road contains well detailed mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages, with well preserved details; and
- Some granite sett gutters and stone kerbs remain.

*Key negative features:*

- Derby Street has the usual obtrusive telephone poles and wires, poorly maintained pavements and lines of parked cars on both sides; and
- Poor quality 20<sup>th</sup> century development either side of the northern section of the road.

**Newnham Croft Street**

Newnham Croft Street is a connecting 'back' street which runs parallel to Barton Road and consists mostly of the backs of buildings and garages. Looking west down the road from Grantchester Street, the view is of a terrace of houses along Hardwick Street presenting a pleasant demarcation with an attractive roofline and original features such as patterned

brick detail surviving. On the right are the Pembroke College flats at the rear of the Co-operative Society store with associated garaging and parking space. These are constructed of beige brick, which is not in keeping with the rest of the area, nor is the black metal walkway around the first floor. The sash windows attempt to match the local vernacular but the scale is not quite right and, being set flush with the wall, they lack depth. Where this building meets Derby Street are the former premises of the Co-operative Society store. This appears to be in use as apartments. Further along the street, the red brick garages at the rear of Cherwell Court have doors painted a soft pink colour which tones well with the gravel surface of the parking area. The old horse chestnut tree in the garden softens the outline of the garages, making this a much more pleasant aspect from the street. Another positive feature which should be kept is the retaining wall with the old setts alongside. Adjacent to this parking area is the St John's Ambulance car park fronted by very obtrusive road markings. Looking east from Hardwick Street along Newnham Croft Street, the plain beige bricks of this building form a large and featureless wall.



**Pembroke College flats**

On the south side, the view is of the painted gable ends of three streets of terraced housing (Grantchester Street, Derby Street and Hardwick Street). The telegraph pole at the rear of No.5 Grantchester Street is enhanced considerably by the presence of a large climbing hydrangea. The passageway at the rear of the Derby Stores Post Office is, in general, a pleasant flower-lined alleyway with a view of trees and bushes in the back gardens of Derby Street and Grantchester Street. Derby Stores are, on the whole, still in keeping with the surrounding area and the vegetable display adds an ambiance to the street. Less attractive are the blank windows which present a flat and lifeless principal elevation.

The kerb stones are still the original blue/

grey stone, and the gulleys have their original pink granite setts (an interesting reversal of those in Grantchester Street). These should be retained.



#### **Historic street name plates**

#### **Key positive features:**

- The historic street name plates;
- The gabled ends of the historic properties in Hardwick Street and Derby Street; and
- Small areas of traditional paving.

#### **Key negative features:**

- Signage for the Derby Stores on the boundary wall facing Newnham Croft Street;
- Views into the Ambulance Station and car parking area;
- Views into the garages and parking for Cherwell Court (although a high brick boundary wall has been

built to try and conceal this);

- At the rear of No. 1 Derby Street there is a large brick garage with metal roller doors opening straight onto the pavement;
- An abundance of overhead wires and telegraph poles, poor quality street lighting and obtrusive road markings;
- Street signs and notices proliferate; and
- The street seems to be dominated by parked cars and car parks.

#### **Merton Street**

Merton Street is a straight street running west from Grantchester Street passing the ends of Derby Street and Hardwick Street, terminating in a probably 1970s development of detached houses called The Cenacle. A small cul-de-sac of cottages called West View dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and leads off to the south just before The Cenacle. The street contains almost continuous terraced houses dating from the 1870s – the date stone on Nos. 1 and 3 confirms that they were built as Crofton Cottages in 1877 and were occupied by Hughes Hall, a graduate college of Cambridge University, in 1885 – this College specialised in teacher-training for women. The College moved to its permanent home overlooking the Fenner's Cricket ground in 1895. There

are 11 houses along the south side, and four on the north, with some two storey and some three storey buildings. All the houses except Daisy Cottage (with a minuscule front garden) open directly onto the pavement.



**Merton Street looking westwards**

Features on the north side (from the west) include the flank of the Edwardian (1909) Newnham Club, which has a plain facade in yellow Gault brick with the red brick decoration to window heads. Apart from one original cast iron window facing Merton Street, all have been replaced. At the end of Hardwick Street is a recent infill of two three-storey houses which contrast markedly with surrounding buildings. These are built in yellow brick with red brick soldier courses marking each floor,

curved window head details in the same material, and a cut-away corner at ground floor level. The irregular window pattern and the use of modern glazing are further discordant features. Adjoining is a row of four cottages (Nos. 8 to 14 even) all well detailed apart from No. 8, which has been refenestrated and new window openings made. On the opposite side of Derby Street, a new house has been built in 1999, which although clearly modern does fit into the street scene relatively well due to its scale and overall form. The following plot is the very large garden of No. 31 Grantchester Street. The fence here is in good repair and there is a well-tended row of pollarded limes with pleasing shrubbery beyond.



*Nos. 8-14 (even) Merton Street*

On the south side (from the east) there are eight changes of roof line, confirming that each property was built

separately. Of note is the flank wall of The Porch (which faces Grantchester Street), pleasantly covered with a virginia creeper. Then follow Crofton Cottages, Weymouth Cottage, Daisy Cottage, Stanley Terrace, Merton Cottage and Clifton Collage, all built at different times. These lead to Croft Cottage (No. 21 Merton Street), formed from the back of No.1 West View, which is heavily masked with shrubbery around the door. The ground floor window, inserted when the garage was converted, is interesting and not displeasing.

The Cenacle is situated at the west end of Merton Street; only half of one house is visible from a distance – an intriguing if probably unintentional feature. The buildings are a modern infill development of the early 1970s on the former allotments at the south end of St Mark’s parsonage garden. They consist of six non-aligned detached Georgian-style houses in light pinkish local brick. This is the latest complete housing development in the Croft. Though it does not have the same character as the traditional buildings, the development is not intrusive and, having become well softened with vegetation, is being well maintained.

Most gardens are unfenced, so lawns and flower beds generally meet the pavement though a hedge has been planted to screen gardens at the farther end. There are mature trees, including a

copper beech, masking the far end of the Newnham Croft Club.



*Newnham Croft Clubhouse*

West View is a terrace of four secluded and well maintained cottages approached by a private pathway on the south side of Merton Street just to the east of The Cenacle. It is a more cohesive group, clearly of one build, and probably dating to around the 1890s (it is shown on the 1903 map, but not on the 1888 map). It is built from Gault brick with red brick dressings and slate roofs, and the first house in the group has an original dormer windows. Sash windows are typical, with a single pane of glass to each opening sash. Virtually all the original metal fencing and gates have been retained and all are painted black. Heavy planting



on a low bank screens the terrace from the roadway of The Cenacle. The vista is punctuated by the high fencing erected to screen the fronts of Nos. 3 and 4.



**West View**

*Key positive features:*

- Varied late 19<sup>th</sup> century houses retaining their original details and materials;
- Original rows of stone setts in the street gutters; and
- Stone kerbing.

*Key negative features:*

- Dominant roof extension to No. 1 West View;
- Nos. 16 and 18 are modern houses which relate poorly to the street;

- The pavement is poor on the north and there is parking on both sides of the street; and
- A telegraph pole with obtrusive wiring stands outside Nos. 16 and 18.

**Grantchester Street**

Grantchester Street runs through the heart of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area from Barton Road in the north to Grantchester Meadows in the south, forming the historic 'spine' of the Conservation Area. It appears to be an upgrading of the footpath to the river which is shown on 17<sup>th</sup> century maps, and may well have been formalised at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Paradise House was built. The street contains the largest shop in the area, the Co-operative Supermarket, as well as a butchers/greengrocers. Otherwise it is all in residential uses, Nos. 5-31 (odd), 24-26 (even), and 37-63 (odd) forming three quite separate terraces of which Nos. 5-31 (odd) were built by 1888, with the others being added between 1902 and 1914.



**Grantchester Terrace dated 1874**



**North end of Grantchester Street**

Looking south down the street from Barton Road there is a striking contrast between the busy road junction and the relative calm of the residential streets within the Conservation Area. The vista is terminated by the end building (No.

32) on the corner of Eltisle Avenue, with the old brick wall of the former hockey field defining the immediate view on the left. The Granta Housing Association development behind this wall was built considerably later than other housing in the area, but still blends in well with the original buildings. Behind this, the sheltered housing at Lammas Court is set back from the street and is well screened by trees. This impression of greenness on entering Grantchester Street is reinforced on the right by the elms, yews and silver birch trees alongside Maitland House – these trees are protected by TPOs. Beyond is the more recent Co-operative Supermarket with some apartments above, providing quite a large building whose scale, materials and detailing do not reflect the general character of the area.

Moving down the road to the corner of Newnham Croft Street, the belt of trees on Paradise Island can be seen in the far distance. Yet more trees can be glimpsed behind the Lammas Field car park and the stepped roofs of the attractively set-back houses on the corner of the access road. The large robinia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) trees in the front gardens of Nos. 18 and 20 Grantchester Street also enhance this aspect of the street.



