

## Emsworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Havant Borough Council  
Approved March 2010

## **EMSWORTH CONSERVATION AREA**

### **CHARACTER APPRAISAL MARCH 2010**

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## **SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT: - DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE EMSWORTH CONSERVATION AREA**

1. This is an **Executive Summary** of the key elements (of significance) that define the essential character and qualities of the Emsworth Conservation Area, which was reviewed in June 1994 – “the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It aims to provide a succinct picture of the Conservation Area as it is today - defining its special qualities and heritage assets particularly in terms of the area’s local distinctiveness and special interest. These qualities should be safeguarded and where possible, enhanced.
2. The Emsworth Conservation Area is located just to the south of the main Havant to Chichester A259, centred on the old town and port at the head of the northwest channel of Chichester Harbour on the Hampshire/Sussex County boundary. The old town sits on a blunt peninsular between two small creeks (adapted for mill ponds), with a medieval layout of streets and alleyways. It grew in importance from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was especially prosperous in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a port with fishing and trade. Oyster fishing in particular flourished although declined by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The expansion of the town beyond the old town during the 20<sup>th</sup> century is more to do with its position as a dormitory to Havant and Portsmouth. There is no longer any trading or major ship building activities, although some fishing and boat building still takes place. Since the 1970s, tourism, recreation and particularly sailing have largely superseded any commercial activities. Today the town’s historic character and waterside atmosphere continues to make it an attractive place to live.
3. Although the old town is predominately Georgian in character (in that period of prosperity buildings were laid down upon the existing street pattern), the Conservation Area does include the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development adjoining on the west side surrounding the Town Mill Pond in Bath Road and Bridgefoot Path. The medieval street layout still dominates, with the 13<sup>th</sup> century market place (St Peter’s Square) as the natural focus, with the other main streets, such as High Street and South Street, radiating from this triangular space towards the various waterfronts. Other than the building of Nile Street in the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, no significant change occurred to the street pattern until the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the building of the short bypass to the north of the old town, from Bridgefoot to Hermitage.
4. In conclusion, Emsworth has retained its historic character of a small, Georgian harbour side town, with a unique waterside atmosphere within the area and that is a popular place for living, recreation and sailing and related waterside activities. The majority of later 20<sup>th</sup> century development and since, on infill sites and back land within the Conservation Area, has managed to ‘fit-in’ without detriment to the environment. There are a few opportunities for improvements to the public realm, namely the public car park in South Street and the eastern end of King Street where some environmental enhancements to the street could

benefit the area. Further consideration of this will be set out in a Management Plan for the Conservation Area.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Emsworth is a small coastal town situated to the east of the town of Havant, on the border of Hampshire and Sussex. It is situated at the head of the western arm of Chichester Harbour and in its early history was an important port for the area. Up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was famous for its oyster fishing fleet. The Conservation Area encompasses the older part of the waterside town, which lies to the south of the A259, between the two historic mill ponds. Emsworth was first designated as a Conservation Area by Havant Borough Council in 1970, as an area which has special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance and the last review was carried out in June 1994. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities, to consider from time to time whether parts of their area should be designated Conservation Areas due to their special character and review them accordingly.
- 1.2 Designation recognises that the *area*, as opposed to just buildings, is special and warrants additional safeguards and attention. This does not mean that change cannot take place (i.e. preservation), but that any new development must take into account the area's special qualities and the Council has additional powers of control. Local Planning Authorities also have a legal duty to consider, formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their district.
- 1.3 Havant Borough Council has fourteen designated conservation areas throughout the Borough. Emsworth is the second largest after the St Faiths Conservation Area in Havant town centre. In accordance with national guidance, the Borough Council has undertaken this Character Assessment of Emsworth in order to define the special qualities that contribute to its character and review its boundaries. It will also provide guidance for future improvement and management plans, along with the Emsworth Design Statement (published in 2008 by the Emsworth Resident's Association) and adopted by the Borough Council as non-statutory planning guidance.

### **Location and setting**

- 1.4 The town of Emsworth lies on a flat coastal plain at the head of the Emsworth Channel, one of the main arms of Chichester Harbour, where the River Ems flows into the sea and straddling the old east – west route between Chichester and Havant (A259). The town is surrounded on three sides by woodland to the north, the Ems River valley to the east abutting the Sussex County boundary and farmland to the west separating it from Havant. Parts of Emsworth and its surroundings fall within the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural

Beauty (AONB). The Conservation Area is primarily within the area defined by the old town with its medieval street layout centred on its 13<sup>th</sup> century square on a blunt peninsular and flanked by two mill ponds (creeks) to the east and the west. Although the Conservation Area's appearance is predominately Georgian in character, the later 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development surrounding the Town Mill Pond on the west side is also included.

- 1.5 One of the main features of Emsworth's attractiveness is its relationship with the outstanding natural environmental quality of the Harbour. The combination of large-scale open waterscape and intimate creeks and the ever changing scene with low tide exposes extensive mud flats and salt marshes. The AONB is an important habitat for wildfowl with national, European and international significance. The two Mill Ponds are both semi-saline lagoons, fed by streams to the north and support a large variety of birds. Slipper Mill Pond on the east side and Peter Pond adjacent to the north are particularly important ecologically.

