



# **Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal**

**Draft Appraisal  
Public Consultation**

**March 2009**

**Forest Heath District Council**

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**Forest Heath  
District Council**

# **Mildenhall**

## **Draft Conservation Area Appraisal**



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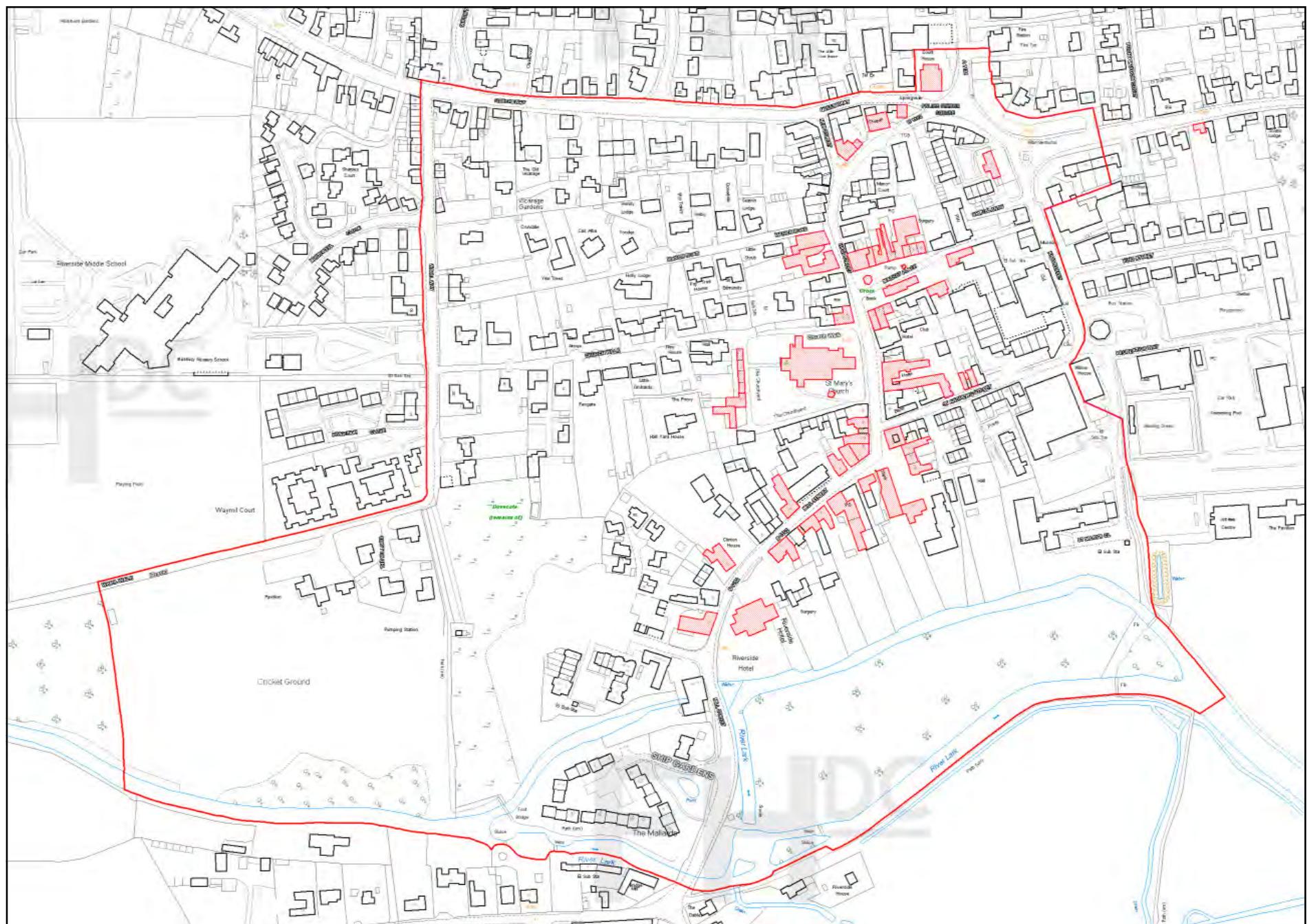
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## Key Characteristics

- Market Town in the Breckland on the fen edge
- Area contains significant archaeological sites from the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman & Saxon periods.
- Serpentine Linear Plan enclosed by traditional buildings on the footway edge.
- Street plan follows historic layout, connecting manor house, marketplace, churchyard, river and staith.
- Significant industrial archaeological remains of the River Lark Navigation
- Church tower is a significant landmark seen across the flat fen landscape and from within the town.
- Buildings are predominately two storey, single width plan, built in local vernacular.
- Rendered timber-frame, red brick and gault brick used for walls, plain tile, pantile and slate used for roofs. Openings in walls have a vertical emphasis.
- Churchyard, enclosed by historic buildings, containing good 18th & 19th-century monuments
- Important medieval parish church, prominent in the townscape.
- Late medieval, timber market cross in historic market place enclosed by historic buildings
- Historic boundary walls in brick, clunch block and flint rubble are important survivals

# MILDENHALL CONSERVATION AREA MAP

Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal



## Introduction

Within our cities, towns and villages are areas of special architectural and historic character, which are to be valued and protected as a central part of our cultural identity. They contribute in many ways to our understanding of the present and the past and add quality to our lives. They are also of immense importance to tourism. They are a precious and irreplaceable asset, which once lost are gone forever.

Caring for them is a dynamic process which involves managing change. This does not mean keeping everything from the past but it does mean making careful judgements about the value and significance of buildings and landscapes to be preserved in the future.

Critical to these decisions is an understanding and appreciation of an area's character, including its social and economic background and the way in which such factors have shaped its urban fabric. This should be the starting point for making decisions about both its management and its future.

The Mildenhall Conservation Area comprises the historic core of the town, from Queensway in the north, to King Street in the east, Wamil Way to the west and the Cricket Ground and water meadows of the River Lark to the south.

The survey of the town for the appraisal took place in Spring 2008 and February 2009. Public consultation will take place in late 2009.

Conservation Areas were introduced through the Civic Amenities Act in 1967 and there are now 13 in Forest Heath District. Conservation areas are '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*'

The Mildenhall Conservation Area was designated on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1973. The area of the conservation area is 30.22 hectares

Having designated a conservation area, the District Council has a duty to review the conservation area and having consulted the local community, will draw up proposals for its preservation and enhancement.

Designation introduces additional planning controls over the demolition of buildings, over minor development and the protection of trees. It is not intended to prevent new development or stifle the area's economic

life or potential but it may mean a requirement for more exacting standards of design for alterations and new development. The District Council when exercising its planning powers will pay special attention to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area according to the policies for the built environment set out in the



*The Mildenhall village sign*

## Forest Heath Local Plan

The appraisal is designed to set out the value and significance of the townscape characteristics of the Mildenhall Conservation Area which will provide a basis, for local development documents and development control decisions.

It takes into account the contribution made to the character of the area by important local buildings, local constructional detail, traditional materials, spaces formed by buildings and also the contribution made by trees, hedges and other natural or cultivated features. Many individual buildings which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area will be mentioned and identified within the building schedules. (abbreviated to PC). These buildings may contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area because of their architectural interest or their townscape interest.

