

# HYTHE

## Character Assessment

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# HYTHE

## Character Assessment

### I OVERVIEW

I.1 Hythe lies on the eastern edge of the New Forest. The historic village of Hythe overlooks Southampton Water, a marine inlet into which the Rivers Test, Itchen and Hamble flow. The modern conurbation has grown south-westwards across to the edge of the open forest, the limit of development now clearly defined by the A326 (Hythe by-pass). Although the area of the conurbation along the coast is low lying and relatively flat, the topography of the central part of the area is undulating and intricate before becoming flatter towards the forest edge. The town is a gateway into the rural New Forest National Park which lies directly to the west, and is popular for waterfront views and recreation opportunities. Many views, however, are dominated by the urban landscapes of Fawley Power Station and nearby oil refinery to the south-east, and the docks and tower blocks of Southampton, which lie across the water.



I.2 To the north-west of the settlement is coastal plain and lowland mosaic, a landscape of small, often irregular, enclosures which extends into the conurbation at its north-western part where development has occurred in a more fragmented fashion, leaving large areas of countryside or woodland between development areas. To the south-east is enclosed coastal plain.

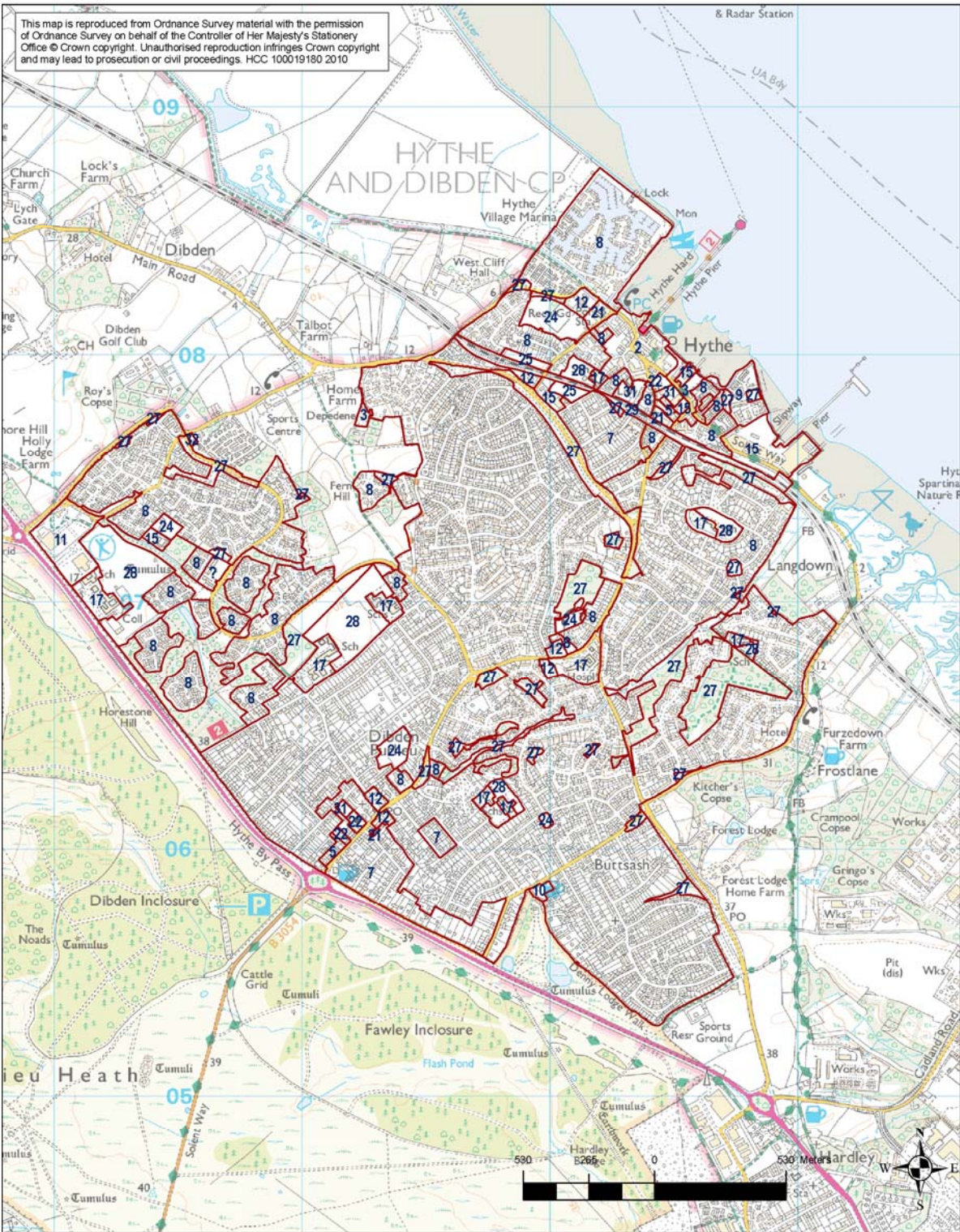
I.3 Until the mid-twentieth century Hythe was a small coastal village focused on High Street and St John's Street, with boat-building and hards along the shore off Shore Road. Elsewhere within the area, a small settlement had begun to develop in the late-nineteenth century at Dibden Purlieu but even by 1940 this was a small, contained area of development set out on a series of straight streets, some forming small grids. The street pattern of this area contrasts with the generally irregular curving pattern of roads and streets across the remainder of the conurbation which partly reflects the pattern of earlier lanes and the topography of the area.

