

Rushmoor Plan

PLANNING FOR RUSHMOOR'S FUTURE



Landscape Assessment of Rushmoor

2009 Update

RUSHMOOR
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

1 Background	4
1.1 Purpose of the Study	4
1.1.1 Rushmoor's Landscape Objectives	5
1.2 Report Structure	5
2 Planning Policy Context	6
2.1 National Policy	6
2.2 Regional Policy	6
2.3 Local Policy	7
3 Methodology	9
3.1 How was this assessment carried out?	9
4 Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape	10
4.1 Thames Basin Heaths Character Area	10
4.2 The Blackwater Valley Context	11
4.3 The Hampshire Landscape	14

The Rushmoor Landscape

5 Historic Context	15
5.1 Introduction: The Evolution of Rushmoor's Landscape	15
5.2 Geology, Topography and Drainage	16
5.3 Ecological Character	21
5.4 Landscape History	26
5.4.1 Cultural Heritage	26
5.4.2 Growth of Aldershot & Farnborough	29
5.4.3 Historical Associations	30
5.5 Agriculture and Land Use	32
6 Landscape Pressures	33
6.1 Military Use	34

Contents

6.2	Farnborough Aerodrome	36
6.3	Urban Expansion	38
6.4	Transport Infrastructure	40
6.5	The Urban Fringe	41
6.6	Climate Change	41
7	Landscape Character Analysis	43
7.1	Landscape Character Areas	43
7.2	Blackwater Valley	48
7.2.1	Hawley	48
7.2.2	Frimley Interchange	49
7.2.3	Farnborough North	50
7.2.4	Farnborough South	52
7.2.5	Hollybush Lane	53
7.2.6	Aldershot Park	54
7.2.7	Aldershot South	55
7.3	Industrial	56
7.4	Heathland and Forest	57
7.5	Pasture and Woodland	58
7.6	Military Town	59
7.6.1	Military Town - Wooded Ridge	61
7.6.2	Military Town - Married Quarters	63
7.7	Basingstoke Canal	64
7.8	Farnborough Aerodrome	65
7.9	Southwood Amenity Open Space	67
7.10	Commercial/Business Park	68
7.11	Farnborough Green	69
7.12	Farnborough Town Centre	71
7.13	Aldershot Town Centre	73
7.14	Urban Residential	74

Contents

7.14.1	Type A	75
7.14.2	Type B	76
7.14.3	Type C	77
7.14.4	Type D	79
7.15	Green Corridors	80

Conclusions & Recommendations

8	Conclusions	81
9	Further Information	86

1 Background

1 Background

This study is a landscape character assessment for the borough of Rushmoor, in north east Hampshire. The assessment builds on a Landscape Assessment of Rushmoor prepared in 1994⁽¹⁾. The assessment will help inform the strategy and policies being developed as part of Rushmoor's Local Development Framework- notably the Borough's Core Strategy. It is published as a draft version and comments are welcome prior to a formal consultation exercise in 2010.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

1.1 The Government recognises and accepts that there are areas of landscape outside nationally designated areas that are particularly highly valued locally.

1.2 Landscape character assessments can help inform policies in Local Development Frameworks, deemed necessary to protect important local landscape areas from inappropriate development. Such policies avoid the need for rigid local designations that may unduly restrict acceptable, sustainable development⁽²⁾.

1.3 Landscape character assessment is a tool for which is used to identify, classify and describe the Borough's environment. In relation to Local Development Frameworks, the assessment can help to inform the formulation of character-based landscape and townscape/ design policies, and provide the spatial framework for considering the landscape and townscape implications of options for different scales and patterns of strategic development in the Core Strategy.

1.4 The main aims of the assessment are:

- 1. To describe the character and quality of the Borough's natural and built landscape identifying its principle components.**
- 2. To identify those parts of the landscape that are vulnerable, under threat, or where there are opportunities for improvement.**

1.5 The assessment can help us to understand the aesthetic quality of the Borough's landscape or townscape elements, identify the features that contribute towards the unique character of the area and highlight the landscape areas that are most at risk.

1.6 The assessment will also provide a baseline for monitoring the impact of new development on landscape and townscape character and quality.

1.7 The scope of this assessment is high level and strategic, and will be supplemented by detailed and site-specific analysis where necessary. A variety of other studies will provide an enhanced understanding in relation to the character of the Borough's landscape (such as Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Green Infrastructure Strategies).

1 RPS Watson (1994) Landscape Assessment of Rushmoor Volume 1.

2 ODPM (2004) *Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*.

1.1.1 Rushmoor's Landscape Objectives

1.8 A number of 'sustainability objectives' have been adopted as part of Rushmoor's Local Development Framework ⁽³⁾. This includes objectives:

- *To conserve and enhance biodiversity in Rushmoor and the condition of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.*
- *To secure the protection and management of listed buildings, conservation areas and other features of historic, landscape and archaeological importance including local distinctiveness.*
- *To promote and encourage high quality design of new development and landscaping.*

1.2 Report Structure

1.9 The next chapter sets out the policy context informing this landscape assessment. Chapter 3 further describes the approach and methodology used in the assessment. Chapter 4 describes the location and planning context of the Borough and surrounding areas.

1.10 Chapter 5 examines how the Rushmoor landscape has been shaped by physical and human influences. Chapter 6 looks at the landscape today (2008) and defines and describes a number of character areas. For each landscape character area identified, a set of guidelines are set out which seek to protect, conserve and enhance certain identified features.

1.11 Chapter 7 examines the main pressures on the landscape and the forces which are causing change. Conclusions and recommendations are contained in Chapter 8.

3 Rushmoor Borough Council (2008) *Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal for the Rushmoor Plan: Scoping Stage*.

2 Planning Policy Context

2 Planning Policy Context

2.1 National Policy

2.1 Landscape character assessment is a tool for identifying the features which give a locality its sense of place, to help understand what the landscape is like today, how it came to be like that, and how it may change in the future as an aid to decision making. It is endorsed within national Planning Policy, particularly PPS1 and PPS7 ⁽¹⁾.

2.2 Planning Policy Statement 7 states that local landscape designations (such as strategic or local gaps) should only be maintained as policy in Local Development Frameworks where it can be clearly shown that criteria-based planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection for valuable areas of landscape ⁽²⁾.

2.3 Planning authorities are therefore required to rigorously consider the justification for retaining existing local landscape designations, based on a robust assessment of the qualities and function of the landscape concerned.

2.2 Regional Policy

2.4 The South East Plan⁽³⁾ provides the regional spatial strategy and was adopted in May 2009. It forms part of the development plan for local authorities like Rushmoor Borough Council, with a number of the policies in the Plan emphasise the importance of the landscape. Consequently, there is the need for evidence and information about the landscape character of the Borough.

2.5 *Policy CC6: Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment* states that the actions and decisions associated with the development and use of land will actively promote the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities. This will be achieved by developing and implementing a local shared vision which respects, and where appropriate enhances, the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes throughout the region.

