

# HILL HEAD AND STUBBINGTON


## Character Assessment

- I OVERVIEW .....2**
- 2 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS .....6**
  - 2.1 HHS01 Stubbington District Centre .....6
  - 2.2 HHS02 Hill Head and Stubbington residential suburbs.....9
    - 02a. *North Stubbington; Mays Lane, Titchfield Road and Cuckoo Lane environs* .....9
    - 02b. *Hill Head* ..... 10
    - 02c. *Seafield Park environs*..... 10
    - 02d. *Stubbington Lane and Gosport Road environs* ..... 10
    - 02e. *Old Street and Marks Tey Road environs* ..... 11

# HILL HEAD AND STUBBINGTON

## Character Assessment

### I OVERVIEW

- I.1 'Hill Head and Stubbington' is a small conurbation lying on the south coast to the west of Gosport and south of Fareham. The built-up area lies on the low-lying, flat coastal plain with the valley of the River Meon to the west. The coastline forms the southern boundary of the area, the Meon valley the western edge, and open coastal plain borders the area to the north and north-east. To the south-east is the airfield of the former HMS Daedalus with a group of World War II hangars sited close to the edge of the airfield. To the north of the settlement a mile-wide band of arable and horticultural fields lies between Fareham and Stubbington. To the west lies Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, part of the Meon Valley, and a larger countryside gap largely managed for biodiversity. The riparian and estuarine habitats, together with intertidal habitats along the Hill Head coastline, are also designated as a Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest for the bird species they support.
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- I.2 Up until the mid-twentieth century this was an agricultural landscape with medieval settlements at the village of Stubbington and at Crofton, the parish centre, which consisted of little more than the parish church and Manor Farm. There were also a number of dispersed farmsteads and cottages mainly set along a network of lanes crossing the area. Hill Head, at the mouth of the River Meon, was the name attached to a small harbour and a handful of cottages.
- I.3 In the early twentieth century there was a small amount of development on the coast near Hill Head. The period between the wars saw some further housing development along the coast at Hill Head, along Crofton Lane, and along the lanes to the north of Stubbington. It was not until the later twentieth century that the bulk of the residential development was carried out, with the conurbation becoming a dormitory settlement to the larger urban areas of Fareham and Gosport.
- I.4 The Hill Head seafront is a popular local visitor attraction, with one of the only beaches between Portsmouth and Southampton, made accessible via three seafront car parks and the Solent Way long-distance footpath running along the coastline. The beach is lined with beach huts and is popular for activities such as summer sunbathing, walking, birdwatching and fishing, and the shoreline for sailing, windsurfing and kitesurfing. There are two sailing clubs, and a small harbour next to Titchfield Haven. In summer the coastal roads and car parks can have very heavy car use and there may be congestion on the southern residential roads.

