

Rowlands Castle Settlement Character Assessment

November 2020



Introduction

General introduction

This Settlement Character Assessment will form part of the evidence base for the emerging Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Development Plan, alongside national, county and district character assessments. It is intended to provide robust evidence to help guide and assist in spatial planning and development management within the Parish, to ensure that the distinctive character of its built environment is retained and change is accommodated in a positive way.

Information from this document can be taken to inform an understanding of the existing built environment (and its interfaces with the adjacent countryside). Building on that, developers and homeowners will be urged to follow the guidance provided, in order to appropriately integrate proposed infill development, house extensions / conversions etc. within that existing built environment.

Planning context

This study has been undertaken to support the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Development Plan, and in particular policy 5, 'Housing Design and Local Character'. It also draws upon other published planning documents such as (but not limited to) the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework
- The East Hampshire District Local Plan
- The South Downs Local Plan
- The Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment
- The East Hampshire District Landscape Character Assessment
- The South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment
- The Neighbourhood Character Study for East Hampshire District Council
- EHDC: Rowlands Castle Conservation Area guidance leaflet
- The Rowlands Castle Parish Local Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- The Rowlands Castle Village Design Statement 2000, together with 1st revision 2019

Methodology

Our approach to undertaking this Settlement Character Assessment has followed industry best practice, referring to several published sources, such as the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition (by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment), and Hampshire County Council's 'Advice to communities on undertaking a Local Landscape Character Assessment: Assessing and Maintaining Local Distinctiveness'.

Early on, we undertook survey work in and around the streets of Rowlands Castle and Finchdean, observing the various different features and characteristics, and compiling a photographic record. At the same time we undertook a desktop study exercise, in order to gain an understanding of the planning context of the parish, the various other character assessments previously undertaken, and the time-depth associated with some of the features observed in our field survey. We also took into account information gathered formally and informally by the local community in support of the Neighbourhood Plan.

This analysis enabled the built environment of Rowlands Castle and Finchdean to be subdivided into different parcels of distinct, recognisable and consistently common characteristics, grouping areas of similar character together. At an early stage of our analysis it was apparent that Rowlands Castle is made up of an intricate patchwork of characteristics, differing at a street level.

We have split the village of Rowlands Castle into 4 'Settlement Character Areas' (refer to map on page 2), with the hamlet of Finchdean forming a 5th 'Settlement Character Area'. These are arranged geographically, with each having definitive characteristics at a broad level. Within each 'Settlement Character Area' there are smaller parcels known as 'Settlement Character Types'. We have identified a total of 8 'Settlement Character Types' within Rowlands Castle and Finchdean, each having uniquely definitive features. As these are not geographically arranged, 'Types' sometimes re-occur within different 'Areas'.

Whereas previous Landscape Character Assessments applicable to the Rowlands Castle parish have focussed mainly on the countryside surrounding the village, this study focusses on the settlement itself in some detail, including the edges and their relationship with the countryside. It also attempts to take disparate information found within various other landscape-related evidence-base documents, and compile it into a single document.

Report structure

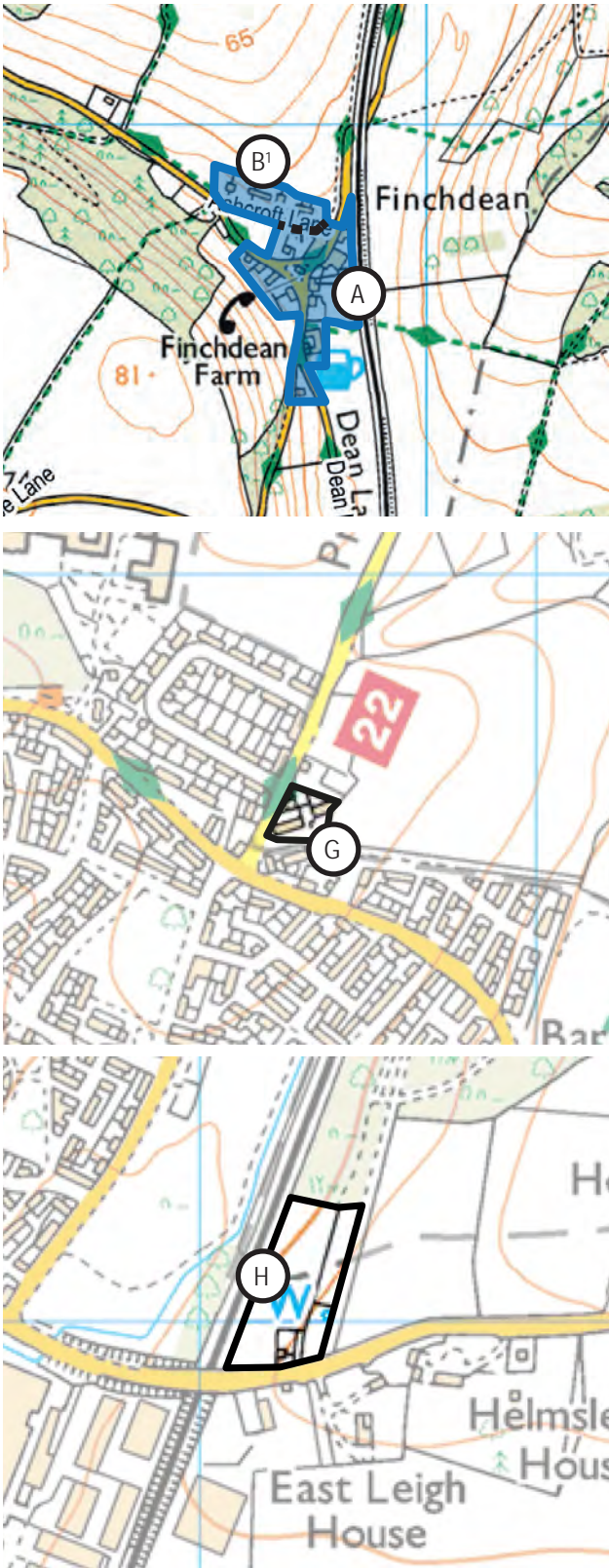
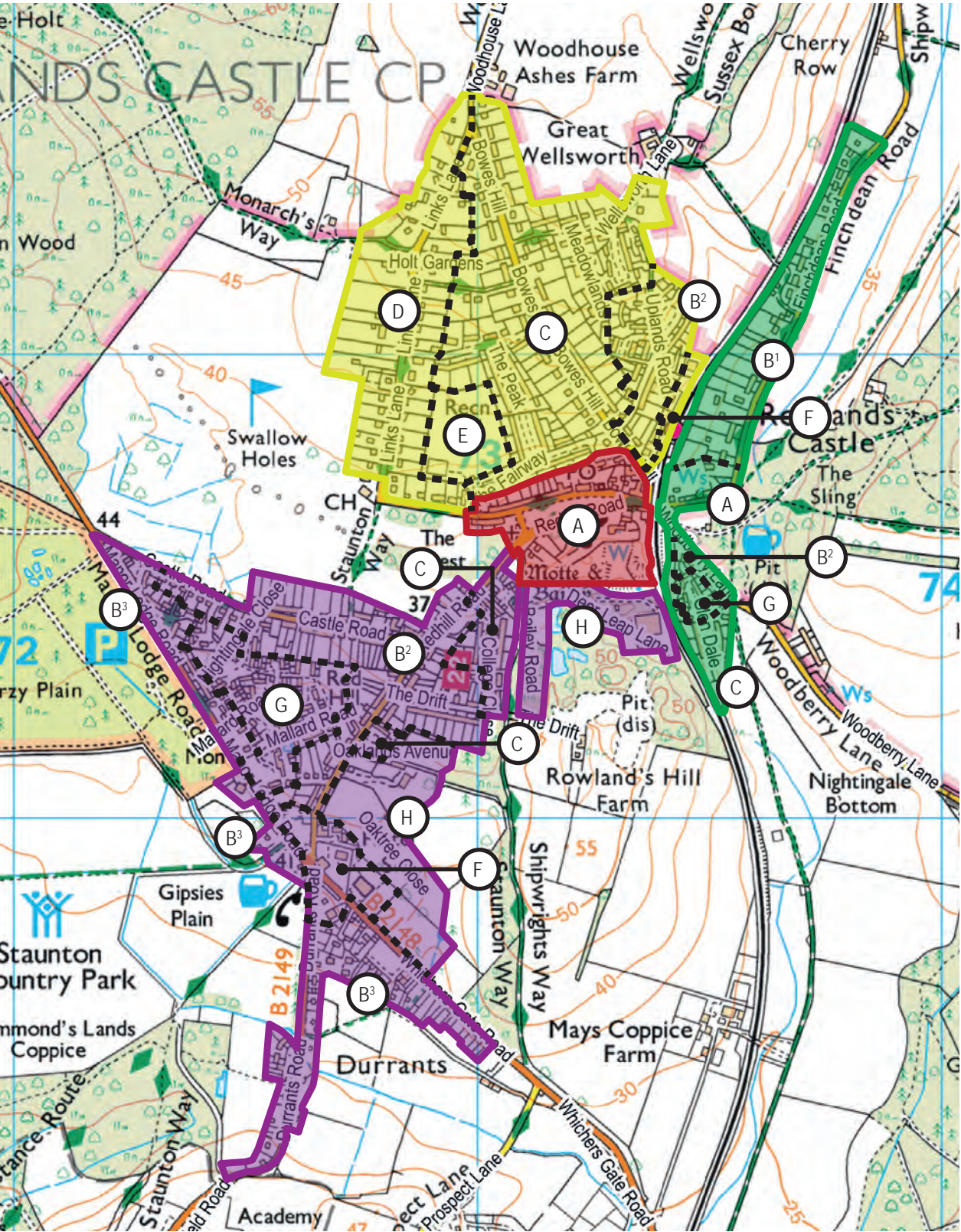
This report is split into two parts:

Part 1 relates to each of the 5 individual Settlement Character Areas, and includes broad management objectives for those areas. Each of the Settlement Character Areas refers to applicable Settlement Character Types within Part 2 of this report.

Part 2 describes each of the 8 individual Settlement Character Types, including design advice which should be taken into account by any development proposals that come forward.

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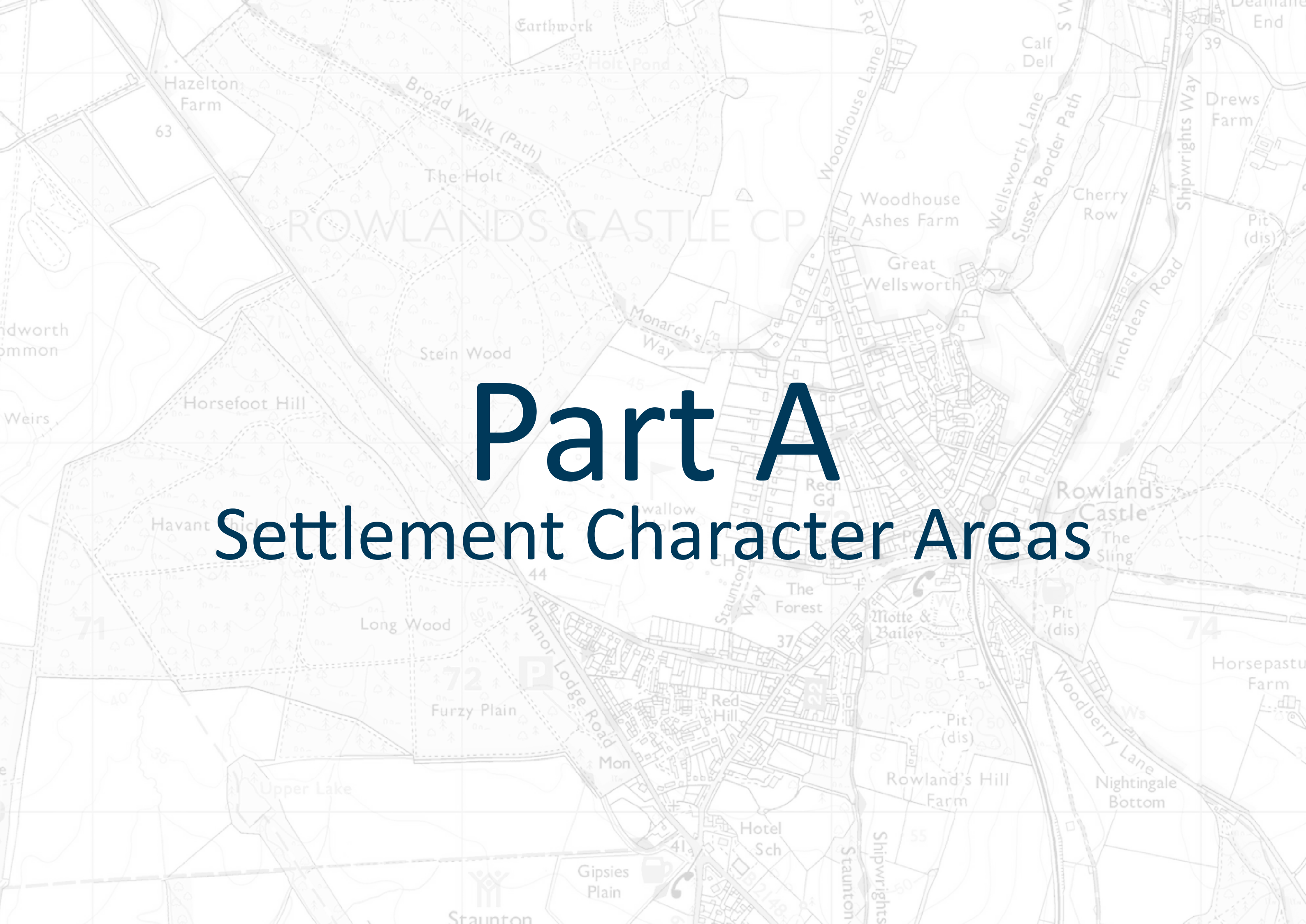


Settlement Character Areas

- 1) Village core
- 2) East of the Railway
- 3) North of the Village
- 4) South of the Village
- 5) Finchdean

Settlement Character Types

- A Historic core; service provision
- B1 Mixed housing (open aspect)
- B2 Mixed housing (enclosed)
- B3 Mixed housing (through roads)
- C Mid 20th Century housing; medium density
- D Mid 20th Century housing; low density
- E Municipal open space
- F Service provision
- G Late 20th Century housing estate
- H Early 21st Century housing estate

A detailed topographic map of the Rowlands Castle Civil Parish (CP) area. The map shows various geographical features including contour lines, roads, paths, and vegetation. Key locations labeled include Hazelton Farm, The Holt, Stein Wood, Horsefoot Hill, Havant, Long Wood, Furzy Plain, Upper Lake, Gipsies Plain, Hotel Sch, Red Hill, The Forest, Rowland's Hill Farm, Nightingale Bottom, Horsepasture Farm, Woodberry Lane, Shipwrights, and Rowlands Castle. The map also shows the Sussex Border Path and Finchdean Road. The text 'ROWLANDS CASTLE CP' is printed across the center of the map.

Part A

Settlement Character Areas

Settlement Character Area 1 - Village Core

Overall character

The village core is the social hub of Rowlands Castle. It is relatively busy, although activity is generally relaxed, and often recreational (e.g. patronage of the 2 pubs and the cafe, and sitting on The Green). The village green is the defining feature of the Area. Buildings fronting onto The Green date from the 18th century though are mainly 19th century linear groups of stylised terraces, densely built next to one another with small brick boundary walls. Whilst none are listed or considered locally as important non-designated heritage assets, when taken as a whole this built environment certainly has historic value, recognised through its designation as a Conservation Area. The Area has an overall positive and attractive character with a strong sense of place and history.

