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PART I:

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 Hampshire Landscape Assessment

This document is the first of a suite of documents produced by the Landscape Planning and Heritage section of Hampshire County Council. The volumes are as follows:

- Integrated Character Assessment (this volume)
- The State of Hampshire's Landscapes, Townscapes and Seascapes (to follow)
- The Hampshire Landscape Strategy (to follow)

I.2 Why revise the Hampshire Character Assessment?

The Hampshire Landscape: A Strategy for the Future (2000) was acknowledged at the time to be a forward thinking document, which has helped to shape policy and guide decision-making across the County. Ten years on, this revision will ensure that the latest guidance and best practice has been taken into account, so that Landscape Character Assessment continues to be relevant, and at the heart of land-based decision-making. In particular the following changes have been made:

- Integration of landscape character assessment and townscape character assessment, bringing the document into line with the European Landscape Convention, which makes it clear that landscapes do not stop at urban boundaries.
- Better integration of coastal landscapes or 'seascapes'
- Use of improved datasets and GIS technology enabling better analysis of this information, including the Hampshire Historic Landscape Characterisation and detailed GIS datasets on soils, geology and Phase I Habitat Survey.
- Better use of local evidence, as all Boroughs and Districts now have landscape character assessments. Some boroughs and Districts are also producing or are in the process of producing townscape assessments.

I.3 Uses of the Integrated Character Assessment

Applications of the Character assessment are many and varied, and include:

- Manual for Streets: A companion Document
- Strategic land use planning
- Green Infrastructure planning
- Farm agri-environment plans
- Development Control work

1.4 The need for County and local level assessments

Each of the Boroughs and Districts of Hampshire have undertaken landscape character assessments, but a County assessment is valuable because:

- Local assessments do cover the County, but have been undertaken at different scales and grains, using slightly different methodologies.
- The County assessment gives a consistent approach to characterisation across Hampshire. This is important for large scale and strategic place shaping work.
- For projects which cross administrative boundaries within Hampshire the assessment provides a consistent reporting framework and style.

A good example is where it provides a spatial reporting framework for regional and sub regional green infrastructure planning work. Another aspect we wanted to tackle was characterisation of settlement which was not included in the 2000 assessment. 23 of Hampshire's larger settlements have been assessed. The character of settlement pattern and form was assessed within the landscape character area descriptions. The addition and integration of settlement characterisation gives a spatial context for urban place shaping like the implementation of Manual for Streets across Hampshire's towns. The Countywide assessment gives a consistent information base for a range of applications.

Essentially, this work is intended to be complimentary to District and Borough assessment work. It can be used when a more strategic and large scale framework is required. Information can also be drawn from both level assessments to inform place shaping. It is important to discuss with the local authority which assessment should be used as the primary reporting framework for particular planning and land management work.

1.5 Structure of the Report

- Introduction and methodology statements
- Overview of the Hampshire Landscape
- Generic Forces for Change
- Landscape and Seascape Character assessment - 63 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and 24 Landscape Types (LCTs)
- Townscape character assessment - 23 settlements. There are 30 Townscape Types (TCTs).

1.6 Character Assessment Team

The project was a joint initiative by HCC officers and external consultants. This was a successful blend local expertise and best practice and latest approach to characterisation. The Hampshire County Council staff comprised staff from the Landscape Planning and Heritage section lead Linda Tartaglia-Kershaw. David Carman was the project manager. The consultant manager was Mark Wilson, (landscape architect / planner), who was responsible for day-to-day

liaison with the consultants and writing of part of the landscape character area and types descriptions / evaluations. Other team members (steering group) included: Vicky Fletcher (Land Management Planner) – managed ecology matters and production of overview, David Hopkins (Head of Archaeology - lead on historic advice), Mike Clark (Conservation officer - historic built environment advice), Peter Atkinson (Historic Parks and Gardens). The consultants for the project were, Alison Farmer Associates who were involved in the characterisation process and the writing of the assessments and evaluations. Forum Heritage who produced the townscape assessment. Countryside (Ecological consultants) and Geodata Institute at Southampton University (GIS consultants).

2. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

The study follows the accepted method for landscape character assessment as set out in the *'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland'* published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage in 2002 and subsequent topic papers. This assessment has followed best practice: it is spatially integrated with the built environment, and includes settlement pattern character and assessment of Hampshire's larger towns. We have also characterised the marine environment to produce seascape character areas (SCAs).

The assessment represents best practice and an innovative approach through:

- Integration of Borough and District character assessments with, as far as possible, County types and character areas (figure 2.1).
- Spatial integration and best fit with adjoining County assessments.
- A holistic and multi layered approach to characterisation; drawing on a raft of GIS information and interpretation of the most dominant and character influencing themes (figure 2.2).
- Integration and input from a number of specialists both from within the County Council and external experts from the fields of historic environment, ecology, geology rural landuse/socio economics, urban design and the built environment.
- Production of an interactive map based web resource.
- Creating a flexible spatial framework with the ability to group up types and character areas for broader classification.

The process of characterisation is summarised in figure 2.3. The first exercise was to determine an appropriate scale for the type and character areas. We wanted a flexible spatial framework that was between the regional (joint character areas) and local scale (Borough and District assessment). The HCC Landscape Character Assessment in 2000 had large scale character areas made up of component landscape types. A lot of the applications we want to use the assessment for require a finer grain view of the landscape but not as detailed as most of the Borough and District assessments. We also wanted the option of using a framework of the scale that the original County assessment provided. Therefore the 2010 assessment character areas and types have the potential to be grouped up.

2.2 Characterisation

The first stage was the development of the landscape types. This involved analysis of the Borough and District assessment approaches and looking at equivalent types and grouping up of local level types. In conjunction, GIS data sets were layered and organised into a hierarchy of importance in determining the landscape type (figure 2.2). The individual types are defined by different combinations of these layers and their differing strengths of influence. For example the Major Scarp and River Valley Floor landscape types are most influenced by geophysical factors,

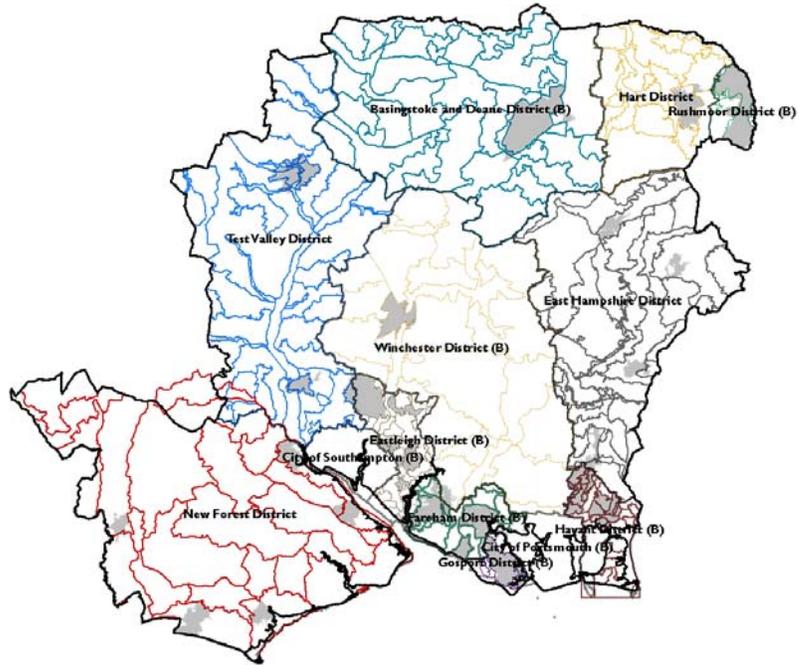


Figure 2.1: Borough and District Landscape Character Areas

GEOLOGY	SOILS	TOPOGRAPHY	LANDCOVER PATTERN
OS 1:25000 (modern & historic)	HISTORIC – particularly HLC	SETTLEMENT	HABITATS

Figure 2.2: Primary GIS information; layering and combining the information and deciding the level of dominance of each on determining landscape types and character areas is a key task of the assessment.

whilst the lowland mosaic types are more readily defined by soils and patterns of vegetation. The landscape types profiles set out the generic characteristics. Variation in scale is an important defining factor between different downland and lowland mosaic types, which are influenced by field and woodland size and topography. The variation in the method for defining the types boundaries between different local authorities necessitated the approach of drawing boundaries which were consistent across the County. 1:25 000 OS base mapping was used and boundaries generally follow features that can be seen on the ground. Many GIS datasets were used in the characterisation process and a comprehensive list is in the appendix.

