

# Residential Areas of Special Character (RASC) Appraisals – Romsey



Date: September 2017

Status: FINAL

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. METHODOLOGY.....	3
3. CONTEXT.....	6
4. USING THIS REPORT.....	10
5. Romsey RASC Character Appraisal .....	12
Romsey Character Area 1 .....	13
CHARACTER AREA: Romsey 1, Southampton Road .....	14
Romsey Character Areas 2A-B.....	17
CHARACTER AREA: Winchester Hill Area 2A.....	18
CHARACTER AREA: Romsey 2B, Winchester Road.....	21
APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY .....	24

## ANNEX 3

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this character area appraisal is to provide guidance to Council members, prospective planning applicants and development management staff to ensure that new development within the designated 'Residential Areas of Special Character' (RASCs) identified by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBCLP) is appropriate to its surroundings, helps to retain the character that gives each area its identity and accords with Policy E4 in the adopted TVBC Revised Local Plan Document 2011-2029 (TVBCLP).

#### 1.2 Relationship to the Revised Local Plan

This report has been prepared to support Policy E4 in the adopted Revised Local Plan, in this case in the context of the Romsey RASC;

#### **Policy E4: Residential Areas of Special Character**

Development<sup>1</sup> within residential areas of special character in Andover, Chilworth and Romsey identified on map 57 – 61 will be permitted provided that:

- a) The size of any proposed or original plot, when sub-divided, is not significantly smaller than those in the immediate vicinity; and
- b) The development's size, scale, layout, siting and detailed design are compatible with the character of within the Residential Area of Special Character.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Approach

The application of Policy E4 requires both the existing plot sizes within the RASC (referred to under criterion a) and the detailed characteristics of existing development (referred to under criterion b) to be taken into consideration, requiring a detailed character appraisal of the area.

To achieve this the approach has been to utilise the methodology described by Hampshire County Council (HCC) in the Hampshire County integrated character assessment <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/hampshire-integrated-character-assessment.htm> which defines and maps a range of 32 generic Townscape Character Types and goes on to identify geographically unique character areas. This has been refined to carry out a more detailed level of assessment, considering an extended range of features for analysis which include the following elements.

#### **Neighbourhood**

- Character Type: as defined in the Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment where appropriate
- Landform

---

<sup>1</sup> Including extensions, alterations, sub-divisions and redevelopment

## **ANNEX 3**

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

### **Streets/Squares**

- Form: summary of reason for definition (ie: branched access points off rural lane)
- Trees
- Any other uses, type of development
- Access, connectivity: including route structure
- Spatial enclosure i.e. ratio of width to height, dimensions across the street between the faces of buildings against building/eaves height
- Special features, features which are particularly significant or distinctive within a character area and have a bearing on the strength of character e.g unusual architectural details, a clear geometric layout , an avenue of large trees
- Nodes/Landmarks/Views
- Parking

### **Plots**

- Relation to public realm
- Plot Characteristics: size, scale
- Building lines
- Position of building within plot (siting)
- Plot boundaries: walls, fences, hedges
- Planting
- Parking

### **Buildings**

- Scale, storey height
- Façade, roof form
- Materials: walls, roofs

### **Other Features**

## **2.2 Data Review**

Data used in the analysis included Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and historic maps

## ANNEX 3

### 2.3 Desktop analysis

Desktop analysis was principally undertaken using OS Master Map base maps, aerial photographs, historic maps and information on development density provided by TVBC.

Consideration was given to higher level attributes and characteristics including :

- Generic character type
- Position relative to wider topography
- Plot size and density
- General context and different land uses
- Relationship to route hierarchy and block pattern , route hierarchy was classified as;
  - arterial route
  - main road
  - side road
  - lane
  - culs-de-sac
  - other (e.g. gated estate)
- Relationship to main settlement
- Street place types
- Plot types
- Period of origin

The result of the desktop analysis enabled an initial breakdown of the wider RASC areas into smaller character areas and the partial completion of a tabular pro forma for each area summarising the higher level defining characteristics.

### 2.4 Field survey

The field survey involved a detailed appraisal of each draft character area on foot as perceived from the public realm. Photographs were taken to illustrate the character areas and accompany the written descriptions the viewpoints are marked for each character area with an arrow and the reference points numbered as follows;

For example 1A2 where 1 represents the study area (where relevant), A refers to the individual character area, 2 refers to the number of the photograph.

Those attributes which could not be covered through the desk top analysis were completed including (where relevant);

- Vegetation

## **ANNEX 3**

- Frontage features and boundaries
- Surface materials
- Views and landmarks
- Parking
- Building heights
- Facades
- Building materials
- Architectural details
- Roof form
- Perceptual aspects (overall impression as viewed from the public realm)

Judgements were also made about the strength of character based on the range of features that define an area and the extent and consistency with which they were represented on the ground.

### **2.5 Characterisation and guidance**

Guidance principles for each of the character areas were produced, identifying those key features to be retained, managed or enhanced.

## **3. CONTEXT**

### **3.1 The appraisal area**

The character areas covered by this appraisal work are shown in Figure 1 - Romsey RASC Study Areas Context Map

Romsey RASC Study Areas Context Map (p7).

This document is specific for the two RASC areas in Romsey, near Southampton. The areas are shown at a larger scale on Figure 2 - Romsey RASC Study Areas (p12). The second study area has been subdivided into two Character areas with an appraisal for each one with a summary description including a road name.

