

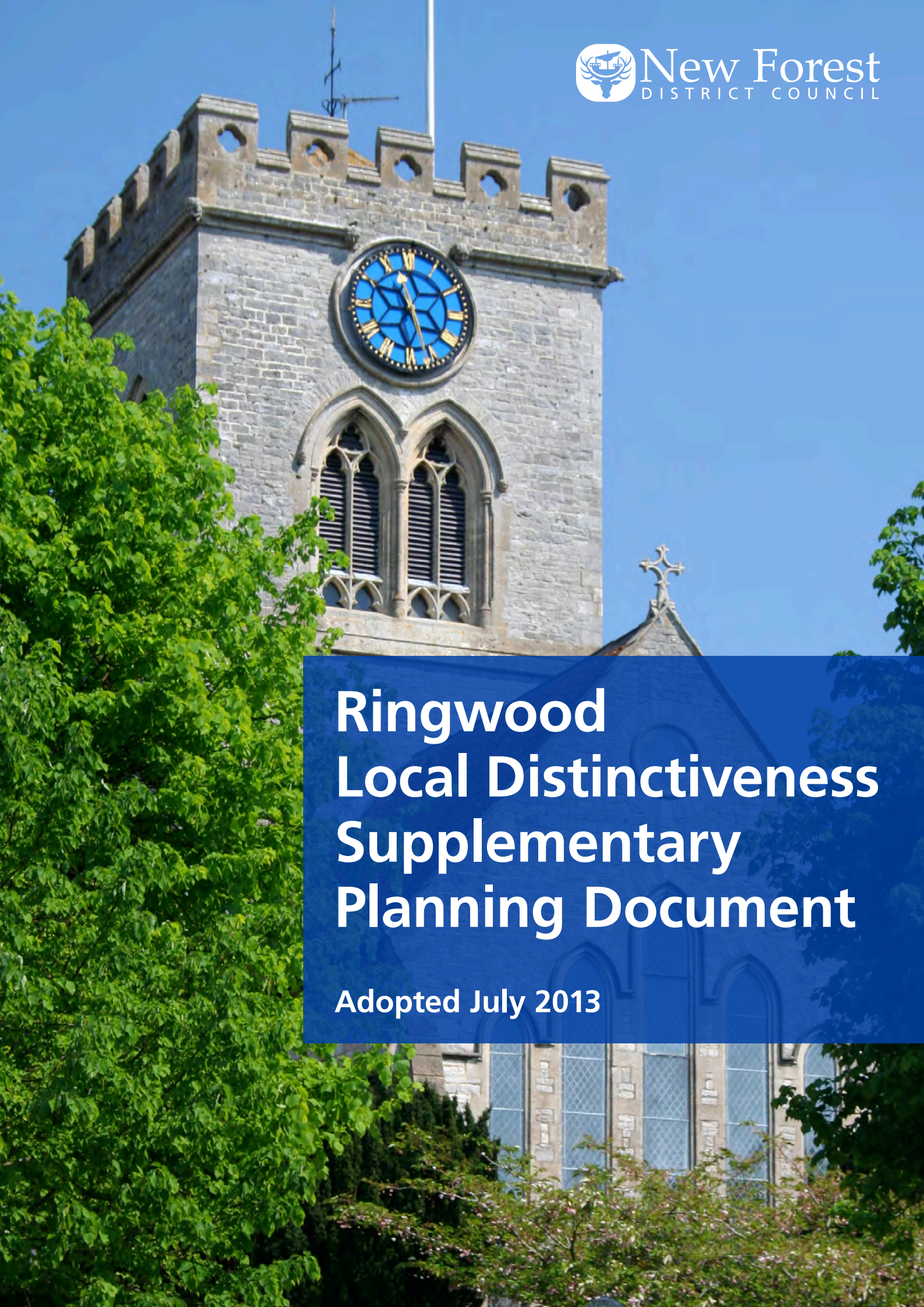
Ringwood Local Distinctiveness

Following public consultation in spring 2013, the Council adopted the Ringwood Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document at its Cabinet Meeting on 3 July 2013. This planning guidance document is aimed at ensuring new development in Ringwood is well designed and respects local character and distinctiveness.

The production of a series of Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) is included in the Local Development Scheme and will form part of the Local Development Framework for New Forest District (outside the National Park). The purpose of these SPDs is to provide additional guidance on the implementation of policies within the adopted Core Strategy, and in particular Policies CS2 (Design quality) and Policy CS3 (Protecting and enhancing our special environment).

- Ringwood Local Distinctiveness

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**Ringwood
Local Distinctiveness
Supplementary
Planning Document**

Adopted July 2013

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This document has been produced by members of the Environmental Design, Policy and Development Control teams in New Forest District Council's Planning and Transportation service. Copies may be obtained by downloading from www.newforest.gov.uk/planningpolicy

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1** This document has been published in order to help identify and protect the local character and distinctiveness of Ringwood. It provides guidance on how new development (including alterations or extensions to existing buildings) should be undertaken in the future, to ensure that it takes place in a way that protects local character and maintains the positive features that contribute to the particular area's local distinctiveness. It applies to all new development – not just residential development. It is the latest in a series of 'Local Distinctiveness' guidance documents that New Forest District Council is preparing for the towns and main villages in its area.
- 1.2** This document is part of the Local Development Framework for New Forest District outside the National Park. It is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which provides detailed guidance on the implementation of policies in the Local Plan. In particular it provides guidance to support the implementation of Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS3 and Core Strategy objectives: Objective 1 - Special qualities, local distinctiveness and a high quality living environment, and Objective 6 - Towns, villages and built environment quality.
- 1.3** The Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management sets out detailed planning policies and proposals to help implement the Core Strategy, including specific site allocations.
- 1.4** The guidance given in this document will be particularly relevant to those considering new development proposals within, or close to, the built-up area of Ringwood. The character area guidance in this document should help inform the necessary research into the context of individual sites. It is for the resident, the developer or the designer to investigate the more detailed character and special qualities of a place and how they can inform the design of new development based upon the information provided here.
- 1.5** The area to which this guidance relates is shown in Fig 2 (at the beginning of section 4). In considering individual character areas, an awareness of the wider rural context is required. With one exception, the boundaries of individual character areas all include sections where the town meets the surrounding countryside. These rural edges are of great importance, and need to be considered in the light of the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park planning policies that apply to the adjoining countryside and National Park.

Policy background

- 1.6** Promoting high quality design and supporting local character and distinctiveness are strong themes embodied in planning policy at national and local level. Detailed policy references are given in Appendix 2 of this SPD.
- 1.7** Earlier concerns over the impact of some recent development trends on the character of parts of our towns and villages within New Forest District, led the Council to place a renewed emphasis on the importance of local environmental quality and local distinctiveness, as reflected in its adopted Core Strategy.
- 1.8** This guidance provides a detailed assessment of what gives the settlement of Ringwood its own unique character and identity, and offers guidance on an area by area basis to ensure that new development will respect local context and strengthen, rather than erode, valued local identity. Whilst there is an element of judgement inherent in the production of such a document, the content is based on first hand observation, analysis and assessment, informed professional judgement, and input from the local community at the project inception stage, through the course of the main technical work and during a consultation stage prior to adoption.
- 1.9** The guidance in this document expands on earlier design guidance published by the Council ('Housing design, density and character' SPD, NFDC, 2006), which sets out the principles and methodology the Council expects developers to follow in the design of their proposals, and the steps to be followed in understanding and responding to local context. The main headings in this document follow the same structure as that earlier SPD, and are also consistent with national design guidance as set out in 'By Design' (DETR & CABE, 2000).

Status of this Supplementary Planning Document

- 1.10** Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are part of the Local Development Framework which provides the planning framework for the area. However, they are not subject to independent Examination and they do not form part of the statutory Development Plan. The guidance they give is a material consideration which will be taken into account in determining planning applications and appeals.
- 1.11** The guidance given in this document should be referred to and taken into account by those designing new development and making planning applications. It will be used by New Forest District Council officers and members to inform decisions on planning applications.
- 1.12** This document should also help in the preparation of 'Design and Access Statements', which must accompany the submission of some types of planning application.
- 1.13** Advice on preparing Design and Access Statements is also available in the Council's 'Housing design density and character' SPD 2006:
www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5137.
- 1.14** Further guidance on the preparation of Design and Access Statements is available from the Design Council CABE at:
www.cabe.org.uk/publications/design-and-access-statements

Purpose and scope of this document

- 1.15** Local distinctiveness is the essence of what makes a place special to us. It is the sum of landscape, wildlife, archaeology, history, traditions, buildings and crafts - everything that makes somewhere truly unique. Where we live and work is unique and whilst elements of its character may be similar to those elsewhere in the country, in combination such elements are uniquely valued as part of a local sense of place. Each and every street or plot of land will exhibit a blend of such elements, sometimes with obvious groups of characteristics appearing strongly, sometimes just a few underlying characteristics defining the area. This document seeks to explain that combination of characteristics which make Ringwood's places special to those who live and work in the town.
- 1.16** Amongst the history and traditions, there are place names and building names which provide not only an important part of the sense of place but also a link to the past that is often vital to the continuity of that sense of place.
- 1.17** The purpose of this document is to improve the quality of new development and to assist in identifying the characteristics of a particular area that need to be appreciated in order to achieve this. Applied properly, the guidance in this document will not inhibit innovative design but will assist by identifying the elements that any design approach must respect.
- 1.18** Design that respects its context is not simply about conforming to what has gone before. However, those aspects of character which are not valued, or examples which undermine the distinct character of an area, should not be allowed to unduly influence new designs. All development sites represent an opportunity to improve on or consolidate the character and identity of a place through either innovative or traditional design solutions provided that they reinforce local character and distinctiveness. Where existing character is poor and unloved or identity is weak, the opportunity should be taken through good quality new design to initiate positive change in the area.

- 1.19** Occasionally opportunities arise to develop an area of land which lies at a transition point or alongside the boundary of one or other area such that there is ambiguity as to which elements of distinctiveness are most influential. In such cases, it will be important to consider appropriateness in terms of the whole context. In so doing, such things as connections, approaches to the site, wider views, and social expectations for an area should all be taken into account in order to realise the potential to repair or enhance an area of townscape which might otherwise appear rather weakly defined.
- 1.20** Section 2 begins by providing an overview of the context and historical evolution of the settlement of Ringwood. Key features that give the settlement its own locally distinct character are identified. Maps and photographs illustrate the town's distinctiveness and the ways in which its historical development has influenced its present-day character.
- 1.21** Section 3 provides general design advice applicable across the town as a whole. This is presented as a table and is intended to be read in conjunction with the more detailed guidance given in Section 4.
- 1.22** In Section 4, a detailed analysis of the different character areas within the town is described, providing specific guidance relating to each area. This is presented: as illustrated text; as key defining elements of character and of Green Infrastructure (summarised in bullet form); in a guidance table augmenting that at Section 3 and finally an annotated map.
- 1.23** To sum up, this document enables local distinctiveness to be recognised, protected and enhanced when development proposals are considered. It is intended to provide a starting point in the design process by setting out a clear statement of the existing distinctive qualities of the place in question. Designers and applicants for planning permission should take these into account, both in their own more detailed analyses and in considering ways to enhance local distinctiveness. Early discussion with the local community and the Council's Environmental Design team is encouraged to augment this guidance.

Section 2

Evolution and setting of the town: What makes Ringwood a special place

Distinctive landscape setting

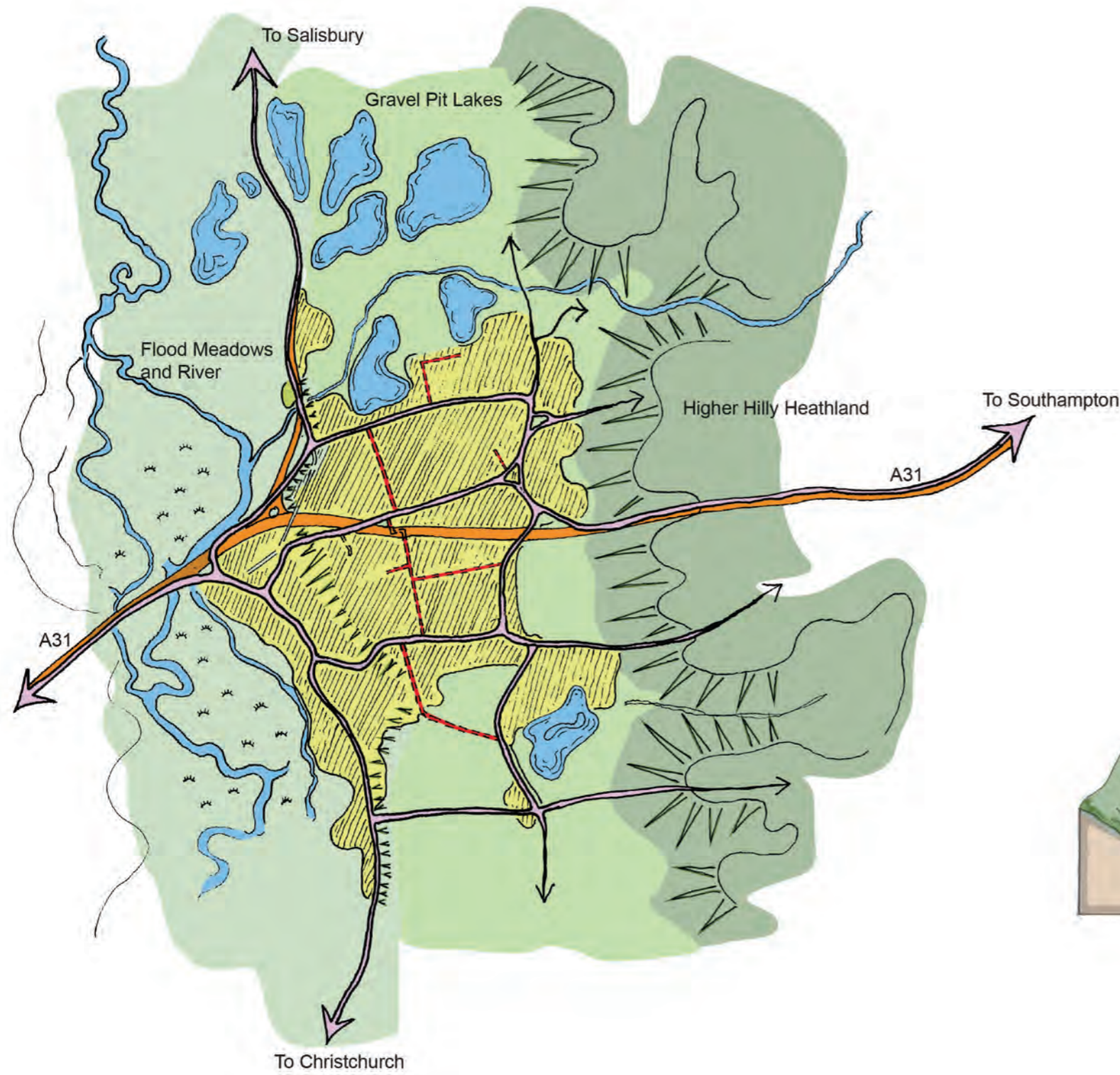


Fig A Ringwood from the South

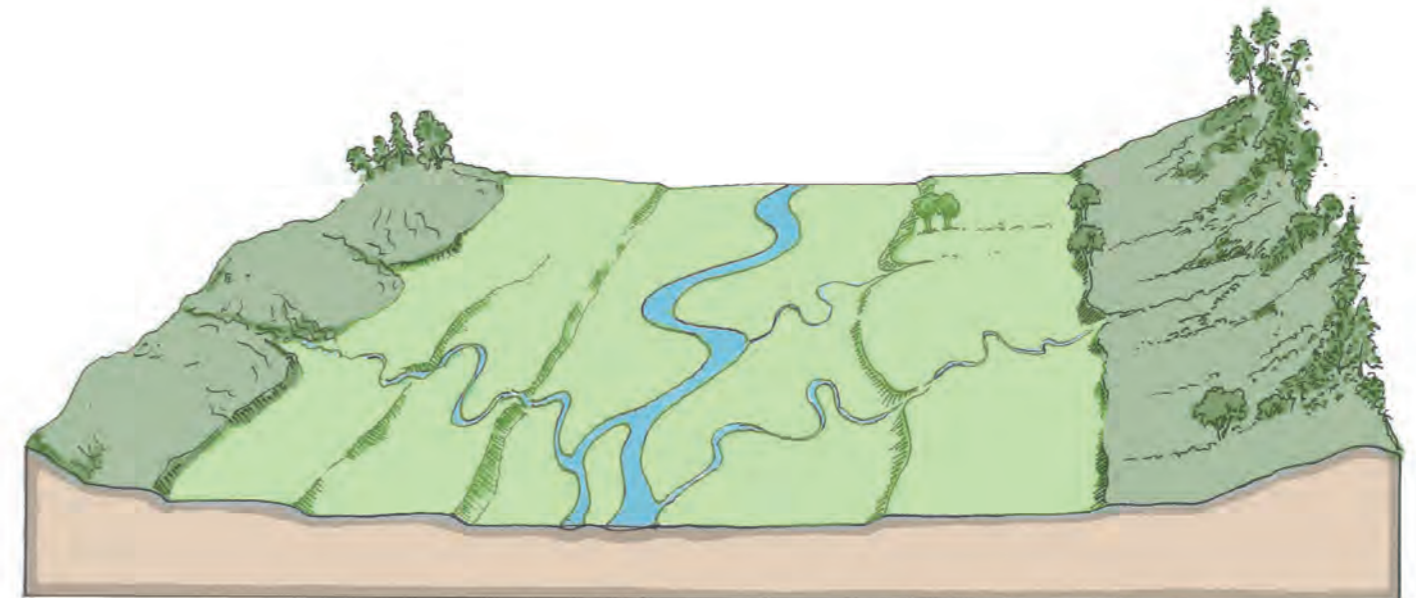
- 2.1 Ringwood has a unique and immediately recognisable setting. Located on the River Avon at the western edge of the New Forest, the town lies on beds of river sands and gravels, a little above the floodplain of the river. The landscape defines the location, the boundaries and much of the character of the town. To the west, the floodplain of the river forms the town's boundary. The Avon, together with its valley, has its own unique character and is nationally recognised for its ecological value. The course of the river, together with its meandering tributaries and branches, creates a wide swathe of rich meadows only just below the level of the town. The land rises little by little, not simply as a gradual slope but more as a series of wide plateau terraces, one very slightly above the other. This can be seen clearly in the way the land east of Christchurch Road lies as flat fields a couple of metres above the road and the dwellings immediately to the west. Such occasional embankments appear at various points in the town, sometimes affecting the alignment of roads and edges of development (eg. south of Hightown Road, east of the Quomp and onto College Road). Sometimes embankments are crossed by roads and appear less sharply (eg. across Carvers sports ground), but nevertheless rise towards successive identifiable flat plains.

- 2.2** Most of the developed area of the town lies on these areas which are referred to as 'River Terrace Farmlands' in the New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment. The typical dwelling types and building materials dotted across this landscape, or predominating in the small clusters of settlement along the Upper Avon Valley, include timber beamed red brick cottages with thatch. Red brick, sometimes ornate Victorian, or white painted cottages with slate roofs are also common reminders of the area's heritage. Even though the town has now enveloped this part of the landscape, such buildings or building groups still remain along the various routes that formerly connected farms and villages, and as such have become part of the rich mixture along those routes that remain. Such routes also keep other evidence of their rural past and characterise large parts of the town with their remnant farmland hedges and occasional field trees. These roads typically lack pavements (Fig 1 overleaf illustrates the landform and evolution of these lanes and roads).
- 2.3** The character of the town is thus constantly influenced by the underlying landscape - a landscape of very special habitats and ecology. Made up on beds of river valley gravel, the flat, fertile land offers both wide views of flat green space and persistent glimpses of greenery between the buildings. To the west lie the open floodplains and the various watercourses, ditches, drains and meadows that give both leisure access to the countryside and amenity through glimpses and views of the river valley beyond the town boundaries.
- 2.4** To the east lies the New Forest National Park. The land rises up through well wooded farmlands towards the ancient forest farmlands and the higher plateau of the New Forest heathlands. The higher land forms a constant backdrop to Ringwood. The belt of woods and pastures bordering the higher undulating plains of the open heathlands, forms a deep green margin to the landscape that characterises the horizon from much of the town, whether seen between buildings or as a wider distant view.
- 2.5** Arriving from the east at any time much before the end of the eighteenth century, travellers would have found their way down one of the lanes cut, through natural use, into the farmed forested slopes. After the high rolling heathlands of the New Forest, dropping downhill between small fields bounded by tree lined hedgerows and woodland, the traveller would find a stark contrast in the landscape. Wide open fields of flat river terrace stretched out a mile and a half to the west towards the town. The church tower and two tall mill buildings would have marked the horizon. There might even have been a silvery ribbon glimpse of river or in winter, some wide expanse of flooded meadow across the distant floodplain.

Figure 1 - Ringwood: evolution and landform



- Older rural lanes (some now urban) evolved naturally prior to the Enclosure Act. They link farms and rural cottages to the fording/bridging point on the river and the market town.
- Older rural lanes which were laid out post Enclosure Act. They are usually straight and were created to divide and access the main fields: North Field, Spittlefield, Crow Field, etc.
- Widened, realigned and new trunk roads
- Built-up area
- Sloping wooded edge of New Forest farmlands
- Marked level change between different river terraces



River flood plain and lower terraces accommodate the old town

Flat river terraces which accommodate the eastern suburban areas of Ringwood

Wooded edge of New Forest

River flood plain and lower terraces accommodate the old town

Flat river terraces which accommodate the eastern suburban areas of Ringwood

Wooded edge of New Forest

- 2.6 Immediately to the north, within the floodplain of the River Avon, lie a series of lakes (the Blashford Lakes) formed by recent gravel extraction, which together with the watercourse itself create a wide corridor of open water, wooded shores, wetland habitats and verdant agricultural land.



Fig B Ringwood - looking west from Smugglers Road, showing how the town nestles down into the low lying river terraces below the wooded slopes and higher plateau of countryside to the east. Only the two churches and occasional industrial rooftops interrupt the forest scenery.



Fig C Ringwood - looking east over the river floodplain from Castleman Trailway.

Relationship of the town to the surrounding countryside: rural to urban transitions

- 2.7** Although the east-west dual carriageway A31 trunk road harshly splits the town in two, it does for the most part respect the verdant nature of the approaches. This dual carriageway delivers the motorist immediately into the town centre via a wide car park that takes up the town's original central green space. The visitor receives a very foreshortened impression of the transition via this approach, seeing nothing of the river valley or the forest lanes, and is delivered at a site where development largely presents its back to the arrival space (The Furlong). Recent development has sought to re-create a sense of place and promote activity that will offer a more inviting visitor experience, with a new community building (the 'Gateway'), a new public square and the renovation of the historic Meeting House. There is the potential to further improve the car park environment to help restore The Furlong's quality as a significant place of arrival.
- 2.8** There are major traffic routes arriving at Ringwood, from Salisbury and Fordingbridge to the north and from Christchurch to the south. These routes exhibit a gradual transition from the rural hinterland to routes with remnants of older rural development interspersed with a huge variety of infill, small estate development and oddly juxtaposed industrial developments together with highway paraphernalia. These two approaches to the town are dealt with as character areas in their own right (see Section 4, Character Areas 4 and 5).
- 2.9** Immediately to the north of the town are the Blashford Lakes, formed from gravel workings. They provide leisure opportunities and amenity as a backdrop to residential or industrial development, but only afford occasional views of open water. The distinctive qualities that the lakes lend to the town are dependent upon the ability to create views of the water from the communal and public realm, retaining and managing the waterside and wetland vegetation and tree belts as green amenity and backdrops to the settlement, and maintaining or enhancing these wetland and waterside habitats for wildlife.
- 2.10** Approaches across the forest from the east are dissipated through various lanes, many of which retain their pavement-free verges, occasional hedgerows and mixtures of housing usually accessed immediately off the lanes, via individual private drives.

- 2.11** The impact of transitions between urban and rural edge is of course not confined to views and impressions seen or experienced from the driving seat of a vehicle. Cyclists and walkers will have their own corresponding, albeit slightly differing, experiences.
- 2.12** The rural edge is particularly vulnerable where the settlement lies on the flat river terraces. To the north of the town, gravel extraction has created tree-lined lakes which contain the urban edge. To the east, the rising forest farmland makes a natural boundary north of the A31, but south of this the open farmland behind Eastfield Lane has a raw and unsympathetic edge of rear garden boundaries. The southern edge also has some abrupt boundaries where housing and industry lies stark along the field boundaries around the Crow Lane and Crow Arch Lane area. Finally the western edge offers views from the river floodplain which are vulnerable where intruded upon by occasional views of buildings. Any new development should respond sensitively to these rural edges, and where necessary help in restoring them. This must be through careful consideration of the landscape rather than simply screening with vegetation.
- 2.13** Ringwood offers some late 20th century examples of residential developments which do respect the distinctive rural to urban transition without compromising the surrounding rural landscapes. For example, the small development at Shires Close off Christchurch Road in the Moortown area is not intrusive on the rural fringe, and creates an appropriate urban scale and spatial coherence within its own boundaries. Similarly, the much larger lakeside development at Hightown Lake further east does not impact negatively on the highly valued (and ecologically designated) valley landscape.
- 2.14** The western perimeter of the town is naturally bounded by the River Avon but in view of the open aspect of this side of town, the rhythm, the density and the vertical proportions of the buildings forming this boundary, are of particular importance. Unfortunately, there are a few bulky and disproportionate buildings which now interfere with the views of the town across this river flood plain. Screening them with trees and hedgerows could at best provide only a partial solution as the natural vegetation of this landscape is deciduous. Trees planted too close to watercourses might also compromise their natural ecology. Further development within the town will need care to ensure that views across the river floodplain from the west are not compromised by inappropriately bulky or tall buildings.