Overall form and layout:

Settlement Type integrated within the area. (Clickable link below):

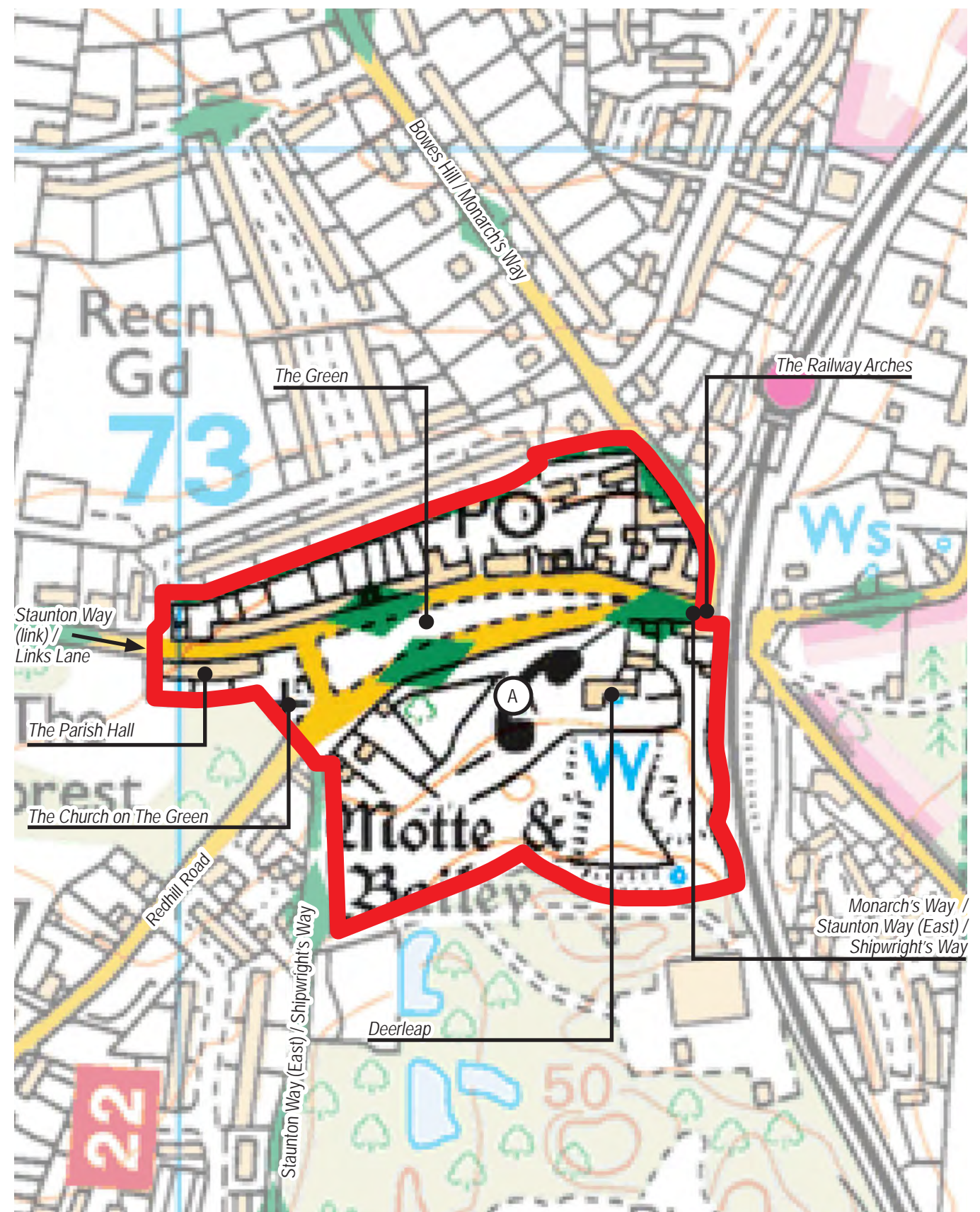
- A: Historic core / service provision

Notable buildings and structures: The railway arches are an important defining feature of the village, and a focal point at terminating views from west to east across the village green. They were built in 1858-1859 and are a visible reminder of the pivotal period when the village became less reliant upon the local agricultural economy. At the opposite end of The Green, the United Reformed Church (known as the 'Church on The Green') provides another focal point, built in 1881 and listed in the Hampshire Historic Environment Record. The Parish Hall is located on Links Lane, away from The Green. Whilst it has less of a visual presence, it is nevertheless an important community hub. Deerleap is a 19th century house within large grounds occupying much of the Area to the south of the village green. The remains of the earthworks associated with the Norman motte-and-bailey castle which gave the village its name and is a Scheduled Monument, are located within the grounds of Deerleap. However, this important feature is not in public view, situated beyond a long stretch of tall flint wall which runs the length of the southern side of The Green, marking the boundary of Deerleap. This wall is in itself locally recognised for its historic value.

Geophysical: The Area has no notable geophysical or hydrological features. The land (and in particular the village green) is generally flat.

Green Infrastructure: The village green provides a significant contribution to Green Infrastructure within the village, not only due to the expanse of grass and mature trees providing natural capital at the heart of the settlement, but also because of its major contribution to village life. It is the focus of social events such as the annual Village Fair and Christmas Carol service, and historically was used for twice yearly agricultural fairs in May and November. It is reputedly the largest village green in Hampshire, and is listed on the Hampshire Register of Village Greens. Whilst The Green is essentially an open space, a number of mature trees feature around its edges, including a distinctive copper beech at its eastern end, and another copper beech at its western end. Significant tree cover extends across the grounds of Deerleap, occupying the southern half of the Area. A wide grassed verge between the Church on The Green and Redhill Road provides connectivity between the natural capital of the village green, and the tree cover at the edge of the golf course to the west of the Area.

Routeways: Several roads converge on, and pass through the Village Core. Redhill Road approaches from the south-west, Links Lane from the north-west, and Bowes Hill from the north-east. The railway arches at the eastern end of the Area provide access to Finchdean Road, and the only access point eastwards from the Village Core. Although these roads do convey through-traffic (for example from Horndean to Chichester via Funtington), the volume of traffic is not continuous as most vehicular movements serve relatively local areas (with Redhill Road carrying traffic towards Havant, Bowes Hill carrying traffic towards Idsworth Park and Horndean, and the roads east of the railway arches carrying traffic towards Finchdean, West Marden and Westbourne). The National Cycle Network route 22 passes along the southern side of The Green, continuing through the railway arches onto Finchdean Road. This accounts for a high volume of cycle traffic, particularly travelling to / from the cafe by the junction with Bowes Hill. Several long-distance footpaths also pass through the Area. The Shipwrights Way, along with the eastern section of the Staunton Way approaches The Green from the south. A link path to another part of the Staunton Way (east) is provided via Links Lane. Monarchs Way enters the Area via Bowes Hill. All 3 of these long-distance trails pass through the railway arches.



Settlement Character Area 1 - Village Core



The Parish Hall is a well-used community venue, located on Links Lane, and not visible from The Green.



The notable flint boundary wall to Deerleap, running almost the whole length of the village green, along its southern side



A typical view across the centre of the village green with 'The Fountain' and 'The Robin Hood' public houses.



The village's commemorative 'Diamond Jubilee Mosaic' is situated to the south-west of the village green



The approach to the village green from Redhill Road, with the United Reformed Church to the left of the view



The eastern end of the 'Historic core' terminates with the double arches of the railway bridge. The village general store, hardware shop and cafe are also seen in this view.

Settlement Character Area 1 - Village Core

Setting

The Area coincides with Local Landscape Character sub-area 10ai (Chalk/Clay Transition – The Holt, Stein Wood and Golf Course).

This Settlement Character Area does not interface with countryside except a small edge on its western side abutting the Golf Course. However, heavy tree cover on this edge curtails any visual or perceived relationship between the Village Core and the countryside.

Settlement Character Area 2 (East of the railway) is adjacent to the East, Settlement Character Area 3 (North of the village) is adjacent to the North, and Settlement Character Area 4 (South of the village) is adjacent to the South.

Key characteristics

- Scenic character with few detractors and prevalence of quality buildings and materials
- Strong sense of history
- Dominated by the village green creating a sense of spaciousness at the centre
- Mature trees provide important backdrop

Broad management objectives

- Taking into account the Conservation Area status of the area, ensure that any management interventions align with the need to preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic features that inform the prevailing ambiance and character of the area.
- Consider strategies to improve management of parking on the roads around The Green
- Resist the introduction of 'traffic calming' measures, such as road humps and traffic lights.
- Consider more sustainable management of grass on The Green which includes the verges
- Maintain uninterrupted backdrop view of trees from The Green to the south and east



The roads around The Green are relatively narrow, and parked cars interrupt traffic flow. Allowing the grass around the edges of The Green to grow long (as shown beyond the cars in this photograph) would be beneficial for biodiversity

Settlement Character Area 1 - Village Core



A typical view along the village green, looking westwards from outside the doctor's surgery

Settlement Character Area 2 - East of the Railway

Overall character

A narrow, linear Area between the railway line and Finchdean Road / Woodberry Lane, following the valley floor and disconnected physically and visually from the village core by the railway line. The two roads converge at the railway arches at the narrowest and most historic part of the Area, facing onto a flint wall which marks the boundary of the Stansted Estate. Much of the Area has a direct connection with the wider countryside, including the South Downs National Park (SDNP), which wraps around the Area's northern part and abuts the eastern edge.

Overall form and layout:

Settlement Types integrated within the area. (Clickable links below):

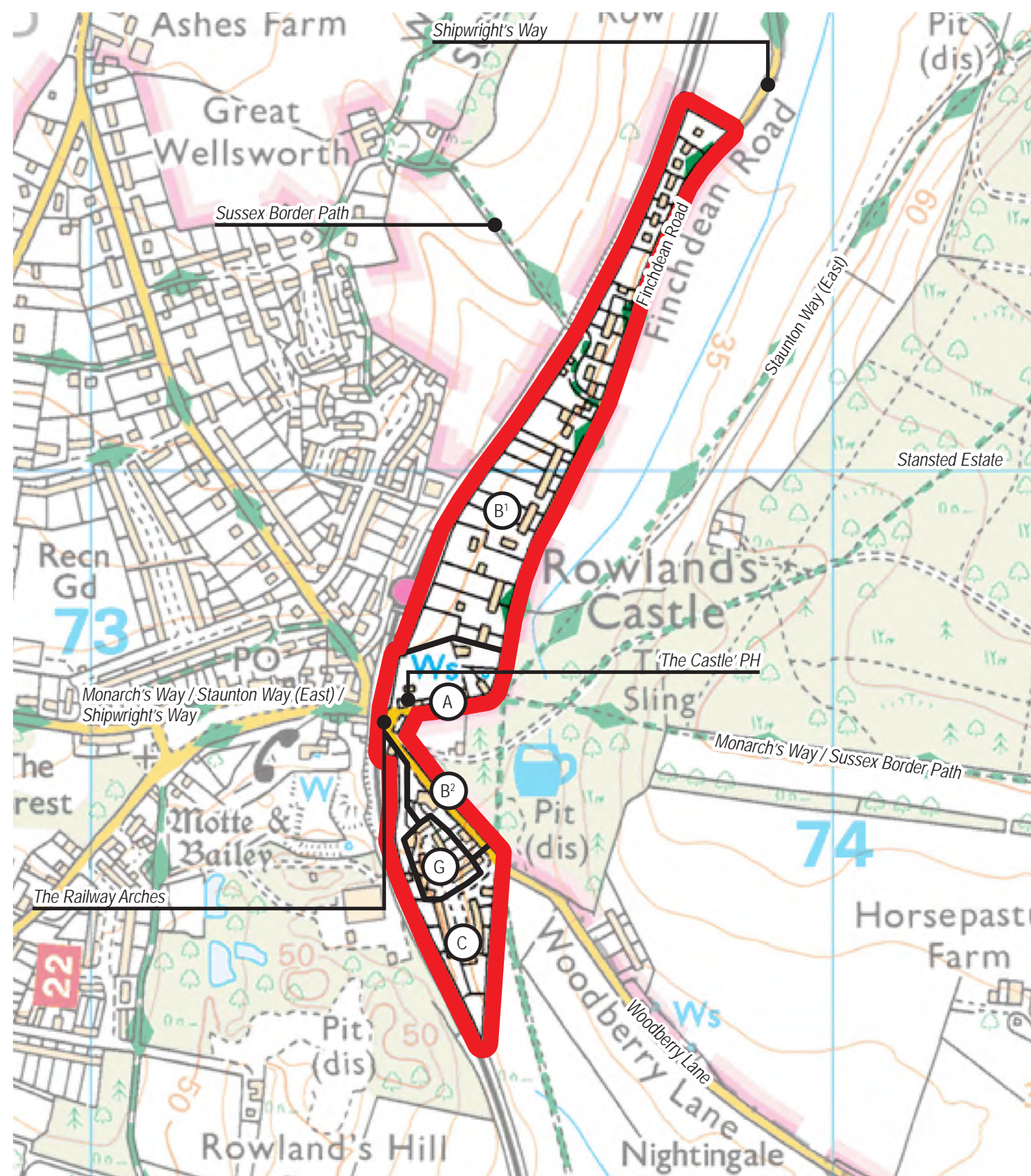
- A: Historic core / service provision
- B1: Mixed housing (open aspect)
- B2: Mixed housing (enclosed)
- C: Mid 20th century housing, medium density
- G: Late 20th century housing estate

Notable buildings and structures: A number of notable buildings and structures cluster around the historic part of the Area, near the railway arches. The arches themselves are considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, built in 1858-1859, and a tangible gateway to the village core. The Castle Inn and 3 Finchdean Road are both Grade II listed buildings, (being 19th and 18th century buildings respectively). Glen House on Woodberry Lane was built between 1901 and 1908 as a residence for the manager of the Rowlands Castle Brickworks. It uses local brick with ornate terracotta tiles in the building and entrance pillars. Beechwood House on Woodberry Lane is an imposing building, currently used as a nursing home, although not considered to be historically valuable. The flint wall marking the boundary of the Stansted Estate (lining the southern side of Finchdean Road (opposite the listed buildings), and the eastern side of Woodberry Lane) is regarded as a non-designated heritage asset, and an important contributor to the character of this part of the settlement.

Geophysical: The land within this Settlement Character Area is low-lying and broadly flat. The Lavant stream is situated a short distance to the east of Finchdean Road and Woodberry Lane. At times when the Lavant is flowing, it crosses Woodberry Lane as a ford just west of the Settlement Character Area. The low-lying topography, the chalk geology leading to rapid groundwater rise, coupled with the presence of the Lavant stream all contribute to periodic flooding in this part of the village.

Green Infrastructure: The Area does not include any recognised Local Green Spaces, or notable features of natural capital. It does however benefit from extensive tree cover in the Stansted Park Estate, adjacent to the east. Private gardens, particularly those along Finchdean Road, have a fairly high proportion of tree cover. This is most extensive as a tree belt along the western edge of the Area, adjacent to the railway line. This tree cover is at its most dense immediately behind the railway station's southbound platform, around the car park and garden to the rear of 'The Castle' public house, and west of the driveway to Glen House.

Routeways: Vehicular movement within East of the Railway is on a north-south alignment, along Finchdean Road (heading in a northerly direction towards Finchdean and West Marden), and on Woodberry Lane (heading in a southerly direction towards Westbourne). Finchdean Road also carries much cycle traffic, serving as route 22 of the National Cycle Network, and occasionally heavy large commercial traffic. Both of these roads converge at the railway arches, which is the only point where there is a physical connection to the rest of the village. Several long-distance footpaths also pass under the railway arches. The Monarchs Way heads eastwards along the Avenue which cuts through Stansted Forest, the Staunton Way heads north-eastwards, skirting along the edge of Stansted Forest, and the Shipwrights Way heads northwards along Finchdean Road. The Sussex Border Path also passes through the Area, approaching via a footbridge over the railway line west of Finchdean Road, and then joining with the Monarch's Way cutting through Stansted Forest to the east. A bridleway heads southwards along the Lavant valley, just south of the Area.



Settlement Character Area 2 - East of the Railway



The relationship between the 'historic core' east and west of the railway arch is apparent in this photograph. 'The Castle' public house is a notable building and facility in this part of the village.



A typical view on Finchdean Road, with mixed housing at the settlement edge.



Bungalows on Finchdean Road overlook the open fieldscape to the left of this photograph. The backdrop in this area is frequently wooded, emphasising the perceived ruralness of the village.



Beechwood House Nursing Home is a large, imposing building on Woodberry Lane, with some building extensions which are unsympathetic to the original architectural style.



Medium density, mid 20th century housing on Glen Dale, with grassed verges and private front gardens that are open to the street. As on Finchdean Road, the backdrop to the street scene is wooded.



Late 20th century housing on Glen Dale, with grassed verges, and a block paved road without roadside footpaths.

