

A narrow lane with an industrial character, running down to the river and lined by buildings of various ages, including University buildings and others.

Mill Lane led down to the King's and Bishop's grain mills at the Mill Pool which are recorded as mills on the Domesday Survey of 1086. The remains of the mill pond and the weir still exist by Laundress Lane. Today Mill Lane has a quiet, back street, character during the day. In the evening the activity provided by the public houses and the University Social Club create a livelier atmosphere, although this has been reduced by the recent closure of several restaurants. Large brick buildings with parapets

dominate the street scene, whilst The Mill public house is an important landmark at its western end. At its eastern end a narrow entry underneath an unusual 'swan-necked bridge' provides access to the courtyard at the rear of the Pitt Building. This forms an enclosed quadrangle of C19 buildings built for the University Press and now houses the University's Graduate Association offices, as well as teaching facilities and other University offices.



Mill Lane

SIGNIFICANCE - SIGNIFICANT

General Overview

Mill Lane is a quiet side street leading off the much busier route of Trumpington Street. Large brick buildings dominate the lane with long frontages standing directly at the back of pavement and rising to two or three storeys with parapets and a horizontal emphasis created by stringcourses. Robust facades, including basement windows with arched heads and pavement grilles, and the lack of greenery in the street scene, contribute to the atmosphere of an historic industrial area. This is confirmed by the survival of a former brewery at Millers Yard, recently the frontage of a complex of housing, office and restaurant uses. The distinctive roof and cowl of an oast house are seen across the otherwise unprepossessing car park on the north side of the road, further enforcing the impression that this has been an industrial area with a strong



Millers Yard

connection to brewing in the past.

The courtyard at the rear of the Pitt Building is a hidden space accessed under bridged alleys from Mill Lane in the south and Silver Street to the north. The east side of the court is formed by the Pitt Building, including Gothic details such as four-centred arched openings with stone details including transom and mullion windows and iron framed casements. The north and west sides are enclosed by early C19 office buildings of the University Press, built in Gault brick with large sash windows, presumably illustrating the



Courtyard at rear of the Pitt Building

need for abundant light to offices or areas associated with printing or print checking.

The buildings are simple but have early C19 neo-classical proportions and detailing including flat brick arched window heads and plat-band cill courses in stone that unite the frontages, as well as a formal entrance with engaged pilasters. They rise to three storeys with a parapet at the roofline. The southern block is of early C20 construction in red brick (similar to the Stuart House), with more elaborate Queen Anne Revival details, including small swan's neck pediment details over the transom and mullion windows in moulded brick. It rises to just two storeys, with basements, which allows sunlight into the court, and also has a formal entrance from the court with a decorative doorcase. Climbing foliage spreads from the Pitt Building onto the northern range adding to the attractiveness of the space. The buildings around the court are well preserved and illustrate the history of the University Press from the construction of the Pitt Building in the early C19, although the dominance of the space by car parking detracts from the setting. As a development they span



Southern block of the University Press buildings



Stuart House

the academic character of upper Trumpington Street and King's Parade to the east and the more industrial aesthetic of Mill Lane to the west.

Near the east end of the street a highly ornamented red brick office building stands out and frames one side of the forecourt of Stuart House, a fine Queen Anne style building built in memory of the mathematician James Stuart (1843 – 1913) who promoted extra mural studies in Cambridge. Its green forecourt provides an attractive open space in the street, which is bounded by an elaborate wrought iron screen and gate. The access for cars to either side is poorly integrated with the green landscape.

At the lower (west) end of the lane, No. 12 (The Graduates Club) and Nos. 13 - 14 (The Mill public house) provide a lower, two storey scale and a more domestic character. No. 13 includes a jettied C16 frontage (albeit remodelled in the C18), topped with a massive brick chimney stack, which articulates the centrally located fireplaces. The public house has been formed by joining two C18 cottages together. This building is on a prominent corner position, so features in views of the street from