I.4 A major feature of the landscape and settlement pattern into the first part of the twentieth century was the presence of many large houses set in park-like grounds. Most of these large houses and parks have been lost through modern development but in a few cases the house survives (as at Furzedown on the eastern edge of the conurbation) and elements of its wooded grounds have been preserved within the development. A similar partial survival of woodland occurred at the site of Purlieu House north of Dibden Purlieu. Forest Lodge, a little to the south of Furzedown, lies outside but adjacent to the conurbation and still survives within its park.

- I.5 The late-twentieth century saw the massive growth of housing development in the area between Hythe and Dibden Purlieu, together with the construction of several new schools and a hospital. At Dibden, a marina and housing development has been constructed to serve the interest in yachting.
- I.6 The heathland habitats adjacent to the town in the New Forest are internationally important for their biodiversity interest, and the coastline is also internationally protected.

## Hampshire Towns Character Assessment – Townscape Types

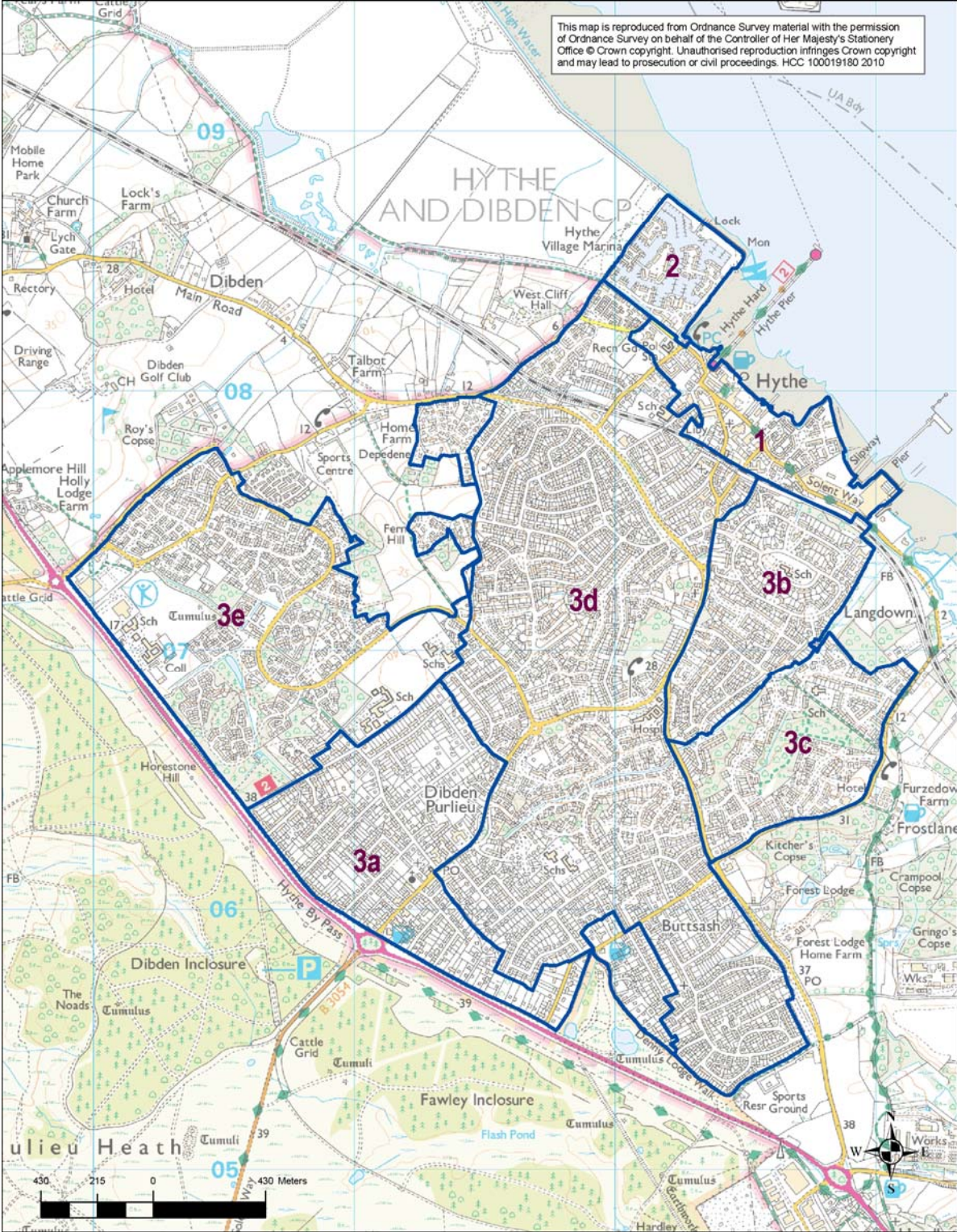
<b>TCT</b>	<b>Description</b>
01	Medieval Planned Urban Settlement
02	Rural Settlement
03	Post Medieval Development 1600–1819
04	Residential 1820–1869
05	Residential 1870–1914 (Terraces, Semi-detached, Small Detached Houses)
06	Residential 1870–1914 (Villas)
07	Residential 1915–1945
08	Residential Post 1945–Present (Houses and Bungalows)
09	Residential Post 1945–Present (Flats, 4 storey 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