Settlement Character Area 2 - East of the Railway

Setting

The part of the Area northwards of the railway arches coincides with Local Landscape Character sub-area 3ai west (Enclosed Chalk Downland – New Idsworth) continuing to the north and west. The part of the Area southwards of the railway arches coincides with Local Landscape Character sub-area 10aiv (Lavant Valley South), continuing southwards.

The landscape abutting the Area along its eastern edge is within West Sussex, and is also within the South Downs National Park. Open fieldscapes lie to the east of the northern part of Finchdean Road, whilst the east of the southern part of Finchdean Road and Woodberry Lane is forested. This landscape is described as Landscape Character Area B3 (Stansted to West Dean Wooded Estate Downland) within the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment.

The Area is adjacent to Settlement Character Areas 1 (The Village Core), 2 (North of the Village) and 3 (South of the Village), although the railway line, elevated on an embankment physically separates these areas. The only exception being the railway arches which provide a conduit directly into the Village Core.

Settlement edges and gateways

Finchdean Road winds its way through gently undulating fieldscape on its approach to Rowlands Castle, with loosely distributed houses on only one side of the road providing a gentle transition to the built environment. A dense hedgerow lines the lane opposite those houses, above which a gentle grassed hillside topped with woodland can be seen.

A footpath (the Staunton Way (east)) on that hillside provides views back towards Finchdean Road, where the houses are seen in a distinctly rural context, with agricultural fields in front, and on high ground beyond.

A footpath (the Sussex Border Path) crosses that high ground, east of Great Wellsworth. From this orientation the built environment along Finchdean Road is hardly perceptible, with only the occasional roof visible over the crest of the land form. This approach to the settlement offers a particularly rural scene, with arable fieldscape in the foreground, and a wooded hillside in the background, with very little built form in between.

To the south of the Area, Rowlands Castle becomes apparent in views from Woodberry Lane some distance before the road enters the built environment. The houses at Glen Dale are situated on a hillside, overlooking low-lying land, with Woodberry Lane enjoying an elevated prospect from the opposite slopes. The scene is nevertheless rural, with significant tree cover rising up the hillside beyond Glen Dale, and a pastoral landscape in front.



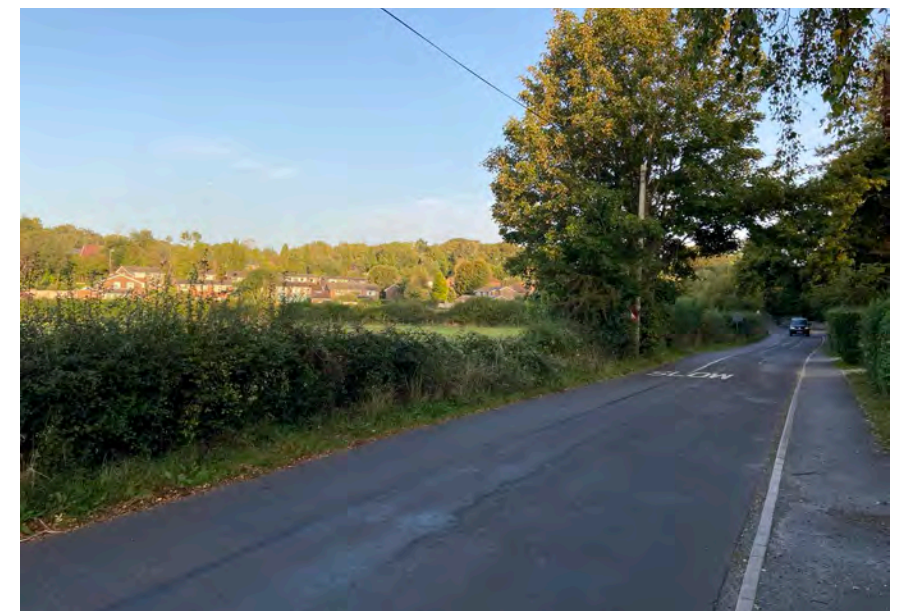
Finchdean Road (also the Shipwrights Way): The northernmost housing represents a 'gateway' to the village.



The Sussex Border Path east of Great Wellsworth: Unobstructed views across undulating, open fieldscape with the roofs of properties on Finchdean Road just visible, set amongst trees, over the crest of the hill



Staunton Way (east): Unobstructed views across low-lying open fieldscape towards properties on Finchdean Road, set amongst mature trees and with a backdrop of elevated land towards Great Wellsworth.



Woodberry Lane: Rural south-eastern approach to the village with 20th century housing on Glen Dale visible against a wooded backdrop.

Settlement Character Area 2 - East of the Railway

Key characteristics

- Narrow linear area between Finchdean Road and the railway line
- Strong visual and physical connection with the wider countryside
- Physically disconnected from the rest of the village by the railway line but providing a clear edge of, and rural approach to, the village
- Mature trees on rising ground to west of the area provide a wooded backdrop in views from the east, including from the SDNP

Broad management objectives

- Improve infrastructure to manage storm-water drainage and future sewerage needs. Ensure that any development proposals are designed to withstand flooding, not impede flows, and not place additional burden on the drainage system.
- Seek to preserve historic features, such as the flint wall surrounding the Stansted Estate.
- Encourage best practice management of trees, hedges and woodland to retain green character
- Facilitate the movement of walkers through the area, possibly with appropriate way-marking, taking care not to create street clutter.
- Development in this area must be carefully planned to retain and enhance the rural green character. In addition, it must avoid a negative impact on the views to and from the South Downs National Park or the SDNP Dark Skies policy. In particular, this applies to additional housing on small parcels of currently undeveloped land at the edges of the settlement, including garden spaces.



Flood waters surging across Woodberry Lane



Where the Lavant stream crosses Woodberry Lane traffic movement can be impeded after storm surges

Settlement Character Area 3 - North of the Village

Overall character

This part of the village is dominated by residential landholding, almost all of which has been developed throughout the 20th century. This built environment forms a triangular street pattern formed by Links Lane, Bowes Hill, and The Green (within the adjacent 'Village Core' settlement character area).

Aside from residential landholding, the railway station, and adjacent builders yard is located in the south-easternmost corner of the triangle. The area is punctuated in its centre with the public open space of the recreation ground.

Links Lane is of particular note, with large houses set back from the road within large leafy gardens. Throughout the area individually designed detached houses predominate, with the exception of Uplands Road and Broad Croft which feature semi-detached houses and bungalows of consistent, repeating style. The street scene throughout the area benefits from vegetated front gardens, and appears spacious, even on Uplands Road which has grass verges and a central green space.

The area is particularly well-connected to the countryside to its east, north and west, which (with the exception of much of the golf course that abuts part of the eastern edge of this area) is designated as the South Downs National Park. Woodhouse Lane continuing northwards from the apex of the triangular street pattern, linking Rowlands Castle village to Idsworth House, and Horndean beyond. 3 long-distance footpaths also provide easy access to the countryside.

Overall form and layout:

Settlement Types integrated within the area. (Clickable links below):

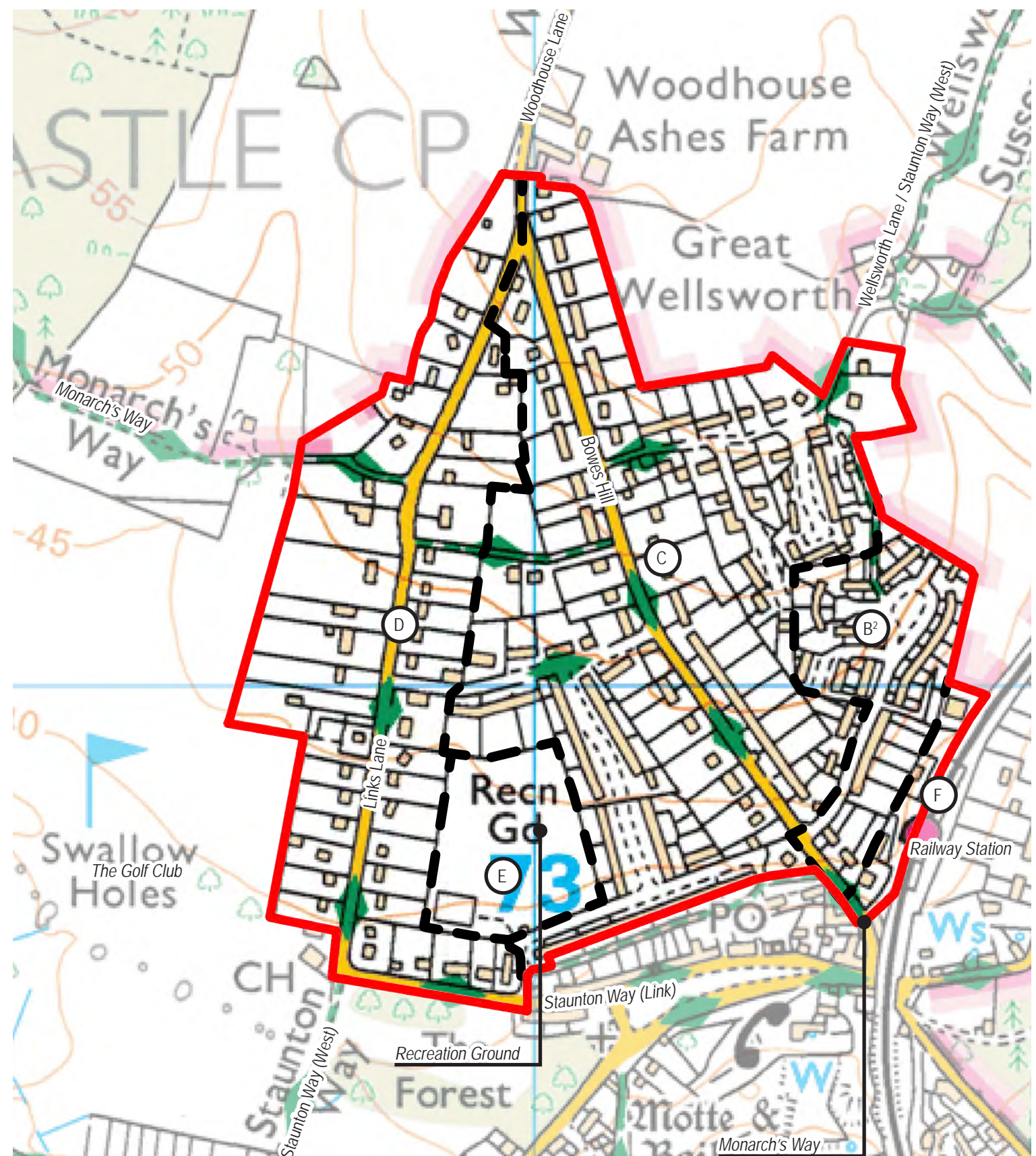
- B2: Mixed housing (enclosed)
- C: Mid 20th century housing, medium density
- D: Mid 20th century housing, low density
- E: Municipal open space
- F: Service provision

Notable buildings and structures: The railway station building (which is a Grade II Listed building) was constructed around 1850, and played a significant role in increasing the pace of the development at Rowlands Castle. The facilities provided by the recreation ground are important for the local community. Several other properties in the Area are considered to be undesigned heritage assets, including Stein Cottage (47 Links Lane), and Flint Cottage (81 Bowes Hill) which is thought to be the oldest building in Rowlands Castle. 4 properties on Bowes Hill (Nos. 37, 39, 56 and 79) are noted as having connections with the former Rowlands Castle Brickworks, using materials including ornate terracotta tiles from the brickworks.

Geophysical: The land rises gently but noticeably northwards throughout the area, from about 42m AOD to about 62m AOD.

Green Infrastructure: The open space of the recreation ground, edged with mature trees, makes an important contribution to Rowlands Castle's Green Infrastructure. Similarly, the open space at the northern end of Uplands Road (known as 'Uplands Green') is considered to be a Local Green Space, informally used for recreation. The gardens of houses on Links Lane are particularly large, many of them featuring mature tree cover. A similar belt of mature trees within the rear gardens of properties on the northern side of Bowes Hill, creating a buffer with the more recent developments at Meadowlands, Broadcroft and Uplands Road to the east.

Routeways: The roads in the North of the Village, and in particular Bowes Hill, convey local traffic from the centre of Rowlands Castle towards Idsworth House and on to Horndean. However, traffic in the area is increasing as the road also provides a convenient link from Horndean to Chichester via Funtington to avoid the frequent congestion on the A27. Bowes Hill also serves as a link route between routes 22 and 222 of the National Cycle Network. This part of the village is very well served by regional trails. The Monarch's Way and Staunton Way (which also serves as the European Walking Route E9) both cross the area, resulting in a high number of walkers passing through the local streets. The route of the Staunton Way (and European Walking Route E9) follows the historic drove route of Wellsworth Lane (beyond the extents of the Settlement Character Area).



Settlement Character Area 3 - North of the Village



The recreation ground is much valued by the local community for amenity, and as open space contributing to the village's Green Infrastructure



Large houses set back from the road on Links Lane form an 'Area of Special Housing Character' as designated in the East Hampshire Local Plan Second Review (March 2006).



Houses on Meadowlands have a consistent architectural style, albeit lack a 'sense of place' associated with Rowlands Castle. Nevertheless, staggering the building line in relation to the street is visually interesting



The historic railway station (right) and builder's merchant (background). The station can be regarded as a hub of activity, and a place where commuting local residents often meet. Congestion in the car park can be an issue.



Houses on The Fairway are detached and relatively large, set back from the road beyond moderate sized front gardens, with hedges consistently lining the roadside.



Properties on Uplands Road include stylised semi-detached houses, which benefit from facing onto public open space. Few properties on this street have driveways, and on-street parking bays are provided.

Settlement Character Area 3 - North of the Village

Setting

The Area coincides with Local Landscape Character sub-area 10ai (Chalk/Clay Transition – The Holt, Stein Wood and Golf Course) continuing to the west, and Local Landscape Character sub-area 3ai west (Enclosed Chalk Downland – New Idsworth) continuing to the east.

The open fieldscapes abutting the northern and eastern edges of the Settlement Character Area are within the South Downs National Park. Much of the Golf Course falls outside of the National Park designation, abutting the south-western side of the Settlement Character Area.

Settlement Character Area 1 (The Village Core) is adjacent to the south.

Settlement edges and gateways

Woodhouse Lane is edged with dense hedgerows, creating a leafy approach to the village from the north. The first indication of the built environment is at the junction of Bowes Hill and Links Lane, approximately 200m south of the 30mph zone. Similarly, due to dense tree cover, walkers using the Monarchs Way across the golf course to the west are also unaware of the built environment until they are adjacent to the rear boundaries of the properties on Links Lane. By contrast, views from the Staunton Way / Sussex Border Path (Wellsworth Lane) north of Great Wellsworth, and from the footpath to Finchdean Road east of Great Wellsworth both offer unobstructed views across open fieldscape towards the rear of properties along the eastern edge of the Settlement Character Area.



Monarch's Way (west): Tree cover to the west of Links Lane restricts visibility of the built environment to a close proximity.



The Sussex Border Path, east of Great Wellsworth: Unobstructed views across undulating, open fieldscape towards properties set amongst mature trees along Bowes Hill and Wellsworth Lane.



Wellsworth Lane (also the Staunton Way (west) and the Sussex Border Path): Unobstructed views across flat, open fieldscape towards properties set amongst mature trees along Bowes Hill and Wellsworth Lane.



Bowes Hill: The built environment becomes apparent at the junction with Links Lane, with roadside footpaths, clipped hedgerows, telegraph poles / wires, and glimpses of houses set-back beyond gardens with mature tree cover.

Settlement Character Area 3 - North of the Village

Key characteristics

- Individually designed detached houses, generally low or very low density, set within large gardens with driveways and mature trees, contributing to 'leafy' streetscapes with an absence of cars parked on-street.
- Extensive vegetation in the gardens and public open spaces of the area play an important role in providing Ecosystem Services within the village.
- A high degree of tranquillity within the area's streets. Generally low levels of vehicle movement, albeit more frequent on Bowes Hill. Other activity tends to be low-key / domestic in nature.
- Part of Links Lane is included within EHDC's Neighbourhood Character Study, and is designated as an 'Area of Special Housing Character' within the East Hampshire Local Plan Second Review (March 2006). This particularly 'leafy' and tranquil street is considered to provide an important contribution to the street scene, worthy of protection.
- The recreation ground is a much-valued community facility and publicly accessible green space, edged with mature trees.
- The Railway station in the south-easternmost corner of the area is the only heritage asset within the area, and provided the catalyst for significant expansion of the village from the 1850s onwards.
- The area is particularly well connected to the wider countryside (including the South Downs National Park) that surrounds it. The Monarch's Way and Staunton Way both pass through.

