

With the Future Mill Road theme, the Garden Workshop Project at Ditchburn Place aims to enhance community engagement and well-being, focuses on creating a vibrant green space for residents and visitors. Through collaborative efforts, the project promotes social interaction, mental health, and physical activity.

Garden Workshop Project

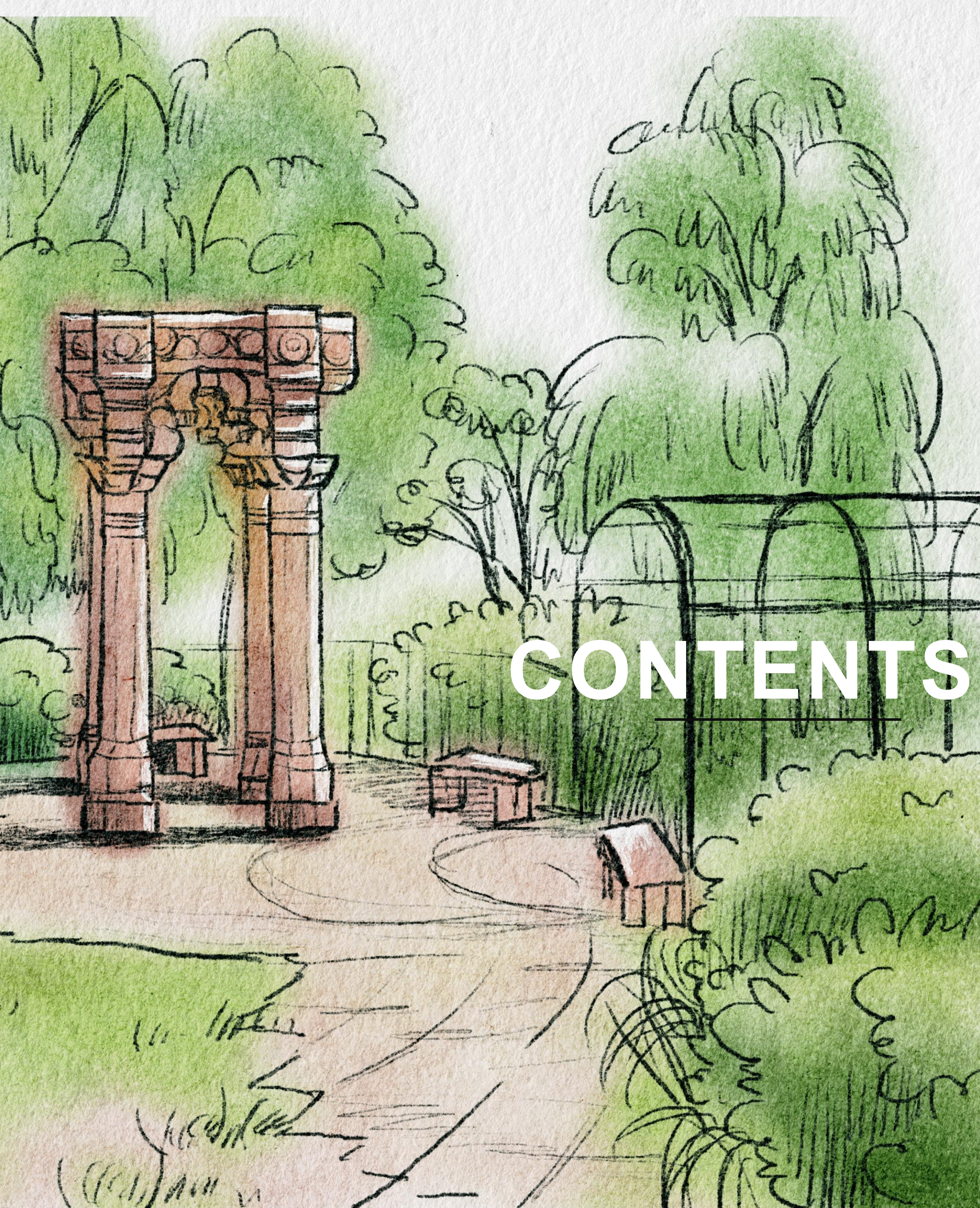
Future Mill Road: Creating a More-than Human Neighbourhood

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MA Art, Health and Wellbeing

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01 Location & Context

02 Process & Approaches

03 Garden Workshop Proposal

04 Artistic Promotion



Part 01 Location & Context

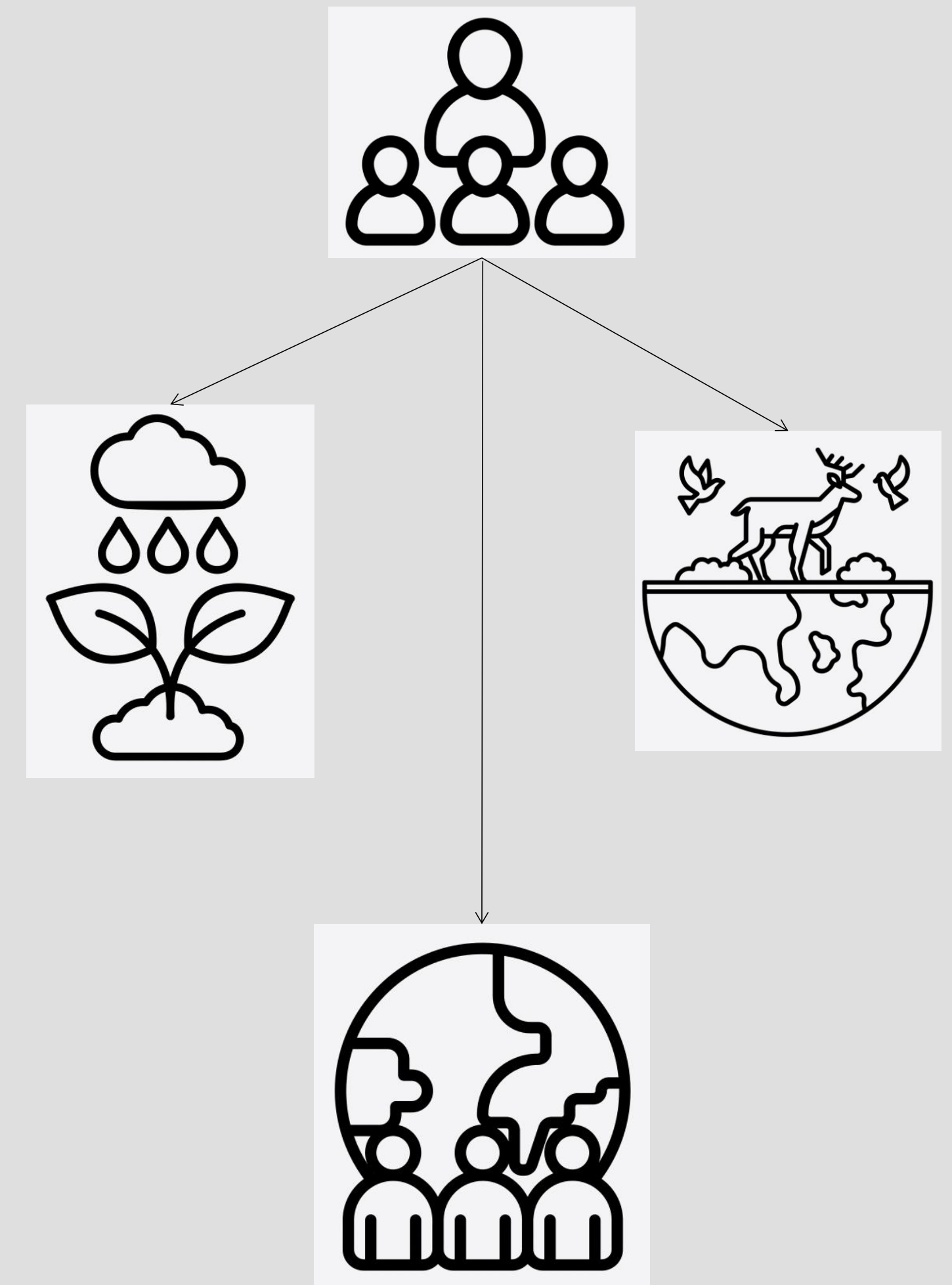


Concept Intro

Future Mill Road: Creating a More-than Human Neighbourhood

How can we transform Mill Road into a safe (free from urban carbon), biodiverse (more-than human), and low-carbon environment (sustainable actions)?