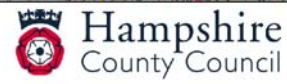
## **HYTHE TOWNSCAPE TYPES**



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**HYTHE  
CHARACTER AREAS**



## 2 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

### 2.1 HTHE01 Historic core and waterfront

#### 2.1.1 Character Summary

***This character area comprises the historic core of Hythe, a settlement which started as a fishing village around a tidal inlet. The settlement runs parallel to but set back from and partially turning its back to the water, but with glimpses to the waterfront and beyond to Southampton and Hamble. Development is directly related to the water. Excellent views are had away from and towards the historic core (particularly from the Victorian pier). Those towards Hythe are strongly defined by mature trees, many of which are specimen trees planted in the mid- to late-nineteenth century when Hythe was experiencing perhaps the greatest and most rapid degree of change in its evolution. There is a vibrant mix of uses to the historic core which service an important residential hinterland and Hythe Marina.***

#### 2.1.2 Key Characteristics

- A compact core of mixed-use buildings (mostly retro-fitted), mostly small independent retailers set along High Street parallel to the waterfront
- Topography is flat and low lying
- Mix of small and some medium-sized buildings on regular plots (some having been amalgamated) generally producing a fine grain
- Building line is consistent throughout with shopfronts and houses set mostly to the back of pavement
- Mostly red brick, some gault and/or yellow brick, painted stucco and render, clay tile and natural slate and some modern concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey buildings, mostly on a traditional scale with upper windows tucked under eaves
- Good mix of uses; retail, residential in the form of houses and flats above shops, plus school, church and public houses and restaurants
- Good tree groups throughout, strongly defining former and present private gardens, the churchyard and parts of the waterfront, also good tree belt to railway line
- Some good shared surfaces and pedestrianised areas; small informal squares and unusually high survival of traditional boundary treatments – mostly cast and wrought iron railings
- Access and connectivity are good throughout for the pedestrian, including ferry links to Southampton. The car-user is more restricted by the water-front and areas of pedestrianisation

#### 2.1.3 Boundaries and setting

The north-eastern boundary of the character area comprises the open waterfront to Southampton Water. To the north is Hythe Marina (HTHE02) and to the west and south are the residential suburbs (HTHE03), Dibden Purlieu and Langdown respectively.

The setting of this character area includes the extended views to be had across Southampton Water and from the Pier, with the former Drummond Arms being a prominent building when viewed from the foreshore. The remaining built form of the village is partially obscured by trees, with elements of present and former boatbuilding enterprises, in part, characterising the water's edge.

Open views out across Southampton Water and towards Hamble are important elements of the character area.

#### 2.1.4 *Designations*

There are a number of statutory listed buildings, particularly to Prospect Place, High Street and St John's Street which include the church of St John. Most buildings are domestic in scale and character and date from the eighteenth century (with possibly earlier cores) and early-nineteenth century. A notable group (in terms of building type) is the public houses and hotels, including the prominent former Drummond Arms. All buildings are Grade II listed.

There are a number of unlisted buildings identified within the conservation area as making a positive contribution. This includes the 2,100 feet long pier, opened on New Years Day in 1881, with waiting rooms and landing places. In 1896, railway lines were laid along the pier for carrying cargo and these were upgraded to an electric passenger railway in 1922. The pier is an important local landmark and used daily by ferries sailing to and from Southampton.

The historic core of Hythe (which shares boundaries with the character area) is a designated conservation area.

#### 2.1.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT02, 03, 08, 09, 12, 15, 21, 22 and 31.

#### 2.1.6 *Topography*

The area is adjacent to the waterfront and there is a very limited change in level from the water to the historic core. The area is flat throughout.

