

ROMSEY

Character Assessment

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ROMSEY

Character Assessment

I OVERVIEW

I.1 Romsey is an historic rural market town lying in the lower reaches of the Test Valley north of Southampton. The historic core of the town lies on the flat valley floor to the east of the river which at this point flows in three principal channels, one of which is a former mill race. Further small streams flow through the built-up area; these watercourses are important elements in the evolution of the town. The southern edge of the town is partly defined by another small stream, the



Tadburn Lake, a tributary of the Test. Two railway lines meet in Romsey, splitting the town into three; the Southampton to Salisbury line bisects the town from south to north-west, and is joined by the Eastleigh line entering the town to the west. The historic core and Victorian suburbs lie to the west of the railway line. To the north and east of the railway line the land rises from the two valleys to the north-east where the highest point is found within the main block of the conurbation, although the land continues to gradually increase in height along The Straight Mile which is lined by large properties in a form of ribbon development and which is considered to be part of the suburban area of Romsey. In addition to the historic core of the town there were several small rural settlements, including Cupernham, New Pond and Little Woodley that have been subsumed within suburban development.

I.2 The town is bounded on its west side by the River Test, although some development has pushed out into the valley floor crossing two of the three main branches of the river. To the north, the town is partly constrained by low-lying watermeadows and open countryside (to the north of Cupernham and also to the eastern edge of the developed area) except along The Straight Mile where the housing lies within a heavily-wooded area. South of the historic core of the town the walled boundary of the park of Brooklands forms an abrupt edge to the town. To the south-east, suburban development has extended as far as the A27 where, except for a small block of fields, the town almost abuts the modern housing of North Baddesley.

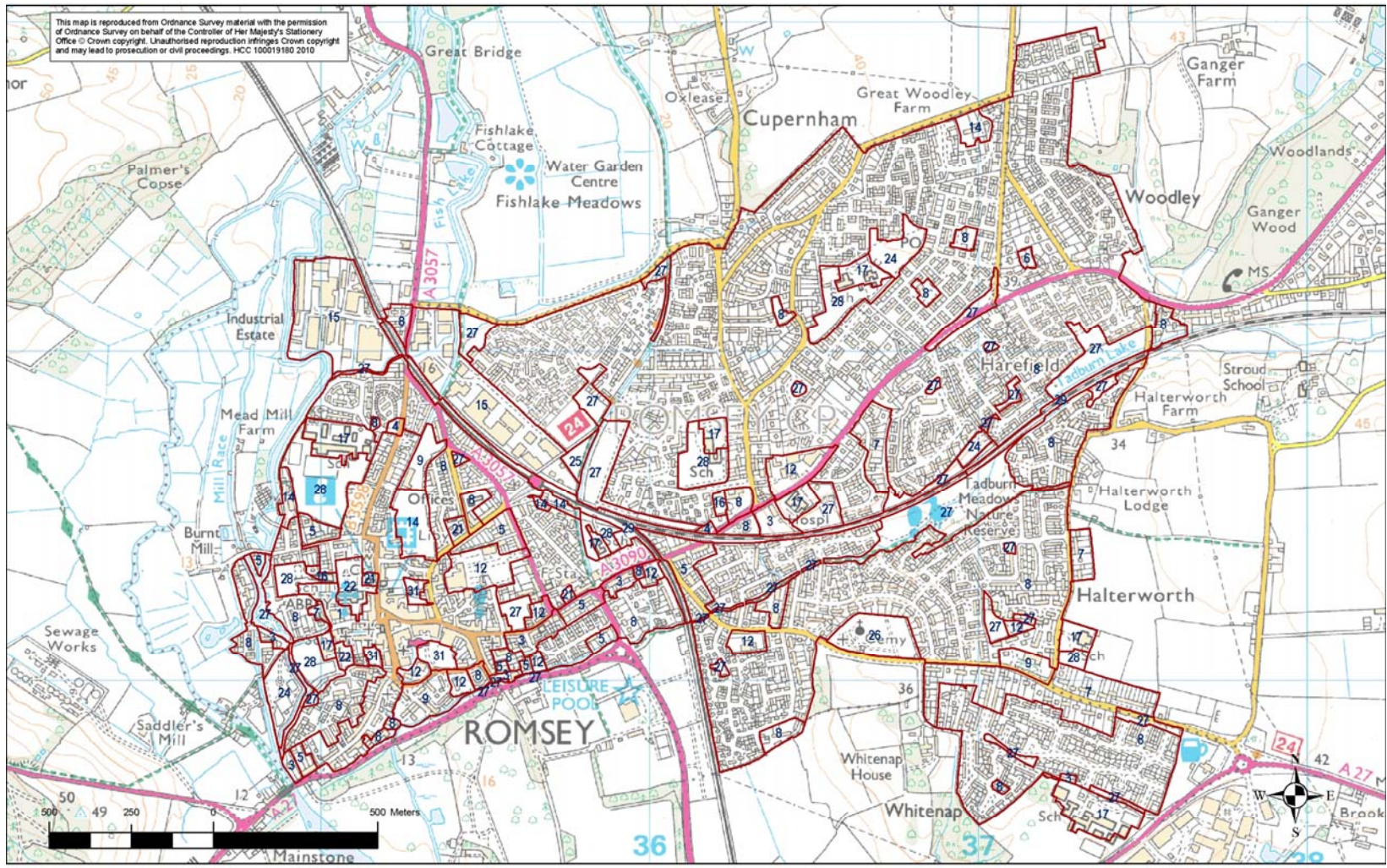
I.3 Romsey is a town of Saxon origin which developed at the gates of the abbey, traditionally founded in 907 AD. The abbey was contained within a precinct between the River Test and the market place to the east. The north and south boundaries of the precinct have not been identified, although the right angle turns at the north end of Church Street and The Horsefair may mark the northern limit. The triangular market place lay outside the abbey gate and was lined with properties to the north and south. By the late medieval period Romsey was a thriving town. Its economy was principally based on cloth making but other industries included tanning and milling with areas of suburban development along Middlebridge Street, Cherville

Street and Banning Street. The town had barely grown beyond the limits of the late medieval settlement by the early-twentieth century, apart from some ribbon development along Winchester Road. Even the coming of the railway in the mid-nineteenth century did not stimulate any large-scale development; only a terrace of houses appeared along Station Road. Between the wars, there was some limited development to the east of the Southampton railway line, both north of Winchester Hill and off Botley Road to the south-east. Post-war the town expanded rapidly to the east and to a small extent to the north. Most of this was medium- to fine-grain-layout housing development and some industrial areas but along The Straight Mile detached houses set in large plots were built to either side of the road.

- I.4 There is a Town Design Statement, called 'Look at Romsey', which has a character assessment associated with it and which has been adopted by Test Valley Borough Council.

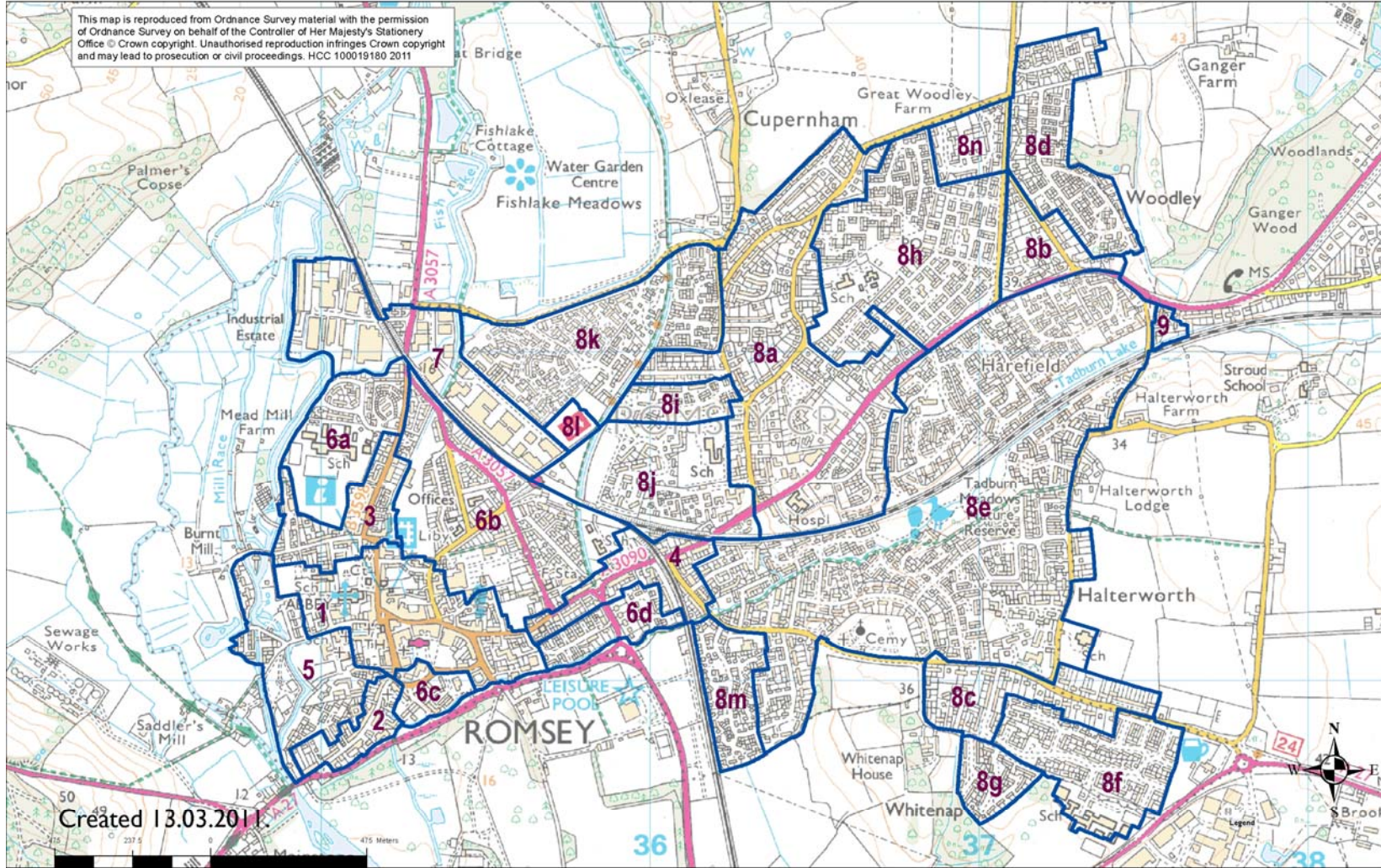
Hampshire Towns Character Assessment – Townscape Types

