

Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment Volume 1



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Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment

Volume 1: Character Assessment

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HAVANT BOROUGH TOWNSCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

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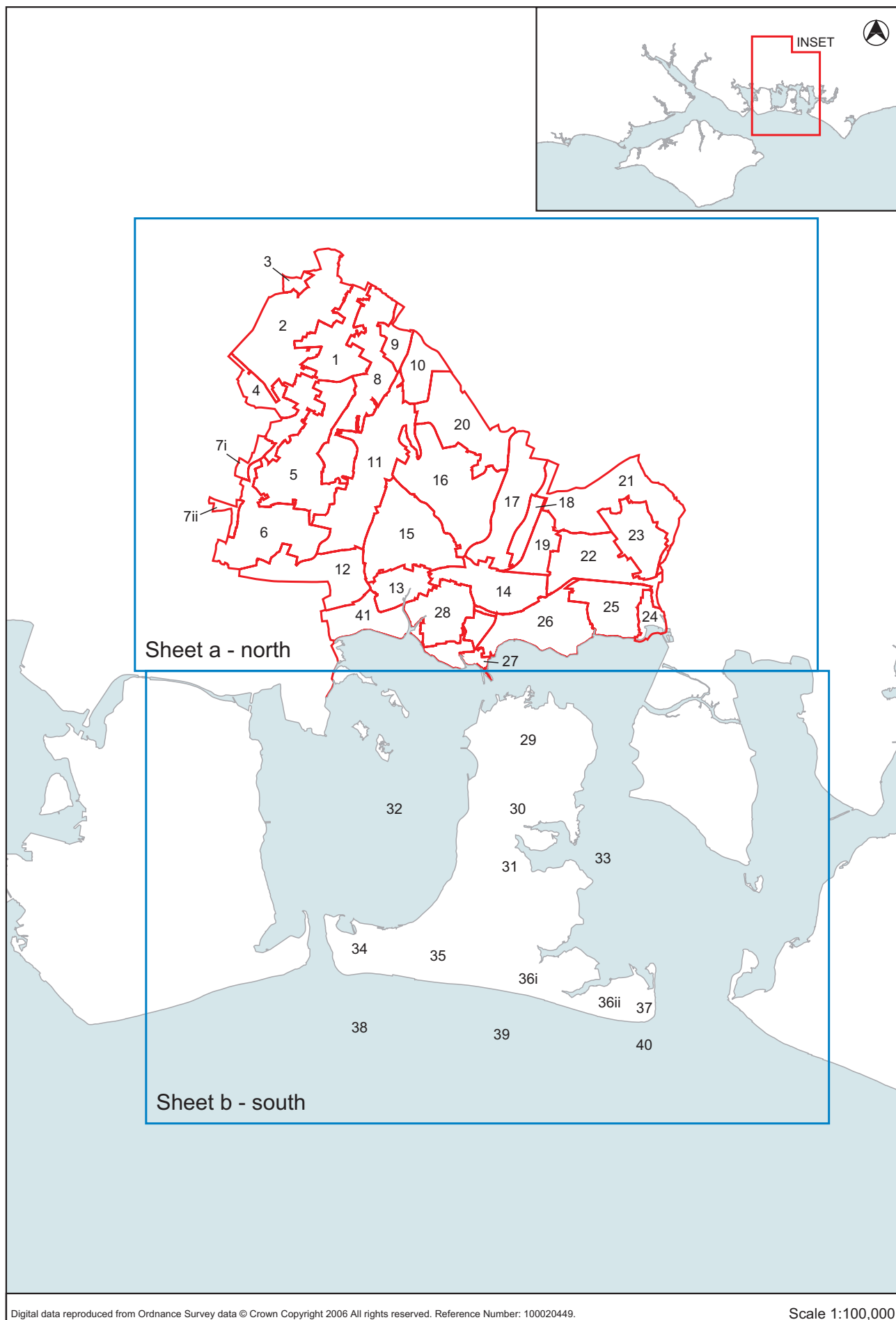
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HAVANT BOROUGH TOWNSCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

SECTION 1:

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY



INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 *Background to the Study*

The landscape character assessment coverage for Hampshire is one of the most developed in the country. The Borough-wide landscape character assessment for Havant Borough Council¹ was originally undertaken in 1996 and has served the Borough well since that time. However, this document preceded the publication of *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland 2002*² and *The Hampshire Landscape: a Strategy for the Future* in 2000. These two documents advanced the requirements of modern landscape character assessments in Hampshire towards a much greater integration of landscape, ecological, historical and cultural aspects of the landscape, consideration of the significance of settlements within the landscape, and tranquillity. The importance of public participation was recognised and has since been developed in the County, largely based on the involvement of communities of interest and local community of place groups.