Broad management objectives

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of natural capital within the area (particularly the mature trees within private gardens and at the edges of the recreation ground, and the hedgerows that form property boundaries).
- Ensure the Recreation Ground and the green space at Uplands Road are retained as open spaces for amenity use by the community
- Recognise the historic importance of the railway station. Ensure any development or installation of railway infrastructure is sympathetic to its Victorian aesthetic. Consider the possibility of installing an information panel and improving access to the down platform for those with impaired mobility or children's pushchairs.
- Facilitate the movement of walkers through the area, possibly with appropriate way-marking, taking care not to create street clutter.



Extensive tree cover within front gardens along Links Lane

Settlement Character Area 4 - South of the Village

Overall character

This Area is perhaps the busiest part of the village, which is greatly influenced by its connections to the wider highway network and in particular the busy thoroughfares of Whichers Gate Road, Durrants Road and Manor Lodge Road which pass through. The significant tree cover alongside these roads (and in particular Havant Thicket) influence a perception of the village being set amongst woodland. The Area is considered to be generally green throughout, with a high degree of mature tree cover punctuating the streetscapes, together with verdant gardens and incidental green spaces within the built environment.

The area has a predominantly residential land-use, but with a cluster of commercial premises, the Parish Church and Primary School at the junction where the three principal roads converge. The built environment in this Area presents considerably varied styles and grain (the pattern of plots within the built environment), with a succession of development (some ad-hoc, and some speculative) continuing from Victorian times to the present day. More recent development has in-filled the triangle between Castle Road, Redhill Road, and Manor Lodge Road, and worked eastwards.

Although the earliest developed roads (Castle Road and Redhill Road) extend south-west away from the historic core, there is little visual and physical connection to it. There are extensive connections to countryside, including Staunton Country Park to the south.

Overall form and layout:

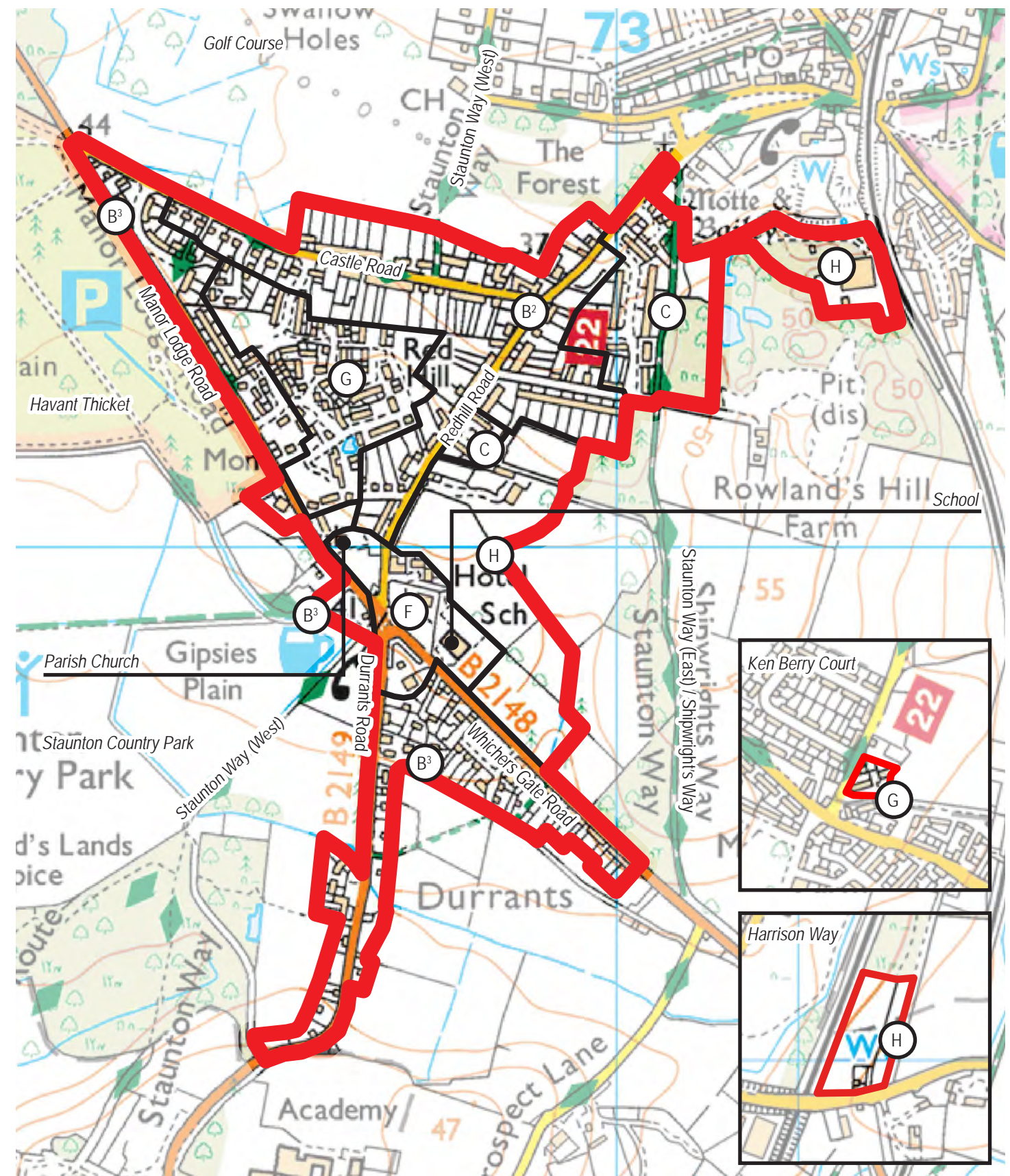
Settlement Types integrated within the area. (Clickable links below):

- B1: Mixed housing (enclosed)
- B3: Mixed housing (through road)
- C: Mid 20th century housing, medium density
- F: Service provision
- G: Late 20th century housing estate
- H: Early 21st century housing estate

Notable buildings and structures: This Area has a wealth of Grade II Listed buildings and structures, including the War Memorial and the 'Kings Stone' (commemorating the occasion when King George VI reviewed the troops prior to the D-Day landings). Autumn House and Woodlands, the Granary to the east of Redhill House, and 'The Beacon' are all Grade II Listed buildings. Un-listed buildings regarded by the local community as highly valuable due to their associations with the village history include the Old Village School, Manor Lodge and North Lodge. Similar value is attributed to the brick pillar and low wall, which are the last remains of the former Stansted College on the boundary at College Close and Redhill Road. Several buildings on Redhill Road have associations with the former Rowlands Castle Brickworks, including Florence Villa (built in 1893 and featuring ornate terracotta tiles), Hillside Cottages, and No. 101 Redhill Road.

Geophysical: The landform of 'Red Hill' provides a distinctive component of this Area's character. The land rises gently but noticeably, southwards from about 35m AOD near Stansted Close to about 45m AOD near Hill Brow Close, and a similar elevation at Manor Lodge. The landform gently slopes downwards further to the south, to approximately 30m AOD part way down Durrants Road where it is crossed by an open field drain (culverted), before rising upwards again towards Havant Academy, and approximately 35m AOD at the southern extent of the built environment on Whichers Gate Road.

Green Infrastructure: This Area includes numerous recognised Green Spaces, which are associated with several decades of housing development. Perhaps the most notable is Whichers Common, which provides a grassed area for recreation, with mature trees at its edges, with houses set back. This provides an attractive 'green' punctuation to the built environment experienced by numerous motorists passing along the B2148 (Whichers Gate Road). A similar green space and set-back of housing is experienced at the opposite end of the this through route within the village, with an area of grassed amenity space between Manor Lodge Road and Kings Close. Several incidental green spaces occur within the Kings Meadow Estate. Footpaths through these spaces provide convenient access to Rowlands Copse, which is a small area of remnant woodland bound by housing, providing access to nature within the built environment. Whilst Rowlands Copse is generally unknown by Rowlands Castle residents, those who live on the Kings Meadow Estate value this secluded refuge and use it regularly for dog exercise and for children's play. The more recent Woodlands Avenue, Deerleap Lane, Bailey Road and Oaklands Avenue housing developments all include incidental green spaces, some with more formal areas of public open space.



Settlement Character Area 4 - South of the Village



Mixed housing on Castle Road



Durrants Road, Whichers Gate Road and Manor Lodge Road are busy routes for through traffic at the southern edge of the village. However, the forested backdrop influences a perception of rurality to the village setting.



The 'Kings Meadow' estate, built in the 1980s has some good examples of spatial arrangement and varied architectural style.



Several businesses, the Parish Church and school cluster around the junction of Manor Lodge Road, Redhill Road, Durrants Road and Whichers Gate Road.



St. John's Church and church centre is an important hub within this part of the village



21st century housing estates have built form that is more densely arranged than the 'Kings Meadow' estate a few decades earlier. Nevertheless, architectural articulation is appropriate for the village.

Settlement Character Area 4 - South of the Village

Routeways: A defining character of this Area is the presence of busy roads, conveying traffic along the southern edge of the village from / to Horndean (along Manor Lodge Road), Havant (along Durrants Road) and Emsworth (along Whichers Gate Road). Redhill Road takes local traffic northwards, and Castle Road takes local traffic eastwards from the main highway network, leading towards the Village Core.

As elsewhere around the village, the presence of several long distance footpaths suggest that leisure walkers will pass through this Area, with some expectation of enjoying its scenic amenity. They would approach from the south on the western part of Staunton Way, passing along Manor Lodge Road and Castle Road before turning northwards to pass through the Golf Course. This western part of the Staunton Way also serves as the European Walking Route E9. The eastern part of Staunton Way, along with the Shipwrights Way passes along Prospect Lane and the drove road to the east of the Area, and continues between College Close and Bailey Road. This is also route 22 of the National Cycle Network.

Setting

Much of the Area coincides with Local Landscape Character sub-area 10aii (Sink Hole Belt - Manor Lodge Road and Blendworth Common) continuing to the north-west. Local Landscape Character sub-area 10aiv (Lavant Valley South) is situated along the southern side of Whichers Gate Road and the eastern side of Durrants Road, continuing to the south-east. Local Landscape Character sub-area 10aiii west (Wooded Claylands - Havant Thicket (and Gypsies Plain)) is situated to the western side of Durrants Road, continuing to the west, along the southern side of Manor Lodge Road.

This landscape is a mixture of open fieldscapes, (particularly to the south-east, within the Lavant Valley, and to the north-west towards Blendworth Common), and woodland (specifically Havant Thicket, to the west).

The allotments and grazing land to the east of Durrants Road are situated beyond the built environment, but are not typical of much of the surrounding agricultural landscape. Both are relatively cluttered areas of open land, with fencing, outhouses, and other paraphernalia. To some extent, these features detract from the overall scenic amenity of the village's rural setting, although views are fairly limited, other than for walkers using the footpath that cuts through the area. Pressure for development here, or intensification of the equestrian management of the land, would threaten the leafy perception of the village's setting, and would represent further intrusion into the gap separating Rowlands Castle and Havant.

Settlement Character Area 1 (The Village Core) is adjacent to the north.

Settlement edges and gateways

Many motorists' impression of Rowlands Castle is limited to the experience of passing along Durrants Road, Whichers Gate Road and Manor Lodge Road. Arriving into Rowlands Castle on Manor Lodge Road is perhaps the most striking, as the road cuts through a deeply wooded landscape on a straight alignment, suddenly arriving at the flint facade of Manor Lodge, and beyond that more housing set back from the eastern side of the road. The woodland of Havant Thicket continues on the western side of the road for some considerable distance, almost until the junction with Durrants Road and Whichers Gate Road.

Arriving from the south, either on Durrants Road or Whichers Gate Road, provides a less wooded experience, although large blocks of tree cover do give these routes a verdant scenery, punctuated by views through to agricultural fieldscape. On Durrants Road, the flint facade and ornate gables of No. 82 Durrants Road come into view as the road sweeps over the crest of a hill and curves past Staunton Country Park. On Whichers Gate Road, motorists pass the cluster of buildings at Whichers Gate Farm set back from the road, but somewhat visible and serving as a visual transition to the built environment.

Walking from Staunton Country Park along the eastern section of Staunton Way provides a distinctly rural experience. Significant tree cover to the west of Durrants Road, and Havant Thicket to the west of Manor Lodge Road ensure that there is little perception of approaching a built environment, almost until the path emerges at the busy road junction opposite the Harvester public house, and the petrol station.



The Shipwrights Way / Staunton Way (east): This ancient drove road penetrates the settlement character area, extending a sense of wooded rurality between Deerleap Lane and Whichers Gate Road.



Manor Lodge Road: The flint facade of Manor Lodge is seen as a first impression of the village to many passing motorists.



Staunton Way (west): The approach to the village from Staunton Country Park cuts through paddocks. Due to the heavy tree cover, unfamiliar walkers would be unaware of the village until they are within close proximity.



Prospect Lane (also the Shipwrights Way, and Staunton Way (east)): The view towards the rear of properties on Whichers Gate Road, with a wooded backdrop

Settlement Character Area 4 - South of the Village

Key characteristics

- Defined by busy roads which detract from visual and aural tranquillity
- An intricate network of streets, but essentially formed around 5 'spine roads' of Redhill Road, Castle Road, Manor Lodge Road, and further to the south Whichers Gate Road and Durrants Road.
- A considerable variety of architectural style and grain
- Distinctive undulating landform
- A sense of being in a wooded setting (influenced particularly by the land-cover to the south) but with a broadly 'green' character throughout
- Strong connections to the surrounding countryside, notably to Staunton Country Park, and Havant Thicket to the south, although often with limited visual connection due to dense tree cover.
- The southern edge of the area forms an important transition to the countryside beyond, contributing to the leafy perception of the village's setting, and maintaining a sense of the gap separating Rowlands Castle from Havant which has seen significant intrusion in recent years.

Broad management objectives

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of natural capital within the area (particularly the mature trees within private gardens, and incidental green spaces within housing developments).
- Encourage best practice management of trees, hedges and woodland to retain green character. In particular maintain and enhance Rowlands Copse as a publicly accessible refuge for wildlife.
- Ensure the formal green spaces at Whichers Common, Kings Close, and within the recent Woodlands Avenue and Deerleap Lane housing developments are retained as open spaces for amenity use by the community.
- Facilitate the movement of walkers through the area, possibly with appropriate way-marking, taking care not to create street clutter.
- Ensure any new development does not contribute to coalescence.



Open green spaces, such as this at Whichers Common, should be sustainably managed for amenity use by local residents, whilst also considering opportunities for improving biodiversity with initiatives such as leaving areas of long grass.

Settlement Character Area 5 - Finchdean

Overall character

A small, rural hamlet remote from Rowlands Castle village and with a clear separate identity. The hamlet is clustered around the junction of four rural lanes, nestled beneath the dramatic landform of a part-wooded scarp slope. The built environment centres on a historic green, within which is a historic 'Pound', now serving as an amenity space with benches. The hamlet is situated entirely within the South Downs National Park, and is regularly visited by leisure walkers and cyclists who pass through, often stopping for refreshment at 'The George' public house.