TCT	Description
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



**ROMSEY
TOWNSCAPE TYPES**





ROMSEY TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



2 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

2.1 ROM01 Historic Core

2.1.1 Character Summary

This character area comprises the medieval core of the town with the market place and its wider setting including the Abbey and its immediate setting. There are a lot of historic buildings, most of which (over 250) are statutory listed. Romsey Conservation Area also covers the entire core area and extends to sections of Victorian suburb (ROM03 and ROM04). The area is strongly defined by its outstanding heritage assets with high-quality buildings set on regular plots. Much of this planned townscape dates from the medieval period and with buildings in most cases set to back of pavement has produced very high-quality, positively enclosed townscape throughout.

2.1.2 Key Characteristics

- Planned medieval market town with good survival of plan form and plot division
- Flat topography
- Tight urban grain of regular plots; narrow and long, some encroachment to the former market place creating further important places and spaces
- Strong building line throughout with houses and shops to the back of pavement. Boundary walls and railings continue the line of the street where buildings are set back
- Wide variety of building materials but predominantly brick and painted brick, some render and stucco and exposed timber framing. Clay tile and natural slate to roofs
- Consistent three storeys to the central open areas of the town, diminishing domestic scale to the outer sections of the principal routes through the town
- Mixed use, predominantly small independent retailers, services and public houses, hotel, banks cafés and restaurants. Private houses to streets on moving away from central commercial core
- Very few trees to the commercial core, no street trees. Trees line Church Road and Church Lane and there are a lot of mature trees in private gardens to the west of Church Lane
- High-quality public realm throughout, limited on-street parking, no street lighting, uncluttered (although narrow) pavements and some shared surfaces in alternative materials (to tarmac)
- Good access and connectivity, particularly for the pedestrian, with an established network of lanes and footpaths linking the core to its suburbs

2.1.3 *Boundaries and setting*

The historic core is enclosed by development on all sides to varying degrees. To the north, east and south-west the principal routes out of the town are lined with early urban extensions to the core of the eighteenth century (and earlier in parts) (ROM02) and Victorian periods (ROM03 and ROM04). To the west, the former direct and important relationship with the River Test has been eroded by twentieth-century development (but is still apparent). This forms character area ROM05; Riverside environs, but is inextricably connected with the historic core. To the north-east, the Victorian and mostly inter-war extensions (ROM6b) to the town (engulfing the station) dominate this boundary. The boundary to the south is partially shared with mid- to late-twentieth-century mixed flats and small dwelling residential development (ROM06c).

The immediate setting is widely varied but generally strongly urban with some notable exceptions such as the riverside area to the immediate west. The wider setting is that of the flat river valley floor of the River Test.

2.1.4 *Designations*

Over 250 buildings are statutory listed within the Romsey Conservation Area (which covers the entire historic core of the town). Three of these buildings are at Grade I; the Abbey Church of St Mary, mainly dating from the twelfth century, King John's House (Nos. 5-9 Church Court), a thirteenth-century open hall, formerly part of the medieval abbey, and Middle Bridge (over the River Test), dated 1788. Grade II* listed buildings include the Dolphin Hotel and the former Corn Exchange, both on Corn Market just south of the Market Place.

2.1.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT01, 07, 16, 21, 22 and 28.

2.1.6 *Topography*

The historic core is slightly raised from the valley floor but this is barely discernible once within the historic core: and the perception is that of a level urban space.

2.1.7 *Layout and Pattern*

The street plan follows that of a market town with much of the planned layout dating from the medieval period. The Market Place was originally a triangular area, overlooked on its western side by the Abbey and with burgage plots to the north and south, which had been encroached upon in the late medieval period creating the Corn Market on its south side. The western edge of the market was subsequently developed creating a barrier between the Abbey church and the town except for the access through the Abbey gate. This development of the market at the heart of the town has created distinct, strongly defined places and spaces of high townscape quality given the high number of surviving historic buildings to both. When this is combined with the tight narrow street plan of roads leading from the market areas with regular plot division which has not suffered from significant amalgamation the resulting townscape is very attractive, memorable and characteristic of the traditional Hampshire market town.

There is an almost consistent building line throughout the historic core with buildings set to the back of pavement with very little variation. This makes for a strongly defined and enclosed townscape.

The River Test plays an important role in further defining the town layout and ultimately its position, and in particular its proximity and close relationship with the watercourses, including its mills and historic crossing points, some being bridges of considerable architectural and historic merit.

2.1.8 *Buildings and materials*

There is a consistent repetition of the Georgian classical language to much of Romsey's historic core with many of the buildings displaying flat fronts, cambered brick arches to tall sash windows and with some parapets hiding roofs. To others there is much variation with hipped gables and pitches to the street. Buildings are generally three storey with some having additional floors in the roofspace, utilising dormer windows, but this is the exception. There is generally a greater scale to the Market Place and Corn Market and this helps maintain positive enclosure to these larger spaces. Buildings to the eastern part of the historic core, particularly to Palmerston Street are of a more modest two-storey domestic scale.

Architectural detailing throughout the historic core is of a high quality with fine stonework and brickwork, examples of fine Georgian doorcases, and late Georgian and Victorian railings and gates to boundaries.

Buildings are predominantly red brick, some are painted or colourwashed and a smaller number are painted stucco or render. Some buildings still retain their exposed timber frame (where others have been refronted with brick). In these cases framing is substantial and early, occasionally medieval, in date. Roofs are mostly handmade plain red clay tiles. There is some natural slate (usually replacing clay tile). This is also seen where substantial rebuilding or remodelling has occurred, usually resulting in a lower roof pitch.

Red brick boundary walls are also a strong feature of the Historic core (as well as other character areas) and often define footpaths and internal plot divisions.

2.1.9 *Predominant land use*

There is a vibrant and positive mix of uses within the core including many independent retailers along with national multiples, cafés, restaurants, a hotel, supermarkets and public houses. A larger supermarket outlet to the edge of the historic core is also attracting shoppers to the town helping maintain a good mix of shops to the centre of the Romsey. There is some indication of residential use to the upper floors to the centre of town and along the principal routes. Higher numbers of houses wholly in residential use are seen, particularly in Love Lane, Bell Street, Church Street and Palmerston Street.

2.1.10 *Public realm*

There is high-quality public realm to the character area with much shared surfacing and attention to materials specification for paving and kerbs. Street lighting is kept to a minimum with lights affixed to buildings rather than on independent columns.

Pavements are narrow in places but uncluttered. There is a welcome lack of on-street parking in the centre of town which maintains the attractive Market Place and Corn Market setting to historic buildings in the centre and The Hundred.

2.1.11 *Open space*

There are three areas of significant open space. The first is the informal but characteristically civic spaces formed by the Market Place and Corn Market. The second is to the south of Corn Market behind the street frontage where there is a large area of surface-level parking and the bus station. The third area is to the north and west of the Abbey church where there are significant areas of green space, including the publicly accessible abbey grounds, which form an important part of the setting of the building. King John's House gardens are also notable. This is part of a heritage centre. The garden has been created in medieval style and is open to the public. There are also a number of large private gardens with a lot of mature trees which form a very attractive backdrop to the Abbey church and its associated buildings to the west side of the former Abbey precinct (now the open space to the north).