The landscape character areas are combinations of the County landscape types rather than subdivisions of large-scale types as in some landscape assessments. This approach is most appropriate for the Hampshire assessment because of:

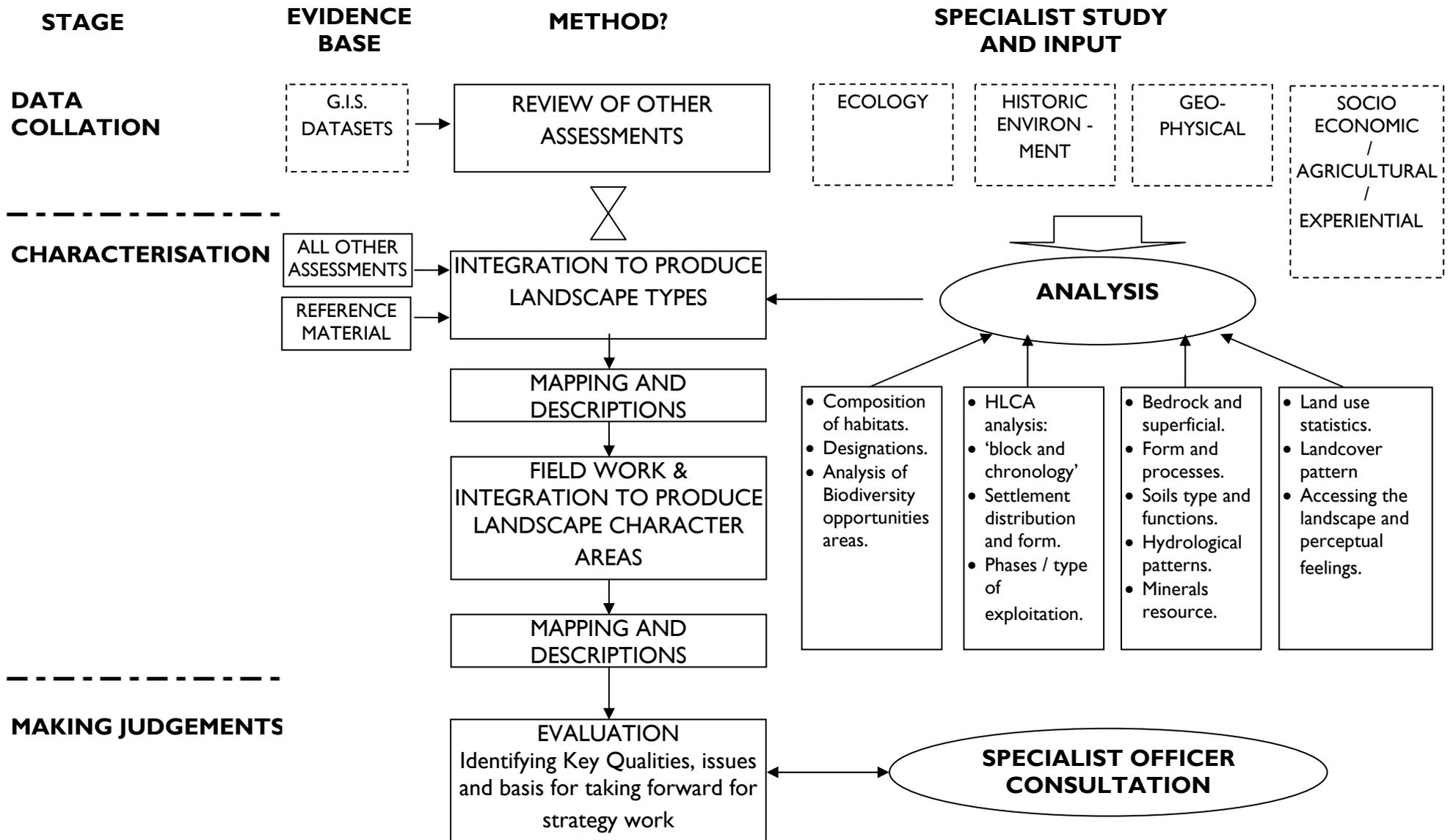
- The small scale nature of many of the landscape types.
- The historical land management connections between types such as enclosed and open landscapes which combine to form an area of distinct character.
- The visual connections / envelopes across different types.
- The fact that Hampshire has closely spaced major river valleys which divide up the landscape, making large east/west character areas inappropriate.