- 2.15** The southern edge of the settlement near Crow Arch Lane is currently an abrupt halt in the wide and open landscape. There is an intensity to this edge (cut off physically from the countryside) which fails to create a sympathetic transition from the rural landscape. Simply offering screens and banks of trees here would be alien.
- 2.16** The A31 road-sign gantries, although a necessary part of the highway infrastructure, are unfortunately damaging to the character of the main east-west approaches to the town. It is important to ensure that these do not set a precedent whereby other, potentially avoidable roadside paraphernalia unnecessarily becomes a part of the landscape, simply because the road corridor might already be perceived as irreversibly spoiled. For instance, oversized buildings would be an obvious detriment but the cumulative effect of inappropriately sited advertisements, aerials, satellite dishes, illuminations, or poor boundary treatments could equally erode the distinctiveness of Ringwood.

Historic development of the town

- 2.17** Ringwood grew up as a small market town at the point where the main road between Southampton and Christchurch crossed the river. Despite some evidence of Bronze Age human activity in the area, there is no Roman or Anglo-Saxon archaeological evidence of a settlement. The Domesday survey indicates that it was a royal estate and recorded a church and mill. Ringwood remained a royal estate throughout mediaeval times and although the town was granted a market charter in 1226 it never became a borough, despite its wealth. For this reason, the historic core of Ringwood is not characterised by the burgage plots common in other mediaeval towns in this part of the country, although there may have been some planned reorganisation south of the high street. Certainly there are long narrow plots and, whatever their origins, planned plots around the mediaeval streets, built up from that period and later filled in and overlaid by other changes, are an essential part of the character of the town. These long narrow plots may simply have overlain field boundary divisions, a not untypical pattern in the immediate locality, prior to the Enclosure Act.
- 2.18** The town does have historic associations with the Monmouth rebellion and events after the Battle of Sedgemoor, but perhaps of greater relevance for our purposes are the activities involved in the day to day life of the town. The regular market made Ringwood the centre of commerce for the rural hinterlands bringing prosperity. Local industry during the post mediaeval period included the two mills, leather tanneries and cloth manufacture. Later on, brick making, building and brewing were major employers.

- 2.19** The present-day parish church (the Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul) was largely rebuilt in the nineteenth century, but retains artefacts from its thirteenth century rebuild, and it is thought that a church has existed here since the time of the Domesday survey.
- 2.20** The main mediaeval townscape of High Street, West Street, Christchurch Road and Southampton Road remains almost intact - rebuilding and repair has retained the pattern of development. This natural growth and evolution of the 'urban fabric' gradually intensified, extending outwards as a pattern of 'ribbon development' along the main routes, defining the strong street patterns seen today.



Fig D Ringwood Town Centre

Historic lanes and roads

- 2.21** The development of the town throughout the centuries, particularly since the arrival of motorised road transport, has inevitably meant that many historic roads and lanes have been widened or straightened to accommodate modern traffic. A number of older lanes remain throughout the town and many of these are valued as distinct features echoing the rural traditions and connections they still retain. There is an element of novelty and intrigue to these unexpected narrow lanes, which give the town a valuable individual character which underlies the characteristics of the more typical planned layouts popular in 20th century development.

2.22 Particular historic roads and lanes exhibiting these characteristics (banks, verges, hedges, absence of pavement, field oaks and occasional cottages and boundary walls) are shown in Fig 1 and include:

- Old Salisbury Road and Gravel Lane – traditional routes from the north now running alongside, but well hidden from, the A338 and A31 interchange areas. They are tranquil and green, with only local access traffic.
- Linford Road – a traditional eastern exit from Poulner to Hangersley and the Forest beyond.
- Broadshard Lane – now part of the Poulner housing developments but nevertheless retaining a strong rural quality of established tree lines, housing set back from this narrow lane, and no pavements.
- Lanes linking Market Place/High Street/Christchurch Road to the Millstream/Bickerley area – particularly Lynes Lane, Deweys Lane and Coxstone Lane, still characterise the semi-rural historical context of the town.
- Star Lane – a much used pedestrian route between Market Place and the (1990s) Furlong Shopping Centre – a link between old and new with adjacent buildings of the same history.
- Quomp.
- Southampton Road - once the turnpike and the original vehicular route into Ringwood from the east, now superseded as a trunk road by the new A31.



Fig E Old Salisbury Road



Fig F Linford Road

- 2.23** The railway arrived to link Ringwood with Southampton in 1847 and with Christchurch in 1862 and the population of the town has increased fairly steadily since then. The town expanded mainly to the east, to take in the various farm groups and isolated cottages as far as Poulner and Lane End Farm in the east, just beyond Moortown in the south, and with a ribbon of development stretching along the Salisbury road to the edge of Blashford in the north. One of the most significant influences on the character of the town is the way it has been laid out east of the historic centre. In the period immediately following the coming of the railway, in contrast to other towns, this area saw the building of relatively few additional roads for speculative development. Where they do exist they follow the routes of links made post-enclosure and often perform the function of linking up the farm lanes or occasionally straightening sections of them. Hightown Road, Parsonage Barn Lane, Crow Arch Lane, Cloughs Road and Broadshard Lane provided these connections and, unusually for planned streets, they only occasionally included paved footpaths and continue to retain a strong rural character expressed through their verges, hedgerows and occasional cottages.
- 2.24** This laying out of roads created opportunities for speculative suburban development along an unusually spread-out network of routes. For that reason, the extent of the town seems to have broadened as a patchwork of planned pockets of houses interspersed with fields, rather than the more typically ordered spreading of suburbia into the wider countryside. For example, a group of 1950s semis might lie between a fragment of Edwardian gridiron pattern streets on one side and late twentieth century cul-de-sac development on the other.



Fig G Map of development stages from late 19th century to World War II. Yellow indicates developed areas up to 1893; orange shows developed areas up to 1898; brown is up to 1910 and pink (and the base map) shows what was developed up to 1947.

2.25 Townscape typologies are explained in Appendix 1 but this more sporadic pattern of development has meant that many of the characteristics of connected gridiron streets common to Victorian or Edwardian planned towns are curtailed into short sections, appearing here as single streets, and similarly the 1950s semis might not appear on typical looping loose grid networks but just along part of one street or one single loop.

More recent evolution

2.26 This filling out of the gaps has continued, sometimes recycling pockets of land where industry or buildings have become obsolete, so that the overriding characteristic of many parts of Ringwood is its closely interspersed mix of commerce and housing and its marked variety of ages and styles. Of course this does not mean that 'anything goes' in terms of new development. Each element of the patchwork has its own characteristics, which may be defined by space, scale and the connections and activity associated with the streets and places. It would be a mistake to dilute the characteristics of the place by wrongly assuming that because a 'mixture' has worked in the past, then anything will do. Any new development will have some impact and will influence the quality of the place. If change is allowed to erode the qualities of the neighbourhood that are valued by the local community, the area will no longer be so well looked after or positively perceived by its inhabitants. In the long term the cumulative effects of such change can cause neighbourhoods to fail.

- 2.27** Some new roads or relatively recent realignments have broken down parts of the town's fabric. However, this spread-out patchwork has at least allowed roads such as the main A31 Ringwood bypass (which removed the mill and vicarage from the mediaeval core) and Mansfield Road to be built with relatively little of the wholesale demolition of neighbourhoods too often seen in the histories of other towns.
- 2.28** The main change within the town, driven by the need to support increasingly intense visitor and commercial uses, has been to realign the road coming from the south (Christchurch Road) where the mediaeval and post-mediaeval streets were unable to cope efficiently with modern traffic. A relatively unbuilt quarter of the town centre enabled Mansfield Road to be built as a link road relieving the centre of its through-traffic at relatively little cost to the town's fabric. Unfortunately this has left connections and remnants of odd shaped parcels of land with sweeping engineered curves at odds with the traditional pattern of the town centre. There is now a distinct mismatch between buildings and streetscape, so the experience along parts of this route suggests that in this particular instance variety is not so much a positive attribute of the town but is more indicative of a lack of coherence.
- 2.29** There is a danger that once a highway and its paraphernalia of signage and commercial pressures (to 'hook' passing trade) has reduced, diluted or destroyed locally distinct characteristics, that this is taken as a precedent for allowing continued impoverishment of the environment. If there were, for example, a characteristic historic farmhouse alongside a busy road, this would offer a great opportunity to reinforce the positive qualities of the town, and would warrant the strongest protection from pressures that might diminish its quality, rather than allowing it to succumb to the highway pressures and to lose the essential qualities that made it attractive and an asset to the character of its neighbourhood.

What makes Ringwood a special place: a summary

- 1 A distinctive landscape setting**, with easy access to the countryside, particularly to the New Forest and Avon Valley. Many areas of the town have open views or glimpsed views between buildings connecting the observer to this landscape. The landform to the east offers a backdrop of forest edge where the land rises markedly from the flat river plain. To the west and throughout the town the river terraces and flood plain itself offer wide open views, influenced by the unique habitat and special characteristics of the valley of the River Avon, including its flood plain meadows and tributaries.
- 2 History and tradition in building forms**: a historic market town centre with a strong variety of traditional buildings, serving commercial, residential or community purposes. A patchwork of development encompassing pockets of heritage value throughout the later suburban neighbourhoods.
- 3 History and tradition in street forms**: a network of traditional lanes and roads without pavements largely retaining their rural character, on the approaches to the town and within it. People often still share the space with traffic, which calls for special care to be taken in making road and street improvement and in the way new development addresses and creates accesses onto such streets.
- 4 A mixed and relatively modest scale, density and form** of building that respects the wider valley setting, combined with a rural social context. There are recent developments giving a feeling of openness and “spatial comfort”, rather than oppressive and bulky built forms, that provide positive examples for both residential (e.g. around Hightown Lake) and employment uses (e.g. Headlands Business Park). Equally there are good examples of recent development which respects the intimate rhythms and containment of the town’s more urban streets (see figs 1.8 and 1.9).

2.30 Ringwood is fortunate in having a number of unique environments and notable features that help create its own identity. These are covered in more detail in the relevant individual character area descriptions (see Section 4) and include:

- The mediaeval town centre (see Character Area 1)
- The Bickerley and environs (see Character Areas 1 and 2)
- The shopping centre (see Character Area 1)
- Blashford Lakes on the northern edge of the town (see Character Area 4)

Integration of modern employment uses within the fabric of the town

2.31 People's working lifestyles and environments are as important as their homes when considering the impacts and contributions developments make to the distinct character of the town. Business parks and industrial estates have traditionally been set aside from residential areas to reduce conflicts of such things as noise, smell and disparity of building sizes. Of equal importance has been the segregation of commercial and industrial traffic. This has sometimes led to a reduced care for the environments they create or the impacts they have upon the wider town. Ringwood is nothing if not mixed. Industrial uses may be found cheek by jowl with the smallest of cottage dwellings and the ability to work in the same town as that in which one lives is no mean advantage. Such juxtapositions require special care, so that the employment use not only functions well for itself but also avoids restricting neighbouring uses and enjoyment of property. Care must also be taken to ensure that the insertions of such widely varying functions do not detract from the overall characteristics and distinctive qualities of the place.

2.32 Business parks are an integral part of the built landscape of the town and should not be consigned to an "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" approach. In view of planned additions to (and renewal of) the employment areas within Ringwood, it is worth appraising the success or otherwise of the existing sites in terms of their local landscape and townscape impact. Qualities that are evident within existing sites can help inform appropriate design decisions on future employment sites. The inset box on the following page highlights attributes and issues raised by Ringwood's business parks.

Ringwood's business parks - attributes and issues

Integrated and matching design in terms of colour materials and styles. This can offer a completeness to a scheme and sense of quality. Conversely, if handled poorly, it can offer monotony and create a cumulative impact upon the wider landscape. Positive examples include Stag Business Park where the soft greens and brick bases suggest both sympathy with the surroundings and a quality and permanence, and Parkside Industrial Estate with its striking blue cladding.

Low rise roofs that respect the wider valley landscape. Millstream Trading Estate and Stag Business Park rely on low roofs to reduce their impact. Endeavour Park and Hightown Industrial Estate have one or two much larger buildings that are at odds with the town's roofscape and the valley landscape. While these may currently appear in isolation, a continuation of such imposing skylines would inevitably have a dramatic impact on the character of this part of Ringwood.

Green space between buildings, which includes (or has the potential to include) trees. These are visible beyond and within each area and contribute to biodiversity. Pullman, Embankment Way Business Park and Headlands Business Park all include significant planting and grass areas that are integral to their layouts. Where planting is of native species and include trees as well as shrubs, this is not only beneficial to wildlife, but is also very practical given the typically simple maintenance regimes that such places normally require. Grass areas throughout are also important to offer year round greenery and amenity. Visually, these business parks also benefit greatly from the very sparing use of security fencing, which can easily create a dominating and oppressive environment.

Access and views onto pleasant green landscapes that benefit employees and impress visitors. Headlands Business Park is almost unique in that it combines its largely natural landscape treatment and open (unfenced) car parks with enough tree cover to soften views of its buildings and access whilst also providing views onto the special wetland landscapes of lakes and wooded footpaths. Parkside Industrial Estate by contrast, sadly seems to ignore the presence of the riverside and open meadow landscapes. The now disused railway and open country beyond offer opportunities to connect the new industrial areas of Hightown and those employment zones near Crow Arch Lane in much more sympathetic ways, taking influence from Headlands and offering better access and better integration into the urban/rural edge.



Fig H Hightown Industrial Estate



Fig I Parkside Industrial Estate



Fig J Headlands Business Park. The buildings are generally simple with shallow pitched roofs and predominantly brick walls. Secure areas are subtle and the usual proliferation of palisade fences is avoided in preference for a simple open plan landscape of car parking and predominantly natural planting.

Overview

- 2.33 Ringwood is a desirable place to live and a town whose economy depends to a significant degree on maintaining its attractiveness to visitors. For both these reasons it is imperative that new development respects those characteristics that make the town and its constituent neighbourhoods desirable.
- 2.34 This document is intended to help ensure that new development proposals are informed by an understanding of locally important characteristics, and how they should be respected in designing new buildings, places, streets and spaces.

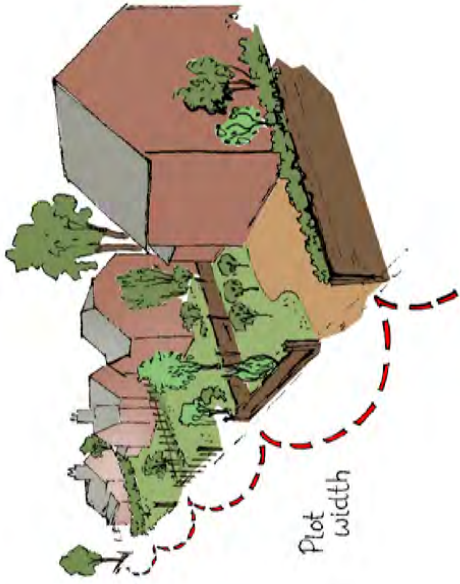
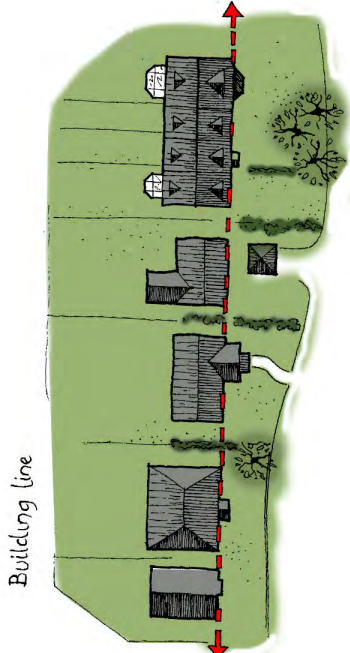
Section 3

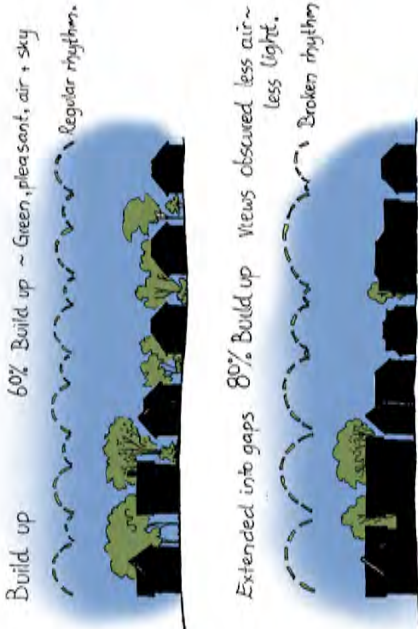
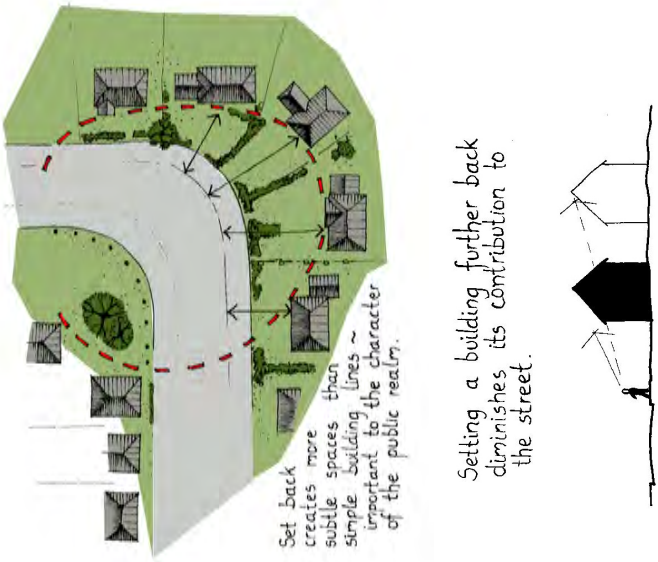
Ringwood – guidance for the whole settlement

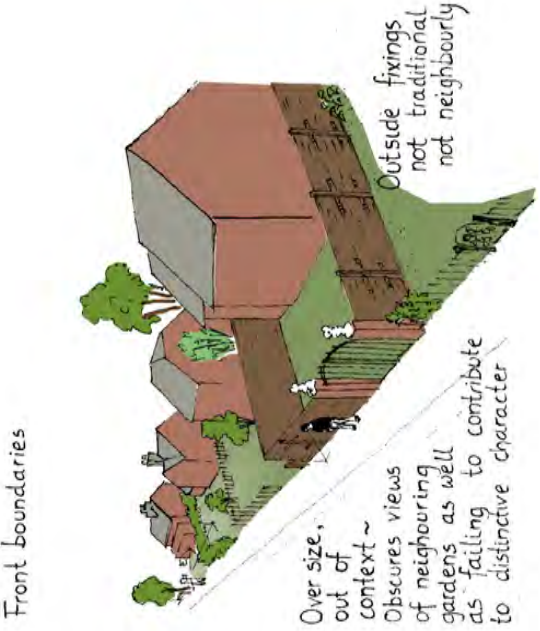

- 3.1** This section provides guidance that applies to development proposals anywhere in Ringwood. The guidance for each individual character area that follows in Section 4 is additional to the guidance given in Section 3.
- 3.2** All roads will be considered as ‘streets’ for the purpose of applying the Central Government guidance on the design of residential streets given in ‘Manual for Streets’ (CLG/DfT 2007).
- 3.3** This section should be read in conjunction with the character area plans and the townscape type descriptions given in Appendix 1. The notations in the box below set out important contextual elements as shown on each of the character area plans.

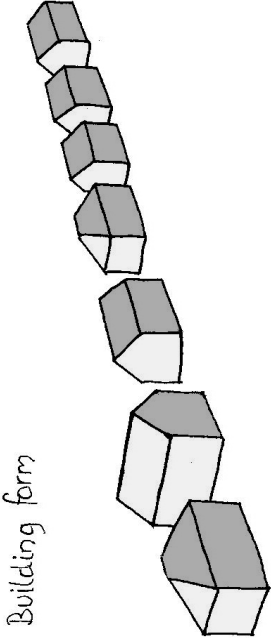

Character area map notations

- A** **Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses.** These are not exclusively marked but where they are they represent the key characteristic to be found in such townscape types. Whilst individual architecture of buildings may not be particularly remarkable this makes the elements of character described in the table below all the more important.
- B** **Planned ‘connected street’ type layouts.** These are not exclusively marked but where they are they offer the key characteristics to be found in the 20th century – mass inter-war and post-war suburban developments and bungalow estates described in Appendix 1. Such developments were built with a philosophy which afforded each property both the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to the collective character of the place through their impact upon the street. Thus the first section below, under the main heading layout, is particularly important in proposed alterations within these areas.
- C** **Older pre-car lanes and streets.** These are only marked where they retain characteristics which provide the neighbourhood with an underlying distinctiveness related to the history of the area.
- D** **Important views, vistas.** There are many important views that need to be retained. Those of the greatest significance are marked on the plans. No proposed development should impact adversely or block important views. The sections above under the main headings Scale and Appearance will be particularly important in proposed alterations in the vicinity of these.


Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
<p>LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)</p> <p>Plot Width Where there are well defined and regular plot widths these contribute to the character, especially where building lines (see below) are less distinct. Often the 'planned connected type street layouts' marked on the character area maps are particularly regular in their plot widths.</p>	<p>Where distinct plot widths are an important feature of an area, development should avoid crossing well defined boundaries and adding extra driveways. Removal of defining features such as walls and fences, tree lines and hedges should be avoided.</p>	
<p>Building line The line defined by the front elevations of the majority of buildings lining a street is often important in defining the space in front of buildings, allowing views along a street and setting the perceived scale of the buildings.</p>	<p>Wherever a distinct building line is evident, new development should respect it. The main bulk of a new building should reflect the typical building line. Forward extensions should be clearly subservient in scale to the main building.</p>	


<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Build up of building line The relative extent and patterns of buildings and gaps along the building line. Loss of existing gaps or introduction of new gaps between dwellings can impact on character by breaking the 'rhythm' of the street and restricting wider views. Often the 'planned connected type street layouts' marked on the character area maps are particularly reliant upon the regular gaps in the building line as a defining characteristic.</p>	<p>Development should seek to retain visual gaps between buildings, where they are needed to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the 'rhythm' of the street; or • The creation of an undue sense of containment, or loss of spatial structure of the street. <p>Conversely, where a strong sense of containment is important to existing character such as in terraced streets, care should be taken not to dilute this.</p>	 <p>Build up 60% Build up ~ Green, pleasant, air + sky Regular rhythm.</p> <p>Extended into gaps 80% Build up Views obscured, less air ~ less light. Broken rhythm.</p>
<p>Set back The total distance from the edge of the road to the front of the building. Changing the set back alters the scale of the building (bringing a building forward in relation to adjoining buildings makes it appear larger, and vice versa). This effect is most noticeable where building lines are not clear.</p>	<p>Replacements or extensions should take account of impact on perceived scale when viewed from the street. Building heights should take account of scale and the impact they have on the overall proportions of the street (the space contained by the building frontages).</p>	 <p>Set back creates more subtle spaces than simple building lines ~ important to the character of the public realm.</p> <p>Setting a building further back diminishes its contribution to the street.</p>

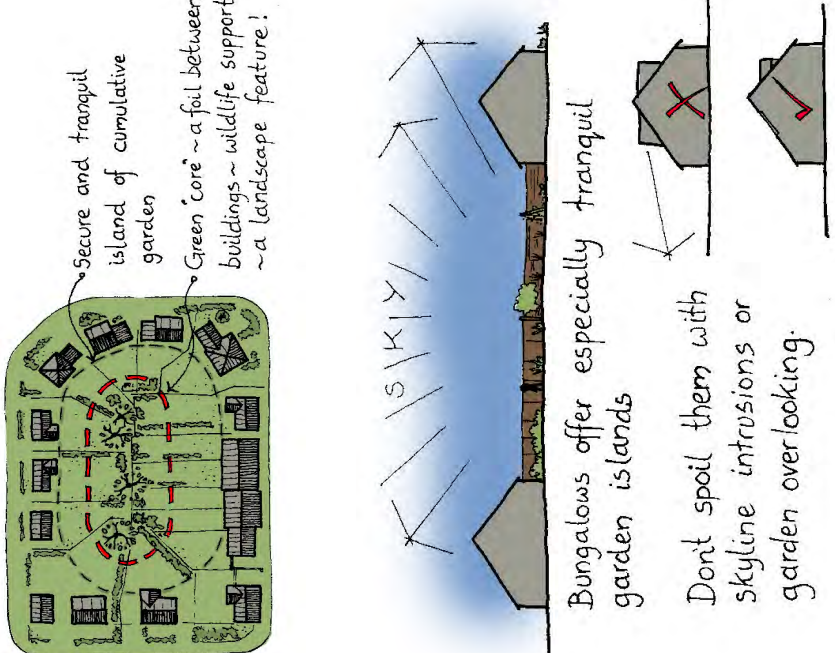
<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Front boundary Many streets have been designed with front gardens. These were usually designed to contribute positively to the broad character of the street. Changes to the enclosure of a frontage by raising or lowering the boundary's height, can alter the character of the street. Tall screens for privacy can be detrimental to the street character, altering the space of the street, reducing views along the gardens, increasing isolation and reducing natural surveillance A tall fence may not only deplete the contribution that the property makes to the quality of the neighbourhood but also reduce the contribution others make through obscuring views along the whole street.</p>	<p>Front boundary enclosures should respect the character of the road or street. Where low front boundary enclosures are typical, introducing taller boundaries should be avoided. Where strong front boundaries are characteristic of the street these should normally be retained but new ones should be of a permanence and quality that is worthy of the very public impact that they will inevitably have. Occasionally rear boundaries also abut streets, in which case their treatment also needs to be sensitive to the character of the street. e.g. replacing a rear hedgerow boundary with a tall close board fence would be detrimental, whereas a wall or fence behind the hedge may suit the street well.</p>	 <p>Front boundaries</p> <p>Over size, out of context ~ Obscures views of gardens as well as failing to contribute to distinctive character</p> <p>Outside fixings not traditional not neighbourly</p>
		