2.1.12 *Biodiversity*

Much of the character area has few green spaces due to a dense form of urban development even to the deep plots running back from the principal streets. To the east there are progressively more mature trees to rear gardens and these are of considerable public amenity value as many are seen to frame and form the backdrop to houses. To the north and west of the core the larger areas of open green space are linked to large tree-lined and landscaped gardens, which to the far west interlink with the river corridor and wider countryside.

2.1.13 *Access and connectivity*

The historic core has good connectivity for the pedestrian with a series of lanes and footpaths running across the town linking retail areas and residential areas to parking and travel interchanges.

2.2 ROM02 Early historic suburb – Middlebridge Street

2.2.1 Character Summary

Historic route into and away from the town, now residential suburb, lined with historic houses (some of which are statutory listed) dating mostly from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but with possible earlier cores. Regular, deep plots. A tributary of the River Test runs in part down the southern side of the road.

2.2.2 Key Characteristics

- Origins as a medieval suburb of the town with distinctive townscape
- Flat topography
- Regular narrow and long plots running away from the road producing a fine grain
- Almost continuous building line throughout; houses to back of pavement or with small gardens with railings and/or brick boundary walls
- Red brick and painted brick, handmade clay tile and natural slate
- A diminishing scale from west to east; three storey down to two and a half and then predominantly two storey
- Residential use – mostly single-family dwellings; a public house and a chapel
- Some mature trees to larger rear gardens and to the south-east boundary, which adjoins the boundary with sub-area ROM06c
- Crowded public realm, due to narrow roads with on-street parking, much relieved by the presence of an open tributary to the River Test
- Limited connectivity travelling north–south but good access to the riverbank and open countryside

2.2.3 Boundaries and setting

To the north and west is the riverside character area ROM05. To the east is the sub-area ROM06c; four-storey 1960s blocks of flats. To the north-east, a small section of the boundary links to the southern end of Bell Street (ROM01), the historic core. The southern boundary is dominated by the by-pass road (the A3090) which has a significant impact on the setting of houses to the south side of Middlebridge Street. Beyond the bypass lies the Broadlands Estate, which is on the national English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historical Interest in England (Grade II*).

The setting of this character area is a mix of the highly enclosed and tight urban grain of the historic core to the north-east, the openness of the riverside, particularly to the west, and the very busy bypass road to the south which greatly impacts on the setting of historic buildings and the character and appearance of the Romsey Conservation Area.

2.2.4 *Designations*

There are nineteen list entries, covering a number of groups of statutory listed buildings in this character area, all Grade II. This includes significant groups of houses built around similar periods and complementing each other.

The character area falls fully within the Romsey Conservation Area.

2.2.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT01, 05, 08 and 09.

2.2.6 *Topography*

The area is predominantly flat.

2.2.7 *Layout and Pattern*

A gently curving street progressing south-west from the town centre to one of the key crossing points of the River Test.

The character area comprises a series of regular narrow and long plots stretching away from the road but maintaining an almost continuous building line for the length of Middlebridge Road. This tight urban grain reflects that of the historic core but is domestic in scale and function.

Townscape is contained by the curving of the relatively wide street but longer, very attractive views of historic townscape can be had along the street. Roof profiles vary, providing interest and punctuation throughout the road, with most being pitched to the road but with the occasional gable and varying pitch to the roof. Dormers also enliven the roofscape in places (usually to the grander-scaled buildings).

2.2.8 *Buildings and materials*

There is a diminishing of scale of town houses down to a cottage scale on moving away from the town centre. Houses at the eastern end of Middlebridge Street are two and a half and three storey. This drops to an almost continuous two storey for the remaining section of the street.

There is a mix of red brick and painted brick (much of the brick is of a high quality) to the older housing and some painted render to more recent development. Roofs are predominantly clay tile but natural slate is also seen in numbers. Thatch (combed wheat reed in multiple layers) is also seen to two or three modest domestic dwellings.

2.2.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is predominantly residential, with mostly single-family dwelling houses and some flats. There is a public house and chapel.

2.2.10 *Public realm*

There are narrow pavements with busy and popular on-street parking but the street is much enlivened by the open tributary of the Test running along the south side, behind railings. Street lighting is poorly considered for such an attractive historic street.

2.2.11 *Open space*

There is very little open space to this character area and almost no public open space. Private gardens are sometimes considerable, particularly to the north side of the street. The wider countryside is, however, accessible to the south west with the Test Way providing access along the river bank.

2.2.12 *Biodiversity*

The River Test, adjacent to the west, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) described further in ROM05, and there are wide woodland patches to the south of the bypass, together with parkland habitats of the Broadlands estate. The linked gardens (some of considerable size), to the north and south of the road provide further urban habitats. These are interlinked with the river corridor to the west, although the bypass forms a barrier between the gardens and large parkland habitats beyond. There are strong tree belts to parts of the southern boundary particularly to the group of flats laid out around Banning Street (ROM06c).

2.2.13 *Access and connectivity*

There is limited connectivity north–south, on travelling through the character area, due to the historic planned nature of the plots, but good access to the town centre and open countryside and the riverbank for pedestrians, on travelling east–west.

2.3 ROM03 Northern Victorian suburbs – Mill Lane and Cherville Street

2.3.1 Character Summary

This character area to the north of the historic core is one of a series of early residential suburbs to the town. Dating partly from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century and from the mid- to late-Victorian period, this area comprises large groups of mostly nineteenth-century modest terraced housing but with some earlier eighteenth-century buildings (particularly to Mill Lane and The Horsefair). There is a tight enclosed street pattern of a fine grain with large groups of houses set to the back of pavement.

2.3.2 Key Characteristics

- Late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century suburb of the town with strongly defined townscape and spaces
- Flat topography
- Mostly regular narrow and long plots, running away from the road, producing a fine grain
- Almost continuous building line in older groups; houses to back of pavement. Later-twentieth-century development is set back with small gardens and low boundary walls or hedges
- Red brick and some painted render, handmade clay tile and some natural slate
- Predominantly two-storey, some three-storey buildings
- Residential use – mostly single-family dwellings; and a public house
- Some mature trees to larger front and rear gardens, strong trees belts to east and west
- Tight, sometimes crowded, public realm with on-street parking and narrow pavements
- Generally good access and connectivity except to the east which is severely constrained by undeveloped sites

2.3.3 Boundaries and setting

The southern boundary is shared with the historic core (ROM01) and to the west (a continuation of Mill Lane) is the riverside (ROM05). To the north and east are sub-areas ROM06a and ROM06b respectively.

The setting to this character area is strongly formed by its proximity to the historic core to the south. Travelling north along Church Street the character area starts at The Horsefair where the street widens. The properties become more mixed in age and style and the street feels slightly less enclosed with more two-storey dwellings than in the historic core. To the west the openness of the riverside contrasts with the semi-enclosed character of Mill Lane, particularly where it meets The Horsefair. To the north, development continues the street enclosure but it is not as strongly defining and there is a clear change in the streetscape at the junction with Priestlands.

2.3.4 *Designations*

There are groups of statutory listed buildings to Cherville Street; mostly modest houses of the early-nineteenth century with some earlier houses. The Horsefair and Mill Lane tend to have earlier houses, including some from the sixteenth century and possibly earlier. These buildings are all Grade II listed. The Horsefair, part of Mill Lane and part of Cherville Street lie within the Romsey Conservation Area.

2.3.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT01, 03, 05 and 08.

2.3.6 *Topography*

This area is low lying and flat.

2.3.7 *Layout and Pattern*

There is a slowly curving street layout, following the historic course of lanes and earlier plan layout relating to the functional areas (The Horsefair) and access to the river and its historic mills (Mill Lane). Strongly defined townscape with terraced housing in narrow (but deep) plots with most houses to the back of pavement.

2.3.8 *Buildings and materials*

Houses are generally modest in scale, a traditional two storeys with steeply pitched roofs to the road. There are some three-storey buildings to The Horsefair.

Red brick is dominant throughout, although there is some painted brickwork, and render is also seen. Handmade clay tiles are seen to steeply pitched roofs, with some natural slate seen in groups. Individual survivals of thatch (combed wheat reed in multi-layers) and timber framing survive.

2.3.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost wholly residential, with single-family dwelling houses. There is a single mid-twentieth-century block of flats and a public house.

2.3.10 *Public realm*

Pavements are generally narrow. There are trees to private spaces which complement the public realm. There are some areas of wider pavement, and hedge boundaries in places. On-street parking throughout adds to the tight urban character of this area.

2.3.11 *Open space*

There is almost no public open space within this character area but substantial private open spaces comprising long narrow mature gardens with tree belts to adjacent open spaces. The sports field of The Romsey School lies immediately to the west of this character area (ROM06a).