2.6 *Policy CC8: Green Infrastructure* seeks a connected and substantial networks of accessible multi-functional green space. They need to be planned and managed to deliver the widest range of linked environmental and social benefits including conserving and enhancing biodiversity as well as landscape, recreation, water management, social and cultural benefits to underpin individual and community health and 'well being'.

2.7 *Policy C4: Landscape and Countryside Management* states that a careful approach to landscape management is vital to the future protection and success of the region's countryside. The Plan states that a key tool to help develop a understanding of the South East's landscapes is the use of landscape character assessment.

1 ODPM (2005) *PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development* (London: TSO); and ODPM (2004) *PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* (London: TSO).

2 ODPM (2004) *PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* (London: TSO). (para.25).

3 GOSE (2009) *The South East Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East of England*.
www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/seplan.html

Planning Policy Context 2

2.8 Outside nationally designated landscapes, Policy C4 seeks positive and high quality management of the region's open countryside. It states local authorities should aim to protect and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of the region's landscape, informed by landscape character assessment.

2.9 Policy C4 states:

"local authorities should develop criteria-based policies to ensure that all development respects and enhances local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided".

2.10 *Policy C5: Managing the Rural-Urban Fringe* recognises that the rural-urban fringe around towns is often an area of mixed land use, rapid change and, in some areas, many competing pressures for land.

2.11 Landscape character is also relevant to the policy on the Location of Renewable Energy development (policy NRM15) and Waste Management Facilities (Policy W17).

2.12 The South East Plan does not provide support for the identification of strategic gaps in Local Development Frameworks. Local authorities will need to carefully review current 'gap' policies therefore, to ensure that they have a continuing justification that accords with the requirements set out in national planning policy (PPS7).

2.3 Local Policy

2.13 Rushmoor Local Plan Review 1996-2011 ⁽⁴⁾ contains local plan policies designed to protect strategic gap, countryside and open areas for the benefit of present and future generations and are based on a hierarchy of open land.

2.14 This hierarchy consists of strategic gaps, important open areas and green corridors. There are separate policies to protect nature conservation sites, heathland, trees and other landscape features and important water features.

2.15 The purpose of strategic gaps is to protect areas of open and undeveloped land between settlements from development, where this would weaken the separate identity of individual settlements. Policy G1 of the adopted Hampshire County Structure Plan identifies two strategic gaps affecting Rushmoor:

- the North East Hampshire Gap (Fleet and Aldershot/ Yateley)
- the Blackwater Gap (The Blackwater Valley towns Aldershot to Yateley and the County Boundary).

2.16 The North East Hampshire Gap is one of four strategic gaps in Hampshire where the purpose is to separate large urban areas and where the gaps need to be large enough to act as a counterweight to the adjoining urban areas. In Rushmoor the gap is dominated by the military training lands between Aldershot, Farnborough and Fleet.

2 Planning Policy Context

2.17 The Blackwater strategic gap is designed to retain the separate identity of settlements along the Valley itself; in places it is narrow and vulnerable and the Council will resist any proposals for development which would weaken the integrity of the gap. The Valley is of particular importance for informal recreation and nature conservation. It has been subject to major development pressures and the construction of the Blackwater Valley Road; it also has a long history of mineral working.

2.18 The Local Plan states that because of their long-term importance to the settlement pattern, these strategic gaps will have a permanence similar to green belt.

3 Methodology

3.1 How was this assessment carried out?

3.1 The analysis described below is based upon studies carried out for Rushmoor Borough Council in 1994 by consultants RPS Watson ⁽¹⁾.

3.2 The approach taken for the original landscape assessment was broad, encompassing not only concepts of natural beauty but also the geological and physiographical features and the flora and fauna. It was based on the judgement of a trained landscape practitioner, and was based on a desk-top study and detailed field surveys. The assessment covered the Borough's urban as well as rural landscapes.

3.3 Amendments to the original assessment have been made to take account of the completion of the Blackwater Valley Road (the A331) for instance. There have been major changes to the character of Farnborough airfield notably the completion in 1996 of the first phases of the Cody Technology Park. The work by Slough Estates has changed the "factory site" to the new Farnborough Business Park and TAG Aviation's new airport infrastructure is beginning to take shape with significant new buildings.

3.4 The RPS Watson study was guided by Hampshire County Council's study "The Hampshire Landscape" (1993) which provided a county level assessment and divided the Borough (excluding the urban area) into three landscape types based mainly on soil and visual characteristics. These were:

- River Valley
- Heathland and Forest
- Pasture and Woodland: Heath associated

3.5 The landscape of the Borough was surveyed in more detail by RPS Watson than the county level assessment, and twenty-four different landscape character areas have been identified.

3.6 The Landscape Character Areas and administrative boundaries rarely coincide. This means that certain areas e.g. the Heathland and Forest, extend beyond the Borough boundary area. In the southern part of Rushmoor, this character area corresponds to the "Tweseldown" landscape type in Hart, whereas further north in corresponds to Hart's "Minley" landscape. This demonstrates how the Rushmoor landscape fits into its wider context.

1 The approach was based on the Countryside Commission's advice on landscape assessment (CCP, 1993).

4 Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape

4 Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape

4.1 Thames Basin Heaths Character Area

4.1 Before they were became part of Natural England The Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative divided the landscape in England into 159 broad 'character areas'. These character areas are still valid and Rushmoor lies within the Thames Basin Heaths character area.

4.2 There are no Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the Borough, although the Surrey Hills AONB lies immediately to the south of Aldershot.