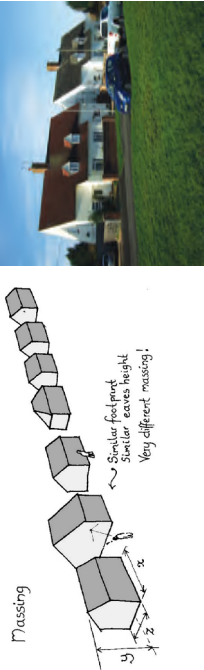
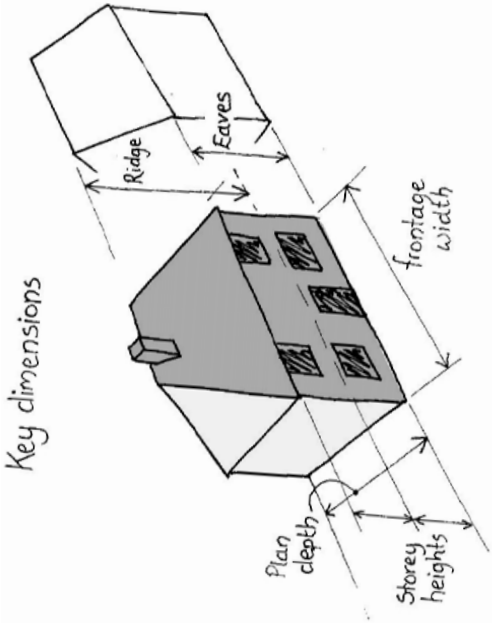
Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
<p>Building format Typical shapes of built form, including heights, widths depths, proportions, roof types. (Do ridge lines run parallel to the street, or at right angles? Are roofs typically hipped or gabled?)</p>	<p>Typical building forms should be identified and taken into account when planning new buildings or extensions to avoid damaging relationships between buildings or building elements.</p> <p>Where consistency in building forms (especially roof shapes and pitches) whether it is in a group or along a street, new building, extensions or additions should generally respect this and avoid significant changes to this format.</p> <p>Dormer additions should only be considered where they will not unduly break up the original roof form. Only in exceptional circumstances should a dormer's ridge meet the main ridge of a building. Design of dormers should respect the proportions of the building as a whole, appearing subservient in proportion, height and be set back behind the building's façade line.</p>	<p>Building form</p> 
LANDSCAPE		
<p>Topography The contours of a site and surrounding area are a fundamental aspect of landscape character especially here in Ringwood where much of the land is very flat but with occasional steep banks or abrupt level changes.</p>	<p>New development should be designed to complement existing contours. Design proposals which simply override the land form and are unduly dominating or require excessive retaining walls or over-engineered solutions should be avoided. Low lying areas and the wide flat areas of Ringwood usually need low roofed proposals and/or gaps that retain longer distance views.</p>	

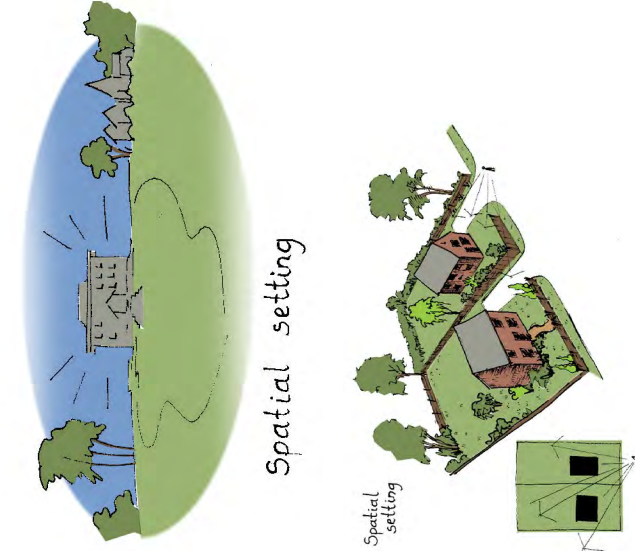
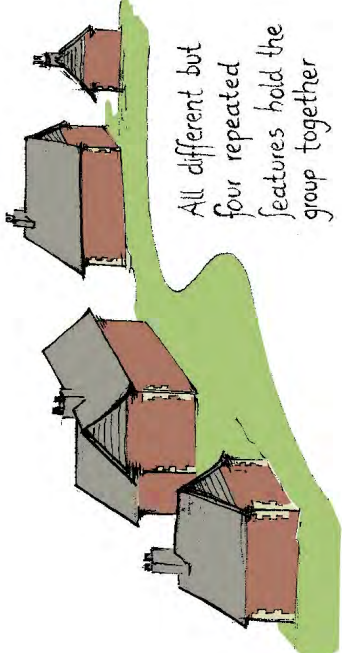
<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Ground water availability Trees and other plants die if they don't get enough water. Natural replenishment and continuity of ground water is vital to support plant growth and therefore the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Impeding ground water availability through culverting of watercourses or extensive hard surfacing should be avoided. Blockwork or other hard surfacing is not usually porous enough and should only be considered where draining to areas of soft landscape.</p>	
<p>Green Infrastructure Public open spaces need to be designed and managed to maximise their contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Physical links connecting landscape features and open spaces are valuable for both amenity and biodiversity. Hedges, ditches, trees, gardens and green spaces when linked by juxtaposition or along footpaths, boundaries or even busy streets, have a value greater than the sum of the parts. Many of the pedestrian links are indicated by small arrows on the character area maps</p>	<p>Public open space design and management proposals should be used to integrate green space into the built environment, re-connect people with nature, and promote biodiversity, amenity and recreational opportunity for the whole community. Management techniques and proposals should retain and enhance the wildlife potential of functional and visual links through the use of native plants, regular pruning, traditional hedge management techniques and replacement of trees lost through age or disease. Alteration through development or alteration to boundary definition that depletes the accessibility, natural surveillance, security or comfort of pedestrian links should be avoided. Designs for new development should aim to make such links attractive, and to improve natural surveillance and access. Boundaries along such links should allow some surveillance and always be of permanent quality (walls, piers and panels or hedges) and include plants to soften or add interest.</p>	

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
<p>Access points Making access points and connections to a local street can affect a basic building block of local character and what makes a place locally distinct. The character area maps indicate the older pre-car lanes or streets where often verges, banks, ditches or hedges are important.</p>	<p>New access points and increasing the use of existing access points should avoid creation of sight lines and radii which damage the street environment. Loss of trees, verges or hedges where such greenery is important are to be avoided or mitigated through the design.</p>	
<p>Trees Groups, lines or individuals. Often an intrinsic part of the distinctiveness of an area. Size, location and species are significant when defining local character.</p>	<p>Trees contributing to the distinctiveness of their locality, including street trees which are a vital component of local character, should be retained and managed to maintain long-term health and amenity value. Unavoidable losses should be replaced wherever possible.</p> <p>Trees have a particular importance within the wide areas of suburban housing in the east and in the mixed use areas in the southern part of the town centre. Many will outgrow their garden environments so it is as important to retain the potential for tree growth as well as individual trees themselves.</p> <p>Whereas trees can be used to screen, it is important not to rely on such devices instead of creating well designed buildings. The backdrop of the forest to the east and the open character of the floodplains can be undermined by introduction of large groups of trees without due consideration of the natural landscape as well as townscape.</p>	


<p>Elements of character and identity</p> <p>Green setting for built development Green space around buildings or groups of buildings soften otherwise hard urban environments, and contribute to local character.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Loss of greenery should be avoided in spaces that provide valuable green setting for buildings. For example, introducing excessive areas of hard surfacing with the removal of lawns and plants will produce a much harder environment and change the character.</p> <p>Where individual settings are important, new or replacement buildings should not significantly exceed the typical proportions of built footprint to garden space. Care should be taken to ensure that the green setting of a building is not lost to excessive car parking space.</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
		

<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Gardens</p> <p>Collectively, rear gardens through their greenery, tranquillity and biodiversity often form a strong part of the distinctiveness of an area. A single insertion of development into the collective rear garden space of a group of dwellings can destroy the integrity of the whole.</p> <p>Front gardens collectively make a substantial contribution to the character of an area - garden trees can make a significant contribution to the character of an area. Many dwellings have front gardens whose appearance provides amenity value to the wider community as well as to their owners.</p> <p>NB Where these are specifically marked on the character area maps, such character should be retained.</p>	<p>Backland development which breaks into and destroys a peaceful oasis of rear garden land should be avoided.</p> <p>Where collective garden areas are specifically marked on the character area maps, their retention will be of particular importance.</p> <p>Where perimeter block development predominates, rear garden infill breaks the perimeter block structure and may reduce the security of internal areas.</p> <p>Whilst such infill will not normally be appropriate, in cases where such infill is considered acceptable, designs should ensure that rear garden boundaries are not visible from the street.</p> <p>Where garden space is limited, hedges along frontages and climbing plants on buildings can offer considerable green character to the street whilst taking up little room in the front garden. A single garden tree may only take up a very small amount of space while giving character to the wider streetscape.</p> <p>New residential development should provide private garden space, appropriate to the development's context. As a guide, in suburban areas with typically larger gardens, new development should aim to provide garden space of at least 100m² for family homes or half the size of the typical gardens whichever is the greater. In town centres courtyard gardens, supplemented by green roof space or balcony, may be appropriate. Close to the rural edge, dwellings should have generally larger gardens to allow trees and tall shrubs to assist in softening the impact of development upon the rural landscape.</p>	 <p>Secure and tranquil island of cumulative garden</p> <p>Green Core ~ a foil between buildings ~ wildlife support ~ a landscape feature!</p> <p>Bungalows offer especially tranquil garden islands</p> <p>Don't spoil them with skyline intrusions or garden overlooking.</p>

<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>SCALE - Proportion</p> <p>Massing The volume of buildings in relation to other buildings, streets and spaces.</p>	<p>Massing of new building should be proportionate in terms of depth, width and height to the buildings, streets and spaces that are characteristic of the area, especially where there is clear existing consistency.</p> <p>In the town centre, the volumes of built forms need to adhere to those which would have been made possible by traditional building techniques</p>	
<p>Key dimensions Key features and details in craftsmanship, building techniques, façade treatment, proportion, pattern of elements may provide consistency and relate one building to another.</p>	<p>Where there are regular and repeated elements such as windows, bays or porches, gables or even chimneys these can offer a reassuring normality to a place. They may offer a quality of character that is memorable in its own right or they may be the distinctive backdrop against which specific 'highlights' can be set. Without repeated elements, building groups become indistinct and there is no opportunity for highlight or memorable feature.</p> <p>When deciding upon the main dimensional criteria of a new building or extension, make sure that actual dimensions of neighbouring buildings and of typical characteristic buildings are measured and understood. For instance, typical eaves heights and ridge heights are likely to be more important than number of storeys. Plan depth will affect ridge height and also the sense of mass as seen in oblique views - disguising excessive depth with flat topped ridges will not normally be appropriate.</p>	

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
<p>Spatial setting The proportion and layout of space around a built form in relation to its footprint and mass.</p>	<p>The spatial setting of buildings must be carefully considered to avoid development appearing 'overbearing' or 'cramped'. Extensions that may seem perfectly reasonable in other respects can not only destroy the special setting of the host building but also that of neighbouring buildings.</p>	
APPEARANCE		
<p>Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail In some areas there will be key features or distinct building styles or treatments, which give a consistency between one building and another. Where there are regular and repeated elements such as windows, bays or porches, gables or even chimneys, these can give an area or group of buildings a distinct local character.</p>	<p>Where there is a locally distinct pattern of development this should be reflected in the new development where possible. Design, detailing and materials can be contemporary and innovative while reflecting traditional features, providing the forms, proportions and patterns are respected.</p>	

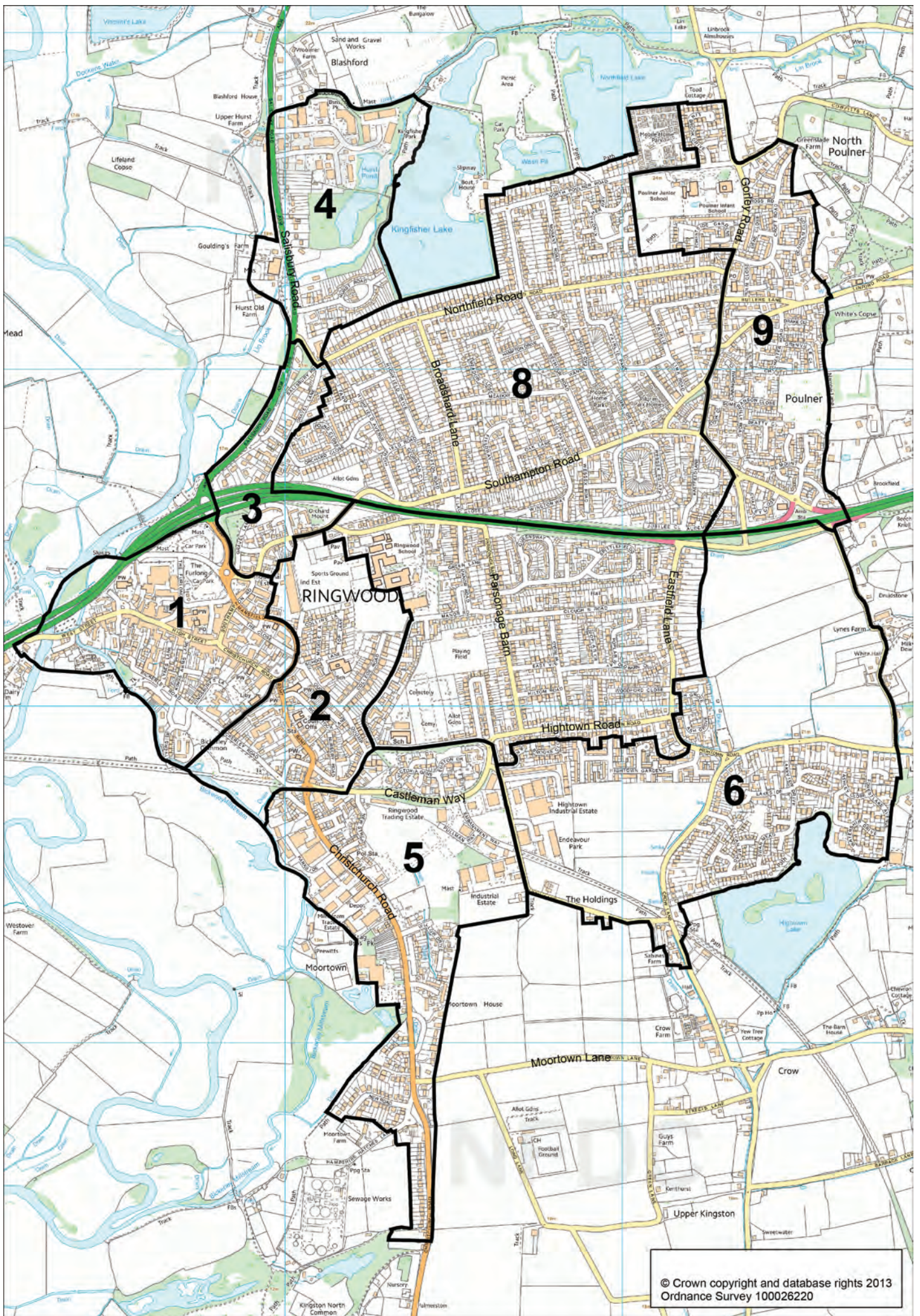
<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Locally significant buildings and structures</p> <p>There are occasional buildings or structures throughout the town which are key local features or which are important as particularly distinctive groups or examples. These have been identified on the key character area maps in Section 4. Even if not a statutorily Listed Building they may be of architectural merit, of a particularly distinct character, or form an important local landmark. These local buildings may be important because of their position in the neighbourhood, their craftsmanship and design or their history, in which case they should be considered as heritage assets. Such buildings are not readily replaced.</p>	<p>Locally significant buildings and structures should be retained wherever possible. Where replacement is unavoidable, whilst the original design need not be entirely replicated, footprints, garden spaces and boundaries, positioning within the plot, materials and proportions should be sensitively designed to retain the considerable contribution these have to the sense of place. Alterations should not reduce the architectural or historical integrity of these buildings or erode their contribution to the character of the area. Advice should be sought from the Council's environmental design team if intending to alter these buildings or their plots.</p>	
<p>Shops fronts and advertisements</p> <p>There is considerable commercial pressure for "corporate identity" and national style which can all too easily erode local character and distinctiveness.</p>	<p>Shopfronts should be designed to make a positive contribution to the character of the street and respect the nature of the building they are part of. Advertising for all commercial premises should be sympathetic in terms of extent, location, materials, colours and lighting. For further guidance please refer to NFDC 'Shopfront Design Guide' SPG 2001.</p>	

<p>Elements of character and identity</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Illustration</p>
<p>Materials Where consistency is important to the local character, a replacement of materials or a new build in different material can destroy that clarity of character. Variety is important but where there is no underlying consistency in other aspects of design it can destroy any sense of place.</p>	<p>Proposals should seek out the main underlying material use in the relevant building groups and respect this in their design. Where consistency of materials is important to local character, choice of materials should reflect the original materials of typical nearby dwellings. Designs should add to the integrity of clusters of similar dwellings through matching colour and texture choices in materials. Typical materials for Ringwood are: red brick and plain clay tile or slate. Occasionally also lime washed cob and timber with thatched roofs.</p>	
<p>DENSITY</p>		
<p>Site coverage (intensity of built form) The approximate proportion of built to un-built land will be evident as the 'hardness' of a place and its impact will also be influenced by the intensity of hard surfaces, walls, structures and outbuildings.</p>	<p>New development should generally reflect locally typical site coverage. Some redevelopment projects might consider creating higher site coverage, but unless the design can successfully create a discrete and pleasant place in its own right, without adversely impacting on the distinctiveness of the neighbourhood, site coverage as well as scale and layouts should take its cue from local context. More intense site coverage will not normally be appropriate in the North Ringwood or Parsonage Barn character areas but in any case where it is proposed, it must be innovative in design to make best use of space, and be of particularly high quality external finish and detail.</p>	
<p>Density Dwellings or floorspace per hectare. This is linked to the number of people using a place.</p>	<p>Designs for residential developments that increase the density on a site should ensure that they provide gardens of a contextually appropriate size and demonstrate that the expected increase in car parking space does not deplete the attractiveness of the street. (See also 'Gardens' section above.)</p>	

Section 4: The Character Area Guidance

The character areas on Ringwood

- 4.0.1** There are nine character areas, as shown in Figure 2.
- 4.0.2** For each area a description, supported by an annotated plan introduces and outlines what is distinctive and of local significance, and where there might be opportunities for improvement. For each area the Key Defining Elements of local character and the key aspects of Green Infrastructure that should be embraced in new development are listed. Finally there is a checklist of guidance that identifies any additional design considerations relating to that individual area, over and above that already covered by the whole town guidance in Section 3.
- 4.0.3** There are often subtle or small-scale variations in character within individual streets and within individual clusters of buildings, as well as broad variations across the whole town. The scale at which this guidance looks at local character is necessarily limited to relatively broad areas exhibiting clear differences in character. The areas identified are:
- 1 Town Centre
 - 2 The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter
 - 3 Gravel Lane
 - 4 The Northern Approach
 - 5 The Southern Approach
 - 6 Crow and Hightown
 - 7 Parsonage Barn and East Fields
 - 8 North Ringwood
 - 9 Poulner and the Rural Edge
- 4.0.4** Whichever part of the country you are in, recognizable and distinct patterns of urban development (townscape character types) can be identified. The main townscape character types occurring in this area have been identified and are set out in Appendix 1. These were used to inform the identification of the character areas within Ringwood and should be read in association with the general design advice in Section 3 and the individual character area guidance that follows.



Character Area 1 - Town Centre



Fig 1.1 Ringwood Town Centre (April 2011)

4.1.1 Ringwood town centre is a rich and varied place with historic charm, busy shops, pleasant parks, streets and spaces. The photographs below illustrate just some of the iconic views that characterise the town centre.



Fig 1.2 Jubilee lamp; Parish Church; Meeting House; Millstream from Danny Cracknell Pocket Park; Grain Store; The Old Cottage, West Street; Furlong Shopping Centre; the War Memorial.

A medieval town centre

4.1.2 This is the area of town regarded as the most significant in identifying the character of Ringwood and which emphasises its historical roots as a country market town. The strengths (and weaknesses) of this locally vital area are well-described in the New Forest District Council Conservation Area Appraisal (2003). It is important that new development not only respects the historic appearance of these buildings, streets and structures, but that where the actual physical fabric of such elements of the town (buildings or structures which may or may not be statutorily protected) still exist, they should be retained and restored wherever possible. It is not good enough to retain simply a façade, or copy a style, if historic fabric is lost in the process.



Fig 1.3 Market Day in Ringwood

- 4.1.3** The centre of Ringwood is characterised by its ribbon development. Buildings cluster together, tightly enclosing the earliest central streets and the market place at the heart of the town. Many buildings are listed, and there are many more which are not but which together present a deeply historic character and appearance. That appearance is based upon the collective impression created by roofscape, street enclosure and traditional proportions combined with traditional materials, craftsmanship and a mixture of uses and activities best suited to a very walkable town. Scale is sometimes mixed, but (with only a few exceptions) within certain parameters is always limited to those building forms that are, or could be, created with the use of traditional technologies i.e. shallow plan depth, or double piled with pitched roofs where the plan is deeper.
- 4.1.4** The centre is that of a typically English rural market town, with generally two-storey buildings and only occasionally a taller building marking a civic use or significant location. Very occasionally a building steps beyond these parameters of scale but this is not usually successful, such buildings tending to undermine, rather than support the qualities that make up the local distinctiveness of Ringwood.
- 4.1.5** The traditional centre comprises West Street, Market Place and High Street but the characteristics described above are carried east along sections of Christchurch Road and Southampton Road. Terraced rows of shops enclose the street around Friday’s Cross in uneven curves but as the streets leave this end of the medieval centre, the building line becomes very subtly more relaxed with some stepping in and out creating spaces for shops to show their wares or simply accommodating more orthogonal internal shop floors.



Fig 1.4 Looking towards High Street, the varied and uneven curve of terrace enclosing Friday’s Cross.

- 4.1.6** Buildings are predominantly two-storey with pitched roofs running parallel to the street. Behind the main streets, they are typically subservient masses following mediaeval field patterns where they existed. Partially based on mediaeval field patterns along these town centre streets, the plot widths vary but nevertheless fall within reasonably tight parameters. They thus create a distinctive rhythm to the streets. This is displayed through subtle changes to building facades and the skyline. Taller buildings are the exception but occasionally rising to three storeys need not undermine the dominating rhythm of the plot divisions, but rather tends to emphasise it provided that such height remains only very occasional. However, it is particularly important to appreciate the tradition of shallow depths with such exceptions as they are clearly visible.
- 4.1.7** Many, though not all, replacements of older buildings successfully adhere to the characteristics of scale and mass described above so that for the most part, the buildings support the identity of the centre. Over the years, new developments have attempted to emulate historic styles. Successful examples are faithful to the architectural principles of their chosen cue adopting authentic proportions and materials. Farther out along Southampton Road are, however, examples that undermine the distinctive character either through failing to take on the proportions or mass of the styles they try to emulate or by attempting to add a contemporary flavour without reference to the elements of building form that define the character of streets in the centre of the town.

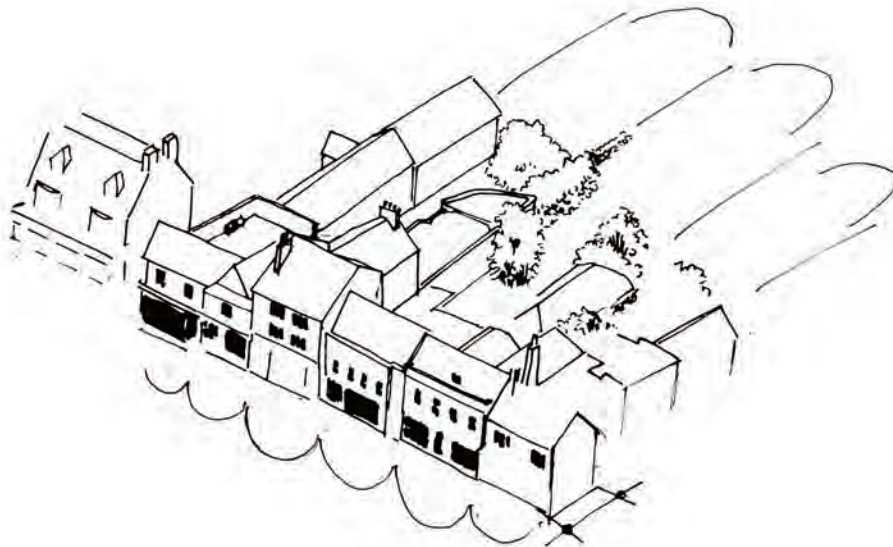


Fig 1.5 Sketched birds-eye diagram showing the parallel roof ridges and subservient forms to the rear which are usually within the mediaeval plot patterns.



Fig 1.6 Sketch diagram illustrating the typical rhythms and relatively consistent key dimensions (see guidance table) along the town centre streets



Fig 1.7 An occasional three storey building supports the rhythm of the street provided it retains the traditional depth.



Fig 1.8 High Street and Friday's Cross. This diagram illustrates how a recent replacement building (taking up the two central plot widths) re-emphasises the street's rhythm, supporting the key elements of scale and appearance that are distinctive of Ringwood's town centre



Fig 1.9 This example of recent development, just east of Friday's Cross, respects the scale and skyline of the town centre. It is easy to appreciate traditional detailing but this works because the proportions are respectful of those of the town centre (with the possible exception of the chimneys). It illustrates the predominantly two storey domestic scale as well as the typically: parallel ridges; portrait windows; subtle skyline changes; rhythms created primarily by plot widths; and secondary rhythms created by fenestration of the town centre.

Notice that: the three-storey house offers a two-and-a-half-storey façade with dormers; the two and a half storey house has dormers receding behind the plane of the façade.

4.1.8 Examples which adhere strongly to a heritage style can easily support the character provided that they display authentic proportions and materials. This becomes less successful where important elements of character are ignored whether the style is historic or contemporary. Farther out along Southampton Road are several examples that undermine the distinctive character either through failing to take on the proportions or mass of the styles they seek to emulate, or by attempting to create their own identity without reference to the elements of building form that define the character of streets in this part of the town.

4.1.9 The first example considered here is that of the old Woolworths building and its larger neighbour, built to allow a widening of the street in the nineteen thirties and forties.