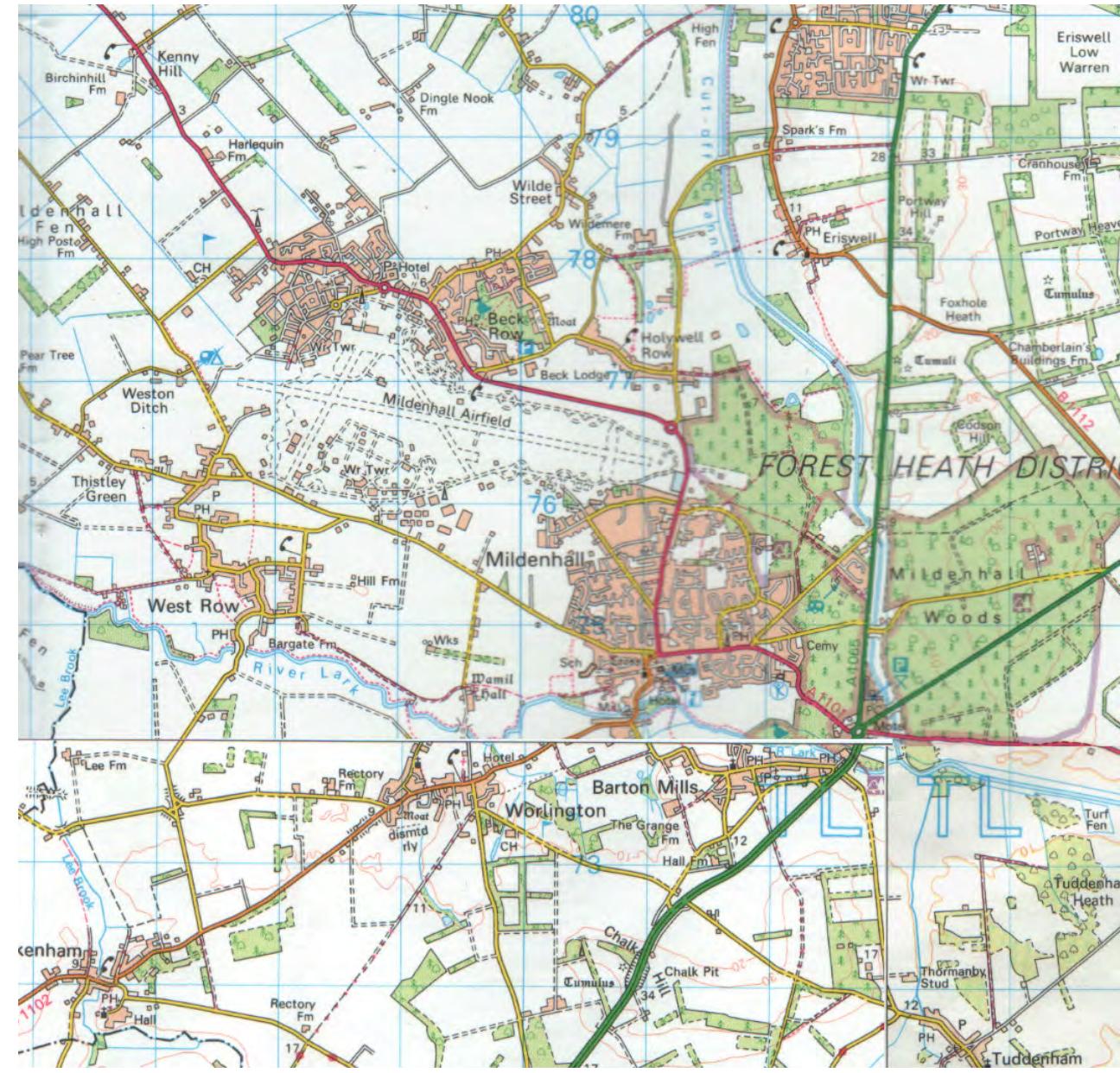
## Special Interest of the Conservation Area

### Location & Context

Mildenhall is a market town in the west of Suffolk, approximately 28 miles north-east of Cambridge, 14 miles north-west of Bury St Edmunds and 12 miles south-west of Thetford. The parish has an area of about 16,700 acres of land and 67 acres of water.

Mildenhall is situated at the western end of the Breckland where it meets the Fens.

The River Lark flows from east to west on its southern border, and the A11, Norwich to London trunk road crosses its eastern end. From its centre there are roads to Littleport,



Location Plan

Brandon, Thetford and Bury St Edmunds.

### **General Character & Plan Form**

The parish is divided into four hamlets, Beck Row, Holywell Row, West Row and Mildenhall High Town; (The Town) the latter being the principal hamlet containing the conservation area. The hamlets are large and straggling and lie in an arc from west to north

The historic centre of the Town is, linear in plan, running from north to south along High Street and Mill Street. The manor domain was to north-west of the High Street, the market place to east; the church to south of centre; and ending at the river crossing in the south. There was substantial growth of the town in the 19th century and to north and east with London overspill development in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century.

Much of the rural part of the parish is within Mildenhall Fen to north-west. Mildenhall Airfield and its USAF base is within an area of approximately 1,000 acres to the north-west. Visually the airfield, behind its high wire perimeter fences is a sprawling development of large scale industrial buildings and aircraft, which impacts on the conservation area through the presence of aircraft over head and the many vehicles, most notably present during the peak hours before and after school. There is a population of about 9,906 living in High

Town, and 4,408 in Beck Row, Holywell Row and Kenning Hill.

### **Landscape Setting**

The Town lies between the fen and the gently undulating Breckland. ( i.e. the Breckland Landscape Character Area and the Fens Landscape Character Area)

To south and west of the Town the fen is characteristically flat, comprised of large rectangular fields, filled by dark peaty soils, enclosed by deep sedge filled ditches, and lines of alder and willow along the ditch edge. The flat landscape and sparse vegetation permit long views across the fen where looking towards Mildenhall High Town the tower of the parish church is a constant feature. There are notable views



*View across the fen from Barton Mills*



*Breckland woods east of Mildenhall*

from West Row and west of Barton Mills. Within the fen landscape are scattered hamlets and farmsteads.

Once extensively heath and warren, the Breckland is now comprised of large gently undulating fields with a sandy, chalky soil, enclosed by windbreaks of mature Scots Pine. Extensive forestry plantations replaced the sandy fields. Their trees enclose and overshadow the roads and close down the vistas. Mildenhall Woods abut the eastern edge of the town and enclose its approach from the east.

### **Historic Development & Archaeology**

There is evidence of continuous human settlement in the vicinity from the earliest period of human development to the present day. There have been significant finds of

Stone Age artefacts, and weapons and implements left by Bronze Age and Iron Age man.

There is evidence of extensive Roman occupation, most notably the Mildenhall Treasure, a hoard of Roman Silver tableware.

These finds reflect the advantages of the fen edge as a place to live, to farm, to fish and to hunt and also for the movement of



*Rare early 14th-century 'Decorated' east window of St Mary's Church*

goods and people. Movement over land came via the Icknield Way an ancient track between Knettishall Heath and the Chilterns.

The name of Mildenhall is derived from the Old English word 'halh' for 'nook' and the Old English word for middle or a person's name 'Milda'. meaning Milda's nook or the middle nook.

By the time of the Norman Conquest, the manor had been given by Edward the Confessor to the Abbot of St Edmunds. The 1086 the Doomsday Survey records 20 acres of meadow, 3 ½ fisheries, 31 forest mares, 37 beasts, 60 pigs, 100 sheep and 1 mill in the parish. There were 75 tax payers and a church with rental from 40 acres of land.

The right to hold a market on Fridays was granted in 1219 and again with a fair in 1412. Mildenhall Manor was exchanged for the Manor of Southwold by the Abbot of St Edmunds and Richard De Clare in 1259. However a sub-manor called Aspalls was owned by Sir Robert de Aspal in circa 1326. In 1445 the Abbot of St Edmunds owned 70 acres of land, 14½ acres of meadow and 10 acres of marsh.

In 1557 the Manor of Mildenhall and Aspalls Manor were granted to Thomas Reeve and Christopher Ballet and passed subsequently to Sir Roger North of Kirtling whose son



*Extract of 1812 Enclosure Map © Suffolk Record Office*

Henry built the manor house, north west of the High Street, in circa 1586 . In 1671 the estate passed to Sir Thomas Hanmer, Speaker in the House of Commons, who extended the Manor House, and gave the town almshouses and a work house in the churchyard.

Sir William Bunbury inherited the estate in 1747 and it remained in his family until the break up of the estate in 1933. The Manor House was demolished in 1934.

The present historic structure of the settlement was established by the 14<sup>th</sup>-century. Then there were three water mills; hemp and flax were being grown; there was a large area of heath, an extensive rabbit warren and lodge, and 8000 acres of Fen. The agriculturists cultivated their crops on

the field strips within the great open fields called 'The Rows' to north and west of the town.