Overall form and layout:

Settlement Types integrated within the area. (Clickable links below):

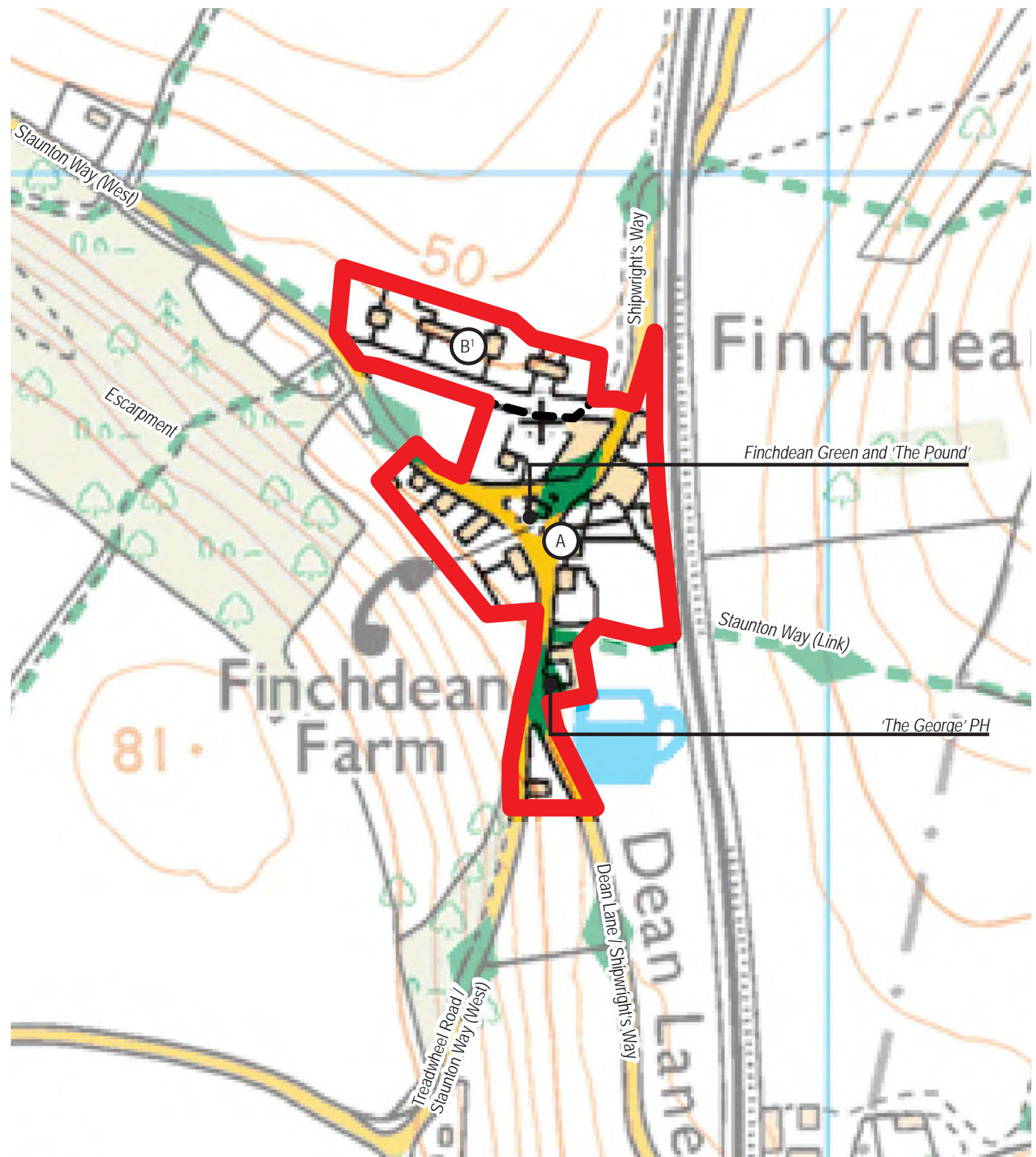
- A: Historic core / service provision
- B1: Mixed housing (open aspect)

Notable buildings and structures: A wealth of Grade II Listed buildings and structures cluster around Finchdean Green, including Finchdean House and the small United Reformed Chapel on Ashcroft Lane. Cottages at Nos. 53/54, 56/58 and 59 are all Grade II listed, as is 'The Limes' on the opposite side of the green. A cast iron 'Type K6' telephone kiosk situated centrally in the green, beside 'the Pound' is also Grade II listed. 'The Pound' itself is not listed, although recognised by the local community for its historic importance. It is a central feature of Finchdean Green. It is a walled enclosure attached to the former Blacksmiths Shop, first shown on the 1838 Tithe map. It is now an open space for recreation, including benches and shelter. 'The George' public house is amongst the most notable buildings in the hamlet. Although it is not recognised for its historic value, it is a focal point for social interaction and local community events. The 11th century St. Hubert's church lies nearby to the north of the hamlet.

Geophysical: The hamlet sits as a cluster of buildings at the meeting point of 2 valleys. Most dramatically, a scarp slope rises from approximately 45m AOD to 81m AOD immediately south-east of the hamlet. A gentler slope up onto Idsworth Down occurs to the north, with similar topography to the east, beyond the railway line. Neither of these valleys have permanent watercourses, although a strong winter stream can flow in either or both valleys in wet conditions. Known as lavants, these are recognised by the Environment Agency as enmained rivers and management of the water course is their ultimate responsibility. The lavants merge by the railway bridge at the back of the George Inn to flow as a combined river through Deanlane End into Rowlands Castle. A ditch and culvert are part of the lavant infrastructure in the middle of the hamlet. These can be filled with fast flowing water in wet winters as was the case in 2014 and 2020.

Green Infrastructure: Finchdean Green is not currently legally registered as a 'Village Green'. However, it is considered to be a Local Green Space and a non-designated heritage asset. It is an important recreational space for the local community (used from time-to-time as an informal 'kick-around' area for local children), whilst the shelter and seats within 'The Pound' are frequently used by local people as well as passing walkers and cyclists. In terms of natural capital, Finchdean Green is a broadly grass-covered space, with relatively little tree cover. A ditch / culvert runs along the northern edge of the space.

Routeways: Finchdean is a quiet hamlet, with normally relatively little motorised traffic using the country lanes which approach it. Dean Lane and Treadwheel Road approach from the south (from West Marden / Rowlands Castle, and from Horndean respectively). Un-named roads approach from the north-west (from Chalton), and from the north-east (from Old Idsworth, and onwards to Chalton). It is likely that these lanes are frequently used for leisure purposes, with cyclists known to regularly pass through the hamlet. The National Cycle Network route 22 passes through the village along Treadwheel Road and the lane to / from Old Idsworth. Similarly, the dense footpath network around the hamlet provide routes for recreational walkers. The Shipwrights Way approaches on Dean Lane, and continues along the lane to Old Idsworth to the north-east of the hamlet. The western part of Staunton Way approaches on Treadwheel Road continuing along the lane to Chalton to the north-west of the hamlet. This route also serves as the European Walking Route E9. A link footpath to the eastern part of Staunton Way leads eastwards from the hamlet, crossing the railway line to the rear of 'The George' public house. 'The George' is a popular refreshment stop for passing cyclists and walkers.



Settlement Character Area 5 - Finchdean



'The George' public house is a popular draw for local residents and walkers / cyclists passing through the hamlet.



Some of the listed cottages to the south side of the green, with the green and the Shipwrights Way sculpture in the foreground.



The flint walled enclosure of the historic village Pound, (including a relatively modern shelter) sitting within the green, adjacent to the former Blacksmiths premises.



Flooding can occasionally cause severe problems within Finchdean, as seen here on the lane towards Chalton



Mixed housing on Ashcroft Lane sit on slightly elevated ground, looking out over a field towards the historic core of the hamlet



'Carpenters' cottage provides the backdrop to Finchdean Green (seen in the foreground of this photo).

Settlement Character Area 5 - Finchdean

Setting

Most of the hamlet sits within Local Landscape Character sub-area 3ai west (Enclosed Chalk Downland - New Idsworth) which continues to the west and south. The northern part of the hamlet, sits within Local Landscape Character 3aii (Open Chalk Downland - Idsworth and Chalton Downs), which continues to the north.

The railway line, to the east of the hamlet, forms a tangible end to its setting.

Much of this landscape is open fieldscape, some of which climbs up onto the downland north of the hamlet. A steeply sided wooded escarpment forms the southern edge of the hamlet.

The hamlet is situated entirely within the South Downs National Park.

Settlement edges and gateways

Every approach to the hamlet has a deeply rural feel. Each of the lanes is relatively narrow, winding, undulating, and lined with dense native hedgerows. Where gaps in the hedgerows allow, the scene beyond is generally one of agricultural fieldscape. The built environment of Finchdean emerges into the rural scene quite quickly on each of these approaches, albeit the high degree of native vegetation throughout the hamlet ensures the contrast between the agricultural landscape and the built environment is not stark. Large hedgerows provide a continuity throughout. Similarly, a backdrop of fieldscape and woodland on elevated land rising above the hamlet tends also to factor as a consistent part of the visual composition.

Whilst each of these approaches to Finchdean is considered to provide an attractive scene, walkers on the link section of the Staunton Way to the east of the hamlet experience a longer and more distant exposure to the built environment. This path cuts through undulating open fieldscape, from where unobstructed views are afforded towards the buildings clustered within the hamlet. A variety of different materials is apparent, with flint, red brick and rendered walls, along with slate and clay tiled roofs. These buildings are set amongst a large quantity of mature trees, with a backdrop of the steep scarp slope, partially wooded, and partially pasture land. The railway line in this scene is surprisingly unobtrusive, with significant lane-side vegetation helping to mask its appearance.



Staunton Way (east): Unobstructed views across undulating arable fieldscape, towards buildings clustered within the hamlet, set amongst trees, and with backdrop of a partially wooded, partially field covered hillside.



South Lane (also the Staunton Way (west)) at the junction with Ashcroft Lane: Rural, hedge-lined approach to the hamlet with wooded backdrop provided by valley side to east and glimpses of old buildings



The road from Old Idsworth, north of the hamlet (also the Shipwrights Way): Distinctive valley landform rises as a backdrop to the hamlet.



Dean Lane (also the Shipwrights Way) at the junction with Treadwheel Road (also the Staunton Way (west)): Rural southern approach to the hamlet, which has a leafy character created by the abundance of mature trees throughout the hamlet.

Settlement Character Area 5 - Finchdean

Key characteristics

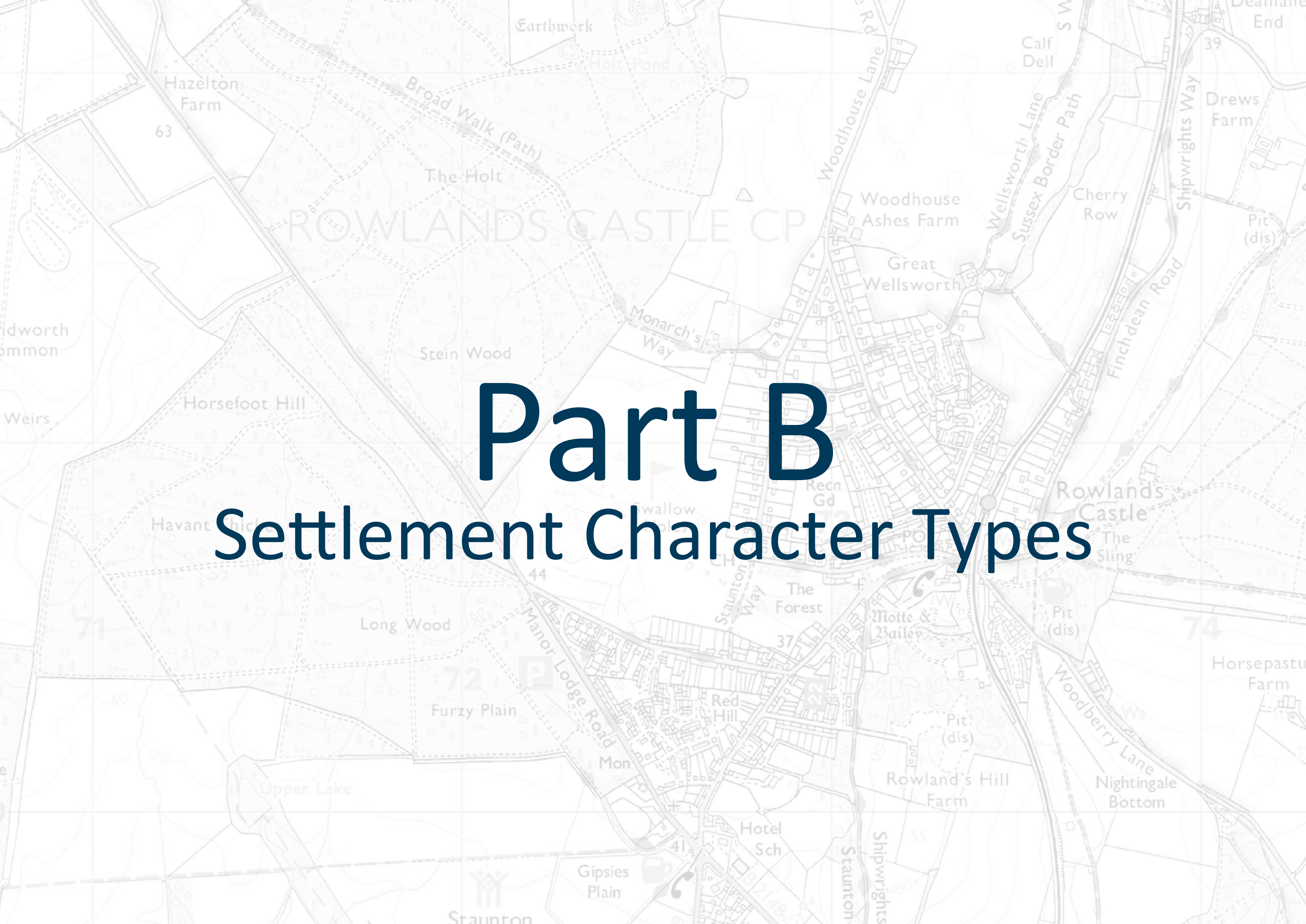
- Overriding rural character with strong sense of place and connection with the wider countryside
- Clear sense of history and attractive quality with generally high quality buildings and materials
- Strong visual and physical connection with the surrounding countryside
- Distinctive valley landform
- Generally tranquil

Broad management objectives

- Consider strategies to improve management of parking around the green
- Consider opportunities to convey information about the hamlet's cultural and heritage assets, (such as 'The Pound') to passing leisure walkers and cyclists.
- Facilitate the movement of walkers through the area, possibly with appropriate way-marking, taking care not to create street clutter.
- Consider more sustainable management of grass on the green and verges with the aim of encouraging more wildflower growth
- Encourage best practice management of trees, hedges and woodland, along with traditional farming practices to retain the 'green' and rural character of the hamlet with strong connections to its setting.
- Improve infrastructure to manage lavant flows and associated ground-water flooding. Ensure that any development proposals are designed to withstand flooding, neither impede nor add to flows, and that drainage systems recognise the groundwater flooding challenges. In addition, caution is advised as Environment Agency flood zone mapping is inaccurate for parts of the hamlet.



Improvements at the green could harness opportunities to improve biodiversity, whilst optimising the efficiency of the drainage ditch, and also highlighting the heritage significance of 'The Pound' and the former Blacksmiths building to passing leisure walkers and cyclists.

A detailed topographic map of Rowlands Castle Civil Parish. The map shows a variety of landscape features including fields, woods (e.g., Stein Wood, Long Wood, Furzy Plain), and hills (e.g., Horsefoot Hill). It also depicts built-up areas with numerous buildings, roads (e.g., Broad Walk, Woodhouse Lane, Shipwrights Way), and water features like ponds and lakes. The text 'ROWLANDS CASTLE CP' is printed across the upper middle section of the map. Overlaid on the map is the title 'Part B Settlement Character Types' in a large, dark blue, sans-serif font.

Part B

Settlement Character Types

Settlement Character Type A - Historic core, service provision

General Description

This Settlement Type occurs at the centre of Rowlands Castle around the village green, also reaching through the railway arches to the southern part of Finchdean Road. Separately, much of Finchdean has the same distinctive features.

The buildings in these areas have a mixture of uses. A large proportion are dwelling houses, but other premises alongside provide numerous other services for the community. This is especially the case in Rowlands Castle, where the Village Core is a self-evident community hub, with its general store, hardware store, cafe, doctors surgery and pharmacy, United Reformed Church and Parish Hall amongst several other service providers. 3 public houses are situated at the centre of Rowlands Castle, and another in Finchdean. Although fewer services are provided in Finchdean, the hamlet has a garage, a chapel, a former blacksmiths and until recently a caravan dealership.

All buildings have a unique style, although some stylised terraces occur around The Green in Rowlands Castle. Most of the houses are two-storey, generally with clay tiled roofs, often with dormer windows in the roof. Although the buildings are set back from the road there is an inconsistent building line, with each property having a different sized front garden or forecourt. Most of these spaces within private curtilage are quite small, often with a low flint or brick wall as a boundary demarcation. 'Deerleap' is an exception to the prevailing form of development, being a large detached dwelling set in very spacious grounds to the southern side of Rowlands Castle green. Although the house and gardens are out of public view beyond an imposing tall flint wall, the large number of mature trees within the property grounds provides a substantial green backdrop to the street scene.