4.1.10 This striking terrace of shops (on Southampton Road - see Fig 1.10) is an example of early twentieth century façadism, offering an importance to the shopping street with proportions and rhythms referring back to classical architecture. However, whilst it respects the street rhythms within the façade, the symmetry, repetition and especially the wide flat roof makes the building appear as one, far wider than typical and with a skyline which is immediately at odds with the town. Such striking features can offer variety and a pleasing richness to the street but in this case, subsequent development nearby has not even respected the underlying rhythms that characterise the town centre but rather taken this exception as a cue to creating something entirely different – namely, over-wide flat-roofed façades with drab window patterns and, at street level, over-wide shop windows.



Fig 1.10 The classically proportioned, neo-Georgian façade creates a striking feature at the junction of Southampton Road and Mansfield Road. The building is rich in detail and rhythms of its own but is at odds with the skyline because, whilst the rhythms of its façade echo the shop fronts, the width at three-storey is incongruous.



Fig 1.11 The subsequently developed and rather drab run of shops alongside sadly fails to respect the rhythms along the street either through plot division or fenestration pattern (they set up powerful rhythms all of their own). With no roof visible, despite being two-storey, this is equally at odds with the skyline.

4.1.11 A second example lies beyond the severing effect of Mansfield Road. Historically the compact building of the town centre did not reach this far but each replacement development has intensified the amount of building along the street. Mostly this is done in similar scale with dimensions that are respectful of the town centre buildings. Numbers 46-52 Southampton Road is an example that picks up some of the key defining elements of the street, but then negates the effect by over development beyond those key characteristics. Firstly in the symmetry of the three frontage elements bound together to appear as one very wide form, and secondly by dwarfing the frontage building with oversized development behind. 'Heritage styling' fails in this instance because proportions are neither respectful of the street characteristics nor faithful to the proportions and dimensions of the historic period the style seeks to emulate.



Fig 1.12 Farther out along Southampton Road where the commercial centre gives way to residential dwellings, this example gives a passing nod to its context whilst inserting a three storey block which is so vastly at odds with the town that it could be anywhere.

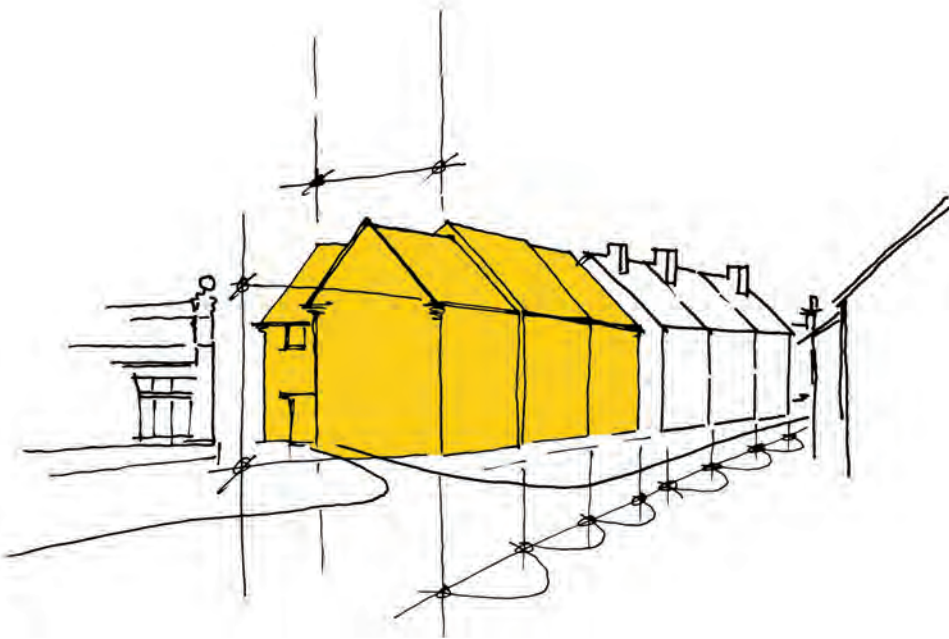


Fig 1.13a Diagram showing how new development could have picked up upon the rhythms and scale of adjacent buildings on Southampton Road with some additional development behind.

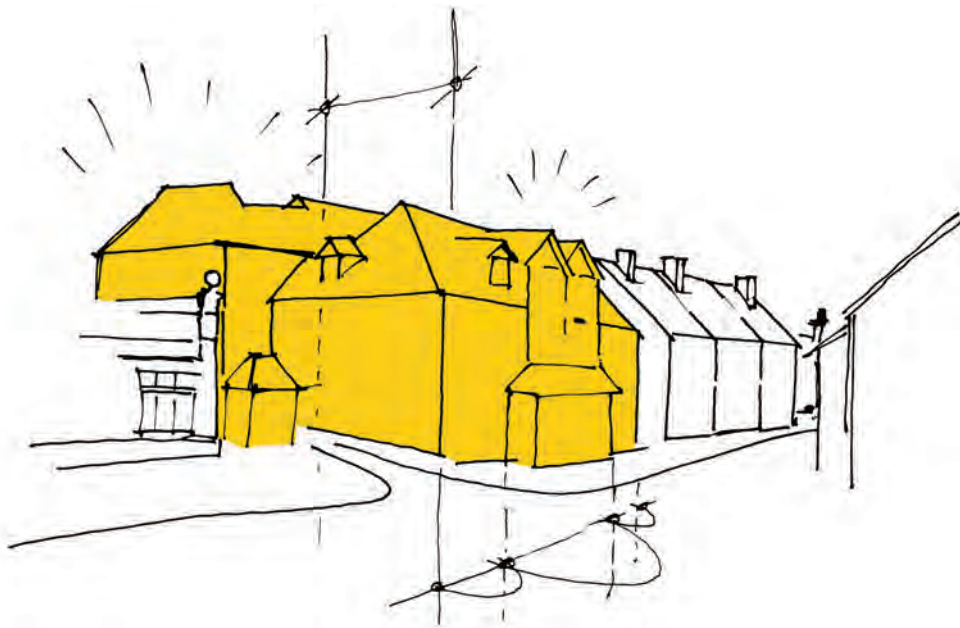


Fig 1.13b Analytical diagram illustrating where the actual building offers some respect to the context but adds elements that then ignore the very issues of scale and mass that informed the design at the outset. It will be important when considering new development in the area, that these key defining elements of character are recognised and the more outlandish elements of such buildings as this are not used as cues or precedent for further development at inappropriate scale.

The Close

- 4.1.12** Behind the continuous terraces of Christchurch Road and the southern end of Southampton Road lies an area of the town centre which has become rather mixed. Community buildings in the form of a church (Roman Catholic), a medical centre and fire station lie next to houses and bungalows. The church is something of a landmark, the others provide nothing in the way of distinctive architecture or quality in their setting being at odds with their neighbours especially in terms of scale and mass.
- 4.1.13** The Close is a well-used pedestrian route connecting schools and residential areas straight to the heart of the town. The quality of this link to Southampton Road as well as that leading to Christchurch Road need to be improved with any new development always maximising surveillance through active and pleasant frontage to enhance the walking experience of these links.
- 4.1.14** Somewhat cut off in modern times by the Mansfield Road link, development and change has not, as yet, provided a distinctive edge to that route so the opportunity to provide significant tree planting and a good quality edge on any developments here needs to be taken.



Fig 1.14 The Roman Catholic Church. The striking (and somewhat Mediterranean) clarity of its architecture and the green-edged setting are important contributions to the character of The Close.

A crossing place

4.1.15 The main A31 trunk road impinges greatly upon the very heart of the town but it should be recalled that this route is the *raison-d'être* for the town's existence at the crossing point of the River Avon. It offers a powerful first impression of the town through the long distance views of church tower (the Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul) and river valley as one comes down from the higher ground and close up views within the valley itself. It is vital to the impression that Ringwood gives, that the clarity of its historic and rural character should not be undermined through deterioration of views from the road. Features such as advertisements, lighting, over-dominant highway paraphernalia, overly massive building (especially roof) forms or even inappropriate screening can have a cumulative impact especially where the highway environment has a tendency to be seen as an already 'lost cause'.

North east quarter

4.1.16 The north east quarter of the town centre is somewhat vehicle dominated. The Furlong, which remained an open green field until the 1970s, has been converted to car parking. The old cattle market and rear plots of the old commercial centre which once faced the mediaeval Market Place have now been amalgamated to offer a more modern shopping experience within collections of modern buildings. This development has been designed to accommodate the remnants of historical walls and buildings. Because these are largely inviting, successful and pleasant additions to the town, the supermarkets are intrinsically 'knitted' into the town's fabric, which has ensured that the town centre has retained a vibrancy and vitality lost in many similar sized towns. However, the connections have altered the 'gravitational pull' in the town such that people are drawn away from the traditional heart – Market Place.

4.1.17 One of the defining characteristics of Ringwood is the many narrow paths and alleys which link the main mediaeval market place and central street through to these newer shopping centres and car park to the north and particularly to the south, where they pass through a more mixed use area towards the Millstream, River Avon and Bickerley Common.

The shopping experience

- 4.1.18** The shopping experience of Ringwood is part of its distinct character. A mixture of shop sizes and types fill the diverse historic core of the town. While the original streets remain open to traffic, the pedestrian realm is considerably more permeable with narrow alleyways and small squares enabling a very sociable living, shopping and visitor experience. It will be important to always protect and enhance the character of links to the market place.
- 4.1.19** The Furlong - a 1990s development on the old cattle market site, has become a focal point for informal socialising and relaxation. Plate glass shop fronts with wooden cladding are part of a new contemporary café culture and street life which, by respecting the distinctive building forms of the town, can thrive in a symbiotic (mutually advantageous) relationship with historic elements of the town centre. Buildings in scale with such older buildings as the grain store, reinvigorate new uses in historic buildings and underpin a local distinctiveness for the shopping core. It will be important to continue to respect the traditional and historic forms and use of locally typical materials in any additions or alterations.
- 4.1.20** Behind the Meeting House, another square offers shelter under heavy timber arcading, echoing the medieval roots of the town and giving an opportunity for shops such as a traditional greengrocers to thrive alongside a modern supermarket.
- 4.1.21** In both places, tying in the contemporary lifestyle generated by supermarket shopping as an intrinsic part of the town's urban fabric, its connections and spaces has been to the great advantage of Ringwood both in terms of the viability of its pedestrian streets and regenerating uses for older buildings. Such examples of respecting the past whilst embracing the new are what make the town centre experience distinctive.
- 4.1.22** It is important to retain the variety of size and type of shop whilst respecting heritage through careful shop front design, which should appear as intrinsic to the whole building form, complementing details and materials. Shop frontages should not impinge upon pedestrian connections or legibility of streets and spaces but rather seek to enhance the vitality and activity of the public realm through good design. More information is available in the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Shopfront Design Guide'.

The Bickerley

4.1.23 The wide green space of Bickerley Common (the Bickerley), which is a designated 'village green', is a highly valued public space accommodating the annual fair and giving breathing space close to the town centre. The disused railway embankment forms a footpath and vantage point from which one can enjoy open views across the river floodplain. Three distinct groups of dwellings lie on the other side of the green from the town.



Fig 1.15 Bickerley Terrace – red brick detailing, chimneys and articulated skyline combine with the setting to create a memorable landmark

4.1.24 Bickerley Terrace with its impressive forest of chimneys and rich detailing and brickwork is one of the most memorable sights in Ringwood. This is due in no small part to the setting. Close by, five pairs of red brick cottages face a gravel lane which runs down towards the millstream. Such an oddly urban insertion beside the stream nevertheless has some charm in the brick detailing and consistent forms unspoilt by roof alteration. The open plan dwellings behind these are largely secluded from view and contribute no positive characteristic to the townscape beyond that of the tree groups which screen their presence.



Fig 1.16 Bickerley Common

- 4.1.25** The northern edge of the Bickerley is lined with a variety of dwellings orientated to oversee the activity of the green, offering important natural surveillance and a sense of comfortable security. Many of these dwellings have gardens which soften the margin - their colour and greenery contributing to the quality of the space. The retention of garden settings as a green margin and the visual connections between dwellings and the open space are important here and must be retained. Screening off these frontages for reasons of privacy or building up the gaps (thus hardening the edge and skyline) would be detrimental to the character.
- 4.1.26** Leading up to the north and north west are various paths, roads and drives which access the town and the maze of buildings which lie behind the main streets. Each winding alley (or 'snicket') holds surprises of gardens, overhanging trees, oddly shaped cottages or buildings and features steeped in heritage. The variety of uses ensures a close-knit fabric which is always busy. Built up over many years this is the sort of townscape where mixed use is seen to succeed, residents live in close neighbourliness with workplaces of various sorts, from small offices to workshops, retail and services. Car parks squeezed between the uses enable a sense of calm business.
- 4.1.27** These winding paths and snickets referred to above connect vehicle access points, yards and streets up to a variety of historic and modern buildings accommodating residential uses and small businesses in seemingly equal number. Each route is marked on the plan and each has its own character. Three examples of such routes are given below, but each is important and collectively they define the character of much of the town centre away from the central streets.

4.1.28 Kingsbury's Lane for example connects up to Gooseberry Lane and Fridays Court past a collection of older cottages, some with front gardens and through either an intimate and small scale contemporary shopping court or a narrow path backing the Conservative Club car park. The Gooseberry Lane connection is now uninviting due to lack of maintenance, misleading signage and poor quality boundaries and surfaces. Fridays Court in contrast has created an inviting route with a development that embraced the external environment through its design.



Fig 1.17 Kingsbury's Lane

4.1.29 Dewey's Lane is an example which allows the pedestrian to arrive on High Street opposite Meeting House Lane via a high quality group of recently built houses, through yards and under an arch through seemingly private spaces. Gardens and trees mix with the dwellings off Dewey's Lane but the path almost peters out completely through private yards so that the surveillance of buildings close by and the activity of other walkers accessing the dwellings or businesses is all that tells the visitor they may proceed.

4.1.30 Strides Lane is different again, being more open, with one or two remnants of historic employment remaining before the yards and car parks give way to dwellings with gardens where the path goes south towards the recently laid out Danny Cracknell Pocket Park - a tranquil green destination on the edge of the millstream.



Fig 1.18 Strides Lane

4.1.31 This whole section of town between the Bickerley and High Street is thus a mixture that creates quiet activity and movement throughout the day. Interspersed with private garden and car park there is a balance between green amenity, historic charm and active use that is maintained by a constant recycling of the land. Replacement and additions to the built environment must not lose sight of that balance if the success of this part of town is to continue. The pathways must remain inviting, the garden spaces must remain large enough to accommodate trees in reasonable number and the buildings must respect the parameters of scale and mass that define the distinctive character of this townscape.

Other green spaces

4.1.32 On the edge of the town centre there are three further tranquil green spaces each of markedly different character: Silver Jubilee Gardens, the new Gateway Square and its partner at the opposite corner of the Furlong and the War Memorial garden

West Street and Silver Jubilee Gardens

4.1.33 West of the Market Place, the closely built up street continues with a sharply diminishing sense of commerce. A deep sense of history as one passes Monmouth's place of custody and thatched building 'The Old Cottage', onto the rebuilt bridge over the millstream is now less about town centre and trade and more underlain by the green and shady riverside tranquillity of the Avon landscape. Silver Jubilee Gardens offers a shady spot to watch both the main river and the millstream rushing through. Views from the river crossing pick up some traditional rural forms of dwellings along The Bridges (a lane), and the historic significance of the (listed) Fish Inn where the road emerges onto the A31 is an important signal to passing traffic that beyond the highway paraphernalia is Ringwood, a historic and rural market town. The care of this particular listed building is thus extremely important to the impression of our town given to passers-by.

The Furlong

4.1.34 Until the 1970s, this was a green field where the drovers route (Gravel Lane –see Character Area 3) once would have arrived at the market. A car park since the seventies, this is now the arrival point for many with bus and taxi's stopping and now the recent development of 'The Gateway', a community

hub for information, local council business and a public square at the meeting of the ways. A cluster of plane trees shades the square. Opposite is the fascinating Meeting House backing onto a busy shopping court at Pedlars Walk and directly adjoining, to the east, is The Furlong Shopping Centre, taking its name from the neighbouring piece of land.

- 4.1.35** The outer edges of the Furlong itself are lined with trees and a small park – a simple grass space with large trees, somewhat removed from popular circulation. Re-establishing and enhancing the diagonal path, tree and hedge lines along the old drovers’ route would better link the amenities of this relaxing area with the new gateway square.
- 4.1.36** Such an amenity might not only serve to improve the town’s attractiveness to visitors but if a holistic review of traffic through The Furlong were to be undertaken, this could improve pedestrian priority. The new square has been designed with the potential to facilitate direct access towards Market Place, down Meeting House Lane. Should the opportunity arise, the old drovers’ route might once again draw people through to the market place, ensuring the viable future of the historic core for years to come.

War Memorial Garden

- 4.1.37** The town’s war memorial sits in an attractive public garden at the south eastern edge of the centre. The imposing presence of Greyfriars overlooks the gardens and the impact of green and trees on the opposite side of Mansfield Road are important contributions to the character of the space.



Fig 1.19 Greyfriars

Key defining elements

- Historic built environment
- Central streets well defined by built form
- Backland often defined by historic field patterns and usually subservient mass of buildings
- Consistent scale of building and strong rhythms along the main streets
- Simple pitched roof forms of clay tile or slate, usually parallel to streets
- Winding paths, alleyways and snickets
- Mixture of uses interspersed with dwellings, gardens and trees (all linked by the narrow lanes and alleys connecting back to the central streets)

Green Infrastructure

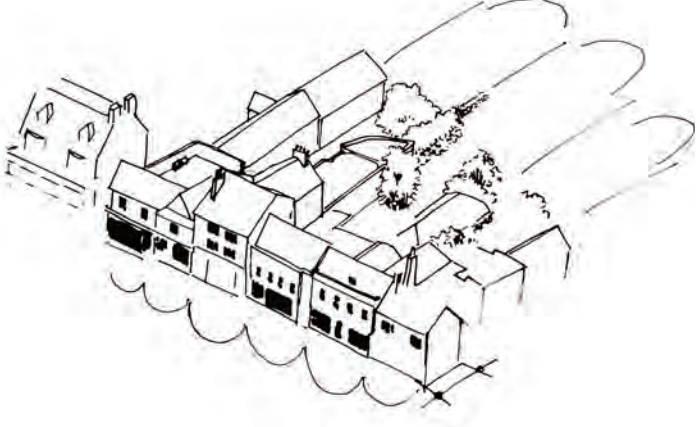
- Trees and garden spaces within the area north east of the Bickerley
- The natural vegetation and habitats of the river's banks, the open green of the Bickerley and the railway embankments
- The more manicured landscapes of Silver Jubilee Gardens, the churchyard and War Memorial Gardens
- Tree-lined paths through car parks
- The Gateway Square (potentially linked to Furlong 'East' Park)

Town Centre Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	Town Centre guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	Varies but within the parameters usually set out by the underlying medieval field patterns. The buildings which line the main streets are consistently shallow and wide rather than built with deep footprints on narrow plots.
Building line	
Building up of building line	Shows the hierarchy in the town centre streets. The main routes are almost 100% built up while Bickerley Road is notable for its gaps between buildings.
Set back	
Front boundary	Important to retain contribution that gardens and space offer to the edges of the Bickerley and throughout the mixed use areas between the Bickerley and High Street/Market Place.
Building format	Whether older or more recent interpretations of historic architecture, the format of buildings has benefitted from an adherence to traditional proportion (associated with traditional technologies for roof spans and use of rooms in roof spaces), in this area. Buildings typically have shallow footprints with roof ridges parallel to the streets.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Flat.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	<p>The Bickerley needs to retain its natural qualities if it is to retain its character. Edge treatments and boundary developments must be sympathetic to this naturalness (using native planting). Furlong footpath link across the car park has a dispersed tree line which is important both to protect and replenish wherever opportunity allows.</p> <p>Jubilee Gardens, the War memorial, Churchyard green space and trees each rely upon a neatness that lifts the status of these spaces.</p>

Elements of character and identity	Town Centre guidance and comments
Access points	In addition to general guidance given in Section 3 There is a danger that some of the planned streets, especially those with defining walled boundaries, may be reduced in their distinctive character if additional access for cars breaks through such walls.
Trees	Especially important where buildings have filled out and reduced the garden spaces north and east of the Bickerley.
Green setting for built development	Care is needed in insertions within any of the wide or deep garden settings from Woodstock Lane, south west to the Bickerley. In the past, some buildings have not always respected the green setting.
Gardens	Small frontage gardens are important to streetscapes and areas of cumulative rear garden importance are marked on the map.
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	 <p>Typically two-storey, shallow depth. Greater masses tend to impinge poorly upon the typical character except where they have particularly public significance or use. In backland, behind the main streets, massing tends to be subservient here. Such buildings traditionally relate to ancillary uses within plots.</p>
Key dimensions	Two storey eaves heights vary within streets but are an important dimension to respect. Depth of buildings is often apparent, as seen obliquely along streets. See also Figs 1.7 and 1.8 Typically buildings are shallow depths in accordance with traditional building techniques.
Spatial setting	

Elements of character and identity	Town Centre guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	<div data-bbox="608 488 1230 958" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="560 1048 1270 1216"> These are particularly important along the main central streets as illustrated also at Figs.1.5 – 1.8. The rhythms created by plot widths are the strongest, with a richness and interest given to the streets by secondary and tertiary rhythms set up by proportionate details of such things as chimneys, fenestration, doorways and shop signs. </p>
Locally significant buildings and structures	<p data-bbox="560 1245 1270 1357"> These are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional and often unspoilt forms, materials and detailing they exhibit. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks as well. </p>
Materials	<p data-bbox="560 1391 1270 1529"> Traditional and locally characteristic materials should be chosen for this area as for the conservation area which covers all but the very north of the area defined here. These are red brick with plain clay tile or slate roofs. Occasionally lime washed cob and timber with thatched roofs. </p>
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	



Market Day



Strides Lane

The Fish Inn where the road emerges onto the A31 is an important signal to passing traffic that beyond the highway paraphernalia is Ringwood – a historic and rural market town.

Ribbon development of the medieval core of the town (West Street, Market Place and High Street).

High Street and Friday's Cross



The uneven curve of terrace enclosing Friday's Cross.

Classically proportioned, neo-Georgian facade creates a striking feature at the junction of Southampton Road and Mansfield Road.



Greyfriars



Queen Anne Cottage

Kingsbury's Lane



Dewey's Lane – the path almost peters out completely through private yards.

Bickerley Terrace – red brick detailing, chimneys and articulated skyline combine with the setting to create a memorable landmark.



Character Area 1: Town Centre

	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp; wall; bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

Character Area 2 - The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter

4.2.1 Within easy walking distance of the town centre is an area where residential development often sits cheek by jowl with small employment and community uses. Much of the area had been built out during the Victorian/Edwardian eras with a slower steady development of the remaining green land through the first half of last century. Later development occurred as infilling, particularly of the long gardens that reach down towards the Bickerley. Carvers Recreation Ground and the Bickerley itself remain as open green spaces.



Fig 2.1 Landmarks - the Trinity United Church and almshouses

4.2.2 It is no surprise then that the predominant character is one defined by its heritage, Christchurch Road and Coxstone Lane having a variety of traditional buildings, a number of which are thatched. Meanwhile the section of Hightown Road which lies within this character area exhibits a sense of arrival and urbanity with its early Victorian terrace buildings enclosing its edge as it curves to meet Christchurch Road.

4.2.3 Behind these earlier buildings, the patterns of the gardens and orchards have set the layouts for later development which filled out the areas with predominantly red brick houses around the turn of last century.

4.2.4 It is fairly easy to see similarities within small clusters of dwellings or streets in this character area. The following text illustrates the various characteristics of each. These are referred to on the plan.

Coxstone Lane

4.2.5 Coxstone Lane contains a charming, secretive cluster of thatched cottages hidden amongst and behind some terraced, semi and detached brick houses of the late 20th century. The higgledy-piggledy layouts are thrown into sharp contrast against the more regimented front and rear gardens and consistent lines of the later buildings. Each cottage is protected by statutory listing. It is nevertheless important to consider the whole street, its rural qualities of hedge and picket fence boundaries, its lack of pavement and the small but all-important garden spaces that surround these (the remains of a far more extensive setting that traditionally such buildings would have had). The later buildings themselves offer green margins and a functional simplicity that allows such dwellings, and indeed those of Christchurch Road (shown), a distinctiveness and it is vital that these green margins should not be lost to hard standing, and that the consistency of lines, forms and materials should remain faithful to their original unadorned design philosophy.



Fig 2.2 Thatched cottage on Coxstone Lane and nearby 1960s terrace facing Christchurch Road

Nursery Road

4.2.6 Nursery Road contains a line of red brick dwellings, mostly in pairs. These exhibit a consistency of roof form and decorative buff brickwork features. Chimneys also with decorative brickwork.

4.2.7 Recent infill and replacement building at Towngate Mews has brought a strong sense of enclosure and surveillance to the street. A new curved building together with the neighbouring front garden space helps to enclose a wider greener street space in sympathy with the existing quality. The street space itself allows for dwarf walls that provide sufficient segregation for personalisation and decorative planting.



Fig 2.3 Impressive set of consistent dwellings on Nursery Road

Hightown Road

4.2.8 The section of Hightown Road that runs into this character area is characterised by a collection of older buildings forming a curved terrace which encloses the street. The tight rhythm along this terrace, together with the rich decoration and variety in materials and architectural detail, offers a powerful hint of what is to be found in the town centre ; this is where the Victorian and Edwardian developers optimised the street façade with their buildings to create their own version of the much older town centre streets. Not so commercial this far from the centre, occasional shops are mixed with residential and other uses. The garages are particularly distinctive with an architectural integrity dating from the early twentieth century, displaying clearly their functional quality.