The medieval settlement was situated between the Manor lands and the River Lark.

The manor demesne was situated between High Street and Wamil Way and Queensway and the River. The market place was in its present location, though most likely occupying a greater area than at present having been encroached by buildings erected by the stall holders.

The Parish Church of St Mary stood within the manor demesne. It was substantially enlarged in the east in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and the main structure in the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The scale of construction suggests local prosperity in the late medieval period and aid from Battle Abbey and St Edmunds Abbey who held an interest in the Church lands.

The oldest surviving buildings in the town date from the 15<sup>th</sup>-century. Some would have been those reconstructed after the fire in 1567 that destroyed 27 houses. Others will have been the result of rebuilding outmoded buildings or structurally inadequate and decayed structures.

In 1524 there were at least 188 taxpayers in the Parish employed in agriculture, woollen cloth production, and leather manufacture.



*Old Walls on south boundary of the former Mildenhall Manor garden*

The C17th saw a significant number of workers in agriculture and in 1674 there were 285 inhabited houses in High Town. In 1871 there was a population of 3,862 living in 860 houses. The local economy supported a wide range of occupations in agriculture, trade and manufacturing.

The River Lark made a significant contribution to the local economy. South of the town, the river divided into two and was sufficiently shallow for a ford. The northern stream flowed to a water mill, on a site probably continually occupied since 1086 and latterly occupied by the Parkers Brothers Mill of 1908.

The south branch formed the navigable section of the river being part of a system

with the Great Ouse having been made navigable in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1700 an 1732, Henry Ashley extended the navigation from Mildenhall to Bury St Edmunds and later, during the 1830s and 1840s, a further major rebuilding program was carried out resulting in a series of river gates called locks and staunches.

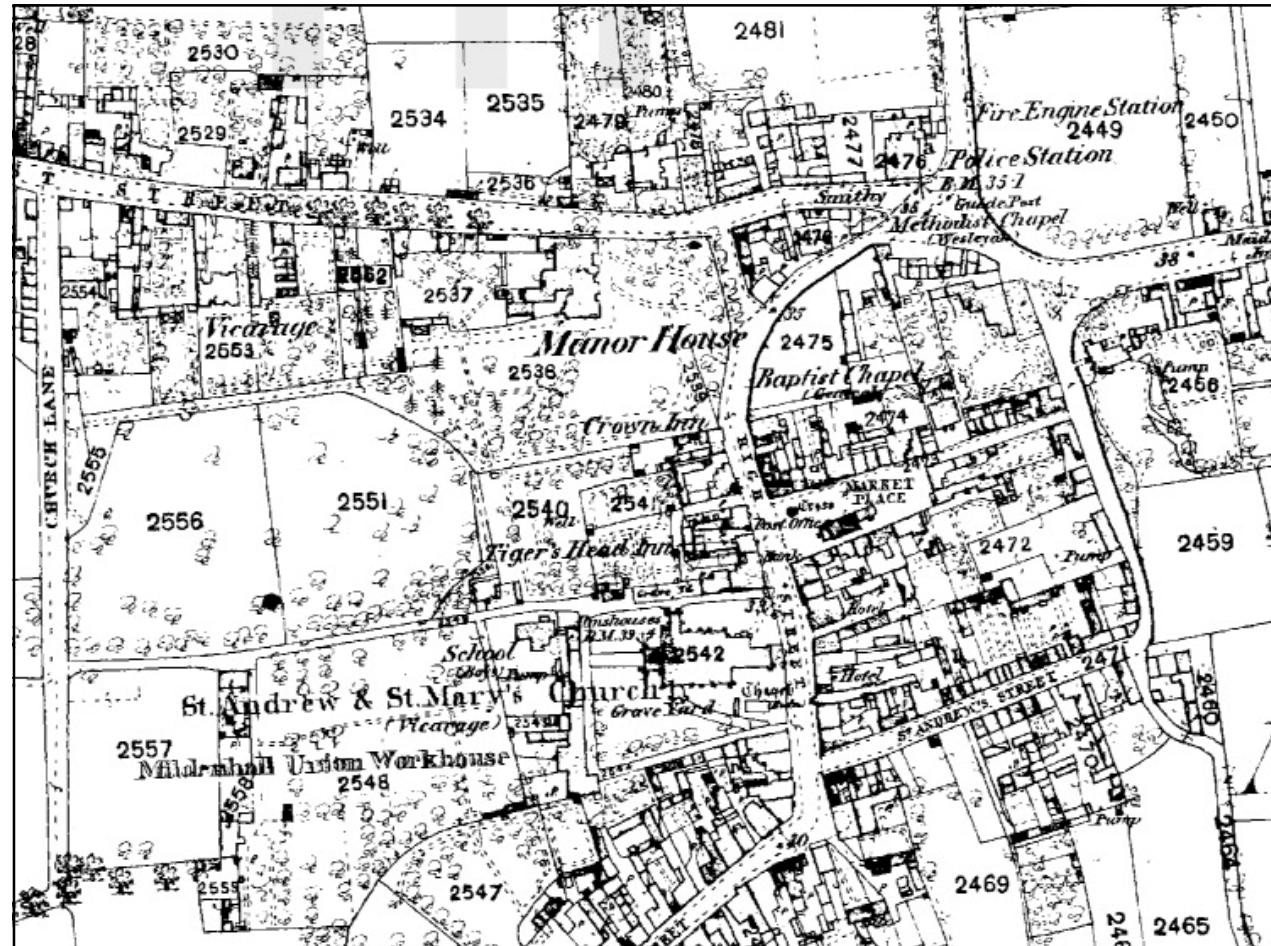
There was a further campaign of repair in the early 1890s.

The navigation, which had been important for the import of coal and the export of grain finally succumbed to competition from the railway when the line from Cambridge was built in 1885 and the station opened in 1891.

The gas works was erected in 1840 on the south side of the river, east of the road bridge where the barges could unload, it



*Extract of 1858 tithe map. © Suffolk Record Office*



Extract of 1882, 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map

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was demolished without trace in 1960.

A tanner and a fuller are recorded in Mildenhall between 1500 and 1699. Their most likely location would have been on the banks of the Lark close to the river crossing.

The Union Workhouse was situated on the west edge of the churchyard and was rebuilt in 1895 and relocated to Kingsway in 1908. A school was recorded in The town in 1724, and a free school built by T.C. Bunbury in 1817. In 1818 there were two National schools for boys and girls and a Church of England School in 1902.

The complex ownership of the medieval Great Fields was amalgamated by an act of enclosure in 1812 and major drainage schemes were carried out in the 1820s.

In 1912 family tenure of Mildenhall Manor came to an end with the death of Sir H Bunbury. In 19?? the estate was broken up and the manor house was demolished. Subsequently the manor domain has been developed with housing in a piecemeal fashion while preserving the former Vicarage and stone and brick boundary walls intact.

Further major change was brought by the establishment of a RAF bomber base in 1934 . Since 1950 it has been home to the USAF with a population in 1979 of approximately 8,000. In 1965-74, Mildenhall



Linear 'serpentine' enclosure in Mill Street, and the lofty landmark of the 160 ft tower of St Mary's Church

was designated as an area for GLC overspill, bringing with it a light industrial estate and low density suburban development to the north and east of the town centre.

### **Character and Interrelationship of spaces within the conservation area**

The principal space is formed by High Street and Mill Street. The streets follow a linear serpentine form.

The space is formed by a continuous built up frontage formed by two storey buildings set on the back edge of the footway, which close the vistas at the turn of the streets. At its northern end, the High Street commences at Police Station Square, an irregular wide space formed by the garden boundary walls of the buildings aligned



*St Mary's Churchyard*

along the five roads that meet in the 'square'. The southern junction contains the war memorial at its centre.

