

Part of the ring road with panoramic views across Parker's Piece.

Gonville Place saw little development until the early C19 when the most significant building along it was the Town Gaol (by 1830). However, by 1886, the construction of large houses with landscaped gardens turned the street into a fashionable residential area. Some of these houses were replaced during the 1960s and 1970s, and the street now forms part of the very busy

ring road. Redevelopment in the late C20 included several large developments: the architecturally interesting Parkside Swimming Pool and the less attractive block of the Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre (part of Anglia Ruskin University)/multi-storey car park. A large YMCA building stands just south of these.



Gonville Place

SIGNIFICANCE - LOW

General Overview

Gonville Place is a green open road lined with trees which provides attractive views across Parker's Piece, with numerous buildings in the surroundings acting as focal points or landmarks. The main buildings on the street are set well back from the road with intervening foliage often breaking up their outlines. The Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre is a poor example of late C20 design with the prominent Queen Anne multi-storey car park to the front and weak articulation to the road. The swimming pool building to the north however stands out as an attractive structure set within well landscaped grounds, and with a wave-form roof that glints in the sunlight.



Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre



No. 2 Gresham Road hidden within garden

The older buildings include the early C19 Owen Webb House, an attractive Neo-classical villa set well back from the street, with a stable block to the rear. A new development in the former front garden detracts from the historic building line and adversely affects views to the historic house. No. 2 Gresham Road is an attractive mid C19 villa which also forms part of the historic frontage but is essentially hidden from view within its spacious garden.

The Gonville Hotel to the south west also originated as an early C19 villa, but has been subsumed by massive extensions to either side in a contrasting brown brick as well as the addition of an unattractive mansard roof covered in brown tiles. The large car park at the front detracts from the green setting of the street, although it is fronted with a close clipped hedge and a large London plane tree. Further late C19 villas add to the historic suburban character at the south west end of the street, whilst the corner with Regent Street is marked by the 1970s Lloyd's Bank. This is built in an interestingly finished raw concrete that provides a strikingly textured surface, the visual impact of the whole building being softened by a line of small