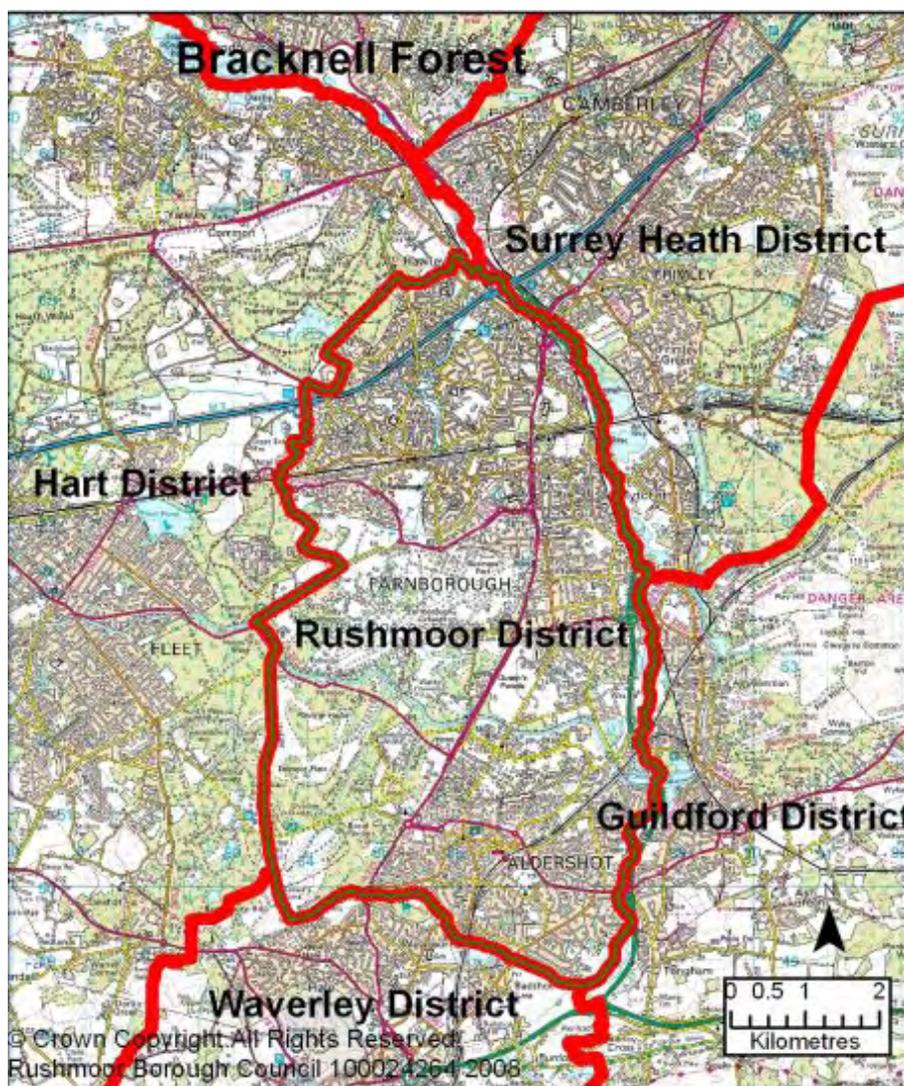
4.3 According to the document produced by the Countryside Agency, the key landscape characteristics of the Thames Basin Heaths character area include the following, and are still relevant today:

Statement 1

- Diverse landscape unified by the high incidence of heathland and coniferous forestry, the open unenclosed nature of which is unusual within the South East.
- Heavily populated and developed area characterised by large towns plus numerous smaller settlements along transport corridors interspersed by open land.
- Important occupation area from Mesolithic to modern times based on exploitation of the rivers.
- Fragmented but often connected blocks of largely neglected remnant heathland as a result of early agricultural clearances and widespread development, with most heath retained on large commons or as Ministry of Defence training areas.
- Large tracts of coniferous plantations or mixed wood with beech and birch are typical of much of the area.

Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape 4

4.2 The Blackwater Valley Context



Location of Rushmoor Borough

4.4 The Borough of Rushmoor borders four other authorities, three of which lie in Surrey. It is important to look at the context of planning policies in these surrounding areas where they relate to landscape.

4.5 Hart District abuts the western boundary of Rushmoor and has similar strategic gap policies covering the area between Fleet and Farnborough/ Aldershot and Blackwater to Hawley. The Basingstoke Canal which extends into Hart is protected as a Conservation Area in both authorities and has a range of conservation policies attached to it.

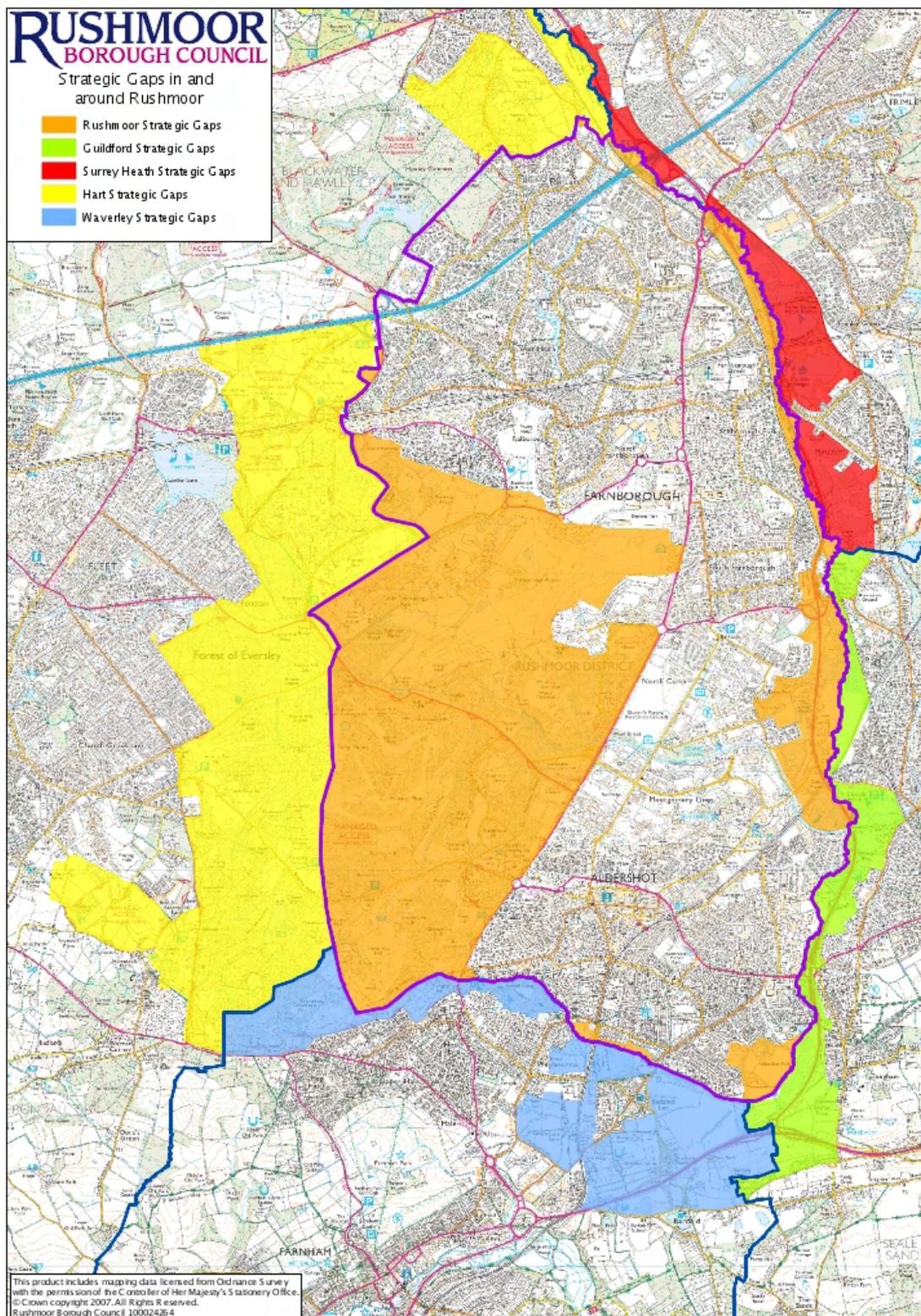
4.6 In **Surrey Heath** the Blackwater Valley forms the boundary with Rushmoor.