### **Historic Context**

- 1.6 The line of the Roman road from Winchester to Chichester follows the present main road A259 (from Havant to Emsworth) and where it meets the town through the present remaining length of West Street, although its alignment immediately to the County boundary and the site of the river crossing to the east is not known. During the Saxon period, Emsworth was part of the Parish of Warblington to the west, whose ancient Church served the whole area until comparatively recent times. This explains why, unlike most towns, Emsworth's Parish Church is found outside the historic core. A lowering of the sea level in the 12<sup>th</sup> century led to the decline of Warblington, when the creek became too shallow for boats at most stages of the tide. This led to a corresponding growth in the town of Emsworth which was still accessible to sea traffic. By 1231 "Emelsworth" is found in contemporary records and in 1239 Henry III granted a charter for a weekly market and an annual fair. By 1341, the town was sufficiently established as a trading and fishing port to be one of the five ports in Hampshire to be ordered to provide a ship for the fleet sent to protect the Channel Islands from French attack.
- 1.7 The town suffered a decline as a result of the Black Death and appears to have been slow to recover. Nevertheless by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Emsworth was a prosperous town and chief port of the Chichester Harbour taking vessels up to 200 tons. This prosperity was associated with the change in agriculture from grazing to arable farming. There were three mills in Emsworth and two more on the Sussex side of the River Ems, where locally grown corn was milled and exported by ship to feed the growing population of London. Many of the fine Georgian houses in the town date from this period. In 1762 the Cosham-Chichester Turnpike Trust was formed and the local roads improved. Stage coaches ran regularly along West Street, High Street and Queen Street to Chichester, Brighton and London, thus resulting in a number of coaching inns

being established in the town during this period. During the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a new road, called Nile Road was added to the medieval street plan connecting the market square with the Town Mill Pond. No further significant changes occurred to Emsworth's street pattern until the 1970s and 80s which saw the construction of the bypass on the A259.

- 1.8 By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Emsworth was a respectable market town and Port Pigot's Directory of 1821, describes Emsworth as a market town whose "inhabitants live by the building of ships and boats, by rope and sail making, by trade in timber and by fishing". Oyster fishing, in particular flourished during this century, but declined rapidly at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to concerns about the quality of the produce. The expansion of the town during the last century is more related to its position as a dormitory (outer suburb) of Havant and Portsmouth, rather than with the economic growth of the town itself. Trading and shipbuilding have long since declined, although fishing and boat building still provides an occupation for some inhabitants. Tourism and recreation, including leisure sailing and related services have largely superseded commercial activities. Today, Emsworth is a popular place in which to live, with a vibrant community spirit. It is perhaps best known for its sailing activities, but it also attracts many visitors who enjoy its small town historic setting and harbour side atmosphere.

## 2. AREA DEFINITION

### Entrances

- 2.1 The approaches to conservation areas are always important in defining the boundaries and establishing the special characteristics of the area.
- 2.2 **Entrance from the west (Havant Road) A259:** Travelling east along this primary east - west route (part of the old Roman road) the approach is long and straight with primarily large, detached housing on either side. The first marker is the Town Mill Pond which comes right up to the road on the south-side and then high mostly modern brick walls flank the approach to the roundabout junction at the head of the old town with North Street. Straight ahead the aspect is less urban with trees either side. Turning right into the old town, the entrance to High Street is relatively wide with modern retail development either side, only then does the aspect provide clues as to what is to come.
- 2.3 **Entrance from the east (A259):** This approach starts in Sussex crossing the open aspect of the Hermitage Bridge, with the Slipper Mill Pond to the south and Peter Pond on the north-side. The main road continues straight ahead with a relatively open aspect on the north side and the old town bordering the south-side. Veering to the left from the bridge the entrance to the Conservation Area starts at the bottom of Queen Street with some modern waterside housing and a garage to the right, and a residential development on the left called Chequer's Quay with the more historic core being established a little further beyond this

entrance starting with listed Lord Raglan public house and the Old Flour Mill on the right.

2.4 **Entrance from the north (North Street):**

From the railway bridge, North Street winds southwards through mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century housing development, passing local shopping parades and culminating at the roundabout at its junction with Havant Road. The entrance to the Conservation Area is viewed across the open traffic space of the roundabout. At the south end of North Street, close to the junction, there are several locally notable buildings on the right-side (west) - the Post Office, Old Town Hall, Fire Station and the former hospital which define a sense of the character and the degree of independence that Emsworth had achieved. But effectively the main road and roundabout junction severs North Street from the old town.

2.5 **Entrance from the harbour (south):**

Being a coastal settlement, the approach from the water is equally important in its own right. By boat, the shoreline of the old town, set between the two mill ponds, and its visual 'containment' can be fully appreciated. But the pedestrian can also realise this feature by taking advantage of the 'promenade' - the walled walkway at the southern which encloses the southern end of the Town Mill Pond.

### **Boundaries**

2.6 Considering the above, the **boundaries** to the Conservation Area have therefore been reasonably established and reflect the existing physical 'gateways' and historic features for the old town. However, as part of the appraisal process, the Council has reviewed the existing boundaries and the outcome of this is explained in the following paragraphs.

