Welcome to the public consultation about the regeneration of the Old Press/Mill Lane site

The Old Press/Mill Lane site lies at the south-western edge of Cambridge’s historic core and is one of the few points in the city centre where public spaces directly overlook the River Cam.

Since 2014, the University of Cambridge has been working with Darwin, Pembroke and Queens’ Colleges to develop a masterplan to regenerate this quarter of the city. In doing so, we will celebrate the rich history of the site, maximise the opportunities offered by Coe Fen and the Mill Pond, and integrate new University, College and commercial space into a coherent and vibrant extension to the city centre.

The current proposals have been developed in consultation with Officers of Cambridge City Council. There are a few important elements on which we have not yet reached consensus and we would like to consult with the public and stakeholders about these. We are asking for specific comments on particular areas in our feedback forms.

Once we have received your feedback, we will prepare a final version of the masterplan that will then be submitted to Cambridge City Council.

The masterplan will guide future planning applications; of which there are likely to be two, one for the area to the south of Mill Lane and another for the north. We anticipate that the application for the south will come forward first, later this year. Both applications will benefit from further public consultation.

Members of the project team are on hand to help answer any questions you may have.
**OUR VISION**

**a gateway to the city centre**

**OUR VISION**
In developing our plans for the Old Press/Mill Lane site, we have balanced the need for forward-looking regeneration with a sensitive approach to maintain the distinctive character of the conservation area. We hope you agree that our plans will breathe new life into an important area in central Cambridge; creating a dynamic quarter which can be enjoyed by residents, visitors and academics alike.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform this area into a distinctive quarter of Cambridge

**OUR MASTERPLAN WILL:**
- Regenerate an important area of the city
- Preserve and enhance the area’s historic character
- Provide a new public space to enjoy the riverfront
- Retain and reuse existing buildings where possible
- Enhance the hard surfaces along Mill Lane and Granta Place
- Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists
- Remove car parking in favour of public space
- Improve the quality of public access through the site
- Provide world class college and university accommodation
The area has changed significantly over the past two centuries. Formerly a place of trade, it is now characterised by academic and leisure uses.

Close to the original location of Trumpington Gate, the Old Press/Mill Lane site is an important approach to the centre of Cambridge next to a historic crossing over the Cam. The King’s Ditch - a large medieval ditch that probably served as a defensive structure - ran along Mill Lane. The area has been occupied for more than a thousand years and has seen constant change and regeneration.

Up to the 19th century, the site was a working area dominated by river trade. The area’s twin corn mills – the Bishop’s Mill and King’s Mill (both demolished in 1928) – were among a range of businesses which benefited from the city’s medieval importance as an inland port. The arrival of the railway in 1845, however, drew trade away from the site. The University Press first built a new printing house in 1804 and gradually the University began to occupy more and more of the site.

Today, most of the buildings are occupied by the University for administrative and academic purposes. However, the site is set to undergo another major transformation as the University intends to relocate almost all of its facilities to elsewhere within Cambridge; providing a once in a lifetime opportunity to give Old Press/Mill Lane a new lease of life.

The area has seen a decline in trade and an expansion of University facilities.

Located at a key node in the river, the area was historically dominated by river trade. The Bishop’s Mill and the King’s Mill straddled the river at the head of the navigation between the upper and lower river zones. They were demolished in 1928.

Over the last century the area has become associated with leisure activities.
In summary, the SPD’s aspirations are:

- to preserve / enhance the special historic character of the Conservation Area
- to create the opportunity for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- to create the opportunity for high quality, sustainable new buildings
- to introduce a range of complementary and compatible uses
- to create and enhance the public realm, potentially including a new public space fronting onto the river
- to improve permeability with priority for pedestrians and cyclists
- to minimise non-essential car parking and improve servicing
- to provide high quality, well designed areas of cycle parking

In 2010, Cambridge City Council working with the University of Cambridge prepared a Supplementary Planning Document or SPD, which provides policy guidance for the development of a masterplan.

The SPD set the aspirations for the site, but also identified which buildings might be demolished to allow redevelopment and create public open space (see the diagrams below, taken from the SPD).

Our masterplan reflects the SPD’s aspirations and takes into account changes that have taken place since 2010.

The redevelopment provides the opportunity of making historic buildings more sustainable and energy efficient; new buildings will meet ‘BREEAM Excellent’ standards.

What the SPD told us in 2010
The SPD identified which buildings might be demolished or substantially altered - highlighted in red.