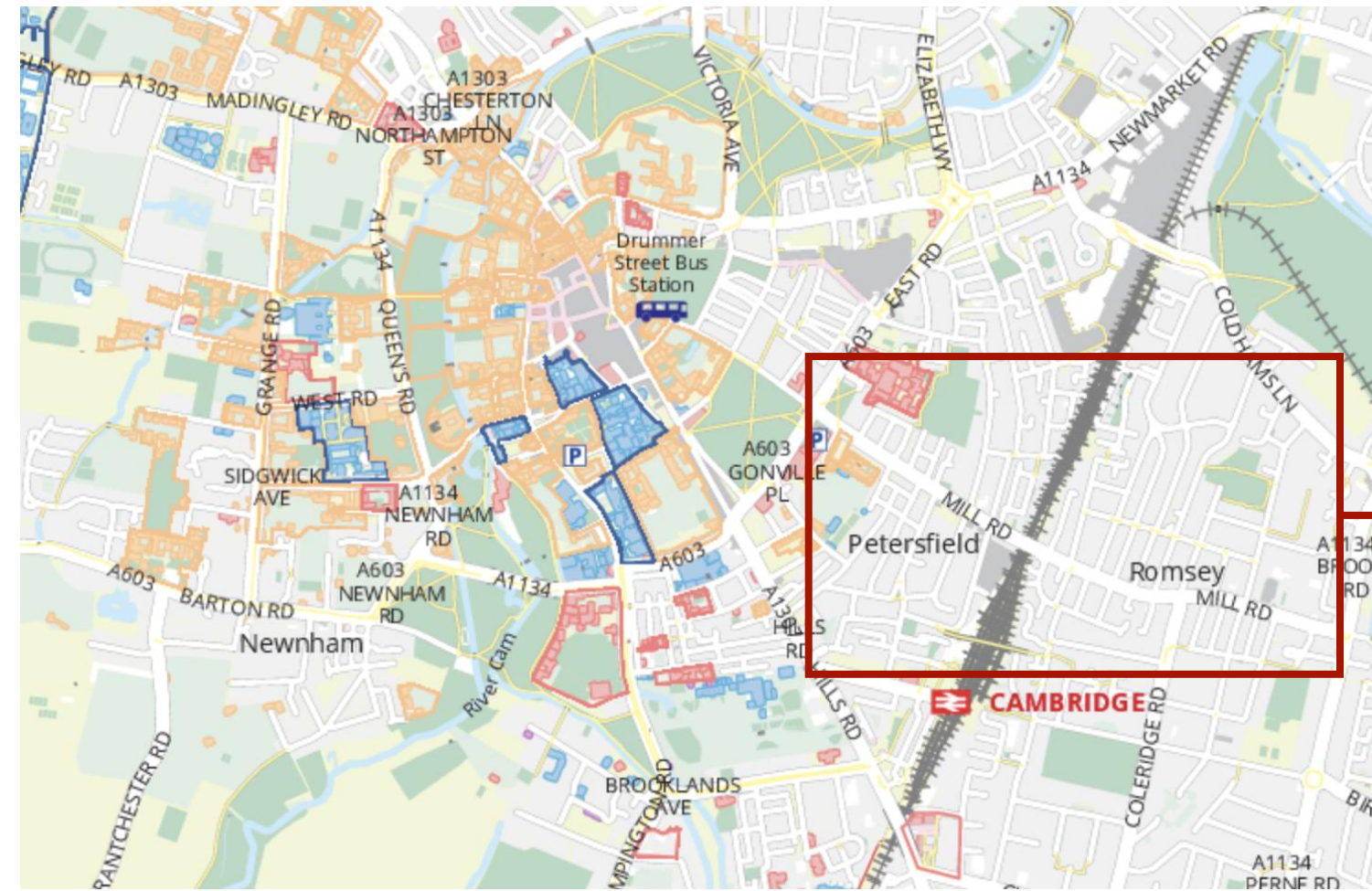
- A **more-than-human** approach is beginning to be re-introduced into Western cultures through political activism and academic thinking about the harms to the planet caused by human actions, including global warming and climate crises, loss of habitats and ecological biodiversity, increased incidence of extreme weather events such as bushfires, floods, and cyclones, and emerging novel pathogens affecting the health not only of humans but of other living things (Lewis; Lupton Covid Societies; Lupton Internet of Animals; Neimanis et al.).
- Contemporary Western more-than-human philosophers argue for the importance of acknowledging our kinship with other living and non-living things as a way of repositioning ourselves within the cosmos and working towards better health and wellbeing for the planet (Abram; Braidotti; Plumwood).
- Lupton, D., Wozniak-O'Connor, V., Rose, M. C., & Watson, A. (2023). More-than-Human Wellbeing: Materialising the Relations, Affects, and Agencies of Health, Kinship, and Care. *M/C Journal*, 26(4). <https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2976> (Original work published August 22, 2023)



Location and Character

Mill Road, located in the southeast of Cambridge city center, is known for its vibrant and diverse community. Stretching from Parker's Piece to Brookfields, it hosts a mix of cultures, independent businesses, and a strong community spirit.

Historically, Mill Road began as a quiet country lane in Cambridge, named after a windmill at Covent Garden. The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century spurred rapid development, transforming the area. Petersfield, traditionally associated with university employees, contrasts with Romsey's working-class roots and socialist traditions.



Map of Cambridge



Map of Mill Road
Petersfield and Romsey



Historical photo of Mill Road



Historical photo of Mill Road bridge

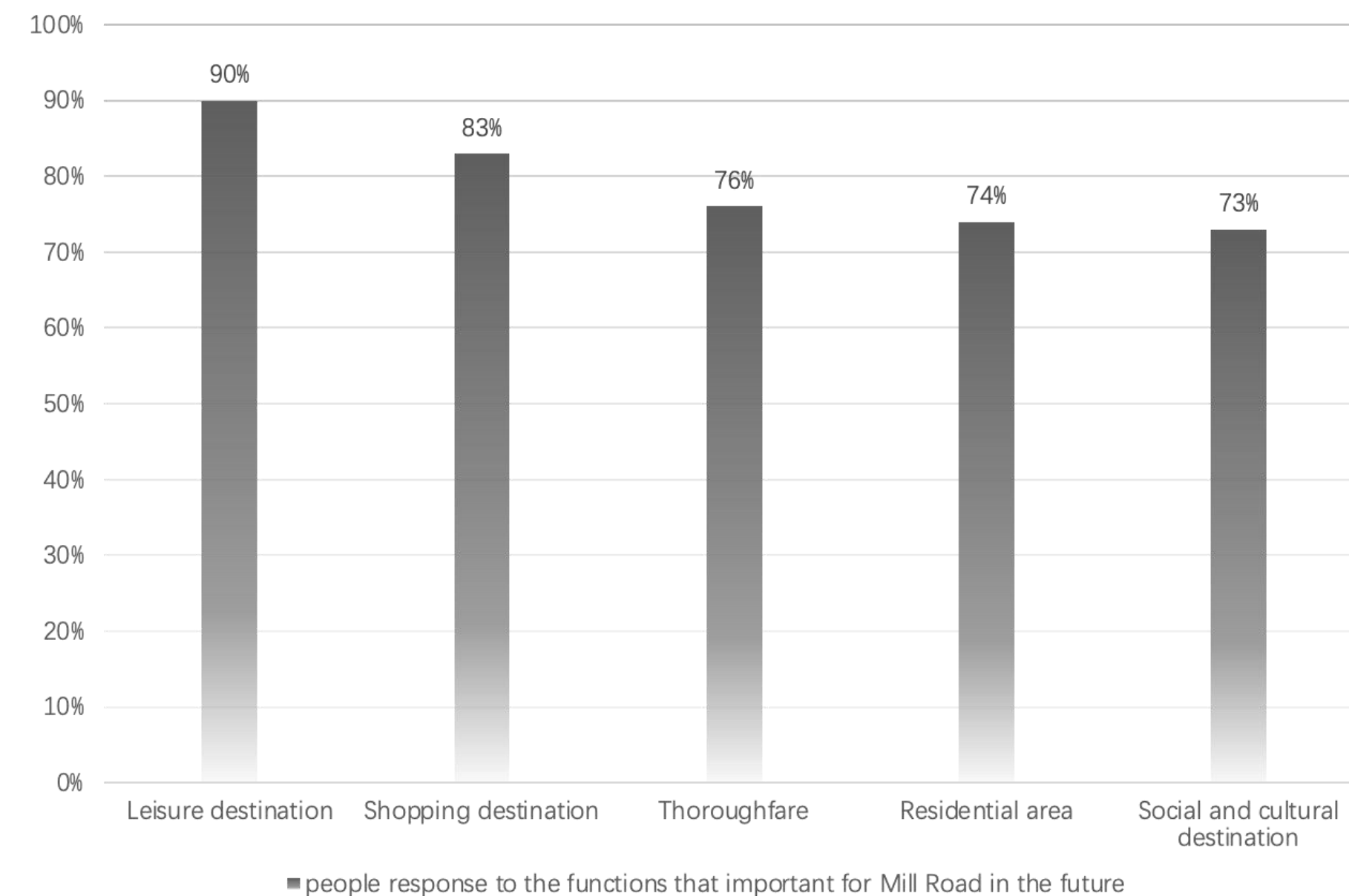
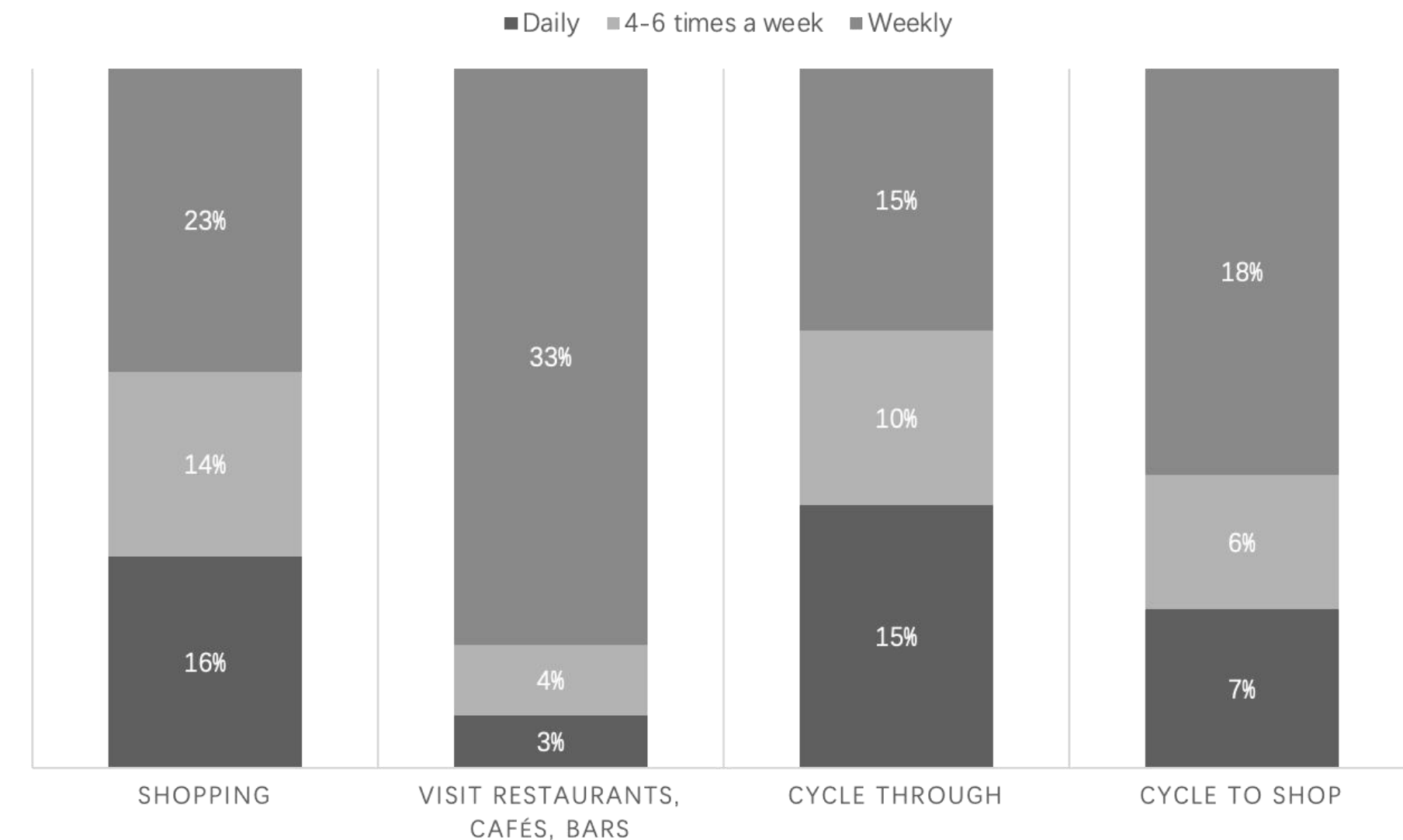
- Alan Bringham and Colin Wiles (2006) Bringing it all Back Home Changes in Housing and Society 1966-2006. Available at: <http://www.cih.org/branches/east/publications/bringing-it-all-back-home.htm>

