

An important vehicular route which crosses the attractive rural spaces of Coe Fen and Sheep's Green with views back towards the city.

Fen Causeway was built in the 1920s to link Newnham village with Trumpington Road and to provide access to the south of the city. Its construction was the subject of fierce local opposition at the time. The road was built on the line of Coe Fen Lane, which joined the footpaths that crossed Coe Fen and Sheep's Green. Today the road is very busy

as one of the main routes around Cambridge, but the negative effect of this traffic is mitigated by the pastoral setting and the views of the River Cam with the historic city centre beyond.



Fen Causeway

SIGNIFICANCE - SIGNIFICANT

General Overview

At its eastern end Fen Causeway passes between the large properties of the Leys School to the south and the Royal Cambridge Hotel and University Department of Engineering to the north. Although the hotel is built up against the pavement, the car parks to the rear provide a large open space, whilst the school and engineering department stand back from the road behind high walls. The setback makes the street a light space, although the high buildings to either side channel views along the street in both directions. The grounds on either side provide greenery that softens the streetscene.



The Royal Cambridge Hotel



North House of the Leys School

North House of the Leys School provides architectural interest as part of the late Victorian Methodist School complex, built in red brick with exuberant stone and brick detailing which provides a strong vertical emphasis. Glimpsed views further into the school complex include the towers of the college chapel as well as the science block as a focus, and the very recent theatre block is prominent. The engineering school buildings are a good example of mid C20 brick construction but the detailing of the boundary railings, backed by a hedge, adds more interest with geometrical patterns cut into the steel

piers.

Where the road enters the open space to the west, the urban character is transformed to a rural environment, with narrow watercourses including both straight cut and embanked channels and more natural winding streams set in lush green meadows on either side of the road. The road has simple wooden post and rail fences to either side, which complement the character of the green spaces beyond. The bridge over the River Cam is emphasised through the use of decorative Neo-classical balustrades and unusual barley twist metal railings which supplement the stone balustrade, whilst the road surface and



Balustrade to bridge over the River Cam

pavements are of inconspicuous blacktop though granite kerbs remain. The tall, unpainted lighting columns are an intrusive urban element in the streetscene.

Views out from the road to either side can be of great beauty, taking in the Arcadian scene of meadows with grazing cattle, the winding courses of the river or streams, the tall poplars or spreading willows, and



Views north



Views south

the long stone wall of Peterhouse and the high buildings and trees of the city centre beyond. West of the River Cam, the city is screened from view by trees and the views out are consistently rural in character.

At the west end of the Causeway, the development of flats at Causewayside has a strong 1920s character (it was actually built in the 1930s) and stands out within the city as representative of early Modernist inspired design with simple lines including the long flat roof and parapet which has a couple of courses of pantiles as a coping, and rows of white rendered bay windows. This is set within a communal garden space with a neatly clipped hedge that is a familiar