**West side of Grantchester Street**

On the west side of the street, Nos. 5-31 (odd) form a long terrace of two and three storey houses. The first seven in the row are modest cottages with flat fronts, slate roofs and two over two sashes – stylistically, they are very similar to cottages in Derby Street and Hardwick Street and probably date to the 1860s. There are then two larger Gault brick properties, again with slate roofs, then a bay-fronted cottage. Most of the remaining properties in the group are three storey Gault brick houses, two windows wide with two over two sashes. The ground floors have canted bay windows with plain parapets. A plaque saying *Grantchester Terrace 1874* confirms the date of their construction. Most of the houses in this terrace also still

have wooden panelled doors, windows and other original features such as the arches over the doors of Nos. 17 and 19.

Turning the corner into Merton Street, No. 31 is a neo-Gothic Gault brick house with a gable facing the street, and opposite, No. 33 (The Porch), is another late 19<sup>th</sup> century detached house with a high wooden fence which runs along Grantchester Street for several metres. Both of these houses have large gardens which add important open (though private) spaces within this part of the Conservation Area.



**Nos. 24-32 (even) Grantchester Street**

On the opposite side of Grantchester Street, Nos. 24-32 (even) form a row of bay-windowed Edwardian houses, constructed in brick with slate roofs. These houses are symmetrical in design, and have original, attractive features.

These include brick eaves details, house names carved into the sandstone of the bays, stone arches over the doorways each with a different plant/flower design on the keystone, black iron railings and wood-panelled front doors on the end houses with elaborate glass panels in the centre doors of the terrace. The butcher's shop which forms the end of this group, on the corner of Chedworth Street, was evidently intended to be the end feature of the terrace and is constructed using matching materials. The traditional canvas awning, and displays of flowers and other wares for sale, all add to the vitality of the street. On the opposite side of the road, on the corner with Chedworth Street, a small area of landscaping provides public seats and some planting. This is in need of some upgrading, but does provide the area with a focus, enhanced by the use of the timber fence on the opposite side of the road, returning down Eltisle Avenue, which is used to display posters with community news and other local matters. Further shops, purpose-built, can also be found here, (Nos. 30/32 Eltisle Avenue) which are used as a chemist and hairdressers.

Beyond this point, Grantchester Street changes in character, as the east side is undeveloped, being formed by the back boundaries to the houses in Owlstone Road. The gardens and fences are diverse in character though fortunately some of the more decrepit garages have

been removed. A big apple tree could be a survivor of Paradise Gardens. On the west side of the street is a long row of very cohesive terraced houses (Nos. 37-63 even), dated 1902 although they are not shown on the 1903 map. These have red brick facades with painted stone details, punctuated by prominent chimney stacks, and with a two storey canted bay windows to each property. Some of the original front garden fences of cleft oak boards remain or have been replaced in similar materials.



*South end of Grantchester Street*

This terrace ends at the junction with Grantchester Meadows, but continues as a short resin-bounded drive towards Paradise House, possibly built in c.1780

and the earliest house in the area, which is almost invisible on a tree-covered island in the river. This is a BLI.

However, a hidden turn carries the road past the end of Owlstone Road, where the end house in the terrace has a notable bay window in its end wall and another Paradise Gardens apple tree. The road skirts the edge of the woodland of the Paradise Nature Reserve and leads to Owlstone Croft, described with Owlstone Road.

*Key positive features:*

- Three good groups of terraced houses, well preserved, dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- Paradise House is the earliest remaining property in the Conservation Area and dates to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century – it is a BLI;
- The survival of original windows, doors, roof materials, and chimney details;
- The well tended front gardens;
- The activity provided by the shops and other facilities;
- The survival of pink granite kerb stones and the gulleys with their original blue/grey stone sets; and
- The original cast iron street name plates, fixed to the walls of the houses.

*Key negative features:*

- Intrusive road markings, poor quality street lights;
- Some use of uPVC windows;
- The pavements in general are in poor condition – they are much patched, uneven and some slope alarmingly;
- Modern pressed aluminum street name plates;
- Intrusive car parking signs; and
- The public seating area next to the entrance to Chedworth Street is in need of enhancements including the removal of a cable television box, improvements to the planting, seating and litter bins, and the replacement of the modern bollards with a better quality product.

**Chedworth Street**

Chedworth Street is a short, straight cul-de-sac to the east of Grantchester Street. The houses on the north side were built in 1913-14 and those on the south side in 1992-3, replacing the original Newnham Croft School building dating from 1914-15. The new school at the south-east end of the road opened in 1989.



*Nos. 1-25 (odd) Chedworth Street*



*Detail of No. 5 Chedworth Street*

The road is dominated by the long terrace of houses along the northern side, Nos. 1-25 (odd), built in Gault brick, with some red brick detailing. The details match other very similar houses in Hardwick Street (Nos. 14-20 even). The houses are uniformly two storeys high, the exception being the last house which is slightly taller,

with a more steeply pitched roof. This has a dormer window and a two storey bay to the front, whereas the others have a bay at ground floor level only. Nos. 21 and 23 at the east end have slate roofs with red ridge tiles; all the others have tiles of varying shades of grey/brown and a variety of ridge tiles. The attractive brick chimneys have red brick detailing and terracotta chimney pots. The character of the houses has changed somewhat by being painted, with no uniformity of colour although pastel colours predominate. Some of the houses retain their original front doors and fanlights, but some have their fanlights only with replacement front doors. There is a variety of low brick walls although some of the houses have had their walls and fences at the front removed. Little of the rear aspect can be seen from the Lammas Field car park.

Newnham Croft Primary School can be found at the end of the street, between the built-up area and playing fields which back onto the Paradise Nature Reserve. This was completed in 1989 in a simple modern style with brick and rendered elevations and shallow mono-pitched roofs. Its impact on the street scene is therefore relatively muted. The original 1915 metal railings remain around the entrance.

A terrace of houses was built in on the south side of the street, replacing the old school in 1992-3, their two storey

bay windows matching the easternmost house on the north side of the street and some of the housing in Grantchester Street. Carefully detailed, they are built using a modern Gault brick with some red brick detailing and have slate roofs with traditional chimneys and terracotta ridge tiles to the bays. The front gardens are well laid out and are finished to the road with an attractive brick wall with contrasting red brick copings.



**Nos. 2-18 (even) Chedworth Street**



**Bay window to No. 2 Chedworth Street**

No. 14 includes a well established almond tree. The lack of aerials and telephone

wires is a welcome feature. The bay at the west end of No. 2 relieves what could have been a very blank aspect to Grantchester Street and Eltisley Avenue. At the rear, all of the houses have two storey bays except Nos. 10 and 12 which are on either side of an archway. A communal driveway at the back provides useful access but does mean there is less sense of enclosure, and it is possible to see a variety of fences, carports and sheds. The roofline has been altered by the addition of dormers or solar panels. The rear driveway has two fine trees: a lime and a Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) which are protected by a TPO. At the eastern end the view is onto the school field, bounded by trees and railings and with the distant trees of the nature reserve. To the west, the east end of The Porch on Grantchester Street is an attractive eye catcher.

**Key positive features:**

- Nos. 1-25 (odd) are a well designed early 20<sup>th</sup> century terrace with some remaining historic details; and
- The high quality of the more recent development (Nos. 2-18 even) on the south side of the road.

**Key negative features:**

- Loss of original front doors;
- Changes to the chimneys and chimney pots;

- Loft conversions;
- Street signage;
- Views to both east and west are spoilt by the parked cars, mainly on the north side; and
- Telegraph poles on the south side with dominant wires to the houses on the other side of the road.

**Owlstone Road**

Owlstone Road runs from Grantchester Street to Owlstone Croft and the Paradise Nature Reserve. There are 45 two storey houses in total, all built between 1904 and 1912. Mostly laid out in terraces, the unity of their original design has hardly changed, although some of the properties now have painted stonework, roof lights or solar panels. Nos. 1-15 odd on the north side form a uniform terrace of eight, with facades of brick to the ground floor and render painted white to the first floor under slate roofs. The properties have recessed front doors, decorated 'porch' pilaster strips and two storey front bays. Nos. 17, 19 and 21 at the outer side of the road's right-angle turn to the south are the only detached properties in the road. They are all of identical design, using Gault bricks with red brick arches and window heads and slate roofs which extend well beyond their supporting walls with decorative 'half-timbered' gables. On the east side, which backs

onto Owlstone Croft, Nos. 23 to 33 (odd) form a red brick terrace of six with feature gables to the end properties and a pair of shared gables to the middle four. There is a wide range of stone detailing with arched lights above the front doors and two storey bay windows. All of the properties on this side have low brick walls to the pavement. No. 23 has a roof extension which unfortunately raises its ridge above the line of the rest of the terrace. Nos. 35 to 49 (odd) form a terrace of eight on a repeating pattern. They are also built using Gault bricks with good quality red brick details and ridge tiles to the two storey bays all with slate roofs. All of the window and door lintels, mullions and pilasters are of stone with fleur-de-lis type motifs on the lintels. Nos. 51 and 53 are a side to back semi-detached pair, built using red brick with bays of two and one storey with slate and lead roofs. No. 53 faces Paradise Nature Reserve and has an oriel window as well as other second floor roof extensions.