The aspirations from the SPD 2010, Section 5

The SPD was adopted in 2010 and provides guidance for future development
The environment around the site is dominated by bins, cars and poor quality ground surfaces.

**THE SITE**

**a case for change**

Located in the historic core of Cambridge, the Old Press/Mill Lane site comprises two city blocks either side of Mill Lane. The site is part of the Cambridge Central Conservation Area and is densely occupied with buildings dating from the 16th to 20th centuries, a number of which are listed, including the University Centre.

Mill Lane serves as a single point of vehicle access to the site, including to the Doubletree Hilton Hotel and Peterhouse.

Despite being a busy part of the city centre, the Old Press/Mill Lane area has the feel of a neglected corner in need of attention, with many buildings that are not fit for purpose. The site contains poor quality pavements with narrow footways and suffers from a profusion of bins and bikes.

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**Our work is underpinned by a wide range of detailed technical surveys and assessments that guide the overall development strategy. These include:**

- Building condition surveys
- Feasibility studies for adaptive reuse
- Consultation with stakeholders
- Heritage and historic assessments
- Planning strategies
- Sustainability strategies
- Energy and carbon assessments
- Transport strategies
- Traffic surveys
- Archaeological desktop assessments
- Site investigations
- Tree surveys
- Flood risk assessments
- Drainage assessments
- BREAAM pre-assessments
- Utilities assessments
- Construction and phasing strategies
- Rights of light assessments

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**1.4ha**

**University freehold**

**2ha**

**Masterplan site area**

**190x135m**

**Site dimensions**

**1.42**

**Plot ratio**

**28,000 m²**

**Total existing floor area**

**38.5m**

**Maximum existing building height**

**51**

**Number of existing buildings**

**9**

**Number of listed buildings**

**16-20th C**

**Age range of buildings**

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**Listed buildings and buildings of local interest:**

There are 67 Grade II Listed Buildings and 21 buildings of local interest on the site.

**Existing buildings:**

Three buildings have been converted from another use.

**Access and movement:**

Mill Lane site provides access to the listed site and to Jesus College.

**Landscape and water:**

The site contains extensive green areas and very few trees.
The 2010 SPD identified the relative heritage significance for each of the buildings within the Old Press/Mill Lane area based on the Historic Environment Analysis from 2008.

To support the development of the masterplan, we have undertaken additional detailed research to provide a more accurate appraisal of the characteristics of the conservation area and the heritage significance of individual buildings. Kenmare House on Trumpington Street, for example, is a group of five buildings but was previously assessed as a single block. Our recent analysis provides a more detailed and accurate appraisal of its constituent parts.

What we know now
- Detailed significance plan (2017): we have undertaken extensive research to establish which buildings (or parts of buildings) are more significant than others.

What the SPD told us in 2010
- The building significance plan from the 2010 Historic Environment Analysis provided a basic level of analysis (from the 2008 HEA).

Building footprints in 1888
- The grain of buildings has changed significantly over the last century, with many houses demolished to make way for warehouses and university buildings.
THE MASTERPLAN
re-imagining this city quarter

Delivering a high quality environment with a unique historic character

1. A new public space at the riverfront
2. An improved connection between Silver Street bridge and the river
3. A widened pavement outside the Anchor on Silver Street
4. New restaurants and cafes that overlook the river
5. A new public space to replace Scudamore’s boat yard
6. A new pavilion building to replace Scudamore’s boat shed
7. A shared space along Mill Lane and Granta Place that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists
8. A new lane behind Silver Street to improve access (Old Press Lane)
9. The former United Emmanuel Reformed church transformed into a performance space for public and College use
10. Pitt Court re-landscaped as a publicly accessible court
11. Improvements to Trumpington Street with enhancements to the surface treatment
12. A new entrance building for Pembroke College containing a gallery open to the public (involving the demolition of no. 75 Trumpington Street. The form of the new entrance is an area where complete consensus has not yet been reached with the Council)
THE MASTERPLAN
a lasting public realm legacy

Our proposal will deliver diverse academic, residential, cultural and leisure space in a combination of refurbished and new buildings.

Wherever possible, ground floor spaces on Mill Lane and the riverfront will provide retail and leisure opportunities, envisaged as food and drink venues. Upper floors will typically provide student accommodation or other University and College facilities.

