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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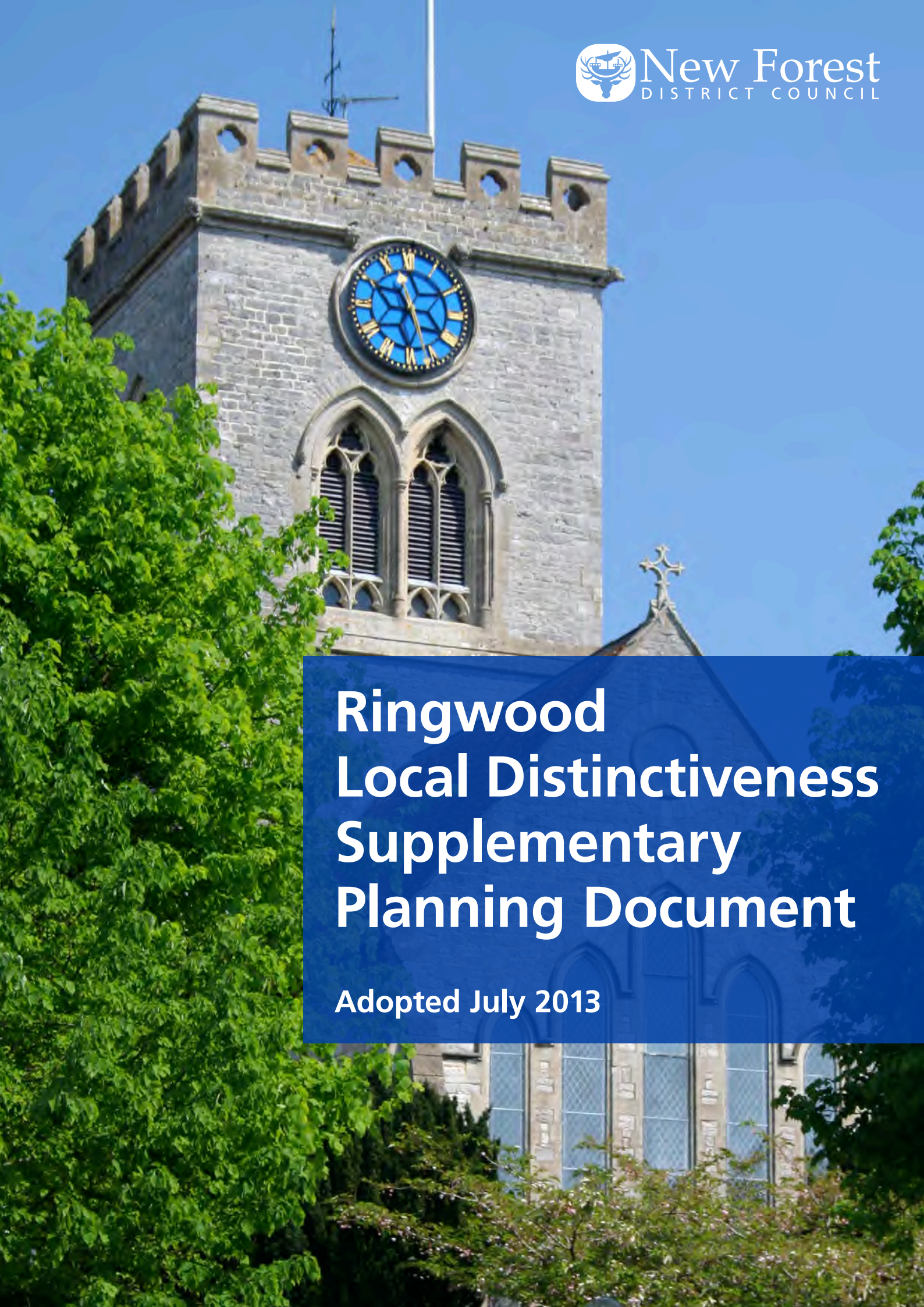

New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ringwood Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document

Adopted July 2013

Contents

Acknowledgements 4

Section 1
Brief introduction on the policy background, status, purpose and scope of this document 5

Section 2
Evolution and setting of the town: What makes Ringwood a special place 10

Section 3
General design advice applicable across the town as a whole 23

Section 4
Detailed anaylsis of each of the nine character areas 39

1 Town Centre 41
2 The Victorian/Edwardian Quarter 53
3 Gravel Lane 65
4 The Northern Approach 75
5 The Southern Approach 83
6 Crow and Hightown 93
7 Parsonage Barn and East Fields 101
8 North Ringwood 117
9 Poulner and the Rural Edge 131

Appendix 1
Schedule of the main townscape types 139

Appendix 2
Planning policies supporting Local Distinctiveness: Details of relevant national and local planning policies 145

Appendix 3
Further information 147

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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.

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.

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.

2.23 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.

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.

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.