Due to the limited size of the majority of spaces in front of buildings, the influence of garden vegetation on the street scene is limited. However, the street scene benefits greatly from the green spaces within the public domain, with extensive mown grass and mature trees.

Some highway paraphernalia detracts from the street scene, although street lamps around The Green are an attractive, traditional style. Finchdean has only 1 street lamp, also in a traditional style. The street lamps on Finchdean Road are modern, but painted green and recessive in appearance. Perhaps the most notable detracting feature is the presence of cars parked on-street.

Distinctive Features

- Plots are relatively small, and generally fairly narrow with built form occupying the front 1/3 of the plot and linear garden spaces occupying the rear 2/3. There is considerable evidence of alteration to these plots and the built form over different periods of time, although at Rowlands Castle green, many of the distinctive features and built form have endured since the 18th and 19th centuries.
- There is a mixture of building styles, including detached, semi-detached, and terraces. These are mostly two-storey, often with dormer windows and shallow pitched roofs. Buildings tend to be built of brick and/or flint, some of which have been painted and/or rendered. Roofs tend to be clay tiled or slate. Windows are generally sliding sash or casement, and doors are wooden.
- The building line often staggers, although broadly parallel to the road. Most buildings are set back a little. Part of the charm of the streetscape is derived from the irregular rhythm of built form, gaps between buildings and variation in height and elevation. Occasional gables interrupt otherwise plain frontage elevations.
- Some buildings form focal points, such as the brick built 'Church on The Green' at Rowlands Castle, with its prominent pointed tower. The 19th century brick-and-flint railway arches form a strong visual stop at the opposite end of The Green.
- Property boundaries are generally low walls, formed either with brick or flint. Occasionally, low hedgerows or black painted railings form boundary demarcations. Generally, roadside footpaths are situated between the highway and private domains, although in Finchdean properties tend to abut the road or have a narrow grass verge between, but no footpath.
- Due to the generous public realm green spaces the street scene does not feel enclosed, despite the relatively small front garden spaces and lack of tree cover within those gardens. The exception to this is on Finchdean Road, which does feel enclosed due to the proximity of the building line to the dense tree cover within Stansted Park to the south.
- Views across The Green, in particular to the south, are a distinctive feature.



The centre of Rowlands Castle green is overlooked by 2 public houses, and stylised terraces



The southern part of Finchdean Road feels more enclosed.



The historic green at Finchdean, overlooked by 18th and 19th century houses.

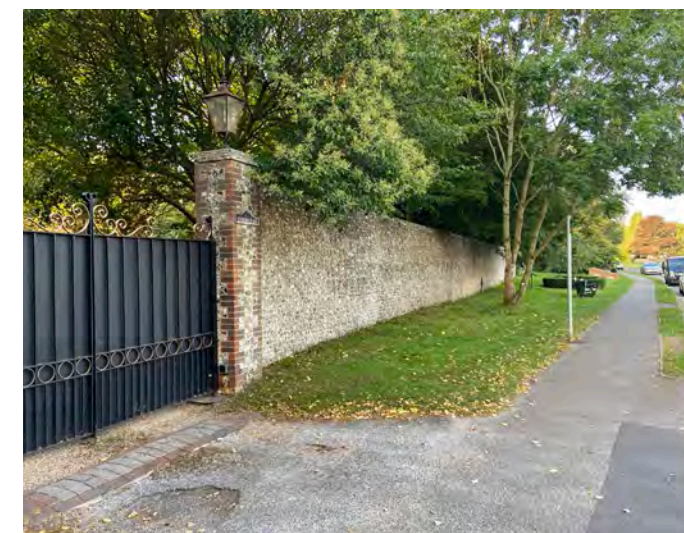
Settlement Character Type A - Historic core, service provision

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 The irregular rhythm of built form, massing and style create an interesting street scene. Collectively, the built environment is seen as an attractive historic village centre.
- 👍 The historic value of the centre of Rowlands Castle is recognised by its designation as a Conservation Area
- 👍 The use of flint, particularly within low walls at the front of property boundaries, is an attractive local vernacular material.
- 👍 The range of services provided lead to activity and a sense of vibrancy to the street scene. Rowlands Castle green is used for public gatherings throughout the year, and is considered to be the heart of the village.
- 👍 Both Rowlands Castle and Finchdean greens provide areas to sit, with benches and litter bins.
- 👍 Visual alignments to some notable buildings and structures help orientation and add to the sense of place.
- 👎 Traffic congestion can detract from the otherwise calm pace of activity. On-street car parking is often at capacity.
- 👎 Finchdean Road suffers occasional flooding.



Traffic congestion in the village centre detracts from the general street scene



Flint is a characteristic building material, most notably the tall boundary wall of 'Deerleap'

Development Considerations

- Any development will need careful consideration, particularly taking into account the Conservation Area status of the area around Rowlands Castle green and Finchdean Road, and the South Downs National Park designation which applies to Finchdean.
- Any new development should complement the prevailing architectural style and materials with local precedent. Any extensions or alterations to existing properties should be sensitively designed to ensure that changes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties, respecting the current building line, heights and scale of built form. In particular, ensure that loft conversions do not appear incongruous.
- Residents should be encouraged to maintain property boundaries, particularly front boundaries, and the features within front garden spaces. Whilst these are within private domain, they do contribute to the overall ambience of the street scene.
- Existing tree cover within private or public realm provides an important function greening the streetscape and should be protected. Additional tree planting should be encouraged where space allows, so long as it does not compromise the characteristic open spaces of The Green.
- No structure or physical feature should be placed where it would interrupt visual alignments with key focal points
- Even small changes to incidental features such as street furniture and signage could have negative implications for the overall aesthetic of the street scene, and should be carefully considered.
- Additional housing on currently undeveloped 'back-land' behind Finchdean Road would be detrimental to the quality and character of that area and should be avoided.



Rowlands Castle green is an attractive place to sit, with benches and litter bins provided



'The Church on The Green' provides a focal point at one end of Rowlands Castle green

Settlement Character Type B - Mixed housing

General Description

One of the notable characteristics of Rowlands Castle is the distribution of individually developed housing. Streets with mixed housing occur in every area of the village, apart from the village core. On Finchdean Road, and also on Ashcroft Lane in Finchdean this housing benefits from an open aspect across adjacent countryside, whereas similar housing sits on both sides of the street at Uplands Road, The Drift, Redhill Road and Castle Road. Along Whichers Gate Road, Durrants Road and Manor Lodge Road mixed housing stock is influenced by the proximity of busy through roads.

These neighbourhoods are all residential, and have mainly developed sporadically throughout the 20th century. Due to the piecemeal nature of this development, architectural styles vary greatly. However, generally the housing is at a medium to low density. Buildings are often quite close to the street, (with the notable exception of Finchdean Road, where houses tend to be set quite well back). The buildings take several different forms from terraces, to semi-detached to detached. Most are two-storey, although there are some pockets of bungalows. The predominant materials are red brick and either clay tiled or slate roofs. Some buildings have rendered façades.

The street scene in these neighbourhoods tends to feel quite constrained, and (with the notable exception of Finchdean Road) lacks the softening effect of verdant front gardens and vegetated plot boundaries. There are generally fewer grass verges than elsewhere in the village. A large proportion of these plots are too tight to accommodate parked cars, and accordingly on-street parking can influence the character of the street scene, particularly on Redhill Road, Castle Road and Uplands Road.

The mixed housing along Redhill Road and The Drift broadly coincides with a neighbourhood referred to as 'Southern Rowlands Castle' within EHDC's 'Neighbourhood Character Study'.

Distinctive Features (generally)

- Irregularity to plot widths, sizes, and the proportion of the plot occupied by building.
- A high degree of incidental, domestic-scale alteration to individual properties over different periods of time, although building styles and the settlement pattern essentially reflect that of the period when the plots were first developed.
- There is a general lack of the more historic vernacular styles seen elsewhere in the village (such as the use of flint), although these neighbourhoods do include some buildings that have used red brick and clay tiles associated with the former Rowlands Castle brickworks.
- The street scene is also very varied. Whilst the presence of vegetation is inconsistent, some vegetation (including hedged front boundaries to properties, and a treed backdrop) in all neighbourhoods gives a sense of connection to the wider rural setting of the village.

Type B1 Mixed housing (open aspect) - Distinctive Features

- A linear pattern of development, which is particularly noticeable when viewed from surrounding areas across intervening open fieldscape.
- Houses on Finchdean Road are all detached, with a notable proportion being bungalows, or one-and-a-half-storey (with dormer windows in the roofs). The houses on Ashcroft Lane tend to be two-storey semi-detached, with a few short terraces.
- Houses tend to be set well back from the road, with spacious front gardens.
- Gardens are well vegetated, with a high quantity of mature trees, including some ornamental species. Enclosures to front boundaries are often clipped hedgerows, although there are also occasional low timber fences and low brick walls.
- These neighbourhoods overlook open countryside, and have a high degree of tranquillity.

Type B2 Mixed housing (enclosed) - Distinctive Features

- Relatively dense ribbon development along Redhill Road and Castle Road represents the settlement expansion which began in the late 19th century, and continued throughout the 20th century.
- Uplands Road is a pleasant and relatively peaceful mid-20th century linear expansion of the village, with a group of bungalows and stylised semi-detached houses addressing each other across a street with grass verges, terminated with a central green space.
- Irregularity to the building line. Whilst buildings are broadly parallel to the road they are set back by different distances.
- Whilst buildings are generally two-storey (with the exception of the group of bungalows at Uplands Road), there are some instances of dormer windows in roofs (some of which are original designs, and some are loft conversions).
- The more elevated part of Redhill Road offers distant views to the wooded Stansted Estate to the north of the village. Tree cover also provides a closer-range backdrop to the built form on Castle Road and the Drift. More spacious front gardens to properties on Uplands Road provided a vegetated ambience to the street scene.
- Redhill Road and Castle Road have relatively low levels of tranquillity, albeit countered to some extent by visual connections to vegetation at close-range and at distance, giving the neighbourhoods some sense of a connection to the wider rural setting of the village.

Type B3 Mixed housing (through roads) - Distinctive Features

- A broadly linear pattern of development, generally along 1 side of Durrants Road, Whichers Gate Road and Manor Lodge Road, and with woodland or dense tree belts on the opposite side of the road creating a sense of enclosure.
- Buildings are generally two-storey, but with a great variety of architectural styles.
- Irregularity to the building line. Whilst buildings are broadly parallel to the road they are set back by different distances.
- Parking is generally provided on-plot, due to the hazardous nature of constantly flowing traffic on the main roads.
- Front boundary treatment is very varied, with short stretches of hedgerow, low brick wall and timber fencing (in some instances tall), frequently interrupted by driveways.
- Considerable disturbance from the constant flow of traffic, and the presence of highway infrastructure has an urbanising influence on these neighbourhoods.



Semi-detached properties on Ashcroft Lane in Finchdean look out over open countryside



Houses on Redhill Road tightly line both sides of the street



The setting of some attractive housing is much compromised by highway infrastructure

Settlement Character Type B - Mixed Housing

Valued and Detracting Features

- Whilst there is a lack of coherence to architectural style and settlement pattern, the piecemeal variety within these neighbourhoods is subtly interesting, and has a certain charm.
- Most properties have front gardens, which tend to contain some vegetation. This helps to ‘green’ the street scene, even when vegetation is limited due to the physically constrained garden spaces.
- Increasing intense demands on space has caused some properties to be extended, lofts and garages converted and garden space given over to parking. Some of these incremental changes have been unsympathetic to the aesthetic of the immediate neighbourhood and the broader character of the village and Finchdean.

Type B1 Mixed housing (open aspect) - Valued and Detracting Features

👍	The relationship with the open countryside and the spacious, verdant front gardens to properties.
👍	The high degree of tranquillity.
👎	Increasingly large proportions of garden spaces have been paved over to create parking space, and lengths of hedgerow frontages to properties have reduced in length to allow for wider driveways.

Type B2 Mixed housing (enclosed) - Valued and Detracting Features

👍	Some buildings are architecturally interesting, particularly those with a heritage value due to their use of materials from the former Rowlands Castle Brickworks.
👍	Vegetation within generally small front gardens and hedgerows to front boundaries, along with a treed backdrop (sometimes viewed at distance) gives a sense of connection to the wider rural setting of the village.
👎	On-street parking can create problems for traffic movement, and clutters the street scene.

Type B3 Mixed housing (through roads) - Valued and Detracting Features

👍	Woodland and dense belts of trees on opposite sides of the roads to the built form give a vegetated structure to the neighbourhoods, and provide a sense of connection to the wider rural setting of the village.
👎	The constant movement of passing traffic erodes tranquillity, and the presence of highway infrastructure has an urbanising influence.
👎	There are instances of unattractive tall brick walls and fencing fronting onto streets.

Development Considerations

- Whilst there has been some back-land development in these neighbourhoods, due to the dense grain of the existing settlement pattern there is limited scope for further new development. However, this may drive a general trend of modifying existing built form in order to facilitate a more intense use of the limited space.
- Development proposals that sub-divide plots to allow the building of additional houses should be resisted. In particular, additional housing on small parcels of undeveloped land at the edges of the settlement, such as garden spaces and ‘back-land’ at Finchdean road would be detrimental to the quality and character of that area and should be avoided.
 - Built form taller than two-storeys is likely to be inappropriate. The replacement of bungalows with two-storey dwellings should not normally be permitted to ensure that newer development does not appear incongruous in relation to neighbouring properties.
 - Conversion of garage spaces into habitable rooms should be resisted.
 - Extensions of existing properties into roofs using dormer windows should be sensitively designed, ensuring that changes to roofscapes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties.
 - Avoid prominent roof lines on higher ground where it will be seen against the sky.



Kings Close, set back from Manor Lodge Road, has an attractive green space



Castle Road has varied architectural styles, with cars parked on the street



Bungalows on Uplands Road, with grass verges on the opposite side of the street



Housing on Whichers Gate Road faces onto woodland

- Attempts to retrospectively impose traditional vernacular form or use of materials may appear pastiche. Instead, any new development should complement the prevailing architectural style and materials within the immediate neighbourhood, and complement the positive defining characteristics of the streetscape, respecting the current building line, heights and scale of built form.
- Avoid inappropriate cladding and decoration of house façades which would affect the overall character of a street.
- Encourage residents to retain green frontages to their properties.
- Carefully consider proposals to widen driveways, to prevent detrimental impact on visual amenity. Whilst this may improve the street scene by reducing the extent of on-street parking, the visual amenity may be displaced, with the immediate curtilage of buildings instead suffering from the truncation of garden spaces, the loss of vegetation (including hedgerow boundary enclosures) and the discordant aesthetic of parked cars.
- Protect the historic detail of some of the older properties, especially those using materials from the former Rowlands Castle Brickworks.
- Protect the views out from the built environment to the open countryside adjacent to Finchdean Road, Ashcroft Lane, and respect the relationship with the rural environment along parts of Whichers Gate Road, Durrants Road and Manor Lodge Road.

Settlement Character Type C - Mid 20th Century Housing (Medium Density)

General Description

Medium density mid 20th century housing is found throughout Rowlands Castle village, most notably in the area north of the village core, centred around Bowes Hill, with Wellsworth Lane, Meadowlands, Greatfield Way, The Peak and The Fairway. Elsewhere in the village, the same type of housing is found in small pockets, at College Close and Hill Brow Close south of the village, and the southern part of Glen Dale, east of the railway.

The houses in these areas are generally built individually, each with a unique style. Houses are detached, two-storey, and set within generous gardens. These gardens are often open to the street, with no form of enclosure at the property boundaries. As such extensive lawns and ornamental shrub borders lend themselves visually to the street scene. Where gardens are enclosed, this tends to be with neat clipped hedgerows, rather than walls or fences. This also contributes to an overall vegetated, horticultural quality to the street scene. Roads tend to not to be cluttered with any highway paraphernalia, other than street lamps. Vehicles generally park on the driveways of the houses, and not on the street.

