

Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment

Volume 3: Appendices

Prepared for:

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**TOWNSCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER
ASSESSMENT OF HAVANT BOROUGH**

Appendix A: Methodology

TOWNSCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT OF HAVANT BOROUGH

CHARACTERISATION METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In November 2005, Hampshire County Council, in partnership with Havant Borough Council, the then Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and English Heritage, appointed Kirkham Landscape Planning Consultants (KLPC), in partnership with Wessex Archaeology and Countryside to undertake an integrated townscape, landscape and seascape character assessment for the borough of Havant. The study is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the form and evolution, past, present and future, of the Havant Borough landscape, townscape and seascape and has been used in determining future planning policy, managing both the urban and rural environments and in guiding planning decisions on the future of the strategic gaps.

Havant Borough is a relatively small area but contains a great and distinct variety of landscape, townscape and seascape patterns, created as a result of its location between the South Downs and the coast, the coastal alignment, the proximity of major urban areas and its own organic growth. The Borough has therefore a complex and intimate relationship between its urban, rural and seascapes, which form its local distinctiveness.

The Brief set out the importance of recognising the evolutionary nature of change to the landscape and in understanding the character of an area and the importance of understanding past, present and future forces of change and how they have created the landscapes of today, and will determine the landscapes of the future.

Existing studies have provided invaluable information on the Borough's urban and rural landscapes. This information has been combined with both broader and more in depth studies of urban, rural and seascapes and their historical development up to the present time.

The prime objectives of the study are to achieve the following:

- A methodology which will enable the separate methodologies promoted by the Countryside Agency and English Heritage to be combined in an effective way
- An understanding of the dynamic nature of Havant's landscapes, townscapes and seascapes
- Results that are relevant to both the planning process and future land management
- The means to using characterisation as a positive and creative tool.

This Appendix provides information on the method of approach taken to characterisation. Details of the results and report format are set out in Section 1 of

the Main Report. Section 1 also sets out how the local community has been involved in the characterisation process and the approach taken to identify strategies and guidelines for each landscape character area.

Project Team

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Study boundary

The primary area of study is Havant Borough. However, the administrative boundaries to the Borough do not reflect the extent of character types and areas and therefore the study was extended into adjacent areas to identify the wider context of the Borough's landscape, through a desk-top analysis of existing studies, confirmed in the field based on a visual assessment.

Study context

A review of the Hampshire county level landscape character assessment and those carried out in adjacent authorities was carried out. The Havant Borough assessment was also set in the context of the Map of England, Natural Areas, National Landscape Types, the adjoining landscape character assessments, and the Hampshire historic landscape character assessment. A review of local plan policy in the borough and in adjacent areas and a literature review to identify local features of social and cultural significance were also undertaken.

Integration with the Hampshire Landscape Sensitivity methodology

The spread of data collection and analysis was also determined by the method of assessment under development for landscape sensitivity by Hampshire County Council¹. The character assessment was therefore presented under six themes: physical landscape features (geology, topography and landform, landcover); bio-diversity; historic development; built form; experiential (tranquillity, access and recreation, visual perceptions); and visibility (views, landmarks and openness/enclosure).

¹ Developing the Approach to Strategic Landscape Sensitivity February 2006. Hampshire County Council

Data collection and surveys

For Theme 1: Physical landscape, the data collected and assessed included geology, soils, topography, vegetation patterns, hydrology and water catchment areas, existing Havant landscape character assessment, using GIS data, OS mapping and aerial photographs and other sources. Surveys were used to confirm landform features, the form and character of waterways, and vegetation patterns.

For Theme 2: Biodiversity, the data collected and assessed included Phase 1 Habitat Survey; Ancient Woodland Inventory; Aerial photography – present and historical; Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation; Statutory nature conservation designations; Biodiversity Action Plan; and Environmental Stewardship targeting statements. No field surveys were undertaken.

For Theme 3: Historic development, data collected and assessed included:

- Hampshire Historic Landscape Assessment (1999)
- Hampshire Extensive Urban Survey: Havant (2003)
- Hampshire Village Survey (1994)
- Hampshire Sites and Monuments Record
- Printed and manuscript maps
- Historic records; published and unpublished documentary sources
- Aerial photographs
- Local Record Offices and Local Studies Libraries.

Field surveys were used to confirm the current status of the historic landscape, seascape and townscape patterns and the significance of the historic built form.

For Theme 4: Built environment, the above data sources were also used, together with settlement pattern and urban surveys informed by previous studies undertaken for Havant Borough (see bibliography). Detailed field surveys of the form and character of the built form were undertaken from a historic, landscape and architectural perspective.

For Theme 5: Experiential, the data included and assessed recreational provision, public rights of way, and sites managed for public access. The data on tranquillity available at the time from the CPRE (November 2005 to June 2006) was found to be too general for use at this level of detail. (Similarly information from Defra on 'ruralness'). Detailed field surveys were used to identify local levels of tranquillity, local noise sources and locally intrusive urban elements. They also identified evidence of informal public access and the visual qualities of the landscape, townscape and seascape (prominent colours, intrusive or scenic elements).