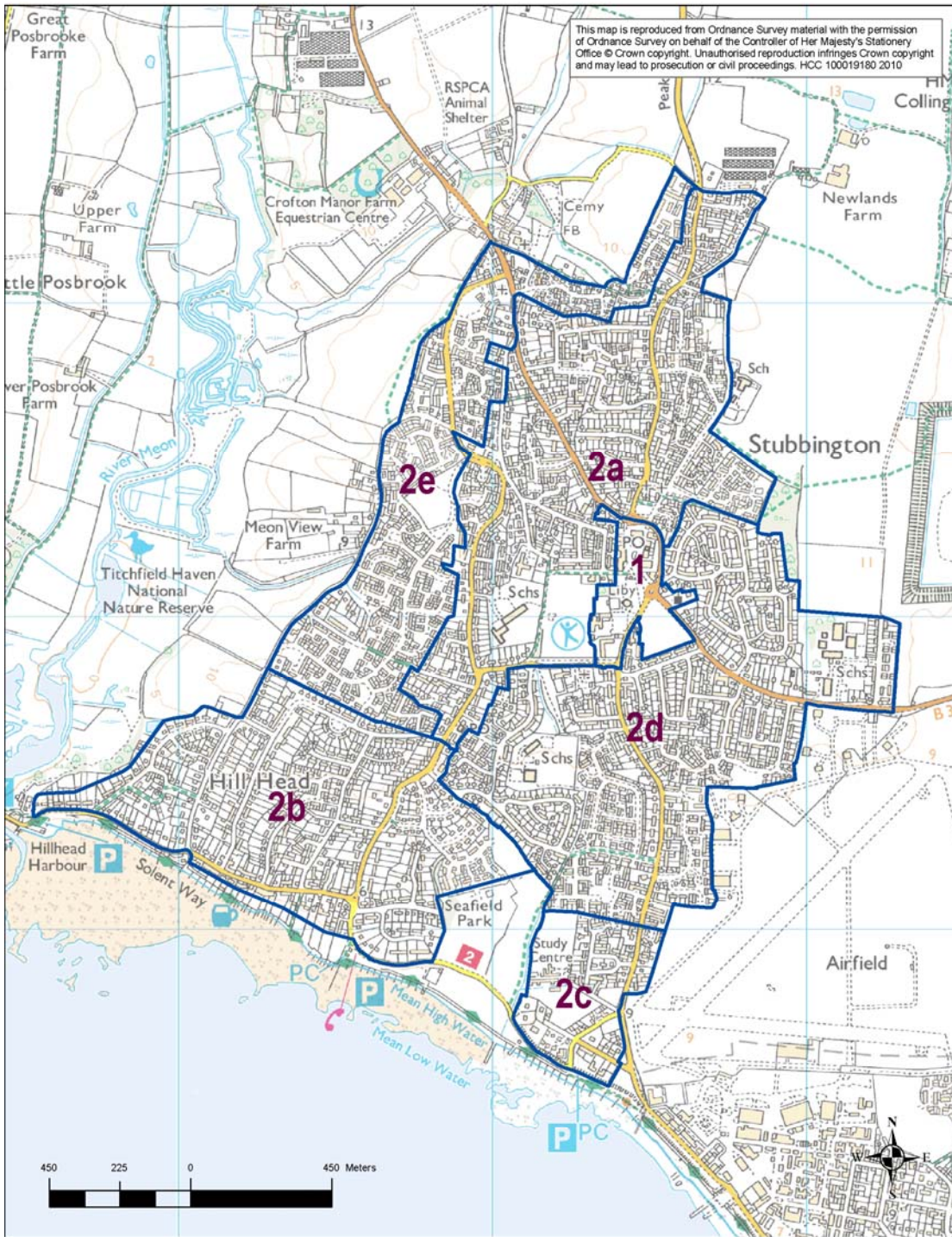
## Hampshire Towns Character Assessment – Townscape Types

<b>TCT</b>	<b>Description</b>
01	Medieval Planned Urban Settlement
02	Rural Settlement
03	Post Medieval Development 1600–1819
04	Residential 1820–1869
05	Residential 1870–1914 (Terraces, Semi-detached, Small Detached Houses)
06	Residential 1870–1914 (Villas)
07	Residential 1915–1945
08	Residential Post 1945–Present (Houses and Bungalows)
09	Residential Post 1945–Present ( 4-storey flats and above)
10	Commercial 1870–1945
11	Large Retail 1950–Present
12	Office/Commercial 1945–Present
13	Business Park 1945–Present
14	Traditional/Older Industrial
15	Industrial 1945–Present
16	Hospital/Education – Older Core
17	Hospital/Education – Modern
18	Defence Pre 1830
19	Defence 1830–1914
20	Defence 1915–Present
21	Civic
22	Religious/Churchyard/Precinct
23	Open Space (Public Park)
24	Open Space (Sports/Recreation)
25	Open Space (Allotments)
26	Open Space (Cemetery)
27	Open Space (Green Corridor)
28	Open Space (School Playing Field)
29	Transport Corridor
30	Civil Infrastructure – e.g. Sewage Works
31	Car Park
32	Mobile Home Park