#### 2.1.7 *Layout and Pattern*

The historic origins of this settlement, that of a fishing hamlet set around a tidal inlet which has retained its village scale, is still evident in the layout and pattern of development within the character area. This can be defined as small houses (some part converted to other uses) and public houses in clusters on regular, sometimes deep, plots thus producing a fine grain running in an informal series of roads and lanes parallel and perpendicular to the waterfront. Lanes and footpaths lead to the waterfront from the historic core. Residential development, away from what is considered the commercial core, backs (St John's Street) or fronts (Prospect Place) onto the foreshore.



Buildings vary between being set to the back of the pavement or having some small front garden area. The latter is often enclosed by traditional railings, retaining a generally strongly defined building line and creating memorable townscape and positive enclosure to streets. There is often a juxtaposition of the enclosure of the roads and the open views to the water.

#### 2.1.8 *Buildings and materials*

There is a striking consistency in terms of scale within this character area. This is one of the key defining aspects of its distinction from the rest of the Hythe area. The traditional buildings of the character area are generally small in size and scale; two storey with only very limited use of dormers or rooflights and usually no more than two or three bays, with exceptions such as the former Drummond Arms. There are few eighteenth-century buildings, with most buildings dating from the nineteenth century. A notable group in terms of building type is the public houses and (former) hotels of which there are a number. This is reflective of the town's fishing village origins. In addition there are the institutional buildings; church and school.

A number of older buildings have been retro-fitted with shopfronts and are part retail to ground floors and residential above. This has generally not diminished the special character of the buildings and has added interest to the streetscene.

Red brick dominates (usually a strong orange hue to older houses), although many have been painted and there is some stucco and painted render. Gault or yellow brick is also seen in small numbers. There are notable examples of mathematical tiles to some of the earlier eighteenth-century houses.

Modern houses and flats have weatherboarding.

Roofs are slate or tile, depending on the period (houses later than mid-nineteenth century tend to have slate). There is some replacement with concrete interlocking tiles but this is only seen in limited numbers to the historic core.

#### 2.1.9 *Predominant land use*

There is a vibrant mix of uses including independent retailers in the small commercial area along with public houses and restaurants. There is also a supermarket to the edge of the centre. Residential properties are interspersed with commercial, with many of the shops being later insertions to older residential buildings.

There is a church and a school, and community uses, such as a local library, serving the wider residential areas to the west and south.

#### 2.1.10 *Public realm*

There is a series of pedestrian-friendly spaces including High Street, Admirals Way and the junction between The Marsh and St John's Street. Boundaries to public footpaths are distinctive because of the significant survival of cast and wrought iron railings throughout the character area, adding to the general quality of the public realm. Lighting is generally unobtrusive and includes replica Victorian light columns to High Street.

Parking is generally confined to off-street car parks and private parking areas off the road.

#### 2.1.11 *Open space*

There are a number of important open spaces within the character area. Prospect Green is an attractive park with an open grassed area giving views to the water. The grounds of The Grove on St John's Street form an important setting for the house and open space linked to the Sir Christopher Cockerell memorial adjacent (with large oak tree to the centre). The churchyard is lined with mature trees forming a key setting for the church and green space (albeit of limited amenity value) close to the commercial core. To the commercial core, outside the small modern shopping development known as the Knighton Centre, there is a small square which acts as a well-used social gathering space within the village.

A number of houses have private gardens, some of which are large open green spaces. Some of them, such as those to 21 Prospect Place, can be appreciated from the public realm.

There are several large surface-level car parks which are well used in the village but comprise large open areas of weak townscape, breaking down the continuity of the building line in the streetscene.

#### 2.1.12 *Biodiversity*

The intertidal mudflats of the Hythe waterfront are part of the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, and are internationally important for the bird species they support. These European and international designations are underpinned by the Hythe-to-Calshot Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Trees play an important role in defining the backdrop of the village in extended views from the water and in marking (in part) the line of the waterfront. The village is notable for its excellent examples of specimen trees (Monterey Pine, Eucalyptus and Holm Oak) planted in the nineteenth century which have reached maturity and are seen in numbers. Views from Hythe Marina towards the village are particularly characterised by the backdrop and framing of development by mature tree belts and groups. The Grove and the churchyard both have good groups of trees, defining views to and from the water and framing historic buildings. Limes, oak, sycamores and horse chestnuts, individually and collectively, are prominent in extended views and strongly define the waterfront in places, possessing landmark qualities in terms of scale and placement.

The belt of trees and scrub along the railway line to the south, together with mature private gardens and street trees, provide some urban wildlife habitats.