Causewayside



Wall and hedge of Causewayside



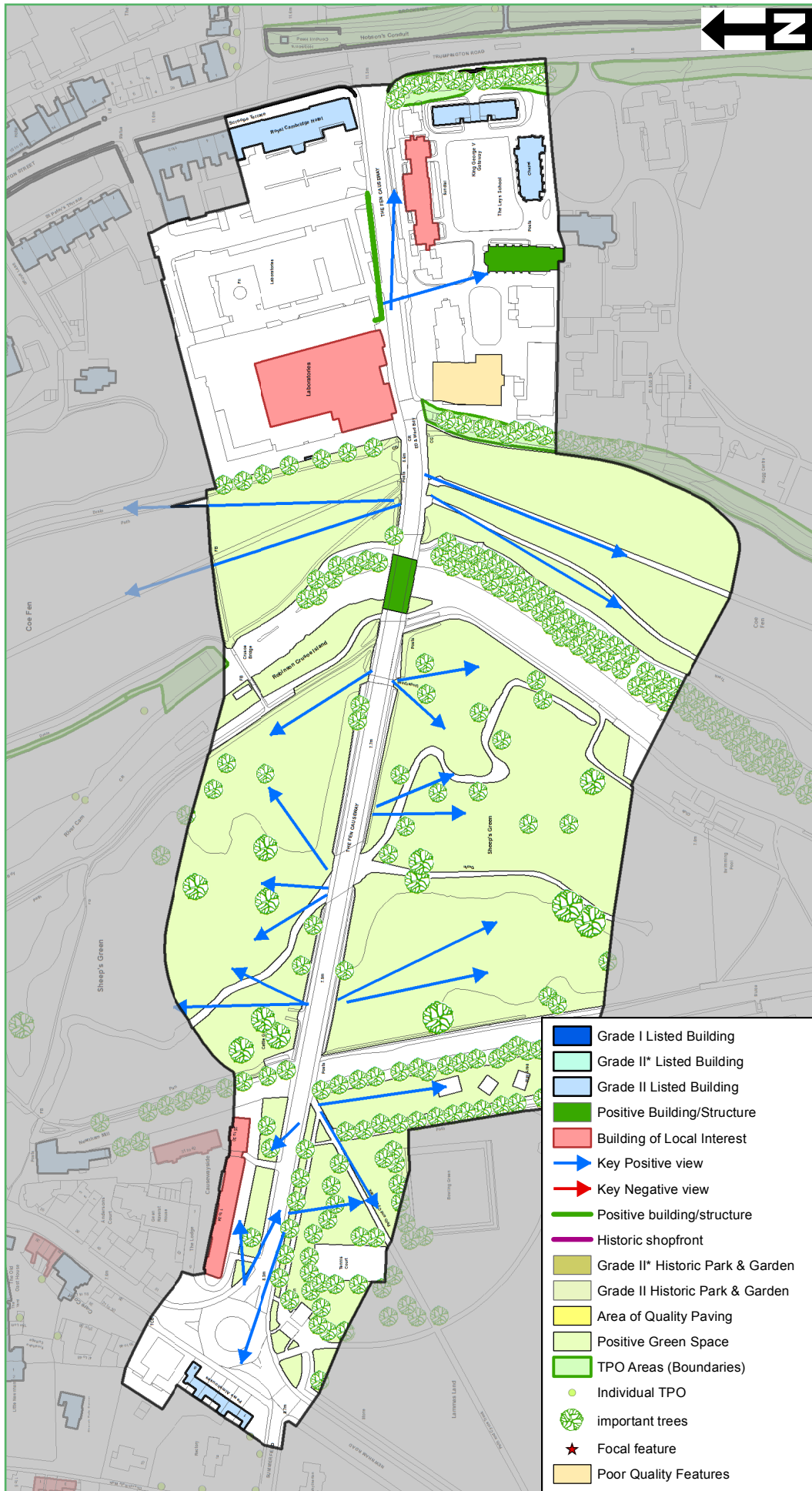
Formal landscaping of Lammas Land



Timber-framed and tile roofed building

feature of early C20 suburban planning as well as a boundary wall which incorporates panels of cobbles. Across the road the formal landscaping of the large municipal park of Lammas Land complements the early C20 character of this part of the Causeway.

Fen Causeway is part of the inner ring road and is therefore a key vehicular route around the city. The road is also well used by cyclists and pedestrians, although the latter tend to cross it rather than walk along it. The few buildings that front the road are in educational or residential uses. Views along the straight road are punctuated by the Conduit Head at the Eastern end and the roundabout with the municipal



floral bedding at the western end. Viewed across this is the juxtaposition of the almshouses and the petrol filling station. The timber-framed and tile roofed building near the roundabout that is now in use for cycle hire appears to be an ex-sports pavilion for Lamas Land.

Townscape Elements

- Close to Trumpington Road to the east, the road has a more enclosed feel with the



Sense of enclosure to the east

university buildings and Leys School defining the street. North House of the Leys School in particular provides architectural interest through its elaborate late Victorian details, whilst the well treed grounds of the school provide greenery to the streetscene.

- The trees along Hobson's Brook provide the focus of channeled views eastward along this enclosed stretch of street.
- Moving westwards, the road cuts through the open spaces of Sheep's Green and Coe Fen, with very attractive views of the Arcadian landscape to which the substantial trees standing amongst the water meadows make an immensely important contribution.
- At its west end the street is enclosed on its north side only with the early C20 Causewayside flats set back in a garden setting and looking across the municipal parkland



Views channelled to the almshouses

beyond as a classic example of Inter-war 'Garden City' planning.

- The flats and tree-line on the south side of the road channel views to the single storey listed almshouses across the roundabout at the west end of the street, with trees providing a green backdrop beyond.

Potential Development

Building on the open space would completely destroy its character. The low-lying land is also prone to flooding, which is why, historically, the land has not been developed.

It is also important that buildings visible across the space are suitably designed and well screened as there is a high potential for development to be conspicuous and detract from the attractive Arcadian vistas that are an important element of the city's historic character and appearance.

Vehicular Management



Wooden fences

Although the road is a key traffic route, it is important that signage does not intrude into the open character or affect key vistas.

Streetscape Enhancement

The wooden fence is functional and suitably rustic, but there are remnants of iron railings that could be used as a model for future railing reinstatement.

The gated pedestrian accesses have good 'Cambridge' cast-iron bollards though the metal gates are of poorer quality and could be improved to match the bollards.

The bridges have been over painted with a poor modern masonry paint which blurs the detailing and retains dirt. This could be removed to allow the detail to be seen.

North side (from west end)

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
Causewayside	BLI	1930s	3	brown brick & rendered bays	Flat with parapet with pantiles as a coping		
front boundary wall	BLI	1930s	N/A	brick / cobble infill panels, stone coping			
Sheep's Green & Coe Fen	County Wildlife Site	N/A	semi-natural open space, flowering meadows, old water channels, trees & hedges				
University Department of Engineering: Inglis Building (including the Old Boiler House)	BLI	1920/30s	3 - 5 + basement	dark red / purple brick and cladding	hipped / slate and lead		
Baker Building	none	1949-52	5	dark red / purple brick	hipped / slate	Murray Easton	
Nos. 6-12 Scroope Terrace, Trumpington Street (Royal Cambridge Hotel)	Listed Grade II	C19	3	gault brick / plaster dressings	slate		

South side (from west end)

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
Lammas Land, Sheep's Green & Coe Fen	County Wildlife Site		semi-natural open space, flowering meadows, old water channels, trees & hedges				
Pavilion building	Positive building		1	Timber-framed	hipped / tile		
The Leys School: north block	BLI	late C19 / early C20	4	red brick, stone detailing	gabled / slate		modern, flat roof extension
House linked to north block	BLI	late C19 / early C20	2	red brick, stone detailing	slate		
Kelvin Building	none	late C19 / early C20	2	red brick, stone detailing	slate		modern extension
Swimming pool enclosure	none	mid C20	1	brick	corrugated sheet		
Highway bridges	none	early C20	N/A	reinforced concrete, iron railings			stripped Classical style
The Leys School: Chapel, Trumpington Road	Listed Grade II	1905-6	1	red brick with stone dressings	slate	Robert Curwen, glass by HJ Salisbury	
The Leys School: The building housing the library and the King George V Gateway, Trumpington Road	Listed Grade II	1913-14	2	red brick with stone dressings	tile	Sir Aston Webb	