**HILL HEAD AND STUBBINGTON  
TOWNSCAPE TYPES**





## HILL HEAD AND STUBBINGTON CHARACTER AREAS



## 2 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

### 2.1 HHS01 Stubbington District Centre

#### 2.1.1 Character Summary

***There are only the remains of the plan form and spaces of historic Stubbington, except for Holy Rood Church, Gosport Road (1878 by T Goodchild) and a small number of modest Georgian houses. The commercial core of Stubbington has developed at this important junction of historic routes and comprises local shops, library, community centre, school and church. It is a well-used district centre of some importance. Its scale, form and predominant uses distinguish the area from the surrounding residential suburbs. Despite its relatively modest size, it has a diverse mix of retail, café, takeaway, supermarket and local services. There are no sub-areas defined within this small character area.***

#### 2.1.2 Key Characteristics

- A compact core of mixed-use buildings, mostly small independent retailers set around a green
- Topography is flat
- Mix of small- and medium-footprint buildings on regular plots (some have been amalgamated)
- Building line is staggered in places but with shopfronts set to the back of wide pavements facing the green
- Red brick, clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles, and some survival of natural slate
- Mostly two-storey buildings, some single-storey buildings separate from the commercial group
- Commercial, retail, some residential (flats above shops), school and church
- Some good trees to the northern end of the green and between the shopping centre and library on the edge of the sports fields to the west
- Some good shared surfaces and large green spaces adjacent to pavements. Excessive lighting to roundabouts at northern and southern ends of the character area
- Access and connectivity are good throughout for the pedestrian. For car users connectivity east–west is more problematic

#### 2.1.3 Boundaries and setting

This character area is completely enclosed by the residential suburbs and urban extensions of Stubbington. Its setting would be considered to be dense urban development except for part of its western boundary which is open sports fields connected to schools to the west. Holy Rood Church is an important landmark and Grade II listed building which can be seen for some distance on travelling north along Gosport Road.

#### 2.1.4 *Designations*

Holy Rood Church is a statutory listed building; Grade C (the equivalent of Grade II). There is a statutory listed, much altered, eighteenth-century house to the south side of Titchfield Road (Grade II). There are no designated conservation areas within the character area.

#### 2.1.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT12, 22 and 23.

#### 2.1.6 *Topography*

The area is flat and low lying

#### 2.1.7 *Layout and Pattern*

This character area comprises an early, tight settlement pattern of buildings set around a triangular green on regular plots (although some have been amalgamated) at a medium to fine grain. The green is at the junction of a series of historic routes in the north of the character area; Stubbington Lane, Park Lane and Burnt House Lane. Whilst very little of the historic built form remains, the early plan of the settlement forming around this junction is still well defined and readable. This gives the character area a village scale and feel.

Buildings are generally set to the back of wide pavements and there is a consistent building line throughout, which provides good enclosure, particularly to the green. Outside the green the townscape is less well defined and buildings are set back, sometimes framed by trees (for example the library) or as buildings having landmark qualities such as the church and, to a lesser extent, the public house to the corner of Stubbington Gardens and Titchfield Road, both seen across open space on approaches to the centre of the character area. The grain of development is coarser in the south than around the green.

#### 2.1.8 *Buildings and materials*

Most buildings date from the mid- to late twentieth century with some older survivals (though heavily altered with the exception of the church). Buildings are one and two storey throughout the character area but with those fronting the green a consistent two storey; shops and services to ground floor with some residential units above. There is a variation to ridge orientation, with parapets and hipped roofs addressing the space, providing interest to the roofline and maintaining a fine grain to the townscape.

Red, buff and yellow brick is seen in the character area as well as knapped flint. There is some painting of brickwork, and some render but this is limited. Roofs are clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles with a very limited survival of natural slate.

#### 2.1.9 *Predominant land use*

There is a good mix of commercial, small-scale independent retail and residential. There is also a library and a church with community facilities. The mix of uses in the character area contributes to the sense of the place as a village centre and community hub.

#### 2.1.10 *Public realm*

The area around the green is a relatively well-used space but does not become too busy for pedestrians to be able to informally cross the roads in relative safety. On-street parking helps calm traffic. Pavements are wide but there is a noticeable absence of street trees. The grassed amenity spaces to the central green are an attractive part of the character area. Trees add to the general informality of this space. Beyond the green, the roads are busy thoroughfares, and sections of Titchfield Road, skirting the commercial area, are narrow with correspondingly narrow pavements. Street lighting to roundabouts is excessive and out of scale with the suburban setting.