**Nos. 32-54 Owlstone Road**



**Owlstone Road**

The west side of Owlstone Road is one continuous terrace built in two parts. Originally behind railings on low brick walls enclosing the shallow front gardens, Nos. 54 to 32 (even) start with the sideways-on No. 54 facing the Reserve. The first twelve terraced properties are red brick with two storey bays and slate roofs including the ground floor part of the bays which extend out slightly further. Nos. 30 to 20 (even) form a terrace of six smaller houses also with two storey bays and slate roofs. Two have painted facades. No. 20, which has a side fence along its northern boundary facing Nos. 1 to 15, bears a stone street nameplate on its gable wall reading 'Owl-stone Road 1904'.



**Houses on the east side of Owlstone Road**



**View to Lodge Cottage, Owlstone Croft**

Owlstone Road terminates at the junction with a private driveway which leads to an entrance to the Reserve and Owlstone Croft. The house, together with its two cottages, was built in about 1880 as a country house for Major R Calvert, Chief Constable for the county. It was a girls' school in the 1920s and

1930s, and was extended in 1946 when it became a nurses' hostel. It is now a student hostel for Queens' College. The entrance gatehouse, Lodge Cottage, is built using Gault bricks with a slate roof, and has curiously curved eaves detail. The remains of its construction date were once on the dormer but have been lost during the recent repair work. The property is a BLI. Turning into the site, the view is dominated by the four storey block of apartments, probably dating to the late 1940s, which conceal the original house (Owlstone Croft) beyond, and to which it is joined by a three storey link. Owlstone Croft is also built using Gault brick and has been extended to the east with a number of single storey additions, concealing the main part of the building, but some original six over six sash windows can still be seen, similar to the details on the gatehouse. Behind the gatehouse there are some original stable buildings, again somewhat altered and extended. The large garden also contains the footprint of a further modern building, shown on recent maps but now demolished.

*Key positive features:*

- Long terraces of well preserved early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses retaining much of their original detailing;
- Original low brick front walls and wrought iron railings, like the ones between Nos. 47 and 49;

- Small front gardens add to the green ambiance;
- The backdrop of mature trees in views into the street from Grantchester Street;
- The close proximity of the Paradise Nature Reserve and the River Cam; and
- Owlstone Lodge, a BLI.

*Key negative features:*

- Some replacement windows;
- Telegraph poles and overhead wires;
- The 1960s street lamps are not particularly attractive; and
- The poor condition and general appearance of the Owlstone Croft site and buildings, although the gatehouse has been recently repaired.

**Eltisley Avenue**

Eltisley Avenue runs from Grantchester Street to Grantchester Meadows along the line of an historic footpath shown on the 1888 map. It was built in two individually cohesive sections, the south-east side between 1902 and 1912 and the opposite side 10 to 15 years later. It is a straight road, mostly lacking in trees. An obvious exception is the magnificent, mature Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus*

*altissima*) in the garden of No. 33. This is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The views at both ends of the road are dominated by trees, including two adjacent Scots pines (*Pinus sylvestris*), giving a surprisingly defined boundary to the road. A feature of the street is the extent to which it is used by walkers, particularly on weekends, as it provides a link between Cambridge and the footpath over Grantchester Meadows. The numbering of the street is unusual, going from Nos. 1-32 continuously on the south-east side, then back down to No. 65 on the opposite side, reflecting the development of the properties in two phases.



**Nos. 1-32 (conseq.) on the south-east side of Eltisley Avenue**



*North west side of Eltisley Avenue*

The street is entirely in residential uses apart from the three purpose-built shops at the northern end, and the modern garage at the southern end (GP Motors), rebuilt in the late 1990s. The workshops associated with the garage are located on the backland site to the north-west of the road, where there are 88 lock-up garages arranged in several rows, which seem to date to the 1930s. The private road which leads to these garages provides access to narrow passageways which service the terraced houses on the north-west side of Eltisley Avenue and on the east side of Marlowe Road. It also provides a pleasant pedestrian short cut through to

Marlowe Road. On the south-east side of Eltisley Avenue, but accessed from Grantchester Street, is another short cut. This one is for pedestrians only and runs parallel to Eltisley Avenue (with a separate section serving the rear of the Grantchester Street properties) emerging in Grantchester Meadows. It is pleasantly untended, being mud beaten to a hard surface. Views from these back alleys over the rear elevations and gardens show all the different permutations and possibilities for extending houses and laying out gardens.



*Detail of house to south east side of Eltisley Avenue*

The distinct character of the street comes from the contrast in style between the houses on either side although all houses are built in red brick, with grey slate roofs. The shops on the corner have been re-roofed in artificial slate but other roofs retain their original coverings. The houses on the south-east side, which are earlier, have a more Victorian character with canted two storey bay windows, painted or natural stone window surrounds, and unusual fretted soffit boards to the eaves. There are moulded keystones over the front doors, each house having a unique pattern. The roofs face the street with the bays rising through the eaves to create small hips, topped by decorative ridge tiles in red clay. These houses are generally well preserved and the slightly deeper front gardens provide greater opportunities for planting and shrubbery.

On the north-west side of the street, the character is more Edwardian, with dominant shared gables facing the street, decorated with applied timber-framing. The houses are built using red brick but some of them have been painted. The paired windows are sashed, with stone lintels. The gables are set forward, with dentil decoration on the soffit boards and immediately above the first floor windows, where they form a string course. The front doors generally have four recessed panels. Again, this group is very well preserved.





**Detail of house to north west side of Eltisley Avenue**

Gardens on both sides of the road are small and fronted with low wooden fences or walls. None of the gardens have been converted into car parking areas, due to their small size. Many of the original front garden paths still remain. There are no road markings, except outside the shops. No speed calming measures exist other than the raised ramp at the entrance to the road.

**Key positive features:**

- Cohesive terraced houses along both sides of the street retaining high quality details;
- Mostly original windows and front doors;
- Long views of the gabled elevations on the north-west side are particularly dramatic;

- The survival of the original purpose-built shopfronts to Nos. 31a and 32a;
- The traditional lettering and signage on these shops enhances the character of the buildings and the area as a whole; and
- Mature trees in many locations, providing the backdrop in views across the area.

**Key negative features:**

- Loft conversions have been installed in about half the houses in the street, with rooflights on the front elevations;
- Some replacement uPVC windows;
- Parked cars along both sides of the road; and
- Cable TV boxes on the pavement.

**Marlowe Road**

The houses in Marlowe Road were probably built around 1912, as stylistically they match the houses on the north-west side of Eltisley Avenue. The land was previously owned by Corpus Christi College and the street is named after Christopher Marlowe, the poet, who was a student there. The road is short and straight, sloping gently down towards Grantchester Meadows. It is a cul-de-sac with only a narrow snicket

giving pedestrian access to Millington Road, and has a private and enclosed feeling. It is very symmetrical with the houses on either side of almost identical character. The northern end is enclosed by the trees in the garden of Nos. 17/17a Millington Road and the view is enhanced by the pleasant front patio of No. 21 Marlowe Road. Viewed from the north, the handsome riverside trees bordering Paradise Island dominate the skyline, while the roofscape of No. 90 Grantchester Meadows provides a pleasing contrast to the symmetry. The absence of street markings enhances the seclusion and quiet atmosphere of the road, and the general absence of through traffic allows children to play safely in the road.



**Marlowe Road**

At street level the variety of garden boundaries adds interest to the otherwise uniform feeling. The front gardens are small, and there is little room for large trees, though some houses have dense hedges that provide a low fringe of green against the red brick of the houses. At the southern end of the road, the wooden fences and tall ash trees in the back gardens of Eltisley Avenue and Grantchester Meadows supply additional texture and colour.



*Detail of a Marlowe Road house*

The houses are all of the same design, with timber-faced paired gables which march rhythmically down each side of the street. The survival of the original slate roofing material is a very positive feature. Again, the walls are red brick although a few houses have been painted. The finials on the gables above the bay

windows and the bargeboards to the principal gables both give great character to the street. All the houses retain their sandstone mullions and lintels, some of which have been painted white or cream. The houses all have sash windows, with one pane over one pane, and there is an almost total absence of modern replacement plastic frames. However, over the years some of the front doors have been replaced and are now more varied in character, though most retain the original leaded glass fanlights above.

*Key positive features:*

- Cohesive early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings which are little altered, with many retaining their original roof materials, windows and doors;
- Long views along the street taking in the gabled front elevations, decorated with applied timbering;
- The prominent chimney stacks;
- Tranquil character due to the lack of through traffic; and
- Historic street name plate on the side wall of No. 21.

*Key negative features:*

- Some replacement windows and front doors;
- The street lights are a mixture of styles, but at night the harsh

orange light of the sodium bulbs drowns the gentle gas light from Millington Road;

- Telegraph poles and overhead wires;
- The pavements have uneven surfaces; and
- Wheelie-bins left on the street or in front gardens do little to enhance the area.

**Grantchester Meadows**

Grantchester Meadows runs from Grantchester Street westwards to the beginning of the track over the meadows. In Spalding's Street Directory for 1895, the road appears to have been a path leading to the university bathing shed and the 'golf links'. At that time the land at the eastern end of the present road was water meadows. Residential development was originally concentrated at the western end where the road narrows. The subsequent piercing of the road by Eltisley Avenue divides the present road into two sections, east and west, each with its own characteristics, although overall the street retains the character of a country lane, with buildings of different sizes, ages and materials, set back at varying distances from the frontage, and often concealed by mature trees and other planting. These buildings are all in residential use.