#### **Boundary with North Street**

2.7 North Street is an important part of the town of Emsworth, reflecting the growth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and does have some historic character which includes two listed buildings; St James Church and No. 6 North Street and four buildings of Local Interest; the Railway Station, the Fire Station and No's 102 and 104 Station Cottages, as well as some other attractive rows of Victorian cottages and a parade of shops with a colonnaded façade on the western side. However, the siting of North Street means it is effectively physically separated from the old town by the A259 with its wide roundabout junction and has therefore established a different character than that of the already designated conservation area.

2.8 North Street is a street of two parts, with the west side being of architecturally more historic interest than the east side. However, the west side does also include various examples of 20<sup>th</sup> Century infilling such as St James Road, which is mainly ordinary inter-war housing. The east side of North Street area is mainly modern commercial and industrial units bordering the River Ems and also includes the gasometer tank which forms a major landmark in this section of the

town. It does however, include a row of terrace cottages which retain an element of historic character. Overall, North Street has suffered from unsympathetic changes to many of the buildings, including some historic ones over the years. These include the loss of slate roofs, traditional wooden joinery replaced by plastic components etc – thus over time, de-valuing the quality of the setting and losing elements which result in a ‘special’ or ‘historic’ interest. These changes, coupled with some undistinguished 20<sup>th</sup> Century development has diluted the original character of North Street and therefore it is concluded that the existing boundary for the Conservation Area should remain, as it is of high quality and focussed around the coastal setting.

#### **Boundary with Bath Road**

- 2.9 The west boundary of the Conservation Area in Bath Road is defined by the surrounding area early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and inter-war housing that surround the Town Mill Pond and form a fitting backdrop. The adjacent roads of Warblington Road, Waters Edge Gardens and Creek End, behind this frontage setting and the Conservation Area boundary consist of modern housing. One anomaly is that the boundary cuts across the rear garden of No 23 Bath Road, a house which is set back from the road. Thus one adjustment that should be made for administrative purposes is to amend the present boundary to include the whole of that property.

#### **Boundary with Havant Road**

- 2.10 There is a row of Victorian cottages identified on the north side of Havant Road however, as with some properties in North Street, the original character of these has been diluted with unsympathetic changes and the dwellings have had the original slate roof replaced by concrete tiles and only one of the nine dwellings has a traditional style of window. As with the case of North Street, this terrace is also physically separated by the A259 and therefore it is not considered that this row of dwellings should be included within the Conservation Area boundary.

### **3. CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE**

- 3.1 This section describes and analyses the existing visual environment of the Emsworth Conservation Area. Visual quality is a scarce resource and as such must be safeguarded. Improvements can be expressed through local policies and by action on the ground where possible.
- 3.2 Defining the character of an area is critical to its preservation and its future. Character may be defined as those factors, or distinguishing marks that qualify or confer a unifying theme to a district or locality, including notable features, certain buildings, architectural styles, geographical or natural elements, colours, textures, focal points and land uses etc. To simplify matters and also to conform to national guidelines on Character Appraisals (appropriate for Emsworth), this spatial and character analysis will adopt the following main headings:-

- **Urban Form/Townscape**

- **Buildings of Interest**
- **Other Special Features**

3.3 In order to make an assessment of these major elements and provide a link for future actions, they will be considered against the following three aspects:-

- (1) Qualities **(Q)** – inherent factors which enhance the environment (positives requiring preservation or safeguarding).
- (2) Issues **(N)** – neutral or negative factors that add little or acting to the detriment of the area (i.e. problems or matters needed to be addressed).
- (3) Opportunities **(O)** – potential that may act as a basis for improvement (but require action to realise or enhance).

The above prefixes **(Q)**, **(N)** and **(O)** will be used for reference in the following sections.

### **Urban Form/Townscape**

- 3.4 First impressions of the old town of Emsworth are that it is a small, historic harbourside town, which is well established and popular and with an almost 'village' character. The character is basically Georgian, overlaying a medieval settlement pattern **(Q)**, emanating from the High Street and the main square - St Peter's Square. The buildings lining the principal roads radiating from St Peter's Square are invariably two and three storeys in height and situated on the back edge of the pavement. They are generally closely spaced, or linked and thus when viewed within the streetscene give the impression of a continuous street frontage. These factors together with the narrowness of the historic road framework, produces a pleasant urban character, which is added to by the curve and bends of many of the roads **(Q)**.
- 3.5 In some streets, namely South Street and Queen Street, the slight change in level downwards from the centre adds to the attraction. Building heights are predominately two storeys and rarely exceed three storeys, with historic individual plots having largely survived intact. The narrow frontages of these plots give the buildings a strong vertical emphasis, which is reflected in the general proportions of elevations, shop fronts, windows and doors within individual elevations dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries **(Q)**. Where infill development has occurred over the years, by conforming to these constraints or 'streetscape rules' of height and width, new development has usually reflected the domestic scale and materials of historic buildings within the Conservation Area. Those that have been constructed with traditional roof treatments and in scale have harmonised more successfully with their surroundings.
- 3.6 Thus despite considerable 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century infilling, the character of the old historic core remains. Although the town has thrived again in recent years, particularly since the mid-seventies being an attractive place to live and sail, it

has generally managed to retain its small scale, intimate character and charm. The medieval street pattern with its mainly Georgian and Victorian development still dominates the townscape. This is due to the fact that much of the much later 20th century infill housing development has either been restricted to small cul-de-sac enclaves (such as the courtyard housing at Orange Row off South Street), or back land areas to the north behind the High Street and Queen Street which have followed a fairly tight urban pattern. Taking the individual streets in more detail, the old town may be divided into **two main character sub-areas**, these are:-