Fig 2.4 Historic terrace and some of the rich detailing on Hightown Road

Fig 2.5 The distinctive garage buildings on Hightown Road

Woodstock Lane

4.2.9 Between the Quomp and Christchurch Road, three dwelling groups create a delightful consistency along Woodstock Lane. The terrace of jettied and tile-hung cottages; a later (but still early 20th century) group of four hipped brick pairs (presumably a continuation, though disconnected, of the Nursery Road group); and round a corner similarly unspoilt but later twin semi-detached pairs (this time with upper floors rendered). The lane itself has a rather special character, due in part of course to the retained architectural integrity of these building groups along the south east side but also as a result of the surfacing, the absence of road markings or grade separation. The tiny front garden margin, common to all these dwellings and consistent even in the later suburban types, nonetheless contributes considerable greenery and a comfortable setting for the terraced cottages. The opposite (west) side of the street is contained by rear gardens behind walls with building infilling only as occasional bungalow development. Some gardens have been converted to car parks but it is the permanence of walled containment and the far more open aspect afforded by gaps between buildings together with the deeper spaces on the south east side that allows light, greenery and a sense of tranquillity to pervade this lane. Any further development in these rear plots must respect the special characteristics of Woodstock Lane, retaining gaps, trees, low permanent quality boundaries and keeping roof lines low and unimposing.



Fig 2.6 Three delightfully unspoilt sets of dwellings on Woodstock Lane

The Quomp

4.2.10 The Quomp (the name of which may derive from the old Roman term for camp) is a street which follows a step rise in the land. The lower side contains some jettied and tile hung terrace groups similar to those on Woodstock Lane. The higher level has a simple rhythm set up by the half rendered mid-twentieth century houses each remaining faithful to its designed form. To either end of the street, there are significant historic buildings: the alms houses with their striking skyline at one end, and the terraced cottages hard against the street at the opposite end. The white building shown is jettied (perhaps unfortunately) only to suit the highway requirements for a sight line in order to enable nearby development. Happily, the building remains. Its location is a striking part of the character of this street.



Fig 2.7 Distinctive buildings at either end of Quomp

College Road

4.2.11 To the north of the Quomp, College Road rises towards Carvers Recreation Ground (although there is no physical connection). Each dwelling or pair of semi-detached dwellings has a different form. A variety of materials and details creates a richness that echoes that of the various gardens that adorn the front of each dwelling and thus a rich margin that makes the road appear extremely green. It is the underlying consistencies here that allow that richness to engender a distinct character. Characteristics include a shared road surface with no pavement, contained between low garden walls, and green boundary definition between each plot and at least some garden planting running across each plot frontage. The massing and proportions of buildings are relatively consistent with the set-back and gaps between, offering each its setting. There is a predominance of red brick and the proportions of portrait windows, bays, chimneys etc define the character.

4.2.12 Towards the top of the road, the buildings are of a later period and set aside some of the consistencies, but the all-important garden frontage remains. The scale, the mass, and the gaps between buildings respect the rest of the road. The proportion of front gardens retained as grass or planting is important and under threat. Most frontages, where altered, have been sensitively designed to accommodate cars within the garden setting. It is important to retain a predominantly walled frontage along each plot front and some greenery along the plot boundaries.



Fig 2.8 Variety and richness in building forms and front gardens on College Road

School associated lanes

4.2.13 The Victorian school building is shown as an important building in the Ringwood Conservation Area Appraisal, but it was not built in isolation. There is a grid of streets associated with it that has provided a community to support the school for over a century. Outside the conservation area, alterations have been allowed to erode some of the qualities of consistency and architectural integrity that characterise this group of streets. However, there remains enough of the underlying character to provide an immediate sense of neighbourhood and an impression of coherence, age and quality.



Fig 2.9 Well-preserved quality of the school building and amongst houses on Top Lane

Christchurch Road

4.2.14 The section of Christchurch Road which runs through this character area displays a series of building groups which contain the street. Some are obviously of historical significance and charm in their own right. Many are all the more distinctive because they work together with others to create either a strong façade to the street or a charming and harmonious grouping through commonality of materials or details.



Fig 2.10 Distinctive buildings and harmonious groups along Christchurch Road

4.2.15 The Trinity United Church is a significant landmark here and on the skyline in distant views. The Salvation Army façade illustrates the variety the street contains. The line of buildings which are set back, from the former council offices to Towngate Mews, has an important margin of garden space that sets off the historic forms opposite and creates a green pleasant setting to display this set of matching brick and buff stone villas.

Bickerley Courts and Gardens

4.2.16 This lane marks the boundary between character areas. Views of the church spires are only part of the interest. It is a rich and varied back lane that looks over historic redbrick outhouses, past trees, hedges and historic features towards a final framed vista focussing on the war memorial centred in its garden setting.



Fig 2.11 Views north along Bickerley Gardens – the quiet, suburban green quality here is important.

Carvers Recreation Ground

4.2.17 Consisting of open sports pitches, as a swathe of grass for sports use, the recreation ground serves as a gap separating the town centre from the later suburban east of the town. A strip of trees and hedge partially screens the rear of an adjoining industrial area. Paths allow limited routes and access while chain link fence and utilitarian boundaries do nothing to make the space inviting as an amenity. Undoubtedly a vital sports resource, there are opportunities here to offer a combination of green amenity and pleasant connections between neighbourhoods. There is a lack of amenity or character which is exacerbated by the neighbouring buildings and boundaries where they provide a poor edge to the north and east sides. Sympathetic planting and well designed buildings offering natural surveillance would improve the space. Skyline and horizon are important considerations in the design of any new neighbouring development.

The Bickerley

4.2.18 The wide green space of the Bickerley is a highly valued public space accommodating the annual fair and giving breathing space close to the town centre.

4.2.19 The northern edge of the Bickerley is fringed by either striking groups of older red brick dwellings or pleasing front garden margins. Most dwellings have gardens which soften the margin and their colour and greenery contributes to the quality of the space while their orientation oversees the activity of the green, providing natural surveillance and a sense of

comfortable security. The retention of garden settings and the visual connections between dwellings and the open space is important here and must be retained. Screening off these frontages for reasons of privacy or building up the gaps (thus hardening the edge and skyline) would be detrimental to the character.

4.2.20 The disused railway embankment forms a footpath and vantage point from which one can enjoy open views across the river floodplain. The railway embankment is the focus of various improvements and changes which invite walkers from the town and elsewhere. A new section of the flood meadows beyond has recently been opened up for the benefit of the community. It is perhaps unfortunate that having cleared the bankside vegetation to allow open views, the well intentioned replanting has included exotic species which in time will appear somewhat alien along this part of the horizon of the river valley landscape. Replacement with native species, appropriate to the local landscape would improve biodiversity as well as helping to repair the rural edge.



Fig 2.12 Overlooking the Bickerley Common

Key defining elements

- Historic built environment
- Forms, detail and materials of Victorian and Edwardian houses
- Small pockets of connected (gridiron) type planned streets – their rhythms and repetition, their garden frontages and gaps

Green Infrastructure

- Trees and greenspace between Christchurch Road and The Bickerley
- Bickerley and the railway route
- Carvers Recreation Ground
- Cumulative groups of front gardens creating green margins (as described in the text: Christchurch Road, Woodstock Lane, College Road, Bickerley Road)

The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	Generally very important in the residential streets
Building line	Generally very important in the residential streets where it is relaxed and set back on most later suburban streets, but conversely sometimes emphasises containment along some sections of older streets such as the south side of Christchurch Road and north side of Hightown Road.
Building up of building line	Adhering to the gaps and rhythms set up by the build up of the original streets will be important especially where lines or groups of semi-detached pairs are evident Woodstock Lane, Nursery Road and College Road for example as well as the red brick lanes north of the school
Set back	Often only minimal but nevertheless important to give such streets as Woodstock Lane and Quomp the personalisation and greenery that characterises them. Occasionally buildings can sit forward to create character and feature to a street. The heritage value of such oddments as No. 30 Quomp (unfortunately now partially removed) is not to be underestimated but generally, adding built form forward of building lines would destroy the amenity value offered to planned streets by oblique and long views of front gardens for example: College Road and the lanes north of the school.
Front boundary	Most planned streets or connected grid layouts have low front boundaries and these should be assessed and again, oblique and long views of front gardens retained without the interference of tall front boundaries. College Road notably has a simple but distinct low wall detail that should not be unduly broken up.
Building format	Whether older or more recent interpretations of historic architecture, the format of buildings has benefitted from an adherence to traditional proportion in this area.

Elements of character and identity	The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Largely flat with the land to the north and east of the Quomp raised above the lower river terrace, the land continuing to rise gradually up College Road and across Carvers Sports Ground.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	A few islands of cumulatively tranquil gardens are marked on the plan and the margins provided by groups of front gardens named above are important. The Bickerley to the south, including the paddock adjoining the millstream south of the old railway alignment and the railway cycle/footpath itself are important resources. Views towards the built edges of the town from these routes are important and it is especially important with the massing and scale of buildings seen in context of the riparian and sylvan setting they have. To the north is Carvers Recreation Ground. Opportunities to restore the native hedgerow edge and improve upon the views around the edges of this space should be taken as should any opportunity to enhance the walking experience through variety and improvements in biodiversity.
Access points	There is a danger that some of the planned streets especially those with defining walled boundaries, may be reduced in their distinctive character if additional access for cars breaks through such walls.
Trees	Especially important where buildings have filled out and reduced the garden spaces north and east of the Bickerley
Green setting for built development	Care is needed in insertions within any of the wide or deep garden settings from Woodstock Lane south west to the Bickerley. In the past, some buildings have not always respected the green setting. Buildings set back off the main Christchurch Road from the former Council Offices to Towngate Mews benefit from a green setting which is in danger of losing its character to vehicle access and parking and to the rear of these, where currently Woodstock Lane enjoys the open green setting beyond its walls. Particularly careful treatment will be needed if development is to be inserted successfully in these plots without degrading the local character
Gardens	Small frontage gardens are important to streetscapes and areas of cumulative rear garden importance are marked on the map.

Elements of character and identity	The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter guidance and comments
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	
Key dimensions	
Spatial setting	
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	These are key features of the repetitive pockets of dwellings that characterise a number of the streets.
Locally significant buildings and structures	These are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional and often unspoilt forms, materials and detailing they show to the area. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks as well.
Materials	Traditional and local materials should be chosen for this area in line with the conservation area which covers all but the very north of the area.
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	

Character Area 2: Edge of centre 'The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter'

	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water



Christchurch Road
The green space offered by garden margin where large detached buildings sit back from the street is important to the setting of the older terrace that lines the southern face of the street here.



Coxstone Lane
Hidden thatched forest cottages. Each one protected by listing, it remains important however, to consider the street, its rural qualities of hedge and picket fence boundaries with no pavement and the small, but all important garden spaces that surround the dwellings.



Bickerley
Wide green space fringed by a margin of green front garden (a single handsome group of older red brick dwellings being the only exception).



Hightown Road
Consistent scale and mass creates a tightly enclosed street frontage alongside the original route into town. Highlights include the corner buildings, various highly decorative door and window heads, the richness of detail and the garage frontage.



The garage on Hightown Road
a surprisingly unspoilt workshop still used as a motor business.



Carvers
An important space and resource for leisure is a buffer between the town centre and the suburban east – has potential for far greater visual amenity.



Quomp
Alms Houses on the Quomp.



School associated streets
examples of the character and charm that still exists where a few of these red brick dwellings have remained faithful to their original designs.



College Road
Most frontages where altered, have been sensitively designed to accommodate cars within the garden setting, often behind the original low wall.



Woodstock Lane
The terrace of jettied and tile hung cottages, also the group of four hipped brick pairs and similarly unspoilt but later twin semi-detached pairs.

The narrow but green frontage and the un-built-up nature of the opposite side of the lane are as important as the consistent and unspoilt original condition of these building groups.



Nursery Road
Redbrick pairs, consistent roof form and decorative brickwork, largely undamaged by alteration.

Character Area 3 - Gravel Lane

- 4.3.1** Separated from the town by the open Furlong car park and Mansfield Road, a cluster of historic buildings, including Manor House, lies along the last approaches of the old turnpike (Southampton Road) before it meets the town.
- 4.3.2** Not strictly a manor (in that it was not the seat of the Lord of the Manor), the eighteenth century Manor House along with its related buildings, coach house, garden walls and one or two quality historic residences, were all built as though wishing to be separate from the town centre beyond the Furlong - an open green which, until the 1970s, bounded the north east of the town centre.



Fig 3.1 The Coach House on The Sweep

- 4.3.3** Southampton Road between Carver's Industrial Estate and Recreation Ground houses a number of listed and locally significant buildings. Later insertions include the white gabled Elmsdown Court that wraps the corner, its proportions and roof shapes respecting the form of the listed cottages at 58-66 Southampton Road, with its architecture a simplified version of the Parker and Unwin 'garden suburb' style.



Fig 3.2 Elmsdown Court



Fig 3.3 58-66 Southampton Road

4.3.4 Opposite Elmsdown Court and extending back to the edge of the character area are the collective qualities of Linden Gardens, Manor Gardens, Linden Court, Orchard Mead, etc. This 1960s collection follows a concise code of materials and forms - light brown brick; modest front gardens behind either clipped hedges or low red brick wall (some retained from much older development); roofs of similar pitch but with eaves lines often broken by façades featuring a central section of parapet wall and white portrait windows. Adherence to this 'code' gives a neo-Georgian gentility to the whole group, a fine and distinctive 'urban edge' before the green spaces which separate the wider expanses of truly suburban Ringwood further to the east.



Fig 3.4 Simple interpretations of Georgian proportions, with a respectfully limited palette of materials, offer a well mannered relationship framing the more ornately fenestrated and older dwelling. The more recent buildings carefully frame the older building.

4.3.5 Other notable features of Southampton Road include: a brick terrace of rural cottages; a white painted and slate roofed dwelling form of similar proportions to the cottages but lying end on to the street; and opposite the Recreation Ground, a fine double piled dwelling (see above). These have all faced this old turnpike route for many years as outlying buildings from the town itself but are now part of its urban edge.

4.3.6 Heading north, the original route to Salisbury had always led out from the market place over the low lying flood plain, across towards North Poulner before turning abruptly north towards Salisbury. At this turn, the road splits and a separate lane as a drovers' way has long taken a more direct route south towards Manor House and the outlying collection of listed and distinctive older buildings. This is Gravel Lane.

4.3.7 Always the back route, (it was once known as ‘Love Lane’) Gravel Lane now connects the older out-of-centre buildings along a predominantly walled gravel track. Various Victorian and older dwellings and structures, together with some early twentieth century cottages, walls and outbuildings define a strong sense of the past along this lane. The walls, whether recent replacements or original brickwork, define and enclose a shared surface that gives vehicle and pedestrian access to the houses. Sections of (usually native) hedgerow augment this walled enclosure where it is incomplete. The variety of gardens beyond, give it a shady green atmosphere that is different from either the suburban hinterland to the east or the busier historic sections of Southampton Road.



Fig 3.5 Gravel Lane – enclosed by shady walls and hedges

4.3.8 The A31 bridging overhead has created an intrusion into the character of this lane both through noise and interruption to the appearance of the route. Thankfully, disruption of the connection in physical terms is minimal for the pedestrian, but the intrusion of insensitive neighbouring development and boundary treatment has, in the last decade or two, spread along a small section immediately north of the crossing. This is starting to destroy the quality of this area and its relationship with the town.



Fig 3.6 Poor boundary and landscape treatment exacerbates the impact of such poorly proportioned buildings to diminish the distinctive character of this section of Gravel Lane

- 4.3.9** The top of Gravel Lane sees a return to the atmosphere provided by red brick and greenery with a number of Victorian and Edwardian villas each within their own green settings, offering views between buildings of trees and gardens beyond. As one walks along Gravel Lane, there is a balance and a tension between what is rear boundary and what is dwelling and outbuilding giving onto the lane itself. The sight of taller and sometimes older buildings across the plots on the west side of the lane suggests that here infill development is taking up what were formerly very deep rear gardens and collections of farm buildings relating to the original Salisbury Road (still bearing that name despite the new road having been built).
- 4.3.10** The original Salisbury Road itself is now separated from the newer main route by deep verges and various tree and shrub groups. Dwellings are set above the level of the road behind a bank or wall and higher level gardens. Although relatively large for today's lifestyles, their plot sizes and set back allows each building to recede as a separate element within a wider landscape and within the cumulative setting of a deep green corridor.



Fig 3.7 Dwellings set above the level of the road, each in its own garden setting behind the wide green corridor of the main Salisbury Road

- 4.3.11** A section of the old road is now cut off from what is now the main A338 Salisbury Road. The wooded thickets and deep verges between the old and new roads give this section of lane a rather quiet rural character, underpinned particularly by two older forest cottages and occasional glimpses of Victorian gables and chimneys to the east. Valuable to this character are a number of other features such as the walled entrances of Nos. 26 and 28, the grass driveway to High Elms and the old signpost still marking the route at the top of what emerges as a rather secretive looking Gravel Lane.



Fig 3.8 Tree and shrub groups and one of the cottages along the old route of Salisbury Road



Fig 3.9 Valuable to the quiet rural character are: (i) the walled entrances of Nos. 26 and 28; (ii) the grass driveway to High Elms; (iii) the old signpost; and (iv) the rather secretive looking entrance to Gravel Lane.

4.3.12 Lying almost parallel, these two historic lanes (the old section of Salisbury Road and Gravel Lane) are linked by a path. What appears from the maps to have been a driveway to a large Victorian house called Highfields built around the 1890s and now demolished, this is now a pleasant route for pedestrians through the attractive garden square of the Georgian styled Merton Grove.



Fig 3.10 Merton Grove from the old Salisbury Road

4.3.13 Nearer the town centre, Gravel Lane becomes a tarmac road where it joins the top of The Sweep. Walls and overhanging trees give The Sweep something of a similar character to that of Gravel Lane and the red brick boundary carries on round the edge of The Small House onto Furlong Mews offering glimpses from the main Mansfield Road of an older quieter part of the town: trees, gardens, chimneys and bell turret all contained by old red brick walls.



Fig 3.11 The walled garden of Manor House along The Sweep

4.3.14 Vehicles heading out of the town centre towards Poulner will enter this character area along a short spur from the Mansfield Road roundabout. The Furlong Mews, seen rising to three storeys provides a gateway along the north edge of this spur. Appearing opposite the dark brown and black Monmouth Court buildings, these two late twentieth century additions to the town are of a scale commensurate with the width and space created by Mansfield Road. They are a gateway which divides this character area from the more urban centre and should not be taken as cues to suggest further buildings of such scale further back into this character area. Once past these recent buildings, the character area quickly resumes its defining characteristics along Southampton Road.

Key defining elements

- Red brick walls containing the street space
- Hedgerows where walls are absent
- Older buildings with historic character
- Gravel surface to Gravel Lane itself
- Trees close to the streets and between buildings

Green Infrastructure

- Incidental green spaces buffering the area from the highways that have segregated the area. These each offering tree groups, hedgerows and grassland and support the semi rural characteristics of the place
- Front gardens and a high proportion of garden to built form on each plot















Gravel Lane Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	Gravel Lane guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	
Set back	Varied throughout, but the staggered set-back and angled alignment at the top of Gravel Lane is a strong characteristic.
Front boundary	Along Gravel Lane, and against the historic buildings in the conservation area, tall boundaries are often a key part of the character. However, their success depends also upon having pedestrian access points and views of gardens and overhanging trees where some properties do front onto the lane. Boundaries along the lane need to be either walls or hedges. Boarded fences and more open plan boundaries tend to detract from the character and quality of the lane and are not usually appropriate. The Linden, Manor and Orchard areas described above have a consistency of low red brick wall and hedge. These are important characteristics.
Building format	Whether older or more recent interpretations of historic architecture, the format of buildings has benefitted from an adherence to traditional proportion in this area. The very few exceptions here are testament to the importance of getting this right. For example, Avon Court on Gravel Lane has an overly deep footprint resulting in an oversized blank gable. The outlandish half hips and oddly disproportionate dormers offend tradition and do nothing to disguise the vast expanse of roof or insensitive massing.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	
Ground water availability	

Elements of character and identity	Gravel Lane guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
Green infrastructure	Deep green spaces, wooded with stands of trees or shrub understorey are important in separating the old Salisbury Road from the new. Dr Little Gardens and Orchard Mount are valuable public green spaces, the latter of some benefit to younger people while the former is a quiet walled arboretum with amenity value somewhat limited by its shadiness and views of an insensitive wall alteration along its whole boundary.
Access points	
Trees	
Green setting for built development	
Gardens	Front gardens and trees overhanging walled gardens and streets are important.
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	See 'building format' above as well as general guidance table.
Key dimensions	
Spatial setting	
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	
Locally significant buildings and structures	These are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional and heritage forms, materials and detailing they show to the area. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks as well.
Materials	Traditional and local materials should be chosen for this area in line with the conservation area which covers the area around Manor House and The Sweep.
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	

Character Area 3: Gravel Lane	
	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

The original Salisbury Road itself is now separated from the main route by deep verges and various trees and shrub groups.



One of the cottages along the route of the old Salisbury Road.

Red bricks and greenery with a number of Victorian and Edwardian villas each within their own green settings, offering views between of the trees and gardens beyond.



Gravel Lane a former drover's route.



The attractive garden square of the Georgian styled Merton Grove which must have replaced a large Victorian House at Highfields late last century.

Gravel Lane becomes a tarmac road where it joins the top of The Sweep.

Poorly proportioned buildings and unrelated boundary treatment is starting to destroy the quality of this area and its relationship with the town here.



The white gabled Elmsdown



58 - 66 Southampton Road
This dwelling is an important landmark terminating the vista from the commercial area of Southampton Road.



Linden & Manor Gardens, Linden Court, Orchard Mead concise code of materials and neo-Georgian gentility retain echoes of a deeper heritage in some of the garden walls.

The Furlong
Formerly an open green that, until the nineteen seventies, bounded the north east of the town centre; now a car park.



Character Area 4 - The Northern Approach

- 4.4.1** Approaching from the north, the A338 road runs through a green corridor of mixed trees and hedge behind wide green verges. This is very different vegetation from the predominantly hawthorn and oak of semi heathland mixtures of the typical New Forest landscape. This is the edge of the Avon River flood plain. Immediately adjoining this Character Area, to the north of the town, lie the Blashford Lakes, formed by recent gravel extraction, which together with the watercourse itself create a wide corridor of open water, wooded banks, wetland habitats and verdant agricultural land. This swathe of rich farmland strongly contrasts with the oak woods and heathland of the higher forest landscapes to either side of this corridor.
- 4.4.2** Blashford House and the pastoral views opposite typify the countryside along this approach, but once past Blashford House the area becomes more built up on the east although the open pastoral scene remains to the west all the way down to the A31.
- 4.4.3** Dwellings on this east side are set back behind deep gardens. The line of buildings set on the higher ground offers a green bank or sloping greenery as a setting. One or two storeys high, they punctuate the skyline but it is the landscape setting not the building designs that define the character here.



Fig 4.1 Salisbury Road

- 4.4.4** Crossing the Lin Brook, there is an important gap in the line. A small paddock in the dip affords some more open views and evidence of the rural setting opposite a collection of old farm buildings. The collection, together with the remnants of the old Salisbury Road and bridge define a space. This

space functions as a green setting for a group of farm buildings. The form of the space is created by the former route and crossing of the Lin Brook and offers a potentially inviting stop for visitors and locals alike. Currently housing a local museum, in combination with the activity identified by café chairs and tables together with the presence of one or two dwellings, this makes for an interesting area. The stream, banks and green space as well as the open views across the river floodplain beyond are all important features at this point. Any erosion of this green space, for example by car parking, would be seriously detrimental.



Fig 4.2 View of the Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul seen looking south west across the river floodplain from Salisbury Road



Fig 4.3 Ringwood Town and Country Experience museum, housed in a collection of farm buildings set back on the old alignment of Salisbury Road

4.4.5 Past the Lin Brook, the dwelling line behind green banks starts again as the verge widens, and views across the river valley of the town and its church tower start to open up to the south west.

4.4.6 As one moves south approaching the town, a red pillar box stands sentinel to Hurst Road, a highly distinctive collection of 1950s dwellings, before the garage and a wide mown green on the left herald a separate entrance to the main part of north Ringwood and Poulner.

4.4.7 Behind the garage, leading out from Gravel Lane (see Character Area 3), the Avon Valley Way is, at this point, a footpath confined behind a graffitied wall and 'wriggly tin' fence. Together with the natural surveillance from the dwellings at Linbrook Court, the increased width of the footpath as driveway is all that alleviates what could otherwise create a sense of insecurity.



Fig 4.4 Dwellings on the east side of Salisbury Road are set back behind the bank which marks the natural floodplain.



Fig 4.5 Red pillar box at the corner of Hurst Road

4.4.8 The path rejoins at Hurst Road, leading through a distinct neighbourhood of cream painted terrace and semi-detached gable roofed properties. The depth of gardens, their potential for trees and the occasional gaps give a thoroughly green backdrop to complement these matching, orderly and attractive forms creating a sense of being in a rural hamlet more than in a town. Part of the central green around which the dwellings are arranged is built out with a subservient collection of bungalows, walled around and nestled into the green at the heart of the community of buildings.

4.4.9 The wide verges, front gardens and central green contribute a valuable green spaciousness to the place. Whilst these are important, they could also detract from the quality of the place if, for example, they were lost to hard standing. Given the attractiveness of this group and its green setting, it is worth improving the green, especially where children could play. Aside from the green setting, it is the clean and simple roof forms, the patterns of windows, the gaps between buildings and the openness of the frontages (uninterrupted by privacy panel fences) that are so vital to the qualities of this place.



Fig 4.6 Signage and low grade maintenance keeps the children off the green, a space reserved for dog bins, manholes and long grass.



Fig 4.7 Change in colour can offer an acceptably subtle element of variety but any more substantial alteration such as roof lines, window patterns or building forms would severely impact upon the distinctiveness of this pleasant group of dwellings.



Fig 4.8 Consistency of form and materials, unfussy steep roofs and gables, consistent proportions and patterns of fenestration and the all-important gaps viewing trees as backdrop are the key defining elements of the 'Hurst Road Oval' houses.

4.4.10 The path runs on, almost invisible off the stub end of Hurst Road, cutting through to the north, pinched between tall mesh fences and so heavily screened as to be denied the amenity of open lake views. Alongside the Lin Brook the path runs northward, but just before leaving the town there is a branch leading off into the Headlands Business Park.



Fig 4.9 Deliberate omission of the ubiquitous security railings and a subtle approach to planting provide a pleasant setting for this working environment (Headlands Business Park).