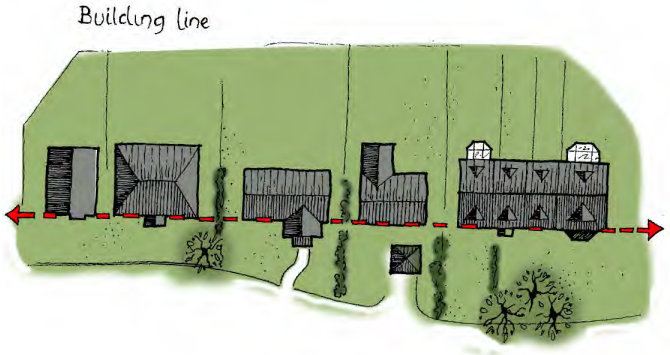
Character area map notations

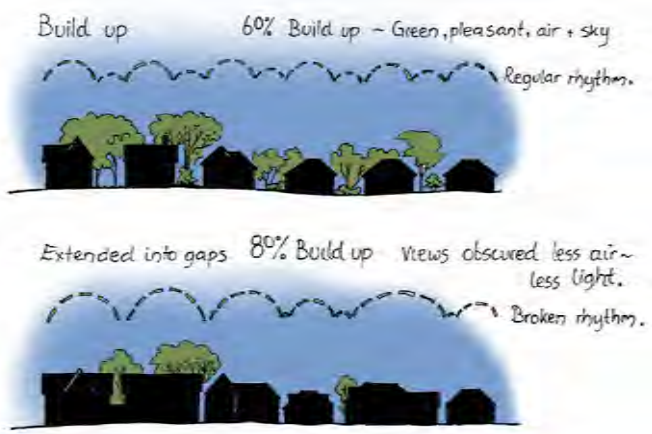
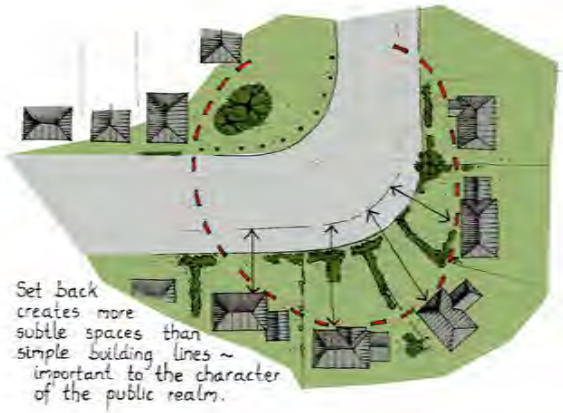
A **Planned cul-de-sac groups of houses.** These are not exclusively marked but where they are they represent the key characteristic to be found in such townscape types. Whilst individual architecture of buildings may not be particularly remarkable this makes the elements of character described in the 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.

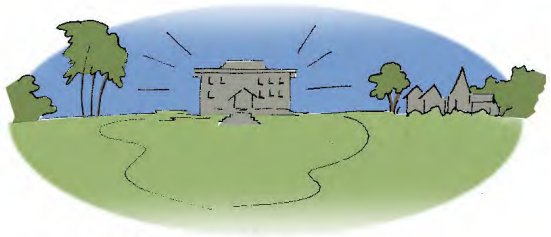
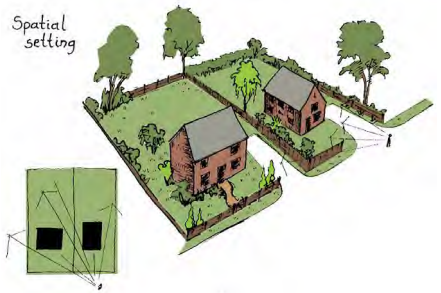
D **Important views, vistas.** There are many important views that need to be retained. Those of the greatest significance are marked on the plans. No proposed development should impact adversely or block important views. The sections above under the main headings Scale and Appearance will be particularly important in proposed alterations in the vicinity of these.

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
LAYOUT - Pattern and arrangement of street blocks and plots (urban structure and urban grain)		
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.	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.	
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.	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.	

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
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.	Development should seek to retain visual gaps between buildings, where they are needed to avoid: • Breaking the 'rhythm' of the street; or • The creation of an undue sense of containment, or loss of spatial structure of the street. 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.	
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.	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).	 Setting a building further back diminishes its contribution to the street.

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
Green setting for built development Green space around buildings or groups of buildings soften otherwise hard urban environments, and contribute to local character.	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. 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.	

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
Gardens 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. 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. NB Where these are specifically marked on the character area maps, such character should be retained.	Backland development which breaks into and destroys a peaceful oasis of rear garden land should be avoided. Where collective garden areas are specifically marked on the character area maps, their retention will be of particular importance. Where perimeter block development predominates, rear garden infill breaks the perimeter block structure and may reduce the security of internal areas. 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. 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. 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.	

Elements of character and identity	Guidance	Illustration
Spatial setting The proportion and layout of space around a built form in relation to its footprint and mass.	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.	 Spatial setting 
APPEARANCE		
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 a give an area or group of buildings a distinct local character.	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.	

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.

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'etre 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'.

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

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	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. Jubilee Gardens, the War memorial, Churchyard green space and trees each rely upon a neatness that lifts the status of these spaces.

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 In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
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	

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	

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	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. 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. Garden frontages to Salisbury Road dwellings and rear gardens at Hurst Road are important settings to the buildings.
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	

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.

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	

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 In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
Green setting for built development	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	

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.

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 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 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.

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.

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 In addition to general guidance given in Section 3
Trees	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.

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.

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