**(A) The Old Town and Harbour**

**(B) Town Mill Pond (Bridgefoot Path/Bath Road)**

### **The Old Town and Harbour (Sub Area A)**

- 3.7 The first part of High Street is a relatively short length of street leading to the old core of the town. The beginning is undistinguished being too wide due to highway improvements and the modern retail development set well back from the original building line. The street then resumes to its former alignment after West Street **(Q)**. On the west side of the road is a dignified three storey Georgian building, of grey and red brick, with an Ionic pillared doorway with an elegant fanlight, surviving between altered ground frontages. Opposite, is the Crown Hotel, which has a good scale and a pillared porch. It dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was one of Emsworth's three coaching inns. A little further along is The Ship (which dates from 1718), also a coaching inn. High Street now widens at its southern end into Emsworth's former market place (now St Peter's Square), from which the town developed from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and is still a busy hub **(Q)**. The buildings grouped around the original medieval triangular space, have a haphazard harmony with different colours and detailed treatments - and the streets leading off South Street and King Street – from the two south and east apexes and the narrowing High Street to the north are effectively closed in perspective. But the visual pleasantness of the urban space (even with its street enhancements and tree) is fussy in detail, in part due to street furniture and road surface treatments.
- 3.8 The most effective buildings fronting the space are on the west side the Clock Tower, which is well set back and a partial reconstruction of St Peter's Chapel, (originally built in 1789) and the least self-conscious, the Methodist Church of 1877 with unashamed red, black and white brickwork around sharply pointed openings. On the south east corner is the former Black Dog (now a restaurant), although built in 1711 its original front has been replaced in the 1930s by brewer's 'best mock-Tudor'. Continuing out of the Square along High Street, another building of note on the north-side is No 4, the Old Pharmacy Shop, which is one of the town's oldest buildings, recently restored **(Q)**.
- 3.8.1 Queen Street: Turning left at the eastern end of High Street, into Queen Street which presents a fine collection of Georgian houses, both large and small which

frame the first half of the street. The street slopes down eastwards towards the river valley and the bypass. On the north side Newnham House stands out, three storeys, red brick and which, as Pevsner points out, has several pleasing quirks in its design **(Q)**. At the end of this block, the back-land development of Frankland Terrace and Pelham Terrace joins the street, with the imposing landmark of Leigh's Mill of 1897 **(Q)** (now called the Old Flour Mill) just beyond the entrance. This is an honest, small town industrial building, in plain red brick with cast iron windows and a wooden gantry in the gable. Opposite, is the three storey, stuccoed Dolphin House, which forms the end of the row of pleasant two storey Georgian brick houses on the south-side in brick, either all in red or grey dressed in red. Notable is No 23 with its Venetian upper windows and shallow ground floor bays **(Q)**. Continuing on the south-side, past a footpath known as Dolphin Cut and over the River Ems and a boatyard (Dolphin Quay), is the Lord Raglan public house, which is the most obvious building in the town to be constructed of flint **(Q)**. With the garage opposite and the modern flats at the road bridge, the street fades into the bypass and the view of the open expanse of the Slipper Mill Pond to the south **(Q)**.

- 3.8.2 King Street: The top of Queen Street leads almost diagonally into King Street, which is a relatively quiet cul-de-sac, which is the spine that serves this south east corner of the old town covering a relatively large area. Two rather severe Early Victorian houses in yellow brick mark the beginning. Then the street proceeds, with a variety of pleasant minor houses, mainly Georgian, on individual alignments i.e. not all on the back edge of the pavement like the previous streets. This is a more informal character, almost polite, with some houses set back in small gardens and some with a few spaces and trees between properties **(Q)**. A notable house is No19 (known as The Hut) being weather-boarded, not the usual overlapping but flush boards. This is explained by the fact that it was built by John King (the shipbuilder) in prefabricated sections and after whom the street is named. It has a charming façade with a fan-lit doorway under a pediment **(Q)**.
- 3.8.3 Opposite, is a gravel driveway between No's 28 and 30 which leads to a large back land area behind the frontage properties, private gardens and a tennis court centred on Holmwood Mews **(Q)**. Back into King Street, the character of the street then changes, with more simple, working cottages in rows and some old remaining boat store buildings **(Q)**. A modern infill housing development now occupies former boat yards behind, on the south-side. The street now becomes a 1970s development of town houses, which extend through to the Slipper Mill Pond on the east boundary. The main part of the street then bends to the left and runs out almost casually to a narrow slipway to the harbour's edge. The view of the waterside at low tide is one of shingle foreshore and mud flats extending far out into the harbour **(Q)**. At low tide, it is possible to walk along the shoreline to the jetty and the old tide mill at the end of South Street. At high tide, the water comes up to the shoreline walls and into the street itself on occasions.