Data Collection

According to The Mill Road Spring 2022 Consultation Findings indicates that Mill Road is predominantly used for shopping, visiting restaurants and cafes, and cycling through. Additionally, 73% of respondents believe that its function as a social and cultural destination is important for the future.

- Cambridge County Council (2022). Mill Road Spring 2022 Consultation: Summary Report of Consultation Findings. Available at: <https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com>

HOW OFTEN MILL ROAD IS USED FOR?



Ditchburn Place

Ditchburn Place has historically significant and is the only public green space apart from Parker's piece that provides a resting place.

Ditchburn Place, located on Mill Road, reflects a rich history: from a workhouse in 1838 to a wartime emergency hospital in 1939, then a maternity hospital in 1948, and finally, accommodation for the elderly since 1988.

Ditchburn Place is fully wheelchair accessible with all external main doors having electronic openings. All the flats are for people who need an element of care and support to allow them to continue to live independently. Generally, the people who live here are aged 60 and over.

The main garden gates are opened at around 10 am and the building doors are opened at 7 a.m. Both are locked each day at around 4 pm. The main gates will remain closed on Saturday and Sunday.



1838
Cambridge Union
Workhouse

1879
Add new buildings
for tramps

1930
County Infirmary

1939
Wartime emergency
hospital

1948
Cambridge Maternity
Hospital

1988
Sheltered Accommodation
for elderly
Ditchburn Place

- Capturing Cambridge (2016) Cambridge Union Workhouse Ditchburn Place. Available at: <https://capturingcambridge.org/mill-road-area/mill-road/ditchburn-place/>

1999

ICCA (Indian Community and Culture Association) leased the Grade II listed Old Mill Road library and renamed it Bharat Bhavan (House of India).
ICCA began an extensive refurbishment project.

2006

Completed stone archway, commissioned in Rajasthan, India, arrived in Cambridge.

2019

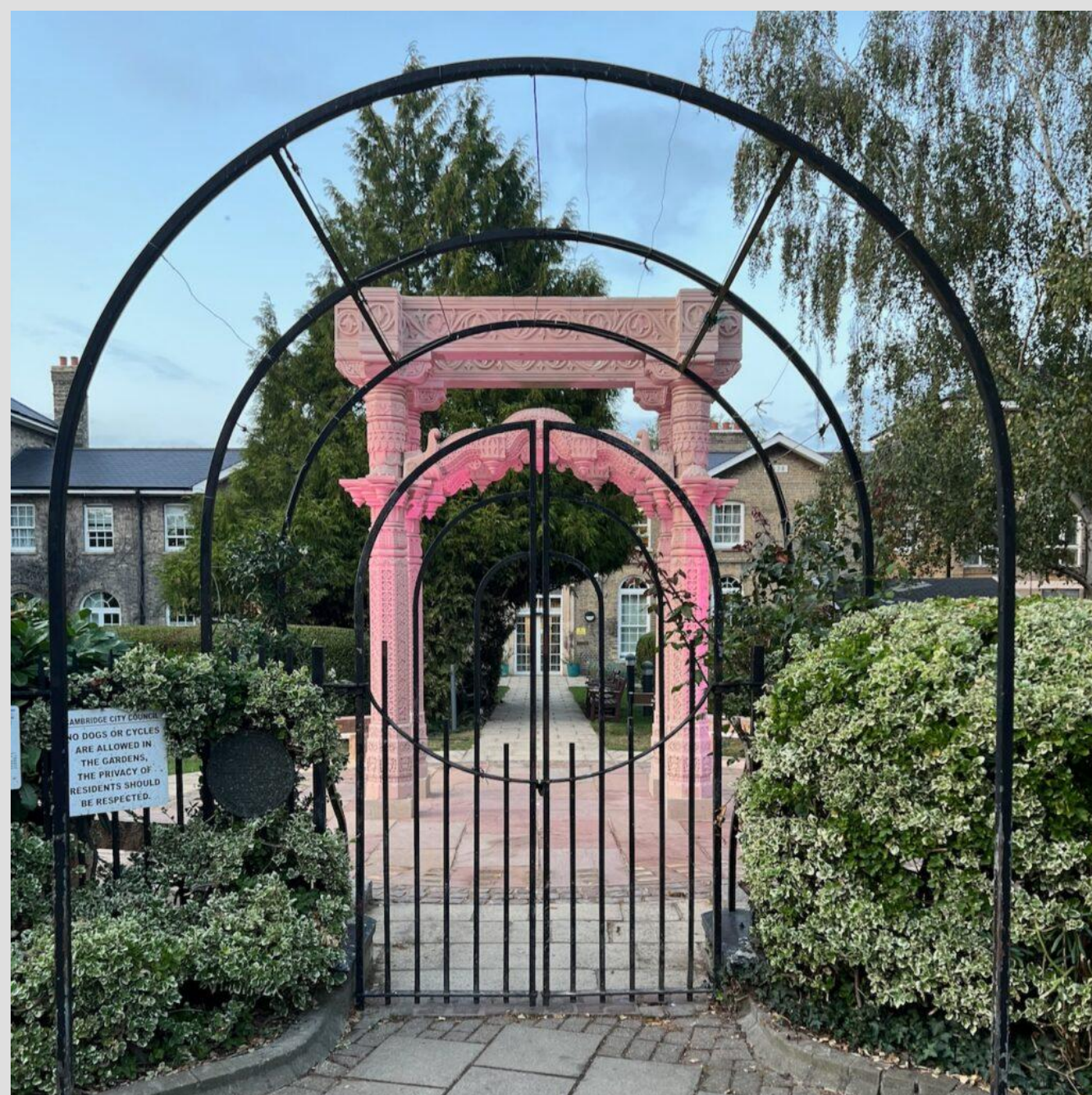
ICCA could no longer sustain the lease of the building. The city council reclaimed the library building but had no plans for the stone archway in their renovation.

2021

Piero saved the stones and persuaded Cambridgeshire County Council to sell them to him for £1

2023

Project groundbreaking event
Renamed it to Cambridge Gateway from India



Piero D'Angelico, Ambassador of the Mill Road Traders' Association (MRTA), honors his grandfather, Master stone mason Falco Gian Pietro, by recognizing the skilled Rajasthani stone masons who carved Bhavat Bhavan. The MRTA's Cambridge Gateway from India Project raises funds to place the archway in Ditchburn Place's public gardens, emphasizing community involvement for its preservation and highlighting its cultural and emotional significance. This project unites communities from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, making Mill Road an example in the UK of a place that brings people together and celebrates multi-nationality.