Area 1 – Character Area 1 (p13)

Area 2 – Character Areas 2A – 2B (p17)

# ANNEX 3

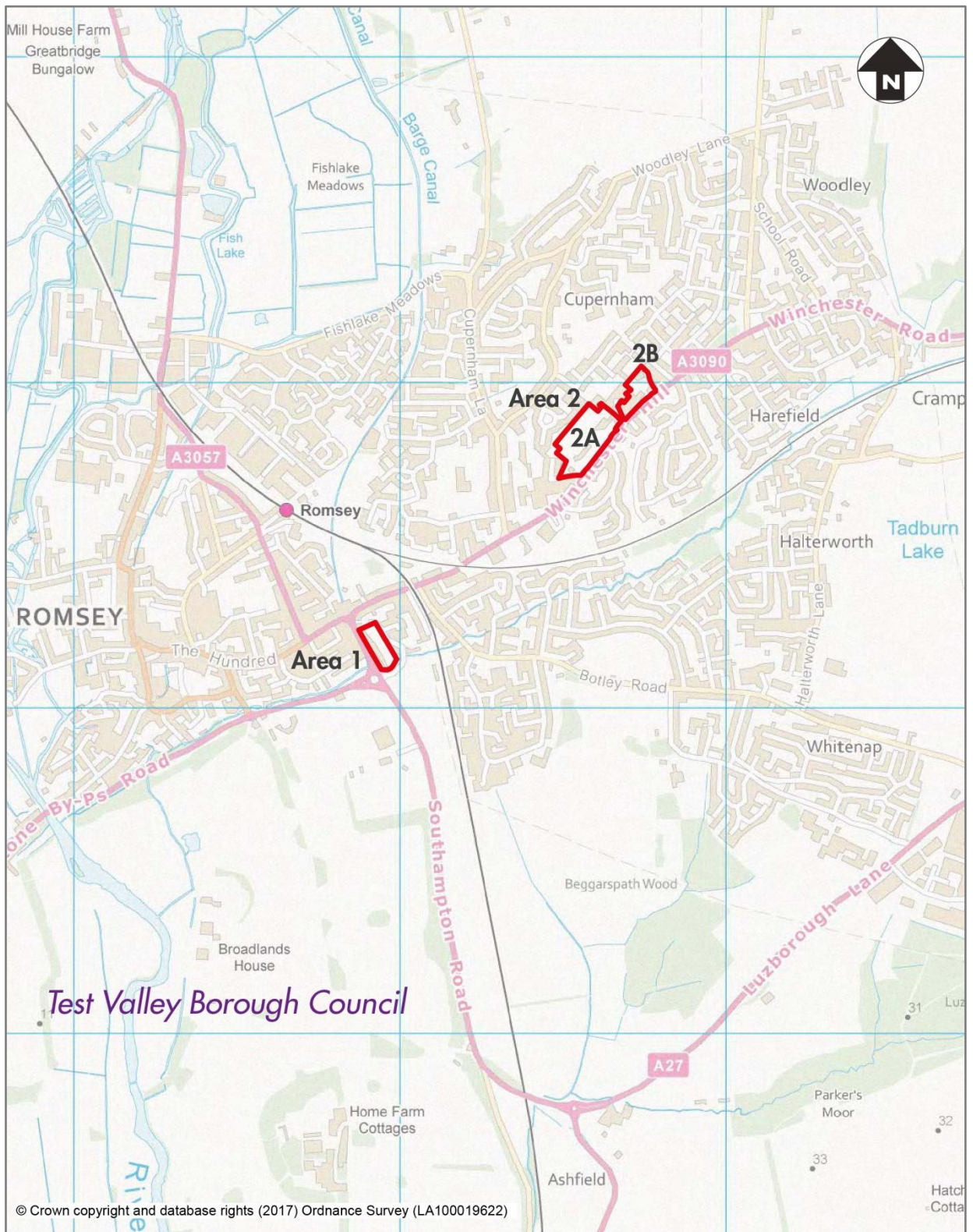


Figure 1 - Romsey RASC Study Areas Context Map

### 3.2 Development history

The evolution of development in the areas studied can be traced through the historic OS maps and it is usually also reflected in the form of development as it relates to the route hierarchy of an area.

### 3.3 Character types and areas

The Romsey RASC areas are included in Hampshire County Council's integrated character assessment (HCC/ica). Both areas 1 and 2 of this document are within the generic townscape type; 'Residential Post 1945 – Present (Houses, bungalows and up to 3 storey flats)'.

The HCC/ica also identifies another level of assessment beneath their 'townscape character types'. These are called 'townscape character areas'. These are determined through analysis of a much wider set of townscape criterion than the townscape character types. These are different from and generally cast at a larger scale from the character areas identified within this report. The summary and key characteristics for the townscape character areas for Romsey in the HCC/ica are set out below. This report's character area 1 (Southampton Road) is contained within **ROM06d** of the HCC/ica and this report's character area 2 (Winchester Hill) is contained within **ROM08a**. Although this provides useful background context, because the HCC character areas are designated at a larger scale, some of the description may not tally with this reports areas.

#### **HCC integrated character assessment: ROM06 Inner suburbs**

##### Character Summary

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

##### Key Characteristics

##### Sub-area of ROM06d The Harrage environs

- Predominantly semi-detached 1970s houses of distinct character at medium grain, built around an earlier (Grade II listed) group of early-nineteenth-century houses of finer grain character. This sub-area also includes other later small infill developments of higher density
- Topography is low lying and flat
- Houses to The Harrage are semi-detached and set in open gardens in small groups. Houses to Knatchbull Close are set in short terraces around small greens
- Building lines are consistent and help define green amenity areas
- Red brick, hanging artificial slates, clay tile
- Two-storey houses



- Residential throughout; private family dwelling houses
- Good survival of trees and maturing planted landscape of twentieth-century developments
- High-quality public realm with wide roads, verges, open gardens to roadside, green spaces, some hedges and tree-lined spaces
- Good footpath access and connectivity throughout, vehicles are restricted travelling east–west

**HCC integrated character assessment: ROM08 Inner suburbs****Character Summary**

This character area is the largest area within the Romsey settlement and can be broadly described as predominantly residential development east of the Salisbury–Southampton railway line, with open countryside to its eastern, northern and southern boundaries. Very small areas of older (pre-war) development; hamlets and small groups of rural housing and early speculative development of the late-nineteenth/early twentieth century have been engulfed in large-scale urban extension in primarily three phases; immediate-post-war, the 1970s and the very-late twentieth- and early-twenty-first century. Older inter-war residential areas have retained some of their integrity but there has been much piecemeal infill on a small and medium scale which has changed their character over time. The degree of retention of natural habitats, trees and historic boundaries varies throughout, and is reflected in the sub-areas identified. The fourteen sub-areas also reflect changes in scale, grain and layout and the degree of openness in each given area.