- 3.8.4 Tower Street: On the south side of High Street is a townscape delight. Pevsner describes the north end of Tower Street as - “the most delicious inland backwater in Emsworth”. This is another residential cul-de-sac, of high quality with a few Georgian houses **(Q)**. On entering three houses set the scene. To the left Trentham Cottage has upper side windows under segmental tympana decorated in stucco fan pattern, a circular central window and doorway with distinctive fanlight. Trentham House is a larger, plainer stuccoed house with bay windows and delicate iron balconies. Its garden half-closes the already narrow street. Opposite is Saxted House, which is Early Georgian, built in grey brick with red dressings and with another fanlit pedimented doorway. The street then continues past the walled garden of the latter and ‘dog-legs’ to the right and then continues inconspicuously into a footway to emerge through a narrow alleyway on the waterside. Behind Saxted House in its garden, is the site of the tower (thought to have been a watch tower) after which the street is named.
- 3.10 South Street and Town Quay: From the market square the street narrows and leads southwards falling gently down to the quayside. Its buildings are mostly simple, small shops and houses **(Q)**. The only noticeable gap in the streetscene is the municipal car park on the west side, which is fronted by the utilitarian, single storey block of the public toilets **(N) (O)**. Adjacent is The Coal Exchange public house **(Q)** which has a ground frontage clad in traditional green ceramic tiles. Just beyond is a well proportioned house (now an off-license), which was the brewer’s house for the brewery which occupied the site of the car park until the 1930s. The narrow street scene continues with former fishermen’s cottages to the left and the modern housing infill of Orange Row, with more mixed uses including pubs and restaurants on the right side, culminating on the corner with a 17<sup>th</sup> century building, formerly The Anchor Inn. Arrival at the bottom of the street at the Quay, one is presented with a guided view of the harbour straight-ahead and to the left with a more open aspect to the east. It is only when the quay is reached that the relationship between the town and the water is apparent and if the tide allows, the remains of the former oyster beds along the foreshore **(Q)**. A public footpath runs eastwards along the foreshore as the tide allows. However, it is from The Promenade which extends from the Quay that the principle views of the harbour are gained. The quayside here is dominated by the former tide mill (now the Slipper Sailing Club), a functional red brick building placed against the jetty, a local landmark which dates from about 1760 **(Q)**. Just to the north is the old malt house, another functional, rectangular building in plain render, but effective in its in location, built partly on piles against the side of the Town Mill Pond.
- 3.11 Nile Street, School Lane and West Street: These are three small streets, all situated on the west side of the town centre. Historically, Nile Street is a relatively new street, built at the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century between St Peter’s Square and the Mill Pond. It is straight and narrow with a mixed character of older and modern town houses, one remaining works building and with smaller cottages towards its west end at Bridgefoot Path. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century,

historic maps show the evolution of School Lane to the north, from a path to a named road. No 12 is The Old School House which dates from the 1840s. West Street on the other hand was part of the old road system, being the western approach to the old town, only superseded in the 1974 by the construction of the short by-pass from Bridgefoot to Hermitage. The truncated western end where it meets the bypass is not a particularly happy connection, even allowing for the surrounding walls. It has a number of historic shops on the south-side towards its junction with High Street and two listed houses on the north-side, No 3, an Early 18<sup>th</sup> century house and No 5, the impressive three storey, stuccoed Kepple House dating from the Late 18<sup>th</sup> century **(Q)**.

### **Town Mill Pond (Sub-Area B)**

- 3.12 Although the Town Mill Pond is both historically and inextricably physically linked to the old town and forms its western boundary, it is surrounded by 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development which imparts a different character upon it from that just a few steps away. Bridgefoot Path on the eastern side has largely late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century development, while the west side in Bath Road is mostly inter-war rows and semis and post-war housing, which is suburban in character and thus very different to the overall 18<sup>th</sup> Century character of the rest of the Conservation Area to the east. Although of modest design the appearance of these houses is enhanced by the waterside location. They are nonetheless, in their own way, complimentary to the Mill Pond, providing an uncomplicated backdrop **(Q)**.
- 3.13 The Mill Pond which is bordered by these two roads on its east and west boundaries, together with the bypass bridge at the north end is one of the significant spaces within the Conservation Area **(Q)**. At the southern end, it is retained by The Promenade, which acts as a harbour wall and walkway between the Quay and the south end of Bath Road, where the Emsworth Sailing Club is situated. Although most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development surrounding is recessive in character, at about its mid-point three buildings occupy prominent positions and provide focal points of views from around the Mill Pond, namely the Malt house and the Slipper Mill on the Quay and a house on the opposite side of the water, No 66 Bath Lane **(Q)**. With public access available around virtually the whole length of the Mill Pond, this is a popular route for pedestrians who are able to take advantage of views from numerous vantage points.
- 3.14 Despite being situated on the shoreline of Chichester Harbour and between the two Mill Ponds, views of the surrounding water from within the old town are limited to glimpses. Only at the bottom of South Street and onto the Quay is the expanse of the harbour revealed. It is from The Promenade that the principle harbour views are gained in full, including important views back to the town **(Q)**. To the east the compact urban character of the town is less pronounced on this waterside skyline, with the newer development occupying the sites of old boat

yards which once lined the foreshore. Only a few buildings, namely the cluster of older houses at the end of Tower Street, face directly onto the waterfront.