The Market Place is a long rectangular space crossed at its west end by the high Street. The space is formed by two storey

buildings aligned around its edges and is divided by a block of buildings on its south side. The space flows diagonally from the south eastern corner of the Market Place and again diagonally, crosses the rectangular court of the shopping centre,



*Linear spaces and serial views from the River Lark Towpath*

into Kings Street.

The churchyard is enclosed generally by two storey buildings and walls around its perimeter. Its eastern end is crossed by the High Street while the space flows around the mass of the parish church at its centre. The road turns west at the southern end of the High Street, and where there is a pleasant small square on the east side.

The space widens out at the southern end of Mill Street where the River Lark conducts its east to west course in water meadow and open country to east of the bridge, and enclosed to west by cottages and houses.

Elsewhere, more loosely enclosed linear spaces are formed by the single and two storey houses in Queensway, Manor Road, Church Walk and St Andrews Street.



*War Memorial and the 'Regency Style' late 19th-century Shrublands House*

## **Viewpoints and vistas**

The 160ft high church tower is a prominent landmark in the flat fen landscape around the town. There are dramatic views across the fen of the tower from Beck Row and Barton Mills.

Within the town, there are frequent views of the tower including from Mill Street, Church Walk, Queensway, St Andrews Street and the Market Place.

There are good serial views of townscape in Mill Street and the High Street, across the Market Place. Viewpoints include, in High Street, The Parish Church of St Mary; Nos 17, The White Hart Hotel; The Bell Hotel; Lloyds Bank, High Street. In Mill Street, No 11; Clinton House; Mill House; The Riverside Hotel and Parkers Mill. From Kingsway there is an attractive vista looking west, of the War Memorial and Shrublands House.

There are attractive footpath walks, along the River Lark tow path and the footbridge west of the Mallards and Wamil Way.

## **Open Spaces**

Visual interest is provided by contrasting connected spaces including the Market Place; the Churchyard; the yard adjoining Lloyds Bank; Clinton House forecourt; Riverside Hotel Gardens and Mill Park Gardens.

## **Landscape Enhancement**

Both streets have been enhanced in the past in part with high quality paving of York stone and granite sets. When budgets permit the paving can be continued north beyond the Market Place and south to the Mill.

## **Redevelopment Opportunities**

Poor townscape, the product of ill considered 20<sup>th</sup>-century development, at the north end of the Highs Street provides opportunities for small scale infill and some redevelopment.

## Manor Domain

**Queensway, Church Walk, Churchyard, Manor Road, New Street, Police Station Square and Wamil Way.**

**The site of the medieval manor domain containing the parish church, the vicarage, pigeon house and manor house.**

## High Significance

The area, to the west of the High Street is enclosed by old clunch and brick walls and contained the manor house in its north eastern corner and the parish church and church yard. The ownership became fragmented in time, eventually containing a vicarage with a generous garden, a school and school yard, almshouses and workhouse with workhouse gardens. Towards the south are the remains of a large medieval stone dove house. An old path crossed the manor grounds which may have defined the edge of the manor domain after the reformation. It persists as Church Walk and is enclosed in part by old walls. There was a chalk pit at the rear of the Almshouses marked now by a shallow depression. The Vicarage and its garden walls were extant in 1885, and may have been built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century. It has recently been converted into flats and the grounds developed.

Today there is no trace of the manor house which was demolished in 1934 and the land



*Boundary Walls in Wamil Way*

sold for development. The flats on the west side of New Street were built in the Manor garden in red brick with pitched pantile roofs though their horizontal proportions and steel windows date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century. Manor Road was built to provide access to the manor gardens in addition to Church Walk and much of the development in the area was carried out piecemeal after World War II.



*Church Walk*

## General Overview

Most of the post war development is low density, one and two storey housing in a tranquil environment which is not of special architectural interest. Queensway is a busy traffic route out to West Row and Church walk provides a safe route from the Middle School to the town centre.

## Townscape Elements

- Views of the Church Tower from locations in Queensway; in Church Walk, and from various locations across the churchyard.
- Important historic walls at both ends of Church Walk; on the south side of Manor Road; along the south side of Queensway and in former vicarage

- garden; and along the east side of Wamil Way;
- Good views of roofscape from Church Walk.
  - High environmental quality of churchyard with trees, mown grass and historic buildings.
  - Architecturally important head stones in churchyard.
  - Views of Grade I listed parish church.



*St Mary's Churchyard, The Hanmer Almshouses*

## Archaeology

The Dovecote MNL 181, probably medieval.



*Queensway. The former vicarage*

Church of St Mary, Mildenhall, MNL 211

Medieval

Charnal House, Medieval,

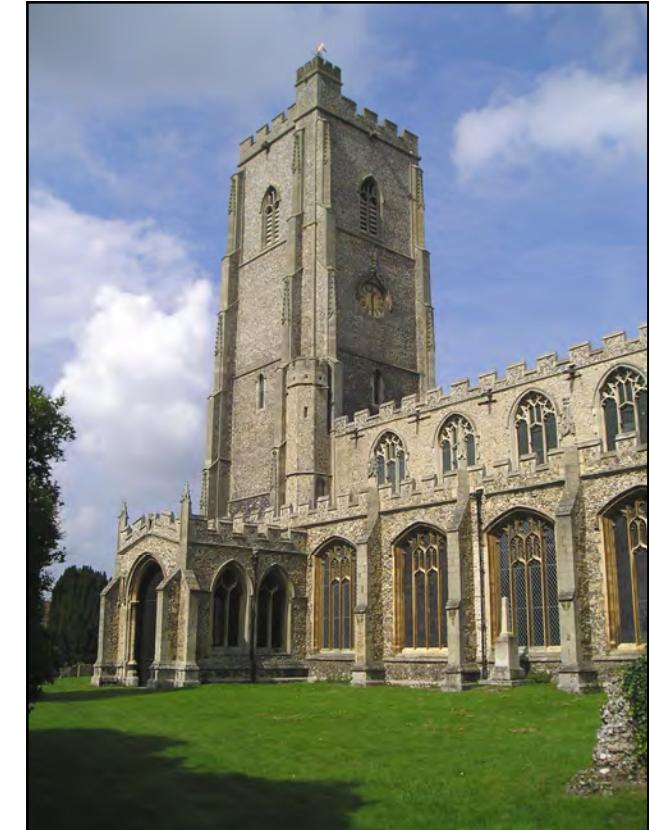
Churchyard Wall, Medieval,

Churchyard, Medieval

Domesday Minster-1086.

The Manor House, MNL 329, C16th until 1934

Mildenhall Union Workhouse and Infirmary, MNL330, Prior to 1776, adapted and enlarged 1836.