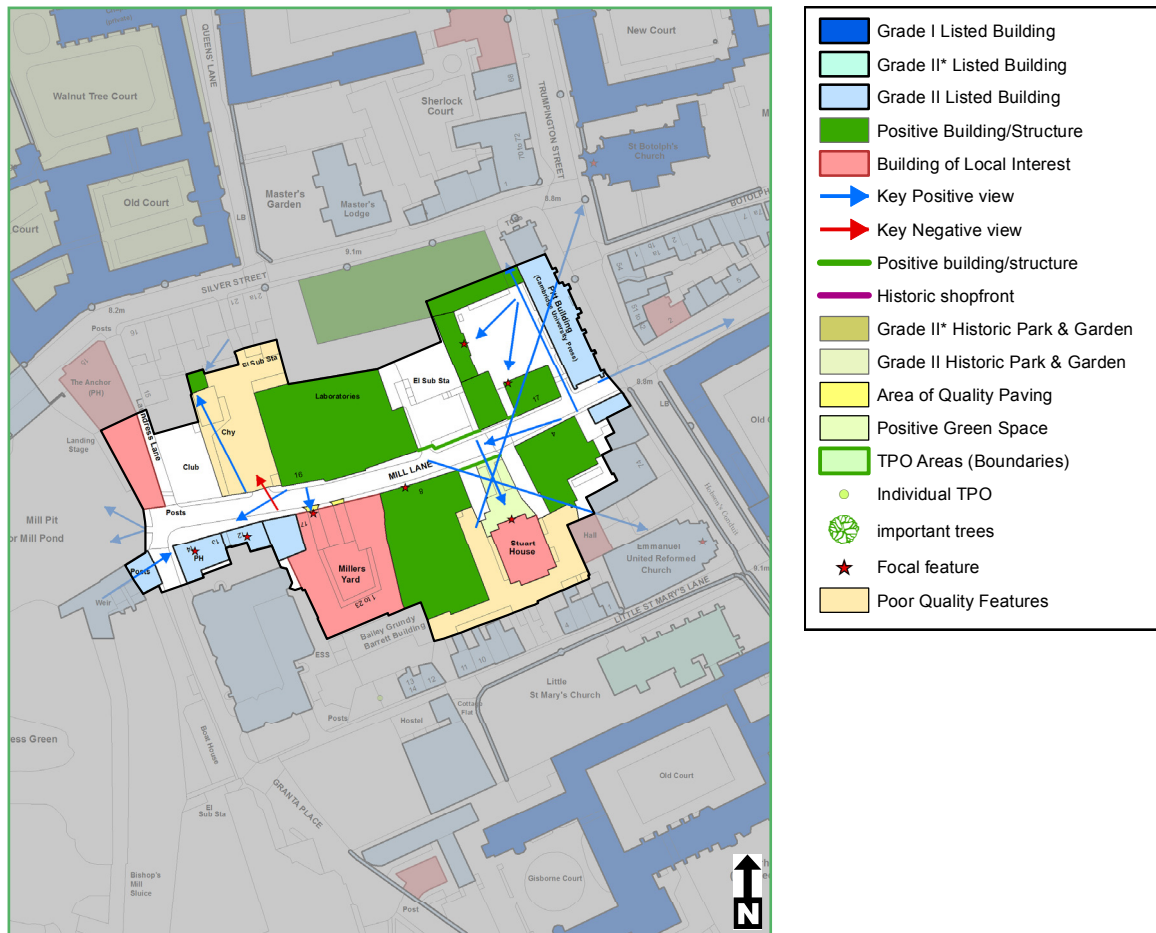
Nos. 12 - 14 Mill Lane



Entrance to Laundress Lane

the green space on the island in the Mill Pond. The entry to Laundress Lane is tightly framed between the corners of two former warehouse buildings, much altered but retaining some character.

The paving of the street retains stone kerbs with stone slab linings to gutters and cobbled crossovers for the entrances of the former brewery. Views to some uninspiring back yard areas are seen from the lane. Mill Lane provides vehicular access to the Garden House Hotel off Granta Place and the many



© Crown copyright (Licence No. 100019730) Not to Scale

university buildings along the street. Pedestrians also use the street to access the university buildings or the riverside, and it is a busy cycle route to Newnham.

Townscape Elements

- Majority of buildings are back of footway or highway with several access lanes.
- Two to three storeys with basements for most of the street.



Views channelled towards the river

- Long, continuous frontages contribute to a strong sense of enclosure with views channelled down the street to the river.
- Wide frontages with parapets and stringcourses create a horizontal emphasis.
- Brick is the dominant material but in various colours including Gault and deep orange/red.
- Quiet frontages create a tranquil atmosphere.
- Greenery interrupts the urban character of the street at Stuart House.
- Nos. 12 – 14 form an important group that represent an earlier phase of development as a more domestic scale street.

Enhancement Opportunities

The university buildings offer a significant opportunity for redevelopment or re-use.

The main environmental enhancement opportunity is the floorscape, which could be made more consistent to provide greater visual cohesion. More formal arrangements for on-street parking could help to manage the currently cluttered appearance.

The car park adjacent to No. 16 is a negative feature, particularly the boiler house and its prominent metal flue.

Traffic Measures

Alterations could be made to reduce the number of vehicles using the street and improve the pedestrian experience.

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
1	Listed Grade II	early C19	3	Gault brick	slate		
4	Positive building	late C19 / early C20	2 + basement	red brick	Dutch pedimented gables / tile		
6 Stuart House	BLI	1925	2	red brick with quoin stones	parapet	George Hubbard	
8 Lecture Halls	Positive building	1930s	3	engineering & reddish / brown brick	flat		stripped Classical style
10-11 Miller's Yard	BLI	C19	2 + basement	Gault brick	parapet / slate		former brewery
12 Graduates Club	Listed Grade II	east: c1775; west: C16 origin, remodelled C18	east: 3 west: 2	east: red brick west: refronted brick & render	east: parapet west: pitched / slate		originally 2 houses
13-14 The Mill Public House	Listed Grade II	C18	2 + attics	painted brick & render	pitched / tile		
Department of Land Economy	BLI	C19	3	painted brick	hipped / welsh slate		W.side of Laundress La.
University Social Club	none	early C20	3	Gault brick	hipped / slate		E. side of Laundress La.
16 & 16a Research Services Division & Corporate Liaison Office	Positive building	C19	3 + basement	grey Gault brick	parapet		
Applied Mathematics & Theoretical Physics Dept	Positive building	C19	3 + basement	Gault brick	parapet moulded cill bands		
17 School of Biological Sciences & Disability Resource Centre	Positive building	early C20	2 + basement	red brick	balustraded faience parapet		
Yard rear of 17 & Pitt Building	Positive building	early C19	3 & 3+ basement	Gault brick	parapets		Formal entrance to W side. Neo-classical
The Pitt Building (University Press)	Listed Grade II	1831	3	ashlar-faced	castellated	Edward Blore	wings, fenestration & interior altered 1934-7 by Murray Easton