- 3.15 The two character sub-areas effectively merge at the point of The Promenade, with the overall effect of the townscape for the old town being unified by the shoreline. It is only to the north of this feature, within the containment of Town Mill Pond that the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century surroundings instil a different character.

### **Buildings of Interest**

- 3.16 Buildings form an important part in the character of conservation areas by virtue of their architectural or historic interest. They contribute at different levels and can have different values e.g. statutory listed buildings, or of local interest, but each can be important in their individual way, or as a group for townscape value in the Conservation Area and should be retained and their character safeguarded.

The following buildings as set out below are all considered to contribute positively (Q) to the character of the Conservation Area:-

- 3.17 There are some 85 (nearer a 100 individually) **Statutory Listed Buildings** within the Emsworth Conservation Area, as set out in the Listed Buildings Register and thus are already recognised nationally as being of architectural or historic interest. The following are considered to be the most significant within the Conservation Area:-

- The Crown Hotel, No 2 High Street, n.side.
- Lloyds Bank, High Street, n.side.
- Westminster Bank, High Street, s. side.
- The Old Pharmacy, No 38 High Street, n.side.
- Emsworth Methodist Church, St Peter's Square, w.side.
- Newnham House, No 5 Queen Street, n side.
- The Old Flour Mill (formerly Leigh's Mill), Queen Street, n.side.
- Lord Raglan PH, Queen Street, s.side.
- Dolphin House, Queen Street, s.side.
- No 23 Queen Street, s.side.
- Nos 1 & 2 Queen Street, s.side.
- Nos 1 & 3 King Street, s.side.
- Nos 5/5a & 5b King Street, s.side.
- No 7 King Street, s.side.
- Ivy House, No 11 King Street, s.side. (Grade II\*)
- The Hut, No 19 Queens Street, s.side.
- Wharf House, No 30 King Street, e.side.
- Trentham House, No 4 Tower Street, e.side.
- Trentham Cottage, No 2 Tower Street, e.side.

- Saxted House, No 9 Tower Street, w.side.
- Quay Mill, Town Quay/South Street.
- Keppel Lodge, No 5 West Street, n.side.

3.18 There are many ordinary buildings, with the same building lines, as some of those which are listed and which also contribute to the character of the old town, but the following are **Other Buildings of Local Interest**, which in particular contribute positively towards the character of the Conservation Area (**Q**), either individually or as a group and thus should be retained and enhanced wherever possible: -

- High Street – Nos 4, 6, 24, 46, 46A, and 48 (even)
- High Street – Nos 7, 17, former Black Dog PH and No. 49 (odd).
- St Peter's Square – Clock Tower No 6A, Methodist Church and No 21 and Nos 37 – 45 (odd).
- South Street – Nos 42, 44, 46 (even) and The Coal Exchange PH, Nos 35 – 37, stores r/o No 47 (odd).
- Queen Street – Nos 8, 14,(even) and 19, 25, 27 (odd).
- King Street – Nos 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 38 – 44, 46 & 48 (even) and Nos 13, 21 – 35 (inclusive), 37, 1 – 6 Stanley Road (odd) (southside)
- West Street - Nos 2 – 4, 6 – 10, 12 -18, 20 -22 (even) and No 1 (odd).
- Nile Street - Nos 2A, 2B, & 2C (even) and Nos 13, 17, 19, 21 & 23. (odd).
- School Lane - Nos 12 The Old School House.
- Bridgefoot Path – The Malt House, Nos 43 – 44, 26 – 29, 30 -35, 36 – 39,
- Bath Road - Nos 26 –29,(inclusive) 30 – 35, 36 – 39, 66 , 60 , 56 – 57.

3.19 The overwhelming townscape image of the Conservation Area's built form is that of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, both in terms of period buildings mostly abutting the pavements and the use of **materials**. The majority of buildings are built in a vernacular style, on a domestic scale with the exception of the industrial buildings. But even these reflect the smaller dimension associated with the locality and local materials. Elevations are generally in red stock brick, but sometimes this is painted, together with examples of painted smooth rendering (stucco) roofs of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Plain clay tiles predominate for roofs and Welsh slate appears with the Regency Period at a shallower pitch. Occasionally there are also fragments of rubble stonework, in a variety of colours probably

reflecting importation from other sources via sea. Flint, a local material, was often used for cheaper walling, as boundaries or in small dwellings and its strong colour and texture provides a contrast to brickwork. The way that brickwork is used is a history in itself. Flemish bond has gentility and Flemish Garden Wall Bond is a grade down the scale. Blue 'header' bricks occur in Flemish Bond as decoration, but they are also used as a total facing brick on a façade, combined with red quoins, bands and plinths. A short phase in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is expressed in a pale yellow (or white) brick, such as at the west end of King Street. The complex pattern of textures and colours, allied to vernacular style and scale gives Emsworth a degree of special quality which makes it distinct from other places. In concert with these elements, traditional sliding sash windows and small pane casements are the common form of fenestration. Fanlights over front doors are a particular feature of Emsworth. It is a matter of importance that these attributes of individuality are preserved wherever possible, in order to maintain the character and quality of the Conservation Area.