**No. 103 Grantchester Meadows**

The west side of the road leads towards the river and the water meadows. Immediately next to the junction with Marlowe Road is a row of Edwardian houses (Nos. 85-99 odd) which have been altered and partly rebuilt after bomb damage. These are similar to the houses in Marlowe Road but with smaller gables and sit close to the pavement with very small front gardens. The rebuilt houses in the middle of the group are poorly detailed in comparison to their immediate neighbours. Further along, on the north side of the road and closer to the open green spaces, are the earliest houses in this part of the Conservation Area. Of these, (Nos. 85-117 odd), most are marked on the 1888 map including No. 113 (called Brook Lodge on the 1888 map) and Nos. 115/117. Nos. 103 and 105 also belong to this earlier period, and are similar to the houses in Grantchester

Street (Nos. 23-29) which are dated 1874, with plain Gault brick elevations, sash windows and slate roofs. No. 103 is unusually three storeys high. An extension, relatively in keeping, has been added to No. 105, now called No. 105a.



**Nos. 107 and 107a Grantchester Meadows**

Next door, Nos. 107 and 107a are a pair of similarly detailed late 19<sup>th</sup> century two storey cottages, again with stone defined canted bay windows and red brick dressings, particularly to the eaves cornice. Both have modern dormers, simply detailed. The wrought iron gates are of note. Nos. 109 and 111 are another matching pair, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century neo-Gothic style but with similar Gault brick and red brick dressings, this time with a three storey elevation facing the

road with a two storey stone bay. No. 109 retains a well detailed timber entrance porch which might well be modern but copying a late 19<sup>th</sup> century conservatory in its detailing. It also retains the name 'Grantchester Meadows' in stone on its front gate pier. No. 111 has a particularly fine six panelled green painted front door, with raised panels which follow the Gothic style. No. 113 is very hidden from the road by planting, but is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century detached villa, again built from Gault brick, with a slate roof. The windows appear to have been changed in the 1930s, although some sashed widows can be seen from South Green Road. It has an interesting series of roofs, some with chimneys with tall clay pots. Nos. 115 and 117 are a pair of similar age, both being late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but differently designed. They sit in an almost isolated location facing out over Skaters Field, with long views towards the River Cam. Both a Gault brick with two storey bay windows (No. 117 is double-fronted), and both have slate roofs with tall brick chimney stacks. The simple one over one sash windows appear original. No. 115 has a two window dormer, probably an addition.



**Nos. 115 and 117 Grantchester Meadows**



**Public footpath to Grantchester from Grantchester Meadows**

Development along the south side of Grantchester Meadows was clearly sporadic and relatively late, with many examples from the 1920s, 1930s and even the 1960s. There are just two

19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, both substantial detached houses (Nos. 100 and 102) both enclosed by large gardens and mature planting. Otherwise the properties in the road date to the early or mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and there is even a small group of 1960s houses (Nos. 104, 106 and 108) at the western end of the road. However, the impact of this modern development is lessened by the high hedges, front boundaries, and mature trees which reinforce the country lane character. There are long gardens to the rear of some of these houses (Nos. 58 to 100 – the numbers are not continuous) which stretch down to a branch of the Granta river which encloses the north side of Paradise Island. Ash and sycamore trees along the line of the river provide a pleasing backdrop which can be glimpsed from the road through the gaps in the buildings. The hogging surfacing of the adjacent footpath provides an attractive alternative to the customary tarmac. Most of this eastern section of Grantchester Meadows contains what appear to be 1920s houses, some nicely detailed, on the south side. These are arranged in a short terrace, or, where the road turns towards Paradise House, as a well preserved pair.

On the opposite side of the road is another short terrace of older houses (Nos. 65-79 odd). They are two storeys high with canted two storey stone bay windows which rise slightly above the

eaves to create shallow hips. The eaves are decorated with scalloped timber, similar to the details on south-east side of Eltisley Avenue, which they back on to. The streetscape in this part of the road has been somewhat compromised by the differing angles of the houses, so there is a certain amount of visual exposure to the back elevations, gardens, sheds and other less attractive features of these properties. Another negative feature is the modern garage showroom building at the junction of Eltisley Avenue and Grantchester Meadows, although it does provide a useful local facility for the community.



**Nos. 65-79 (odd) Grantchester Meadows**

*Key positive features:*

- Well detailed late 19<sup>th</sup> century houses along the northern side of the road, with a variety of building forms;
- Nos. 103-115 are mainly pre-1888 houses, the oldest ones in this part of the Conservation Area;
- The survival of the roof materials, windows and front doors in these properties;
- Nos. 65-79 odd are a well preserved group of early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses, similar to the houses in Eltisley Avenue, which they back on to;
- The green qualities of the area, with mature trees and shrubbery in the large gardens;
- The longer views towards mature trees and Paradise Island; and
- The close proximity of the water meadows and the River Cam.

*Key negative features*

- Some of the 20<sup>th</sup> century houses along the south side of the road are of little architectural merit, although due to the deep front gardens their visual impact is lessened.

**South Green Road**

South Green Road is a private cul-de-sac leading north from the western end of Grantchester Meadows. The first pair of houses (Nos. 1 and 2) is marked on the 1903 map, so presumably development took place around that time. Previously the area was fields and a gravel pit, but by 1903 the land opposite the houses had become St Catharine's College Cricket Ground.

Nos. 1-8 are a continuous terrace of two storey houses, built from Gault brick with red brick string courses, giving a pleasantly 'stripey' effect. There are stone ground floor canted bay windows, with circular pierced parapets similar to houses in Hardwick Street. The bright red clay pots are worthy of special mention.



*Nos. 1-8 South Green Road*

The entrance into South Green Road is contained by mature planting on both sides of the street. A small, probably 1960s, single-storey building on the east side of the road is a former consulting room associated with No. 113 Grantchester Meadows. Following is a detached modern house, 'Innisfree' and then the terrace of early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses (Nos. 1-8 cont). There is another small infill house (No. 9), then the road turns to the right, leading to a new sports hall. This is relatively hidden by No. 9, although it is quite a bulky and tall building. On the opposite side of the road is a modern development of student accommodation by St Catharine's College which admirably reflects the style of the adjoining Edwardian terrace. The western side of the road is separated from the adjacent St Catharine's College playing fields by a low hedge. The road is unadopted, one half being the responsibility of the College, the other half that of the residents.



*View across St Catharine's College Cricket Ground*

*Key positive features:*

- Well preserved early 20<sup>th</sup> century terrace with original details;
- Early 20<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed gas street light outside Nos. 4/5, still operational; and
- Attractive long views over St Catharine’s Playing Fields, taking in the mature trees and the recently extended pavilion.

*Key negative features:*

- Large rooflights in some of the terraced houses;
- A prominent sewerage vent pipe at the north-west end of the road would be improved by a coat of paint; and
- The poor condition of the 1960s building in the garden of No. 113 Grantchester Meadows.

**Millington Lane**

Millington Lane is accessed from Millington Road, so although within the Newnham Croft Conservation Area, it cannot be reached from it. It comprises a relatively recent development of five red and yellow brick modern houses with intricate and dominating red tiled roofs. Since construction, the landscaping has become more established and the development is generally softened by the large number of mature trees, some of

which have TPOs, between the newer houses and the back gardens of the houses in South Green Road. There are further TPOs on trees in the gardens of Nos. 101, 101a and 103a Grantchester Meadows, three houses of a similar age which are accessed from a gap between Nos. 99 and 103 Grantchester Meadows, so they can hardly be seen from the street.



*Houses in Millington Lane*

**4.5 St Catharine’s College Sports Field and the river meadows down to the River Cam**

Roughly where it joins South Green Road, Grantchester Meadows becomes an unadopted road covered in rough tarmac and gravel, which leads to the footpath towards the river and Grantchester Meadows. This is at the point where urban Newnham Croft adopts a more rural character as it opens up to the fields

of Grantchester Meadows – this change being a vital characteristic of the area.



*View over Skaters’ Field*

To the south are meadows stretching to the river which were once flooded and used in winter for skating. This is known by several names - ‘Skaters Meadow’, ‘Lamp Post Field’ or ‘Electric Light Field’. A single electric lamp remains in the centre of the field to remind the onlooker of this previous use. The meadow is owned by Cambridge Past, Present and Future (formerly Cambridge Preservation Society), but managed on a long term lease by the local Wildlife Trust. To the east the meadow is bounded by a footpath which leads to the former university bathing shed. To the north-west are the playing fields of St Catharine’s and Pembroke Colleges, the latter also providing some allotment space for local residents.

*Key positive features:*

- Attractive rural character with long views over the water meadows towards the River Cam;
- Popular footpath, well used by local residents and visitors; and
- Views from the river over the meadows.

*Key negative features:*

- The area is sometimes used for car parking or for caravans;
- The road surface, as well as the narrow single pavement on the western end of the road, both need attention; and
- A TPO'd oak tree in the front garden of No. 115 Grantchester Meadows is in need of some attention.