Distinctive Features

- Plots tend to be varied in size, with differing widths to the street. Building footprints tend to take up approximately a little over a quarter of the plot area, with rear garden spaces accounting for up to half of the plot area, and front garden spaces up to a quarter.
- There is little evidence of the sub-division of plots to allow the building of additional houses. The plots have remained essentially unaltered since their creation in the mid to late 20th century, although aerial photography suggests that driveways in front gardens may have been expanded, to create additional hard-standing for the parking of cars.
- Buildings are detached, two-storey houses, albeit varying in height and mass. Architectural styles are varied, but generally brick-built with tiled roofed. Occasionally façades are rendered, or with hanging tiles. However, there is an absence of any traditional, vernacular style identifying with Rowlands Castle.
- Buildings are generally parallel to the road, set back from the plot boundary. However, the depth of front gardens is inconsistent, so building lines are often not straight. Similarly, the width of gaps between buildings often lacks consistency.
- There are occasional small clusters of houses that have been developed at the same time, exhibiting the same or complementary architectural style and massing. Examples include the properties at Hill Brow Close, the southern part of Glen Dale, Wellsworth Gardens and Meadowlands. These planned streets tend to have gentle sinuous curves, with the built form arranged at an angle to the street. This creates an interesting visual composition, creating variation in roof-form and exaggerating the influence of incidental landscape treatment in open spaces along the street.
- Streets are inward-facing, with dwellings on one side of the street addressing other dwellings opposite. However, the degree of enclosure is relatively low, owing to the considerable distance from building façade to building façade, the relatively spacious streets, and the generally loose nature of vegetation within front gardens and at front boundaries. Canopies of mature trees often form a backdrop to the houses, giving a visual connection to the landscape beyond, and a sense of a wider special framework beyond the street.
- The street scene is consistently influenced by domestic, front garden vegetation. This creates a varied and interesting scene. Front boundaries are either open to the street (i.e. without any physical means of enclosure), or are neat hedgerows. Hard boundaries such as railings or walls are seldom (if ever) observed. These boundary treatments tend to cluster, so that small neighbourhoods all have hedgerow boundaries, or all have open frontages. Generally, roadside footpaths sit between the highway and private domains. Occasionally, mown grass verges and incidental pockets of mown grass occur within the public realm. Street lighting is consistently low-level.



Open frontage gardens on Hillbrow Close



Open frontage gardens on College Close



Open frontage gardens at The Peak

Settlement Character Type C - Mid 20th Century Housing (Medium Density)

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 The generally gardenesque feel to these streets is of considerable benefit to the street scene.
- 👍 The street scene often has a treed backdrop, beyond the houses.
- 👍 The streets are relatively tranquil. With the exception of Bowes Hill, the streets are not thoroughfares, and as such vehicular movements are infrequent. Car parking generally occurs on-plot, and not on-street.
- 👎 Occasionally, rear gardens may side on to the street, and there are instances of varied, unsympathetic boundary enclosures (such as timber panel fencing) facing the street, detracting from its otherwise vegetated scene.
- 👎 The stylised architecture does reference traditional form and use of materials found elsewhere within Rowlands Castle, and does not contribute to the sense of place or scenic amenity.
- 👍 However, the varied architectural styles are of their time, and as such are of some interest.



Hedgerows green the street scene at The Fairway



Open frontage gardens on Glen Dale

Development Considerations

- Residents should be encouraged to maintain property boundaries, particularly front boundaries, either without any means of physical enclosure or with planting / hedges. Design cues should be taken from positive boundary treatments (as referred to above) existing in relation to adjacent properties. Physical boundaries – walls or fences – all affect the ambiance of a street, and aesthetically detrimental means of enclosure (such as close-board fencing, timber panel fencing or blank walls) would become increasingly intrusive with size and height.
- Avoid inappropriate cladding and decoration of house façades which would affect the overall character of a street.
- Development proposals that sub-divide plots to allow the building of additional houses should be discouraged. The low-level density of built form is an important, defining quality of this settlement character type. Any pockets of narrower plot widths facing onto street, or buildings which are proportionately larger in relation to their gardens, would appear incongruous.
- New development should not be more than two-storey, unless exceptional circumstances determine it may be appropriate to the character of its immediate setting. Extensions of existing properties into roofs, using dormer windows, may be appropriate. However, these extensions should be sensitively designed, ensuring that changes to roofscapes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Any new development should complement the prevailing architectural style, and respect the current building-line and scale of built-form. Whilst acknowledging that this does not contribute to a sense of place, any attempt to retrospectively impose traditional vernacular form or use of materials would appear pastiche.
- Any new development should acknowledge that the defining characteristics of these streets are generally informed by the spatial arrangement and vegetation, rather than by built form. Accordingly, some emphasis on the amenity value of front gardens should be given to consideration of development proposals, ensuring that sufficient space is allowed for a level of vegetation roughly equivalent to neighbouring properties (particularly allowing room for trees to mature), and taking into account the relationship between the private realm and the streetscape.
- New development should allow for sufficient on-plot parking, preferably within garages. Space allowance should be informed by number of dwellings in the property. Conversion of garage spaces into habitable rooms should be reviewed for adverse impact on parking. Any increased visibility of parked cars, particularly those parked on-street, would compromise the overall character of the streetscape.



Neat hedgerow boundaries and grass verges at Meadowlands



Open frontage gardens on Wellsworth Lane

Settlement Character Type D - Mid 20th Century Housing (Low Density)

General Description

Low density mid 20th century housing only occurs in one instance in Rowlands Castle, along Links Lane in the north of the village. The extent of this Settlement Character Type broadly coincides with an 'Area of Special Housing Character' designated within the East Hampshire Local Plan Second Review (March 2006).

The houses in these areas are generally built individually, each with a unique style. Houses are large, detached, two-storey, and set within very spacious gardens. These gardens are often enclosed street-side with tall, clipped hedgerows. Glimpses of the gardens and houses, often through imposing gateways, tend to reveal extensive lawns with flowing ornamental borders, and a high degree of tree cover. The mature trees contribute significantly to the street scene, including some unusual and ornamental species which, taken as a whole, give the street an arboretum-like quality. The street tends to not to be cluttered with any highway paraphernalia, other than street lamps. Vehicles generally park on the driveways of the houses, and not on the street.

Distinctive Features

- Links Lane has a very low residential density of approximately 4 dwellings per hectare. Plot sizes vary from about 0.12ha to 0.88ha. Proportionally, the houses tend to take up a relatively small part of the plot area, albeit they are still large houses with footprints between 100m² and 200m². Houses are typically set back from the road by about 15m to 18m, although in some instances this setback can be more than 30m.
- Buildings are generally parallel to the road, although building lines are not straight, and gaps between buildings differ. Accordingly, the settlement pattern lacks consistency. Streets are inward-facing, although the depth of gardens and density of intervening vegetation diminishes the sense that dwellings on one side of the street address other dwellings opposite.
- Buildings are detached, two-storey houses, albeit varying in height and mass. Some have single-storey extensions or outbuildings. Architectural styles are varied, albeit some of the older houses have dramatic sweeping roof-lines, many with hips or half hips and features such as tall brick chimneys, half-timbering on gables and leaded lights. Occasionally façades are rendered, or with hanging tiles. Red brick and clay tiles are the dominant material. However, there is an absence of any traditional, vernacular style identifying with Rowlands Castle.
- There is occasional evidence of the sub-division of plots to allow the building of additional houses. However, the plots generally have remained unaltered since their creation in the mid to late 20th century, although aerial photography suggests that driveways in front gardens may have been expanded, to create additional hard-standing for the parking of cars.
- Aerial photography reveals that several properties have open-air swimming pools in their rear gardens. At least one also has a tennis court. Substantial mature tree cover within the gardens is key to bedding the settlement into the surrounding rural landscape and screening the buildings.
- Most properties are fronted by mature clipped evergreen hedging to the road, sometimes mixed with remnants of old field hedges. There are occasional properties with open frontages, either with no physical enclosure, or visually porous low walls and / or railings. There are also some instances of garden walling incorporating incongruous panels of flintwork. These interruptions to the otherwise green streetscape have a suburbanising effect.
- A roadside footpath sits between the highway and private domains on the western side of Links Lane, with a narrow grass verge on the opposite side. However, there are no areas of public open space. Street lighting is consistently low-level.



Links Lane has a verdant, arboretum-like ambiance



Properties tend to be set back behind tall, clipped hedgerows

Settlement Character Type D - Mid 20th Century Housing (Low Density)

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 A significant number of mature trees within private gardens, including some unusual and ornamental species give the street an arboretum-like quality.
- 👍 The streets are relatively tranquil, with low volumes of traffic. Domestic activity and associated sources of noise occur in a spacious context of very low density built form.
- 👍 A low level of street lighting and on-plot rather than on-street parking contributes to a sense of being a verdant neighbourhood at the interface between the settlement and the rural landscape.
- 👎 Occasional loss of vegetated garden frontages, replaced with hard boundary treatments giving a sense of creeping suburbanisation.

Development Considerations

- Any new development should acknowledge that the defining characteristics of this street are generally informed by the spatial arrangement and vegetation, rather than by built form. Accordingly, some emphasis on the amenity value of front gardens should be given to consideration of development proposals, ensuring that sufficient space is allowed for a level of vegetation roughly equivalent to neighbouring properties (particularly allowing room for trees to mature), and taking into account the relationship between the private realm and the streetscape.
- Existing vegetation, particularly tree cover should be retained wherever possible, and sound arboricultural management should be encouraged in order to maintain the existing tree stock, replacing trees that become over-mature. Residents should be encouraged to maintain property boundaries with vegetation, particularly as tall clipped hedgerows. Aesthetically detrimental means of enclosure (such as close-board fencing, timber panel fencing or blank walls) would have a detrimental effect on the overall ambience of the street, become increasingly intrusive with size and height, and should be avoided.
- Development proposals that sub-divide plots to allow the building of additional houses should be resisted. The low-level density of built form is an important, defining quality of this settlement character type. Any pockets of narrower plot widths facing onto street, or buildings which are proportionately larger in relation to their gardens, would appear incongruous.
- New development should have broad consistency with the prevailing building line, set back from the road.
- New development should not be more than two-storey, unless exceptional circumstances determine it may be appropriate to the character of its immediate setting. Proposals should aim for varied and interesting roof-lines. Extensions of existing properties into roofs, using dormer windows, may be appropriate. However, these extensions should be sensitively designed, ensuring that changes to roofscapes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties.
- New development should complement the prevailing architectural style of neighbouring properties, using materials sympathetic to those existing nearby.
- Any increased visibility of parked cars, particularly those parked on-street, would compromise the overall character of the streetscape. New development should allow for sufficient on-plot parking, preferably within garages, informed by the number of bedrooms in the property. Simple, low-key driveway treatments should be encouraged. Conversion of garage spaces into habitable rooms should be resisted.



Development should aim for interesting roofscape, but avoid overlooking dormer windows and rooflights



Large houses, set back from the road, within spacious front gardens and tree cover.

Settlement Character Type E - Municipal Open Space

General Description

This Settlement Character Type occurs in only one location within Rowlands Castle. It is synonymous with the recreation ground, which is located within the northern part of the village, surrounded by low density and medium density 20th century housing.

The recreation ground is essentially an open space of amenity grass, edged with mature trees. It is notable for its lack of built form, except for the community building on its southern side near the entrance off The Fairway. Various facilities are located within the open space, including tennis courts, fitness trail equipment, and a children's play area. Castle United Football Club play matches on the pitches on Sunday mornings. Large-scale community events are held on the recreation ground, most notably the annual village fireworks display in November. This space is much valued by the local community for its amenity, and as open space contributing to the village's Green Infrastructure

Distinctive Features

- Large expanse of mown amenity grass extending across a broad open space, with a general lack of built form aside from one single-storey 'Pavilion' building.
- Large, mature broadleaved trees of various species at the edges of the space. Most of these trees sit along the shared boundary with adjacent residential properties, although at the northern end some trees are situated within open space.
- Some margins of grass alongside the perimeter of the space are left to grow long.
- The open space is overlooked by the rear elevations of neighbouring residential properties, particularly those on The Peak. Adjacent rear garden spaces to properties on Links Lane and Greatfield Way are deeper, with more tree cover.
- Various facilities are provided along the southern side of the open space, including:-
 - A tarmac surfaced parking area, with space for approximately 20 vehicles.
 - 3 surfaced tennis courts, surrounded by tall chain-link fencing with a tall clipped hedgerow at one end.
 - A basketball hoop, with paved area beneath.
 - Several benches are provided, overlooking the playing pitches
 - An outdoor gym equipment area
 - A popular children's play area, including traditional play equipment, enclosed by a low railing. A zip-wire and outdoor table-tennis table are also provided outside the low railing.
- Facilities within the 'Pavilion' include changing rooms, a meeting space and publicly accessible WCs.

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 The spaciousness of the recreation ground is a welcome punctuation within the otherwise built-up environment.
- 👍 The mature broadleaved trees around the perimeter of the space form an attractive backdrop, and also contribute to the village's Green Infrastructure network.
- 👎 On occasions (particularly Sunday mornings when the football club are practising) the parking area has insufficient capacity. This leads to an increase in parking outside of the Recreation Ground, particularly on The Fairway. Numerous cars and congestion is unattractive and an urbanising influence.
- 👎 The interface between the recreational use of the open space and the private amenity of the adjacent residential properties is a little awkward. The rear façades of dwellings on The Peak do not contribute to the sense of place or scenic amenity of the recreation ground.

Development Considerations

- Continue to manage the recreation ground exclusively as a sporting and community amenity space.
- Resist any development within the open space. In particular, any additional built form should be low-key, single-storey, solely for community amenity use, and close to the edge of the space.
- Protect and maintain the existing mature trees around the edges of the space. Consider planting additional trees along the eastern edge to soften the interface with the private properties on The Peak, and also as replacements for any existing trees which are becoming over-mature.
- Resist proposals for increasing infrastructure within the open space that would have an urbanising appearance and would be incongruous within the prevailing rural ambiance of Rowlands Castle.



Open space, surrounded by trees, backed onto by private gardens



The Sports Pavilion



Tennis courts and fitness trail

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Settlement Character Type F - Service provision

General Description

This Character Type occurs most notably in the south of the village, around the junction of Manor Lodge Road / Whichers Gate Road / Redhill Road and Durrants Road. It also occurs just north east of the village core, around the railway station.

In contrast to the prevailing land use throughout the rest of Rowlands Castle and Finchdean, within these pockets land use clearly associates with the provision of all manner of facilities for the local community. Buildings tend to be purpose-built for these facilities, and as such there is broad variation in architectural style and use of materials. There is a high degree of interaction and movement between the public realm and the service provision premises. The highways and associated infrastructure unify the constantly changing elements of the street scene which is influenced by signage and built form of service provision premises. Whilst all of these elements feel somewhat urban, in contrast to the prevailing character of Rowlands Castle, tree cover and occasional mown grass verges provide some relief to the busyness of the scene, providing some continuity and sense of place.

Distinctive Features

- Plots are very irregular in terms of size, and proportion of which is occupied by building. Some plots are large, with relatively small buildings (for instance, the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist sits alongside a graveyard and parking area), whereas other smaller plots are quite cramped, occupied by proportionately large buildings (for instance, the office premises at the southern end of Bowes Hill sits alongside a modest private parking space). Most of the buildings have been purpose-built and have remained basically unaltered, albeit with some cosmetic changes (for instance, the primary school), whereas other buildings and their settings have evolved considerably (for instance, the Harvester public house was at one time a private dwelling, and has since had several building extensions, together with the development of an extensive car park within which sits the purpose-built Travelodge hotel).
- Building styles are very varied, although all are relatively low-level. Roofs are also very varied ranging from flat-roofed (e.g. the School), to shallow-pitched (the offices at 1 Bowes Hill), a mixture of flat and single-pitched roofs (e.g. the telephone exchange), steeper pitched, multi-orientated roofs (e.g. the Harvester pub), curved roofs (e.g. Blendworth trailer hire), and very steep pitched roofs (e.g. the parish church).
- These buildings and associated structures lack association with vernacular styles, with the exception of the parish church which is built from flint. A low flint wall also sits along the front of the Harvester / Travelodge car park, creating a subtle but attractive edge to the street, mitigating the detrimental affect of the parked cars to some extent. One of the extensions to the Harvester uses flint, as does the Church Centre adjacent to the church. Roofing materials for the pitched roofs throughout are predominantly slate, occasionally clay, tiles.
- This Character Type lacks any identifiable building line, or rhythm to the grain and massing of built form.
- There is also a lack of consistency to features and spacial arrangement within the street scene. In most places there is no separation between the road kerb and roadside pavement. However, around the junction of Manor Lodge Road / Whichers Gate Road / Redhill Road and Durrants Road there are some wide grass verges. Many properties are open to the street. Where boundary enclosures occur, these tend to be low-level in a wide variety of materials, often brick. A tall hedgerow of mixed species encircles the graveyard. This, together with the tree cover within the graveyard gives an enclosed feel to Manor Lodge Road just south of St. John's Church. By contrast, a few metres further south, at the junction of the 4 roads, the street scene feels more open, due to the relative lack of tree cover, absence of hedgerows, and the relatively low-lying buildings of the petrol station and Blendworth trailer hire beyond,



St. John's Church, built in 1837, is an important village landmark



The railway station is an important historic building. Parked vehicles around it are frequently detracting



The petrol station is a visually discordant collection of structures and infrastructure at a sensitive focal point

Settlement Character Type F - Service provision

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👎 Discordant and inconsistent styles of built form and external structures.
- 👎 Busy roads, with constant traffic movement eroding tranquillity.
- 👎 Highway infrastructure such as signage, guardrails and lighting clutters the street scene, and detracts from more positive features beyond.
- 👎 Signage associated with the various service providing premises can be visually chaotic.
- 👍 Existing tree cover and occasional mown grass verges provide a green backdrop to the street scene, and a broadly rural framework connecting with the wider environment within and around Rowlands Castle.
- 👍 Some existing buildings and structures are of architectural merit and historical importance, particularly St. John's Church, the War Memorial and the railway station.