- 3.20 **Walls:** These are a traditional means of enclosure and demarcating boundaries within urban areas and Emsworth has its own tradition based with walls of flint and stone as well as brickwork **(Q)**. Brick is the predominate material and there are many good examples throughout the Conservation Area, with some particularly noteworthy walls in Tower Street and King Street. The sea walls consist of brick, flint and stone and are a strong visual feature along the shoreline **(Q)**. Although in places their attractive character has been diminished where they have been rendered. Rendering has also been used to some boundary walls to gardens of terraced houses in Bridgefoot Path. This is less attractive than the low front garden walls of brick, which typify many of the boundary treatments of properties fronting onto the Town Mill Pond.

### **Special Features**

- 3.21 Besides the main elements of urban form and buildings, there are a number of other features of special interest which contribute to the character of the area.
- 3.22 **Views:** The history of Emsworth is inextricably linked with the harbour, although the association between the town and the waterfront has changed from its earlier commercial base to one largely related to tourism and recreational sailing. This waterside activity and related services are still an important part of Emsworth's character. As previously mentioned, despite being a coastal settlement and situated between the two Mill Ponds, views out from the old town are not common. Only at the southern end of South Street and from the Quay can the harbour be appreciated **(Q)**. Nevertheless, the element of surprise, where such views do occur elsewhere is a feature **(Q)**. The foreshore footpath east of the Quay is accessible at low tide, but it is The Promenade which affords the best all round views of the harbour **(Q)**. The nature of these harbour views change with the state of the tide, with extensive mudflats exposed at low water. However,

whatever the state of the tide, the sense of a contained openness is the overriding impression.

- 3.23 The views around the Town Mill Pond offer a different perspective, being that of containment around the elongated length of water, contrasting with the compact, mostly terrace housing. Also the views are punctuated by the three focal buildings that protrude into the Mill Pond at the southern end **(Q)**. There are a number of terminated views within the old town itself (such at the east end of High Street and in Tower Street), primarily due to the street pattern and the location of significant buildings or local landmarks **(Q)**. The main views are identified on the Character Appraisal Diagram.
- 3.24 **Trees:** Although predominately an urban area, there are a number of trees which contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Area. They provide a natural foil to the buildings and helps soften the appearance of the urban scene, as exemplified in King Street and Tower Street **(Q)**. They have attractive features in their own right and in some instances provide a focal point within the urban setting, as for example, the yew tree at the junction of Queen Street and Frankland Terrace **(Q)**. New trees have been introduced in St Peter's Square as part of the environmental enhancements. Some trees, while significant in themselves and important in their local context also provide a background to views glimpsed between buildings and skyline features to longer views within the Conservation Area. Many of the trees within back gardens, such as those in Saxted House in Tower Street fulfil this role **(Q)**.
- 3.25 Substantial tree planting along the margins of the A259 bypass helps to define and reinforce the northern boundary of the Conservation Area **(Q)**.
- 3.26 **Archaeology:** The majority of the Conservation Area has been defined as an area of archaeological importance by the County Archaeologist for many years. The line of the Roman Road between Chichester and Winchester runs through the north of the Conservation Area crossing the western end of West Street, although the main archaeological interest has always been concerned with the subsequent development of the medieval settlement. On that basis, due to the significance and potential of the old town area, the majority of the Conservation Area continues to be of archaeological importance **(Q)** and any development that will cause ground disturbance must be referred for consultation to the County Archaeologist.

#### **4. CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 In addition to the main principles to be applied to ensure that the key characteristics of the area are safeguarded and promoted, designation does give the Local Planning Authority a more positive role (a firmer hand) when considering proposals for new development in the conservation area. **A number**

**of special controls apply and it is advisable for anyone thinking of carrying out works to a property in the conservation area, to seek advice from the Borough Council's Development Control team at an early stage.**

### **Works which require permission**

4.2 Within conservation areas, further restrictions on permitted development rights afforded to dwellings apply. For example planning permission is required for:

- Any additions and alterations to the shape of a roof e.g. inserting dormers or raised roof lights.
- The cladding of any part of the exterior with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles.
- Extending beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwellinghouse
- An extension to the dwellinghouse which would have more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwellinghouse
- The installation of a satellite dish on a building or chimney which exceeds 15 metres in height or a wall or roof slope, which fronts a highway.
- The erection of any detached buildings, enclosures, pools or containers which would be situated on land between a wall forming the side elevation of the dwellinghouse and the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- The installation of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a wall or roof slope which fronts a highway or forms either the principal elevation or side elevation of the dwellinghouse.
- Most works to business premises require planning permission including additional controls on advertisements (the design and size).