#### 2.1.11 *Open space*

There is good provision of public open space both within and immediately adjacent to the character area. To the south of the commercial core are large expanses of amenity green space. Stubbington Recreation Ground, to the west of Stubbington Lane, lies mainly in HHS02 but the section in HHS01 houses community buildings, sports clubs and sports facilities and a formal park set in an open well-treed green setting. To the east of Stubbington Lane is a large open area of green space backed onto by houses to the south but with houses and Holy Rood Church facing on to the open space to the north. The open space provides a setting to the church and its prominent flint and stone tower. The green triangular space to the commercial core is an historic survival of early settlement layout, and a valuable green amenity space for local people. It provides a sense of identity and pulls the surrounding townscape together to form a memorable place. The edge of the character area is tree lined but this open space forms an important part of the setting to buildings within the character area.

#### 2.1.12 *Biodiversity*

There is a high degree of open green space, and some tree cover to the edges of these provides some urban habitats within the character area. However, these areas are not easily linked to open countryside, substantial green corridors or areas of woodland.

#### 2.1.13 *Access and connectivity*

There is good access for both pedestrian and car user, perhaps with emphasis on the pedestrian through the use of footpaths, particularly from the south and west. Connectivity is good travelling north–south for the vehicle user but less successful east–west. Connectivity for the pedestrian is good throughout.



## 2.2 HHS02 Hill Head and Stubbington residential suburbs

### 2.2.1 Character Summary

**A series of early lanes and routeways travelling north–south (evidenced by the isolated survival of early buildings – most of which are statutory listed) forms the framework for the almost entirely residential suburbs, reaching from Crofton in the north, engulfing the commercial core of Stubbington (HHS01) and running for much of its length right up to the edge of the Solent Water in the south.**

**The area, despite being a large character area, has a high degree of homogeneity. Most of the bungalows and houses are semi-detached or detached (with the exception of some very-late-twentieth-century development) and almost all are set back from the road in gardens (of varying sizes) and with a mostly consistent building line following the roadside (be this rectilinear or curvilinear). There are differences in layout and variety in grain, although most are medium scale. The open character and backdrop, degree of former character of the landscape being retained (mostly trees) and period of development has necessitated the defining of five sub-areas within this character area.**

### 2.2.2 Key characteristics

Sub-areas of HHS02

#### 02a. North Stubbington; Mays Lane, Titchfield Road and Cuckoo Lane environs

- Inter-war and post-war development at a medium-grain character (on average), but this varies throughout. Blocks of development are broken up by cul-de-sacs
- The topography is flat throughout
- A mix of semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows set on medium-sized plots
- Building lines are often staggered to roadsides throughout, but dwellings are generally set back from the road with low boundary walls or hedges defining the roads or lanes
- Red brick with clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Single- and two-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Mature boundaries of hedges and some trees. Some historic boundaries and lanes
- Very limited on-street parking. Some street trees, although limited, and some roads have grass verges
- Very good access and connectivity, particularly for the pedestrian, with a series of footpaths running behind and between roads and through separate estates

#### 02b. Hill Head

- Mostly post-war expansion at a generally coarse- and sometimes medium-grain character, but tight with no open spaces between blocks
- Land is flat and low lying
- Large detached houses, some detached bungalows and some semi-detached houses
- Some variation to the building line, often reflecting the gentle curve of a road or cul-de-sac
- Houses set back from the road in large front gardens
- Red brick, some render (but limited), clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Some single-storey but mostly two-storey houses
- Entirely residential ; single-family dwelling houses
- Wide roads, with grass verges and often lined by mature boundaries, but a notable absence, however, of street trees
- Some tree cover within large gardens and to boundaries
- Excellent access and connectivity (the Solent Way passes along the length of the southern boundary), particularly to the seafront

#### 02c. Seafeld Park environs

- Mostly inter-war and post-war expansion in three phases of encroachment into the park – mostly coarse grain, which is loose in layout
- Land is flat and low lying
- Mostly large detached houses and some detached bungalows
- Varied building line, often staggered to offset road grids
- Houses set back from the road in large front gardens
- Red brick, clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Mostly two-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Wide roads, with limited on-street parking, no street trees. Mature boundaries to some roads
- Good tree belts to the park and to Crofton Avenue environs (the latter also has mature trees to gardens)
- Good access and connectivity for the pedestrian, particularly to the seafront. Poor access and connectivity for the car user