*Church of St Mary*

## Streetscape Enhancement

## Redevelopment Opportunities

Queensway							
Building Name/ No	Status	Age	Height	Wall Materials	Roof form/ material	Architect	Notes
10-14	PC	C19	2 + 3 storeys	gault brick	hipped & gabled slate		Imposing and significant building in streetscape
34	PC	C19	2 storeys	flint & gault brick	gabled and slate		
3	PC	C19	1 1/2 storeys	render	Smutt pantiles		
5	PC	C19	2 storeys	flint with brick dressing	corrugated pantiles		Incorporates C17 brick
19 Manor Cottages	PC	C19	1	Brick	red pantiles		Site of Manor House
27-31	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick	hipped slate		3 Terraced Cottages
33	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick field stone	hipped slate		Double pile plan
1-6 The Old Vicarage	PC	C19	2 storeys + attics	gault brick	gabled slate		Too much altered to be listable
39	PC	C19	2 storeys	knapped flint & gault brick	gabled pantiles		Recommended for listing
40	PC	C19	2 storeys	rendered & painted	black pantiles		
47	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick , flint & brick	black pantiles		Built up off boundary wall
42 Queens	PC	C18	2 storeys	painted & render brick	gabled pantiles		Potential for listing
44	PC	C18	1 1/2 storeys	flint with brick dressings	red pantiles		Potential for listing
48-52	PC	C18	1 1/2 storeys	painted brick	red pantiles		Potential for listing
Church Walk							
22,24,26 High Street 2 Church Walk	GII	C17	2 storeys + attic	rendered timber frame	gabled plain tile		5 light gabled dormer
4	PC	C19	2 storeys	rendered & painted	gabled pantiles		
Church Rooms	PC	C19 & C20	1 storey	rendered & painted	red & brick pantiles		
14 -17 Hanmer Almshouse	GII	1722	1 storey	red brick	plain tiles		
13	GII	1800	2 storeys	painted brick	hipped slate		
12 The Priory	GII	1836 with early core	2 storeys	rendered & painted	behind parapet		
The Priory Stables	Curtilage						
S.West corner(?)		C19	3 storeys	painted render	gabled pantiles		
6 & 7	PC	C19	2 storeys	painted render	concrete pantiles		2 cottages
4 & 5	PC	C19	1 1/2 storeys	painted render	pantiles		2 cottages
3	PC	C19	2 storeys	field stone & brick	gabled pantiles		
1	PC	C18	2 storeys	painted render	plain tiles		
Parish Church	GII	1300 & later		limestone & flint	slate & lead		
Charnel House	GII	1387		flint rubble & free stone			
Grave Markers	PC	C18 & C19		limestone			High quality carved C18 & C19 headstones - those in original location to be considered for listing as a group
Church Rooms	PC	C19		field stone & gault brick dressings	hexagonal slate gabled		Former school
1	PC	C20	1 1/2 storeys	rendered & painted	gabled corrugated tiles		garden wall
Walls north & south of Church Walk							C17 bricks & clunch
Manor Road							
Walls South side of Manor Road		C17 & later					Clunch
New Street							
Wamil Way							

## Market Place

### Market Place, King Street, St Andrew's Street

#### HIGH SIGNIFANCE

An historically important ensemble in the Market Place containing a 15<sup>th</sup>-century market cross, an elaborate 19<sup>th</sup>-century pump and enclosed by buildings built mostly during the 16<sup>th</sup>-century.

The Market Place is an important historic place, situated outside the manor gates, where on Fridays a market has been held since it was granted by Henry III in 1219. The surviving buildings that enclose it contain fabric dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>-century though it is likely that these were not the first on the site nor that they mark the original boundaries. It was not unusual for a marketplace to be encroached upon by stall holders and No 33 Market Place, built on an island site on the south side in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century was probably an encroachment.

The area contained rows of small cottages, their gardens, orchards and pasture and the stable yards of the White Hart and the Bell Hotels.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, St Andrews Street contained a continuous line of cottages on the footway edge. King Street contained cottages on its west side including No 6, two flint cottages with slate roofs that are now

the Mildenhall Museum.

#### General Overview

The 1970's shopping centre occupies the south-east quarter of the area, and connects a wide shopping mall to the south east corner of the Market Place. While the architectural design of the Mall is plain, pedestrian flows and spatial relationships



*Shopping precinct*



*Mildenhall Friday Market*

between the Market Place and the shopping centre work well.

Parking in the Market Place appears to be popular though it causes much visual detriment and causes the loss of pedestrian safety in the shopping centre.

The service courts of the shopping precinct

disrupt the built up frontage of cottages on the back edge of footways, opening up views of the backs of the precinct shops.

### Townscape

- Low density two storey development enclosing yards used for serving or car parking.
- The Market Place are fine, personal scale enclosure formed by two storey buildings built on the edge of the Market Place, and the back edge of the footway on in High Street.
- The island of shops on its southern side helps visual interest to the Market Place by forming a short and narrow pedestrian lane.
- No. 1 & 2 and 17 & 19 occupy

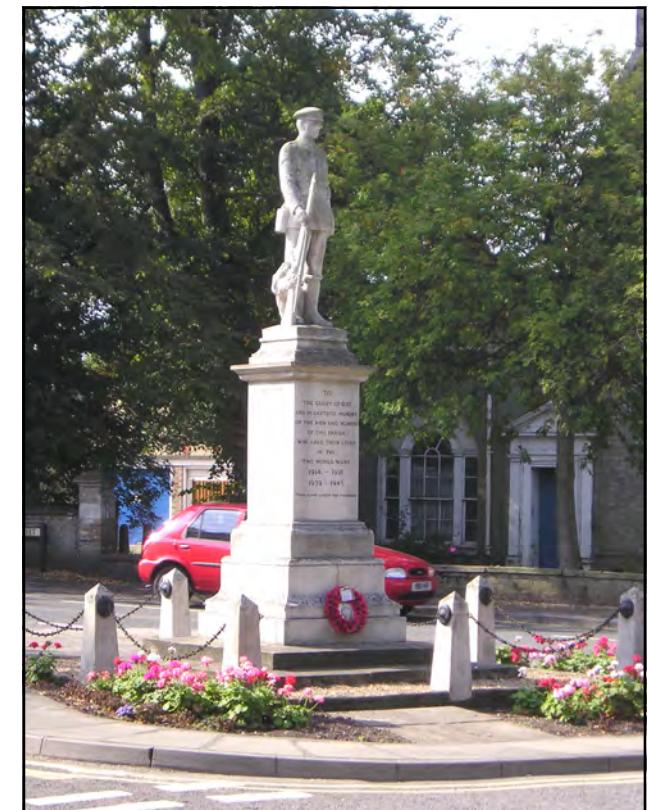


Narrow Market Place Street

prominent sites on the corner with the High Street and No 11 Market Place is prominent towards the east end.

- Attractive flow of space and pedestrians, diagonally across the Market Place and into the shopping precinct.
- High proportion of listed buildings enclosing the Market Place
- Vernacular buildings with single width plans, steep pitched roofs and traditional painted timber windows with vertical proportions and small panes.
- The Market Cross and the village pump make important contributions to the historic and architectural interest of the group of buildings in the Market Place.
- Good views east and west across the Market Place.
- St Andrews Street is enclosed by two storey buildings set on the back edge of the footway. Its historic character has been compromised by modern openings into yards making rear elevations visible. Its architectural character is more complete at the western end of the street.
- Fashionable late C18th-century facade of Shrublands House in Kingsway.

- War Memorial at the junction of Kingsway with King Street. Significant wall and tree belt on the north side of the junction.



War Memorial

Kings Street							
Building Name/ No	Status	Age	Height	Wall Materials	Roof form/ material	Architect	Notes
2 Shrubland House	GII	Late C18	2 storeys + attics	gault brick	gabled plain tiles		& garden wall
4	PC	C20	2 storeys	gault brick	corrugated clay tiles		
2 & 8 Museum	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick & field stone	gabled pantiles		
Market Place							
1 & 2	GII	Late C16, C17 & C20	2 storeys	rendered timber frame	gabled plain tiles		
4	GII	Late C17	2 storeys + attic	painted gault brick	gabled plain tiles		crested ridge tiles
5, 6 & 7	GII	Early C16	2 storeys + attic	timber frame	gabled plain tiles		crested ridge tiles
8 & 9	GII	Late C16, C17 & C20	2 storeys + attics	rendered timber frame	gabled plain tiles		
10	PC	C18	2 storeys	rendered timber frame & painted brick	concrete pantiles		
11							
Market Cross	GII	C15		timber frame	hipped lead		
Parish Pump	GII	Late C18	3 storeys	wood & cast iron			
28 Wongs Restaurant	GII	C17 & later	2 storeys	painted brick & rendered timber frame	gabled plain tiles		crested ridge tiles
3 shops	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick	hipped slate		
30	PC	C19	2 storeys	painted pebbledash	gabled pantiles		
31-32	GII	C18 & C19	1 storey + attic	rendered timber frame	gabled plain tiles		
33 (2 shops)	GII	C18	2 storeys	rendered & painted brick	gabled plain tiles		
St Andrews							

## High Street & Mill Street

### Streets containing the principal historic assets and the historic core of the town

The Town grew around these streets which during the medieval period ran between the manor gate in the north and the River Lark to the south. The streets connected the great fields to north and west, the manor gate, the market place, the parish church, and the water mill, causeway, bridges and staithes. The buildings in the streets contain little structure built before the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and it is probable that most post date the fire of 1567. However the market place contains a rare late 15<sup>th</sup>-century timber market cross and the High Street contains the C13th-century Parish Church which



Parkers Mill and Ship House, Mill Street

suggests that some of the buildings in the High Street escaped the fire. The streets have high townscape quality and contain the finest historic buildings in the town. Behind the Inns in the High Street lay their stables and yards, today, preserved as ancillary accommodation and car parks.