## 5 Architectural Overview

The Newnham Croft Conservation Area is notable for its well preserved terraces of late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses, mainly two storeys high and built from the local Gault brick. Shallow pitched slate roofs, with dominant chimneys and tall clay pots, are another notable feature. Some of the houses are paired or detached, principally in Grantchester Meadows. The Conservation Area also includes some early 20<sup>th</sup> century purpose-built shops, a church dating to 1900, and several blocks of well preserved 1930s

apartments. The only Listed Buildings are Newnham Mill and a street light in South Green Road. Descriptions are included at Appendix 1. There are five Buildings of Local Importance (BLIs). Descriptions are included at Appendix 2.

Development appears to have commenced in the north along Barton Road in the 1850s, then down Hardwick Street, Derby Street, Grantchester Street and Merton Street between the 1860s and 1900. Some of the properties in Grantchester Meadows also date to

this period. Otherwise, Eltisley Avenue, Marlowe Road (which are similar building types) and Owlstone Road date to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, although there was a certain amount of infilling in Grantchester Meadows in the 1920s and again in the 1960s or 1970s.

The only buildings which pre-date this are Paradise House, a BLI and dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century; Newnham Mill, Grade II listed and dating to the 1850s; and then two unlisted houses (The Grove in The Driftway – a BLI, and Owlstone Croft off



Owlstone Road) which both appear to date to the 1870 or 1880s. The Red Bull Public House in Barton Street appears to have been built as four separate cottages – the details suggest a date of between 1850 and 1860.

The predominant building type is the terraced house, with many good examples throughout the Conservation Area. These are generally two storeys high, the earlier houses (1860 to the 1880s) in Hardwick Street, Derby Street and Grantchester Street being flat fronted. Later, mainly in the period between 1900 and 1914, canted one or sometimes two storey bays were added, built from stone with attractive details such as fleur-de-lis incised decorations. Sash windows, usually two over two panes, and panelled front doors are also common. The later terraces, such as the houses on the north-west side of Eltisley Avenue, and in Marlowe Road, also have dominant front gables, faced with false timber framing, a foretaste of the ‘Tudorbethan’ details of the 1920s and 1930s. Whilst a yellow or grey Gault brick is usually used, there are examples of the use of red brick, such as the houses on the south end of Owlstone Road, facing the Paradise Nature Reserve, which date to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Slate roofs are also ubiquitous with shallow pitches and red clay ridge tiles. Everywhere, the tall brick stacks, often with their original clay pots, make a very important contribution

to the special character of the area.

Of note are the several examples of purpose-built shops: Nos. 45-51 (odd) Newnham Road, with their historic shopfronts intact; Nos. 31a and 32a Eltisley Avenue, which have simpler purpose-built shopfronts, again intact (an adjoining shopfront has been much altered); and No.36 Grantchester Street, a single storey shop which was added to an existing terrace but in a sympathetic way. Two further shops, the bakery in Derby Street (No. 7) and the Derby Stores/Post Office at No. 26 Derby Street, have shopfronts which are simple and in keeping but have probably been altered.



**No. 36 Grantchester Street**

One of the few non-residential buildings in the Conservation Area is St Marks’ Church, which is a simple neo-Gothic red brick building with a large stone-faced

parsonage next door. The church dates to 1900 and is a BLI.

Maitland House facing Barton Road is a complete anachronism within this mainly Victorian and Edwardian Conservation Area, being a 1930s purpose-built block of flats with original details such as the Crittall windows. Well maintained and only two storeys high, it does retain a more domestic character which is in keeping with the area. It is also a BLI, a designation shared with the Causewayside, the three blocks of much taller 1930s apartments overlooking The Fen Causeway. This retains its original Art Deco details and is an imposing collection of buildings in a very focal location.



## 6 Trees, Landscape and Open Spaces

The Newnham Croft Conservation Area is a mainly late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential area which includes, or is enclosed by, notable open green spaces, river frontages, and woodland. This contrast between the built-up more urban frontages, and the open green spaces with their abundant wildlife, is one of the principal features of the Conservation Area.

The principal landscape features are (from north to south):

### **Mill Pit, the River Cam, Sheep's Green**

This area lies just outside the northern tip of the Conservation Area to the east of the listed former corn mill and links though to the City Centre – it includes many footpaths which wind through the water meadows on either side of the Cam.



*The Mill Pit*

### **Lammas Land**

This large area of public open space, created in 1925, lies within the Conservation Area and is a well managed public park with a variety of facilities including the paddling pool, tennis courts and children's play area. It is crossed by footpaths and in the summer is a very popular facility. The mill leat forms the eastern boundary to the park and to the Conservation Area, separating it from Sheep's Green and the River Cam water meadows beyond.



*Lammas Land*

### **The Paradise Nature Reserve**

This Council-owned and managed wildlife reserve has reintroduced unmanaged

woodland along the banks of the Cam which provide excellent habitats for a variety of plants, animals, reptiles, invertebrates, and birds. A winding pathway follows the line of the Cam along its western bank, the river forming the boundary to the Conservation Area. Views from this side of the river, over the water course to the water meadows and willow trees beyond (within the Southacre Conservation Area) are of special note. It is a quiet, tranquil area enlivened by the distant sounds of children playing in the neighbouring Newnham Croft School. A public car park at the end of The Driftway is used by the many visitors, often accompanied by children and dogs, although the opening hours are controlled to prevent the spaces being used by commuters.



*Paradise Nature Reserve*

Beyond the Nature Reserve, there are privately owned areas of woodland and

water meadows associated with Paradise Island. Whilst not publically accessible, the many mature trees can be seen from the built-up area in Grantchester Meadows and Owlstone Road.

### **Skaters Meadow and Grantchester Meadows**

This area of open green fields, some managed as a nature reserve, wraps around the southern edge of the Conservation Area. Popular with walkers, it provides attractive footpaths to the water meadows and beyond. The playing fields for St Catharine's and Pembroke Colleges are also included within the Conservation Area, and although their short grass and managed boundaries do little for wildlife, they do provide attractive views and open up the landscape, particularly from South Green Road.



*Skaters Meadow*



## 7 Key Characteristics of the Conservation Area

The key characteristics of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- Mainly residential Conservation Area containing well preserved late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses, mostly arranged in terraced form;
- Cohesive building forms with traditional materials and details well preserved;
- Tranquil village character reinforced by the lack of through-traffic;
- A high proportion of the Conservation Area is open green space or woodland, including Lammas Land, a popular public park; the Paradise Nature Reserve, notable for its wildlife habitats and location next to the River Cam; and the rural nature of the water meadows which lead towards Grantchester to the south west of the City;
- Attractive views from many locations over open green spaces, woodland or water;
- The northern tip of the Conservation Area, beyond The Fen Causeway, has a more urban character with more commercial buildings, focused on the Grade II listed Newnham Mill and its adjoining mill pond, which is now a restaurant;
- The only other listed entry is an

- early 20<sup>th</sup> century gas street light in South Green Road, still in use;
- There are several BLIs: Causewayside, a 1930s block of apartments; Maitland House, Barton Road, a smaller block of 1930s apartments; St Mark's Church, Barton Road, a neo-Gothic red brick church completed in 1900; The Grove, The Driftway, a probably mid-19<sup>th</sup> century house, now somewhat altered; and Paradise House, a somewhat isolated late 18<sup>th</sup> century building on Paradise Island, next to the River Cam;
  - The earlier houses can be found in Hardwick Street, Derby Street, Grantchester Street, Merton Street and the northern side of Grantchester Meadows – these are predominantly simple, flat fronted Gault brick cottages with some larger three storey houses including Grantchester Terrace in Grantchester Street, dated 1874;
  - Early 20<sup>th</sup> century terraces in Eltisley Avenue, Marlowe Road, Owlstone Road and Grantchester Meadows, dating to between 1900 and 1914;
  - Use of yellow or grey Gault brick, or, for some of the later properties, red brick;
  - Most of the roofs are slated with prominent chimney stacks with tall clay pots; and
  - Maitland House, Causewayside and the parsonage to St Mark's Church have clay pantiled or plain clay tiled roofs.



## 8 Issues and Recommendations

### 8.1 Conservation Area boundary review

The existing boundary to the Newnham Croft Conservation Area was drawn up in 1998. It abuts the Southacre Conservation Area to the east, the Cambridge Central Area in the north and north-east, and the West Cambridge Conservation Area to the north-west. The northern-most tip of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area is a triangular area between The Fen Causeway, Newnham

Road and the mill leat, and is enclosed on two sides by the Central Conservation Area. The properties within it are mainly commercial properties and include the listed former corn mill (Newnham Mill), now a restaurant. This area has an urban character which is reinforced by these commercial uses, the proximity of the City Centre, and busy vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It is also physically separated from the residential streets which make up the core of the Newnham Croft Conservation Area by the large

public park called Lammas Land. It is the Council's intention to review the boundaries of all of its Conservation Areas shortly and it is recommended that the boundary is redrawn to exclude this area from the Newnham Croft Conservation Area and add it to the Cambridge Central Conservation Area to which it more logically belongs due to its location, buildings, and building uses.