**Key Characteristics****Sub-area of ROM08a. Winchester Hill and Cupernham Lane**

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

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

## 4. USING THIS REPORT

### 4.1 Guidance

Section 5 sets out the detailed appraisals for the RASC areas for Romsey shown in Figure 2.

For each of the character areas a series of guidance principles have been produced based on the data from the site surveys. The guidance principles are intended to assist development management staff and prospective planning applicants ensure that new development serves to retain the character that gives each area its identity. With reference to criterion a) of the **TVBCRLP policy E4** concerning Residential Areas of Special Character the ‘immediate vicinity’ referred to should be taken to include those plots within each individual character area. When proposals for subdivision of plots are made for example, the effect on all the other plots within the same character area should therefore be given particular consideration. The document does not of course obviate the need to treat each development proposal on its own merit.

In general terms the Romsey Residential Areas of Special Character owe much of their character to low density housing with substantial properties set back from the road, often, especially in areas 2a and 2b behind tall hedges in well treed plots. This type of development of low density dwellings makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Policy E4 does not seek to restrict development however it seeks to retain the distinctive local character that makes the special character of Romsey.

In this context proposals for higher density development have to be considered carefully to ensure that cumulative effects associated with an increase in domestic activity and vehicle movements will not be of a type of development that would be uncharacteristic of the area as this could result in an increase in noise, disturbance and loss of amenity and character. Further intensification of development would also apply pressure to those parts of the area served by roads without footways where road improvements or footway provision would result in the loss of grass verges and the further erosion of local character.

### 4.2 Description tables

These tables identify the characteristics of each character area for a range of key criteria from neighbourhood level down to the design of buildings.

## **ANNEX 3**

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

The purpose of the table is to provide a design code for the makeup of each character area which can be used to ensure that new development retains the character that gives each area its identity, in particular the table should be used to obtain the more detailed information required to implement the guidance principles identified.