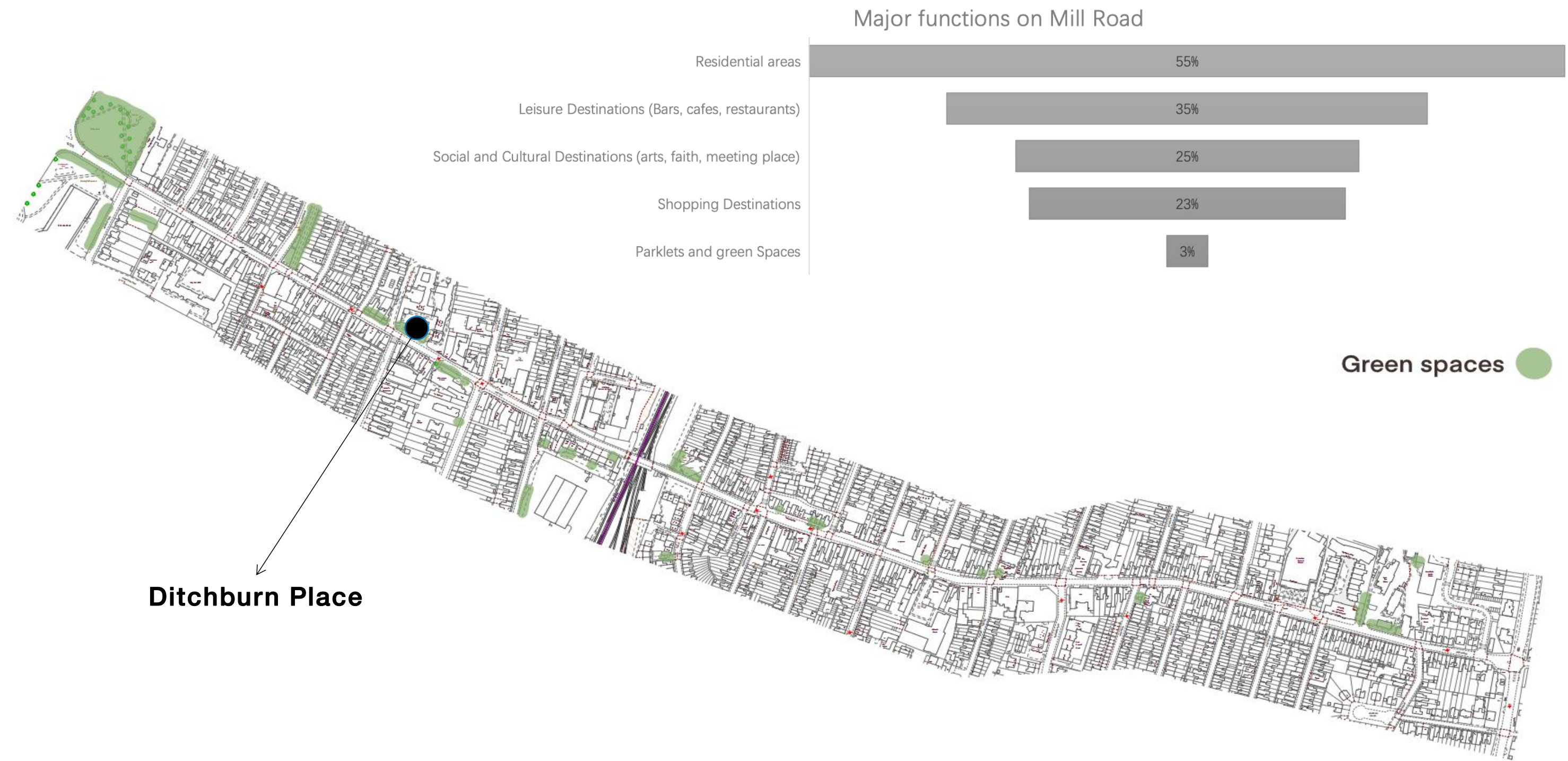
Cambridge Gateway from India

Green Spaces

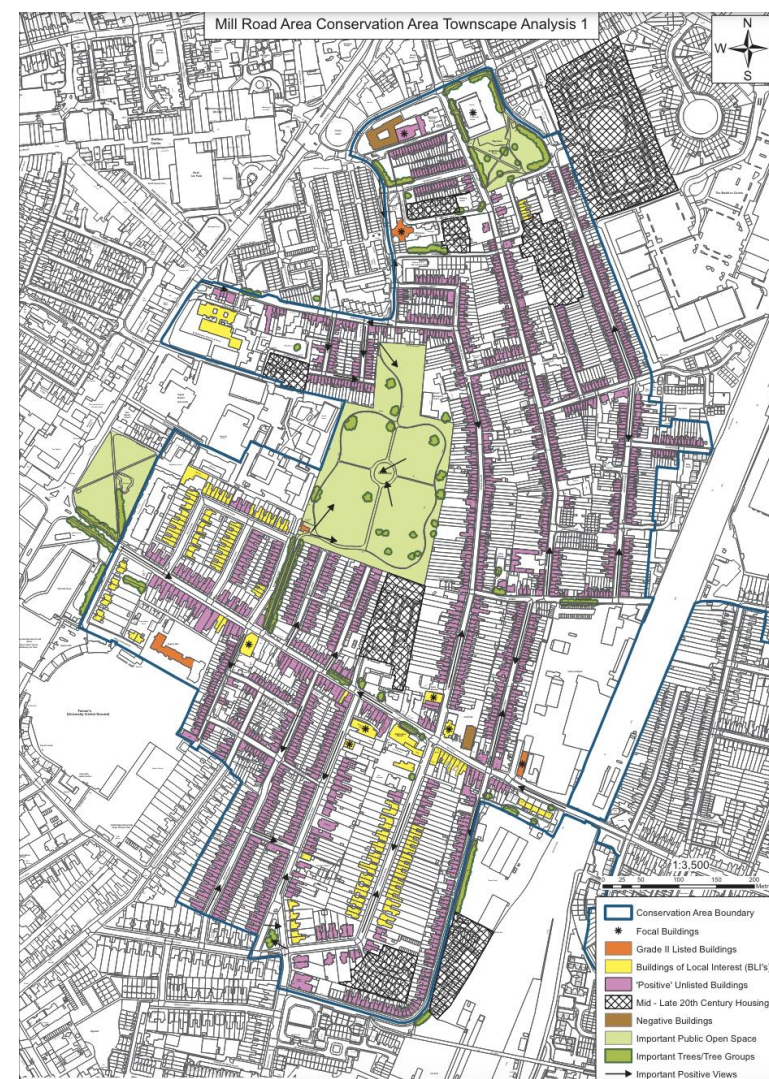
Currently, only 3% of Mill Road is green space, impacting residents' quality of life.

Green space is important for Mill Road because it cleans the air and improves the quality of the environment.

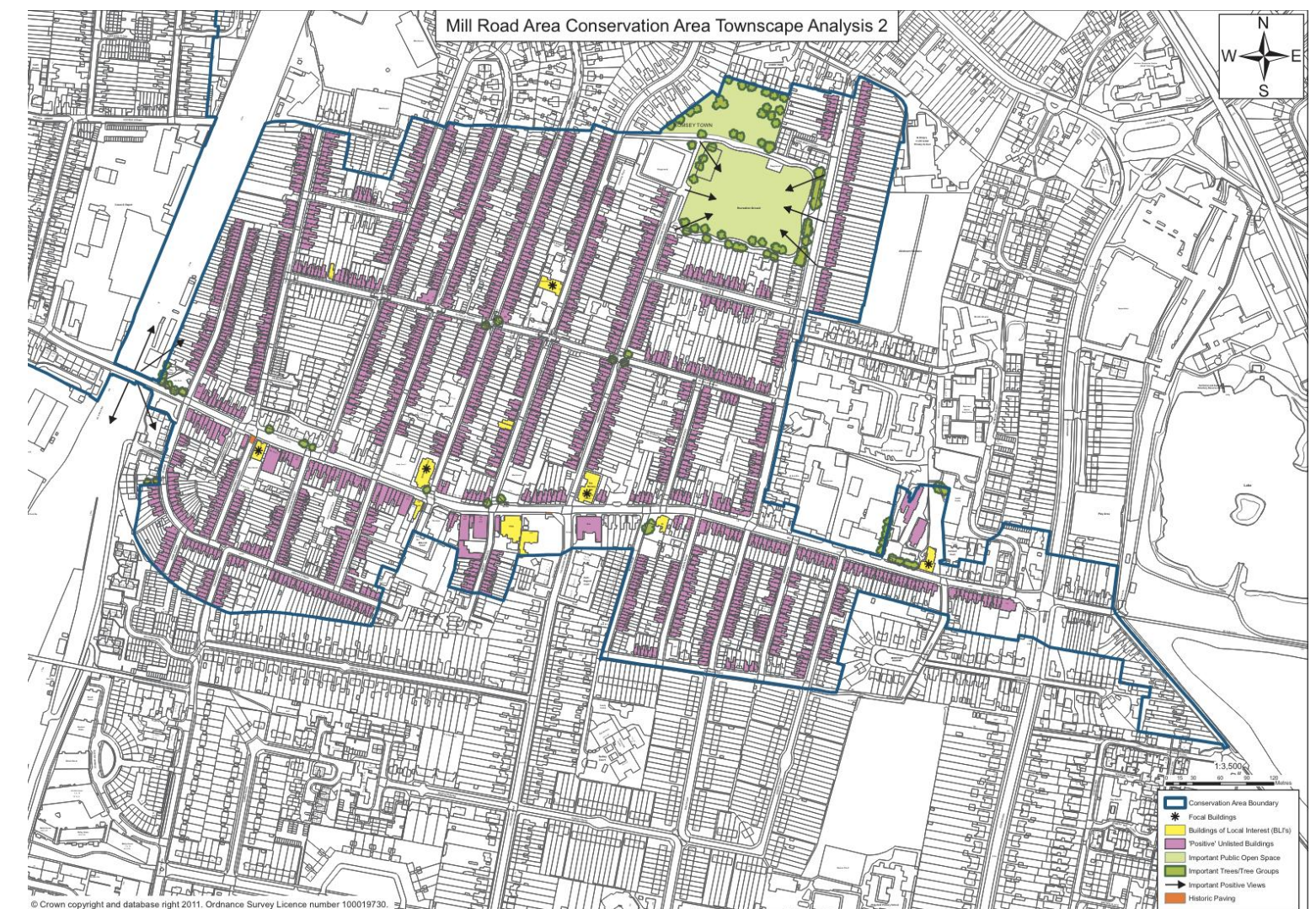
- Mill Road Area Conservation Area Appraisal available at: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/5771/mill-road-area-appraisal.pdf>