The river valleys, for example, were defined by break in slope and perception of whether you are in or outside the valley and not by extent of landscape type. The seascape areas were defined on broad changes in use (for example recreational boating or commercial shipping) and changes between estuary or harbour and more open sea. Reference is made in the descriptions to the component County landscape types as well as the component Borough and District landscape types. There is a statement of the similarities and variation with the local level assessment LCAs which are typically but not always grouped up to form the County LCAs. The local and County descriptions are compatible although there may be variation in the boundary mapping for reasons already described.

2.3 Making judgements

Following the characterisation stage judgements are made about the character areas, as follows:

- Key Qualities: positive characteristics which are fundamental to character, structured by theme i.e. historic, biodiversity, experiential and visual.
- Force for Change: that could have an impact on the key qualities of a character area.
- Threats: aspects which have and are likely to have adverse impacts on the key quality.
- Opportunities: suggesting links to other strategies and plans and possible actions which will benefit the key quality.



The identification of key qualities is a distillation of positive and defining attributes which contribute to local distinctiveness. They include both important pervasive aspects like international habitats and features such as important historic sites and the contribution they make to the landscape character. Distilling such key qualities requires value based judgements to be made although the qualities are measurable and will help give direction to the landscape indicators and monitoring work in the State of Hampshire's Landscapes, Townscapes and Seascapes volume.

Forces for change relate to both current and possible future change. They are selected from a series of generic forces which are then made relevant to each character area. The most influential forces for change are identified for each key quality. This will again help in targeting the monitoring work more effectively in a future Landscape Strategy.

The possible changes to key qualities as a consequence of threats and opportunities are then explored. These are derived from local level assessments and other strategies and initiatives which are perceived to have the most effects on landscape. The opportunities are not prescriptive or specific actions but highlight where there could be links with other strategies, land management planning and land use planning work.

3. TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The characterisation of the urban areas of Hampshire is intended to complement and sit alongside the landscape characterisation work. These are seen as complementary exercises and share the same aims of furthering the understanding of the character of Hampshire in its entirety.

This work develops upon methodology developed by English Heritage and others and combines a series of indicators developed through work on The Lincoln Townscape Assessment, the work on rapid character assessment in *Character and Identity: Townscape and Heritage Appraisals in Housing Market Renewal Areas* (English Heritage and CABE, 2008), and *By Design Urban Design in the Planning system: towards better practice*, (CABE, 2000). Throughout this work over the last decade, quickly and clearly identifying the distinctiveness of locality has been a key aim in the re-establishment of urban design principles in the planning system. This has been embedded into national planning policy guidance, most notably Planning Policy Statement 1 and has been the catalyst for evidence based policy development through the Local Development Framework led by authorities such as Hampshire County Council.

This urban characterisation work builds on the first of the seven objectives of urban design, as defined in *By Design*; that of identifying the character of a given area, which is defined as a 'place with its own identity'. Further:

'To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.'

The methodology also builds on the Building in Context Toolkit (English Heritage) which also advocates the rapid assessment of character in order to provide an understanding of context, be this for single buildings or large urban extensions, particularly to areas of high sensitivity. In addition, English Partnerships and The Housing Corporations *Urban Design Compendium* (Llewelyn-Davies 2000) provides a comprehensive inventory of issues relating to character appraisal, much of which has formed the basis for headings found in the town and conurbation studies.