The Gonville Hotel



Spire of Our Lady Roman Catholic Church



Views across Parker's Piece

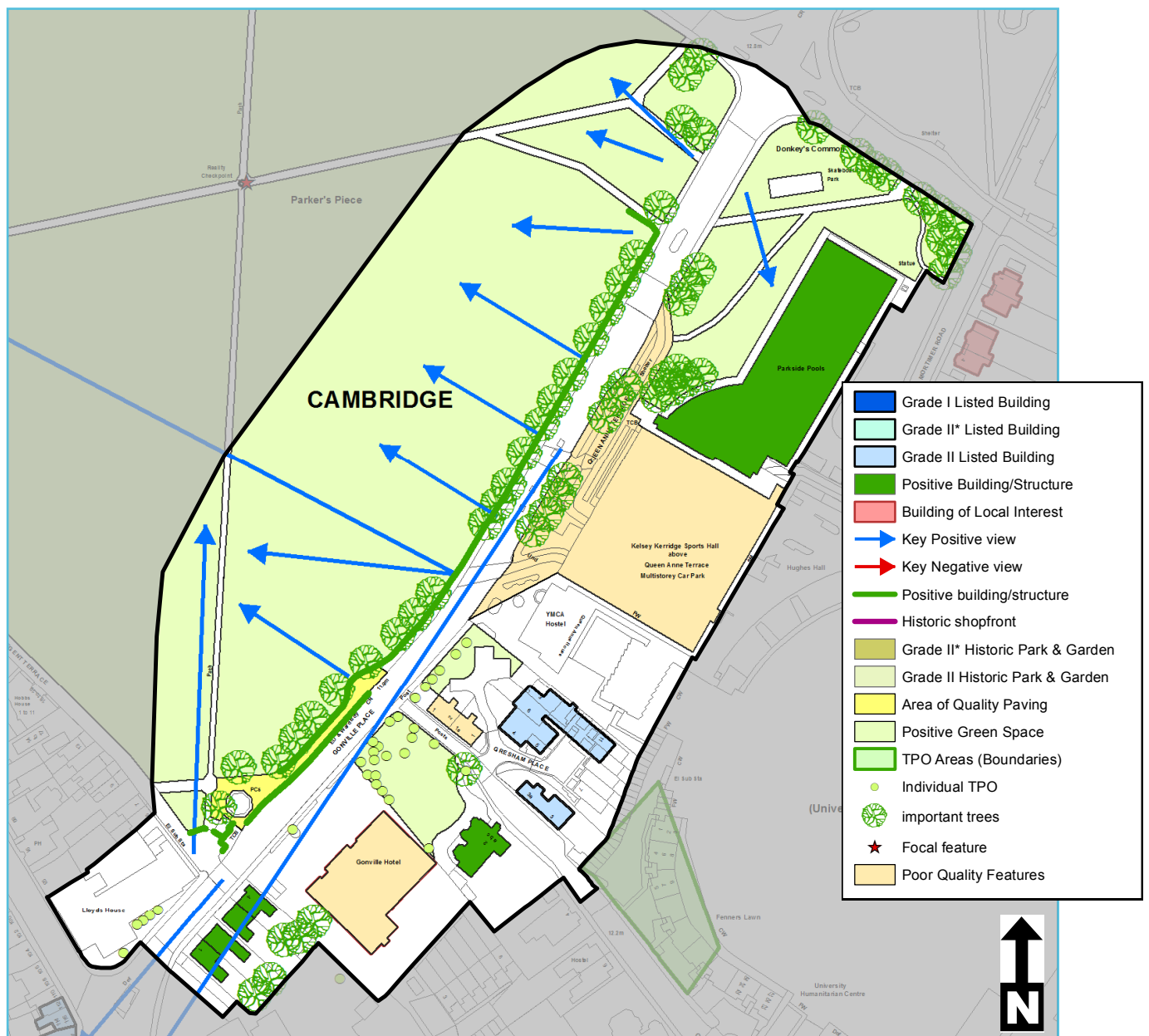


Vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian use

London planes.

Views south west along Gonville Place are dominated by the tall spire of Our Lady and the English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, whilst views across Parker's Piece find a focus on the C19 side elevation of the University Arms Hotel with its interesting roofline of corner turrets.

Gonville Place is heavily used by vehicles as it is part of the inner ring road. However, cycle and pedestrian traffic is also busy at certain points, such as the lanes which take cyclists from Gresham Road



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across Gonville Place to the city centre via Regent Terrace. The route in or out of the Queen Anne Car Park is also heavily used by pedestrians, resulting in conflict points between the different users.

Townscape Elements

- The majority of the street has an open character due to deep set-backs of properties from the road and the open views across Parker's Piece.
- A small number of older villas provide evidence of the development of the area as a prestigious suburban street overlooking the open space of Parker's Piece.
- The western end of the street has more enclosure due to the presence of buildings on both sides of the street, creating a gateway area at the entrance to the city centre via Regent Street.
- A variety of landscape features, including numerous mature trees, shrubs and low hedges, provide greenery.
- A large steel grass hopper sculpture adds an artistic element to the streetscene at the front of Owen Webb House.
- The spire of Our Lady and the English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church dominates the view south west along the street.

Streetscape Enhancement

The car park of the Gonville Hotel could be better screened.

The area in front of the Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre is dominated by highways signage, whilst this section of road is often beset with queuing traffic.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The Queen Anne car park and the YMCA provide an opportunity for a new high quality development, although not exceeding the current scale of these buildings. However, these sites are unlikely to become available for redevelopment in the near future.

Any redevelopment of these buildings would need to respect the form and setting of the existing buildings, the landscaping and trees as well as the potential impacts on Parker's Piece.

Redevelopment of the Gonville Hotel might present an opportunity to green the road frontage including reinforcing the tree planting.

Building No./ Name	Status	Age	Height (Storeys)	Wall Materials	Roof Form / Materials	Architect	Notes
1-2	none	late C19	2 + attics	grey / brown & red brick	hipped / gabled / slate		
3-4			2		hipped / slate		
Gonville Hotel	none	early C19 with later additions	2	gault brick	hipped / slate		
Gresham House, 2 Gresham Road	Positive building	Early C19	2	Gault brick	hipped/slate		
Owen Webb House, (now nos. 3-6 Gresham Place)	Listed Grade II	c1830	2	Gault brick	hipped / slate		
3 and 3A Gresham Road	Listed Grade II	c1830	2	Grey gault brick	hipped / slate		
YMCA	none	1974	3 + attic	red brick	slate		
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre & Queen Anne Terrace multi-storey car park	none	1971-75	5	concrete	flat		
Parkside Pools	none	1998-99	N/A	timber / glass & steel	curved / sheet metal	S & P Architects	Prize-winning
Public conveniences	none	2004	1	render & metal	copper	Freeland Rees Roberts	Prize-winning
Lloyds House	none	1976	3	polished concrete	flat		