4.7 Guildford Borough's Local plan also has policies covering the Blackwater Valley as a major gap and promoting this area for public access and recreation.

4 Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape

4.8 Waverley Borough's Local Plan also includes a gap policy which complements that in Rushmoor, identifying a gap between Farnham and Aldershot.

Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape 4



Strategic gaps in and around Rushmoor (2008)

4 Location and Context of Rushmoor's Landscape

4.3 The Hampshire Landscape

4.9 Hampshire County Council prepared a Landscape Strategy in 2000, based on the county landscape assessment produced in 1993.⁽¹⁾ Rushmoor is identified in this strategy as containing the landscape types: pasture and woodland; heathland and forest; river valley; and urban area. Rushmoor is covered by the landscape character area known as North Hampshire Lowland and Heath.

1 Hampshire County Council (2000) *The Hampshire Landscape A Strategy for the Future*.

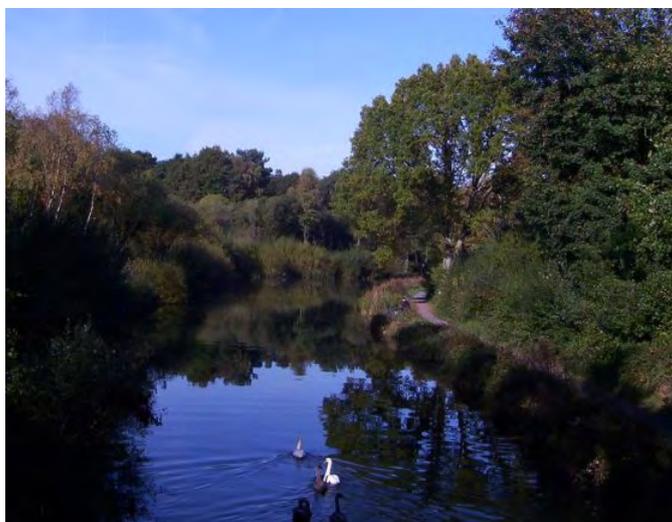
5 Historic Context

5.1 Introduction: The Evolution of Rushmoor's Landscape

5.1 Rushmoor has a diverse landscape character which is the product of both physical characteristics and human influences of a mostly recent origin, brought about by the “opening-up” of this part of North East Hampshire from the late eighteenth century onwards.

5.2 Physical factors include the geology and soil, ecology, topographical and drainage characteristics of the area. Human factors include archaeology, landscape history and human settlement, agriculture and land use, and historical and literary associations. The arrival of the army in the mid-nineteenth century and the acquisition of large tracts of woodland and heathland by the government for military use has been the dominant factor in shaping the landscape character of the Borough.

5.3 The study area contains a number of fine landscapes, some of which are of international importance for their wildlife. A large area of woodland and lowland heath at Long Valley / Caesar’s Camp dominates the western edge of the Borough. Its relative scale and the diversity of its habitats make it of significant nature and landscape conservation value. It was confirmed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), by English Nature in July 1994.



Basingstoke Canal

5.4 Other ecologically valuable sites include Eelmoor Marsh and a section of the Basingstoke Canal (both SSSI’s). In March 2005 the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area was adopted, in Rushmoor the SSSI areas of Bourley & Long Valley and Eelmoor Marsh were included within this designation.

5.5 Also within the study area are other characteristic features including Farnborough Airfield and the Blackwater Valley. Despite these large open areas the urban spread of Farnborough and Aldershot extends over about 55% of the Borough.

5 Historic Context

5.2 Geology, Topography and Drainage

5.6 The majority of the study area lies on the edge of the Weald and geologically forms part of the southern limb of the London Basin which slopes and dips gently northwards. It is characterised predominantly by the Bracklesham Beds which are a low-lying series of clays, sands and pebble formations.

5.7 The southern part of the study area forms a gently undulating strip of land extending north-east from Farnham and comprising a series of sands and clays. This runs east and west through Bourley Hill bringing the sands of the Bagshot Beds to the surface at the northern slopes of Caesar's Camp (ht 177m OD). South of here is the sharp fold of the Hog's Back (ht 154m OD) created by the prominent chalk edge of the North Downs which runs west to east and lies just outside the study area.

5.8 Plateau gravels, waterborne and originally sourced from streams from the North Downs, south of the study area, give rise to the prominent hills at St Michael's Abbey and Farnborough Hill Convent (ht 98m OD).



Farnborough Hill area

5.9 Gravel drift deposits characterise the Blackwater Valley and its tributary Cove Brook, which have cut broad flood plains amid the surrounding gently undulating topography of the study area. These drift deposits contain valuable sand and gravel reserves and much of the Blackwater Valley has been affected by mineral extraction.

5.10 The soils formed from the Bracklesham Beds give rise to both acid well drained sandy soils suitable for acid-tolerant species such as heath, and also, where subsoils are less permeable, to areas that are seasonally waterlogged and provide wet lowland heath habitats. The gravel alluvial deposits of the Blackwater Valley form a range of fine, well drained soils in the north, but in the middle to southern sections are affected by groundwater and flooding.