Ditchburn Place



Site plan of Petersfield



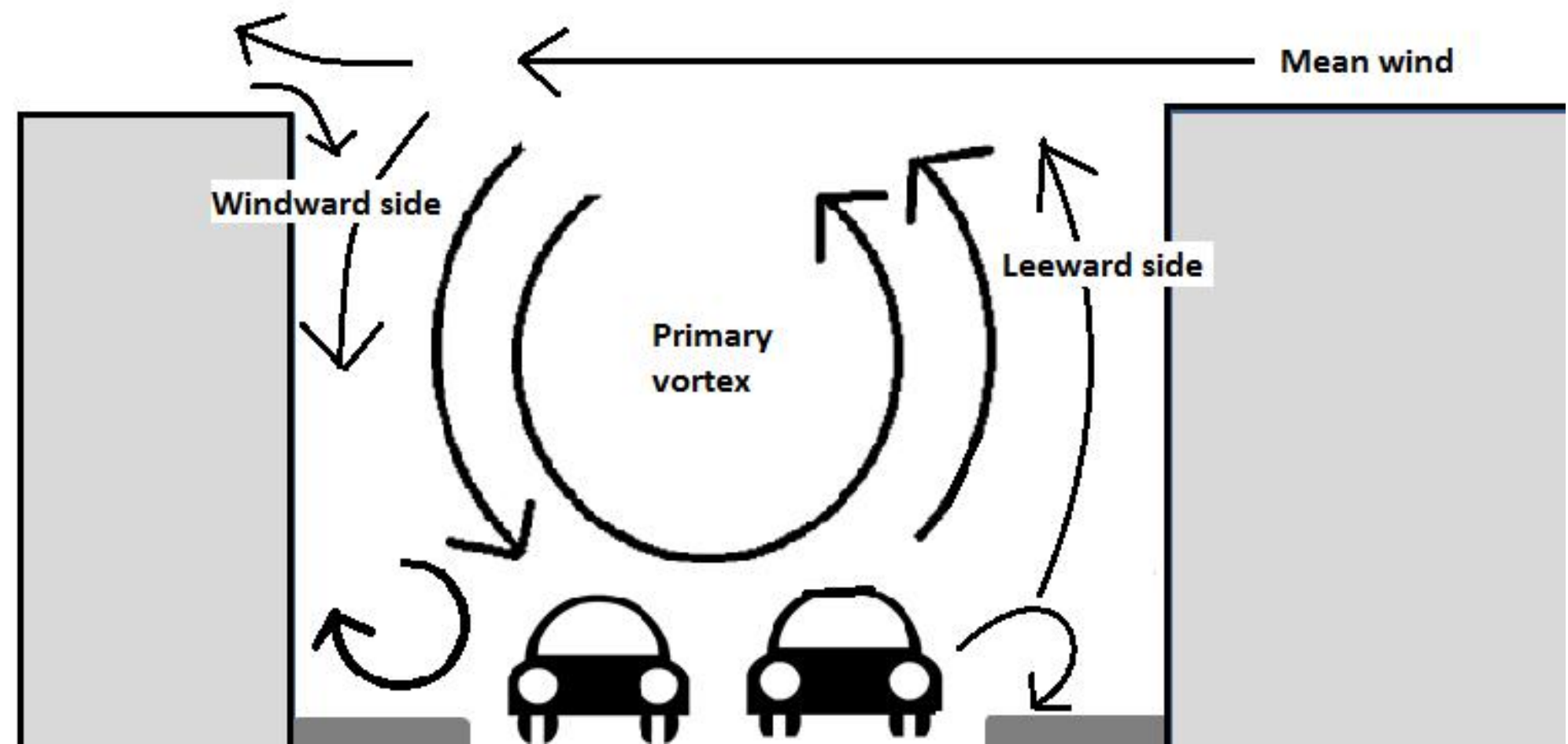
Site plan of Romsey

Environmental Issue

Mill Road suffers from the urban canyon effect, with limited greenery exacerbating environmental challenges.

An urban canyon is a place where the street is flanked by buildings on both sides creating a canyon-like environment. Such human-built canyons are made when streets separate dense blocks of structures, especially skyscrapers.

Urban canyons affect various local conditions, including temperature, wind, light, air quality, and radio reception, including satellite navigation signals.



Air flow of urban canyon



Current Mill Road

- Air Quality Monitoring Mill Road, Cambridge available at: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/10282/mill-road-air-quality-monitoring-report-2019.pdf>



Part 02 Process & Approaches





Case Study



The Eden Project, Cornwall, UK

An educational charity and visitor attraction aims to connect people with the natural world and demonstrate the importance of plants to people and the planet.

The project has features like Tropical Rainforest Biome, Mediterranean Biome, and outdoor gardens display a variety of plants that thrive in the temperate climate of Cornwall. Education programs include workshops, interactive exhibits on sustainability, biodiversity, and conservation.

Visitors to the Eden Project can explore the biomes and gardens, participate in workshops and guided tours, and enjoy a range of dining and shopping options that emphasize local and sustainable products.

The project demonstrates the positive impact of nature on mental health, physical activity, and community bonds, providing a valuable model for Mill Road.

- Eden Project (2024). Nature Connections – activities for better health and Wellbeing. Available at: <https://www.edenproject.com/mission/projects/nature-connections>



Secondary Research

Secondary research about the environmental benefits of urban nature initiatives shows that small-scale urban gardens can promote biodiversity, improve air quality, and enhance personal well-being. Nature's positive impact on mental health such as reducing feelings of loneliness and stress while improving concentration and social interactions.

The use of green infrastructure to alleviate air pollution: Green infrastructure provides a high surface area for pollution deposition, acts as a permeable barrier, and can alter local air dispersion patterns. A study by Pugh states that the simple addition of vegetation to street canyons can reduce street-level concentrations of up to 60% for PM and 40% for NO₂.

- Prof Andrea Mechelli (2024) 'People who live near green space are less likely to struggle with mental health issues' Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/article/2024/may/19/andrea-mechelli-urban-mind-green-space-mental-health>
- Anna Zakrisson: 'How Green Infrastructure Affects Urban Air Quality' Available at: <https://www.purple-roof.com/post/green-infrastructure-street-canyon-urban-air-quality>