For Theme 6: Visibility, there was no readily available data that could be universally applied for all three character groups. For example woodland data used by Hampshire County Council to measure levels of enclosure in rural areas were not considered so useful in urban areas where enclosure is often derived from the built form or hedgerow features. Field surveys were therefore undertaken to identify

enclosing elements, views out from the Borough and into the Borough from the surrounding areas, and local landmarks.

For all Themes: A full photographic survey was undertaken over the full project year and photographic folders compiled for each landscape character area.

Field surveys were also used to inform and refine the provisional boundaries to historic landscape character areas, landscape character types and character areas; and also to inform the inter-relationship on the ground between the landscape, townscape and seascape of Havant and that of the adjoining areas and thus determine the wider landscape context

Character assessment

The assessment of landscape, townscape and seascape utilised the same method of approach for all these areas and thereby provides a seamless and compatible analysis between the types of characterisation. Within this the elements of each theme were assessed as set out below or as set out in the relevant appendices. There was an emphasis on the present-day landscape, informed by time depth analysis, with the work based on areas, not specific sites. All aspects of the landscape, no matter how modern, were treated as part of the landscape character.

The approach to townscape analysis moved away from an urban design based approach to townscape assessment as this had already been thoroughly covered in Roger Evans Associates 'Public Realm Design Framework for Havant Borough Council' March 2005. Inspired by English Heritage 'change and creation' programme, the townscape characterisation defined areas of change and expansion to the built environment from map regression and aerial photography. Fieldwork was used to supplement this study with a visual interpretation of the type, scale and grouping of the built heritage across the study area. This identified the urban character of each of the episodes of growth.

The historic landscape characterisation and assessment of the built form formed the basis of the townscape characterisation to which was added the landscape, visual, experiential and ecological characteristics of the urban form. This reflects our belief that these aspects are equally important to the urban environment.

A study of topography, similar to that undertaken for the EH pilot study of *England's Historic Seascape*, was used to identify episodes of sea level changes since the prehistoric period and the impact upon the coastal zone. Human interaction with the sea was investigated and topics such as industry, recreation and transportation addressed to understand the current landscape.

Classification and mapping

The study undertook both a top down and bottom up approach to classification. In the first instance the Borough was classified into broad district level landscape *types*, in accordance with current guidance and compatible with the county level landscape character types. The landscape types were then generally sub-divided into more

detailed landscape character *areas* to reflect local distinctiveness in landscape, townscape and seascape form and character. However, particularly in the coastal zone, some landscape character areas eventually contained a number of smaller scale landscape character types.

Concurrently, a detailed Borough-wide Historic Landscape Character assessment (HLC) was undertaken (full details are set out in Appendix C). This was derived from the existing county historic landscape character assessment which was developed to enable the assessment and categorisation of urban and coastal areas and applied at a greater level of detail.

The historic landscape character types (HLCTs) were plotted as polygons in GIS, and are compatible with the OS MasterMap base. The HLCTs were then aggregated to form the mapping base for the landscape character areas and landscape types.

Landscape character area based strategies

Each landscape character area was evaluated as a whole, taking into account all aspects of the study, to determine a management strategy within the framework of conservation, restoration and enhancement.

An overarching strategy for each landscape character area has been formulated to reflect the main characteristics, the strength or otherwise of local distinctiveness, and the forces of change in the area. The strategies fall under three approaches:

Conserve: where the area has predominantly a strong sense of local distinctiveness; there are a significant number of key characteristics that are valued by the community at large; and the conservation of existing character is paramount.

Enhance: where the area retains a good sense of place but there are signs that this is being eroded by non-descript or poor design or inappropriate change. There will be scope for the introduction of new elements to enhance the existing character.

Restore: where the area has lost much of its local distinctiveness. The remnants of a past, more strong and valued, character may suggest that restoration of the earlier pattern is desirable. Restoration may similarly suggest the recreation of a new sense of place building on the key characteristics.

Management Guidelines

Guidelines for 1) landscape management and 2) the built form and development were prepared to reflect the use of landscape character assessment as a creative tool rather than a constraint on change. These are set out for the landscape character types, to cover those generic features common to the types, which would be repeated for all those landscape character areas which lie within or contain a particular landscape character type. Further guidelines are included under each landscape character area which cover the area's specific characteristics and issues. Both sets of guidelines should be read together.

GIS

A GIS database is the principle product of the study from which additional maps and reports will be generated and is capable of re-analysis and future updating.

The project GIS has been created in ArcGIS 9. The mapped historic landscape character areas (HLCs), landscape character areas (LCAs) and landscape character types (LCTs) are presented as three separate layers within the GIS and supported by a database that contains the attributes on which the polygons (areas) have been defined. Associated metadata has been generated using the ArcGIS ISO metadata editor following the UK GEMINI Metadata Standard. The database consists of physical and cultural parameters that combine visual field observations with desk based interpretations.

Attributes of the landscape are categorised and defined within the database. Tiers of attributes or categories would be created within each specialist field, which can be cross-referenced to each other and contribute to the definition of the character areas and types. The attributes would be range from the broad level, for instance for the cultural landscape, an area defined as 'industrial' to a principal attribute of 'marine' and then a sub-category of 'former fishery'.

Pilot studies

The study made best use of pilot studies to refine the methodology; achieve a satisfactory level of detail; and create a format that would easily inform Hampshire County Council's emerging landscape sensitivity method of approach.