### General Overview

Together with the Market Place these were the principal shopping streets in the town. At the time of survey, a number of shops were closed, others had been converted to non-retail uses, and several were vacant. There



Mill Street: Riverside Hotel to left, Walls of Clinton House to right and No 30, a late Georgian town house of quality.



Mildenhall High Street East Side

is a significant amount of traffic which becomes significant at peak times when it discomforts pedestrians who might otherwise be encouraged to extend their walk to the river footpath.



The Bell, High Street; An early 19th-century facade conceals a 16th-century core.



C 20th breach of scale and lay out in High Street

## Townscape

- Buildings were built on the back edge of the footpath providing an attractive enclosed linear space. The serpentine course of the roads gives additional visual interest with enclosed space at bends and views of facades and roofs.
- Low density and scale development rarely exceeding two storeys
- Views through coach doorways of public houses and former public houses.
- Important historic buildings in visually dominant locations including in the High Street, The Parish Church of St Mary; Nos 17, The White Hart Hotel; The Bell Hotel; and Lloyds Bank



*Formerly the Cock Inn, now shops on the west side of High Street south of the churchyard.*

- In Mill Street there are, No 11; Clinton House; Mill House; The Riverside Hotel and Parkers Mill.

## Open Spaces

Visual interest is provided by contrasting connected spaces including the Market Place; the Churchyard; the yard adjoining Lloyds Bank; Clinton House forecourt; Riverside Hotel Gardens and Mill Park Gardens.

## Landscape Enhancement

Both streets have been enhanced in the past in part with high quality paving of York stone and granite sets. When budgets permit the paving can be continued north beyond the Market Place and south to the

Mill.

## Redevelopment Opportunities

Poor townscape, the product of ill considered 20<sup>th</sup>-century development, at the north end of the Highs Street provides opportunities for small scale infill and some redevelopment.

## Archaeology

The Streets lie within the area occupied by the medieval village where there is potential for below ground and above ground archaeological artefacts and remains.

High Street West		Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal					
Building Name/ No	Status	Age	Height	Wall Materials	Roof form/ material	Architect	Notes
2	PC	C19 + C20	2 storeys	flint & bricks	gabled pantiles		
1 Springvale	GII	Early C19	2 storeys	painted brick	gabled pantiles		
Methodist Church	GII	Early C19	2 storeys	gault brick	hipped slate		
4	GII						
6	GII						
14	GII	Late C17	2 storeys + attics	painted render	plain tiles		Formerly The George PH, delapidated rear wing
16	GII	Early C16	2 storeys	painted brick			
18	PC	C19	2 storeys	painted pebbledash	pantiles		
20 Tigershead	PC	Early C19	2 storeys	painted brick	gabled plain tile		
22/24/26	GII	Early C16	2 storeys	painted brick & painted render	plain tiles		
Church of St Mary	GI	C13 & later		flint & limestone	lead & slate		
28	PC	C19	2 storeys	red brick	gabled plain tile		
30 & 32	GII	C16	2 storeys + attic	painted render	gabled plain tile		
<b>HIGH STREET EAST</b>							
15	PC	C18	2 storeys	rendered & painted	gabled pantiles		
17 & 19	GII	Early C16	2 storeys & attics	Timber frame & brick	fishscale plain tile		
21 White Hart	PC	C18	2 storeys	painted pebbledash	plaintile		
Barn rear of 21	PC	C19	2 storeys	field stone	gabled pantiles		
25 The Bell	GII	C16 & early C19	2 storeys + attic	red brick	plain tiles		
27-29	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick	hipped slate		
31,33,35 & 2 St Andrews Street	GII	C19	2 & 3 storeys	painted & rendered brick	hipped slate		
37	GII	C17 & later	2 storeys + attics	painted render	gabled plain tiles		
45	GII	C19	3 storeys	red brick, rendered annex	gabled slate & plain tiles		
Lloyds Bank	GII	C19	3 storeys	brown & red brick	hipped slate		
<b>Mill Street</b>							
2 includes 34 High Street	GII	C16 & later					
4	GII	Early C19	3 storeys	rendered & painted	hipped slate		
6	GII	Early C19	2 storeys + attics	rendered & painted	gabled plain tiles		
16	GII	C18	2 storeys + attics	rendered & painted	gabled plain tiles		
18	PC	C19	2 storeys + attics	rendered, painted & field stone	gabled black plain tiles		
20	PC	C18	2 storeys + attics	rendered & painted	gabled tiles		
20A	PC	C19 & C20	2 storeys	red brick / weatherboard	hipped pantiles		
22 Clinton House	GII	C18	2 storeys + attics	rendered & painted	gabled plain tiles		Boundary wall
24, 26	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick	gabled black pantiles		
30	PC	C19	2 storeys	gault brick	hexagonal slates		
Mill House	GII	C17 & C19	2 storeys	rendered & painted	gabled plain tiles		
Parkers Mill	PC	C19	4 storeys	red & gault brick	gabled slate		Historic Mill site
Ship House	PC	C20	2 storeys	rendered & timber frame	gabled pantiles		Relocated GII Histroric building
1	GII	C19	2 storeys	red brick /weatherboard	hipped & slated		
9	GII	C16 & C19	2 storeys	timber pebbledash	Smutt plain tiles		
5 Two shops	GII	Early C18	2 storeys	rendered timber frame & gault brick	gabled plain tiles		
7 & 7A	GII	C17 & C19	2 storeys	timber frame cased in red brick			
11	PC						
13	GII	C16 &C19	2 storeys	rendered timber frame			23
15							
Riverside Hotel	GII	Mid C18	3 storeys	red brick tuck pointing	hipped slate		floor added in C20 formerly known as The Hall
Riverside Hotel wall	curtilage	Mid C18		Red brick			

## River Lark

### Motive water power and a navigable river enhanced the development of the Georgian Town

#### High Significance.

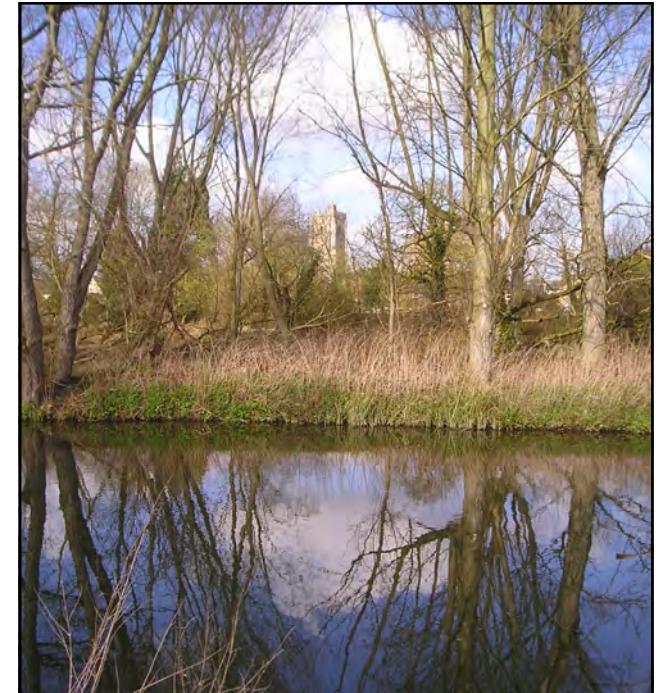
A water mill is recorded in the 1086 Domesday survey, probably on or close to Parker Brothers' Lark Mill on the north side of the river. The mill was rebuilt in 1908 in brick as a steam mill, with 4 storeys, later augmented by an oil engine and water turbine it supplied electricity between 1919 to 1935.