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

## 5. Romsey RASC Character Appraisal

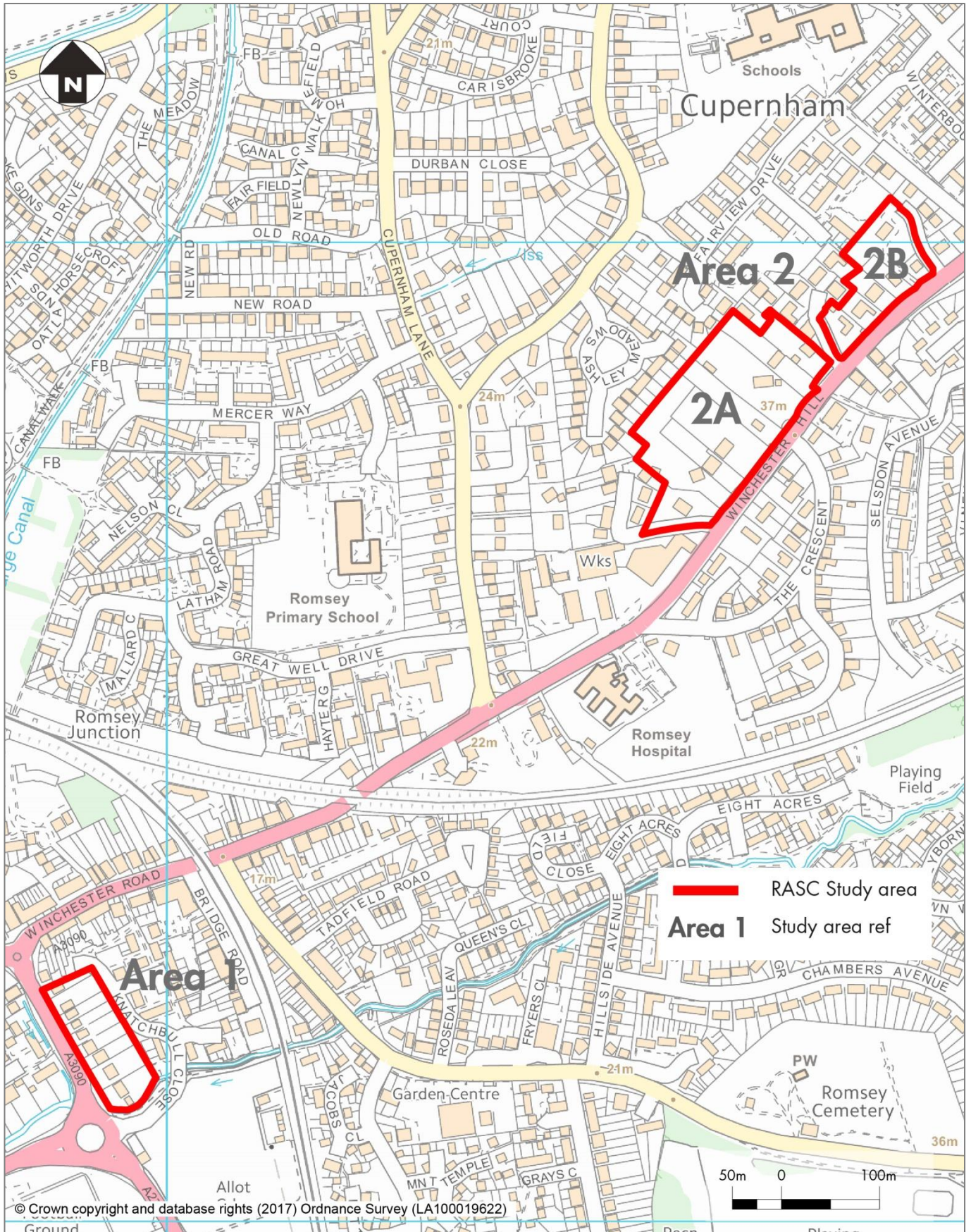


Figure 2 - Romsey RASC Study Areas

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

## Romsey Character Area 1

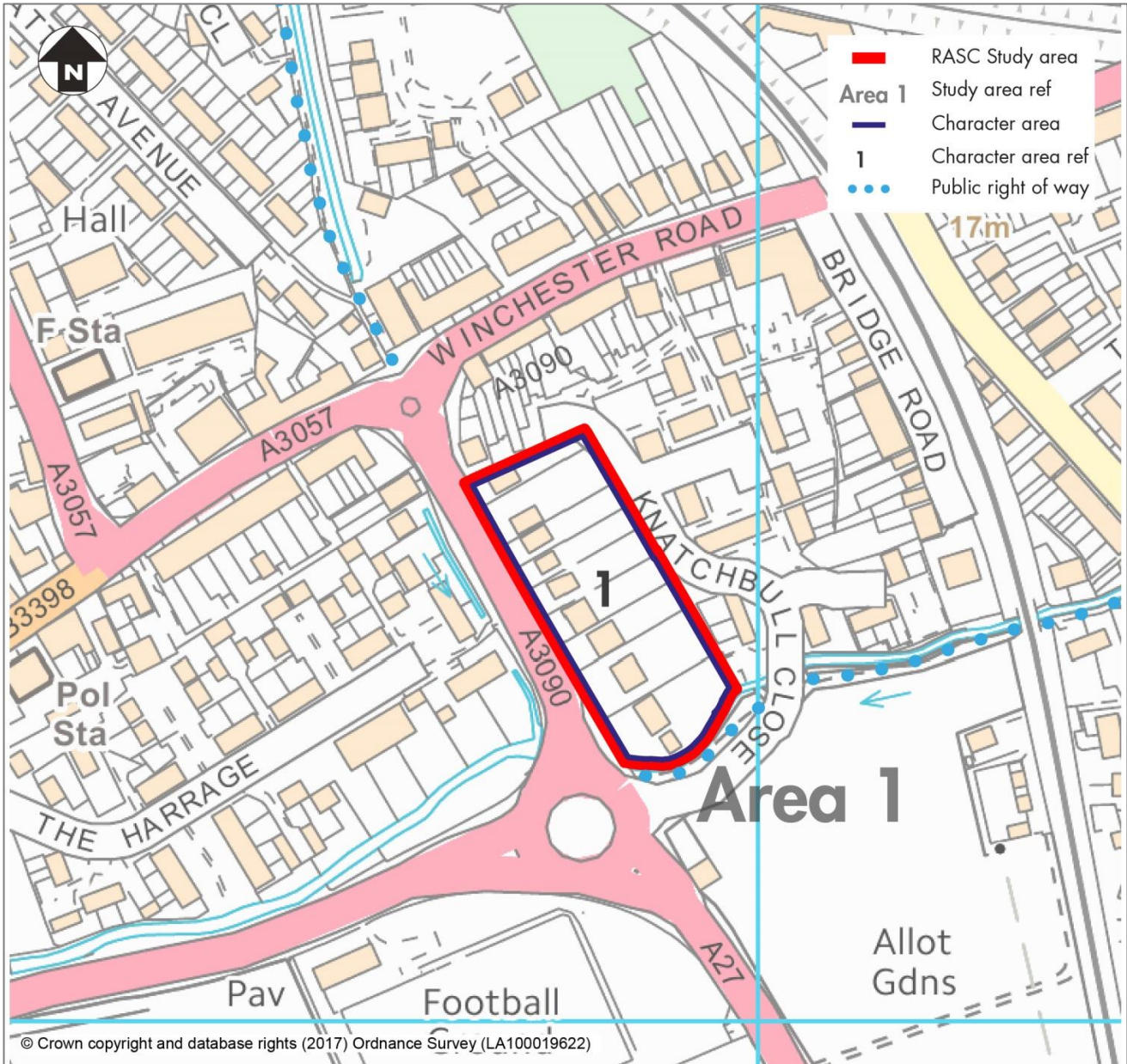


Figure 3 - Romsey Area 1 – Southampton Road

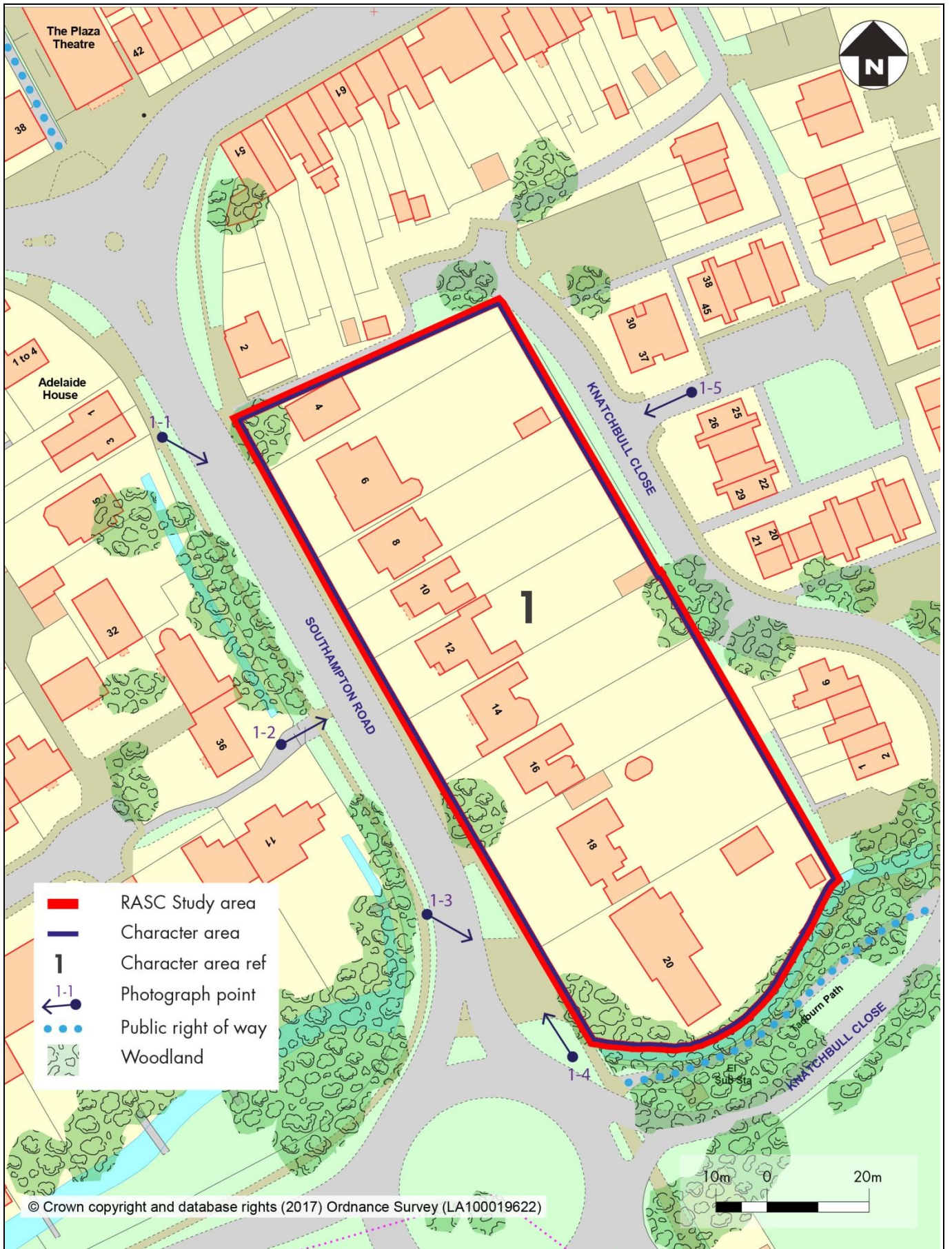
## ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