#### 02d. Stubbington Lane and Gosport Road environs

- Post-war, moderately fine-grain development, predominantly of bungalows with blocks broken by frequent cul-de-sacs
- Land is flat and low lying
- Bungalows set in regular plots along long sweeping roads with low brick and hedge garden boundary walls
- Consistent building line following curvature of roads throughout
- Red brick with some render/pebbledash, clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Predominantly single-storey dwellings

- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Most roads are wide, with grass verges but no street trees and very limited on-street parking
- Limited trees to front or back gardens, good tree belts to open green space adjacent to Crofton Hammond Junior and Infant Schools
- Good access and connectivity, with a hierarchy of principal routes and feeder roads linking to other areas throughout

02e. *Old Street and Marks Tey Road environs*

- Late-twentieth-century housing
- The topography is flat throughout
- Fine grain, which is both irregular and loose in layout (blocks separated by small incidental spaces). Short terraces or semi-detached and detached houses set in groups or around small cul-de-sacs
- Inconsistent building lines due to the often overly complicated road and plot layouts
- Red brick, hanging tiles and modern clay tile and other modern interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Areas of open space with small wooded areas link throughout the sub-area. Trees often forming the backdrop to development
- Shared pedestrian spaces, roads with grass verges let down in places by dead frontage to the main feeder roads
- Good access and connectivity throughout, with a series of footpaths and pedestrian lanes linking houses, and linking areas to each other and to sub-areas beyond

2.2.3 *Boundaries and setting*

The edge of the settlement forms the boundary to all sides. To the west is the valley of the River Meon, with Titchfield Haven at the mouth of the river adjacent to the edge of the residential areas of Hill Head. To the north is open countryside, a small but significant gap between the residential suburbs of this settlement and those of the southern fringes of Fareham. To the east, and partially in the Borough of Gosport, is the former HMS Daedalus military base and airfield. The airfield runs up to Gosport Road, with Peel Common (and the sewage works) north of this, and HMS Collingwood to the south, in Fareham. To the south is Solent Water with the Isle of Wight clearly visible from the shoreline.

The setting of this character area is essentially open 'coastal plain' landscape. From any direction there is a real sense of arrival as one travels very quickly from open, expansive, low-lying landscapes to enclosed, urban, mostly medium-grain development. This change is abrupt. The only exception to this is to the south-eastern corner of the character area where Seaford Park and the edges of the adjacent airfield give a general sense of openness to this part of the character area and its immediate setting. This is combined with the close proximity to water and the extended views up and down Solent Water from this point in the character area.

Views from the Isle of Wight (which is elevated and undulating) look down onto this section of the Solent Water shoreline, and the line between urban and rural will be readily apparent in these views, emphasising the importance and sensitivity of the setting in these views. Views to the Isle of Wight and Calshot are also an important part of the essential character of this readily accessible section of waterfront.

#### 2.2.4 *Designations*

There are fourteen listed buildings, all are Grade II. They all date from between the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, mostly of a cottage scale with much alteration and extension. Some have timber frames, one is thatched and all are isolated, with the exception of Holy Rood Church, Crofton and the adjacent Manor House which form an attractive group at the northernmost tip of the character area.

There are no designated conservation areas within this character area.

#### 2.2.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT07, 08, 16, 23, 24, 27 and 28.

#### 2.2.6 *Topography*

To the south-western corner of the character area, the landform falls very gently towards the Meon valley and Solent Water but this is almost imperceptible until almost to the water's edge. There is a clear level change from the edge of the developed sections of the character area down to the waterfront.

#### 2.2.7 *Layout and Pattern*

Despite its large area, there is some consistency in layout and pattern across the character area, with most distinction between developments reflected in changes in the tightness or looseness of grain, period and material detailing. Grain and period of building are reflected in the sub-areas identified within this character area. The differences are often subtle. The following is a broad overview of the key layout patterns seen within HHS02.