The public realm will be improved to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and to create a safer, more welcoming environment, including public access through the centre of the site. In line with the SPD, our proposals deliver the following:

• An enhanced public realm at the riverfront that improves access to the river and punts
• New restaurants and cafés along the riverfront
• Potential improvements to the University Centre
• High-quality student accommodation

• Pitt Court – a public square and hub for academic institutions
• Shared surface along Mill Lane prioritising pedestrians and cyclists
• Improved street scene and access
• New publicly accessible performance and gallery space

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Our proposals provide a vibrant and complementary mix of uses in line with the SPD’s aspirations. These uses include food and drink, office space, gallery space and academic uses that will benefit both the city and the University.

The food and drink uses will create active frontages along the riverfront and Mill Lane. A cafe or restaurant might also occupy the building on the north side of Pitt Court, providing a welcoming frontage facing the city centre.

Living accommodation for approximately 350 College students is arranged around new courtyards and will help to relieve some pressure on the housing shortfall in the city. Typically located on the upper floors above other uses, the College accommodation will be accessed via new lanes and routes through the site such as Old Press Lane on the north and Kenmare Gardens and Ray and Dagmar Dolby Court on the south.

The site will also accommodate a new student hub on Old Press Lane to complement other academic spaces.
BUILDINGS
a careful balance of old and new

RETENTION STRATEGY

In order to redevelop the site as sensitively as possible the majority of buildings around the perimeter of the blocks, such as Mill Lane and Silver Street, will be retained. This will allow the unique historic character of the site to be preserved, whilst unlocking opportunities for greater redevelopment within the interior of the blocks.

In line with the SPD’s aims, our improvements to the public realm will also significantly enhance the setting of important listed buildings, such as the Pitt Building, the former United Emmanuel Reformed Church and the University Centre.

Retention and adaptive reuse of many of the buildings will be complemented by new purpose-built facilities.

Around the site’s perimeter, several new infill buildings complete the street frontage; increasing the diversity of the street scene. New buildings are proposed to replace existing buildings of lower significance that cannot be suitably adapted.

Within the interior of the site, the proposals clarify the layout, enhancing accessibility, access to daylight and the appearance of new and existing buildings.
The masterplan sensitively integrates our proposals within the existing urban context.

The form and style of buildings has evolved over the site’s history; developing from a tight-knit urban grain of houses to a looser urban condition with taller buildings, such as the neo-Georgian lecture theatre block (equivalent to five stories).

The proposals retain the prominence of the landmark buildings at the corners of the site, while introducing new buildings, which respond to the scale, height and massing of the existing context. New buildings are typically two, three or four storeys in height. One five-storey building is proposed, nestled in the centre of the north block.
**Old Press Mill Lane**

**MOVEMENT**

prioritising pedestrians and cyclists

Transforming the urban experience for pedestrians and cyclists, while improving access to new and existing buildings

Our aspiration is to positively transform the environment for residents and visitors, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Our proposals have been guided by the SPD and developed in discussion with the City and County Councils.

A key aim is to encourage greater pedestrian flows into the site from Silver Street. At the same time, we propose significant enhancements to the environment, for example by introducing paving to create shared spaces similar to other areas in the city centre. Proposed enhancements include:

**The proposals include:**

- Widening the pavement on Silver Street in front of the Anchor
- Introducing a new lane to the rear of Silver Street
- Enhancing Launderess Lane to make it more attractive
- Creating new public spaces on the Mill Pond and Upper River to relieve congestion and create a vantage point
- Re-surfacing Mill Lane and Granta Place as a shared space to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and enhance its appearance
- Improving Trumpington Street, potentially including a new crossing from Pembroke College
  - (Note: The existing pedestrian crossing on Trumpington Street will be retained)
- Removing the majority of car parking
- Increasing the amount cycle parking and making it more convenient

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**VEHICLE MOVEMENTS**

**PEDESTRIAN/CYCLIST MOVEMENTS**

**HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Green Street is a good example of a shared space with high quality paving in a historic context**
We are proposing to create a new, high-quality public open space on the riverfront to improve access to the water and establish a focal point, with new cafés, restaurants and the Anchor pub activating the space.

The 2010 SPD recognises the opportunity for a potential new public space on the Mill Pond (the plan from the SPD is shown below). It also identifies the Laundress Lane warehouse building as having the 'potential for either demolition or substantial alteration'. In our view, the benefits of a new public space outweigh the loss of this building, which has been extensively altered.

City Council Planning and Conservation Officers prefer a solution that retains the warehouse building on the Mill Pond whilst achieving public use. They consider that the building contributes to the character of Laundress Lane and the Mill Pond through its enclosure of the lane and its position on the water's edge.