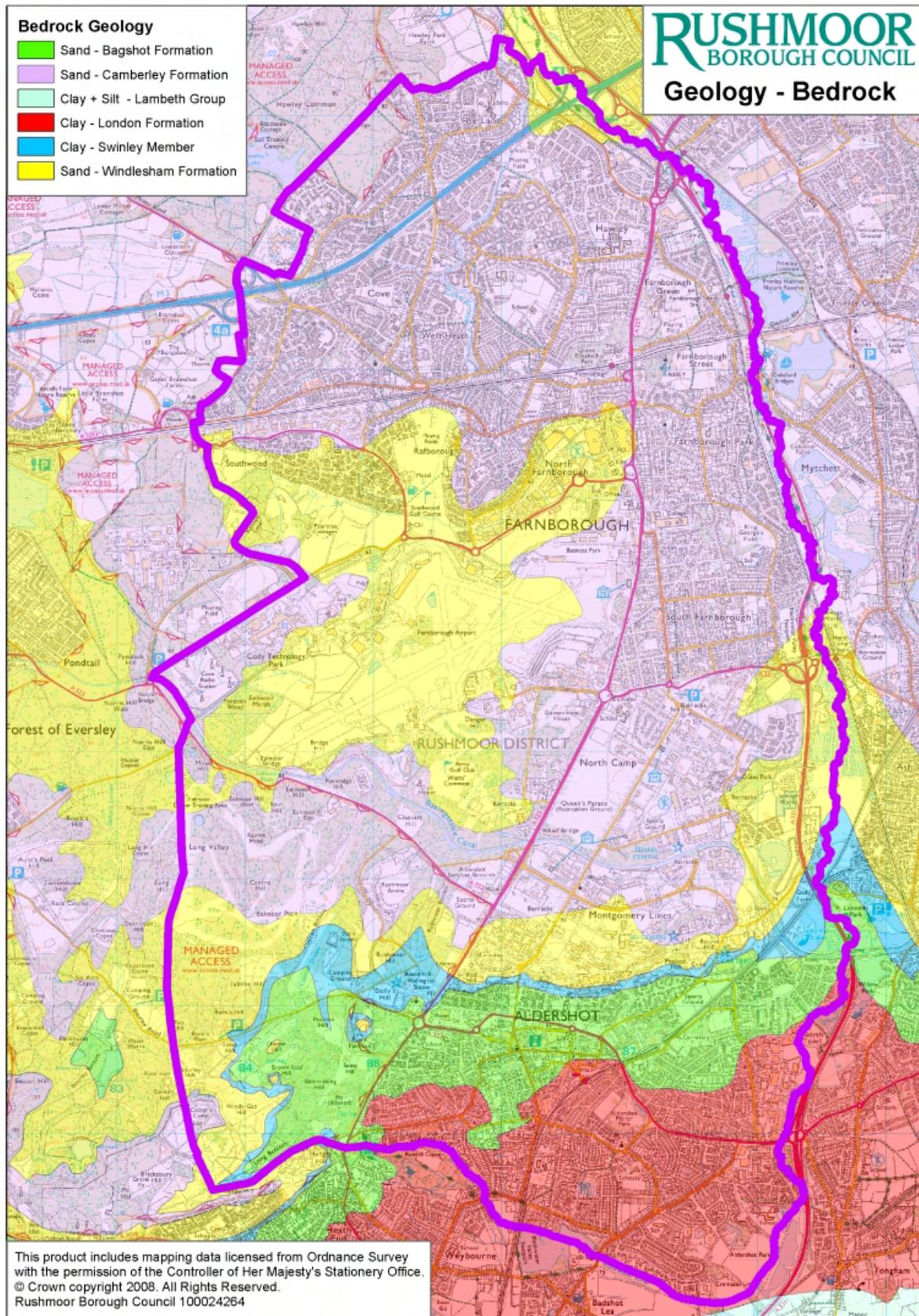
Historic Context 5



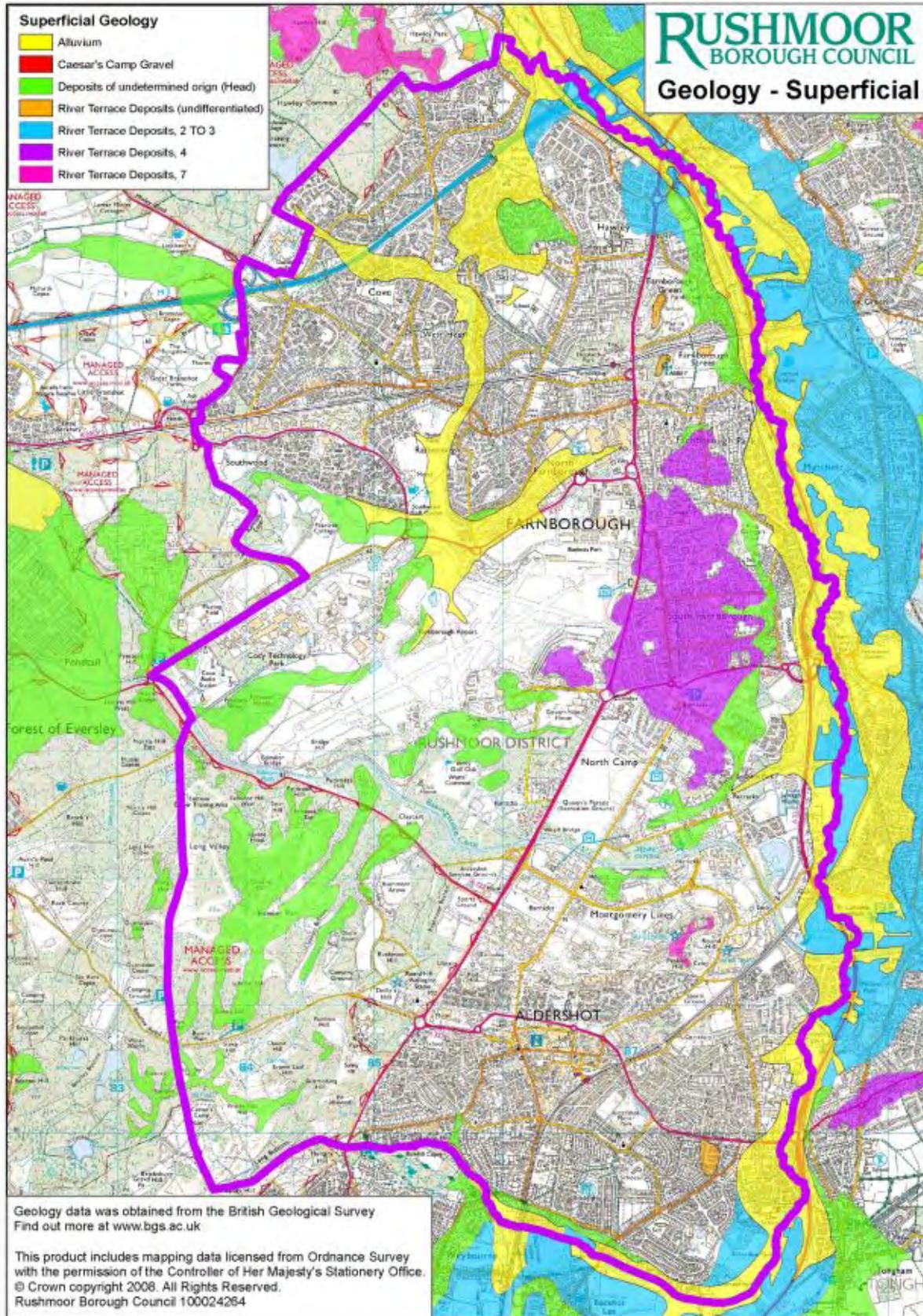
Cove Brook

5.11 The study area contains several water courses and a large number of open water bodies which are the result of mineral extraction. The River Blackwater, and its tributary Cove Brook, flow through the area and form important green corridors. The Basingstoke Canal, crosses west to east bisecting the study area and, although artificial, is an important historical and ecological feature.