The post-war estates can be divided into three areas which largely differ in their grain characteristics rather than in any significant changes to house types or use of open space. The loose- to medium-grain areas of Hill Head (sub-area HHS02b) are a mix of immediate-post-war and 1970s housing with more variation to building type; semi-detached and detached houses set on a more informal series of road layouts, often with cranked roads or gently curving principal roads through the estate, with feeder roads and cul-de-sacs leading from these main roads. Plots are generally regular, and some, particularly to the south-west corner of HHS02b and backing on to the waterfront, are very large. Most gardens in this sub-area are of a generous size. The second area, north of the commercial core of Stubbington (HHS02a), is laid out predominantly in a medium-grain character and there is a greater mix of house types, with semi-detached and detached bungalows seen in higher numbers, as well as detached houses. These house types tend to be separate with a single type making up large groups. Roads in this sub-area are shorter, but there is still a mix of rectilinear and curvilinear road layouts with no predominant type. The long pronounced curves of the historic routes through this character area are distinctive

features of the layout and the set back of houses, generally along these principal routes, gives a sense of spaciousness and procession through this area. Sub-area HHS02d is also a mix of housing types, favouring the bungalow; semi-detached and detached houses but at a medium to tight grain. Whilst the mix of curvilinear and rectilinear roads is still seen, the gaps between houses are much smaller and there is a less emphasis on open space. The principal route, Stubbington Lane, is reflective of that to the north of the commercial core; a wide curving road with houses well set back to a higher degree than that of the roads leading from this route within the sub-area. This is also true, but to a lesser extent, to Gosport Road.

The late-twentieth-century development within the character area (sub-area HHS02e) is of a predominantly tight grain; short staggered terraces or semi-detached and sometimes detached houses, set in groups or around small cul-de-sacs, often with shared surfaces. Areas of open space with mature trees and some retention of historic boundaries are evident in this sub-area. This period of residential development is generally characterised by a single 'spine' or through road, providing connection with the areas beyond, but with most if not all housing facing onto secondary roads and the series of short curved cul-de-sacs which open off them. This often results in the main roads through the estates having dead frontage throughout as they are invariably flanked by the rear garden fences of the housing. This is particularly evident throughout the sub-area.

Sub-area HHS02c largely reflects the boundaries of Seafield Park. Within this sub-area, residential development is not easily characterised because of a variety of grain, with a looser character in the southernmost development. Developments also range from those backing on to the open areas with their gardens facing the park, to recent development addressing the open spaces and giving it some form of formal edge. The key characteristic these encroachments share is their contained nature, retaining the dominance of the park and the open spaces between buildings rather than development dominating these valuable open spaces. None could be said to integrate well with the park despite the recent attempts along Illustrious Road (to the north-western corner) to address the park.

#### 2.2.8 *Buildings and materials*

The general house types found in this character area are well-constructed flexible accommodation, and older houses and bungalows have been successfully extended and altered to provide medium-sized to large family homes. There is no set style and no houses could be considered as architecturally innovative or individual. However, the grouping of houses generally seen, with generous space around them, is an attractive part of much of the character area, especially to the principal routes. Bungalows tend to have expansive roofs, especially when paired. There is much variation to the house form, particularly with the way the building addresses the street; either with ridge parallel to the road or gable or hipped to roadside, often seen within the same street scene.

The predominant building material is red/orange brick. There is variation to colour and texture, especially to late-twentieth-century development (HHS02e) and brick is often combined with tile hanging, particularly to buildings dating from the 1970s. There is some render but it is limited and is not seen in groups or strongly defining certain areas or roads. Clay tile is used almost consistently throughout, although clay tiles have been replaced by concrete interlocking tiles in isolated areas and on individual buildings.

#### 2.2.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost entirely private, family, dwelling houses (bungalows and houses). There are some low-rise blocks of flats, found in small groups, but they are limited in number. There are three school complexes, each with medium-sized to large areas of open space; play grounds, playing fields and recreational areas. There are single shops to corners and within residential areas, and a small number of public houses. Much of the area is served by the district centre to Stubbington (character area HHS01).