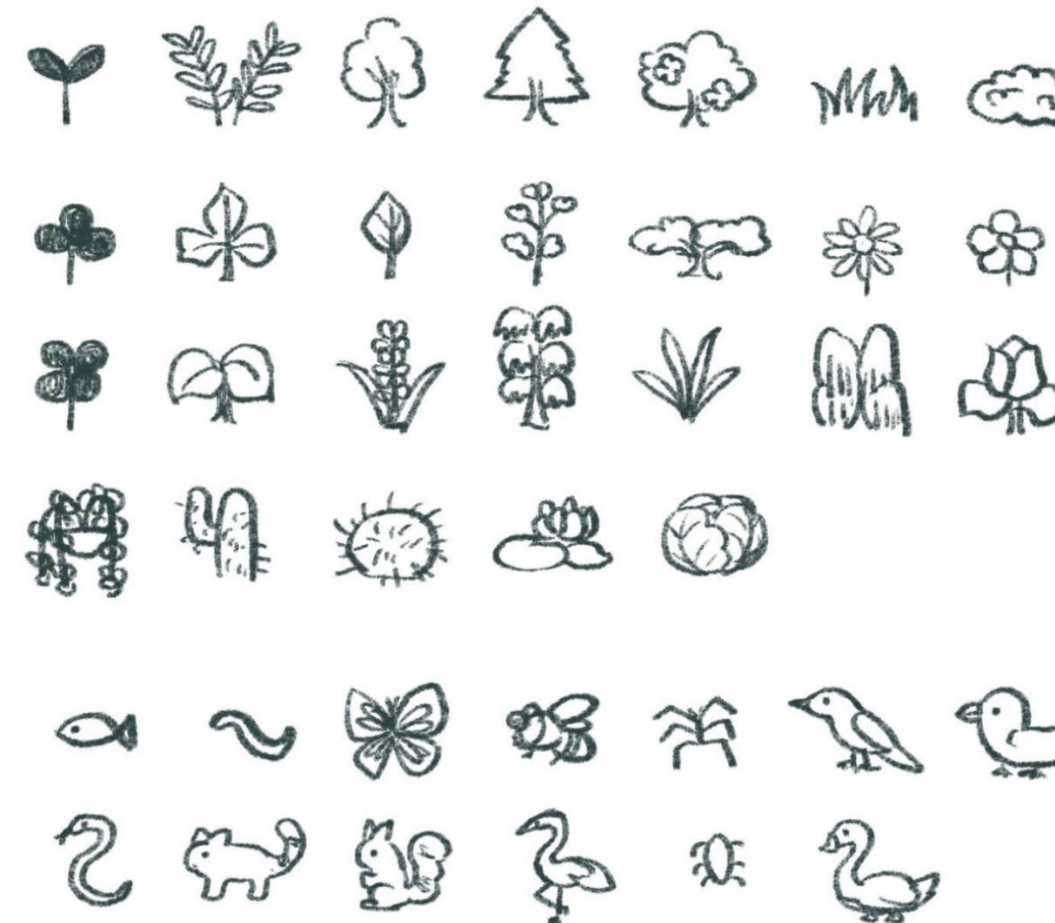
Visit Local Garden

Visiting the Cambridge Botanical Garden for sketching has offered diverse plant species and landscapes that inspired new ideas and perspectives. Observing the variety of flora helped me understand different environmental elements and how they can be incorporated into urban design. Going to the Botanical Garden allowed me to study how natural elements interact with human-made structures, offering valuable insights into creating harmonious urban spaces that blend nature and art.

Cambridge Botanic Garden



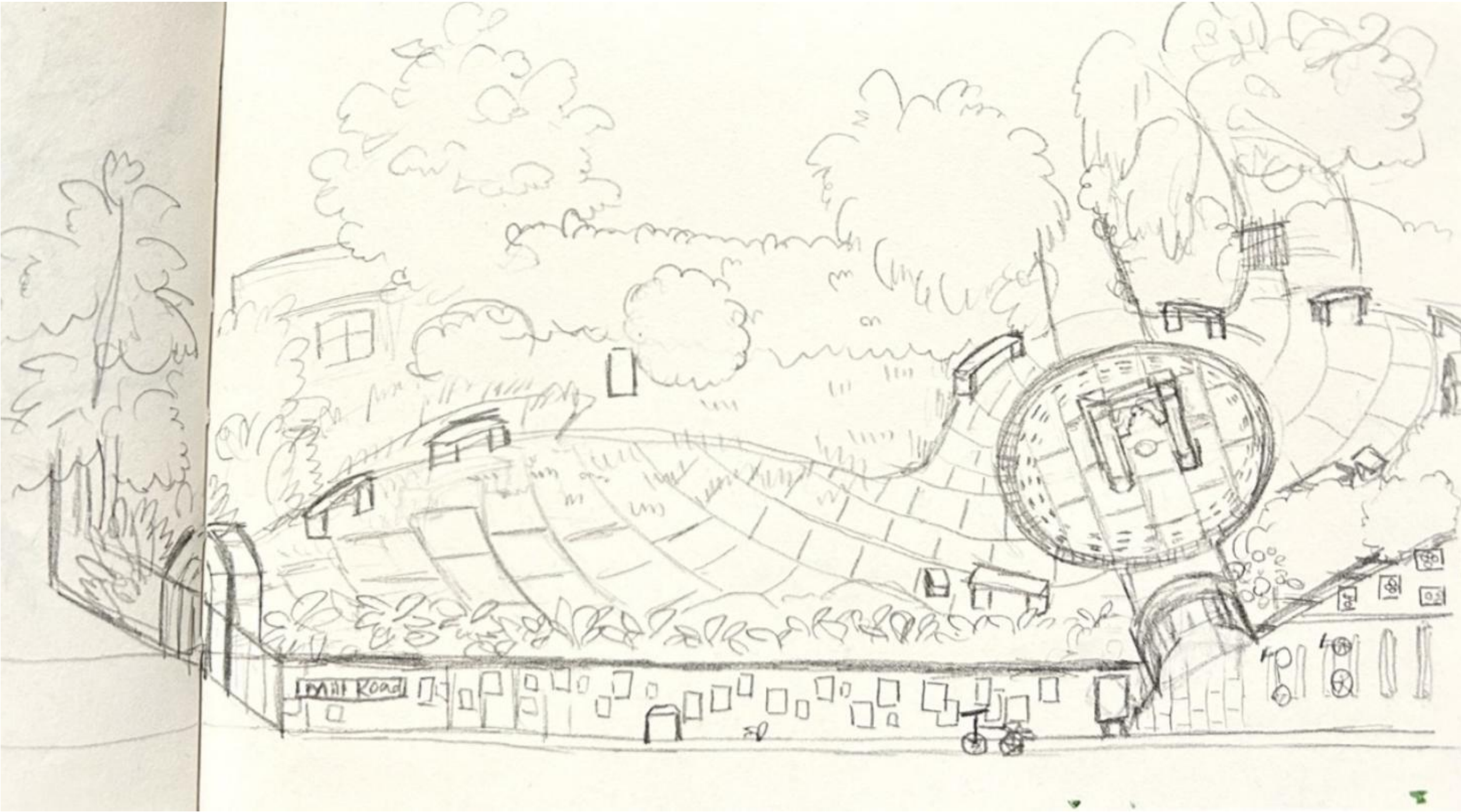
Ditchburn Place



Mapping & Sketching

Mapping the Ditchburn Place public garden allowed me to identify the key areas and existing features such as pathways, open spaces, and existing vegetation.

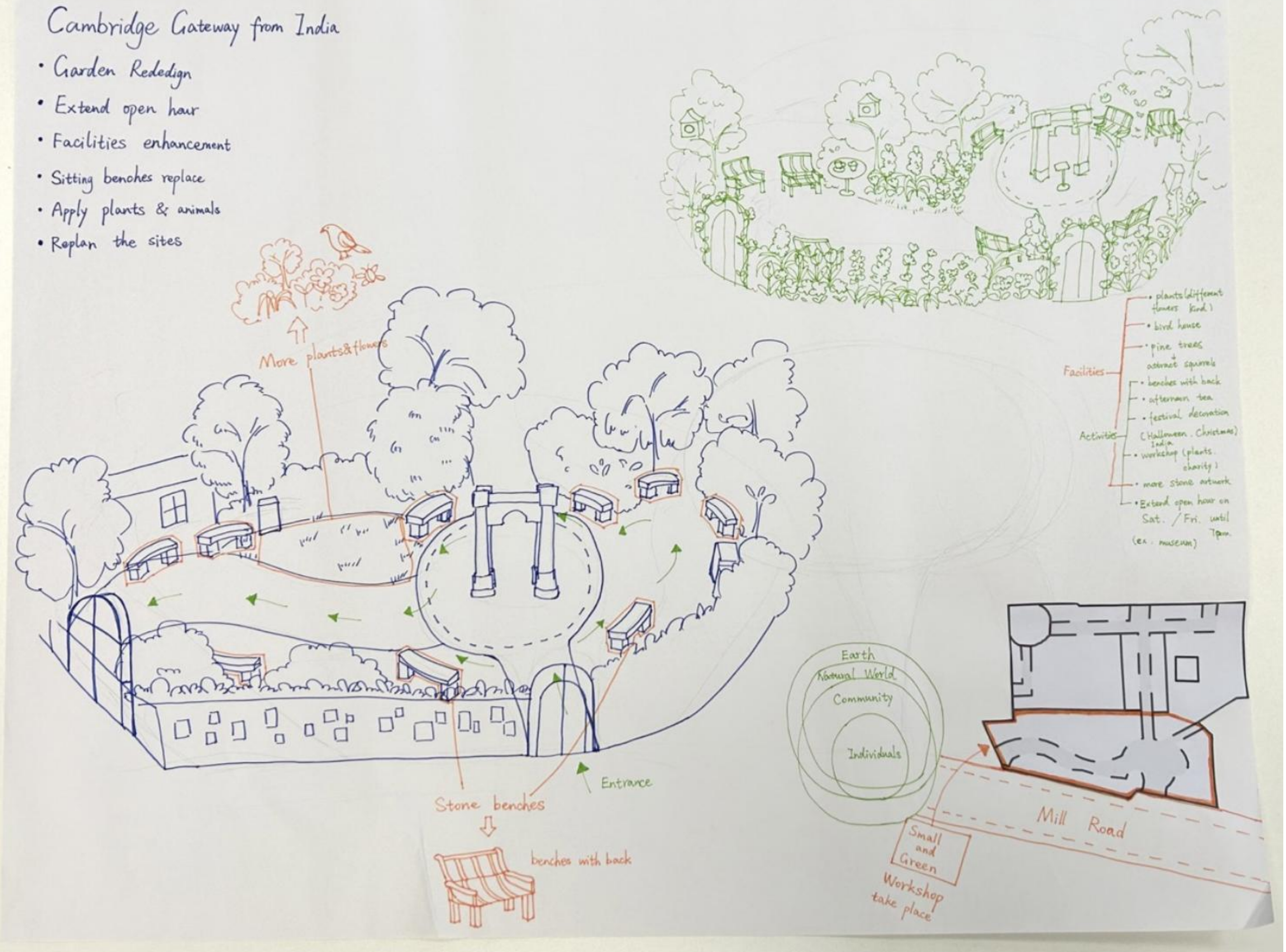
Sketching involves immersing myself in the environment of Ditchburn Place, sitting on a bench, and using my senses to capture various scenes and details with my drawing tools.