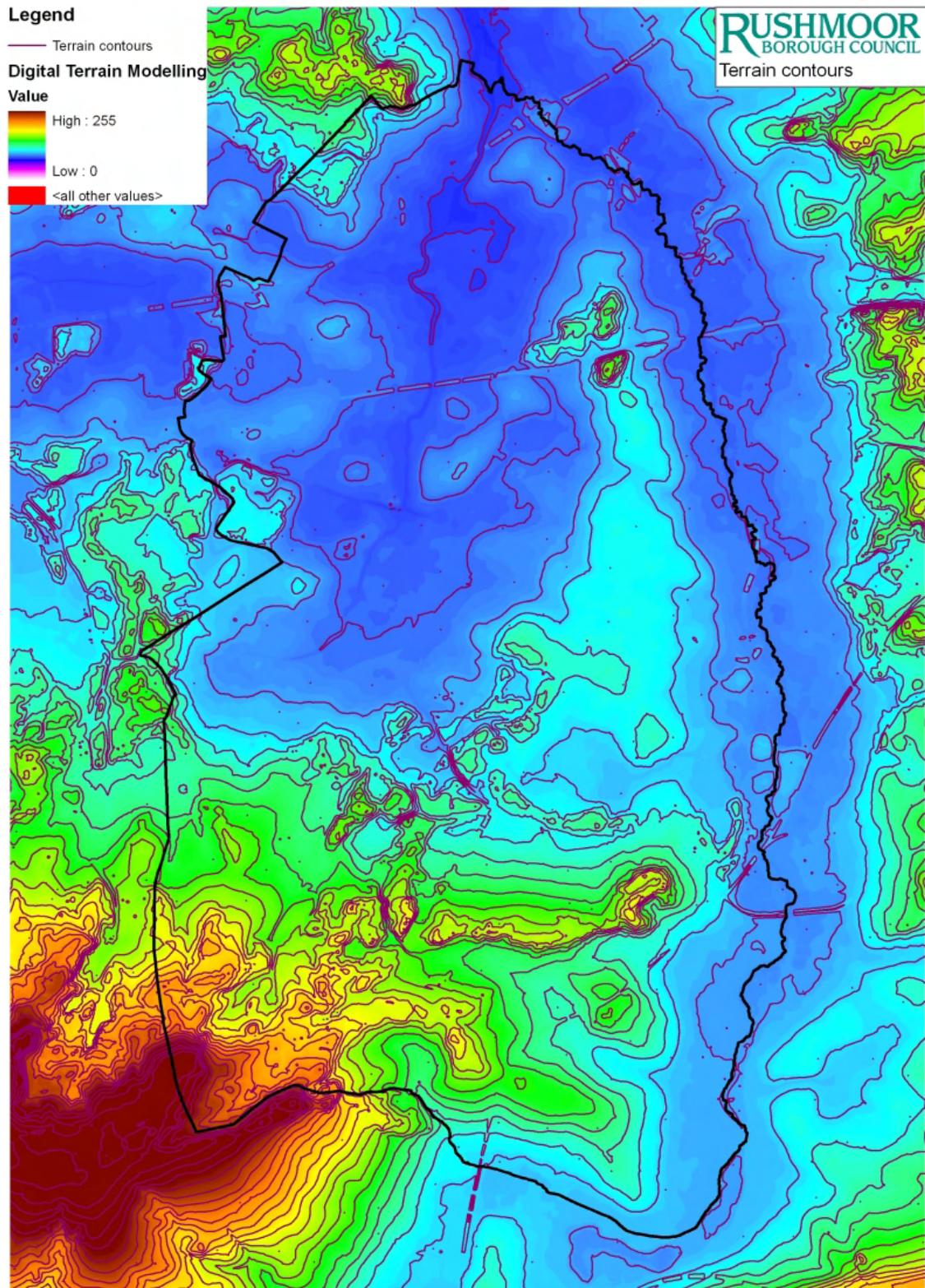
5 Historic Context



Historic Context 5



5 Historic Context



5.3 Ecological Character

5.12 Rushmoor Borough is a small, mainly urban borough, but with a large proportion of open space and Crown land. The area also differs from the surrounding districts in having only a small amount of land in agricultural use. The intersection of these factors with the geology (mainly sands and gravels) has led to an interesting and distinct ecology.



5.13 The range of semi-natural vegetation include broadleaved woodland, conifer plantation, heath, neutral and acid grasslands, valley mire and aquatic habitats. The dominant habitat types are the heathland vegetation communities associated with the Tertiary and Quaternary gravel and sand deposits. These have been planted with conifer and broadleaved plantations in places and also invaded by scrub and woodland where management is limited. The aquatic habitats are associated with the Blackwater Valley in the east and the smaller Cove Brook. There are also flooded gravel pits and the Basingstoke Canal within the district that add to the ecological interest.

5.14 The heathland habitats are recognised in some cases as being of national or international importance for the plant communities and wildlife they support. There are five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated within or partly within the Borough (see table below), covering an area of 471 hectares of land within the borough boundary. These sites were designated by English Nature and are now monitored by Natural England, SSSI's receive statutory protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

SSSI Name	SSSI units in borough
Basingstoke Canal	1,7,8,9
Bourley & Long Valley	2,3
Castle Bottom to Yateley & Hawley Meadows	14
Eelmoor Marsh	1,2,3
Foxlease Meadows	9