4.4.11 Headlands Business Park (within the parish of Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley) has successfully embraced the philosophy that the working environment should also be a pleasant place in its own right. The buildings are generally simple with shallow pitched roofs and predominantly brick walls. Secure areas are subtle and the usual proliferation of palisade fences is avoided in favour of a simple open plan landscape of car parking and predominantly natural planting. The river gravels and sparse soil are not stuffed with serried ranks of municipal ‘use-up-space’ shrubbery, and though there are some areas of non-native shrubs, many areas have been planted or allowed to vegetate more naturally with drought tolerant wild flora and grasses under a mixture of planted and self-set trees and shrubs. Managed with a light touch, this greenery separates and softens the groups of parked cars and lorry delivery areas. Gates are low anti-vehicle barriers and the impression that workers might actually enjoy arriving at their place of work and feel able to break out at rest times into a relaxing environment is one that many other employment zones in Ringwood and across the district must envy. Retention of these soft landscape areas will be important.

Key defining elements

- Wide green corridor
- Consistency and forms of dwellings around Hurst Road's 'Oval'
- Elements of heritage

Green Infrastructure

- Naturalistic planting and unfenced landscape of the employment area
- Green verges along the main road corridor
- Hedges, tree groups and green bank on the eastern side of the main road
- Open views across the river floodplain to the west
- Lin Brook and the associated open paddock and open green space either side of the main Salisbury Road

The Northern Approaches Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	The Northern Approaches guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	Particularly important to retain consistency in Hurst Road.
Set back	The depth and green nature of the set-back is important along the east side of Salisbury Road and either side of Hurst Road.
Front boundary	Green bank and hedges along Salisbury Road and the openness of low front boundaries to Hurst Road are important.
Building format	Especially consistent on Hurst Road.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Respect the main drops in level which correspond to the river flood plain.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	Retain the qualities of openness and greenness of the space around Lin Brook either side of Salisbury Road and in front of the museum. Where opportunity arises, seek to open views of water, manage willow groups that encroach upon wide panoramas towards the church and river floodplain and seek opportunities to improve the amenity value of Hurst Road Oval.
Access points	
Trees	Variety of species is markedly different from the higher forest lands to the east. Groups alongside the Salisbury Road corridor, some large landmark pines close to the garage and the existence and potential for trees in rear gardens of Hurst Road are all important distinctive elements of the area.

Elements of character and identity	The Northern Approaches guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
Green setting for built development	<p>Employment developments need spaces around them with simple native tree shrub and grassland treatment. Introduction of fences would interfere with setting of buildings and should be avoided.</p> <p>The Lin Brook margins and setting for the farm buildings that house the museum all need to be protected and enhanced where opportunity allows. Care must be taken to avoid intrusive car parking and highway paraphernalia taking over the quality of the setting here.</p> <p>Garden frontages to Salisbury Road dwellings and rear gardens at Hurst Road are important settings to the buildings.</p>
Gardens	
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	It will be important to retain the typically domestic scale, forms that are set into and subservient to the wide spaces and landscape rather than larger flatted blocks.
Key dimensions	Extremely important to respect these and the consistent proportions if changes are considered in Hurst Road.
Spatial setting	
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	Consistency in Hurst Road is important and it would be particularly appropriate to follow traditional building forms around the farm, museum and bridge.
Locally significant buildings and structures	These are marked in orange on the plan. They are highlighted for the consistency and strength of character their palette of materials, roof forms, chimney and fenestration patterns give to the area.
Materials	
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	



Buildings are set back along the Eastern margin of a very green corridor.

Low rise dwellings
set back in deep front garden settings - it is the landscape setting, not the building designs, that hold the character here.

Route of the old Salisbury Road.



Hurst Road 'Oval'
A distinct little neighbourhood of cream painted terrace and semi-detached gable roofed properties. The depth of gardens, their potential for trees and the occasional gaps give a thoroughly green backdrop to these repetitious but attractive forms and a sense of being in a rural hamlet aside from the town.



Open views across the River Avon's floodplain
Ringwood church tower on the horizon. The open pastoral scene remains to the west right the way down to the A35.

Green lawns and hedgerow margins create a wider corridor.



Headlands Business Park
The buildings are generally simple with shallow pitched roofs and predominantly brick walls. Secure areas are subtle and the usual proliferation of palisade fences is avoided in preference for a simple open plan landscape of car parking and often natural parking.



This industrial estate is one of only a few in the district that embrace the philosophy that the working environment should also be a pleasant place in it's own right.

Important green space
separates a former route and crossing. It offers a potentially inviting stop for visitors and locals alike. The farmyard scale of buildings and their form is important, but it is the space, and the separation of the lane from its successor, and the green nature of the space which are most important here.

Character Area 4: Northern approach	
	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

Character Area 5 - The Southern Approach

4.5.1 Approaching Ringwood from the south there are, in common with many other parts of the town, various layers of the historic layout still visible.

Rural edge

4.5.2 The whole area, the lanes and approaches to the town all lie on a low plain on the east of the Avon and its various associated streams. A step in the landform and the impact it has is most clearly evident along the east side of the southern end of Christchurch Road, behind the houses at Willow Drive and across the back of the industrial area (formerly Wellworthy) to Hightown Road where it bounds the north side of the Waterloo Way housing.



Fig 5.1 South where the dwellings lie only alongside the west margin of Christchurch Road, a line of bungalows sit low down on the lower river terrace below most views across the open farmland plateau.



Fig 5.2 Two cottages at the southernmost end of Ringwood

4.5.3 From the south, the settlement begins where footpaths cross the main road. Here two older rural cottages (one thatched) stand toward the road. The bank on the east is overgrown with wild scrub and long grasses. On the west side lies a line of fairly consistent hipped bungalows offering views between and over them to the lower marshy land, the trees that surround the fields and towards the sewage treatment works. As bungalows on the lower ground, they will only appear low down into the landscape when seen from viewpoints across the higher plateau in the east. This unobtrusiveness is important in rural edge locations on this open flat plain. Continuing on into the town, the road leads north from this somewhat open character to a more enclosed triangular green.

An outlying hamlet?



Fig 5.3 Older dwellings and the original road alignment define a small green with characteristic bungalow estate and late twentieth century cul-de-sac developments having later expanded this outlying community.

4.5.4 Whereas this row of suburban bungalows might have appeared somewhat alien in the landscape, round the very next bend to the north, the visitor arrives through a group of sheltering trees to what feels like a small village green, backed by cottages and connected by various side routes to historic farms of the area or more recent clusters of suburban houses. Here for the first time, houses appear raised up on the embanked eastern margin of the road with large gardens including taller trees. Two traditional cottages remain to help define the character here at the junction with Moortown Lane and the top end of the green where once the Nags Head Inn would have been the focus for news and travellers.



Fig 5.4 Older terraced houses enclose the green and the old Nags Head Inn (now a house) still remains just beyond the north of the triangular green.

4.5.5 Along this section, and in the triangle here, hedgerows, trees and green space characterise the recent suburban layouts. Moving north, a second green, formed once again where the road had been straightened, is filled with tall cedar and turkey oaks immediately to the south of Moortown House. The crescent of the old road provides access for several large detached properties, themselves set behind pines and tall hedgerows. This tree group in combination with those of the larger gardens hereabouts is valuable. Apart from softening the impact of the town from rural viewpoints, the trees prevent the monotony of continual build up along the roadside.



Fig 5.5 The gate pillars of Moortown House beneath the green shade of the cedar and turkey oaks.

Red brick terrace and an enclosed green

4.5.6 To the north of Moortown House, largely hidden apart from its garden walls, the road corridor runs into one of the most distinctive and recognisable Ringwood scenes. Long terraces of historic brick cottages lean back from the road on the west, their backs lowering into extensive linear garden plots. To the east a wide apron of open green fronts a collection of houses with steeply pitched roofs. The effect is distinctly 'Ringwood' but it is also clear that nowadays there is a conflict here. The green is over-run with cars.



Fig 5.6 The iconic Christchurch Road Terrace defines the southern edge of a wide green space, where the stepped land form is obvious and the tree lined horizon and 1950s cottage style houses, by contrast, offer a kind of semi ruralness.



Fig 5.7 Behind the open terraced green - low eaves, steep gables and important gaps allow a green setting, created by the trees beyond these 'cottage styled' 1950s dwellings and the deep, sometimes very well cared for, gardens.

4.5.7 The effects of car over-run are exacerbated by the popularity of off-road vehicles which have easier access over the embankments that define the edge of the lower river terrace. Further unrestrained loss of the green or loss of the open character would be detrimental to the town at a point where the townscape is so memorable - synonymous with the town itself.

4.5.8 Up until this point on Christchurch Road, the evolution of the town's fabric is relatively clearly defined. The old rural routes, the single or grouped older dwellings along them and the later infilling with discrete areas of similar buildings, planned in groups around cul-de-sacs or infilling along the main route are all evident. Leaving this last green space and continuing north towards the town centre, the influences of the urban centre become increasingly apparent where demolition and rebuilding and the re-use of land has created a far greater mixture of dwelling and employment uses.

A transitional zone

4.5.9 Alongside the river, the employment parks have little to commend them in terms of the character they contribute to the distinctiveness of the town. They fail to benefit from or allow the underlying landscape character to soften their impact. On the east of the road, large areas await re-use for employment. A distinct character along the frontage will be very important to the town as a whole. Either buildings that reflect the rhythms and patterns that characterise this southern approach or a combination of this and strong tree groups backing the shelf in the landscape would be appropriate design responses.

4.5.10 Duck Island Lane, Southfield and New Street, together with the main Christchurch Road still retain various historic elements. New Street is the most intact, with red brick terraces and pairs of semi-detached houses still retaining their original proportions even where they have lost important details such as chimneys and appropriate window forms. Infill throughout the area has attempted to emulate these heritage assets with little success. Over-simplified details and non-traditional materials have diluted the impact of the remaining traditional buildings whilst offering nothing of distinction in themselves. The worst excesses are where roof forms and depth of plan defy traditional building techniques. There are a few better examples where larger groups of new buildings, while echoing characteristics seen nearby, actually have some consistency and repeated patterns to define their own distinct place in the town. For instance, one new dwelling (The Cuckoo's Nest) on Duck Island Lane has been designed with something of the traditional richness and quality of brickwork and detailing.

Old railway yard environs

- 4.5.11** In the north east corner of this character area, a late twentieth century relief road loops round to connect the eastern suburb and allow transport to a major employment area. With one large notable exception in the form of a converted railway warehouse, the lost railway has been replaced with modern industrial and office uses to the south of this loop. For the most part screened from the driver by hedges and trees, the units are each utilitarian in form with little sense of belonging to this town.
- 4.5.12** The prime asset of this area in contributing to the character of the town is its connection to the countryside. The pedestrian route along the line of the old railway is not completed here, and it is greatly detrimental to the town that this route is interrupted. One way in which both a cultural connection with the past and a physical connection to other parts of the town can still be achieved would be through the future development of some remaining pockets of land with an emphasis on advantageous orientation of buildings, a strong landscape and simple uninterrupted pedestrian routes.
- 4.5.13** To the north, again screened by trees and hedges, a pocket of late twentieth century houses offer a network of green spaces, well connected footpaths and a consistency in buildings and materials. This pocket of houses could as easily have been anywhere on the outskirts of any town. However, its direct footpaths to the town and its backdrop of tree-lined embankment anchor it here, where its strength is in its layout, its spaces and its consistency.



Fig 5.8 A railway related warehouse extended and refurbished to give a new lease of life to this piece of industrial heritage off Castleman Way.



Fig 5.9 Southland House forms a strong historic reference at this transition point.

Key defining elements

- The terrace and 1950s council built houses between Moorland Gate and Willow Drive
- Red brick nineteenth and early twentieth century houses
- Occasional rural cottage form set forward towards the road
- Small groups of late twentieth century cul-de-sac development with consistent matching materials and details

Green Infrastructure

- Small greens and spaces associated with older rural lanes
- Trees in the grounds of, and in the space in front of, Moortown House
- Landscape setting of industrial units
- Spaces and green links to the rear of Shires Close, and integral to the development north of Castleman Way

The Southern Approach Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	The Southern Approaches guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	
Set back	
Front boundary	Avoid creating overly tall front boundaries. Where tall boundaries are acceptable, these need to be high quality brick walls nearer the centre or native hedgerows in the more rural parts.
Building format	
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Respect the main step changes in level which correspond to the river's flood plain terraces. Reduce the impact of buildings through either sitting down on the lower ground with low roofs or celebrate the rise with buildings of special quality accepting that they will be seen from distance.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	Verges and hedgerows in the south of the area, deep gardens and tall trees. The north of the area has a depleted green infrastructure which needs pockets of woodland and open greens restored where possible through new development. The green margin to the highway all the way from Moorland Gate north to Monmouth Close needs to be restored and improved. Further encroachment should be avoided and any new development on the employment land should include a green frontage of significant trees and hedgerow.
Access points	
Trees	

Elements of character and identity	The Southern Approaches guidance and comments
Green setting for built development	In addition to general guidance given in Section 3 Employment developments need spaces around them with simple native tree shrub and grassland treatment. Excessive fences interfere with setting of buildings and should be avoided where possible.
Gardens	
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	
Key dimensions	
Spatial setting	
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	
Locally significant buildings and structures	 <p>It is important where different uses are juxtaposed, that the use value of the locally significant buildings does not deteriorate. Pressure from excessive noise, dust, vehicle access and parking from neighbouring uses must not be allowed to reduce the usability of locally significant buildings.</p>
Materials	With such a myriad of styles and ages of development in Ringwood it is important to restrict the palette to locally appropriate materials.
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	



Albany Terrace -
New street



Duck Island Lane has several buildings that constitute a heritage asset and which have positively influenced new building locally.

Blue tin sheds – little sympathy with the context; a spurned opportunity to use the green waterside location to create a pleasant work environment.



Consistent quality late C20th cul-de-sac group. Distinctiveness is in the consistent detailing, materials and architecture of such groups. Front garden greenery is often a key component.



Triangular green where the route has been straightened. An outlying hamlet – a small group of older buildings define the old green.



New Street -
charming cluster of old or sympathetically styled rebuilt dwellings,

Connected green spaces along waterside.

Older rural cottages at the crossing of ways.



The terrace by the green
186 - 240 Christchurch Road, combined with the green space and steep roofed estate opposite creates a particularly distinctive feature in the town.



Former Nags Head
and one or two rural cottage forms.



Rural edge -
single storey dwellings lie low on the river terrace with limited impact on the wide flat landscape. Gaps and garden settings help minimise the intrusion.

Character Area 5: Southern Approach	
	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

Character Area 6 - Crow and Hightown



Fig 6.1 Crow and Hightown Character Area (April 2011).

- 4.6.1** The course of the old railway can be seen in Fig 6.1 above crossing the road at Crow on the left, the old rural lanes clearly separating the modern estate that surrounds the lake. The old thatched pub at the crossroads can be seen as a hub between neighbourhoods - a rural setting benefitting from a suburban location. The lanes in this area retain much of their rural character, with verges, ditches and field hedges. They have views to open countryside and are characterised by a variety of dwelling forms: from the original farm buildings, to occasional Victorian or Edwardian cottages, infilled along Hightown Road and Crow Lane with a variety of bungalows and houses. Typically these have large gardens and individual green settings.
- 4.6.2** The old thatched buildings at the former Hightown Elm Farm mentioned above remain as a landmark and centre to the neighbourhood – now a public house. The grass triangle and wide verges at the road junction in front of these offer a rural setting to this group of buildings.



Fig 6.2 Wide verges, hedges and ditches retain the rural character of the main lanes through the area.

- 4.6.3** The area can usefully be divided into three basic townscape types for descriptive purposes, although each benefits from elements of the wider landscape and the character of the lanes along which they are approached.

Late twentieth century estate around Hightown Lake

- 4.6.4** A fairly typical late twentieth century estate layout with cul-de-sac arrangement for access. Small garden frontages and well planted-up gaps around street edges give a green quality to the neighbourhood. It is notable in that there are very few vantage points from which the lake can be viewed, such that the potential benefits of this landscape are generally not apparent from the streets and public realm. Most dwellings back onto the water if they abut it at all. There is a path leading around the lake that offers some leisure walking although this is restricted in that it can be accessed at only one or two points. The backdrop of waterside planting and the wildlife it encourages is of course fundamental to the character of living by a lake.
- 4.6.5** The predominantly interwar infilling and cottages along the lanes, each having their own settings, provide large gardens offering the potential for taller trees and greenery that benefits the whole area. The opposite side of the road is bounded by an agricultural hedge in the foreground with some wide open rural views behind. North of Hightown Lane the wide farmland is set against a backdrop of rising ground and the edge of the forest. Deep gardens and hedgerow boundaries to the rear of Eastfield Lane retain the rural qualities of this place. The views over Crow Lane are also essentially rural, being across wide fields, but the industrial edge of the town and the exposed edges of Hightown Gardens creates a rather abrupt edge. Looking south across this area though offers a far more distinctive landscape. The few dwellings that exist here are all of a similar form: modest sizes of detached or paired steep-gabled 1950s cottages, set apart from one another, punctuate the wide flat river terrace land creating an extremely distinctive landscape along the southern stretch of Crow Arch Lane.



Fig 6.3 Sporadic cottages with steep gables and chimneys punctuate the wide rural setting, accentuating the wide flatness of the river terrace landscape.

Hightown Gardens and Ash Grove (nineteen sixties and seventies estates)

4.6.6 Buildings in these estates are predominantly tile hung and simple in form. They are gable ended with shallow roof pitches. Their garage courts can be a detriment without good natural surveillance, but the cul-de-sac ends offer important views out onto their respective open areas of countryside.



Fig 6.4 The Hightown Gardens estate offers an abrupt edge to the farmed river terrace landscape.



Fig 6.5 Ash Grove – consistent forms, materials and a sense of space.

Crow

4.6.7 At the junction of the old railway alignment with Crow Lane and Crow Arch Lane, there is a small cluster of houses in long or spacious plots. Their historic architectural integrity is somewhat diminished by alteration and replacement but they still offer value through their forms, materials and detailing where such characteristics remain.



Fig 6.6 A cottage at Crow. Quoin bricks, window surrounds, door arch, decorative bargeboard and chimneys offer a sense of heritage at the old railway crossing.



Fig 6.7 Older cottages on Hightown Lane show locally typical materials.



Fig 6.8 The public house which was once Hightown Elm Farm is the epitome of much of Ringwood's rural past. One of the occasional cottages punctuating a network of rural lanes which have, with this exception, been swallowed up by suburban infilling throughout the last century.



Fig 6.9 Views like this on the rural edge provide a sense of tranquillity and in common with so many eastward outlooks, also offer a sense of where one is in the landscape. The land rising on wooded farm slopes above the river terraces borders the higher plateau of the New Forest's open countryside.



Fig 6.10 Views towards the town looking westward from the Nouale Lane footpath illustrate how important the quality of the rural edge can be.

4.6.8 Crow Lane in common, to some extent, with Crow Arch Lane and the eastern end of Hightown Road is a key route between areas of settlement other than the town centre. Traffic detracts somewhat from the more rural characteristics of this lane so that whilst it remains a clear thoroughfare, its curves and green edges are important characteristics that can discourage speed and reduce the impacts of pollution.

Rural edges

4.6.9 The edges of development west of Eastfield Lane and south of Hightown Road are abrupt boundaries where housing or industrial building and curtilage lie along exposed field boundaries with only occasionally strips of tree planting attempting to soften the impact of buildings. Such planting is often alien in itself as the grouping or species of trees (typically conifers) appears unusual in the wider landscape. Development around Hightown Lake is more successful in this respect in the way tree groups, pockets of planting and small open spaces create a softer rural edge (albeit assisted by water – see Fig 6.1). New development in this area needs to recreate a more sympathetic rural edge in this way – screening with trees is not generally appropriate.

4.6.10 The rural edge is also characterised by use of the rural lanes themselves. For instance, the older rural lanes are important for horse riding, walking and cycling. Lighting and road marking is unobtrusive and low key. Together with remnant field hedgerows, verges and views of the open countryside, these are important and should be taken into account when designing layouts for any new development.

Key defining elements

- Wide views big skies - views afforded across wide flat fields, a highly characteristic landscape type (emphasised by the isolated dwellings marked on the plan)
- Rural tranquillity and green character along the older pre-car lanes
- Occasional historic buildings dotted along the older rural lanes
- Consistency in the forms of contemporaneous groups of buildings away from the lanes

Green Infrastructure

- Hedgerows
- Footpath link along alignment of railway
- Open farmland
- Lake and its well vegetated surroundings
- Corridors of older pre-car lanes the edges of which include verges, hedges, ditch and deep-set front gardens

Crow and Hightown Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	Crow and Hightown guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	
Set back	Important to retain deep set-back along the main lanes.
Front boundary	Important to retain the green, hedgerow and garden dominance along the main lanes.
Building format	Important to retain the consistency in estates off the main lanes. On the older lanes, cues should be taken from the few heritage buildings that remain.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Respect the flatness of the landscape through creating wide settings for new developments. Take opportunities to retain and frame views or glimpses of the wooded slopes to the east.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	Take opportunities to improve, add to or connect to paths. Seek to manage and augment, through landscape improvements, the native hedges and field ditches, tree and shrub groups and wetland vegetation of both the railway footpath and the lakeside environments.
Access points	Development or change should not diminish the verges and hedges or increase the vehicular crossover of the main lanes.
Trees	Apart from the lake side, these are rather occasional, as punctuation along the lanes or old field boundaries. The landscape is wide and flat and new development should not rely simply on tree screening to reduce its impact. New structure to the landscape would need sensitive location and species selection.

Elements of character and identity	Crow and Hightown guidance and comments
Green setting for built development	In addition to general guidance given in Section 3 See comments above on tree planting. Also opportunities to enhance the edges of the Hightown Gardens estate and the Crow Arch Lane industrial area through enhancing the green setting as well as built development.
Gardens	
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	
Key dimensions	
Spatial setting	Retain the spatial setting of the important or landmark buildings marked on the map and especially the wide settings of those steep gabled cottages that punctuate the flat river terrace landscape along Crow Arch Lane.
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	
Locally significant buildings and structures	These are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional forms, materials and detailing they show to the area or those that have special significance in the landscape.
Materials	
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	
Density	



The line of the disused railway offers an important footpath link - a pedestrian way out into the countryside and a wedge of countryside character right into the heart of the employment areas south of the town centre.



The public house which was once Hightown Elm Farm is the epitome of much of Ringwood's rural past.



View of eastern edge of Ringwood



One of the paired steep gabled 1950s cottages which punctuates the flat land creating an extremely distinctive landscape along the southern stretch of Crow Arch Lane.



Character Area 6: Crow and Hightown	
	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

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Late C20th estate around Hightown Lake
A fairly typical late C20th estate layout, with cul-de-sac arrangement for access.



Character Area 7 – Parsonage Barn and East Fields



Fig 7.1 Aerial view (April 2011)

- 4.7.1** This area covers the land east of the old town where, around the turn of last century, new lanes were built connecting up the original lanes between farms and settlements, thus opening up large areas for speculative house building. The town here has not spread out from any particular nucleus, but this suburban hinterland of the main town has gradually filled out as a patchwork over the last hundred or so years. The identity of the various neighbourhoods here is often therefore dependent upon the lanes and streets around which the dwellings are arranged, or upon strength of consistency within particular pockets of contemporaneous development. One important and fairly consistent element of local distinctiveness unifying almost the whole character area is the woodland views on the eastern horizon. There is a persistent awareness, through glimpsed views and often framed road-end vistas, of the rising wooded land to the east giving a sense of where one is in the landscape - a sense of closeness to the forest.
- 4.7.2** Occasional groups of red brick houses from early last century, together with some remnants of garden walls and hedges, frequently give the streets a sense of permanence, heritage and tradition.
- 4.7.3** Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some hedgerows remain and give the main lanes a definite rural aspect to their character.
- 4.7.4** Gaps between dwellings and low rooflines generally across the landscape allow the all-important glimpses and vistas to the wooded forest beyond, so that even at street level that sense of place is intrinsic to the character whilst, from first floor windows, this sense must be all the more apparent to many of those residing here.

- 4.7.5** The land was largely filled up in terms of building out the green fields by the early 1970s. Each fragment of the patchwork that was created would have had its characteristics, just as those occasionally recycled or intensified pockets of more recent infill still exhibit their own strong characteristics. Many characteristics would have been to do with space, scale and the connections and activity associated with the streets and places. The broad mixture of styles and building types in many of these areas may unfortunately have led to a sense of 'anything goes' in terms of new alteration and development across this area. However, provided that the key underlying elements of character which have been described above are recognised, this freedom to alter and rearrange need not detract from a sense of belonging.
- 4.7.6** Provided that the best examples (the historic and character-defining buildings and streetscapes) retain not only their intrinsic character but their influence and defining status, and are not relegated to a more minor role by over-intrusive or domineering development, the locally distinctive character of the place need not alter for generations. The freedom to adapt, recycle and recreate new dwellings within this area continues.
- 4.7.7** To illustrate this, it is worth exploring the area in more detail focussing on the framework of streets. Eastfield Lane, which has long connected Poulner with Hightown and Crow via various farms remains, marking the extent of the town to the east. Hightown Road (somewhat straightened in the nineteenth century) still runs in from Hightown to the centre of Ringwood and probably marked the southern edge of development until the 1970s. Both roads retain some of their rural characteristics in the form of sections of hedgerow (albeit not always of the original species), uneven verges, lack of pavement (at least on one side) and intermittent older dwellings relating first to farming uses on the land and later examples of the first speculative housing in red brick and aligned to the road. Parsonage Barn Lane crossed between the flat fields over a hundred years ago. Resurfaced to accommodate speculative building, it has become sporadically more suburban over the last century. Again there is verge instead of pavement to one side and signs of early twentieth century development still remain near the northern end.
- 4.7.8** Cloughs Road follows a similar evolution though again development was slightly later still.

Hightown Road

4.7.9 The northern side of Hightown Road has a pavement in place of verge and development dating from around the beginning of the twentieth century. Development on the greener southern edge is almost all a little later suggesting that for many years residents looked out across the flat river terrace farmlands to the south. The plan shows the various more distinct building groups but long vistas for almost its entire length show views of the wooded forest beyond, framed by hedgerows and garden trees. Westbury Road and Addison Square lead off Hightown Road, the latter having lost the central green space that gave it character. Here the forms of the distinctive gables along the east side and sets of terrace cottages along the west still prevail under a vibrant patchwork of alteration and personalisation of each dwelling.