• original sketch by Jiahan

Cambridge Gateway from India

- Garden Redesign
- Extend open hour
- Facilities enhancement
- Sitting benches replace
- Apply plants & animals
- Replan the sites



Mapping & Sketching

Using the mapping method, I gained insights into the flow of people entering the public garden, the layout of the facilities, and potential areas for improvement. This approach allowed me to observe the paths visitors typically take and understand how the current arrangement of benches, plants, and walkways affects their experience.

• original work by Jiahan

Interviewing

Using semi-structured interviews, allowed me to gather rich, detailed information. By engaging with Piero, I aimed to understand the history of the stone archway, as well as its relationship with Mill Road. Learning about the community's reception and any challenges faced during the project has provided valuable insights into the role of public art in urban spaces.

Similarly, speaking with the Ditchburn Place representative has offered a deeper understanding of the site's history, current usage, and community significance. I get to know the challenges and future plans for the area, as well as the role of green spaces in its development.



Co-creation with stakeholders

1. Re-design, introduce the project:

Idea about add more plants to attract more wild life and insects

Slow down the flow of people make them willing to stay

2. Workshop arrangement:

Clarify the ownership of the space

Possibility of open the space without the hedge

Ditchburn Place is available to integrate with old people

The way to balance private and public spaces is to set a gate to separate

3. Feasibility of the workshop:

The workshop aims to enhance community engagement and well-being

Intergrate with Indian community/culture union is out of the main focus

Developing tourism to alleviate financial problems

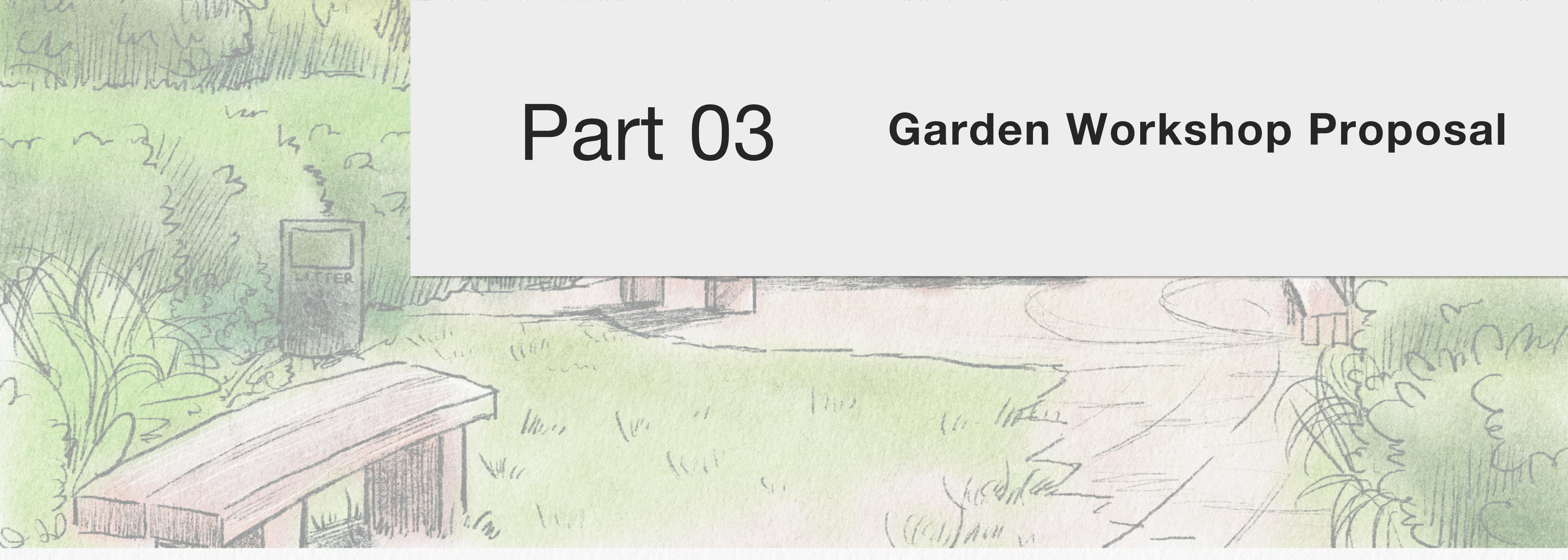
Sustainable approaches to maintain the garden





Part 03

Garden Workshop Proposal



Integration with neighbours

Small and Green plants shop is just across the road from Ditchburn Place, on opposite sides of Mill Road.

A houseplant and homewares shop selling unusual and easy-care plants and a selection of beautiful pots and houseplant accessories. Some of the pots are handmade by local artists. They also sell a variety of handmade terrariums.



• photograph in Small and Green

Ditchburn Place Garden Workshop Proposal

Objective:

To establish a Garden Club at Ditchburn Place that promotes social interaction, mental well-being, and physical activity

Target Audience:

General Residents: Families, individuals, and gardening enthusiasts from the Cambridge area.

Ditchburn Place Residents: Elderly residents who may benefit from the therapeutic and social aspects of gardening.

Workshops and Events:

Workshops in collaboration with Small & Green, including:

Terrarium Making Workshop (£55.00 - £60.00 per person)

Includes all materials needed: glass vessel, plants (Fittonias, small ferns, cushion moss), soil, gravel, activated charcoal, and decorative stones.

Sessions last approximately 1.5 hours.

Participants take home their created terrarium.



example of terrarium making

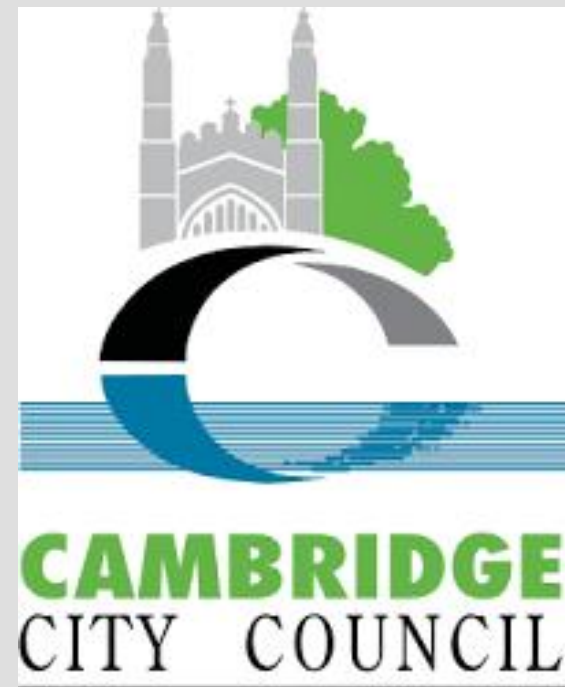


Eden project workshop 2024



01. Safety Measures

- Non-Slip Paths
- First Aid
- Supervision: Volunteers and staff
- Accessibility
- Ergonomic Tools
- Regular Maintenance



02. First Aid Training and Kits

- Cambridge Red Cross: Provide discounted or volunteer first aid training sessions. Funding for first aid kits can be obtained through local health organizations or community grants.
- Cambridge City Council: Potential funding for health and safety initiatives through community grants.



03. Supervision and Volunteers

- Cambridge Volunteer Centre: Recruitment of volunteers to assist with gardening and events.
- University of Cambridge: Collaboration with student groups for volunteers (studying horticulture, social work, or healthcare)
- Local Schools and Colleges: Engage students in volunteer programs as part of their community service requirements.

Additional Resources and Funding for Safety and Supervision

Ditchburn Place Garden Workshop

How satisfied are you with today's workshop?

Very satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

Were the instructions and activities clear and easy to follow?

Yes No

Do you feel more connected to the community after participating in this workshop?

Yes No

How likely are you to participate in future garden-related activities?

Very likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Very unlikely

Do you feel that participating in this workshop has positively impacted your well-being?

Yes No

Any additional comments or suggestions?

Feedback session

- Ticking box evaluation card

The purpose is to evaluate the success of the workshop, identify strengths and areas for improvement, measure its impact on community bonding and well-being, gauge future participation interest. This feedback will help enhance future workshops and better meet the community's needs.

For Ditchburn Place

Therapeutic garden reduces stress and improves mental health
Fosters community and reduces resident isolation
Gardening improves mobility and health for elderly residents
Enhance the beauty of Ditchburn Place
Promote interaction and understanding between residents and the public.

For Health Organizations

Support initiatives improving community health

To environment

Promote biodiversity and sustainability through eco-friendly gardening practices
Improve mill road air quality issues

For Educational Institutions

Students gain practical experience in horticulture, healthcare, and social work
Opportunities for students to fulfill service requirements

For Local Businesses

Increase sponsors' brand visibility
Enhance corporate social responsibility
Direct interaction with potential customers

Benefits



Part 04

Artistic Promotion





Promoting Ditchburn Place

I want to alleviate the funding issue at Ditchburn Place by leveraging Cambridge's thriving local tourism industry. While exploring local gift shops for inspiration, I noticed that Ditchburn Place, despite being a landmark, lacks proper promotion.

To address this, I could use my illustration skills to design a series of postcards featuring Ditchburn Place. If these postcards are accepted, they can be sold directly at Ditchburn Place. This approach ensures that the funds generated from the sales go directly to them, simplifying the process and maintaining transparency.