#### 2.2.10 *Public realm*

The public realm is generally of a good quality throughout this character area. There is limited on-street parking throughout as most houses have a driveway. Roads are generally wide, often accentuated by open boundaries and some grass verges, particularly to corners. There is generally a notable absence of street trees throughout the character area although many gardens have ornamental trees to front gardens with well-maintained hedge-lined boundaries, generally adding to the quality and natural enclosure of the street scene.

#### 2.2.11 *Open space*

Open space facilities include school grounds, play areas, recreation grounds, green spaces within areas of housing, some greenways between estates and a small allotment site off Stroud Green Lane. Stubbington Recreation Ground (HHS02a), also directly linked to the playing fields of Crofton Anne Dale Junior and Infant Schools, and Seafield Park (HHS02c) are the two main large amenity green spaces, with sports pitches, recreational spaces, play facilities, informal semi-natural green spaces, and a seafront green space (Seafield). Stubbington is directly linked to school playing fields and community sports facilities to the west and east. A north-south tree-lined greenway, often following a stream, links Stubbington to the Crofton Hammond Schools' sports fields and then to Seafield Park. Houses back and front on to Seafield Park which, to the east, is interlinked with play facilities and semi-natural green spaces of Stubbington Study Centre, a county-run educational facility. Together, these facilities form an important green corridor and off-road route to the seafront. The Seafield Park area is an important break in the developed shoreline with a particularly high local amenity value. The beach at Hill Head, Titchfield Haven, and the rights of way network along the coast and around Titchfield Haven all provide further recreational facilities.

Sub-area HHS02e is distinctive for its high degree of open space provision (and retention of historic tree-lined boundaries), woven into the layout of the houses, giving this sub-area, despite its tight grain, a feeling of spatial quality and sense of openness throughout.

Looser-grain housing with substantial gardens is characteristic of HHS02b, particularly properties relating to the waterfront and Titchfield Haven. These open garden spaces are particularly important to the setting of the character area on its south-western boundary.

The seafront, including its generous parking provision, is an important open space which is very popular throughout the year (but particularly in the summer months) and is used by people taking advantage of the recreational aspects of the waterfront; sailing, windsurfing, kitesurfing and kite flying. This mix of activity is an important part of the character of this section of the Solent Water.

#### 2.2.12 Biodiversity

Designations which adjoin the settlement include Seafield Park Playing Field, which lies to the west of HHS02d, and a small ancient semi-natural woodland Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Tips Copse, which lies adjacent to Queens Crescent, east of HHS02a. Vicarage Meadow SINC lies entirely within HHS02a. The Seafield Park area is important for Brent Geese, whilst Vicarage Meadow is a small grassland site adjacent to Stubbington Recreation Ground. In addition, as described in the overview section, the intertidal habitats along the length of the coastline, as well as the estuarine habitats of Titchfield Haven, are internationally important for biodiversity.

There are frequent green corridors through the settlement, which form potentially species-rich urban habitats, and in places these corridors form wider patches with the countryside beyond. Habitats include interlinked patches of medium- to generous-sized gardens, especially where there is moderate- to loose-grain suburban housing, often with mature planting together with the open space network, greenways and retained historic field boundaries within the settlement. There are particular corridors within HHS02b, and between Stubbington and Seafield Parks. In addition, Seafield Park (HHS02c), with its semi-natural habitats within and adjoining the character area, is directly connected to the shoreline and is an important biodiversity resource. Housing within the south-western corner of HHS02b, with large mature gardens, backs onto Titchfield Haven and forms a larger habitat patch with higher potential wildlife value. The open spaces are also often lined by rear gardens of houses (some of which are substantial). They often have tree boundaries or small sections of woodland to the edges which add to their wildlife potential.

### 2.2.13 *Access and connectivity*

There is good access to all parts of this character area, with a hierarchy of roads, lanes and footpaths favouring the pedestrian, but also allowing good access and connectivity for vehicles. Travel north–south is slightly favourable to the car user, with a series of footpaths and other pedestrianised routes favouring the pedestrian moving east–west. The Solent Way passes uninterrupted along the shoreline (following the character area’s southern border) and links to the rest of the shoreline of Solent Water, down to Gosport and up to the River Hamble and beyond.