**Selwyn Road**

The inclusion of Selwyn Road was also considered as part of this Appraisal process. The cottages along the south side are shown on the 1888 map, and their simple details are similar to properties in the Newnham Croft Conservation Area. However, they are located some distance away, on the other side of Millington Road and Kings Road, and have little physical relationship to the Newnham Croft Conservation Area. In addition, they face probably a 1930s development of no special interest, so they are somewhat isolated. It is therefore concluded that there is no justification for their inclusion within the Newnham Croft Conservation Area. Otherwise, after careful consideration of the remaining boundaries, no further changes are considered necessary.

**Recommendation:**

- Implement the above changes when appropriate.

## **8.2 Protection of the setting of the Conservation Area**

The setting of the Conservation Area is provided on several sides by open green spaces including Sheep's Green, the mill leat, the River Cam, playing fields, and the water meadows leading towards Grantchester. Lammas Land, a large public park, and The Paradise Nature Reserve also lie within the Conservation Area. Together these provide the Conservation Area with an attractive setting and a rural ambiance which is one of its main characteristics.

These landscape features are already protected by being open spaces in public ownership, but some land, including private gardens, is not under public control and there will inevitably be pressure for new development including the sub-division of plots or the addition of over-large extensions. These must be strongly resisted although the redevelopment of neutral or negative 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, and their replacement with a building of similar size and bulk, might be acceptable subject to the usual controls. The City Council has strict Local Plan policies which seek to protect Conservation Areas and ensure that

new development either 'preserves or enhances' the special character of the area. These will continue to be rigorously enforced by the City Council when any proposals for new development are submitted. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), adopted in March 2012, and the accompanying guidance, also contains policies relating to the historic built environment. All new applications for change within the Conservation Area must therefore be judged against these criteria.

**Recommendation:**

- Continue to protect the setting of the Conservation Area

## **8.3 The protection of unlisted properties**

The demolition of any of the unlisted but 'positive' buildings (as marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map) will be resisted by the City Council, so any applications for demolition will have to be accompanied by a Justification Statement similar to that required for the demolition of a Listed Building. The retention of unlisted but 'positive' buildings is included in English Heritage guidance relating to the protection and management of Conservation Areas, and there is a presumption within the new NPPF for the protection of undesignated heritage assets, such as these buildings.

There is already a presumption in favour of the retention of Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest.

**Recommendation:**

- Continue to protect unlisted but ‘positive’ buildings from demolition

**8.4 Care of the trees within the Conservation Area**

Whilst many of the trees within the Conservation Area are publically owned, and their management is therefore assured, a large number are also owned privately. Some were planted before the residential development of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and now, after 120 years or so, are beginning to reach the end of their lives. Given the number of trees, and their location on private land, it has not been possible to survey each tree within the area as part of this Appraisal, and it is therefore suggested that local residents consider instigating some community effort on this issue. This could include:

- Appointing a local volunteer to act as a ‘tree warden’ for the Conservation Area;
- Asking private owners if they are willing to allow access onto their land so that the trees can be surveyed to ascertain:
  - Species;

- Age;
- Condition;
- Is there any need for a replacement tree?; and
- Recording the results on a map with linked data base.

This information could also be provided to the City Council to assist with the work of their Tree Officer. The aim would be to provide some long-term Tree Management Plan for the whole Conservation Area, and to encourage private owners to care for their trees and to replace them with appropriate species if this is needed.

It was noted during the survey work for this Appraisal that the oak tree outside No. 115 Grantchester Meadows, which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order, is in poor condition. The owner should be approached to see if remedial work needs to be undertaken.



*Tree outside No. 115 Grantchester Meadows (TPO'd)*

Of note is the potential threat from ash dieback (Chalara) with over 20% of the trees in Cambridge as a whole being this species. Whilst older trees are more resistant to this disease, younger trees are particularly vulnerable. Only time will tell how Chalara will impact on the landscape within and around Cambridge in the years to come.

**Recommendation:**

- Facilitate the production of a Tree Management Plan for the Conservation Area, assisted by the local community

**8.5 Maintenance of the roads, grass verges, pavements and street lighting**

Most of the streets within the Conservation Area are the responsibility of the County Council. Street lighting, litter bins, street signage, and other public realm features are utilitarian at best and rather poor quality at worst. The condition of the pavements has often been compromised by trench-work, and whilst original stone kerbs and gutters remain in some locations, these features are potentially under threat.

Street-by-street enhancements, as funds allow, could be implemented to cover such matters as:

- The use of traditional street lights;



- The use of a standard palette of materials (high quality, and traditional) for paving, kerbings and street gutters;
- New litter bins;
- New public seats;
- New cast metal bollards;
- Reintroduce the old street name plates, and place them on the buildings; and
- Prioritise the end of Chedworth Street or an enhancement scheme.



*The end of Chedworth Street is in need of enhancement*

Any improvements should be first agreed with the local community.

### **Recommendation:**

- The County Council could consider a wide range of improvements to the public realm, subject to funding and after consultation with the local community.

## **8.6 Traffic and parking**

Long term parking by commuters, which is the responsibility of the County Council, is a particular problem in this Conservation Area. Subject to the views of the community, a residents' parking scheme could be introduced, although road markings and signage must be kept to the minimum necessary. In addition, more traffic calming measures could be considered at the primary junctions, using good quality traditional materials and the minimum of signage.



*Obtrusive parking in Eltisle Avenue*

### **Recommendation:**

- The County Council could consider a Residents' Parking Scheme, subject to the views of the local community.

## **8.7 Protecting the houses from inappropriate alterations**

Even within Conservation Areas, owners of houses in use as a single family residence (rather than apartments or houses in multiple occupation) are allowed to alter their properties in a number of ways without requiring planning permission from the City Council. These are called 'permitted development rights'. Typically, they include changing roof materials, installing modern windows and front doors, and altering front gardens and front boundaries to allow car parking. Permitted development rights can be removed by the City Council under what is called an Article 4 direction. This means that planning permission will be required for such alterations, the purpose of this additional constraint being to encourage house owners to use traditional materials and details, rather than to stop change occurring at all.

It has been noted during the survey work for this document, that a number of houses have been adversely affected by the loss of their original front doors, windows, roofing materials, chimneys

or by painting. Given that these are currently in the minority, and that many of the houses do remain remarkably well preserved, the use of an Article 4 direction would seem to be advisable at some stage in the future, subject to the necessary resources and funding being available to the City Council.

**Recommendation:**

- The City Council could consider the use of Article 4 Direction in the Newnham Croft Conservation Area at some stage in the future.

### **8.8 Buildings of Local Interest**

It is recommended that the following buildings (which are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map) are added to the City Council's list of Buildings of Local interest:

- Nos. 45-49 odd Newnham Road;
- St Marks' Church parsonage and hall; and
- Nos. 31a and 32a Eltisley Avenue.

Full descriptions and photographs are included at Appendix 2.

**Recommendation:**

- Add the above buildings to the City Council list of Buildings of Local Interest.

## 9 References

Newnham Croft Conservation Area Appraisal, published 1998, Cambridge City Council

## 10 Contact details

For further information about conservation areas and historic buildings, contact:

Urban Design and Conservation

Planning Services

Cambridge City Council

PO Box 700

Cambridge

CB1 0JH

Tel: 01223 457000

Email: [planning.conservation@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:planning.conservation@cambridge.gov.uk)

# 11 Appendix 1: Listed Buildings

## *Newnham Mill, Newnham Road listed Grade II*



***Newnham Mill***

Built in 1853. Grey Gault brick. Old watermill, but converted to factory use for many years. L-shaped, with a later rear wing. Three storeys, three windows, sashes with glazing bars. Weather-boarded sack hoist in west gable end. Slate roof with vent along it.

## *Gas Lamp Post between Nos. 4 and 5 South Green Road listed Grade II*

Street lamp erected by the Cambridge University and Town Gas Light Company, c. 1889. Made of cast iron to a design loosely based on the classical column, the lamp consists of a fluted shaft on a circular base which is set on an octagonal plinth. The shaft tapers slightly before splaying out to form a plain banded capital. A simple four-sided lantern of

metal and glass, crowned with a simple round finial detail, rests upon four curved metal supports, and a ladder rest projects from its base.



***Gas Lamp post***

Gas was introduced to Cambridge in about 1822 by John Grafton. He made gas from oil for street lighting in 1823, producing gas from coal a little later and finally moving his production site to the riverside for ease of coal delivery. An Act of 1834 converted his company to the Cambridge Gas-Light Company, which in 1867 became the Cambridge University

and Town Gas Light Company. Gas production ceased on the riverside site in 1969 following the introduction of North Sea gas into Cambridge.

The gas lamp in South Green Road dates from to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is still supplied with gas, having remained in use to the present day.

## 12 Appendix 2: Existing and proposed BLIs

### Existing Buildings of Local Interest

*Maitland House, Barton Road*



**Maitland House**

1930s, apartment block of two storeys with stuccoed walls and hipped, glazed pantiled roofs, curving first floor balconies and original Crittall windows. The horizontal panes give a sleek, *Moderne*, appearance, evocative of an ocean liner, with symmetrical patterns and large picture windows flanked by smaller slit windows. The central block and end wings are linked by recessed blocks with entrance doors in corners. Maitland House is set behind a low wall on the street frontage amidst communal gardens laid mainly to lawn, with some mature trees around the perimeter.