2.3.12 *Biodiversity*

Gardens are mature throughout this character area and some have large mature trees within them or to the edges. Gardens to the west side of Cherville Street are linked to the adjacent sport fields and their riverside setting beyond. Good tree belts east and west of this street provide north–south green corridors, and hedge boundaries to fronts and sides of plots add to the general high degree of landscaping and vegetation seen in this relatively urban character area.

2.3.13 *Access and connectivity*

There is good connectivity to the commercial core of the town and out to the River Test. Connections to the east are more problematic, due to the undeveloped Brewery site forming a large landholding with no public access. Movement to the east must involve travelling north or south first out of the character area.

2.4 ROM04 Eastern Victorian suburbs – Winchester Road and Botley Road

2.4.1 Character Summary

This character area, to the east of the historic core (ROM01), is one of a series of early residential suburbs to the town. The predominantly residential buildings date from the mid- to late-Victorian/Edwardian period and are mostly terraced and semi-detached, with occasional detached houses on a grander scale, lining the roadside. Houses vary from being set at back of pavement to being set in small gardens with brick boundaries (sometimes with railings). The westernmost railway bridge over the road acts as a gateway to the town from the east, although similar built form continues further east along Winchester Road to the second railway bridge, with this townscape effectively contained within the bridges.

2.4.2 Key Characteristics

- A main road lined with Victorian and Edwardian residential development
- Flat topography throughout
- Semi-detached and detached houses on generous, deep but narrow plots, at a fine to medium grain. Roof ridges are parallel to the street, but are well articulated with projecting bays and gables and chimneys to front roof slopes
- Houses share a consistent building line throughout, set slightly back from pavement with small front gardens mostly given over to hardstanding and front area parking
- Brick, traditionally red/orange in colour. Natural slate roofs, with some replacement with concrete interlocking tiles
- Houses are two-storey throughout, with limited use of the roofspaces
- Almost entirely residential, some commercial premises (e.g. a car dealership)
- There is no public open space or any street trees
- Busy road but wide pavements, some hedge boundaries and trees to front gardens
- Generally good access and connectivity, although the railway lines are significant barriers to connectivity with the eastern section of the sub-area and to the north-east edge

2.4.3 Boundaries and setting

To the west is the historic and commercial core of the town (ROM01) with Winchester Road continuing as The Hundred to the market centre of the town. To the south and north are the residential suburbs defined as sub-areas ROM06d and ROM06e (south) and ROM06b (north). To the east are the sub-areas of ROM08. To the north-east the boundary is strongly defined by the Salisbury mainline railway which is elevated and travels over the road creating a relatively narrow road bridge and townscape pinch-point.

The setting of the character area is residential suburbs of various periods although this is not readily apparent as the ribbon development along Winchester Road is almost continuous and enclosed and awareness of these later suburbs is limited. The setting is also somewhat disrupted and confused by the presence of two railway lines which effectively enclose a substantial section of the townscape within the character area.

2.4.4 *Designations*

There are a few (less than five) statutory listed buildings to Winchester Road; these are eighteenth-century houses or public houses. The western section of Winchester Road to the westernmost railway bridge is included within the Romsey Conservation Area

2.4.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT03, 05, 08 and 21.

2.4.6 *Topography*

The area is low lying and flat

2.4.7 *Layout and Pattern*

This character area comprises the ribbon development of residential dwellings along Winchester Road in generous plots which run back from the main road, a considerable way in some cases. Houses are generally set back from the road (there is a prominent historic group to the south side to back of pavement), with small gardens. Many of these gardens have been given over to hardstandings for cars.

There is generally a consistency to plots which helps define the area as a distinctive late Victorian residential suburb. The railway divides the townscape in a disruptive manner but the railway bridges do act as a gateway into and out of the town and its inner urban suburbs.

2.4.8 *Buildings and materials*

There is a mix of scale and status to the buildings of this area. Houses are almost exclusively of two storeys but this is often on a grand scale. There is some use of the roofspaces, resulting in some dormers and rooflights (although the latter are mostly to the rear of the house). Some houses have canted bays to the ground floor and some are full height. Roofs are articulated with gables and complex hips to projecting bays. Chimneys are a prominent and important feature in the relatively tight townscape.

Red/orange brick is dominant, and some of the earlier (eighteenth-century) brickwork is of a very high quality. There are painted stone lintels and dressings to some of the grander houses. Most have natural slate roofs but there has been some replacement with modern concrete interlocking tiles.

2.4.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost entirely residential, with a former cinema (now a local theatre), a short parade of local amenity shops, and a car dealership.

2.4.10 *Public realm*

Relatively wide but busy road, with no on-street parking

2.4.11 *Open space*

There is no public open space in this character area but there are large gardens to the rears of properties with a lot of mature trees within them and to their edges, particularly to the northern boundaries.

2.4.12 *Biodiversity*

There are mature gardens to most properties in this character area, creating urban habitats which are linked to each other and to open green spaces to the north, and to the well treed green corridor of both railway lines as they pass through the character area. This in turn links to much larger open spaces, open countryside, and the Broadlands Estate parklands beyond to the south.

2.4.13 *Access and connectivity*

The railway lines severely restrict connectivity north–south through the character area, for the pedestrian, although there is a footpath running parallel to the canal which passes under the railway line to housing areas to the north (ROM08) and open countryside beyond.

2.5 ROM05 Riverside - The Means and Mill Lane environs

2.5.1 *Character Summary*

The riverside area of the town has been gradually encroached upon by twentieth-century development but has managed to retain a sense of openness, extensive tree cover and natural vegetation, access to the river bank and a generally informal semi-rural character despite being so close to the town centre.

2.5.2 *Key Characteristics*

- A unique mix of medium (short linear detached house development) and fine grain (short terraces development) within the semi-rural setting of the River Test
- Low-lying and flat topography throughout
- Formal layout to plots in groups with wide variation in grain between periods of development
- Consistent building lines within groups, sometimes strongly defining private courtyard like spaces
- Red brick, some render, some clay tile to older properties but mostly modern concrete interlocking tiles
- Mostly two-storey and some chalet-style houses (single-storey with dormers)
- Residential – mix of single-family dwelling houses, flats and nursing home
- Large public open space adjacent to river and good tree cover throughout, small pockets of woodland and strong tree belts to river bank and beyond
- Good quality public realm largely due to the tranquil nature of the area
- Very limited access and connectivity for the car user, but good footpath connectivity for the pedestrian, especially to the riverside and beyond

2.5.3 *Boundaries and setting*

The character area is to the western edge of the town, and is bordered by the flood plain and watermeadows of the River Test, beyond which is open countryside rising up as wooded slopes to the sides of the river valley. To the east is the historic core (ROM01), Mill Lane (contained within ROM03) and The Romsey School sports grounds (ROM06a). To the south-east are the rear gardens of properties on the north side of Middlebridge Street (ROM02).

Despite its close proximity to the town centre this character area's setting feels semi-rural. This has much to do with the high degree of tree cover to the western side of the town and the tranquil open spaces adjacent to the river.

2.5.4 *Designations*

Saddler's Mill, on The Causeway, is a Grade II listed building. Lower sections of the river (from Saddler's Mill south) fall with the designated Romsey Conservation Area.

2.5.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT03, 04, 05, 07, 08, 14, 16, 24, 27 and 28.

2.5.6 *Topography*

The area is low lying and flat throughout.

2.5.7 *Layout and Pattern*

This area is informally laid out in a series of small to medium-sized contained developments. Riverside Gardens and Rivermead Close are fine-grain housing developments adjacent to and straddling the River Test. These are set out in short and long terraces of houses around open greens and the river itself. There are separate garage courts to the rears of these houses. There is further fine-grain development to the north of Middlebridge Street. This comprises informal perimeter blocks of flats, houses and townhouses around parking courts. To the north and east there are several short cul-de-sac developments of medium-grain housing layout, set in generous plots with direct private access to the riverbank, and a short early terrace of modest houses between river tributaries.

Despite the considerable development, this area does not feel crowded.

2.5.8 *Buildings and materials*

Mostly modest terraced dwelling houses (some older houses and non-domestic buildings; mills and hop stores now converted to residential dwellings) with some mid and late-twentieth-century semi-detached or detached houses; two-storey with some chalet-style houses. There are some important survivals of buildings relating to the River Test, such as the eighteenth-century Grade II listed Sadlers Mill and its associated mill cottages – set under one roof.

Mostly red brick and clay tiles to older houses and former non-residential buildings, some timber framing, modern brick of various colours but mostly red/orange, painted render and concrete interlocking tiles to roofs.

2.5.9 *Predominant land use*

Use is almost entirely residential (with some non-residential building types converted to residential); single-family dwelling houses, a nursing home and sheltered housing.

2.5.10 *Public realm*

The quiet, tranquil nature of much of this character area means most lanes are used as shared surfaces for pedestrians and cars. In many cases there are no pavements or street lighting which adds to the semi-rural character of the area.