### 2.1.13 Access and connectivity

There is excellent access and connectivity for the pedestrian, and transport links via the ferry to Southampton. Vehicle users are more restricted with a number of areas pedestrianised and the car discouraged from the central commercial areas and waterfront. The railway line is a barrier to pedestrian connection of the residential suburbs to the west and south with the waterfront although there are a number of crossing points (bridges both over and under the railway line) for cars and pedestrians alike. The Solent Way long-distance footpath runs from the ferry and through the character area, providing pedestrian access to waterside habitats to the south-east and out to the New Forest.

## 2.2 HTHE02 Hythe Marina

### 2.2.1 Character Summary

***Hythe Marina was the first ‘marina village’ to be constructed in the United Kingdom and set a benchmark for this building type and its close relationship with its waterside setting and its close connection with yachting and boat ownership generally. It is located on the western shore of Southampton Water and comprises a development of 209 berths to the marina, lined by houses with shops, restaurants and bars. The marina is gated and public access is largely restricted to the waterfront.***

***The development is arranged around a series of private courts with all houses looking out to the water and often incorporating a private berth for a boat. This model has been repeated across the south coast and elsewhere and the built form is distinctive and could be considered to form a marine vernacular.***

### 2.2.2 Key characteristics

- A purpose-built gated private housing community set around a series of linked marinas separated from Southampton Water by a lock
- The area is flat and comprises reclaimed land
- Regular relatively narrow plots with all enjoying direct private access to water, and most having a private berth for boats allocated with the house
- Buildings lines are gently staggered throughout groups
- Mix of red brick and render, some weatherboarding, clay tile and slate to roofs to provide variation
- Mostly two- and two-and-a-half-storey houses (the latter making use of the roofspace)
- Predominantly residential, some services and shops, restaurants and a café
- Almost no mature trees (other than to western boundary), some ornamental trees and shrubs to developing gardens and landscaped areas
- A high-quality private realm with limited access to the public; the publicly accessible areas are in part dominated by car parking and large areas of tarmac
- Limited public access and connectivity

### 2.2.3 *Boundaries and setting*

To the west, the character area is bounded in part by the Historic Core and Waterfront (HTHE01) and the residential suburbs of HTHE03. A watercourse defines the boundary between the marina development and its adjacent character areas. To the north-east and south-east, Southampton Water lies beyond the boundary of the developed area which is enclosed by a levee forming a continuous pedestrian route to the water's edge and providing some parking areas for visitors to the marina. To the north is the low-lying open grassland and foreshore of Dibden.

The marina is prominent in views across the water from Southampton and along the shoreline. It is set apart from the older settlement and connectivity with this area (HTHE01) is limited, particularly because of the watercourse between them. The marina is intimately related to Southampton Water and the waterfront and this open setting is an important part of its character.

### 2.2.4 *Designations*

There are no statutory listed buildings or conservation areas within the character area. The Hythe Conservation Area lies adjacent to the south-western section of boundary and the character area forms, in part, the setting of the northern sections of the conservation area, particularly the waterfront.

### 2.2.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT08.

### 2.2.6 *Topography*

The area is flat and comprises reclaimed land with development raised on built up islands, surrounded by a levee which is connected, via a lock, to Southampton Water.

### 2.2.7 *Layout and Pattern*

Despite the relatively fine-grain nature of development, much of the character area comprises marina, and boat storage, which gives it a sense of openness. Development comprises a series of islands and small projecting sections of land set seemingly randomly (although many take advantage of the view south along Southampton Water) around an enclosed square of reclaimed land, part of which has been excavated to form a marina. The islands are reached by a causeway. The islands and projections are arranged so that houses line the outer edge and face out to the surrounding water. The inner spaces are parking courts, private parking areas, small gardens and hard-landscaped areas. Each building has access to a private waterside berth, floating pontoon or quay area. To most houses, small private gardens sit between the house and waterfront although some front directly on to the waterside.

The groups of houses to islands or projecting landform are staggered. However, this variation to the building line is subtle and lost within the group so that they appear consistent. The ridgeline consistently sits parallel to the waterside and variation is achieved through staggered building lines and minor variations on ridge and eaves height.

### 2.2.8 *Buildings and materials*

Houses are strongly defined by their deep roof form throughout and often the roof will be articulated with rooflights or dormers. Variation is achieved by varying ridge and eaves lines, staggering the building line and changing roofing material from clay tile to natural slate.

There is a much use of glazing to take advantage of views and balconied areas. All houses have a strong relationship with the waterfront, and the boats moored in the marina add to the strong sense of a marine vernacular.

Materials are consistent to groups but used to create variation to the streetscene. These comprise a mix of red brick, painted render (cream or white), and weatherboarding. Roofs are mostly clay tile, with some natural slate providing variation. The roofscape is a consistently dominant feature of the development and is a characteristic of the marine vernacular which can be seen throughout early marina development.

### 2.2.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost entirely residential; private houses mostly set in gated courts. There are a small number of units providing services, such as a hairdresser and a restaurant.