Development Considerations

- Support highway improvement initiatives that would improve highway infrastructure / remove signage that clutters the streetscene.
- Support initiatives that would encourage the owners of the various service providing premises to improve the appearance of their premises in a collective way, in order that there is some consistency of boundary treatments, and avoidance of unnecessary signage and infrastructure cluttering the street scene.
- Ensure any new development maintains the prevailing architectural style at street level, respecting the current building line, heights and scale of built form. In particular ensure that loft conversions do not appear incongruous.
- Encourage use of vernacular materials in any new built form, particularly flint and red brick walls, clay and tiled roofs.
- Support the removal of features which are at odds with the prevailing rural character of Rowlands Castle, in particular timber close-board fencing and picket fencing.
- Ensure that any development, including highway improvement schemes respect the historic landmark building of St. John's Church within its leafy graveyard setting. Also protect the War Memorial and ensure that its function as a focal point is not disrupted with street clutter / highway infrastructure.
- Conserve and enhance any existing vegetation within the public and private realm. Encourage new planting of native trees and hedgerows wherever space allows. In particular encourage sound arboricultural practice to extend the longevity of existing trees, and replace any trees which are becoming over-mature.
- If possible, encourage the owners of premises with parking areas to soften the appearance of parked cars and break up the expansive hardstanding with new tree and shrub planting, preferably of native species.



The Harvester public house was originally a private dwelling, and has had several extensions. The single-storey flint extension with a clay tile roof is an appropriate vernacular aesthetic. The low flint wall is an attractive frontage to Whichers Gate Road.



The Travelodge hotel is set back from the road by a considerable distance, behind a large parking area. It has a relatively recessive appearance against a backdrop of mature broadleaved trees.



The broad curved roof to Blendworth trailer hire gives a horizontal emphasis to this low-level building. Signage and security fencing are urbanising influences on the street scene.



The primary school is a low-level building with a large footprint, set in extensive school grounds, partly asphalt surfaced alongside a playing field surrounded by mature trees.

Settlement Character Type G - Late 20th century housing estate

General Description

This Settlement Character Type occurs almost entirely within the southern part of the village, synonymous with the Kings Meadow Estate, built in the late 1980s. There is a further small pocket of the same character type at the northern end of Glen Dale, to the east of the railway. In addition, Ken Berry Court, which is located off Prospect Lane (outside of the village but within the Neighbourhood Plan area) has similar features.

These neighbourhoods were built by volume house builders, using a 'pattern book' approach to the mix of dwelling types. However, these 'standard' houses have been successfully manipulated with architectural articulation and appropriate materials (such as red brick and panels of flint) to subtly reference local vernacular. Furthermore, the spatial arrangement of the estate has been successful in creating areas of incidental green space, alongside planting within private front garden spaces, and against a backdrop of mature trees which have been retained and integrated within the development. Overall, these elements create a particularly verdant ambience to the streets. Varying degrees of enclosure and openness also create an interesting experience whilst passing through the various streets and connecting footpaths.

Distinctive Features

- Plots are relatively small, but irregularly shaped with varying sizes and widths. All plots have some garden space to the front and rear of the dwellings, albeit in some instances the front gardens are only a few metres deep. The buildings tend to occupy about 1/3 of the total plot size, relative to the varying size of the plot (and building). There are two blocks of flats within the Kings Meadow Estate. These are in fairly discrete locations at the far end of Mallard Road and Brambling Road, against the backdrop of Rowlands Copse. Their footprint is large in relation to their plots, and the communal garden space that surrounds them is not well defined, reading more as general amenity space rather than semi-private garden space.
- There is a relatively high proportion of detached houses, alongside some short terraces and occasional semi-detached. Whilst there is repetition of building styles, which have been derived from standard 'pattern book' design, the variants are well mixed and repeating styles tend to be well distributed and not so apparent. Subtle manipulation of these standard designs have introduced elements of vernacular style, most notably the use of red brick and panels of flint within principal building façades.
- Buildings are often broadly parallel to the road, but the roads themselves tend to curve with corresponding building positions at differing angles, set back from the plot boundary. This creates variation in the rhythm of built form and gaps between the buildings. In turn, this creates an interesting sequential visual experience moving through the streets, with glimpses between and around buildings opening up and closing.
- Plots tend to be either open to the street, or with low clipped hedgerows to their front boundary. Several of the streets have mown grass verges and no roadside footpath, instead denoting that the highway is a shared vehicular/pedestrian space by the use of block pavement surfacing. Other streets do have roadside footpaths, sometimes in addition to mown grass verges or areas of incidental green space. The streets also include narrowing points, often planted attractively with ornamental shrubs, coupled with granite sett 'rumble strips' designed to slow vehicular movement. Street design has incorporated street trees, and in places has retained trees which were mature at the time the estate was built. These now dominate parts of the street scene, contributing greatly to a distinctly leafy feel to the estate.



An area of incidental greenspace, off Nightingale Close



Streets are set out around retained mature trees, which now form focal points in the streetscene



The loose arrangement of buildings around relatively narrow roadways effectively increases the visual parameters of the streetscape, and allows room for a framework of vegetation

Settlement Character Type G: Late 20th century housing estate

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 The street scene often has a treed backdrop, beyond the houses. Incidental green spaces, planted with trees and shrubs, and planting within private gardens all contribute to a particularly verdant street scene.
- 👍 Whilst there is inevitably a concentration of domestic activity within these streets, interventions to slow the movement of vehicles and a considerable amount of vegetation in the street scene give a sense of relative tranquillity.
- 👍 The arrangement of sweeping roads and an irregular pattern of set-back built form creates an interesting sequential visual and spatial experience moving through the streets, with contrasting areas of openness and enclosure, and glimpses opening up and closing between and around buildings.
- 👍 Architectural articulation and use of vernacular materials has some success in subtly referencing broader characteristics of Rowlands Castle.
- 👍 The use of granite kerbs throughout the estate gives a sense of quality to the street scene, even when the surfaces of the highway and roadside footpaths are macadam.
- 👎 In some places, roadside car parking regularly exceeds the capacity allowed for within the parking bays provided. This can create hazardous driving conditions with impaired visibility, and is a detriment to the overall street scene.
- 👎 Some front garden spaces are not well maintained, or have been extensively paved over in order to increase space for parked vehicles.

Development Considerations

Due to the relatively dense grain of the existing settlement pattern there is limited scope for further new development. However, this may drive a general trend of modifying existing built form in order to facilitate a more intense use of the limited space.

- Development proposals that sub-divide plots to allow the building of additional houses should be resisted.
- Conversion of garage spaces into habitable rooms should be resisted.
- Extensions of existing properties into roofs using dormer windows should be sensitively designed, ensuring that changes to roofscapes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Residents should be encouraged to maintain property boundaries, particularly front boundaries, either without any means of physical enclosure or with planting / hedges. Design cues should be taken from positive boundary treatments (as referred to above) existing in relation to adjacent properties. Physical boundaries – walls or fences – all affect the ambiance of a street, and aesthetically detrimental means of enclosure (such as close-board fencing, timber panel fencing or blank walls) would become increasingly intrusive with size and height.
- Paving over of front garden spaces to create increased parking space should be resisted, or carefully designed in order to retain structural vegetation (such as hedgerows and trees) which are of most benefit to the street scene.
- Any new development or alterations to existing built form should complement the prevailing architectural style within the immediate neighbourhood, and complement the positive defining characteristics of the streetscape. The scale of any new built form should relate to surrounding buildings, although variations in roof-line, pitch and a staggered frontage may be appropriate. The use of building materials that are characteristic of the village, such as red brick and flint, are particularly encouraged.
- Avoid inappropriate cladding and decoration of house façades which would affect the overall character of a street.
- Any new development or extensions to existing built form should safeguard the structural vegetation (such as hedgerows and trees) that are of benefit to the street scene. If loss of vegetation is unavoidable, replacement vegetation of equal amenity value should be provided.
- The planting of new native species is particularly encouraged.



In some places, roadside car parking detracts from the street scene



Some architectural articulation is sympathetic to traditional styles and materials



Houses within this built environment often have a wooded backdrop



Block paved road surfaces, without roadside footpaths at Glen Dale.

Settlement Character Type H - Early 21st century housing estate

General Description

Recent housing estates have been developed within the southern area of the village, and have extended the settlement boundary eastwards. Bailey Road and the Deerleap Lane estate (located on the site of the former brickworks) are located just south of the village core. The Woodlands Avenue and Oaklands Avenue estates are much further south of the village's central facilities, Oaklands Avenue accessed from Redhill Road, and the Woodlands Avenue estate having its principal access off Whichers Gate Road, but also wrapping around the rear of the Primary School connection onto Redhill Road with a pedestrian link. In addition, Harrison Way, which is located off Bartons Road (outside of the village but within the Neighbourhood Plan area) has similar distinctive features.

Similar to the 1980s 'Kings Meadow' estate, these new neighbourhoods have been built by volume house builders, primarily using a 'pattern book' approach to the mix of dwelling types. The Woodlands Avenue estate is the largest development in Rowlands Castle since the 'Kings Meadow' estate, with a total of 106 dwellings in 15 different styles. These developments have a greater density of dwelling than 'Kings Meadow', and tend to place built form closer together, closer to the road (i.e. with smaller front gardens), with a higher proportion of terraced houses, and some taller houses which use dormer windows to create living space in high pitched roofs.

Nevertheless, careful design has been successful in creating some attractive streetscapes, harnessing the 'greening' effect of existing mature trees (particularly oaks) which have been retained and incorporated within the spatial arrangement of the streets, along with set aside for formal recreation, areas of more incidental green space, and some attractive ponds (functioning as part of the drainage infrastructure). A framework of existing mature tree belts around these sites has also been helpful in creating a green backdrop, having the effect of 'humanising' the scale of the built form, relative to the tall trees beyond.

The predominant use of red brickwork is appropriate for Rowlands Castle, reminiscent of the former brickworks. Furthermore, 'standard' house designs have been successfully manipulated with architectural articulation, some façades with hanging tiles, and occasional use of flint on feature walls to subtly reference local vernacular.

Distinctive Features

- Plots are generally small, but irregularly shaped with varying sizes and widths. Most built-form is set back a little from the road / footpath, although in some instances this space is less than a metre, leaving little (if any) space for front garden vegetation. Many of the buildings occupy almost 1/2 of the total plot size, relative to the varying size of the plot (and building), with rear gardens generally equivalent in size as the footprint of the building.
- There is a wide variety of built forms, including some detached houses, alongside short terraces and occasional semi-detached. These are nearly all two-storey houses, although a few bungalows have been built, and a few properties have a third storey in the roofspace.
- Whilst there is repetition of building styles, (derived from standard 'pattern book' design), the variants are well mixed and repeating styles tend to be well distributed and not so apparent. Subtle manipulation of these standard designs have introduced elements of vernacular style, most notably the use of red brick, hanging tiles and panels of flint within principal building façades. Instances of rendered walls are also scattered throughout some of these developments. Roofs are generally gabled.
- Buildings are often broadly parallel to the road, but the roads themselves tend to curve with corresponding building positions at differing angles, set back from the plot boundary. This creates variation in the rhythm of built form and gaps between the buildings. In turn, this creates an interesting sequential visual experience moving through the streets, albeit the tight proximity of buildings to one another often curtails glimpses to the environment beyond.
- Plots tend to be open to the street, or with low clipped hedgerows or groundcover shrub planting to their front boundary. Black estate railing is used as a means of enclosure throughout the Woodlands Avenue estate. A few street trees have been incorporated where possible, although the tight grain of built-form has limited new planting within the street design. Nevertheless, the public realm has benefited from mature trees pre-dating the developments having been retained and incorporated within the general street arrangement. These now dominate parts of the street scene, and together with the often wooded backdrop, contribute to a generally leafy feel.



The Bailey Road development successfully uses vernacular materials; red brick, clay tiles and flint.



Some of the built-form comes close to the road, leaving little room for vegetation



The Woodlands Avenue development incorporates informal amenity spaces and retained mature trees

Settlement Character Type H - Early 21st century housing estate

Valued and Detracting Features

- 👍 The street scene often has a treed backdrop, beyond the houses.
- 👍 Architectural articulation and use of vernacular materials has some success in subtly referencing broader characteristics of Rowlands Castle.
- 👍 The arrangement of sweeping roads and an irregular pattern of set-back built form creates an interesting sequential visual and spatial experience moving through the streets.
- 👎 The streets and small front gardens are generally fairly tight spaces which afford little opportunity for 'greening' the street scene with vegetation.
- 👎 There are instances of unattractive tall brick walls and close board fencing fronting onto streets.
- 👎 Whilst some parking courts, garages and roadside parking bays are provided, off-street parking takes precedence over vegetative garden space in some places. Numerous parked cars tend to add a visually discordant element to the street scene.
- 👎 Predominant use of black tarmac road surfaces, standard concrete road kerbs and black tarmac footpaths diminishes the quality of the streetscene.
- 👎 In some places, infrastructure such as electric sub-stations, junction boxes and bin collection points have been placed unsympathetically where they intrude on the general ambiance of the streetscene.

Development Considerations

Due to the relatively dense grain of the existing settlement pattern there is limited scope for further new development. However, this may drive a general trend of modifying existing built form in order to facilitate a more intense use of the limited space.

- Conversion of garage spaces into habitable rooms should be reviewed for adverse impact on parking.
- Extensions of existing properties into roofs using dormer windows should be sensitively designed, ensuring that changes to roofscapes would not be detrimental to the scenic quality of the streetscape, or intrude within the private amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Residents should be encouraged to maintain property boundaries, particularly front boundaries, either without any means of physical enclosure or with planting / hedges. Physical boundaries – walls or fences – all affect the ambiance of a street, and aesthetically detrimental means of enclosure (such as close-board fencing, timber panel fencing or blank walls) would become increasingly intrusive with size and height.
- Paving over of front garden spaces to create increased parking space should be resisted, or carefully designed in order to retain structural vegetation (such as hedgerows and trees) which are of most benefit to the street scene.
- Any new development or alterations to existing built form should complement the prevailing architectural style within the immediate neighbourhood, and complement the positive defining characteristics of the streetscape. The scale of any new built form should relate to surrounding buildings, although variations in roof-line, pitch and a staggered frontage would be appropriate. The use of building materials that are characteristic of the village, such as red brick and flint, is particularly encouraged.
- Avoid inappropriate cladding and decoration of house façades which would affect the overall character of a street.
- Any new development or extensions to existing built form should safeguard the structural vegetation (such as hedgerows and trees) that are of benefit to the street scene. If loss of vegetation is unavoidable, replacement vegetation of equal amenity value should be provided.
- The planting of new native species is particularly encouraged.
- Any design vistas or focal points within the streetscape should be safeguarded, and development of new physical features should not intrude upon key visual alignments.



Blank walling of rear gardens siding onto the public realm at Oaklands Avenue.



A drainage pond forms an attractive setting to the Deerleap Lane estate



The streetscape of high density developments often benefits from a wooded backdrop



Close-board fencing, standard concrete road kerbs and a dominance of parked cars can detract from the streetscene