*St Mark's Church, Barton Road*

1900, red brick, stone dressed church with brown tiled roof, designed by R

Philip Day, Surveyor to the Archdiocese of Canterbury in the Transitional Early English/Decorated Gothic style. Nave with apsidal end and staged buttresses, at north and south aisles and a spirelet (fleche) on the main ridge. Gable facing Barton Road set in north aisle. Simple lancet windows, some in pairs and some with simple plate tracery. Plain west end with gable finished with vertical slate hanging tiles, contains entrance doors. The fleche is a prominent skyline feature. Set well back from the road within a landscaped churchyard.



**St Mark's Church**

*Causewayside, The Fen Causeway*

1930s, development of 42 flats. The principal range of 24 bays faces The Fen

Causeway. Three storeys of brown brick and rendered bays. Flat roof with steep pantiled slopes above parapet. Vehicle arch flanked by radius ends through bay 19 gives access to rear 'mews' block. Irregular pattern of two storey bays. Entrance doors with semi-circular canopies and Crittall windows.



**Causewayside**

*Owlstone Croft Lodge, Owlstone Road*

Owlstone Croft, together with its two cottages, was built in about 1880 as a country house for Major R Calvert, Chief Constable for the county. It was a girls' school in the 1920s and 1930s, and was extended in 1946 when it became a nurses' hostel. It is now a student hostel

for Queens' College. Only the entrance lodge is a Building of Local Interest, as the main house has been much extended and altered.



**Owlstone Croft Lodge**

Lodge Cottage was built as two dwellings using Gault bricks with a slate roof, and has curiously curved eaves detail. The remains of its construction date were once on the dormer but have been lost during the recent repair work. It has a rectilinear plan with small extensions – two stair towers to north and south, bay window to west, paired WC wings to east and modern boiler house to north east corner. The building has a steeply pitched, gabled slate roof with hipped roofs over stair towers and lean-to over WC wings. The walls are Gault brick with a projecting band course between the ground and first floors and rendered cornice to front eaves. There is a shared central brick chimney stack

with decorative oversailing courses, and below this a central gabled dormer on front roof slope with casement windows and applied decorative timber framing to gable and panel between windows. The ground floor has canted bay with six-over-six vertically sliding sash windows and an eight-paned fixed light to either side and a brick panel separating the units. There is a cant-nosed brick plinth to the front bay only. The roofs to these bays and to the porches are flat. Two-over-two narrow sashes to gable end walls and casements under cambered brick heads to rear walls. The lean-to WC extensions have small lights to the flank walls. There is a door to each coal hole (beneath the stairs) in each house but one is behind the later boiler house. The boiler house has a later brick chimneystack breaking through the eaves by the stair tower hip on the northern dwelling. The first floor has a pair of six-over-six vertically sliding sash windows to the front elevation (one to each dwelling) and casements under the eaves on the rear elevation. There are two-over-two narrow sashes in the gables to the attic floor and at the landings in the stair towers.

*The Grove, The Driftway*

Two storey Gault brick house of c1860. End-on to street with principal elevations concealed by high Gault brick boundary wall. Three bays, the larger central section being three windows wide.

Mixture of eight over eight sash windows, with small casement windows to road elevation at ground floor, protected by iron bars. Some cast iron casement windows to back elevation. Gothic pointed glazing bars to one eight over eight sash on rear elevation. Modern windows in central section first floor rear. Shallow pitched hipped slated roofs with brick dentil eaves detail to end bay. A much altered building which probably dates to c1840 with later 19<sup>th</sup> century extensions to both sides. Important in long views across Lammas Land.



**The Grove**

*Paradise House, Grantchester Street*

Said to be dated to c1780 but appearance is of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rectilinear plan to main range with out shut to left flank. Gault brick with shallow pitched, hipped, Welsh slate roof to front range, gabled M-roof to rear wings with the 'vee' infilled in brick. Short, plain brick

stacks symmetrically placed to ends of front range, truncated stacks to both rear gables. The front elevation has a central front door up several steps – the whole house is built off the ground on a brick arched plinth because of regular flooding by the river. Five large symmetrically arranged vertically sliding sash windows with ‘eight-over-eight’ panes. The door has a semi-circular arched lintel containing a fanlight with radial glazing bars and the windows have rubbed brick flat-arch lintels. The elevation facing the river also has a central door but only four windows, (the top left being blind), and the first floor brickwork above the door – between the windows – shows remnants of the painted sign of the former public house. A modern conservatory extends from this side. The rear elevation is a blank wall of brickwork with only one window, under a timber lintel, serving a first floor bathroom. The elevation facing Newnham Croft is largely obscured by the lean-to out shut, which is not raised off the ground. Hence one steps down into the ground floor boiler room, etc, and down from the stair landing into the subsidiary bathroom above. The interior has some good, plain joinery such as panelled doors and architraves, a stair with slender square-section balusters and mostly original windows. There is a legend that a dollar sign scratched into a window pane in the eastern front ground floor room was put there with a diamond

bought with a large sum of money acquired by a former owner of the house.

**Outbuildings and garden:** There is a curious, mono-pitched roofed stable block between the house and the river, which is in Gault brick with a pantiled roof. There are spaces for two coaches/traps, grooms accommodation, which has a chimney, and a hayloft accessed by a first floor door on the rear elevation. It is not clear why both the house and the outbuilding have such peculiarly blank rear (east) elevations. The house sits in an approximate four acre plot and has a fine, if neglected, avenue of trees leading from the front garden westwards.

### **Proposed Buildings of Local Interest**

#### *Nos. 45-49 (odd) Newnham Road*

Purpose-built row of shops with apartments above accessed by separate entrance from the front, dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two storeys high with mansard roofs partly concealed by brick parapet. Round or triangular pediments to attic windows in mansard. Slate hung roofs with moulded cornice between attic windows. Plum coloured brick with red brick decoration including dressings to the windows and a first floor string course. Stone quoins to party walls at each end of group on first floor only. Sash windows with six over six lights, sometimes replaced in uPVC with similar divisions.



***Nos. 45-49 (odd) Newnham Road***

Of special note are the three original timber shopfronts, now used by the Domenico Di Martino Hairdressers (No. 45), GD Designer Style Hire (No. 47) and the Cambridge Book and Print Gallery (No. 49). These match and all have central entrances contained within gently curving glass facades with slim mullions supporting traditional fascias. The spandrels have carved masks and foliage, adding to the attractive detailing. Below are low stall risers with raised panels and to the side, fluted pilasters. All have traditional canvas blinds. Between Nos. 47 and 49 is a pair of Gothic boarded front doors with pointed heads and stained glass fanlights. Similar paired doors between Nos. 45 and 47 but with panelled doors underneath door hoods supported on console brackets. Single front door at end of group to No. 49 has similar doorcase with console brackets but replacement timber front door. Nos.



43 and 51 continue the group in either direction with similar elevations, but do not have the shopfronts or mansard details of Nos. 45-49, so are not included as BLIs.

*St Marks' Church parsonage and hall*

This would appear to have been built at the same time as the church (1900) in a neo-Jacobethan style. The church is already a BLI. The parsonage is a large two storey building, built in Gault brick with stone dressings and four course brick eaves cornice. Brick relieving arches. The steeply pitched roof is covered in machine-made clay tiles, now weathered to a dark brown. Two substantial axial brick chimney stacks. The six light mullioned and transomed windows contain simple white-painted casements. The front elevation is notable for the way the entrance is defined by a single bay which steps slightly forward and then rises two storeys with stone kneelers supporting a gable which punctures the roof. This gable contains a six light mullioned and transomed window at the first floor. The front door is located beneath this window is a recessed open porch. To the left, and attached to the parsonage, is a matching bay which steps forward and presumably contains parish rooms and a hall. A possibly 1960s single storey extension has been added to the far end of the building, of little visual impact to the main block.



***St Marks' Church parsonage and hall***

*Nos. 31a and 32a Eltisle Avenue*

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century purpose-built shops with original shopfronts, now used as a chemist and hairdressers. Low brick stall riser and simple shopfront with two panes of glass. Timber fascia supported on paired timber brackets. No. 32a retains its original glazed door with two recessed moulded panels beneath – No. 31a has a modern version of this. These shopfronts sit in a group of matching houses which continue the character of the buildings on the north-west side of Eltisle Avenue, with half timbered gables and sash windows. A similar shopfront to adjoining property has been very altered, so not included.