### 2.2.10 *Public realm*

There is a high-quality private realm to the landscaped courts and private parking areas. These areas are integral to the housing groups and maintained through private management agreements.

### 2.2.11 *Open space*

There is a high degree of private open spaces to the housing groups. These are hard-landscaped and provide access and some additional parking for houses. To the edge of the marina is a hard-landscaped area given over predominantly to parking, although this appears to be underused. Gardens are very small amenity spaces adjacent to the water. Marina Mound is, however, a large amenity green space accessible to the north of the character area.

### 2.2.12 *Biodiversity*

The predominance of hard surfaces, the island nature of much of the development and a lack of connectivity with surrounding habitats limits the biodiversity value and habitats of this character area, although it is surrounded on three sides by designated sites. These include the inter-tidal Ramsar site, SPA and SSSI complex to the north-east and south-east (noted in HTHE01). To the north-west, Marina Mound open space is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), connecting to Dibden Bay SSSI beyond, which is grazed semi-natural neutral grassland.

### 2.2.13 *Access and connectivity*

Given the mostly private access to the house groups and very limited access for cars other than for owners of the properties, it is considered that access and connectivity are poor throughout the character area. Pedestrians do have access to the waterfront and this connects with the open space and foreshore to the north although there is no public right of way.

## 2.3 HTHE03 Residential Suburbs

### 2.3.1 Character Summary

***This large character area can be broadly described as a predominantly residential development to the east of the A326 and the west of the railway line. There are five distinct phases. From the inter-war period Dibden Purlieu developed as an area of private speculative mixed housing at a coarse to medium grain on a grid of streets and roads. The immediate-post-war period is represented by the 'Garden City'- type social housing expansion of Hythe to the south. These areas are then connected (or infilled) by extensive 1970s and onwards extension, running to the west of Southampton Road, Langdown Lawn and Butts Bridge Hill. The area to the north of Water Lane is the final phase of development in the late-twentieth century. This final phase is particularly distinctive for its retained areas of ancient woodland and areas of very-high-quality wildlife habitats. These distinct phases have been defined by five sub-areas. There is very little remaining of the former parkland upon which this area was developed, although some historic boundaries and the occasional area of planned landscaping, such as Langdown Firs, survive.***

***Within the character area, there are small and medium-sized district centres such as Dibden Purlieu but these are not of sufficient scale or character to warrant separate character area description. These areas, by reason of their scale and contemporary period of development (to their host residential estates), are read as part of fabric of the predominantly residential areas.***

### 2.3.2 Key characteristics

#### Sub-areas of HTHE03

##### 03a. Dibden Purlieu

- Older residential development at a coarse to medium grain with a rectangular block layout.
- The topography is very gently rising to the north
- A mix of houses and bungalows set on medium-sized to large plots on a grid of roads which includes cul-de-sacs
- Consistent building lines, with only very minor variation throughout, dwellings set back from the road with low boundary hedges defining the road
- A wide variation in materials but generally red brick (some other colours are also seen such as gault brick) or painted render, with clay tile and modern concrete interlocking tiles
- Bungalows and two-storey houses, some use of the chalet bungalow plan with dormers to the roofspace
- Predominantly residential with small district centre of independent retailers and services
- Some mature boundaries of hedges and trees. Good trees to rear gardens
- Mostly off-road parking, wide roads with no grass verges or street trees
- Good access and connectivity due to the grid layout

### 03b. *Langdown Environs*

- Medium- to fine-grain housing laid out to Garden City principles
- The landform is slowly undulating throughout and falls to the north-east
- Long sweeping roads of terraced and semi-detached housing in small to medium-sized regular plots
- Consistent building lines to streets and to groups which help formally define open spaces within and to the edges of estates
- Brick and painted render are seen in equal measure, mix of clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses almost throughout
- Residential throughout; single-family dwelling houses
- A high degree of small to medium-sized public open green space between houses and to the edges of estates as well as in informal small, medium-sized and large green courts. Some front gardens have hedges
- Housing areas are characterised by wide roads with grass verges and larger 'break out' open grass areas. Some on-street parking, and front gardens used for parking
- Good access and connectivity, with a series of footpaths linking to the Solent Way

### 03c. *Furzey Piece*

- Immediate-post-war and later housing expansion (1970s) retaining large areas of green space
- Gently undulating topography
- Modestly sized private dwelling houses in short terraces, and semi-detached and detached housing, laid out in very informal grids often backing onto green space
- Consistent building lines throughout, houses set back from road with front gardens and open boundaries. Some groups are offset from the road but maintain a consistent line within their group
- Red brick, tile hanging, weatherboarding, with concrete interlocking tiles and some plain machine-made clay tile
- Bungalows and two-storey housing
- Private dwelling houses throughout
- Large areas of retained ancient woodland form the setting for most development
- Wide roads with only limited on-street parking, some grass verges and green spaces adjacent to highway
- Good access and connectivity, with areas linked by footpaths and green spaces