CHARACTER AREA: Romsey 1, Southampton Road	
NEIGHBOURHOOD	
Character Type	Residential Post 1945 – Present (Houses and bungalows) Condition: Good
Landform	Flat
STREETS/SQUARES	
Form	Individual gated entrance from main road
Trees	Isolated mature oaks
Non-residential uses, type of development	None
Access, connectivity	Close to Romsey town centre and well connected, with public access around most of the area.
Spatial enclosure	>5:1 but sense of enclosure mostly increased by mature trees either side of Southampton Road to 4:1
Special features	Southern edge forms part of the clear urban edge, with allotments adjoining to the south
Nodes/Landmarks/Views	Roundabout at southern end of road is a significant node on the highway network; open views to south
Parking	No
PLOTS	
Relation to public realm	Mostly clear views of houses, either through railings or over hedges (of varying heights)
Plot characteristics	Average plot size 0.09ha
Building lines	Regular, falling back slightly towards southern end
Position of building within plot, siting	Moderate to deep setbacks, front on, dwellings occupying most of the plot width
Plot boundaries	Evergreen and beech hedges with occasional trees form main frontage, interspersed with occasional plots with railings.
Planting	Planting in most front gardens and prominent tree line on opposite side of road.
Parking	Within front part of plots
BUILDINGS	
Period/type	Immediately pre-war to present
Storey height, scale	2-2.5 floors
Façade/roof form	Regular facades, dormers/gables/hipped/half hipped
Facing materials	Brick walls, occasional black and white timbered and rendered upper stories or gable highlights; tiled roofs
OTHER FEATURES	
<p><b>Strength of character: moderate.</b> A strong building line and relatively uniform frontage boundary and a degree of variety (all house types are different) that becomes an element of character in itself. The contrast with the character outside the area to the western side of the Southampton Road does not diminish the strength of character of this area because the two metre high brick wall and abundant trees along this side tend to obscure the houses along the west side, giving rise to a more neutral backdrop to the character of the eastern side.</p>	
GUIDANCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the hedge/hedge and wall/ railings frontage treatment</li> <li>• Retain oaks and ensure sufficient garden land is retained to enable large trees to reach maturity</li> </ul>	

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



CHARACTER AREA MAP: 1

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



Figure 1 -1 View looking south-east from beyond the north-west corner



Figure 1-2 Looking north-east, focussed on the distinctive mock-Tudor frontage of number 12