The River was navigable in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, and the navigation was subject to a succession of improvements in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The mill stream is conventionally arranged to feed the Lark Mill, in Mill street, with the mill leat above and mill pond below the mill. The navigable section of the river took the southerly course with a towing path to south on its eastern side and to north on its west side. The passage of craft through the lock and staunches must have greatly interfered with the operations of the water mill, which may have turned from water to steam power at the earliest opportunity. Mill Street crossed the mill leat and the River Lark on bridges and a causeway (probably of medieval origins) before dividing into roads

to Barton Mills and Freckenham.

There appears to have been little change to the watercourses, shown on late 19<sup>th</sup>-century maps. East of the bridge was a lock and a weir, discharging into a basin and quay ('The Gaspool'). The lock has been replaced by a guillotine gate sluice, though the brickwork remains. On its south side was the gas works and a quay. Grain would have been loaded and coal unloaded for domestic use and for the generation of gas. On its north side there is a footbridge through which a canal runs connecting the river with the mill stream and the mill bridge. West of the bridge were two staunches (types of lock crossed by barges while the water flowed through the open gate). Worked in conjunction they could be used as a pound lock with turf sides. (one with a central body of water between gates that could be raised and lowered). The stonework of the staunch, dated 1832 is a rare survival. There was a group of industrial buildings on the south bank , now converted to dwellings, including a second mill west of the bridge. An octagonal brick pill box was built on the river bank south of



*St Mary's Church Tower over the Lark water meadows*



*Former Lock guarded by brick pillbox fortification*

the western staunch between 1939 and 1945.

### **General Overview**

The parish boundary follows the line of the river except to the east of the river, where it follows the line of a ditch, including within it the grounds of Riverside House, built on the site of the gasometers of the gasworks.

The remains of the works to provide the navigation remain in situ and are rare and of industrial archaeological significance. A public footpath crosses the area from the cricket ground to the playing fields following the tow path and crossing the river over a series of attractive wooden foot bridges which allows public enjoyment of the river, the extant navigation structures and views of the country side. The area between the mill leat and the river east of the mill and bridges is water meadow containing a plantation of mature trees in pleasing contrast to the mown grass of the river banks west of the bridge and the playing fields to the east. It follows the southern edge of the town, where the pattern of tenure in the gardens south of Mill Street suggests the persistence of the medieval property boundaries.

### **Landscape Enhancements**

It is likely, that the water meadow south of the mill leat is of ecological interest in addition to its landscape interest. The water



*River Lark Footbridge*



*Gaspool and C19th footbridge*

meadow contributes to the definition of the southern edge of the town and to its setting and can be appreciated from the tow path or from Barton Mills to the south.

It is recommended that the area should be

charitable or publicly owned, that it should remain undeveloped and managed for its archaeological, landscape and wild life interest.

The enjoyment of the footpath is diminished by the necessity of crossing the river via the road bridge. The acquisition of some of the water meadow might provide land for a footpath and a river foot bridge.

River Lark							
Building Name/ No	Status	Age	Height	Wall Materials	Roof form/ material	Architect	Notes
Gas Works	PC	C19		brick			
East Staunch Lock	PC	C19		brick & stone			
West Staunch Lock	PC	C19		brick & stone			
Lark Bridge	PC	C19					Site may be of Archaeological interest
Gaspool Bridge	PC	C19		brick			
Mill Bridge & causeway	PC	C19-C18		brick			Assumed to be part of the 1908 rebuilding

## Local Materials

Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal



Red plain tiles with fish scale panels



A mix of red and black pantiles



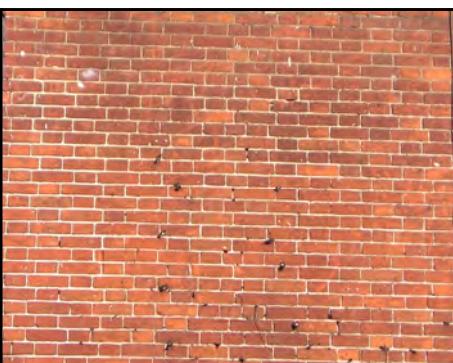
Rare black glazed double Roman tiles



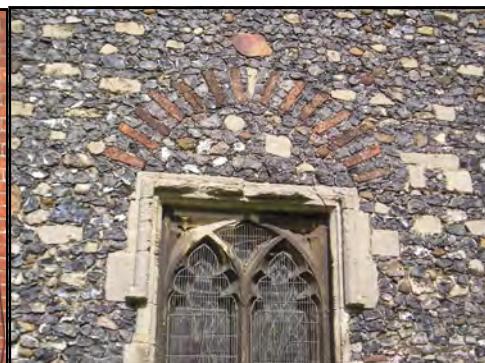
Hexagonal slates



Timber-frame with wattle & daube infill



C18th red brick laid in Flemish Bond



Medieval brick, flint and limestone



C17th local brick laid in English Bond



Painted and pargetted render



Clunch wall



Late C 19th gault brick



Granite sets, York stone pavings with concrete curbs

## Local Detail

Mildenhall Conservation Area Appraisal



Letterbox and stamp machines



Hanging inn sign now on the wall of the Bell



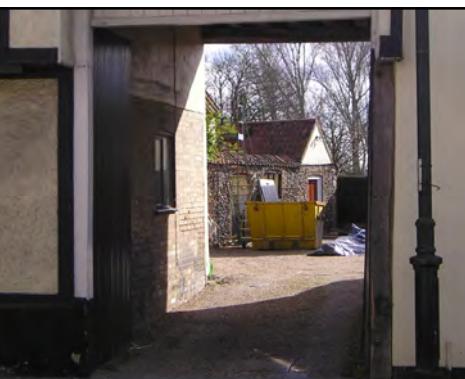
Early C 19th village pump in Market Place



C 15th Market Cross



Fashionable late C18th window



Views through former coach doors of inn



Georgian canted bay window .



War Memorial



C18th Headstone in St Mary's Church-yard



Former Back gate into Vicarage Garden



Gate piers and gas lamp holder, Clinton House



Floral enhancements to Hanmer Almshouses

## Green Spaces

### St Mary's Churchyard:

Enclosed by two storey historic buildings and surrounding the important medieval church; providing its setting, and containing good mature churchyard trees and fine late 18<sup>th</sup>-century and early 19<sup>th</sup>-century monuments.

### The Cricket Ground:

An extensive open area of close mown grass, enclosed by tree lined walks to east and north. The pretty tree lined walk, south of Wamil Way to the River, provides views to east of the remains of the manorial dovecote and the remaining woodland between the developments west of Mill Road and the footpath.

### Mill Street Gardens

Gardens south of the buildings on the south side of Mill Street, providing the setting for the historic buildings there and preserving ancient property boundaries between the street and the mill leat.

### Lark Water meadows

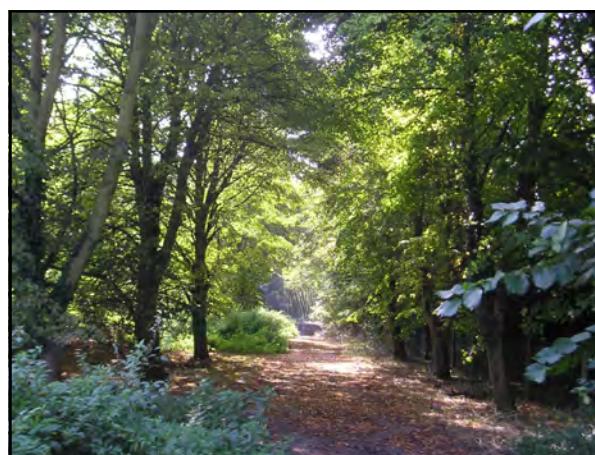
Meadows between the mill leat and the south bank of the River Lark, providing the setting for the southern edge of the town and the Lark Navigation locks.



