

## Looms Lane

While this is an historic street it had major changes in the later 20<sup>th</sup> C which saw it widened to enable heavy lorries to gain access to the commercial areas around the Market Square in Buttermarket and to provide an improved access to the former bus station in Brentgovel Street. The results of this was that the south side of the street was almost entirely rebuilt and the junction at Northgate Street remodelled, with buildings removed from the south side and never replaced. As a consequence, the street seems wide for one in the centre of this historic town and buildings on the south side are almost without exception from the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> C. Likewise at the eastern most end of the north side of the street are modern houses. It is, perhaps, too soon to judge the long-term value of these new buildings and so they are not assessed here.

Also on the north side of the street is a large wall to the grounds of Regency House. This is in red brick and is in large part 18<sup>th</sup> C but has earlier elements too, including pieces of 'Abbey' stone. The wall is a very important feature in the street and conservation area.

Asphalt road with concrete flags and brick pavings. Modern highway lighting on tall standards.



### Former Health Centre, Blomfield House, Looms Lane

See Lower Baxter Street.

### 2 Looms Lane - 'Garland House'

With its entrance in Garland Street perhaps it is curious this building's postal address is Looms Lane. It is a 1970s office building mainly in two storeys with a dormered attic. It is in pale buff bricks with a slated roof with artificial stone plat bands at ground and first floor levels. There are three bays of fenestration to Looms Lane and five to the corner block when it returns into Garland Street. To the north of the corner block are two others, the southern most having five bays and repeating some of the detail of the corner, but without plat bands, and then a simpler three bay and three storey element adjacent to the building to the north.

This building has had a recent conversion to residential uses and part of this has seen all the original fenestration and door 'joinery' replaced with plastic. This building was well thought out and not unsympathetic to its location when built but these recent changes have compromised any contribution that it may have made to the conservation area.



### 2 Looms Lane Extension

This is an office building in three storeys with a flat roof from the late 1960s/early 1970s and of a type and form that was fashionable during a relatively short period of time. It is built in white calcium silicate bricks and has four bays; that to the west is blind brickwork while the others have full width fenestration with panelled aprons between double shafted columns. The ground floor entrance is above ground level accessed via concrete steps with box steel handrails. This has a canopy and a later added rainscreen in glass. Below the ground floor at the east side is a passage leading to the rear of the building where there is car parking. The building is set back from the street edge and has a small, asphalted area to the front that is used for car parking and which rather spoils the setting of the building. Imagined with a boundary wall with some landscaping, the building would be a small office building of some quality, not innovative or exceptional, but a well-designed building which speaks of its period.

While there are those who will disagree this small office building has some quality and speaks of its period and reflects the architectural fashion of that time. For this reason it makes some modest contribution to the conservation area but this would be improved if, the front area was landscaped and the street had some enclosure.



## 7 Looms Lane

This is a late 19<sup>th</sup> C house, presumably always detached but the flank walls in flint and red brick suggest this may have been part of a terrace or includes elements of an earlier building - this might be worth further research. The street elevation is two storeys of white brick with a slate finished roof with a small dormer window and a brick stack.

There are two, two over two, sash windows at first floor and a canted hexagonal bay to the ground floor together with the entrance door. All window joinery appears original, but the door is modern. The openings have stone lintols with carved keystones. Plastic rainwater goods.

This house has had a major refurbishment in recent years and part of this refurbishment included the cleaning of the brick and stonework and rebuilding a dwarf brick wall with steel railings to the front boundary. This does rather make the house appear modern like its pastiche styled neighbours which adjoin to the east and west. Notwithstanding that, it is a good historic house in the conservation area to which it makes a positive contribution although the satellite TV dish rather detracts.