#### 03d. Hythe

- Post-war development at a medium grain throughout, with predominantly curvilinear shaped streets and blocks
- The topography is undulating to the north, flat to the south
- A mix of semi-detached and detached houses with some limited terraced housing, on medium-sized plots
- Building lines are consistent to the roadsides throughout, but dwellings are generally set back from the road with open boundaries
- Red brick, some buff and yellow brick, some tile hanging and weatherboarding with clay tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Mostly two-storey houses, some bungalows
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Mix of boundary treatments but mostly open or with low hedges
- Very limited on-street parking. Very few street trees, but most roads have grass verges, some are very large (e.g. those to Southampton Road)
- Good access and connectivity, particularly for the pedestrian, with a series of footpaths running behind and between roads and linking separate estates

#### 03e. Applemore environs

- 1970s, 1980s and 1990s small to medium-sized housing estates of a fine-grain character but broken up and set within retained blocks of mature woodland. Numerous cul-de-sacs.
- The area is gently undulating throughout
- Small to medium-sized plots with generally small front and rear gardens
- A varied and irregular building line to the south, with houses and groups often inward-looking, but more consistency in groups to the north
- Wide variation of brick colours and types and mostly modern clay tile roofs, tile hanging and some decorative joinery
- Two-storey houses throughout
- Residential throughout; generally small to medium-sized dwelling houses, some clusters of larger houses
- Very good survival of mature trees forming much of the setting to development, some survival within developments
- Some variation in materials to shared surfaces of cul-de-sacs and access drives to multiple properties, limited on-street parking, open boundaries but no grass verges or street trees
- Good access and connectivity though much development is inward-facing

#### 2.3.3 Boundaries and setting

This character area takes in the suburban extensions of the village of Hythe. It is strongly defined by the line of the 'Hythe bypass' (A326) to the west, and by the railway line to the east, separating this area from the historic core (HTHE01). To the north is Dibden Golf Course and to the south is open countryside interspersed with woodland, with the Solent Way running along the edge of suburban development.



The wider context of this area is based on its role as a backdrop to the foreshore in extended views from Southampton. The gently rising landform appears as a heavily wooded area rising back from the waterfront. Area HTHE03e, in particular, contributes to this treed backdrop.

#### 2.3.4 *Designations*

Deepdene House (formerly listed as Shipdene), in HTHE03e, is a Grade II listed, early eighteenth-century house, altered in the early-nineteenth century. The Hythe Conservation Area lies to the north-east of the railway, and sections of development adjacent to the boundary could be considered to form part of its setting.

#### 2.3.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT03, 07, 08, 11, 12, 15, 16, 24, 27, 28 and 30.

#### 2.3.6 *Topography*

The landform is undulating throughout but steadily climbs in places, thus giving the wooded slopes seen in extended views from Southampton Water. There are very limited extended views despite sometimes sharp changes in gradient because of much enclosure from tree belt and wooded sections of the character area.

#### 2.3.7 *Layout and Pattern*

There is some variation in layout and pattern across the character area, mostly reflecting the different grain and block layout shape and frequency of cul-de-sac-dominated housing and period of development, and the retention or otherwise of woodland and historic boundaries. There are some distinct phases of development which are reflected in the sub-areas identified within this character area. The following is a broad overview of the key layout patterns seen within HTHE03.

The inter-war and immediate-post-war development which makes up HTHE03a (the older core of Dibden Purlieu) is characterised by a grid layout with cul-de-sacs providing an uncrowded low- to medium-grain settlement pattern, with generous single- and two-storey, mostly detached dwellings set in medium-sized to large front and rear gardens. Boundaries vary but are often hedge-lined. There has been limited loss of boundaries because most houses have driveways.

HTHE03b and part of HTHE03c comprise finer-grain immediate-post-war housing areas and have been laid out with direct reference to 'Garden City' principles. Houses are often grouped round small, medium-sized and large greens and there are wide principal routes with narrower feeder roads. This is well illustrated in the sub-area HTHE03b around the Langdown Road area.

HTHE03d comprises a series of post-war developments which are consistent within their periods of construction. These are generally at a medium grain and have underlying strongly defined character due to the predominance of a single type of building, be it single-storey or two-storey buildings, and a continuity in building line. There is also a strong uniformity in plot widths. Houses are generally 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.

To HTHE03e, the mixed 1970s, 1980s and 1990s housing estates are built to a predominantly fine grain with irregular layout of dwellings and often employ single main access roads with a single entry point or a loop and many feeder roads serving several cul-de-sacs and small loops. These areas are characterised by informality to the building line and with constant curving of the roadside, and grouping of houses around a shared surface close or cul-de-sac. This sub-area is not very legible and tends to lack a sense of place.