*The Cricket Pitch*



*River bank*



*Cricket ground footpath*



*Riverside Water meadows in Spring*

### River Banks

Green spaces formed by the banks of the River Lark between the lock gates and including the mill stream.

## Intrusion or Damage

Queensway: The site of the former manor house.

Land between 1 High Street and rear car park of No 7 Market Place.

## Neutral Areas

Shopping Centre, car parks, food store and environs

Mill Park Gardens

## General Conditions of Buildings

There is general concern over the viability of the shopping streets and commercial properties and rental income providing the means to adequately maintain them.

Alleged fall in sales from the sale of alcohol and the needs for diversification in trading to maintain the remaining fine historic pubs and hotels in their traditional uses.

## Buildings at Risk

Rear of 14 High Street

Boundary Walls

Shrublands House

Rear No 7 Mill Street



*Site of former Mildenhall Manor*



*Buildings at the rear of 14 & 16 High Street*

## Pressure for Change

Changing commercial practice leading to change of use and changes to streetscapes and buildings

Need to provide parking for cars, servicing for commercial properties and safe footways and highways.

## Community Involvement

This first draft of the appraisal will be submitted to the Parish Council, landowners and interested members of the public. An edited version will be placed on the FHDC Web Site and observations invited.

## Boundary Revisions

The extension of the conservation area to include historic garden walls and some buildings with historic character on the north side of Queensway.

The west end of Kingsway to include the buildings and walls with historic character, and the south bank of the River Lark within the Parish of Barton Mills to include the former industrial buildings and World War II pill box..

## Local generic guidance

### **Understanding**

Prior understanding is the best basis for conservation decisions; buildings and landscapes should be clearly understood before we change them. Understanding should be clearly focussed on assessing the impact of proposed changes of the significance of the building or landscape.

### **Alterations**

Applications for conservation area consent should be able to justify their proposals. Alterations should be necessary for the viability of the building where proposed alterations affect architecturally or historically significant landscape. Flexibility in approach is desirable with a willingness to abandon conventional design solutions in favour of an imaginative approach. Generally new windows and doors should reflect the predominant style and proportion of the building.

### **Archaeology**

The conservation officer or the County Archaeologist should be consulted about the need for prior archaeological evaluation and mitigation to protect archaeological remains within the conservation area. As well as below ground, archaeology is also concerned with standing buildings.

### **Brickwork**

Local brick can be red or yellow to the approval of the local authority, and laid in English bond or Flemish bond. Before the 20<sup>th</sup>-century they were laid in a lime mortar using a mix of approximately 1 lime to 3 of sand. Ash or brick dust were often added to speed the set. The lime used was in a wet puttylike form. Powdered or hydrated lime was not used.

### **Pointing**

Lime mortar should be used when repointing historic brickwork. The existing mortar should be analysed to obtain a good match. Lime putty made from a slaked lime should be used, though only when the risk of frost has passed. The face of the pointing should be slightly recessed to minimise the thickness of the joint.

The technique of pointing with an incised fine lime putty joint over the brick coloured pointing is known as 'tuck pointing'. This should be preserved.

### **Rendering**

Check existing renders for relief patterns called pargetting which should be preserved. On 'Georgian' buildings check renders for the rare application of patent cement renders which should be preserved

Avoid rendering old brickwork or flint work, bite the bullet and repoint. Rendering stores up problems for the future.

Avoid hard cement renders on timber-frame or masonry which will crack, let in water and trap it in the wall. Use several coats of lime mortar finished with limewash to avoid cracking and allow the walls to breathe.

### **Car parking**

The replacement of front gardens by parking areas will not be permitted.

### **Extensions**

Alterations should be necessary for the viability of the building. Where proved necessary, extensions onto buildings which make a significant contribution to the conservation area should not visually dominate the original building. Modern extensions should not dominate the existing building in mass and scale and generally be built with matching materials.

### **Conservatories**

New conservatories when appropriate and visible from the public domain should be constructed of painted timber and generally be designed in a plain traditional style with a pitched glazed roof.

### **Porches**

Georgian and Victorian (Classical) porches or door cases should not be covered or filled

in by new porches or draft lobbies.

### **Flint Rubble Walls**

Flint rubble or napped flint walls should be preserved and neither painted or rendered.

### **Paint**

#### **Colour**

Colours should be appropriate to the building's period. Bright artificial colouring on walls should be avoided.

#### **Materials**

Choose paints which allow the passage of water vapour. Lime washes are recommended for longevity and hue where the structure of the building is suitable.

### **Repairs**

Doors, door surrounds and windows should be repaired rather than replaced. Traditional and proven materials are best for repairs

### **Roofs**

#### **Slate.**

Some slate roofs and stone slate roofs are laid in diminishing courses. These should be preserved when roofs are re-slated. The same type of slate should be used and non-natural materials avoided. Indigenous slate is preferred to imported slate.

### **Tiles**

Clay Tile roofs should be preserved. Hand

made plain tiles should not be replaced by machine made tiles. Hand made tiles may be consolidated to visible roof slopes, and machine made clay tiles used on slopes not visible from the conservation area.

Concrete tiles will not be permitted.

Variation in profile and colour of pantiles should be preserved

### **Chimney stacks & pots**

Chimney stacks are important features in the roofscape and indicate the date and layout of a building and normally they should be retained.

### **Dormers**

17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century dormers of the pedimented type should be retained.

Historic tiled or slated gabled or pentice roof dormers should also be retained.

### **Roof lights**

Dormers are preferred to roof lights. Large roof lights add a visually intrusive element into a roof, particularly multiple sets of roof lights.

Small conservation type recessed roof lights are preferred. on rear roof slopes

### **Shop fronts**

Shop fronts of merit should be retained or restored when unsympathetically altered. 20<sup>th</sup>- century shop fronts should be retained

in significant 20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings. The presence of surviving blind boxes, shutters and stall risers should be investigated.

Strident display fascias and internally illuminated fascias will not be permitted and standard corporate shop fronts will be resisted.

### **Satellite Dishes and Meter Boxes**

Dishes and boxes should be carefully located and visually unobtrusive. Single satellite dishes should be used for terraces.

### **Streetscape**

Traditional, natural materials such as stone flags, granite curbs and sets and bound gravel finishes are preferred for paving. The location of street signs should be carefully considered, and duplication avoided to reduce visual clutter.

### **Windows**

Should the Council serve a direction under s.4 of the Planning Act, the removal or alteration of windows of architectural or historic significance will not be permitted.

The insertion of uPVC windows will also not be permitted.

### **Views**

The obstruction or partial obstruction of views identified as of significance will be resisted.

## **Walls**

Flint or brick boundary walls will be protected and demolition will not be permitted.

## **Summary of Issues**

To follow public consultation

## **Management proposals**

To follow public consultation

## **Useful Information,**

Forest Heath District Council

District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Bury St Edmunds,

Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Tel: 01362 697194:

E-mail: [info@forest-heath.gov.uk](mailto:info@forest-heath.gov.uk)

Suffolk County Council

Planning Department Suffolk County Council Headquarters  
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk

IP1 2BX

Switchboard: 01473 583000

Minicom: 01473 584030

English Heritage,

East of England Region,

24 Brooklands Avenue,

Cambridge CB2 2BU

Tel: 01223 582700

English Historic Towns Forum

PO Box 22,

Bristol, BS16 1RZ

Tel 0117 975 0459

Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment

1 Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

Telephone 020 7070 6700

E-mail: [enquiries@cabe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cabe.org.uk)

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY

Telephone: 020 7377 1644. E-mail: [info@spab.org.uk](mailto:info@spab.org.uk)

Georgian Group,

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX

Telephone 087 1750 2936

E-mail: [info@georgiangroup.org.uk](mailto:info@georgiangroup.org.uk)

Victorian Society,

1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, London W4 1TT

Web: [www.victorian-society.org.uk](http://www.victorian-society.org.uk)

Department of Culture Media & Sport (DCMS) [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

Suffolk Record Office, 77 Raingate Street, Bury St Edmunds

IP33 2AR

Telephone: 01284 352352 (Searchroom)

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