Fig 7.2

Westbury Road with chimneyed row offers a distinctive skyline here and to the culmination of Woodford Close behind.



Fig 7.3

Addison Square, a set of gabled chalet dwellings around an elongated green has long since lost its green and infilling altered its character. However the underlying characteristic is still the clean and simple forms of the gabled buildings that remain.



Fig 7.4

Dwellings are often behind hedgerows, verges and green banks along Hightown Road, perpetuating that sense of a rural past, so typical of the older pre-car lanes.



Fig 7.5

Long vistas like this to the wooded forest slopes beyond the town are important throughout the character area. Here the combination of this and the hedgerows, verges, banks and front gardens offer a very rural character along Hightown Road despite its built-up nature.



Fig 7.6 A variety of villas, semi-detached cottages and a terrace sit behind suburban gardens from where they once looked out onto the wide open countryside to the south.

4.7.10 Sections of native hedgerow now mixed with garden species and grassed verge are a powerful part of that green character. Even a very few further losses of these and the front gardens behind will alter the character of Hightown Road considerably.

4.7.11 The far west end of Hightown Road takes on a leafy but more urban character. Dipping down increasingly steeply towards the lower river terraces of the town centre, the vista to the west is quickly lost. Trees on the bank to the south shade the road while subtle traffic calming measures discourage this section as a short cut. A shop on the corner, a cemetery, allotments and a school all combine to make this something of a transition – a break between the wide flat suburban area described above and the lower lying urban area of the town. The detailed plan for Character Area 7 picks out the key built forms.



Fig 7.7 East end of Hightown Road - four gabled houses add drama to the steep rise and echo the characteristic gables of the school with its landmark bell tower.



Fig 7.8 The gate pillars, wall and evergreen 'arboretum' of trees reinforces the cemetery's peaceful rest garden atmosphere.

Eastfield Lane

4.7.12 Whereas the east end of Hightown Road had been straightened to accommodate development, Eastfield Lane remains somewhat meandering with varying widths of verge and of set-back with occasional rural buildings remaining that pre-date the speculative expansion of the town. It remains a key route between areas of settlements other than the town centre, and traffic detracts considerably from the more rural characteristics of this lane so that whilst it remains a clear thoroughfare, its curves and green edges can discourage speed and reduce the impacts of pollution. The eastern edge is significant in several ways. Its tendency for buildings to block or detract from the rural vistas and views to the east is balanced by the deep garden spaces and gaps that have the potential to frame and to add to the green infrastructure. The varied building forms and styles that might once have adorned this ribbon as it became more suburban have been amended and altered over the years to create some of the most extreme examples of disproportionate forms or outlandish decoration. New or replacement development should take its cue from the original forms and local materials but most especially respect the rural eastern edge, the gaps and the deep garden spaces.



Fig 7.9 Green verges, garden and hedgerow combine with the curves and varied width of Eastfield Lane. The forms of traditional cottages and sections of low rise roofs should be valued and respected in any new designs.



Fig 7.10 Idiosyncratic roof extensions along Eastfield Lane, but it is the gaps between dwellings revealing trees and the wooded skyline beyond that really matter.



Fig 7.11

Original red brick semis from early in the twentieth century at the top of Eastfield Lane. The A31 lies in cutting between these and the landmark group of pines beyond.

Parsonage Barn Lane and Mount Pleasant

4.7.13 Much of Parsonage Barn Lane is clearly to be seen on Victorian maps as a ruler-straight and parallel sided track between field boundaries. Probably created to define and access agricultural fields after the Enclosure Act, the lane nevertheless facilitated sporadic development as though part of a planned gridiron layout, gradually in-filled with a variety of developments over the last century. It was given only one footpath and its character is

one of extremely varied dwelling types, both bungalow and house, but there is at least: a front garden margin, space to either side, and a building line that is consistent in sections. Sometimes groups of bungalows along its length offer a strong sense of openness and, from time to time occasional reminders of its heritage appear with a garden wall here, a red brick cottage there, or a fragment of native hedgerow. Even an old street lamp gives a sense of age creating a minor landmark here. The narrow verge remains instead of pavement along the east side and although this is often squeezed it nevertheless imparts a character and distinctiveness relating to the lanes rural past.



Fig 7.12 Examples illustrating the variety, heritage and a feeling of spaciousness at the north end of Parsonage Barn Lane described in paragraph 4.7.13 above.



Fig 7.13
Vista towards the church from the new top section of Parsonage Barn Lane. Here Mount Pleasant forms the transition point from suburban east side of the town before crossing the green spaces towards the urban edge along Southampton Road.

4.7.14 The top end of Parsonage Barn Lane has been severed by the A31, Lilac Close north of the main road forming the elbow that once connected to Poulner Lane (now called Southampton Road). However, with the building of the new A31 route, Parsonage Barn Lane needed a new connection. The solution was a sharp westward turn to connect across the top of Mount Pleasant (a small track developed for one or two cottages in late Victorian times) to join the old Poulner Lane at the site of Poulner Cottage (now a row of bungalows and houses facing the new section of road). The land here sits a little higher than the surroundings with Mount Pleasant looking down across open green and the new section of Parsonage Barn Lane enjoys a vista across the town to the church tower. Here Mount Pleasant forms the transition point from suburban east side of the town before crossing the green spaces towards the urban edge along Southampton Road.

4.7.15 Boundaries along the Poulner Cottage site are somewhat varied in their attempts to keep out the traffic noise while the school opposite is secured by grey weldmesh barely softened by the alien *Leylandii* screen so clearly betraying the newness of this section of the road. This sets it apart from the older rural sections where mixed native hedgerows even in their disparate fragments offer far more colour, wildlife and seasonal change. There is a string of connected green spaces of various sizes alongside the main road along here and onwards across the north of Queensway and Spittlefields. The section alongside Parsonage Barn Lane is somewhat sparse but even where it thickens perhaps as a result of the road coming out of cutting to the east, the amenity is limited to little more than creating distance from the traffic noise, dust and fumes. Opportunities to reduce the noise considerably while turning the spaces into pleasant and meaningful assets to these neighbourhoods exists through improved design and management.



Fig 7.14 There are a string of connected green spaces alongside the noisy A31.

Manor Road and Green Lane

4.7.16 Green Lane is one of several small spurs laid out as lanes and tracks shown on Victorian maps which facilitated speculative (as opposed to planned) development at that time. Indeed the 1867-1893 map shows an area marked in readiness for development aligned to field boundaries. Hence the top end of Manor Road has its distinctive early (around 1900) twentieth century red brick (and painted) cottages. Originally in a rural setting, this is about as urban as this area gets and it took around another half century before Manor Road was extended and layouts as well as building design started to respect the rural nature of the area. It is clear that there was a conscious effort from around the 1950s onward to avoid the tendency to urbanise this area of Ringwood.



Fig 7.15

Manor Road's distinctive, turn of twentieth century, red brick (and painted) cottages.

4.7.17 Manor Road was later developed to the south of Green Lane with wide green spaces, verges and a set of similar white painted dwellings with steep roofed gables, low eaves and tall chimneys. Indeed the rural looks of these cottages recalls a time when their surroundings were indeed still dominated by fields with still only a patchwork of development across the area.



Fig 7.16 Manor Road – becomes suburban in the neighbouring development (50 or so years later).

Queens Way and Spittlefields

4.7.18 Whereas these speculative streets have evolved into a very mixed collection of buildings, the later additions of intermediate roads often display a consistency of building forms. The largest examples are along the northern edge of the area where Queens Way and Spittlefields developed the town outwards. Simple 1950s and 1960s boxy forms lead into the characteristic 1970s style towards the east changing to such details as landscape windows and much smaller chimneys. In this neighbourhood, the green verges, spaces and hedgerow garden frontages of many of the dwellings gives a more spacious suburban character.



Fig 7.17 Connected and planned layouts provide green spaciousness

Inside 'the square'

4.7.19 There is a square area of the town at the heart of this suburban layout between Parsonage Barn Lane and Eastfield Lane and north of Hightown Road to Cloughs Road. Poorly connected and with almost no open green space, its external environment is somewhat oppressive. However, whilst the streets are less green and spacious than elsewhere, the consistent set-back and front garden margins keep the atmosphere as one of relaxed suburbia. Dwellings are a mixture with little to catch the eye but while such ubiquitous architecture and simple connected grid layout might seem to be from anywhere, the glimpses and views of the forest beyond retain a sense of place that is only of this landscape. These streets are recognisable as being of Ringwood because residents can see the rising forested lands to the east.

4.7.20 There are some groups of dwellings with a consistency of form that it would be desirable to respect and there are of course the gardens that set the atmosphere as suburban and tranquil within the backs, but this area through its layout is deprived of open space, of connections to amenities and of any delight or visual attractiveness by virtue of its architecture. Since the removal of a section of dwellings to create a park is hardly likely the one hope is that the community here can contribute to the character through their own personal contributions to streetscape, ie gardens. Trees in the rear, greenery that can be seen to the front.



Fig 7.18 The collective consistency of forms creates strongly identifiable neighbourhoods. It is important to retain such positively identifiable characteristics and avoid odd or disproportionate alterations to the basic form.



Fig 7.19 A purely functional set of additions

Key defining elements

- Views and often framed road-end vistas of the rising wooded land to the east
- Occasional groups of red brick houses from early last century
- Occasional features such as lamps, remnants of garden walls and hedges that often give the streets a sense of permanence and heritage and tradition
- Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some rural hedgerows remain to give the main lanes their character
- Low rise, domestic massing across the whole area always one and two storey dwellings

Green Infrastructure


- String of connected spaces alongside the A31
- The cemetery and allotments
- Open countryside and green rural margin to the east
- Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some rural hedgerows remain to give the main lanes their character
- Front garden margins to streets and rear gardens collectively forming tranquil islands

Parsonage Barn and East Fields Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	Parsonage Barn and East Fields guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	Gaps between buildings will be particularly important where roads run north to south in order to retain the persistent glimpses of the countryside to the east.
Set back	
Front boundary	This is important throughout, but particularly along Hightown Road and Eastfield Lane where hedgerows are a key part of the distinctiveness in longer views.
Building format	There are a number of buildings and groups of buildings where clarity of form is intrinsic to their heritage value. Interfering with roofscapes especially will deplete their contribution to the character of the town.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	A few islands of cumulatively tranquil gardens are marked especially those along Eastfield Lane. The string of connected spaces alongside the A31 needs more planting structure and a management programme to thicken the boundary wherever possible.
Access points	Verges, especially in the older streets and Queensway and Spittlefields areas, should not be reduced by additional cross-over or pressure for parking.
Trees	Relatively few of note but those that do contribute (and those opportunities for tree planting that could) to the streetscapes are therefore of greater importance.

Elements of character and identity	Parsonage Barn and East Fields guidance and comments
Green setting for built development	<p>In addition to general guidance given in Section 3</p> <p>The setting of the eastern edge of the town to the rear of Eastfield Lane must retain and improve its rural green edge wherever possible. The sites adjoining open areas such as these and especially Mount Pleasant will require special attention to their green setting.</p>
Gardens	<p>This area is entirely suburban in character with rural reminders and a rural edge to the east. Retention of gardens, front and back, is therefore important.</p>  <p>Even the most urban terrace has a strong garden presence</p>
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	<p>Typically domestic throughout with the occasional exceptions for community buildings. Any departure from typically domestic massing would have an intrusive impact upon the area and should only be considered where buildings have a public use to justify their intrusion.</p>
Key dimensions	
Spatial setting	
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	
Locally significant buildings and structures	<p>These are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional forms, materials and detailing they show to the area. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks or particularly strong heritage assets as well.</p>
Materials	<p>Within pockets of consistency, it is important to match these and not to further dilute the strength of character here.</p>

Elements of character and identity	Parsonage Barn and East Fields guidance and comments
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	This is varied throughout. See 'Garden' and 'Green Setting' sections above – but this area is suburban throughout and can take very little intensification of built form in terms of the further depletion of character that would ensue through loss of greenery and potential for trees and greenery.
Density	As explained above, this area is suburban throughout and can take very little increase in density that would result in intensification of traffic use making the lanes less pedestrian friendly and placing further pressure on the verges, boundary hedges and garden frontages, further depleting the character of the older lanes.



Manor Road
a more rural suburbia



Parsonage Barn Lane
A front garden margin to either side and a building line that is consistent in sections. A narrow verge takes the place of pavement along the east side.

Inside the 'square'

There is a square area at the heart of this suburban layout where the consistent set-back and front garden margins keep the atmosphere as one of relaxed suburbia and the glimpses and views of the forest beyond retain a sense of place that is only of this landscape.

- views and often framed road-end vistas of the rising wooded land to the east.
- open countryside and green rural margin to the east



Original red brick semis from early in the twentieth century – unspoiled roof forms, retained chimneys, original window forms and red brickwork are all characteristic

Green Lane

One of several small spurs laid out as lanes and tracks on Victorian maps allowing speculative development at that time.



The far west end of Hightown Road takes on a leafy but more urban character. Four gabled houses add drama to the steep rise and echo the characteristic gables of the school with its landmark bell tower.



The gate pillars, wall and evergreen arboretum of trees lends the cemetery a peaceful rest garden atmosphere.



Hightown Road
A variety of villas, semi-detached cottages and a terrace sit behind suburban gardens from where they once looked out onto the wide open countryside to the south.



The view down Hightown Road is extremely green despite the built up nature of the road and the long vista to the wooded forest slopes beyond is important.



Sections of native hedgerow now mixed with garden species and grassed verge are a powerful part of the green character along Hightown Road

Views often framed road-end vistas of the rising wooded land to the east.



Eastfield Lane
It is the gaps and trees in the skyline that really matter.



Westbury Road with its turn of the century chimneyed row offers a distinctive skyline both here and at the culmination of Woodford Close behind.



Character Area 7: Parsonage barn and East Fields

	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water

Character Area 8 – North Ringwood

- 4.8.1** Glimpsed views and road-end vistas of the rising wooded land to the east (the fringes of the New Forest) create a strong sense of closeness to the forest - a persistent understanding of where one is in the landscape. Coupled with that, throughout this swathe of mixed suburban bungalows and houses there are various single, and groups of, red brick houses from early last century which give the streets a sense of permanence, heritage and tradition.
- 4.8.2** Just as in Character Area 7, from the beginning of last century new lanes started to be built connecting to the original lanes between farms and settlements, consequently opening up large areas for speculative house building. Indeed the two areas can be looked upon as being part of the same patchwork of varied but consistently suburban development. The area is bounded by the old lane connecting north Poulner with the old Salisbury Road (and thence to the town) and a string of lakes in the Avon Valley immediately to the north. However, whilst that area to the south (Character Area 7) had not spread out from any particular nucleus, this area is centred around a ribbon of older development between the farms and cottages of Poulner and the town in the west. Unlike the area to the south, this was not cut off from the main thoroughfare to the town with its occasional shop, or pub along the way. Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some hedgerows remain to give the earlier lanes their rural characteristics.

Southampton Road

- 4.8.3** The former Poulner Lane (now called Southampton Road) is one such example with particularly wide verges and at least one good stretch of hedgerow offering rural characteristics. Southampton Road exhibits several examples of earlier buildings of rural character. Some linear forms of workers' cottages remain together with a few old thatched and timberframed farm houses or occasional brick forest cottages. Additional old suburban brick villas and semi-detached pairs fill many of the gaps so that combined with the line of hedge and banks, there is a sense here of a rural past as a wide turnpike on its final approach towards the market town. Attempts to emulate traditional building forms during later development along remaining sections of the street help (with varying degrees of success) to retain this character today.

4.8.4 Vistas to either end towards Ringwood church tower to the west and the White Hart Inn against a forested backdrop in the east remain, so that the character is strong despite the persistent drone of traffic. The concrete diversion walls around the A31 built in a cutting with a short hiatus in the continuity of Southampton Road lead across the angled overbridge towards the town.



Fig 8.1

Timber framed forest cottage - the listed Poulner Lane Farm House sits modestly amongst the later dwellings lining Southampton Road. It is significant not only for its age but the exposure of the layers of history visible in the vernacular craftsmanship of its end elevation. Such views need to be protected as well as the building itself.



Fig 8.2 A later example of the forest cottage with even later suburban infill. Such attempts to emulate historic characteristics can have the effect of merely diluting the positive impact of the real thing. The late 20th century example has an entirely different massing (clearly visible in its deeper footprint) and much greater roof plane (lacking skyline interest such as chimney stacks) even though the façade gives a nod towards tradition.



Fig 8.3 The wide verged Southampton Road (formerly Poulner Lane) has a sense of being the main street in the hierarchy of suburban roads here. It was once the main turnpike road.



Fig 8.4 The same view magnified shows that the vista towards the church tower is not spoilt by the A31 (it is the incessant noise however that mars the character here).



Fig 8.5 Edwardian residential development alongside the older rural cottages along Southampton Road.

Speculative suburban beginnings

- 4.8.5** Just as described in Character Area 7, this area started to be developed around the beginning of last century. This was initially only around the main thoroughfare (Southampton Road), then later within the farmland at Gypsy Lane. Next, several new streets were laid out close to the crossing of Poulner Lane (now Southampton Road), and the connecting lanes of Parsonage Barn Lane (later to be severed by the A31) and Broadshard Lane. Here the beginnings of a gridiron layout are evident with the most intact row retaining some front garden walls, most of its chimneys and its distinctive red and buff brick detail, single storey bays and slate roofs at Middleton Road. Similar development remains fairly unaltered at Fairlie in the north east corner.
- 4.8.6** These sorts of suburban beginnings were also appearing at this time in other parts of Ringwood, such as College Road, Woodstock Lane nearer the town centre, Manor Road and three isolated semi-detached pairs halfway along Eastfield Lane as mentioned in Character Area 7. Late Victorian examples include the grid next to School Lane near Carvers Recreation Ground and the row of staggered villas that make such a highlight at the culmination of Gravel Lane. However, in common with these other character areas, expansion of this nature did not carry on with any pace, but instead the gradual need for homes allowed a slow sporadic infilling of the remaining fields in small patches. Most was laid out as connected streets, the earlier dwellings pre-dating typical bungalow layouts of looping connected streets so that those later styles of building often now line the edges of more traditional street layouts.



Fig 8.6 Distinctive red and buff brick detail, single storey bays, slate roofs and chimneys at Middleton Road. The front gardens are small but important. Such characteristic elements as these and those listed in paragraph 4.8.5 are worth retaining.



Fig 8.7 Heritage; form and detail. A single late Victorian house pre-dating its similar neighbours by a few years is particularly attractive. It is important that it retains its decorative details, traditional materials and garden setting at the corner of Gypsy Lane.

A broad sense of variety

- 4.8.7** Broadshard Lane (and Northfield Road) pre-date any suburban aspiration for the area. They were farm tracks but their straight alignments, borne of the Enclosure Act, made them starting points for the suburban villas that now line their banked verges with large garden and spacious settings.
- 4.8.8** Along the boundaries of fields, between lanes, new roads link to open up the land for speculative development. However, the pace of change did not fill these with red brick rows. The earlier roads such as Northfield Road and Broadshard Lane are developed as mostly two storey houses, often of some size, a well to do suburban idyll in the making. Some few individual houses dotted elsewhere are interspersed with larger groups of bungalows often built with roof accommodation, some converted later.
- 4.8.9** Variety can often mean a 'hotch potch' with little to define character. Here, variety does not undermine the sense of place for three broad reasons:
- a) There is an openness that often reaches as far as the forest ridge to the east, but each street has sheltered homeliness created by gardens, hedges, trees and uncrowded buildings – rooftops punctuating the skyline are varied and interspersed with various trees.
 - b) There is a restrained ratio of the taller (two storey) dwellings within each discrete neighbourhood that does not dominate the skyline but rather punctuates it. Gaps between dwellings and the front and back gardens allow a predominance of greenery and a variety of trees to punctuate the skyline.
 - c) Many of the bungalows are designed as chalet bungalows and those that are converted mostly have sensitively designed dormers that do not dominate roofscapes so as to ruin the integrity of the building.



Fig 8.8

Broadshard Lane with characteristic hedges, grassed banks, front garden trees and absence of defined pavements.



Fig 8.9 Northfield Road – verges, hedgerows, deep set-back and a vista to the forest in the east.



Fig 8.10 Variety works well where well designed buildings retain their own design integrity and trees intersperse a skyline close to and further off along the horizon.



Fig 8.11 A rural cottage in its spacious setting just about predates the suburban developments that filled up Northfield Road.



Fig 8.12 A pair of mansard roofed dwellings close by Merryweather Estate – their charm is their unspoilt shape opening up the wide skies and roofs that maximise the gaps between.

Accessible open spaces

- 4.8.10** There are some pockets of development (such as Kingfisher Way and the Wessex and Merryweather estates) that were clearly planned and designed as layouts around, or encompassing, open greenspace. Mostly (with one exception – Kingfisher Way) developed as local authority housing, the buildings have strongly characteristic forms often repeated to create a sense of neighbourhood. The spaces allow the buildings to sit comfortably in the landscape and although these communal spaces are usually only for the immediate residents, the garden spaces (especially the local authority layouts) allow these developments to contribute to the wider landscape through the presence of or potential for trees.
- 4.8.11** There is often tension between the value of such spaces for amenity and concern over children playing on them to the extent of creating disturbance. These are valuable assets for our children and for visual amenity. Neither amenity nor play value is fully realised but the spaces remain extremely valuable as setting for the buildings and should be retained and enhanced where possible. There is also a tension between their amenity value and the desire to park cars. Open spaces have many uses (play, recreation and green amenity) there is a need to accommodate these uses such that they complement each other. Occasionally it is possible to accommodate car use but care should be taken not to remove or detract from such amenity value.



Fig 8.13 Merryweather Estate. The open green and backdrop of garden trees and the forest lands to the east allow utilitarian houses to appear as locally distinct and attractive cottages in a semi-rural setting. Care will be needed in treating even small elements like front boundaries if the quality is to remain. The simplicity of roof forms and retention of chimneys are clearly vital.



Fig 8.14 Winstone Way. Characteristic and consistent forms and materials give each pocket neighbourhood its character. Front gardens, the verges and low front boundaries are important. Note the views of rising forest land to the east – clearly setting the context here despite being a full kilometre away.



Fig 8.15 Wessex Estate. Again, the front gardens, hedges and verges give a strong setting but the simple forms, clean rooflines and rhythm of chimneys against the skyline create a powerful character reminiscent of many earlier forms of estate workers' cottages – a more rural version of a garden suburb.

Key defining elements

- Views and often framed road-end vistas of the rising wooded land to the east (see 4.8.9 (a) above)
- Occasional forest cottages dotted throughout the area
- Occasional groups and single red brick houses from early last century
- Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some rural hedgerows remain to give the main lanes their character
- Low rise, domestic massing across the whole area - always one or two storey dwellings (see 4.8.9 (b) above)

Green Infrastructure

- String of connected spaces alongside the A31
- Hedgerows alongside Southampton Road and the A31
- Verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges to the lanes and some rural hedgerows remain to give the main lanes their character
- Suburban front and rear gardens throughout whole area rear garden island groups are marked, front gardens create deep margins to streets

North Ringwood Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

Elements of character and identity	North Ringwood guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	This is fairly consistent within certain parameters and based upon original land sale divisions. Further subdivision may have the effect of condensing the grain and significantly hardening the character of the area.
Building line	Only older buildings step forward, or where older buildings predominate these sit closer to the street than typical suburban forms.
Building up of building line	Gaps are very important throughout to enable dwellings to be seen within their green settings.
Set back	Apart from the older dwellings and pubs, the later domestic dwellings generally have enough room for gardens to contribute to the overall green character of the area.
Front boundary	Low fences and hedges predominate allowing front gardens to contribute to the character of the whole area.
Building format	Typically hipped roof bungalows or mixture of two storey houses.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Flat.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	Islands of cumulatively tranquil gardens are marked. The string of connected spaces alongside the A31 needs more planting structure and a management programme to strengthen the boundary wherever possible.
Access points	Verges, especially in the in the older streets, should not be reduced by additional cross-over or pressure for parking.

Elements of character and identity	North Ringwood guidance and comments
Trees	In addition to general guidance given in Section 3 The larger groups and specimens have been marked on the map. The importance of trees as a mixture of garden species and taller specimens relies on the space given by gardens to enable this mixture to be perpetuated through replanting so that the area has a persistent green character and the scale of buildings and impact of development generally is reduced.
Green setting for built development	Most dwellings have their own proportionate setting.
Gardens	This area is entirely suburban with rural reminders and a rural edge to the east. Retention of gardens, front and back, is therefore important.
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	Typically domestic throughout with the occasional exceptions for community buildings. Any departure from typically domestic massing would have an intrusive impact upon the area and should only be considered where buildings have a public use to justify their intrusion.
Key dimensions	In areas where dwellings have been built to similar patterns, the consistency is important.
Spatial setting	Many areas have a predominance of bungalow or low building forms but with occasional taller older houses. It is important that this ratio of low to taller dwellings is retained and that the smaller footprint sizes of the taller dwellings remains.
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	Contemporaneous dwelling groups such as those on Middleton Road or Merryweather Estate should retain their consistency.
Locally significant buildings and structures	Those with particular heritage value are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional forms and their position within the street envelope – they alone sometimes stand out as having markedly different settings or by addressing lanes or spaces that may have been altered. Materials and detailing are often of a richness and quality that is valuable to the distinctiveness of an area. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks or particularly strong heritage assets.
Materials	Within pockets of consistent use, it is important to match these and not to further dilute the strength of character here.

Elements of character and identity	North Ringwood guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	This is varied throughout - see 'garden' and 'green setting' sections above – but this area is suburban throughout and can take very little intensification of built form. Further depletion of character could ensue through the loss of greenery or loss of potential for trees and greenery.
Density	As explained above, this area is suburban throughout and can take very little increase in density, it would result in intensification of traffic use making the lanes less pedestrian friendly and placing further pressure on the verges, boundary hedges and garden frontages, further depleting the character of the older lanes.

Character Area 8: North Ringwood

	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water



Broadshard Lane predates any planned suburban aspiration for the area.