3.2 Approach

The Hampshire Townscape Assessment was a largely desk-based project which consisted of three principal tasks:

- An historical appraisal of the urban areas;
- Mapping of Townscape Character Types (TCT);
- An assessment of the character of the townscape and identification of Townscape Character Areas (TCA).

3.2.1 Historical Appraisal

A short background to each of the urban areas within the study has been produced to set out the topographical setting of the area and to briefly describe the evolution of the urban

area. This section is not intended to be a definitive history for each settlement but aims to identify and understand the origins and key phases and drivers of the development and expansion of the urban area.

The principal sources for this section were:

- Extensive Urban Survey reports, where available
- Victoria County History
- Historic map sources
- Local history publications and reports

3.2.2 Mapping of Townscape Character Types

Within an urban area there will be groups of buildings or areas that will share similar qualities through factors such as their form, date of development, materials or use. In total, a possible 32 Townscape Character Types (TCT) were identified and mapped across the urban areas.

Modern OS Mastermap provided the base-line mapping and compared against the four epochs of historic OS 6" (1:10560) mapping dating from 1870 to c.1940 to identify areas of development in accordance with the TCTs. The TCTs were then mapped in GIS. Generally the scale of data capture was in the region of 1:2500 – 1:3000. To enable the production of an illustration of the various phases of development, each TCT was also assigned a phase code ranging from Medieval to Post WWII.

To assist in the identification of TCTs aerial photographs available on Bing (www.bing.com/maps) which also has oblique photographs for many of the urban areas within this study. Centremaps / Blom Urbex supply oblique aerials under licence, which were used to illustrate the reports. It should be noted that this was not a building-by-building assessment but an attempt to capture the broad character of the built environment across the urban area. Therefore, there will invariably be buildings of an earlier or later date in some TCTs where the majority of buildings fall into the TCT classification. However, where there are areas of development markedly different in character from the surrounding, for example, flat blocks within areas of traditional residential housing, the flats were identified as a separate TCT even where there was a single block.

With respect to open spaces within the urban areas, these were classified after reference to the typology set out in the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce report *Green Spaces, Better Places* (2002).

The 32 TCTs identified and their characteristics are described in **Appendix *** together with details of the phases assigned to the various periods of development:

3.2.3 Assessment and identification of Townscape Character Areas

The production of TCTs for each area formed the framework for initial analysis of the urban areas with the identification of Townscape Character Areas also utilising existing landscape character assessments (which include urban areas) for example, those of Havant, Fareham, Gosport and Eastleigh which provided background information for the analysis. Conservation Area Appraisals, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans, where available,

have provided further valuable information. In addition, statutory listed buildings, particularly groupings of buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, designated conservation area boundaries combined with any published character appraisals of the areas and the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens and the Hampshire Register of Parks and Gardens were reviewed to provide an initial appreciation of the designated and published sources.

Further desk-top based work, focusing particularly on the use of aerial photographs and assessment of settlement pattern and density from figure ground type mapping established a draft series of TCAs. These character areas were reviewed by Hampshire County Council Officers and tested on the ground with selective site visits. All towns and areas were visited at least once. After discussion with Council Officers and site visits, the TCAs were amended as necessary.

The key aim of the definition of TCAs is to aid the understanding of place by grouping like with like or identifying where there is true diversity; this is also a characteristic. The consistent analysis of the indicators of character is essential in order that areas are assessed under the same criteria. This also provides a framework for the avoidance of general description which is not analytical. The following indicators form the basis for the analysis of TCAs:

- Context/setting
- Topography
- Grain
- Layout
- Scale
- Density
- Building types
- Architectural qualities
- Heritage Assets
- Period
- Materials
- Uses (current and past - where relevant)
- Ownership
- Public Realm
- Green Space and treecover
- Connectivity

It should be noted that character areas must have some sense of a predominant indicator. This will vary, for example on a modern industrial estate; scale of buildings, materials and layout will be consistent and strongly defined. Architectural quality will vary considerably. Historic cores to towns will be strongly defined by grain, scale, architectural qualities and possibly materials. In some cases the latter may be very distinctive – for example, the survival of thatch buildings to the centre of Ringwood or the use of flint to parts of Winchester or Fareham.