1999 also saw the publication of the *Hampshire Historic Landscape Assessment*, which has informed landscape character assessments undertaken by other districts since that time. Most recently, Hampshire County Council has looked in greater detail at the contribution of habitat diversity in informing landscape characterisation.

There was therefore a need to update the Havant Borough Landscape Character Assessment, in line with current best practice and the approach taken by the County, and other Hampshire boroughs and districts. Most importantly, there was a need to expand the assessment to embrace the complex townscape and the seascape of the Borough and to draw on more recent studies into the townscape pattern (see Bibliography).

The new extended Havant Borough Landscape Character Assessment is a district wide assessment, which sits within the framework of the national and county landscape character assessments and complements the neighbouring district wide assessments. It is designed to inform the emerging Borough Local Development Framework.

1.2 *General Scope of the Landscape Character Assessment*

The Havant Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2006 is designed as an integrated assessment of the rural and urban landscape and seascape. It explores the historical and contemporary events and influences that have shaped the Borough's development and will shape its future and brings together the different urban, rural and marine environments in a seamless way, recognising the close inter-relationship between these different elements.

¹ Havant Borough Council *Havant Borough Landscape Assessment* February 1996

² Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland. The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage. 2002

1.3 *Objectives of the Havant Landscape Character Assessment Project*

The aim of the project has been to provide a clear framework to guide the future development and management of the Borough landscape, townscape and seascape in order to ensure that the distinctive character of the Borough is retained and change is accommodated in a positive way to the benefit of the people who live and work in the Borough, of the ecological and historical value of the Borough and of the overall condition of the landscape and built form.

The prime objectives of the study have been as follows:

- To produce a landscape character assessment that can be readily understood by both the public and professionals and within which the characteristics of the landscape are clearly identified;
- To ensure a fully integrated approach to characterisation informed by using landscape, ecological, historical and cultural assessments and weaving them together to define landscape types and landscape character areas;
- To bring current methodologies employed by landscape practitioners, historians and ecologists together in one study;
- To reflect fully the role of settlement pattern and development, and built form and design, in determining the landscape, townscape and seascape form and the intimate relationship between the built form and the surrounding countryside from which it developed;
- To assist in the conservation, enhancement and restoration of a viable and healthy landscape within Havant Borough through landscape management guidelines;
- To assist in the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the landscape, townscape and seascape through well founded character based built form and development guidelines;
- To inform the emerging Borough Local Development Framework;
- To use the process to identify areas that require further work;
- To involve the general public in the landscape, townscape and seascape character assessment process in a practical and valuable way;
- To use this process of better understanding and communication to enable the public and stakeholders to effectively inform the identification of influences on the landscape, management strategies and planning policy;
- To provide the basis for a district level *Landscape Sensitivity* assessment for the Borough, as part of Hampshire County Council's development of a county wide approach to landscape sensitivity. This will create a tool to direct and inform decision makers in future land use and land management change.

1.4 Summary of Methodology

The methodology adopted for the Havant Landscape Character Assessment follows the guidance set out in *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland* 2002. It also draws on the latest developments in the assessment of townscape character, as promoted by English Heritage, including the 'change and creation' programme and recent seascape assessment. The methodology has been developed by bringing together the techniques and means of presentation found in traditional landscape character assessments and historic townscape analysis. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment has also been developed to respond to the complex and detailed patterns in the urban environment, and this in turn has been used to inform the landscape character assessment. Finally the scope of the characteristics under each LCA and presentation of the material was designed to directly lead into the method of approach under adoption by Hampshire County Council to *Landscape Sensitivity*. Consequently the methodology differs from that adopted by other Hampshire districts and boroughs.