- photograph in Cambridge gift shop

Postcard Design

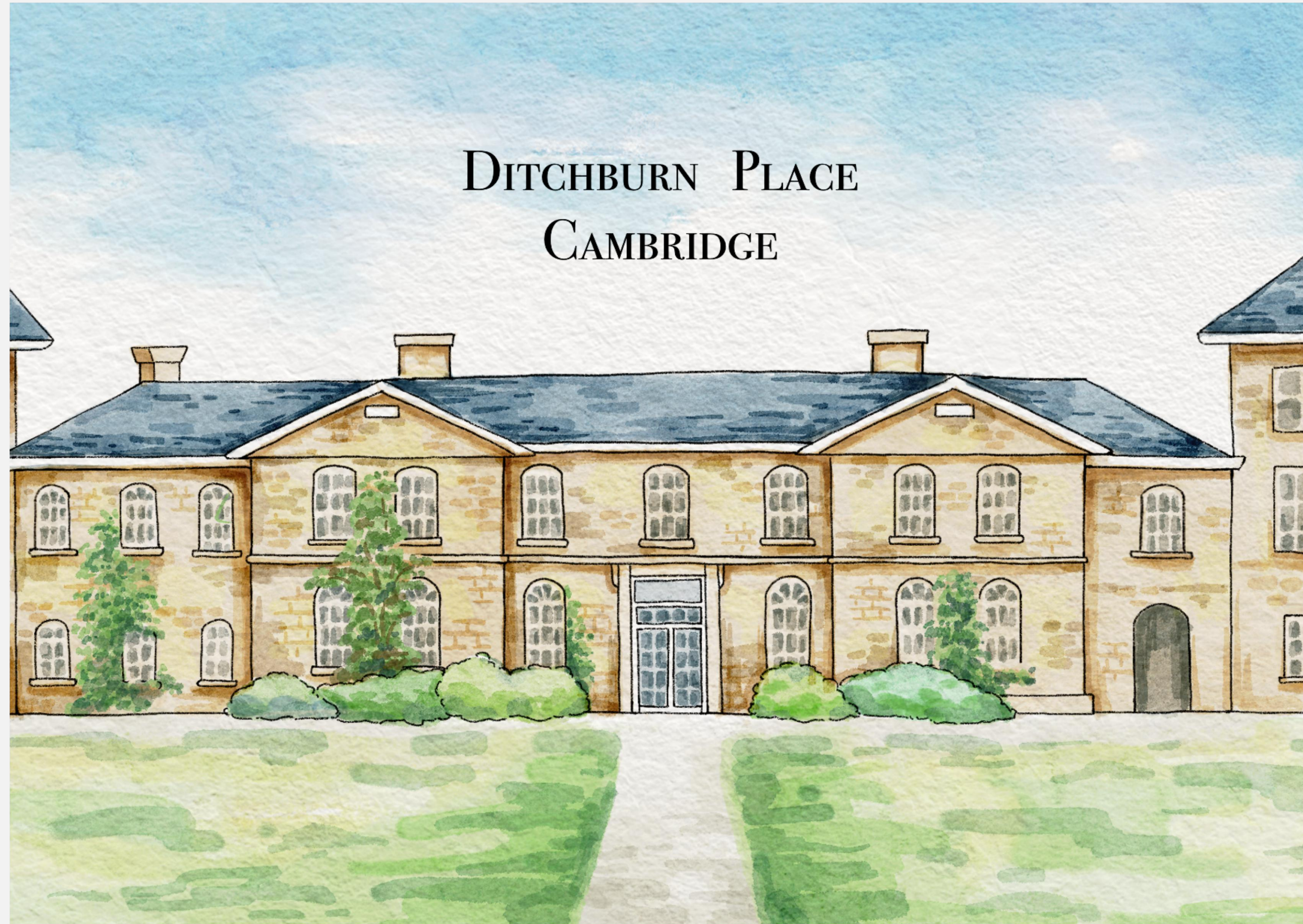


DITCHBURN PLACE, CAMBRIDGE



01
Create photo collages
mimicking the style of scenic
postcards found in gift shops.

DITCHBURN PLACE
CAMBRIDGE

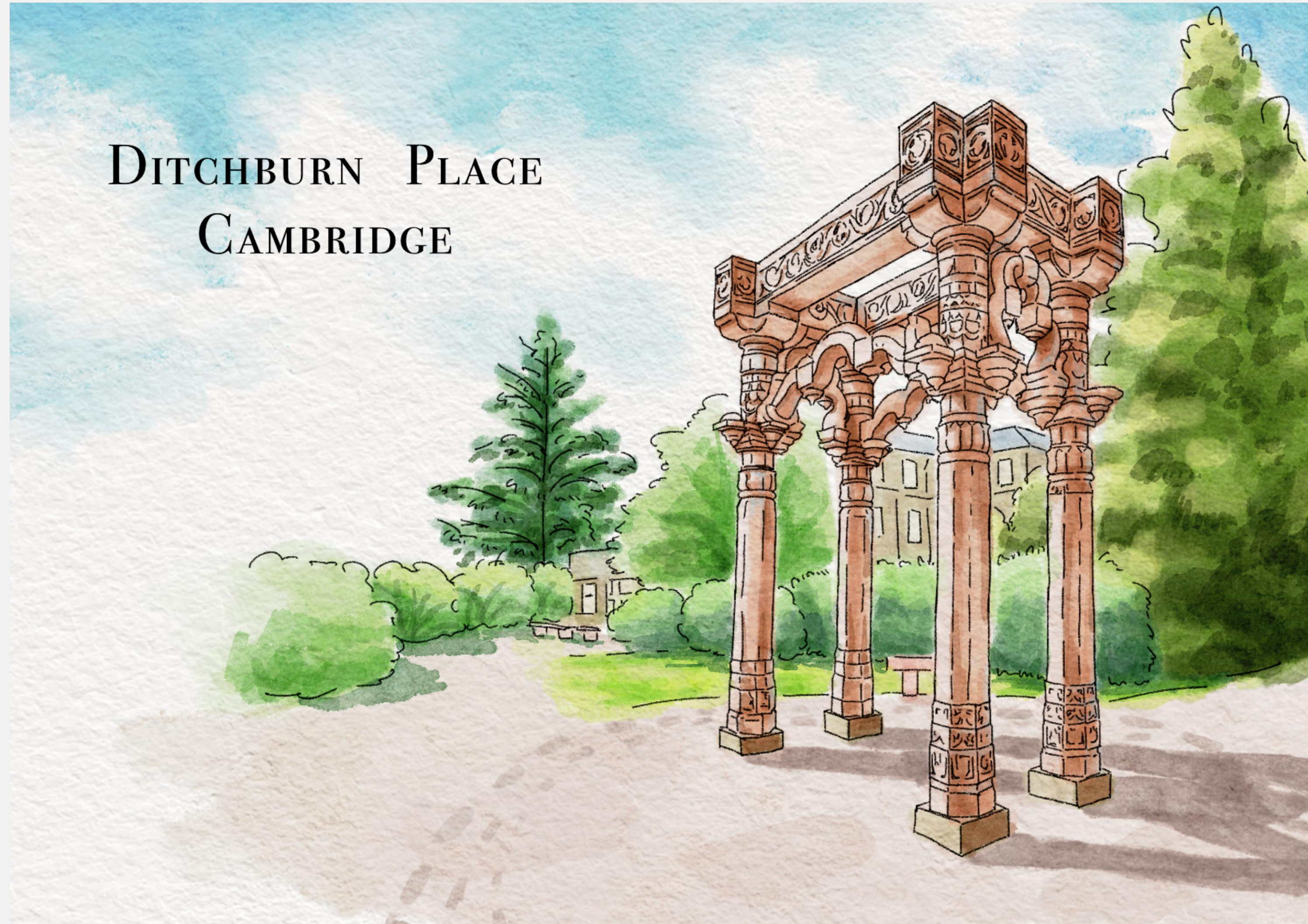


Postcard Design

02

The main building of Ditchburn Place mimicking the style of hand-drawn postcards found in gift shops.

DITCHBURN PLACE
CAMBRIDGE



Postcard Design

03

The stone archway of Ditchburn Place mimicking the style of hand-drawn postcards found in gift shops.

Postcard Design



04

Original illustrated postcard
"Garden Workshop"

Postcard Design



05

Original illustrated postcard
“Halloween party”

Postcard Design



06

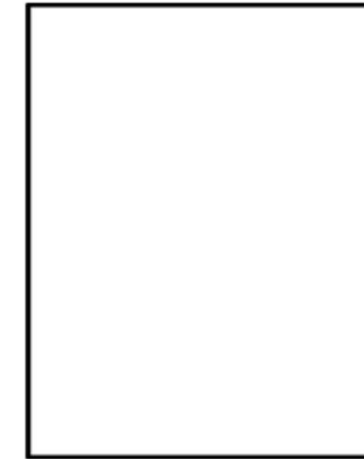
Original illustrated postcard
"Mill Road Winter Fair"



MA Art, Health and Wellbeing
Designed by Jiahao Tian 2024

Ditchburn Place, Mill Road

Ditchburn Place was originally built as a workhouse in 1838 and later became Mill Road Maternity Hospital. It now offers sheltered accommodation for the elderly, maintaining its long-standing tradition of community service.



Postcard Design

Back Design

With brief introduction of Ditchburn Place, a logo of ARU and designer's information (course name, name, year)

Outcome





Outcome



Thank You.

/ Jiahan in 2024 /