2.5.11 *Open space*

There are large areas of open space, including Romsey Memorial Park, a tree-lined urban park to the edge of the river, riverside footpaths and school sports grounds. There are also extensive private garden spaces, often tree lined and landscaped. Both fine-grain developments within this character area (Riverside Gardens and Rivermead Close) comprise houses set around attractive semi-enclosed courtyards, with mature trees and/or the riverbank forming an integral part of these spaces.

2.5.12 *Biodiversity*

There is a high degree of green space throughout this character area, with development in places being peripheral to the river corridor, gardens and other green spaces. The River Test is an SSSI. It is a classic chalk stream; one of the most species-rich lowland rivers in England and renowned for game fishing. Several

braided channels flow through the character area, some open in nature, others tree lined. They interconnect with riverside open spaces; watermeadows to the west and the large riverside gardens with mature trees. Parts of the character area are within the Test Valley Biodiversity Opportunity Area; the riverside habitats are an important part of the overall biodiversity value of the river valley. They also contribute to the high quality of the public (and private) realm within the character area.

2.5.13 *Access and connectivity*

There is good footpath connectivity along the river (including the Test Way) although much of the land is in private ownership and there are limited opportunities to walk right across the flood plain and meadows beyond. There is no road access across the river to the west, which affects connectivity; most road users have to come into the area through the busy town centre road system.

2.6 ROM06 Inner suburbs

2.6.1 Character Summary

This character area comprises a series of residential suburbs of varying size, grain and form; semi-detached houses, to varying lengths of terraces, but few detached houses, all sharing a common characteristic of being constrained by either transport infrastructure or the extent of the existing historic core and its historic suburbs or both. This area also includes the sports centre and allotments, to the south of the A3090 and east of the A27 respectively. Whilst these sub-areas are not strictly part of the inner suburbs their land use is inextricably linked to the town centre. Whilst the domestic scale of these sub-areas (with the exception of ROM06c) is a unifying characteristic of the majority of this fragmented character area, five sub-areas have been defined to reflect the diversity of the form and variety in grain of development.

2.6.2 Key Characteristics

Sub-areas of ROM06

06a. Priestlands and Lansdowne Gardens

- Planned post-war residential development at a medium grain, notable retention of historic garden walls to Lansdowne Gardens
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Good sized regular plots throughout
- Building lines are consistent to streets and areas of open space and occasionally staggered. Houses are set back with small gardens (some are laid over to parking). Those to Lansdowne Gardens are laid out radially following the path of historic garden walls
- Red brick, weatherboarding (Lansdowne Gardens) and concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey throughout and no use of roofspace for additional accommodation (due to limited headroom and pitch of roof)
- Residential throughout; single-family private dwelling houses
- Good survival of earlier historic boundaries and good tree belts to boundaries, and street trees. Good provision of small green public open spaces, often with trees
- On-street parking throughout, relatively narrow roads, standard materials and discrete lamp columns
- Good pedestrian access to the riverside, otherwise reasonable north–south access and connectivity, less to the east

06b. *Alma Road and Malmesbury Road*

- Inter-war and post-war modest housing in short and long terraces with small front gardens but large deep rear gardens, reflecting much of the spirit of the Garden City movement
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Good-sized regular plots throughout
- Building lines are consistent to streets and areas of open space but are occasionally staggered. Houses are set back with small gardens (often laid over to parking)
- Red brick, and concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey throughout and no use of roofspace for additional accommodation (due to limited headroom and pitch of roof)
- Predominantly residential; single-family private dwelling houses with schools, library, police station, council offices and retail superstore
- Good provision of small and medium-sized green public open spaces, often with trees
- On-street parking throughout, sometimes narrow roads and cul-de-sacs, standard materials and discrete lamp columns
- The railway line to the eastern boundary is a significant constraint to connectivity, otherwise north–south connectivity is good

06c. *Banning Street environs*

- Medium-rise flat and maisonette development
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Well grouped blocks, defining some valuable open green space, in informal perimeter blocks, around parking and communal areas, of four storeys with external walkways
- Building lines partially define roads and internal spaces
- Concrete frame including cast insitu walkways with brick cross walls and prefabricated panels forming units, flat roof
- Four-storey buildings
- Entirely residential use; flats and maisonettes
- Good tree cover, to green spaces adjacent to blocks and lining the watercourse to the south, providing a screen to the A3090
- Good quality public realm, wide access roads, generous public space and passive surveillance to parking courts and green space
- Good access and connectivity, favouring the pedestrian, close to the commercial core of the town

06d. *The Harrage environs*

- Predominantly semi-detached 1970s houses of distinct character at medium grain, built around an earlier (Grade II listed) group of early-nineteenth-century houses of finer grain character. This sub-area also includes other later small infill developments of higher density
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Houses to The Harrage are semi-detached and set in open gardens in small groups. Houses to Knatchbull Close are set in short terraces around small greens
- Building lines are consistent and help define green amenity areas
- Red brick, hanging artificial slates, clay tile
- Two-storey houses
- Residential throughout; private family dwelling houses
- Good survival of trees and maturing planted landscape of twentieth-century developments
- High-quality public realm with wide roads, verges, open gardens to roadside, green spaces, some hedges and tree-lined spaces
- Good footpath access and connectivity throughout, vehicles are restricted travelling east–west

2.6.3 *Boundaries and setting*

The eastern and north-eastern boundaries of sub-areas ROM06b and ROM06d are strongly defined by the railway lines which cut through the modern town effectively, defining an inner urban and outer (ROM08) suburban area. The southern boundary of sub-area ROM06a and the western boundary of ROM06b are with the historic core (ROM01) and its associated historic suburbs (ROM02, ROM03 and ROM04). Sub-areas ROM06c and ROM06e are to the south of the historic core and suburbs, and are strongly defined on their southern boundary by the A3090 (Romsey bypass). The leisure centre is south of the A3090 and adjacent to open countryside and the Broadlands Estate.

The setting of this character area is mixed and complex, with its most sensitive boundaries being those adjacent to the historic core. Here, views into and out of the character area could have significant impacts on historic assets, whether this is the setting of listed buildings or the setting of the Romsey Conservation Area.

2.6.4 *Designations*

There are a number of statutory listed buildings to Station Road (ROM06b) to include the County Library, The Brewhouse (formerly of the Romsey Brewery), the police station and 11-15 Station Road. All these buildings date from the late-eighteenth or early-nineteenth century and are Grade II listed.

Three early-nineteenth-century houses in a short terrace are listed under Harrage Park, now surrounded by The Harrage 1970s housing development (ROM06d).

A building of note is No. 94 Greatbridge Road (ROM06a), the former entrance to the Lansdowne Nursery Estate and its associated boundary wall stretching north and south along Greatbridge Road.

Much of the character area shares boundaries with the designated Romsey Conservation Area.

2.6.5 *Townscape types present*
TCT05, 08, 12, 14, 16, 2, 28 and 29.

2.6.6 *Topography*
The character area is low lying and flat throughout.

2.6.7 *Layout and Pattern*
Sub-areas ROM06a and ROM06b share, in part, common characteristics; short, medium and long terraces of houses in good-sized plots with front and rear gardens, grass verges punctuated by public areas of green space, often with mature trees. Sub-area ROM06b is a much larger version of ROM06a. There are long terraces, some gently curving, with a consistent building line throughout, some semi-detached houses and an earlier core of terraced Victorian houses to Station Road. This is medium to high density development but with a sense of space and good-sized gardens to all properties.

Sub-area ROM06c comprises groups of four-storey flats and maisonettes with external access corridors in a series of informal perimeter blocks set around open green space or overlooking garages and parking courts.

Sub-area ROM06d comprises a medium and fine grain. Houses are generally grouped, with consistent building lines defining open space around them (with the exception of those fronting the A27).

Of note is the unusual layout of Lansdowne Gardens (part of ROM06a) where houses (constructed in the 1970s) have been set within the former complex of garden walls used for cultivating fruit trees and other plants. These high red brick walls formed part of the Lansdowne Nursery Estate and are set out in a series of concentric circles.

2.6.8 *Buildings and materials*
Sub-areas ROM06a and ROM06b are predominantly two-storey red brick houses of simple design, with projecting ground floor porch and windows, with pitched roofs and concrete interlocking tiles. There is some variation in architectural embellishment and use of materials within these sub-areas. Sub-area ROM06d is architecturally striking for its use of artificial slate mansarded upper storeys to brick ground floors. These houses, although dated, are well-built and sit well in their landscaped surroundings.

The blocks of flats to sub-area ROM06c have four storeys; concrete framed with brick cross and end walls and panels of prefabricated concrete with a pebbledash finish. The blocks are flat roofed.