*Please note that these are further restrictions and the full list of permitted development rights can be found in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008.*

Conservation Area Consent is a special form of consent which applies to unlisted buildings in conservation areas and is required for the total (or substantial ) demolition of a building, or structure in excess of 115 cubic metres and also other structures such as gates, walls, etc depending upon their height, location and date of construction.

Listed Building Consent is another special form of consent, which applies to all listed buildings whether they are in a conservation area or not. Consent is required before any works can take place to a listed building both externally and internally.

### **Works to Trees**

- 4.3 With limited exceptions all trees (with a stem diameter of 75mm at 1.5 metres above ground level) standing within a conservation area are legally protected. It is an offence to cut down, lop, top or wilfully damage a tree. Any one intending to do work on a tree, must give six weeks written notice to the Local Planning Authority. There is an exception where a tree can be legitimately felled if dead, dying or in a dangerous condition, but it is always advisable to inform the Council's Tree Officer beforehand and to keep a photographic record of the state of the tree, as you may be required to provide evidence. Landowners have a duty to plant an agreed replacement in such cases.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

### Recommendations for Future Management

- 5.1 In order to preserve or enhance the characteristics which define the special interest of the Conservation Area, the following list of suggested actions and management proposals aim to assist in the recognition and protection of these special qualities and encourage their enhancement. Some are already in place, or have begun, but may require further co-ordination:-

#### Urban Form and Buildings

- 5.2 Alterations to Statutory Listed Buildings are already controlled under the terms of the Planning Acts. However, **there are many other unlisted historic buildings which make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area and would benefit by additional controls to safeguard them.**
- 5.3 The original architectural characteristics of buildings (in particular original windows and roof coverings) should be respected and retained – and reinstated wherever the opportunity arises when improvements are necessary.

The following alterations should always be avoided:-

- Replacing original tile or slate roof coverings with heavier concrete tiles.
  - Installing plastic (PVCU), aluminium or other non-traditional windows or doors in place of traditional materials.
  - Removal or inappropriate alterations to existing garden walls, railings, entrances/gate piers, steps, paths and trees.
  - Removal of architectural features such as chimney stacks, pots, cornices, decorative brickwork
- 5.4 In this way the 'dilution' of the character by any inappropriate alterations in the past may be rectified and the appearance of the area enhanced. Historic Building Grants for repairs or alterations to individual properties could be available to give encouragement to owners. **The Council will give consideration to the introduction of Article 4 (2) Directions**, which remove

certain permitted development rights in order to retain the architectural details and character of unlisted buildings.

- 5.5 **Any alterations or extensions** should be sympathetic to the original design and materials of the building. Owners should always use the appropriate professional advice (registered architects or chartered surveyors) in order to ensure the best benefit from their building proposals.
- 5.6 **The design of any new buildings** will also need to be sensitive to the scale and character of the site and the area and show imagination – building upon the existing urban form, details and materials. It is important to respect and maintain the building lines particularly within the medieval street pattern and elsewhere within the Conservation Area.
- 5.7 **Identifying Buildings at Risk:** Where appropriate the Council will encourage the repair and restoration of any building under threat or vulnerable, including where necessary the serving of Urgent Works and/or Repairs Notices.

### **Natural Features**

- 5.8 The preservation of the setting of the waterside character is fundamental to Emsworth, including other features such as trees throughout the Conservation Area. Such features are important for the historical context, as well as a valuable asset to the town's continuing environmental attractiveness.

### **Opportunities for Enhancement and Improvement**

- 5.9 As an essential part of the principal to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the Borough Council will draw up schemes for enhancement to reinforce the distinctive character of the area by:-
- The retention, repair and maintenance of any special features.
  - Taking a co-ordinated approach together with Hampshire County Council towards highway repairs, re-surfacing, tree planning, maintenance and cleaning, improved street furniture (such as appropriately designed street lighting, street name plates, seating or pavement plaques), to underpin the area's significance.
  - Take a planned approach towards the resolution of any traffic and parking problems in consultation with residents and traders in the town centre.
  - Compile a design brief to guide the development of the South Street Car Park frontage, in order to both realise the potential and ensure a sensitive solution.
  - Seek an improvement scheme for the eastern end of Kings Street.
  - Uphold and support the principles set out in the Emsworth Design Statement.
  - Continue to work closely with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

- **Boundary Change:** Make a minor amendment to the Conservation Area boundary to include the whole of the property known as No 23 Bath Road.

### **Public Consultation**

- 5.10 Publish the Character Appraisal which defines the special qualities of the area and involve the local community in the process, in order to underpin support for any proposals and the area's future.

### **Future Management Plan**

- 5.11 Publish the Council's long term strategy in the form of a Management Plan for the area, which sets out a corporate approach to the recommendations above for protecting and enhancing the area.
- 5.12 As part of the Management Plan, regularly monitor and review the effect of change on the character of the area and establish management responsibility for taking any necessary action to deal with any problems that may arise.

Chris Lyons  
Development Services Manager

**Point of contact:**

Rachael McMurray  
Planning Officer

Tel: 023 9244 6546      [rachael.mcmurray@havant.gov.uk](mailto:rachael.mcmurray@havant.gov.uk)