A full description of the methodology can be found in *Appendix A* to this report.

Key aspects of the methodology were to:

- To carry out a Landscape Character Assessment that considers all aspects of the landscape, including seascape and townscape;
- To set out the interaction between the historic fabric, urban spaces, green spaces, gateways and street patterns, variety of scale and intimacy, scale and grain of the rural and urban fabric, variation of architecture, historic buildings, designed landscapes, visible archaeological features and their settings, the shoreline, intertidal zone and tidal waters, and ecological character;
- To review and refine the historic landscape character assessment (HLC) carried out at County level for Havant Borough to provide detailed landscape, townscape and seascape HLC categorisation and GIS mapping
- To use the HLC polygons as the mapping blocks for the boundaries of both the landscape character types and character areas
- To identify both positive and negative characteristics within each landscape character area;
- To identify landmark features and key views and the visual relationships within the Borough and between the Borough and its wider setting;
- To identify ecological and historical links and networks running through the Borough;
- To undertake a detailed review of the study area through overlay mapping, desk studies, background knowledge of the area and review of the 1996 Havant Borough study;
- To carry out detailed field surveys and a comprehensive photographic record;
- To achieve compatibility with the existing Hampshire County landscape, historic landscape and ecological assessments and refinement to more detailed level;
- To achieve compatibility with adjacent landscape character assessments including those in Hampshire and West Sussex;
- To undertake consultations at different stages of the project with key individuals and organisations to assist the project team in understanding the local landscape character and forces for change;

-
- To ensure extensive liaison with local residents and local interest groups to draw upon local knowledge and perceptions;
 - To employ 'landscape' as the lead, bringing together public perceptions of the landscape with landscape, ecology, historical and cultural assessments of the landscape to determine and describe landscape types and landscape character areas, to evaluate the landscape and set out broad management strategies.
 - To create GIS mapping and a database;
 - To prepare a report in MSWord, to be also presented as Adobe Acrobat in .pdf format for inclusion on Havant Borough Council's website;
 - To prepare a report that reflects the input from community stakeholders. The Report, maps and illustrations are designed to be clearly understood at a lay level, backed by technical information.

At all times the study was approached with the aim of obtaining a greater understanding of local perceptions of the landscape and reflecting these in the assessment and the final report. The methodology was also developed to provide supporting evidence to the Borough Local Development Framework and to comply with the landscape character assessment requirements of PPS7 and PPS1.

1.5 *Structure of the Report*

The Report is set out in three volumes, with supporting appendices.

Volume 1: Havant Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment 2007 brings together the results of the integrated landscape, townscape, seascape, ecology, history and community assessment. It summarises the Borough-wide characteristics of the landscape, townscape and seascape and the influences on the formation of the past and present landscape.

Three stages of classification and mapping have been completed. Firstly, the Historic Landscape Character Assessment identifies, at a detailed level, both landscape and townscape historic character types (HLCs). Secondly, the study classifies the Borough into sixteen district landscape character types (LCTs) which are defined by the overriding geology, land form, and landscape, townscape and seascape pattern at a district level. Thirdly, the Borough is then classified into forty one distinctive landscape character areas (LCAs) where the local features define a specific identity, drawing on the results of the above assessments. Within this context, the LCAs are formed by grouping HLCs into readily recognisable character areas. In many cases a LCA will comprise only one district landscape character type. However, elsewhere a number of district landscape character types will be found in one LCA.

Volume 2: Community Consultation Report 2006 sets out the results of two consultation exercises carried out in March and May 2006.

Volume 3: Appendices includes the Historic Landscape Character Assessment 2006 and supporting background studies as follows:

Appendix A	Methodology
Appendix B	Ecological report
Appendix C	Historic Landscape Character Assessment
Appendix D	Bibliography and References
Appendix E	List of Consultees
Appendix F	Glossary

Mapping has been produced in GIS showing polygon (rather than point) data over OS MasterMap. Figure 1 shows the Historic Landscape Character Areas, Figure 2 shows the Landscape Character Types LCT.A to LCT.P, and Figure 3 shows Havant Landscape Character Areas LCA1 to LCA41. The results of the study are also set out in a GIS Access database which is held by Havant Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. Copies of the supporting Appendices may also be viewed at their offices.