Sub-areas have been defined to further help the understanding of what in some cases may be subtle but important differences. In the case of the residential suburb character areas to

each of the urban areas, the sub-areas often relate to a combination of period of development (mostly between immediately post-war to present day), density and layout. For example, the housing estates of the mid- to late 1980s and early 90s have a very distinctive and consistent almost pattern book scale and layout, with often only materials and topography distinguishing them from each other within and between separate urban areas.

There is a general pattern to character areas within urban areas. They invariably comprise the older established settlement cores (usually but not always designated conservation areas) and their expansion; the early suburbs to these cores, mostly Victorian and Edwardian but occasionally older, in the case of, for example, Winchester (College and Hyde) and Romsey (Middlebridge Street), further commercial centres, these can often be small but very distinctive areas such as Park Parade District Centre north of the historic core of Havant, industrial estates (these tend to be grouped as one character area but can be topographically split). These invariably share similar characteristics, but occasionally differ in scale and detailed use terms, for example light industrial, services and manufacturing to heavy industry. There is then usually the largest character area which comprises residential suburbs. These are occasionally defined as separate character areas where their character is so distinctive and well-defined. A good example of this is the North Fleet residential suburb, a designated conservation area (and so recognized locally for its quality and architectural and historic character) which forms a separate character area. There are some areas of high quality which possibly fall short of conservation area designation but nonetheless are of high value as older urban areas; good examples are Lakewood Road, Chandlers Ford and Sleepers Hill, Winchester. However, in the absence of any recognized designation they have remained part of the main character area dealing with suburban residential development. Distinctions and particular qualities are summarized within the descriptions. In some cases the urban area has subsumed former rural settlement; villages, (Clanfield in Waterlooville/Horndean) hamlets (Pennington in Lymington) and once isolated farmsteads which may survive within the present-day townscape.

Some of the residential character areas within the urban settlements are particularly large. This is reflective of much of the trend within Hampshire and across the region and nationally of massive expansion of urban settlements in the mid- to late part of the twentieth century. However, its character is often shared across large areas and often between settlements with house types and layouts in particular, for example, the estates set out to the Radburn principles, seen across the urban settlements of Hampshire. The sub-areas reflect this and highlight patterns and periods of change on a strategic level across the County.

In the case of the residential sub-areas, the local name of the area is used wherever possible. If the area is not easily defined by local reference, a summary of its chief characteristics will be used, for example *large scale post-war expansion*. This, in itself, may often be an indicator of the identity of a place or area.

In all cases the decision to define a character area and sub-areas within these has been taken on analysis of the identified indicators, with consistency to predominant indicators being a key driver for definition; for example residential use. It is not divisive or based on a random sub-division of the urban areas. It is intended to aid understanding and provide a

framework for planning and informing potential change in or adjacent to these character areas.

There are instances where a sub character area occurs in different locations of the town. Essentially they share the same layout and development style characteristics. The different areas are identified by i, ii, iii etc. and below the key characteristics their geographical uniqueness and context is described. For instance a sub area adjacent to the coastline will have a very different feel to where it occurs inland adjacent to woodland.

3.3 Structure and content

3.3.1 Character summary and key characteristics

Each of the TCAs have been sub-divided into headings. The following provides an overview of what information can be found under each heading and how this has been summarized.

Character Summary

The character summary is intended to provide an introduction to the description and give the reader an idea why it has been defined. The key indicators highlight and identify of the number and nature of sub-areas that are identified.