Table of SSSI units in Rushmoor

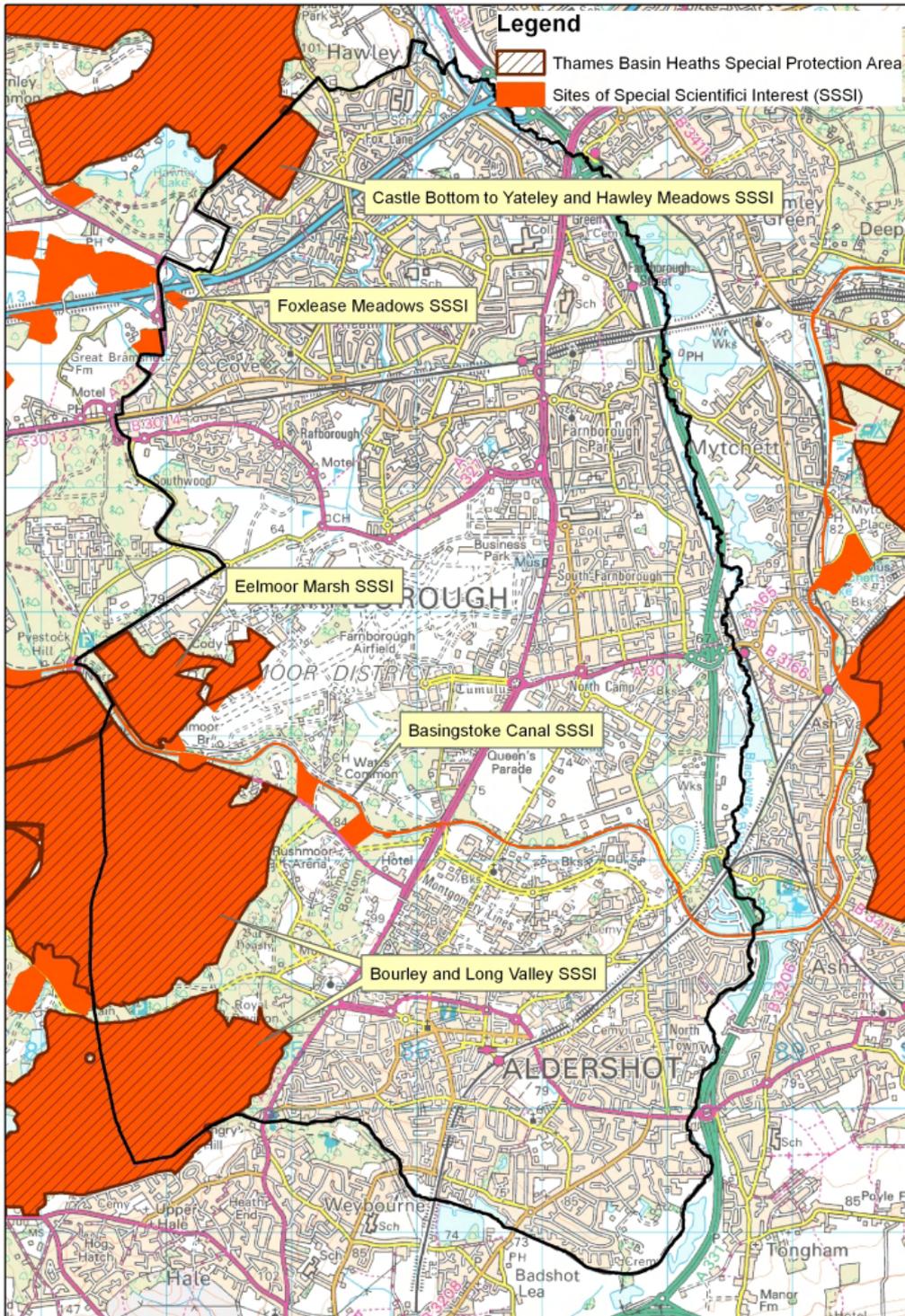
5 Historic Context



Large areas of open heath near Caesars Camp

5.15 Of the five SSSI's four reflect the character of the main ecological interest within the Borough and contain dry and wet heath, acid grassland, bog and wetland habitats. Excluding the Basingstoke Canal the SSSI's cover nearly 300ha and are all located along the western edge of the Borough. Areas within the **Bourley and Long Valley, Eelmoor Marsh and Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Meadows SSSI's** are also designated as a Special Protection Area under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409). The map below shows the overlap of international and national designations in the area.

Historic Context 5



Map of International and National Designations within Rushmoor

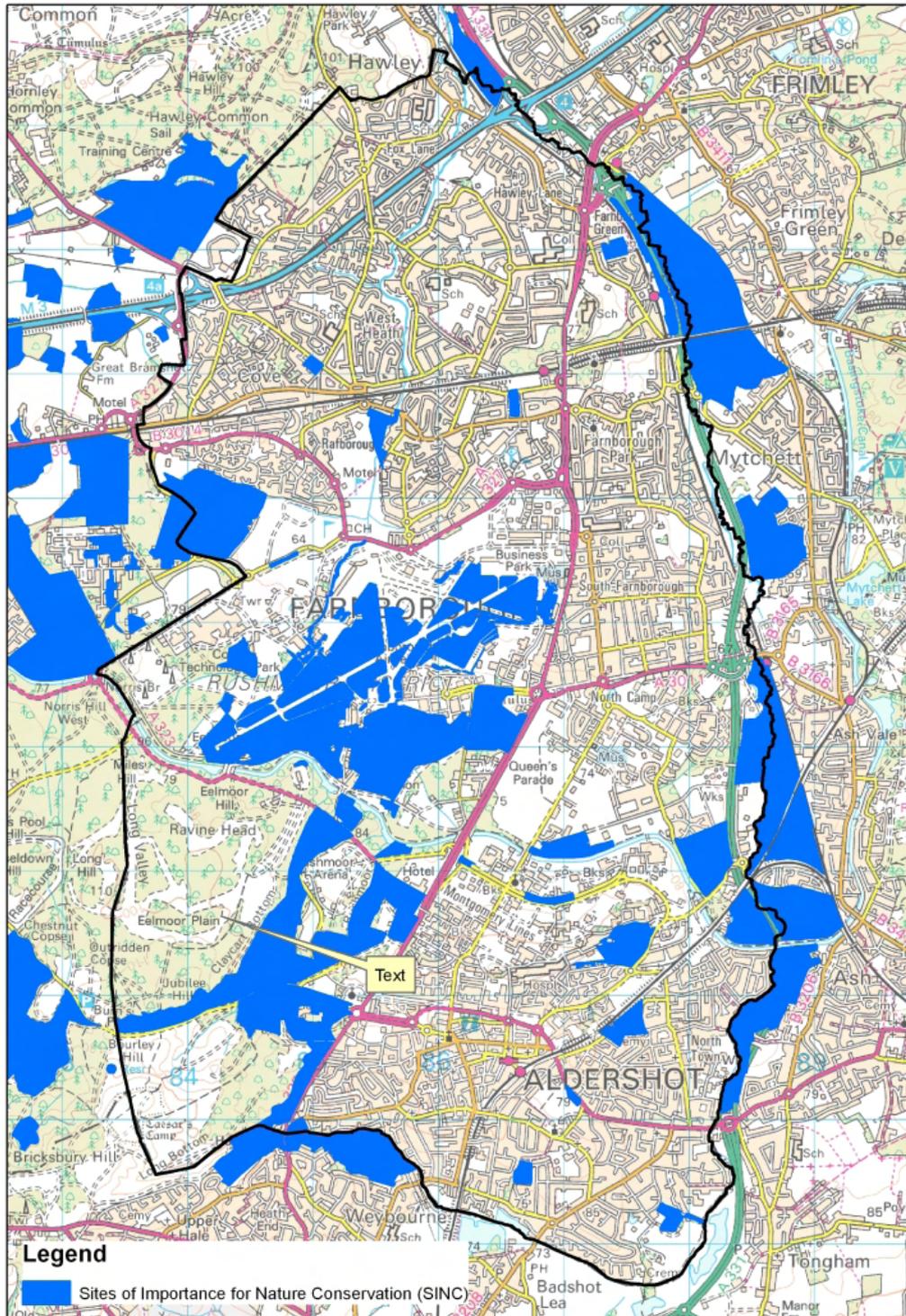
5 Historic Context

5.16 The Thames Basin Heaths was designated for the populations of breeding woodlark (*Lullula arborea*), nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) and Dartford warbler (*Sylvia undata*), all specialist heathland species listed in Annex 1 of the EC Directive, that the areas support. ⁽¹⁾

5.17 There are a number of other areas designated for their nature conservation importance under the Local Sites system. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are allocated at a county level and cover areas of priority habitats or that support priority species. There are 36 SINCs in Rushmoor (shown on the map below) and these include a range of habitats including the grasslands associated with Farnborough Airfield and areas associated with the Blackwater River. In particular the gravel pits in the Blackwater Valley are of importance for wintering wildfowl, passage migrants and breeding waders.