Figure 1 -3 Frontages of the southern corner



Figure 1 -4 View north-west from southern end of Southampton Road



Figure 1 -5 Looking west at plot backs from Knatchbull Close

## PHOTOGRAPHS



# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

## Romsey Character Areas 2A-B

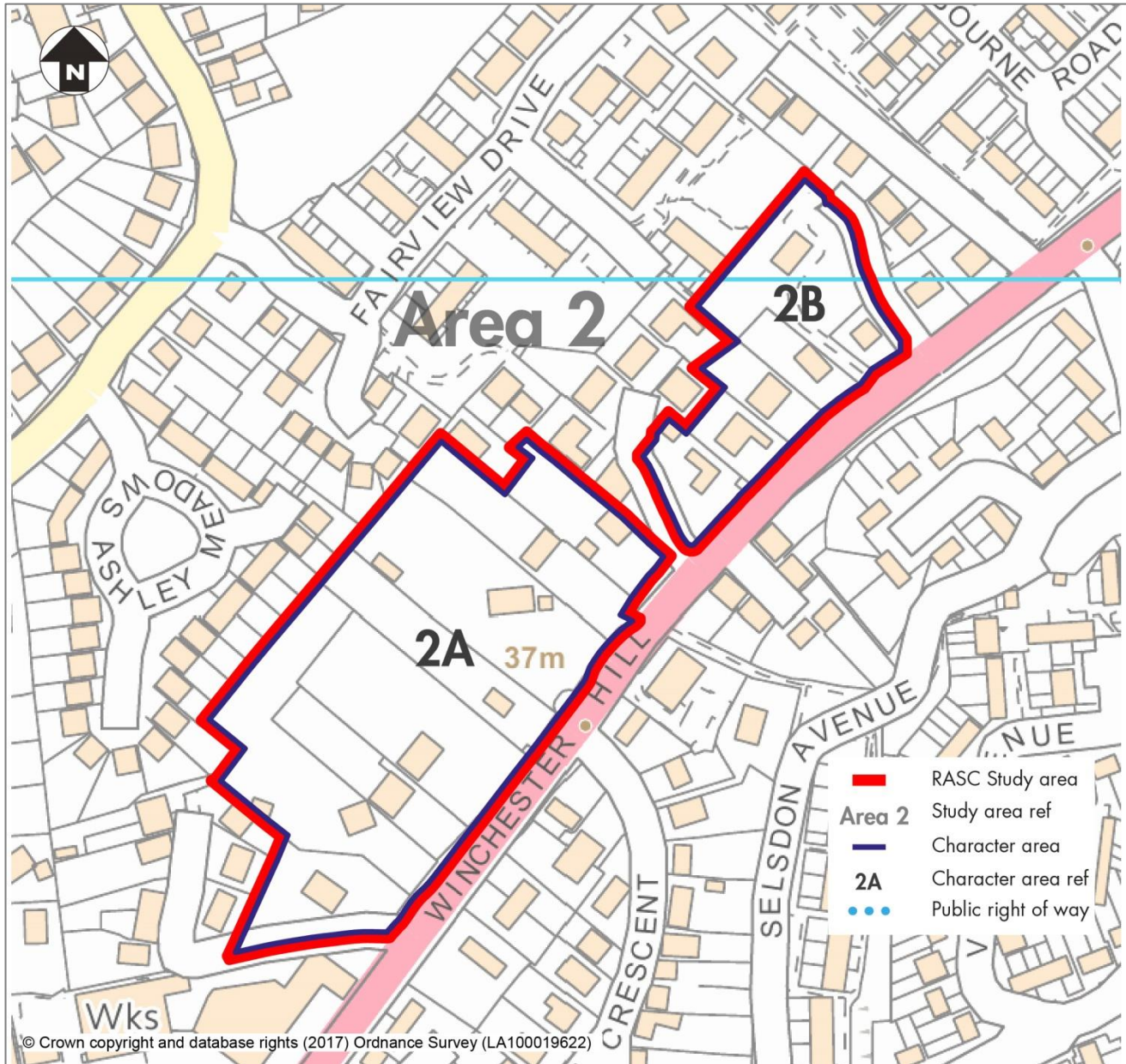


Figure 4 - Romsey Area 2

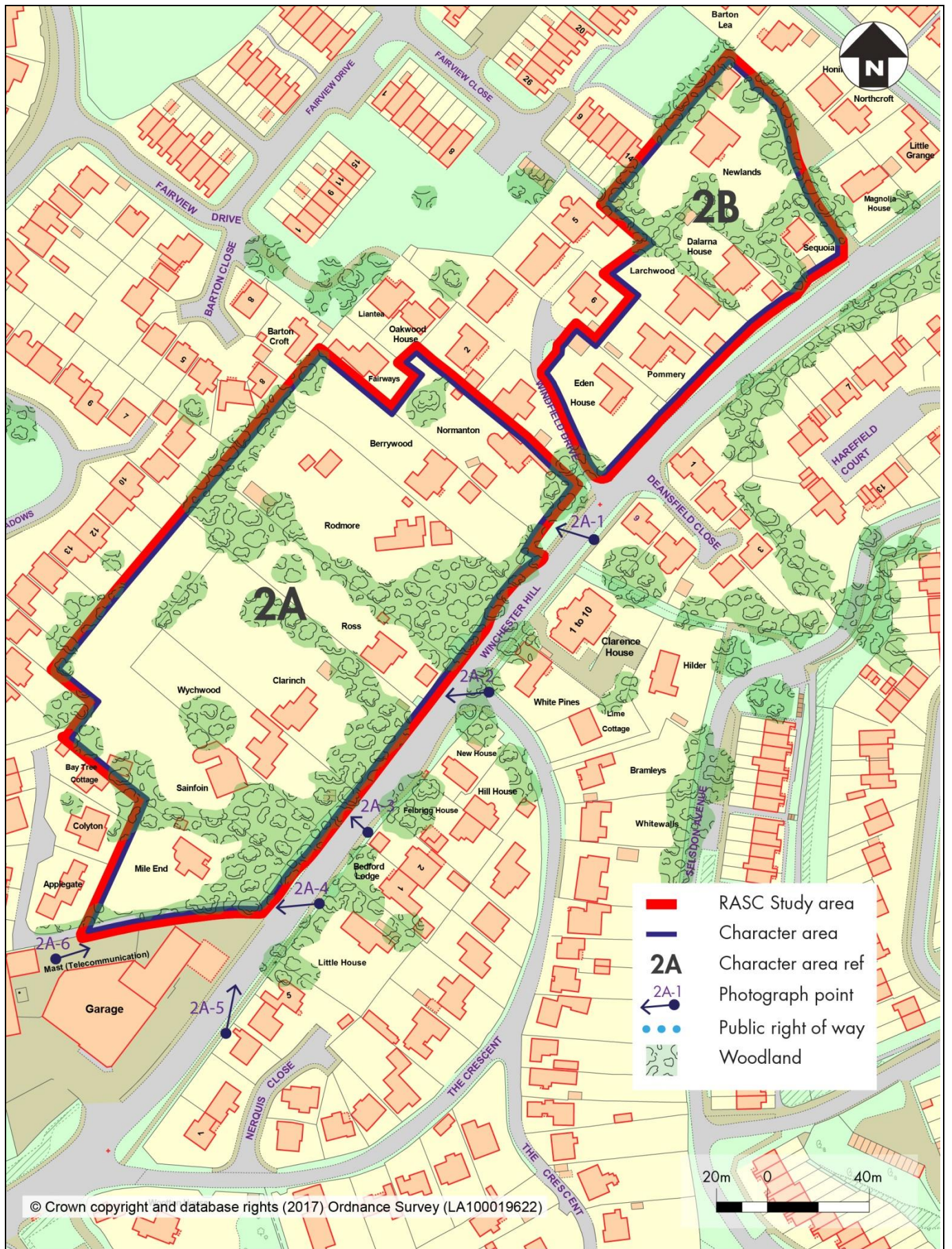
## ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