We welcome your views on these different approaches to this part of the site.

“The development should seek to create public realm to a high quality, potentially including a new public space fronting onto the river”

SPD, Section 5.2 (2010)
Our masterplan delivers:

- A new, high-quality public space that supports existing businesses and creates new commercial opportunities
- A coherent space for visitors to enjoy the river and Coe Fen
- Increased footfall, improved disabled access, and access for pedestrians and cyclists
- Improved views from Coe Fen and Silver Street Bridge of new and existing buildings

GRANTA PLACE

The current location of Scudamore’s boat yard on Granta Place forms a physical and visual barrier to the upper river, with unsightly railings and overcrowded bike parking. The SPD envisages this area as a potential new open public space. To accomplish this, the boat shed building could be replaced with a smaller, higher quality building, thereby allowing a significant part of the upper river to be opened up.

The boatshed is owned by the City Council (and is therefore not in our control) and we understand the Council are considering their options for redevelopment. We hope the Council will bring forward their own development of Granta Place in parallel with our plans and prioritise creating public open space on the upper river for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Our proposals show how the area could be enhanced and we welcome your feedback on our suggested approach for this part of the site.
STREETS AND SPACES
a fine grain of lanes, yards and courts

Our proposals provide a hierarchy of recognisable spaces to improve legibility and wayfinding. This will enhance the everyday experience of moving through the site and allow better access to the existing buildings.

New space
• a new public space overlooking the Mill Pond
• a new public space on the Upper River
• a new lane to link Silver Street to Mill Lane (Old Press Lane)
• Two new landscaped courts raised on podiums as amenity for residents
• a new landscaped court at the heart of the south block (Ray and Dagmar Dolby Court)
• a new garden off Trumpington Street (Kenmare Gardens)

Existing spaces
• Mill Lane re-surfaced as shared space and activated by ground floor uses
• Silver Street enhanced by locally widening the pavement and introducing a new informal crossing
• Laundress Lane enhanced by removing bins and introducing more ground floor uses
• Trumpington Street enhanced by re-surfacing and introducing a potential new crossing
• Pitt Court re-landscaped as a public space
• Stuart House forecourt re-landscaped with planting and trees
NEXT STEPS delivering for Cambridge

Your views are important to us and we will be considering your feedback carefully before we finalise the masterplan. If you would like to be kept informed of future progress, please add your contact details to the feedback form.

We anticipate that there will be two separate planning applications – one for the area to the south of Mill Lane and one for the north. It is likely that the application for the south will come forward later this year, preceded by a further public consultation.

Thank you for attending today’s consultation event. You can find all of this information online at www.opml.sitedevelopments.cam.ac.uk

We would be grateful to receive your feedback, either by completing a paper feedback form or by going online to: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Opmlfeedbackform

Please submit your comments by Thursday 12th April 2018

PUBLIC BENEFITS

Our masterplan addresses all of the key aspirations in the SPD and we are proud of the regeneration we can bring forward for the Old Press/Mill Lane area. In particular we hope to:

• Regenerate an important yet neglected area of the city centre

• Provide a new public space on the riverfront activated with cafes and restaurants

• Provide world class college and university accommodation

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

£200 million capital investment

£76 million gross value added (GVA) to the local economy

£1.7 million (at least) per annum of increased student spend in the local economy (including education and accommodation fees)

Additional business rates paid to Cambridge City Council

£1.52 million (at least) in New Homes Bonus payments to the council over a four-year period

Person years of temporary construction employment equivalent to 112 permanent construction jobs

Key to securing local, national and international investment in the city’s economy

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

BREEAM Excellent rated new buildings

Creation of new public green spaces on the riverside

Public realm improvements to create shared spaces, crossings and improved quality of pedestrian and cycle ways

Increased cycle parking and removal of car spaces

SOCIAL BENEFITS

New publicly accessible art gallery and URC events space

Improved pastoral care and enhanced teaching space

350 new student bedspaces taking pressure off the general housing market

Regeneration of this part of the city centre with improved quality of footpaths and cycleways

Promotes walking and cycling

Access to social, open space and leisure facilities

TIMELINE

Supplementary Planning Document is adopted 2010

Work starts on the masterplan 2014

Masterplan finalised Summer 2018

Public Consultation Spring 2018

Further planning applications 2019

Construction work starts, subject to planning consent 2022 (at least)

First planning application for the south Late 2018

Potential early enabling works 2020