Key Characteristics

The key indicators for each character area and sub-area are summarized by ten bullet points. The bullet points relate to the main headings. Please note that some key characteristics summarise the main headings and some combine them. This is intended as a rapid summary for quick reference and should be read in conjunction with the main headings which provide a more detailed analysis. The main headings deal with some elements of the character area which are difficult to summarise effectively or in any meaningful way, for example the boundary and setting. The following summarises the key characteristics:

- **Form/origins/reason for area/sub-area**
A brief summary of the reason for definition, for example; Crescent of bungalows, circa 1940s
- **Topography** (summary)
See main heading
- **Plots** (part of layout and pattern)
The size and shape of plots and the corresponding size, scale (usually expressed as small, medium, large and occasionally very large houses) and type (for example detached, semi-detached house/bungalow) of building on the plot
- **Building lines** (part of layout and pattern)
Where does the building sit on the plot? For example; to the back of pavement or set back in small gardens with brick front boundary walls
- **Materials** (part of buildings and materials)
Summary of the *predominant* materials and any notable vernacular materials
- **Scale** (part of layout and pattern and buildings and materials)
The height of buildings, usually denoted in storeys
- **Uses** (summary)
See main heading
- **Trees and open spaces** (summary of open spaces and biodiversity)
Degree of open space (usually green space) and degree and type of tree cover, for example, tree-lined, sections of woodland, large specimen trees from a former parkland
- **Public realm** (summary)
See main heading
- **Access and connectivity** (summary)
See main heading

3.3.2 Main headings

The following summarises the type and level of information provided under each of the following main headings provided for each character area. These headings are used for the character area only as they are intended to give an overview of the cohesiveness of the character and should explain how all the sub-areas relate to the character area.

Boundaries and setting

The orientation, where relevant, edges and relationship to other character areas is described. The setting is described in terms of the wider context focussing on any views major views into or out of the character area and the subject/nature of these views

Designations

Scheduled Monuments are identified. Statutory listed buildings are briefly introduced, by Grade I, II* and II and described where they have specific attributes which will aid understanding the areas heritage assets. Conservation area designations are identified and the extent of coverage is described in each case.

Townscape types present

A list of the TCTs present within the character area.

Topography

The shape and degree of change to the landform throughout the character area and summarized in sub-areas. Described in more detail when the topography creates significant opportunities for views from and to places, spaces or buildings or where a particular aspect of development is revealed, for example, roofscape on looking down over houses

Layout and Pattern

The general arrangement of streets and the plots lining these streets is described. The orientation of the houses and their position on the plot is described with particular reference to the building line. The building line is an important aspect of the perception of a street and its formality or informality can have a significant influence on the character of an area or sub-area.

Buildings and materials

The predominant types of material are described, distinguishing where necessary between traditional (vernacular) and modern. The colour, textures, patterning, building techniques, locally distinctive building methods and/or use of materials (for example the use of thatch) are mentioned where they are felt to contribute to the character of the area.

Predominant land use

Type and range of uses and how the mix affects the vitality/busyness or otherwise and also the sense of neighbourhood/community identity/culture.

Public realm

Description of the public realm using key indicators; presence of older or high quality surface treatments, parking provision, for example, is there on-street parking or the presence of grass verges? Are street-trees present? How well-defined is the public realm, for example, are pavements lined by mature hedges and trees, strong boundaries? Street furniture, signage, legibility, modern surface treatments, boundary treatments, hard or soft landscaping noted where it is present.

Open space

The presence and extent (rough size) of parks and gardens, both public and private, is identified, particularly of any sites that are included on the *Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest* (compiled by English Heritage), and their contribution described. Domestic gardens, front and back, are described particularly where boundaries and trees within private spaces make a significant contribution to the public realm

Within this section trees, hedges and street greenery, not only in public places, but on private land as well are described. Important single trees and groups are identified and described where appropriate. Their broad species/type – broad leaf, specimen, conifer, ornamental is described when this is considered character defining.

Biodiversity

The importance of mainly green spaces and waterways are described in terms of their potential for sustaining wildlife. Statutory and local designations are identified and the degree of connectivity of natural habitats is defined placing importance on the presence of green corridors in even the most densely developed areas.