<b>CHARACTER AREA: Winchester Hill Area 2A</b>	
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD</b>	
<b>Character Type</b>	Type ( HCC ) 8a Residential Post 1945-Present (although historic OS maps show most development occurred between 1933 and 1946) Condition: Good
<b>Landform</b>	On gently sloping ground
<b>STREETS/SQUARES</b>	
<b>Form</b>	Individual gated entrances from main road
<b>Trees</b>	Well treed, all within plots
<b>Non-residential uses, type of development</b>	None
<b>Access, connectivity</b>	Direct connection to town centre, footways and grass verges on both sides of main road
<b>Spatial enclosure</b>	>5:1
<b>Special features</b>	No
<b>Nodes/Landmarks/Views</b>	No
<b>Parking</b>	No
<b>PLOTS</b>	
<b>Relation to public realm</b>	Houses mostly obscured from view, with occasional short glimpses through gates
<b>Plot characteristics</b>	Deep, large plots > 3:1 depth to width , average plot size 0.3 ha
<b>Building lines</b>	Generally irregular
<b>Position of building within plot, siting</b>	Deep setbacks, some buildings skewed in relation to road
<b>Plot boundaries</b>	Evergreen hedge, almost exclusively laurel ( <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> )
<b>Planting</b>	Heavily planted with mixed ornamentals with some mature native trees and conifers
<b>Parking</b>	Within plots
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	
<b>Period/type</b>	Mainly interwar with later additions
<b>Storey height, scale</b>	1.5-2.5 floors
<b>Façade/roof form</b>	Irregular facades, dormers/gables/hipped/half hipped
<b>Facing materials</b>	Brick walls, render, tiled roofs
<b>OTHER FEATURES</b>	
<p><b>Strength of character: Strong to moderate</b>, based on a very strong soft landscape treatment (high hedges and mature trees) to boundaries and uniformly large plots.</p>	
<b>GUIDANCE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the hedge frontage treatment, using Laurel only</li> <li>• Retain tree cover and ensure sufficient garden land is retained to enable large trees to reach maturity</li> <li>• Avoid further vehicular access points through front boundary hedges</li> <li>• Avoid development which would prevent the appreciation of separation between buildings as viewed from the public realm</li> </ul>	

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



© Crown copyright and database rights (2017) Ordnance Survey (LA100019622)

CHARACTER AREA MAP: 2A

# ANNEX 3

## Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



Figure 2A-1 Looking north-west from beyond the north-east corner of the character area.



Figure 2A-2 Looking west from junction with 'The Crescent'.



Figure 2A-3 View towards the north-west looking towards the entrance to 'Wychwood'.



Figure 2A-4 View looking west towards the south-east corner of character area.



Figure 2A-5 The south-east corner of the character area viewed from the south.



Figure 2A-6 Looking east along the pedestrian cut running along the far southern edge of the character area.

### PHOTOGRAPHS

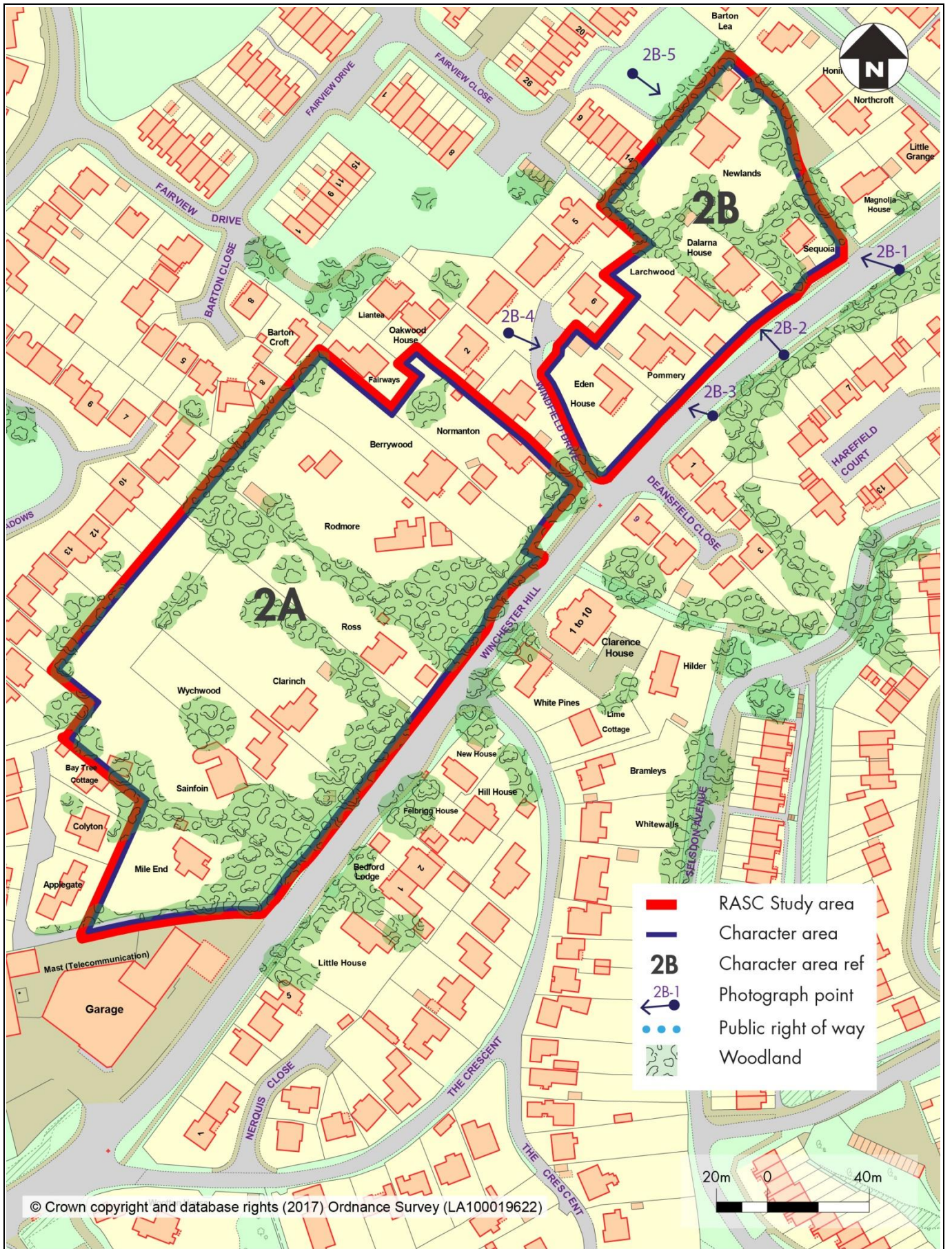
## ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey

CHARACTER AREA: Romsey 2B, Winchester Road	
NEIGHBOURHOOD	
Character Type	Type (HCC) 8a Residential Post 1945-Present (although historic OS maps show most development occurred between 1933 and 1946) Condition: Good
Landform	Gently sloping
STREETS/SQUARES	
Form	Individual, mainly gated entrances from main road
Trees	Mainly in plots
Non-residential uses	None
Access, connectivity	Direct connection to town centre
Spatial enclosure	>5:1
Special features	No
Nodes/Landmarks/Views	No
Parking	No
PLOTS	
Relation to public realm	Glimpsed through gates/vegetation
Plot characteristics	Average plot size 0.1ha, shape variable.
Building lines	No
Position of building within plot	Moderate setbacks, facing main road.
Plot boundaries	Evergreen hedges (about half of which are laurel, <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> ) with trees
Planting	Mixed ornamental planting with some mature native trees and conifers. Significant line of horse chestnut along north east boundary
Parking	Within plots
BUILDINGS	
Period/type	Mainly inter war with some later additions
Storey height	1,1.5-2 floors
Façade/roof form	Irregular facades, dormers/gables/hipped/half hipped
Facing materials	Brick walls/render Tiled and slate roofs
OTHER FEATURES	
<p><b>Strength of character: Moderate</b>, with a strong frontage treatment, similar in character to that of area 2A, but with fewer trees. Very well treed southern side of road provides a relatively neutral backdrop to the character of this area.</p>	
GUIDANCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the hedge frontage treatment</li> <li>• Retain tree cover and ensure sufficient garden land is retained to enable large trees to reach maturity</li> <li>• Avoid further vehicular access points through front boundary hedges</li> <li>• Avoid development which would prevent the appreciation of separation between buildings as viewed from the public realm</li> </ul>	

# ANNEX 3

Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



CHARACTER AREA MAP: 2B

# ANNEX 3

## Test Valley RASC Character Appraisals - Romsey



Figure 2B -1 Looking west at eastern corner from Winchester Hill



Figure 2B -2 Looking north-west towards 'Larchwood' and 'Darlane House'



Figure 2B -3 View west towards southern end of area



Figure 2B -4 View looking east to back of southern end



Figure 2B -5 Looking east at plot backs of northern end

### PHOTOGRAPHS

**APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY**

<b>Arterial route</b>	high-capacity road with many branch roads.
<b>Backland development</b>	development located behind existing buildings, usually on the ends of long back gardens.
<b>Bay window</b>	a window that projects out from the façade of a building forming a space in the interior.
<b>Building line</b>	the line created by the front edge of a series of adjacent buildings. Where there is public realm to the rear as well as the front of plots, the character area description will always refer to the building line along the frontage.
<b>Building setback</b>	the distance between the front edge of a building and the front boundary of its plot.
<b>Context</b>	the setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses as well as landscape and existing buildings.
<b>Cul-de-sac</b>	street with a single point providing both entrance and exit.
<b>Dormer window</b>	a window providing light to a roof space set within a structure with walls and a roof.
<b>Gable end</b>	the face of a building with a simple double or single pitched roof resulting in a triangular shape to the top of the wall.
<b>Hipped roof</b>	a roof in which the faces are pitched on all sides of the building from a common eaves line.
<b>Landmark</b>	A building or structure that stands out from its background by virtue of height, position, size or some other aspect of its design.
<b>Node</b>	a focal point or meeting place, often located at the intersection of key routes.
<b>On plot</b>	within the property boundary, generally used with reference to parking spaces.
<b>Public realm</b>	the areas of a settlement for the general use of the public such as streets, squares and parks, most frequently in the ownership and control of a public body.
<b>Spatial enclosure</b>	the clear and continuous definition of a street space or square by buildings or planting. Enclosure is principally determined by the relationship between the height (A) of adjacent buildings and the distance (B) between them. It is the three dimensional mass of the buildings together, to a lesser extent, with the trees visible from the public realm, that determine the enclosure of the street. The more 'urban' the character of an area, the more highly enclosed it usually is and the more highly defined the built 'edge' is. Whilst this pattern has evolved in response to increased land values towards the middle of urban centres, it has also led to various beneficial consequences. In this context one relevant effect is that the degree of enclosure provides an unconscious signal to visitors to the area about the character of the street in relation to its proximity to an urban centre. This is crucial to support the legibility of an area.



## ANNEX 3

Degree of enclosure is also relevant here as a general determinant of the character of a particular street or section of street. In a street of relatively uniform degree of enclosure, a development which changes this uniformity can be resisted on the grounds that it would inappropriately weaken the overall strength of character or that it would set a precedent, which over time would change the legibility and perception of the where the street stands in the hierarchy of streets.



$$\text{Ratio of street enclosure} = \frac{B}{A}$$

*This diagram illustrates how street enclosure (ratio of street width to building height) is measured. Building height is also described in the following ways (1) overall height in metres (2) height to eaves (3) height in relation to neighbours or height in storeys.*

### **Topography**

the three dimensional surface features of the ground surface, also referred to as land-form; also a description or representation of those features.

### **Route structure**

the hierarchy of route types which define a movement network.

Document prepared for TVBC by Eastleigh Borough Council;

Julian Davies & Mark Ellison (urban design) and Andrew Barnet (graphic design and maps)

End of document