A rural cottage in its spacious setting just about predates the suburban developments that filled up Northfield Road.

Heritage, form and detail
A single late Victorian house predating its similar neighbours by a few years is beautifully preserved in its garden setting at the corner of Gypsy Lane.



Middleton Road distinctive red and buff brick detail, single storey bays, slate roofs and chimneys.



Northfield Road - verges, hedgerows, deep set-back and a vista to the forest in the east.



Variety works where well designed buildings retain their own design integrity and trees intersperse a skyline close to and further off along the horizon.



The wide verged Southampton Road (once Poulner Lane) has a sense of being the main street in the hierarchy of suburban roads here. Once the main turnpike road. The vista toward the church tower is not spoiled by the A31.



Winstone Way views of rising forest land to the east – clearly setting the context here despite being a full kilometre away.



Timber-framed forest cottage the listed Poulner Lane Farm House sits modestly amongst the later dwellings lining Southampton Road



Merryweather Estate the open green and backdrop of garden trees and the forest lands to the east allow utilitarian houses to appear as locally distinct and attractive cottages in a semi-rural setting.



Character Area 9 – Poulner and the Rural Edge



Fig 9.1 Looking westward over Poulner

- 4.9.1** Whilst most of the flat farmland of the river terraces had been developed prior to the 1970s, little spread of suburban housing was evident to the east of the north-south road (Eastfield Lane from the south and Gorley Road northward) that runs roughly parallel to the steeper ground of the forest edge.
- 4.9.2** This character area consists of land that remained rural until various planned phases of 1970s open plan, and 1980s/90s cul-de-sac developments were superimposed upon the network of rural lanes where they descend and converge towards Southampton Road.
- 4.9.3** Arriving from the east at any time much before the end of the eighteenth century, travellers would have found their way down one of the lanes cut, through natural use, into the farmed forested slopes. After the high rolling heathlands of the New Forest, dropping downhill between small fields bounded by tree lined hedgerows and woodland the traveller would find a stark contrast in the landscape. Wide open fields of flat river terrace stretched out a mile and a half to the west towards the town. The church tower and two tall mill buildings would have marked the horizon. There might even have been a silvery ribbon glimpse of river or, in winter, some wide expanse of flooded meadow across the distant floodplain. After the emptiness of the heath, travellers along these converging routes and the occupants of the various forest cottages which populated these slopes were sufficient custom to sustain two hostelryes: The London Tavern on the northern of the two routes (Linford Road) and the White Hart Inn where the lanes converged at the head of Poulner Lane (now Southampton Road).

4.9.4 Eastfield Lane from the south and Gorley Road from the north meet these converging routes, which connected up the various farms. They are still dotted with occasional Forest cottages, usually thatched. These, together with the remaining rural characteristics of the lanes, are fundamental to the distinctiveness here.

4.9.5 Today, the southern route (what remains of Poulner Lane – the old turnpike) as it connects to the A31 dual carriageway is much altered to accommodate traffic but several cottages remain along with Merryweather Farm House (almost lost amid intense development).



Fig 9.2
Merryweather Farm House

4.9.6 The northern routes, however, lead out through the new layouts reasonably intact into the National Park. Linford Road, Butlers Lane and Cowpits Lane all head into the rising forest farmlands towards Linford. Remnants of hedgerow to either side, green verges and a number of thatched cottages retain a rural quality to these lanes notwithstanding the more recent development of pattern-book housing that adjoins and, in places, intrudes.



Fig 9.3 One of the thatched cottages and (right) the verges, walls, hedges and trees that together with these older rural dwellings provide a strong sense of belonging both to the countryside and to the forest.

4.9.7 Narrow Lane, which once connected with Nouale Lane (south of the A31) to join Hightown with the various farms up and down the lower edge of the rising forest farmland, is still visible. Nowadays, Narrow Lane consists of two short cul-de-sacs and a connecting path which create a boundary along the east of Character Area 9. Historically it roughly marked the boundary between the smaller field patterns of the forest farmland and the much wider river terrace farmland. Now it is the boundary of the built-up area and of the New Forest National Park. Part of the higher forest farmlands, a very different landscape, protrudes westward beyond this path. The steeper slopes remain green, leaving a spur of land as a mound of rough parkland, protected from the advancing tide of suburban spread as though protected by the nature of the terrain but probably in part through deliberate planning.



Fig 9.4 Narrow Lane – a green footpath linking the ends of cul-de-sacs is characterised by green banked edges, large oak trees and where the dwellings remain, the occasional wall or outbuilding that still offers forest and heritage character where all else below is no longer rural.

4.9.8 An oasis of green, open to the community, The Mount is a well-used and popular public area. It remains somewhat isolated and was never fully embraced by the layout of the new streets that surround it. Its great benefit is the elevated views it affords of the town, laid out below and to the west. Clusters of shrubs and trees have been introduced for interest and wildlife but the amenity of this land falls far below its potential. Never intended as a manicured park, the native planting and well-meaning ‘light touch of the maintenance mower’ never quite creates the natural piece of forest or meadow that might once have been hoped for. The soil too rich for a diverse meadow and the desire for openness too great to allow the forest oaks or even landmark pines or pioneering birch to gain a foothold, there is no physical invitation (path or feature) to ascend to the summit and enjoy the views. There is clearly an opportunity here to allow a natural asset to fulfil its potential as a public amenity.



Fig 9.5 View westward from The Mount, over the rooftops of north Ringwood to the tree-lined horizon of Dorset.

4.9.9 The suburban areas that wrap around The Mount to the north, west and south have a far more planned layout than that on the flatter lands to the west. Although this layout is unrelated to the character of its host landscape it nevertheless has a charm and quality of its own. Together with the backdrop of tree-covered forest slopes to the east (including The Mount), this provides a distinct and pleasant neighbourhood.



Fig 9.6 Matching groups of dwellings with green squares and verges on the lower slopes where the land starts to ascend towards the forest edge.



Fig 9.7

Green open plan frontages and consistent designs create matching pockets and mini neighbourhoods within the cul-de-sac areas with a backdrop of trees from the forest edge farmlands visible to offer a sense of belonging.

4.9.10 Pockets of green space are designed into these areas as greens or grass verges, occasionally sporting garden species trees. Collections of similar houses are gathered around a maze of cul-de-sac streets. Modest gardens are valuable spaces for family amenity but also allow a richness of colour and interest to adorn the crisp simplicity of building forms. It is the simple forms of the houses and the repeated patterns of matching materials which make each pocket of dwellings distinct. These dwellings offer distinctiveness through their similarity and honest 'of their time' designs. As groups, their distinctiveness is far more fragile with the pressure always to make the most of each individual dwelling. A particularly sensitive approach to design of alterations is therefore required, since extensions and loft conversions could easily destroy the collective sense of place, if the similarities and simplicity of form are not reflected. Attempts to emulate older building forms would simply dilute the strong sense of connection with the past and with the forest that the lanes and remaining cottages provide.

4.9.11 Besides the suburban housing that fills the areas between the lanes, there are a number of community buildings that make this end of northern Ringwood an active destination for residents, including a small supermarket to serve local needs and a purpose-built medical centre. A large junior school offers green (though inaccessible) space to the area.

Key defining elements

- Rural lanes defined by their uneven widths, verges without pavements, occasional banked up edges and occasional rural hedgerows
- Older forest cottages (usually thatched) and their garden settings
- Low rise, domestic massing across the whole area always one and two storey dwellings
- Cul-de-sac layouts with garden and greenspace as an integral part of their parking and vehicular areas
- Mini neighbourhoods of similar houses. Simple forms, clean rooflines, limited palettes of materials

Green Infrastructure

- Green edges to older lanes
- Verges and green space as an integral part of cul-de-sac layouts
- The Mount, both as a potential amenity space, and for the backcloth of trees and greenery it gives to the wider area
- Trees (and the potential for garden trees) across this area are intrinsic not only to the character of this but also the long views that characterise Character Area 8
- Suburban gardens - front and back

Poulner and the Rural Edge Character Area Guidance

The following guidance illustrates how new change and development might be achieved in a way that maintains and enhances the character and distinctiveness of this part of Ringwood. It identifies how any new development should be designed to respond to its context and the key defining features of this area.

This guidance supplements that already set out in Section 3

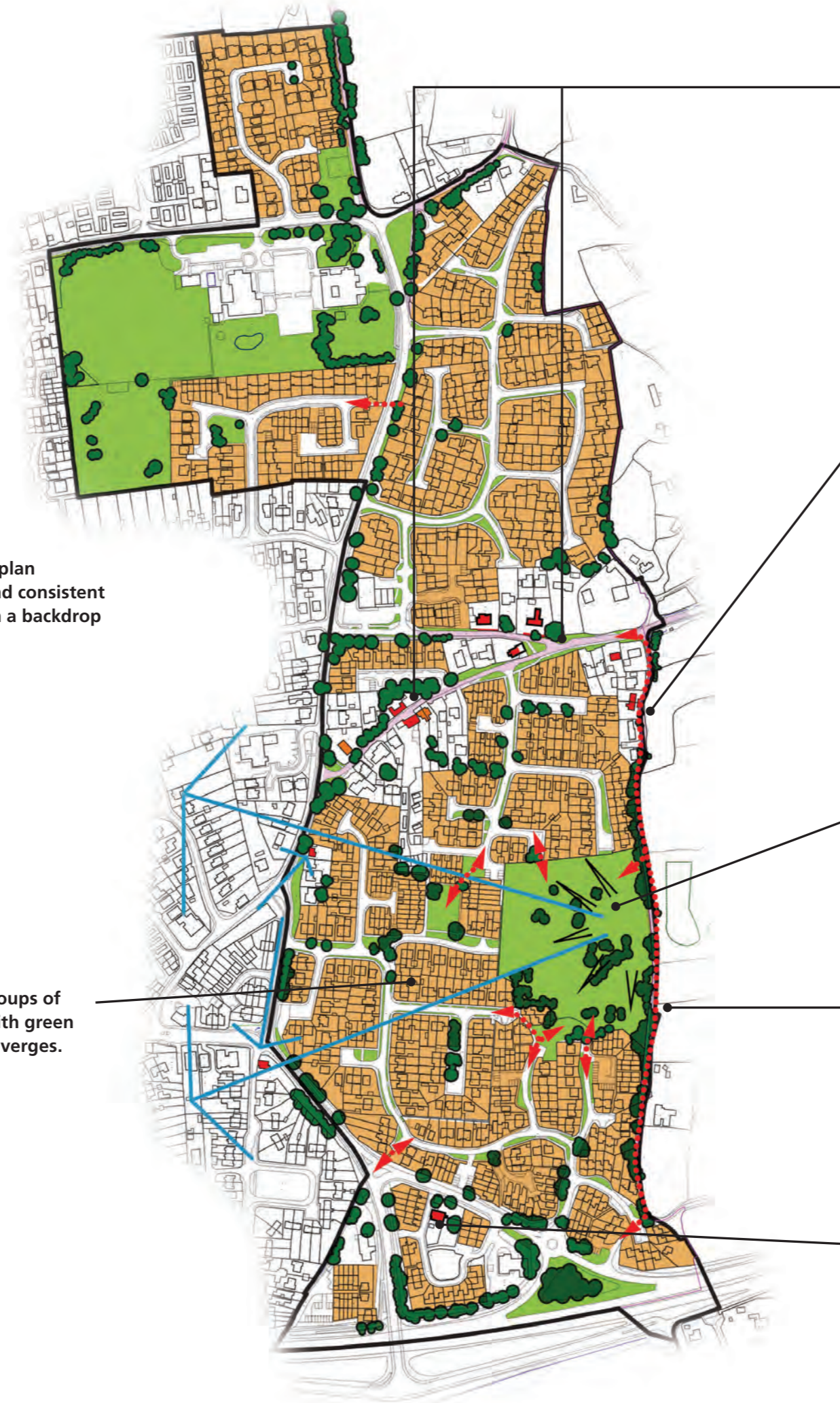
Elements of character and identity	Poulner and the Rural Edge guidance and comments
In addition to general guidance given in Section 3	
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)	
Plot width	
Building line	
Building up of building line	
Set back	
Front boundary	Most dwellings are open plan so that there is no fence or boundary to the front.
Building format	Consistent within groups of similar style. If altering any buildings it will be important that extensions or additions respect the format of the original building. For instance, gabled building would look awkward with additions that include hipped roofs and vice-versa.
LANDSCAPE	
Topography	Rising gradually toward the east with the steeper land remaining unbuilt upon towards the middle.
Ground water availability	
Green infrastructure	The Mount is central to the neighbourhood – improved access and the realisation of its potential could make this a defining feature.
Access points	Verges, especially in the in the older streets, should not be reduced by additional cross-over or pressure for parking.
Trees	Trees are particularly important not only in terms of the contribution they give to this area but also the long distance views from Character Area 8
Green setting for built development	The forest cottages should not be crowded so as to reduce their traditional setting.

Elements of character and identity	Poulner and the Rural Edge guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
Gardens	This area is suburban but with strong rural reminders and a rural edge to the east. The gardens, front and back, are critical to the quality of such cul-de-sac layouts in the richness, colour, variety and wildlife support they bring to whole area.
SCALE - Proportion	
Massing	Typically domestic throughout with the occasional exceptions for community buildings. Any departure from typically domestic massing would have an intrusive impact upon the area and should only be considered where buildings have a public use to justify their intrusion.
Key dimensions	In areas where dwellings have been built to similar patterns, the consistency is important.
Spatial setting	Many areas have a predominance of bungalow or low building forms but with occasional taller older houses. It is important that this ratio of low to taller dwellings is retained and that the smaller footprint sizes of the taller dwellings remains.
APPEARANCE	
Rhythms, patterns and consistency in features and detail	Each group of dwellings within the cul-de-sac layouts has a distinctiveness reliant upon the collective consistency of detailing and patterns of simple forms. These should not be diluted by extension or alteration which breaks with the original architecture. Honest architecture derived from the dwellings' own time will succeed where emulating past histories will not.
Locally significant buildings and structures	Those with particular heritage value are noted on the plan. Their significance is in the traditional forms, materials and detailing they show to the area. Marked in red are those that offer themselves as significant landmarks or particularly strong heritage assets as well.
Materials	Within pockets of consistent use, it is important to match these and not to further dilute the strength of character here.

Elements of character and identity	Poulner and the Rural Edge guidance and comments In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
DENSITY	
Site coverage (intensity of built form)	This is varied throughout (see garden and green setting sections above) – but this area is suburban throughout and can take very little intensification of built form in terms of the further depletion of character that would ensue through the loss of greenery or loss of potential for trees and greenery.
Density	As explained above, this area is suburban throughout and can take very little increase in density. It would result in intensification of traffic use making the lanes less pedestrian friendly and placing further pressure on the verges, boundary hedges and garden frontages, further depleting the character of the older lanes.

Character Area 9: Poulner and the rural edge

	Conservation area boundary
	Larger garden spaces or groups of tranquil garden space
	Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses
	Planned connected type street layouts
	Listed buildings
	Important building groups and street frontages
	Older pre-car lanes and streets
	Avenues
	Important trees/tree groups
	Important open green space
	Key features or buildings (lamp;wall;bldg)
	Important views, vistas
	Pedestrian links
	Water



Green open plan frontages and consistent designs with a backdrop of trees.



Matching groups of dwellings with green squares and verges.



Remnants of hedgerow

to either side, green verges and a number of thatched cottages or other heritage features and buildings retain a rural quality to these lanes.



Narrow Lane -

A green footpath linking the ends of cul-de-sacs is characterised by green banked edges, large oak trees and, where the dwellings remain, the occasional wall or outbuilding that still offers forest and heritage character where all else below is no longer rural.



View westward from The Mount

Over the rooftops of north Ringwood to the tree lined horizon of Dorset.



Access from Narrow Lane and the rural edge of the area onto the back of The Mount.



This area is much altered to accommodate traffic but several cottages remain, along with remnant of Merryweather Farm House.

Appendix 1: Townscape types

The 'townscape character' types of residential developments found within New Forest District's main settlements are described briefly below. These were used to inform the identification of the character areas within Ringwood and should be read in association with the general design advice in Section 3 and the individual Character Area Guidance in Section 4.

Remnant of Early Settlement:

Historic settlement; vernacular buildings and street patterns exist as evidence of early organised settlement.

Isolated Farmstead:

Farm groups; farmhouse and related farm buildings dating from seventeenth or eighteenth century. Probably associated with a country estate or manor originally but often becoming independent following the fragmentation of manorial land.

The Farm group will vary in original pattern, subsequent evolution and then the survival of individual buildings with the present form resulting from a protracted process of piecemeal addition followed by absorption into the urban landscape.

Eighteenth Century Country Estate:

Principal house, home farm and other associated buildings together with a designed landscape.

The Classical Urban House:

Mid seventeenth century to mid nineteenth century property in a variety of guises throughout the period but characteristically displaying symmetry, vertical windows and the use of classical details particularly mouldings but also in ironwork to boundary railings and balconies.

Dwellings in urban areas are evident in the form of repeated buildings of the same or similar form resulting typically in the "Georgian Terrace" marked by the typical characteristics identified above with brick or/and stucco facades. This type sets up a strong rhythm along a street and will dominate the immediate area. Buildings tend to be set just back from the pavement with a narrow frontage set behind railings or low walls with railings.

Individual buildings are found, typically as former "Merchants Houses" or early civic buildings in the commercial core of a historic urban settlement. The majority will now have a commercial use, at least at ground floor, with upper storeys being sub let as flats or having a less intensive, storage use or indeed in a number of cases being left empty. Buildings are with few exceptions set at the back edge of the pavement.

Mid nineteenth century Victorian "Workers House":

Usually terraces or semi-detached two-storey "redbrick" dwellings either at back edge of pavement or street or with small front gardens enclosed by strong boundary of low, brick wall or low, brick wall with cast iron railings on top. Where these occur in large numbers, they are usually laid out along streets connected as a gridiron such that they enclose their rear yards within simple 'perimeter blocks', so called because their facades, front doors (and best sides – the front room reserved for visitors) all wrap the perimeter. The buildings themselves were often quite plain with simple facades and little decoration and almost always constructed in red brick in contrast to the earlier stucco and highly decorative brickwork of grander Victorian houses.

Late nineteenth century and early twentieth century connected streets (gridiron):

Patterns of mid nineteenth workers' houses evolved especially in more affluent areas into streets of terraces or semi detached houses on regimented grids with modest rear gardens and often a small margin of garden to the front. They continued to be laid out along gridiron streets enclosing perimeter blocks such that rear gardens are away from general public view and access.

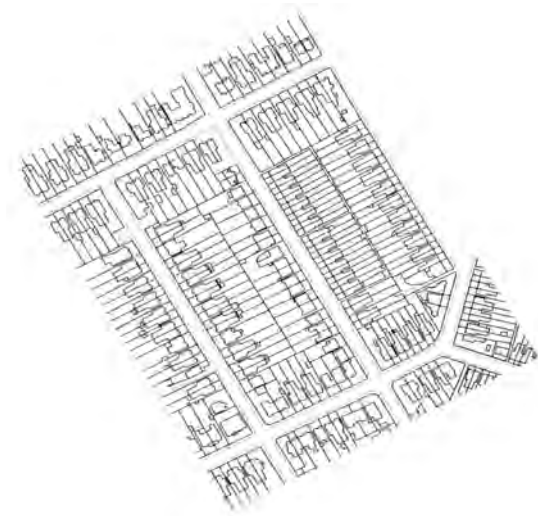


Fig (i) Streets of houses laid out along formal grid of connected streets. Note the rear gardens accessed by alleyways and very modest front gardens. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved New Forest District Council Licence no. 100026220 2010

Late nineteenth century Victorian/Edwardian/Arts and Crafts Suburban Speculative:

The first suburban development type of large, individual dwellings built in generous plots of land set out in a planned manner on a grid of generous roads often avenues with street trees. The buildings sit within their gardens, not specifically addressing the street, with pedestrian gate and often the later addition of vehicular access, manoeuvring space and twentieth century garage. Architecturally these houses exhibit similar characteristics to the "High Victorian" era with enriched detail and a symmetry of form both in the overall shape of the house and in the smaller parts of them. Bay windows in varying form are a distinctive feature with corner bays topped with a steeple roof being a common feature that is evident in the translation of the style into the urban terraced housing of this period where it is found at street corners for emphasis. Rooflines are broken by gables and have steep roof pitches, 60° being normal in the larger, more prosperous houses.

Forest Cottage:

A small, rural dwelling linked to a smallholding or commoning rights. These span a number of periods and vary in appearance according to the period in which they were built. Older surviving examples being of timber frame construction, two or three bays, single storey or single storey plus attic and with commonly thatch to the roof. Subsequent construction sees the introduction of cob walls with a timber roof construction and thatch, tile or slate roofs. The most recent guise and most evident today is the double fronted, central entrance door, two storey, brick built dwelling with shallow slate roof. Characteristically the dwelling will be surrounded by a collection of simply constructed outbuildings, basic timber frames with tin roofs. These buildings were once isolated smallholdings supporting traditional activity in the Forest but have since the mid twentieth century become subsumed into the expanding townscape of the settlement.

Twentieth Century - Mass Inter-war/Post-war Suburban:

Housing developed following the example of the "Garden City" movement, and evolving into the "traditional suburban housing" of the interwar and immediately post war years. Detached or semi detached dwellings, with ample front gardens, set back from but addressing the street rather than the earlier suburban type which was larger and set into its plot. In the municipal housing boundaries tend to be utilitarian, in the private housing there is more sense of enclosure and privacy to frontages.

Bungalow Estates:

Post war single-storey, mostly pyramidal roofed, dwellings. Consistency and repetition of scale and building materials with frequent use of "new materials" e.g. profiled concrete roof tiles, unifying large areas of development. Strong building line with generous front "gardens" set behind low front boundaries, often walls with shrub planting/ornamental hedge planting immediately behind the front boundary. Straight or semi-curved street patterns in a loose interconnected grid. Grass verge to front of pavement sometimes with ornamental street trees at regular intervals. Verges expanding into larger green areas at some road junctions.



Fig (ii) Connected streets follow a more curvilinear loose grid than earlier forms but nevertheless create perimeter blocks for both twentieth century 'mass suburban' and 'bungalow estates'. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved New Forest District Council Licence no. 100026220 2010

Post-Second World War flat developments:

The demand for seaside properties and the increase in retirement flat market precipitated this movement. Large blocks of flats of individual design filling plots with little or no private amenity space.

1960s/1970s Open Plan Estates:

The influence of architects like Corbusier and the introduction of new technologies resulted in the appearance of system built housing particularly seen in public housing developments of this period. Mixed developments of flats and houses (if the car is catered for, this is in garage courts). Buildings set in generous "parkland" landscape. Surrounded by public open space and parking areas that are both often underused.

1980s and 1990s Development:

Cul-de-sac developments with a hierarchy of residential roads encouraging low traffic speeds. Mass 'family' housing, often built by national or regional 'volume' house-building companies. In the 1990s pressure to maximise the use of development land increased resulting in smaller plots to building ratios. Development often mimicked historic styles, for example neo-classical. A variety of styles often found in one development.



Fig (iii) 1980s and 1990s cul-de-sac development created for a car orientated society. Note the much reduced rear garden spaces. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved New Forest District Council Licence no. 100026220 2010

Turn of the 20th/ 21st Century:

Increasing amounts of new residential development on 'infill' sites, with pressure to increase housing densities on previously developed sites within established residential areas. Flatted developments replace large family houses. Space around buildings reduced. Less off-road parking provided.

Appendix 2: Planning Policies supporting Local Distinctiveness

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets as one of its core planning principles that planning should:

“always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”. (Paragraph 17)

In paragraph 58 it states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments (amongst other things):

“

- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; ...
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.”

Planning policy in New Forest District (outside the National Park)

The Local Plan for New Forest District (outside the National Park) has two main documents: Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management.

Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy

The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy was adopted on 26th October 2009. The Core Strategy sets the overall planning strategy for the area up to 2026. An objective of the Core Strategy is:

“1. Special qualities, local distinctiveness and a high quality living environment

To provide for a high quality, safe and attractive living environment for communities in both urban and rural areas in a way that respects and safeguards the special qualities, character and local distinctiveness of the Plan Area and the adjoining New Forest National Park.”

Core Strategy policy CS2 addresses design quality and states:

“Policy CS2 Design quality

New development will be required to be well designed to respect the character, identity, and context of the area’s towns, villages and countryside.

All new development will be required to contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features, and shall not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, light pollution or other adverse impact on local character and amenities.

....”

Policy CS3 is concerned with protecting and enhancing our special environment and states:

“Policy CS3 Protecting and enhancing our special environment (Heritage and Nature Conservation)

.....

Working with local communities, features of local heritage value which contribute to local distinctiveness will be identified. New development proposals should maintain local distinctiveness and where possible enhance the character of identified features.

.....

The special characteristics of the Plan Area's natural and built environment will be protected and enhanced through:

- (a) applying relevant national and regional policies;
- (b) ensuring that new development protects and enhances local distinctiveness (see Policy CS2);
- (c) a review of Areas of Special Character and landscape features through subsequent Local Development Framework Documents;
- (d) using the development management process to positively bring about development which enhances local character and identity and which retains, protects and enhances features of biological or geological interest, and provides for the appropriate management of these features;

....."

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management Development Plan Document, adopted on 14th April 2014, sets out detailed policies and proposals to help achieve the Core Strategy policies and objectives.

Section 5 of the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management Document has site specific policies relating to Ringwood.

Further information regarding planning policies can be found at:
<http://www.nfdc.gov.uk/planningpolicy>

Appendix 3: Further information

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Planning Practice Guidance

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/design/>

'Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment' – Ringwood Townscape Assessment, HCC, 2010

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/planning-the-landscape/landscape-character/hampshire-integrated-character-assessment/townscape-assessments.htm>

New Forest District Council information:

<http://www.nfdc.gov.uk/planningpolicy>

- 'Ringwood: A Conservation Area Appraisal' (adopted SPG), NFDC, 2003
- 'New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment' (adopted SPG), NFDC, 2000
- 'Housing design, density and character' (adopted SPD), NFDC, 2006
- 'Shopfront design guide' (adopted SPG), NFDC, 2001