Havant Borough Council will also publish Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the *Havant Landscape Character Assessment 2007* on the Borough's website in .pdf format on www.havant.gov.uk.

Volume I is set out as follows:

Section One: Introduction sets out the background to the study, its objectives, a summary of the methodology and the structure of the Report.

Section Two: Formative Influences on the Landscape sets out the main influences that have created the landscape we see today across Havant Borough. These include **physical influences** (geology, soils and agricultural capacity, landform and hydrology, climate, ecology and vegetation) and the **human influences** (historic landscape character, historic settlement pattern, historical periods, cultural and community values). **Social and economic influences** are set out in the next section under Forces for Change.

Section Three: Forces for Change – Borough-wide identifies the main forces of change to the landscape of the Borough. It looks at the main aspects of national, regional and local policy and guidance that will affect the future of the countryside and in more detail at the main social and economic forces for change found to affect the Borough. This section has drawn extensively from national, county and local sources and from the responses of consultees. A bibliography of sources and list of consultees is to be found in Appendix E and F of this report.

Section Four: the Character of Havant sets out the characteristics for each landscape character **type** identifying the landscape, ecological historical and community perceptions and requirements for each type. These are key aspects that are common to all the character areas within the character type and are not repeated in the character area descriptions and guidelines. Strategies and guidelines for land management and the built form for the each landscape character type follow this.

Section 5: the Character Areas of Havant sets out the characteristics of each landscape character **area**. There are 41no. LCAs in total. However LCA7 has been subdivided into two areas which are split by the Borough boundary and LCA36 has been split into two separate but similar areas, giving a total of 43 character area assessments.

Local and detailed strategies and guidelines for land management and the built form for each landscape character area follow this.

1.6 *How to Use the Study*

The Havant Landscape Character Assessment is designed to be used as a live document which will advise the planning process and land management within Havant Borough.

Government guidance in PPS7 and PPS1 make it clear that changes within urban areas and the countryside should respect and enhance the distinctive character of the land and built environment. This can only realistically be achieved if those responsible for changes, developers, landowners, farmers, government and local government bodies, have ready access to clear guidance on what makes each area distinctive and how this can be respected and enhanced. This Report sets out that guidance for Havant Borough.

Users of this study are advised that we have tried to avoid unnecessary repetition and therefore it is essential to read the relevant text for both the landscape character type and character area within which the land, which is of interest, falls. The landscape character type sets out the characteristics and guidance common to all areas within the type. The character area specific details are set out under each landscape character area. Context and details of background studies can be found in *Sections 2 and 3* and the *Volume 3 Appendices*, including the results of the *Historic Landscape Character Assessment 2006*.

For clarification, we have adopted the following approach to our classification and assessment.

Landscape classification is central to Landscape Character Assessment and is concerned with dividing the landscape into areas of distinct, recognisable and consistent common character, grouping areas of similar character together³. For the Havant Borough Landscape Character Assessment the Borough has been divided into generic Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and locally distinctive Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).

Landscape Character Types (LCTs) are generic in nature in that they may occur in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical landuse, settlement and built form pattern.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) are units of landscape, which are geographically specific and have their own individual sense of place. These are particularly useful in planning and management terms so that appropriate policies or actions can be applied at a local level.

In 1993, Hampshire County Council defined a range of generic Landscape Character Types for the rural areas of Hampshire, divided into two broad groupings: the *Chalklands* and *Lowland Mosaic*. Within Havant Borough, these two groupings were

³ Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. The Countryside Agency and Scottish Heritage. 2002

subdivided into a total of seven county level Landscape Character Types. These seven types have been examined in more detail and refined, resulting in a more detailed locally specific classification of subdivisions, boundaries and characteristics under sixteen district landscape character types. The relationship between the two is set out at the beginning of Section 4.

The classification, description, strategies and guidelines for each **Landscape Character Area** bring together the generic characteristics of the landscape character types, the historic and contemporary development and land use classification of the Historic Landscape Character Assessment, detailed studies of the landscape, built form, ecology and seascape characteristics of each area and community perceptions and aspirations. The classification, description and guidance also reflect the landscape character assessments of adjacent LCTs and LCAs outside Havant (see Bibliography).