### 2.3.8 *Buildings and materials*

There is a broad mix of bungalows and houses (semi-detached and detached) throughout this character area with the exception of sub-area HTHE03e which almost entirely has houses. There tends to be more variation to form to late twentieth-century development, with more articulation of the façades with gabled projecting bays and half hips. The chalet bungalow is seen throughout the character area (with the exceptions of HTHE03e and HTHE03b) where dormers in part define the roofscape. The older housing stock to HTHE03a has been much altered and extended, with some rebuilding and development of backland plots.

Older areas such as HTHE03a have far more variation to materials, with a mix of brick (mostly red) and painted render seen in equal numbers.

Stylistically there is some variation across the character area. All development would be generally considered as traditional, with brick (various colours), pitched roofs and front and back gardens. Front boundary treatments vary but are generally open or partially enclosed with hedges. There is widespread use of tile hanging and weatherboarding throughout the character area.

Roofs are mostly clay tile, machine-cut or concrete interlocking tiles of various styles.

### 2.3.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost entirely single-family dwelling houses. There are small district parades of shops, and corner shops within estates and on the main roads through sub-areas. Churches, chapels, community facilities, schools and colleges are key land uses and dispersed within the character areas.

### 2.3.10 *Public realm*

The roads are generally wide throughout this character area. Grass verges tend to be seen consistently in some areas (e.g. throughout HTHE03b and HTHE03d) but not at all in others, and there is a notable absence of street trees throughout. Boundaries and enclosure vary, with some estates having open boundaries to front gardens, and this accentuates a feeling of space to these estates (e.g. most of HTHE03e). Otherwise, boundaries are usually low hedges or in some case close-boarded fences. There is relatively limited on-street parking and some front gardens have been converted to parking spaces but most houses have driveways.

Southampton Road is notable for its almost boulevard qualities, where green space with trees divides carriageways and forms a major memorable route between housing developments.

### 2.3.11 *Open space*

Open spaces within the town include semi-natural woodlands and grasslands, recreation grounds, school playing fields, play areas, allotments, and formal parks. Facilities tend to be concentrated towards the waterfront, or within the north-western corner of the character area (HTHE03e). Playing fields are generally connected to small, medium-sized and large school complexes.

There are good survivals of ancient woodland, often associated with earlier parkland to large houses (some of these houses survive), characteristic of sub-area HTHE03c and HTHE03e where most development is set against a backdrop of trees and historic field boundaries.

Sub-area HTHE03d has a relative lack of public open space, although there are some facilities located in the north and south of this sub-area. HTHE03a also lies adjacent to the open New Forest, although the A336 forms an access barrier. Forest Front is a semi-natural open space managed as a nature reserve and play area on the southern edge of HTHE03a and HTHE03d.

### 2.3.12 *Biodiversity*

The New Forest lies directly adjacent to HTHE03a and HTHE03e, and is heavily designated for its biodiversity interest as a Ramsar Site, SPA, Special Area of Conservation and SSSI. The A326, however, forms a hard barrier between the urban and semi-natural New Forest habitats.

There are significant opportunities for enhancing biodiversity within woodlands and wildlife corridors throughout the character area. The estate developments of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s retained large areas of green space and development has been woven between large pockets of woodland. This is particularly characteristic of sub-areas HTHE03c and HTHE03e. Six of the woodland fragments are listed as ancient semi-natural woodland and designated as SINC. There are several more woodland SINCs adjacent to the town. There is also a small wetland flush SINC in HTHE03e. The woodlands, together with planting and mature trees, create a well-wooded setting for houses in HTHE03c, HTHE03e and parts of HTHE03d.

There is some survival of early field boundaries and watercourses, most notably those travelling west to east through the southern section of HTHE03d and forming the boundary to sub-areas HTHE03b and HTHE03c.

Almost all houses have private gardens of varying size and maturity. In places these form green corridors where they link with each other and to open space, grassland, woodland or planting along transport corridors (the A326 and the railway line), particularly in HTHE03c, HTHE03d and HTHE03e. The open spaces in HTHE03e form a wide green corridor linking to the open countryside beyond.

### 2.3.13 *Access and connectivity*

Connectivity varies within HTHE03 but is generally good throughout. There are often footpath alternatives for the pedestrian, which link a series of wooded areas, open green space and recreational green spaces.

For the car-borne traveller much of the character area is legible and accessible, with the exception of the estates of sub-area HTHE03e because of their inward-facing character. The A326 transport corridor (Hythe bypass) acts as a significant barrier to wider access to the New Forest but also forms a strongly defined boundary to the developed suburban expansion of Hythe. The railway line to the east impedes access to the waterfront. However, there are a good number of road and footpath links over and under the track. Footpaths run south to link with the Solent Way which skirts development to the south-eastern boundary. Pedestrians can take advantage of the ferry service to Southampton from HTHE01.