2.6.9 *Predominant land use*

The character area is predominantly residential; a mix of single-family dwelling houses, maisonettes and flats (ROM06c). In addition, there are a number of ancillary uses complementary to the residential hinterland such as sports centre and allotments (ROM06d), Romsey School (ROM06a) and infant school, railway station, library, police station and large superstore, all in ROM06b.

2.6.10 *Public realm*

Sub-areas ROM06a and ROM06b have grass verges, some tree lined, and generous open spaces adjacent to the highway. ROM06c is well laid out and there is good passive surveillance of communal areas.

2.6.11 *Open space*

There are large areas of open space within or adjoining some sub-areas, principally a large school playing field in ROM06a and the Romsey Rapids public sports centre to the south of ROM06c and ROM06d, both of which have integrated sports facilities; football, cricket and rugby pitches and athletics tracks as well as dedicated pitches for public use and clubs. There is also a large allotments site to the east of the A27. There are occasional smaller areas of amenity green space in the other character areas. The many private gardens of the character area are good open spaces with most enjoying a good-sized garden to front and rear.

There is a very large area of surface-level parking to the retail superstore in sub-area ROM06b.

2.6.12 *Biodiversity*

Tree coverage varies throughout the character area with most tree belts to the boundaries particularly to the railway to the east and the industrial estates (ROM07) to the north. There are some trees to front and rear gardens but they are not as prominent or frequent as other character areas. There are also mature trees to the south of the blocks of flats of ROM06c which provides a good screen for the residents between them and the busy A3090.

Gardens are linked and form significant green corridors when taken with the watercourses, footpaths, railways and roads which cross through and to the edges of this character area.

2.6.13 *Access and connectivity*

Access and connectivity varies across the character area, but is generally good throughout, with good access by road and for the pedestrian to facilities within the town centre and to roads out of the town. The main public green space is to the south of the area, but there are reasonable footpath links to green spaces in other character areas.

2.7 ROM07 Romsey Industrial Estate and Frobisher Industrial Centre

2.7.1 Character summary

This character area has a large industrial estate, straddling the railway line to the north-western edge of the town, bordering open countryside to the north. Medium- to large-footprint buildings set on a series of grids with single entry feeder road servicing the entire estate. Buildings are functional, offering large blank facades to roads. There are mostly low-key manufacturing and storage facilities. Buildings set in large expanses of hardstanding, much of it used for parking of cars or lorries. This character area is a single cohesive group despite slightly different phases of construction.

2.7.2 Key characteristics

- Post-war industrial estate of medium- to large-footprint buildings
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Very-large-footprint buildings, often inward-looking, linked by a grid of roads with a single entry and exit point
- Grid of roads with consistent building lines to roadside
- Units are clad in profile metal, with this material also forming the roof covering. Brick plinths
- Equivalent two-storey height relative to domestic buildings (to eaves height)
- Large semi-open and open areas for parking and storage of vehicles
- Manufacturing and storage with some ancillary office uses
- Some trees to boundaries between units and hedges to parking areas fronting roadsides. Considerable tree belts to most boundaries
- Predominantly dead frontages to roads throughout and very limited provision for pedestrian movement within the estate
- Poor access and connectivity, with design and use orientated around the vehicle, but a public right of way adjacent to the waterway bisects this part of the estate

2.7.3 Boundaries and setting

To the north and west of this character area are the watermeadows and tributaries of the River Test. To the east are the residential suburbs of outer Romsey (ROM08) and to the south and south-west the railway line forms a strongly defined boundary with the inner residential suburbs of ROM06 beyond.

Despite its sensitive location on the banks of the River Test the industrial estate is not particularly intrusive when viewed from the urban extent of the town. Its setting is well screened from neighbouring residential areas by strong tree belts and the raised railway line as it travels north from the town.

2.7.4 Designations

There are no statutory listed buildings or designated conservation areas within the character area.

2.7.5 *Townscape types present*
TCT08, 12 and 15.

2.7.6 *Topography*
The land is low lying and flat throughout

2.7.7 *Layout and pattern*
Streets are laid out on a grid. Buildings sit in large plots but their setting is often defined by parking of either cars or larger vehicles; often articulated lorries and their containers.

2.7.8 *Buildings and Materials*
The built form within this character area is on a large scale. The massing of the units is broken up in places by the use of low-pitch roofs with gables end on to the roadside.

Buildings are utilitarian and highly functional with limited variation in materials, and often dead frontages to the main feeder roads.

Materials vary but most units are clad in profile metal with this material also forming the roof covering. Brick plinths are seen and these are made from modern stock bricks of various colours and finishes.

2.7.9 *Predominant land use*
Land use is low-key manufacturing, services and storage.

2.7.10 *Public realm*
The public realm is adequate for the uses in the character area, vehicles dominate and there is limited provision for the pedestrian.

2.7.11 *Open space*
There is no public open space within the character area. There are large areas of hardstanding providing forecourts and parking courts.

There is a good degree of tree and hedge coverage to the boundaries of this character area and some units have soft landscaping; hedges and trees to internal boundaries between plots.

2.7.12 *Biodiversity*
There is no provision for green space with only limited street trees seen lining parts of the main routes through the industrial estate. The railway line forms a narrow green corridor through the area, and a tributary of the Test forming the boundary with ROM06a appears to enjoy some screening from the estate via mature trees. There are strongly defined tree- and hedge-lined green corridors to all of the character area's boundaries.

2.7.13 Access and connectivity

The character area is bisected by the railway line and the A3057, separating the estate into two units, with limited access between them. Access to the industrial estate from other areas is constrained by its location to the north of the town, by the railway line and road to the south and west, and to the east by deliberate separation between the estate and the residential areas of ROM08k and 08l. The estate is designed for vehicles rather than the pedestrian, although there is one footpath across the character area, connecting residential areas with Fishlake Meadows to the north.

2.8 ROM08 Inter-war and post-war outer suburbs

2.8.1 Character Summary

This character area is the largest area within the Romsey settlement and can be broadly described as predominantly residential development east of the Salisbury–Southampton railway line, with open countryside to its eastern, northern and southern boundaries.

Very small areas of older (pre-war) development; hamlets and small groups of rural housing and early speculative development of the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century have been engulfed in large-scale urban extension in primarily three phases; immediate-post-war, the 1970s and the very-late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first century.

Older inter-war residential areas have retained some of their integrity but there has been much piecemeal infill on a small and medium scale which has changed their character over time. The degree of retention of natural habitats, trees and historic boundaries varies throughout, and is reflected in the sub-areas identified. The fourteen sub-areas also reflect changes in scale, grain and layout and the degree of openness in each given area.

2.8.2 Key Characteristics

Sub-areas of ROM08

08a. Winchester Hill and Cupernham Lane

- Mix of pre-war, inter-war and post-war development at a coarse grain
- Land falls steadily to the south and west
- Generally larger houses and bungalows in large and very large plots
- Houses set well back from roadside with much irregularity to the building line. This varies in places with some houses staggered to gentle curves and a more variable building line to parts of Cupernham Lane and Winchester Hill
- Red brick, with clay tile and natural slate roofs, later interlocking tiles and profiled tiles
- Predominantly two-storey but some groups and roads of single-storey dwellings
- Residential throughout; generally medium-sized to large private dwelling houses

- A lot of mature trees to rear gardens forming significant groups, some street trees and trees to front gardens adding to the tranquil, and in some cases semi-rural, character of roads and lanes
- Wide roads, some with grass verges, very limited on-street parking and minimal street lighting
- Reasonable access and connectivity travelling north–south but less successful east–west with only limited opportunity for pedestrian linkage in this direction

08b. *Braishfield Road and School Road environs*

- Inter-war coarse-grain development within former grounds of large detached house
- Gently rising land to the north
- Medium-sized to large detached bungalows set in large to very large plots
- Staggered building line to road with dwellings set well back from roadside
- Mostly brick and clay tile
- Single-storey apart from a two-storey house to Cedar Lawn
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses
- Limited public open space, but good sized private gardens throughout
- Trees form an important part of boundaries and backdrop of developments, mature hedges to most roadside boundaries
- Mostly private gardens, so limited connectivity through the sub-area but good access and well connected through the road network to other sub-areas

08c. *Botley Road and Whitenap Lane environs*

- Inter-war medium- to coarse-grain linear development
- Topography is flat
- Medium-sized to large detached bungalows set in large to very large plots
- Staggered building line to road with dwellings set well back from roadside
- Mostly brick and clay tile
- Mostly single-storey or chalet-style houses
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses
- Limited public open space, but good sized private gardens throughout
- Mature trees strongly define the roadside and form an important part of boundaries and backdrop of developments, mature hedges to most roadside boundaries
- Good access and connectivity