Access and connectivity

Access to the character area or sub-area is summarized in general terms; excellent, good, reasonable or poor. This is measured against vehicle users and pedestrian access. Connectivity is summarized in terms of both the vehicle user (where useful) and pedestrian. The presence of public rights of way is noted, major footpath networks, the quality and legibility of areas and the ability to get across the character area or sub-area and into and out of the area is summarized also mostly in general terms; excellent, good, reasonable or poor. The reason for the connectivity classification is summarized, for example: “*This character area is very poorly connected due to the restricted access to military personnel for much of the area.*”

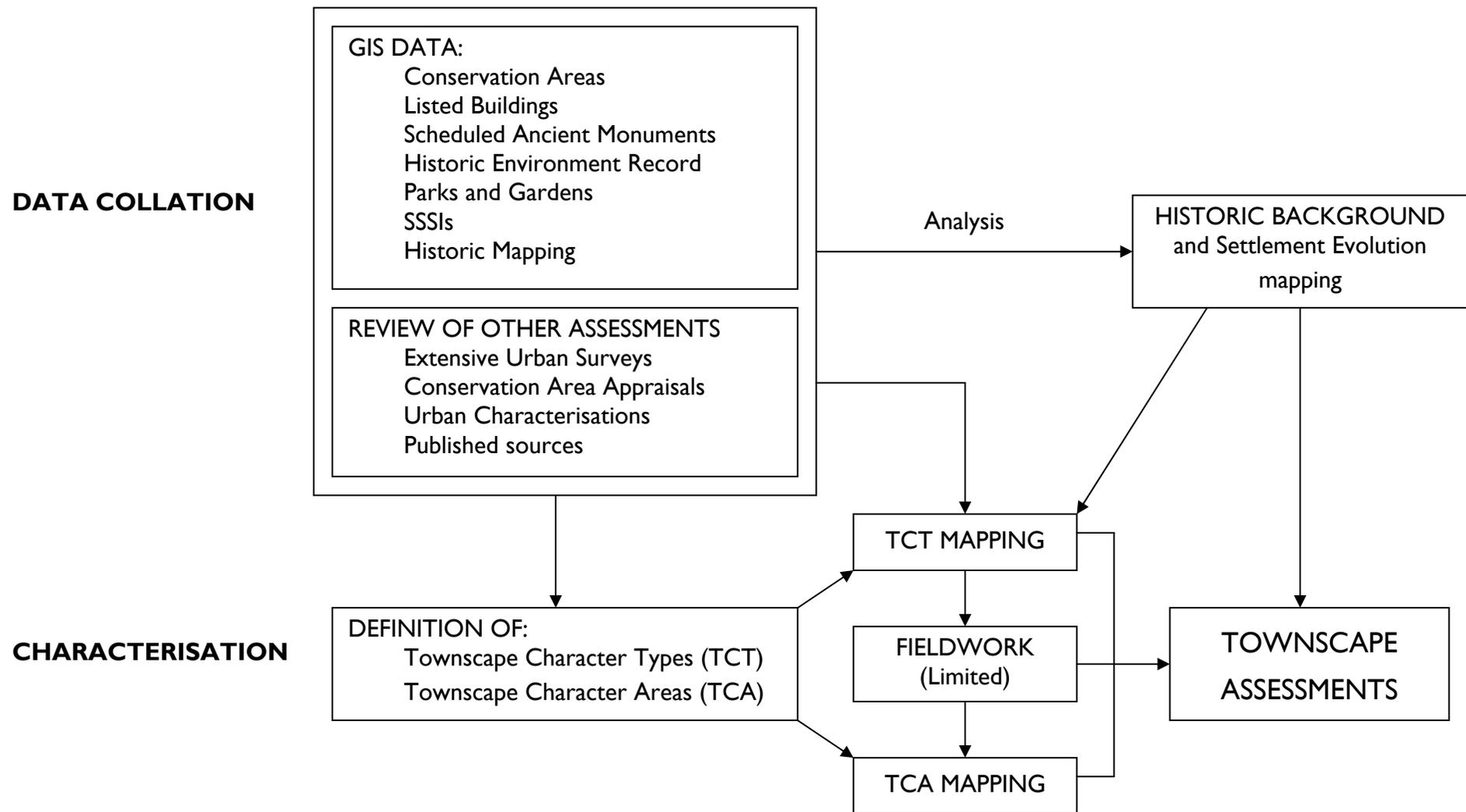


Figure 2.3 The Hampshire Townscape Character Assessment Process.