***Nos. 31a and 32a Eltisle Avenue***

## **13 Appendix 3: Maps**

# Newnham Croft Conservation Appraisal Area

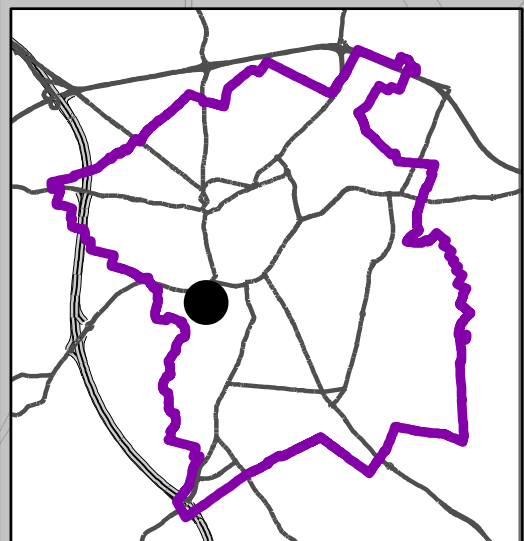
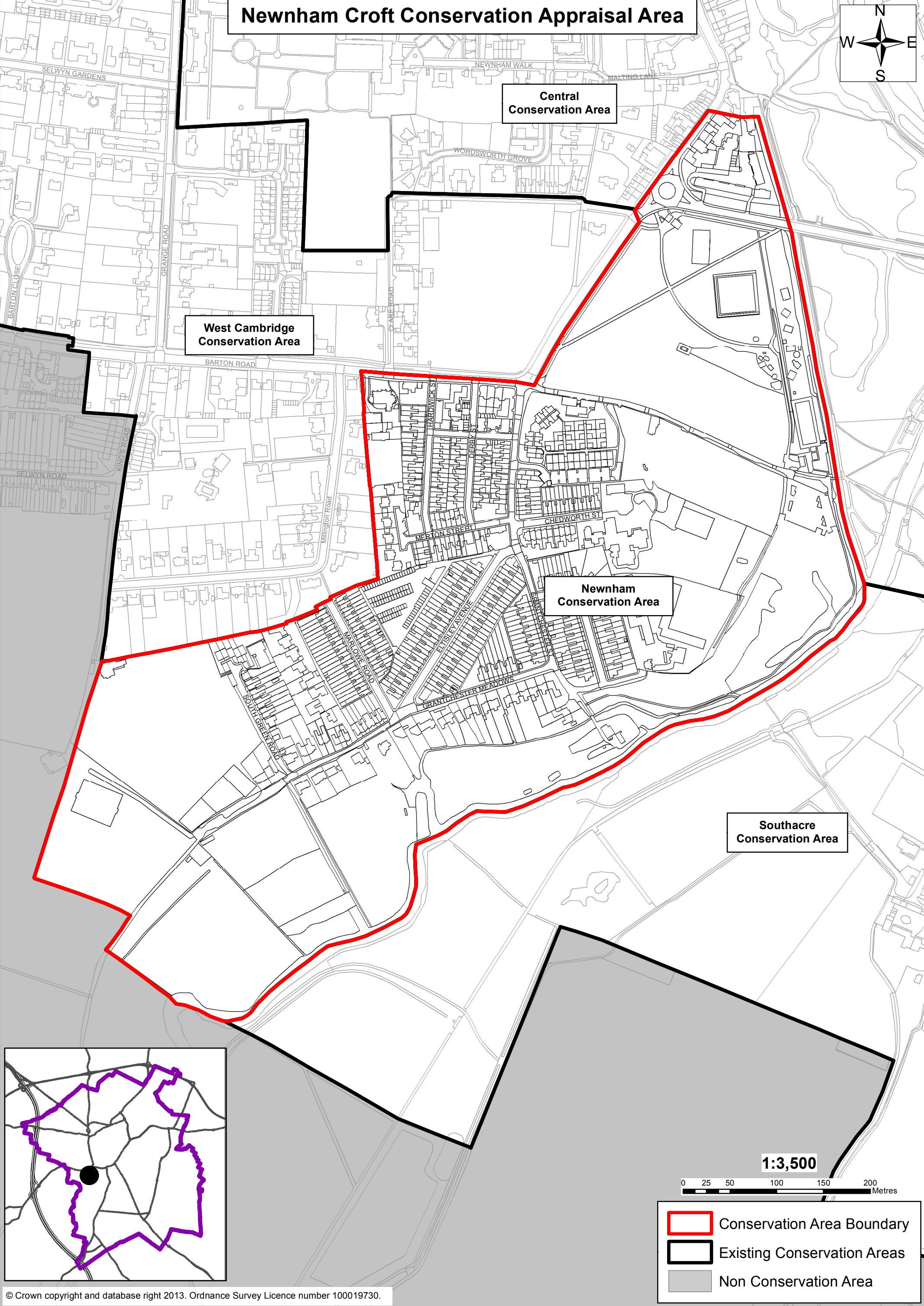


Central  
Conservation Area

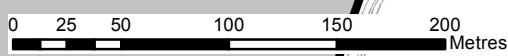
West Cambridge  
Conservation Area

Newnham  
Conservation Area

Southacre  
Conservation Area

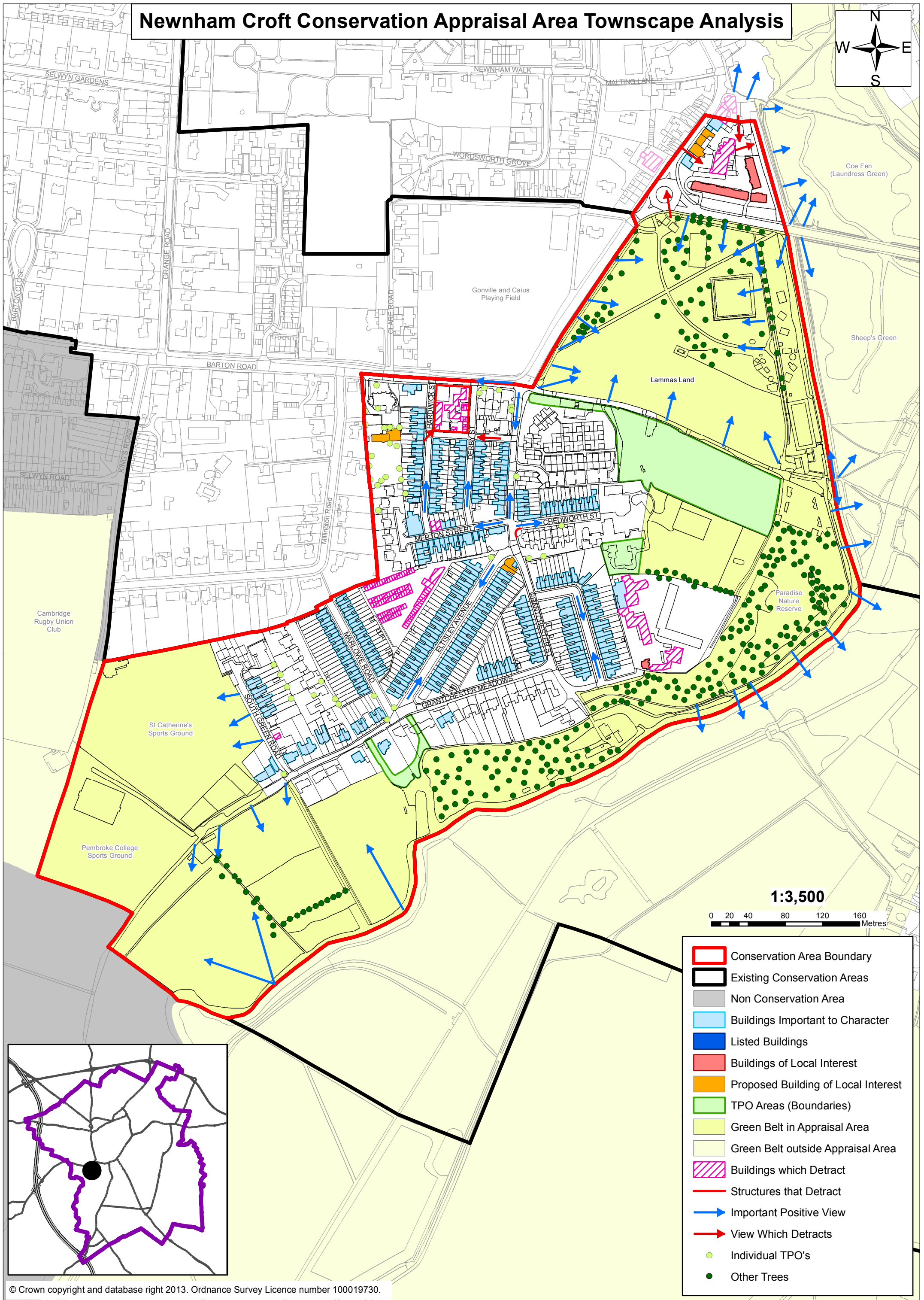
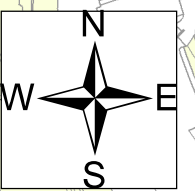


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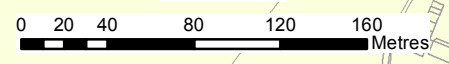


- Conservation Area Boundary
- Existing Conservation Areas
- Non Conservation Area

# Newnham Croft Conservation Appraisal Area Townscape Analysis



1:3,500



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Existing Conservation Areas
- Non Conservation Area
- Buildings Important to Character
- Listed Buildings
- Buildings of Local Interest
- Proposed Building of Local Interest
- TPO Areas (Boundaries)
- Green Belt in Appraisal Area
- Green Belt outside Appraisal Area
- Buildings which Detract
- Structures that Detract
- ➔ Important Positive View
- ➔ View Which Detracts
- Individual TPO's
- Other Trees