08d. *Woodley*

- Inter-war and post-war modest housing at a medium to fine grain
- Landform is very gently undulating
- Short terraces around greens and parking courts
- Consistent building lines to individual roads with houses set back in small gardens defining green spaces
- Red and buff bricks, tile hanging and clay tile
- Two-storey houses
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses
- Houses laid out in short terraces around greens and linked by footpaths and roads with wide grass verges. To north, similar but more parking courts than green spaces
- Some mature trees and historic boundaries to edges survive
- Very good access and connectivity, often with footpath alternatives to other sub-areas

08e. *Halterworth and Harefield environs*

- Housing development of the 1970s and 1980s and later, at a medium to fine grain
- Rising landform, sometimes steeply, either side of valley
- Good-sized plots arranged in sweeping streets, crescents and cul-de-sacs which limit the number of complete blocks of housing
- Houses laid out in short terraces or semi-detached, with building lines consistent throughout, mostly small open front gardens
- Red brick and concrete interlocking tiles, some tile hanging
- Two-storey, low-pitched roofs with ridges generally parallel to road
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses, some flats and isolated blocks of flats
- Generally good provision of open space between groups of houses, with mature trees
- Good public realm, primarily due to the generous open space provision, access to wooded areas (nature reserve), wide roads and generally off-street parking provision throughout
- Good access and connectivity, with a well-used footpath travelling east–west and linking to woodland and the open countryside to the east. The railway is a significant barrier to connectivity north–south

08f. *Northlands Road and Montford Road environs*

- Housing development of the 1970s at a medium to fine grain
- Topography is flat
- Good-sized plots arranged in gently curving streets and open cul-de-sacs
- Houses laid out in short terraces or semi-detached, with building lines consistent (although slightly staggered in places), mostly small open front gardens
- Red brick, hanging tile and concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey, low-pitched roofs with ridges generally parallel to road
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses
- Good provision of open space between groups of houses, with mature trees
- Good public realm, primarily due to the generous open space provision, wide roads and generally off-street parking provision throughout
- Good access and connectivity through an established network of streets, greens and footpaths

08g. *Whitenap – Five Elms Drive environs*

- Suburban 1970s medium- to fine-grain housing estate
- The topography is flat
- Mostly semi-detached or detached houses occupying a large proportion of the medium-sized plot, set around cul-de-sacs and greens
- Buildings set back from the roadside in their own front gardens; open front boundaries, staggered building lines throughout
- Red multi-bricks with tile hanging and concrete interlocking tiles, some flat roofs
- Two-storey houses and three-storey town houses
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses
- Good survival of older mature trees and maturing landscaping from inception
- Good public realm; wide roads, limited on-street parking and grass verges
- Good access and reasonable connectivity, however no public access to the adjacent open countryside

08h. *Cupernham*

- 1970s fine-grain urban expansion
- Landform is very gently rising to the north
- 'Radburn Estate' principles - short terraces arranged in rectilinear layouts around greens and parking courts
- Consistent building lines to individual roads with houses set back in small gardens defining green spaces
- Red and buff bricks, tile hanging and clay tile
- Two-storey houses
- Residential throughout; private dwelling houses

- Houses laid out in short terraces around greens and linked by footpaths and roads with wide grass verges
- Some mature trees and historic boundaries to green spaces survive
- Excellent access and connectivity throughout

08i. *Mercer Way environs*

- Fine-grain 1980s housing estate
- Area falls away from Cupernham Lane
- Tight urban grain created by houses in short terraces with small front gardens and larger rear gardens
- A sometimes varied and irregular building line
- Generally red or buff brickwork, some painted render and mostly modern clay tile roofs or concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses and isolated three-storey blocks of flats
- Residential throughout; generally small to medium-sized dwelling houses and some flats
- Limited survival of mature trees and some open green amenity space to edges of parking courts
- Wide roads and grass verges
- Very good access and connectivity throughout

08j. *Latham Road environs*

- Medium-grain 1980s housing estate
- Topography is flat
- Houses set in short to medium-sized terraces around cul-de-sacs, with small open front gardens and larger rear gardens and an irregular layout
- Varied and irregular building line throughout
- Generally red or buff brickwork, modern clay tile roofs or concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses
- Residential throughout; generally small to medium-sized dwelling houses
- Good survival of historic boundaries and mature trees throughout
- Shared surfaces, low level of traffic, trees to grass verges
- Good access and connectivity, although the railway line to the south is a major barrier to connectivity in this direction

08k. *Fishlake Meadows environs*

- Late-twentieth-century medium- to fine-grain housing
- Flat topography
- Short terraces set in groups or around small cul-de-sacs
- Inconsistent building lines due to the overly complicated road and plot layouts
- Red brick, decorative joinery and modern clay tile and other modern interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Areas of tree-lined open space. Maturing landscaping
- Some shared pedestrian spaces, hedge-lined footpaths, let down by dead frontage along footpaths to main feeder roads
- Reasonable access and connectivity despite a series of cul-de-sac developments, off the principal route, leading to legibility issues

08l. *New development (off Kingfisher Way)*

- Early twenty-first-century fine-grain housing
- Flat topography
- Fine-grain, mostly terraced or semi-detached housing, mostly linked forming an informal perimeter block with internal parking courts, also with housing facing on to these spaces
- Consistent building line following road layout with houses set slightly back from the pavement
- Red brick, painted render, painted joinery, and modern clay tile and slate and other modern profiled tiles
- Two- and three-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Maturing landscaping
- Good shared pedestrian spaces, with varied street surfaces
- Good access and connectivity, particularly to public open space, and there are footpath routes to the historic core (via the canal tow-path)

08m. *Tadburn Road environs*

- Late-twentieth-century medium- to fine-grain housing
- Flat topography
- Short terraces set in groups or around small cul-de-sacs
- Inconsistent building lines due to the overly complicated road and plot layouts
- Modern multi-bricks, tile hanging to small bays, modern pantiles and concrete interlocking tiles
- Two-storey houses
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- Maturing landscaping but limited tree cover

- Some shared pedestrian spaces, hedge-lined footpaths, let down by dead frontage along footpaths to main feeder roads and a general lack of street trees or public open space
- Reasonable access, but poor connectivity due to a series of cul-de-sac developments not linked to adjacent areas or the open countryside beyond (to the south)

08n. *Horseshoe Drive environs, Woodley*

- Late-twentieth-century development within the grounds of an older house at a coarse grain
- The topography is flat
- Large detached houses set in irregular plots around a crescent
- Largely inconsistent building line, staggered throughout
- Red brick, some flint panels, clay tiles
- Two-storey houses throughout
- Entirely residential; single-family dwelling houses
- A good survival of mature trees to rear gardens and to boundaries with Woodley Lane and Brashfield Road (original field boundaries)
- Wide roads, open-fronted gardens, limited traffic and unobtrusive lighting
- Good access for the car user, but very poor connectivity with development set around a closed loop

2.8.3 *Boundaries and setting*

The western boundary of this character area is strongly defined by the railway line but is also encroached upon by Romsey Industrial Estate (ROM07) to the north-west and the Victorian suburbs of Winchester Road (ROM04) as they reach as far as the diverging London-bound railway branch and its railway bridge across the road. To the south-east, the character area abuts the Abbey Park Industrial Estate but this is well-screened from Luzborough Lane. It is the heavily engineered roundabout, in a rural setting, which is most indicative of a continuation of the urban extent of Romsey at this point. Continuing along Winchester Road eastwards, the village of Crampmoor (ROM09) forms a small section of the eastern boundary while the remaining boundary, north and south of this, is open to the countryside. This boundary is both hard and soft. In places it is strongly defined by one side of a road or lane being developed and the other a hedgerow and/or tree-lined boundary to open fields, and elsewhere the rear gardens of houses back onto open countryside. Both are seen in equal measure.

The setting of this character area is varied to the west with but there is very little perception of the outer expanses of Romsey until the traveller passes through the second (easternmost) railway bridge to Winchester Road. The open countryside to the east, north and south forms an essential and highly sensitive part of the setting of the character area but due to the topography its full extent is not appreciated from these areas.

2.8.4 *Designations*

The late-seventeenth-century Great Woodley Farmhouse, Woodley Lane (ROM08n), is Grade II listed. There are no designated conservation areas within the character area.

2.8.5 *Townscape types present*

TCT02, 03, 04, 05, 08, 09, 12, 14, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26, 27 28 and 29.

2.8.6 *Topography*

This character area is undulating but broadly falls either side, sometimes steeply, down to the stream valley which also takes the railway line (running east–west). To the north side of this valley, the land then falls to the west down to the former Romsey Canal (which now forms part of the boundary between ROM08k, ROM08l, ROM08j and ROM08i). On travelling east along Winchester Hill, which runs through the centre of the character area, from the railway bridge there is a steady climb upward. This level change is best appreciated and most apparent in sub-area ROM08a.

2.8.7 *Layout and pattern*

There is much variation in layout and pattern across the character area reflecting site constraints, variation in grain of housing and period of development. There are 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 ROM08.