By looking at the forces of change within the Borough of Havant, such as agricultural policy, the future of South Hampshire Sub-region, demand for housing and recreation and protection and enhancement of the countryside, the study identifies the *Key Issues* and *Local Issues* affecting each LCT and LCA.

This understanding of the characteristics and main issues in each character area provides the basis for an overall *Strategy* and more detailed *Guidelines* which are designed to retain and strengthen the distinctive landscape, townscape and seascape character (landscape, biodiversity, history and culture) of each character area, protect each area from inappropriate changes, identify specific improvements to the features of the landscape and form a framework for future change. The *Guidelines* are subdivided into two categories: *Land Management* and *Built Form and Development*.

Key Characteristics: These are the main and most important features that distinguish a landscape character area. They will include the main features of the landscape type (distinctive geology, topography, vegetation) and locally distinctive features.

Key and Local Issues: These include live issues that are anticipated to influence future change in the landscape. Some are a continuation of current changes whilst others are potential issues arising from new or expanding forces of change. The issues are identified from professional sources and the perceptions of the local community and may have either a beneficial or adverse effect on the landscape.

Strategies: 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.

These approaches follow established practice in landscape character assessment⁴. It is also recognised that at times a strategy of new landscape or townscape **creation** may be best, where the driving force will be to create new landscape character, drawing on the merits of the existing landscape, townscape or seascape pattern and form. This study does not consider this in any depth as it is included in urban design studies such as 'Public Realm Design Framework for Havant Borough Council' 2005⁵.

It is also recognised that within an overall strategy, a different approach may be needed to specific features or parts of the area. For example, within a strategy to conserve the predominant positive features of the area, there may be a need to enhance or even remove certain more negative features. A strategy combining these options is therefore sometimes adopted, or a specific approach to a particular issue identified in the guidelines.

Guidelines: These set out recommendations for each landscape character area, based on the natural and cultural landscape characteristics of each area, in order to conserve, enhance or restore a healthy and locally distinctive landscape, townscape and seascape across the Borough.

1.7 Consultation and Community Involvement:

A four stage process has been undertaken to inform the characterisation and identification of strategies and guidelines. In the first instance, during data collection, those bodies and groups with a professional or technical interest in the area (known as Communities of Interest) were consulted by letter. The Community Boards which represent the interests of the local community (known as Communities of Place) were asked to identify members of the Board who would have an interest in being involved in the project.

In March 2006 the Community Boards and a number of residential groups were consulted on the proposed boundaries and key characteristics of the landscape character areas through the distribution of Consultation Packs. This was followed up in May 2006 when workshops were held for representatives of these groups to further inform the characterisation and explore the community's aspirations and concerns in each landscape character area.

In August 2006 the Draft Havant Landscape Character Assessment and the Report on Community Consultation were both posted on Havant Borough Council's website. Consultees from the Communities of Interest were invited to comment on

⁴ Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. The Countryside Agency and Scottish Heritage. 2002

⁵ Roger Evans Associates. *Public Realm Design Framework for Havant Borough Council* October 2005

the Draft Havant Landscape Character Assessment. In September 2006 a sample from the Havant Landscape Character Assessment was presented to the Members on the Local Development Framework (LDF) Panel at Havant Borough Council.

The results of the March and May consultations with the local community, comments from LDF Panel Members and comments from the Communities of Interest will be considered, leading to the final Report being completed in October 2006.

1.8 *Project Steering Group*

The Project Steering Group consisted of:

David Carman, Project Manager – Hampshire County Council
Julie Boschi – Havant Borough Council
Graham Bryant – Countryside Agency
Graham Fairclough – English Heritage
Linda Tartaglia-Kershaw - Hampshire County Council
Mark Wilson - Hampshire County Council

The project was also advised by:

Andrew Biltcliffe - Havant Borough Council
David Hopkins - Hampshire County Council
David Went – English Heritage

KLPC, Wessex Archaeology and Countryside would like to acknowledge the help and support provided by Steering Group members and other members of staff at Hampshire County Council and Havant Borough Council throughout the study.