Late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century houses with significant inter-war and post-war infill form the basic structure of sub-area ROM08a. The layout is of mostly large detached bungalows and houses, with some semi-detached dwellings set on generous plots, often with space all around the building, good-sized front and back gardens with off-street parking, detached garages and varied but mostly robust mature boundary treatments. Development has followed earlier lanes and roads with later piecemeal additions of cul-de-sac road layouts interspersed with large surviving plots. This part of the sub-area retains a semi-rural feel due to its relatively coarse grain and a high retention of trees and historic hedgerow.

Older development, from inter-war to immediate post-war (such as much of ROM08a, ROM08b and ROM08c; Winchester Hill and Cupernham Lane, Braishfield Road and School Road environs and Botley Road and Whitenap Lane environs, respectively), retains much of the earlier former field boundaries. This is reflected in the robust individual trees and tree belts of indigenous tree species to these sub-areas.

The post-war estates can be divided into two types. Firstly, the coarse to medium grain, with more variation to building type, with 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. Sub-area ROM08e, ROM08f and ROM08g are good examples of these. The second type is more widespread in the character area and

comprises estates laid out following the principles of the 'Radburn estate'; houses set in short terraces (of between four and six houses) arranged around open cul-de-sacs which allow access to shared public green spaces and are linked to larger areas of public open space and occasionally woodland. Housing in sub-areas ROM08d, ROM08h and ROM08i strongly reflect this layout pattern.

The late-twentieth-century development within the character area (sub-areas ROM08j, ROM08k and ROM08m) is of a fine grain; short terraces or semi-detached and sometimes detached houses, set in groups or around small cul-de-sacs, often with shared surfaces. Large areas of open space with mature trees and some retention of historic boundaries is evident in these sub-areas. This period of residential development is 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 in sub-area ROM08m. Notable exceptions to the above are the recently completed infill adjacent to Canal Walk and Horsecroft (ROM08l), which employs more traditional building motifs and forms, and sets houses out in large irregular perimeter blocks with parking courts to the centre, and houses facing into parking courts or flats above garages. Many of these physical and spatial concepts could be said to have derived from the 'Poundbury' principles of urban housing layout, though this is a loose interpretation of the concept.

2.8.8 *Buildings and materials*

The predominant traditional building materials are red brick with plain clay tile and natural slate or modern concrete interlocking roof tiles. There has been much replacement of traditional roof materials with modern replacements throughout this character area.

The character area predominantly contains two-storey houses in various forms. There are bungalows, and in some cases entire roads are single-storey, but they are not seen in equal numbers to houses or mixed with houses to any great extent. This lends more cohesiveness to areas generally.

Housing estates dating from the 1970s are often characterised by the use of non-local, non-traditional textured and coloured brickwork with tile hanging (in greens and browns) or weatherboarding (often replaced with uPVC boards). Low-pitched roofs of interlocking tiles, often coloured.

In the late-twentieth-century developments (for example, ROM08m), brick is the predominant walling material throughout. There are many different colours, textures and finishes, from red, orange and buff bricks in straight colour and multi-bricks. Roofs are mostly clay tile, machine-cut or concrete interlocking tiles of various styles. Houses will often adopt traditional features such as decorative barge boards, timber porches, mock timber framing to upper storeys, mock sash windows and the use of decorative tiling for hanging tiles and roofs.

2.8.9 *Predominant land use*

The area is almost entirely single-family dwelling houses. There is some flatted development (sub-area ROM08i), and some blocks of flats interspersed with houses and flats, but this is limited and does not strongly define any one particular area. There are small district parades of shops and corner shops within estates. Churches, chapels, community facilities, schools and colleges are also key land uses and dispersed within the character areas.

2.8.10 *Public realm*

There is generally a good quality public realm throughout, with a number of roads benefiting from grass verges and small grassed areas to corners and junctions. There is a notable lack of street trees throughout this character area.

2.8.11 *Open space*

Open space within the character area is often ancillary to school complexes. They are a combination of playing fields, recreation grounds and open green spaces; notably those in ROM08h and ROM08j, Cupernham Infant and Junior Schools and Romsey Junior School, respectively.

There are some valuable green open spaces comprising grassland with mature hedges and trees to boundaries adjacent to the former Romsey canal (ROM08j). These open spaces link to retained open areas to the north (including children's play areas) which lie adjacent to recently completed housing (2009), to the south of Kingfisher Way.

Tadburn Meadows Local Nature Reserve (ROM08e) is an important green space at the heart of the character area and comprises mature woodland stretching along the valley to the south of the railway line. This forms an attractive backdrop to much of the development to the north and south of the railway line, particularly that of sub-area ROM08e.

2.8.12 *Biodiversity*

Woodley meadows within ROM08f is a grassland Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within ROM08f, and there are several adjacent SINC, notably the 60ha Fishlake and Ashley Meadows SINC to the north of ROM08k. Within the character area habitats include amenity and semi-natural habitats of the various open spaces, private gardens, and the east–west railway line running along the valley across the character area. Almost all houses have private gardens of varying size and maturity but most are linked to each other and to the open space or transport corridors. Larger gardens of older properties, for example those along Winchester Hill or Cupernham Lane, collectively provide a swathe of vegetation characterised by mature hedge and tree boundaries throughout.

Some of the later estate development of the 1970s and 1980s (notably development in sub-areas ROM08e, ROM08j, ROM08k) have retained areas of green space and, in some cases, pockets of woodland which have been woven into developments.

2.8.13 Access and connectivity

There is good connectivity, moving east to west through the character area, including footpaths and linked estates. The train line running east–west is a significant barrier, with very limited points to cross, and the character area subsequently houses estates with limited permeability either side of the railway line (sub-areas ROM08a and ROM08e in particular).

2.9 ROM09 Crampmoor (western edge – within settlement policy boundary)

2.9.1 Character Summary

Crampmoor, to the east, is almost wholly semi-rural and rural in character and does not feel part of the Romsey urban expansion but rather is an expanded hamlet of houses to the edge of the town. The area is largely made up of detached chalet houses and bungalows and a petrol station set in generous plots with good surrounding tree cover, wooded belts and natural boundaries.

2.10.2 Key Characteristics

- Large detached houses set in large plots in a rural setting
- Steadily rising ground from south to north
- Staggered plot layout
- Predominantly red and buff brick with clay tile and natural slate roofs
- A mix of single and two-storey houses, those to The Straight Mile occasionally on a grand scale
- Entirely residential – single-family dwelling houses
- Trees and hedges strongly defining roadside boundaries
- Quiet, tranquil and rural with very little traffic
- This area is reasonably accessed by road but poorly connected to the town for the pedestrian. The railway is a significant barrier to access to the open countryside to the south

2.10.3 Boundaries and setting

This character area shares a small section of its western boundary with the outer suburbs of Romsey (ROM08), with open countryside to the north, east and south.

The setting of this character area is strongly defined by the surrounding partially open (to the south) and partially wooded countryside (to the north and north-west).

2.10.4 Designations

There are no statutory listed buildings or designated conservation areas within the character area.

2.10.5 Townscape types present

TCT 08 and 12.

2.10.6 Topography

The area is defined by steadily rising ground from south to north.

2.10.7 *Layout and Pattern*

A wide tree-lined road, with extensive planting within the grounds of residential properties, and a country lane with no pavements, but grass verges flanked by substantial hedges add to the strong rural feel of this character area.

The building line is well set back from, and staggered, along Halterworth Lane. Buildings are set within generous plots.

2.10.8 *Buildings and materials*

Houses are predominantly single storey and chalet style. Detached, sometimes substantial, properties in large plots with mature landscaping of high hedges and mature trees. Houses are from a single period- 1960s/1970s. There is a chapel on the junction of Winchester Rd and Halterworth lane, probably of nineteenth century origin, which could be considered to be more linked with the Crampmoor area than ROM08e to the west.

Red brick with clay/ concrete tile predominate. Most parking is provided within the generous curtilages. Much care has been given to retention of existing trees, hedges.

2.10.9 *Predominant land use*

Land use is residential, with entirely single-family dwelling houses.

2.10.10 *Public realm*

The public realm includes some grass verges, no street lights, mature boundary treatments and some wirescape. There are no street markings to St Swithun's Close, adding to the rural character.

2.10.11 *Open space*

There is no formal public open space but the large private gardens take up a considerable part of this character area and are of a high amenity value to owners.

2.10.12 *Biodiversity*

The character area is adjacent to Ganger Wood, a SINC to the north.

Gardens are very well-treed, with some given over to woodland, whilst other areas are laid to grass but with substantial hedging to all boundaries. The gardens are also linked to the south and the green corridor adjacent to the railway.

2.10.13 *Access and connectivity*

Pedestrian routes are adjacent to the main Winchester Road but the railway line to the south poses a significant barrier, with Halterworth lane providing one of two local crossing points for the whole of Crampmoor.