1 The EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) includes lowland heath as a priority habitat type due to its international ecological significance.

Historic Context 5



Local Designations - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

5.18 The Rowhill Copse SINC is a species-rich woodland and is owned by Rushmoor District; however, the majority of the site is within the neighbouring Waverley Borough Council. The woodland on site is species-rich but not regarded as ancient woodland within English Nature's Provisional Ancient Woodland

5 Historic Context

Inventory. Indeed, no ancient woodland is recorded in the District. The site is important locally and has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve, and plays an important role as a local recreational and educational resource.



Rowhill Nature Reserve

5.4 Landscape History

5.4.1 Cultural Heritage

5.19 The study area contains some evidence of ancient human settlement, although relatively little of it remains today. Flint implement, artefacts, and ancient earthworks and burial mounds have been discovered and a number of these findings have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and remain as archaeologically important sites within the Borough.

5.20 Caesar's Camp (SAM 32) in the south-west of the study area includes a large complex hillfort of Iron Age date situated on an irregular promontory. In addition to the hillfort, there are also the remains of part of a medieval park pale which survives as a bank and ditch situated along the western edge of the camp. In view of the rarity of such hillforts and their importance in understanding the nature of social organisation in the Iron Age period, Caesar's Camp is considered to be of national importance.

Historic Context 5

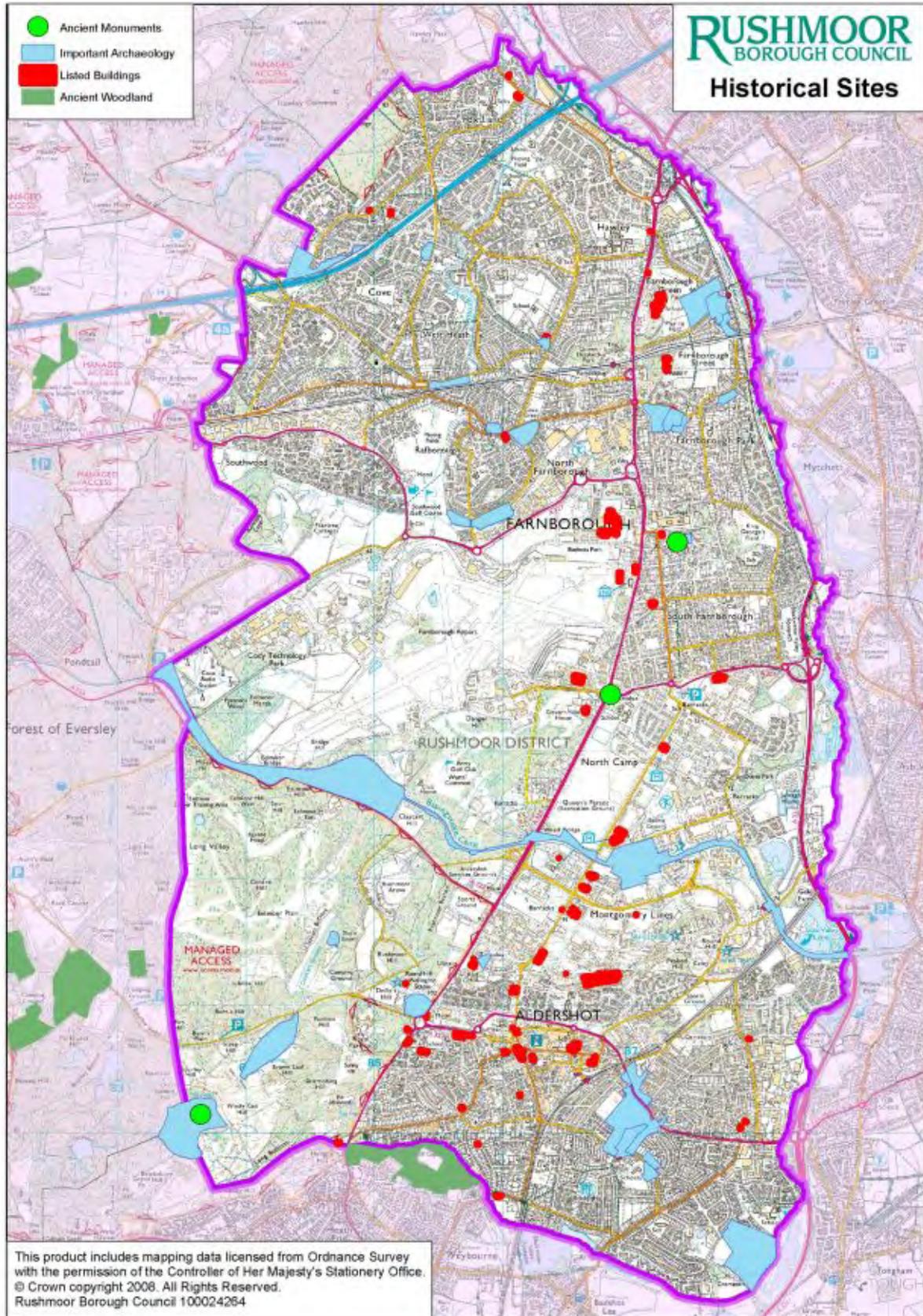
5.21 There are two bowl barrows dating from between 2400-1500BC within the study area which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. They are the bowl barrow at Cockadobby Hill on Queens Roundabout (SAM 199) and the bowl in Albert Road (SAM 226). While bowl barrows are not uncommon nationally, their prominence, in particular that of the bowl barrow on the Cockadobby Hill roundabout, makes them a major historic element within the modern landscape and remain important indicators of beliefs and social trends amongst prehistoric communities. Both are considered to have considerable archaeological potential.

5.22 During **prehistoric** times (ie before the Roman invasion of AD43) there was a general trend towards a decrease in nomadism and a tendency for man to clear the woodland and heath and drain the marshes to create pasture and arable land. Much of the earliest clearance concentrated on the most easily worked land on the chalk slopes of the Hog's Back which is just outside the Borough. Large tracts of woodland provided fuel and clay for a large-scale pottery industry.

5.23 In the late **Saxon period (650-1066AD)** farmlands developed into small villages, predominantly on the lower slopes of the chalk downs and in the river valleys and it is likely that most of the present day villages around Aldershot originate from this time.

5.24 From the earliest times, religion has had an influence on the area. By the time of the **Norman Conquest (1066)** the parish church had become a feature of the Hampshire village. St Michael the Archangel in Aldershot dates from around 1170 and at this time the parish of Aldershot had become a tithing to the Monastery of Winchester. There are a number of listed religious buildings within the study area. They include St Michael's Abbey in Farnborough, which is sited on a prominent hill overlooking the town.

5 Historic Context



5.4.2 Growth of Aldershot & Farnborough

5.25 Both Aldershot and Farnborough remained as villages up until the mid-nineteenth century. However from the late eighteenth century three factors led to the “opening-up” of this part of Hampshire. They were the construction and opening of the Basingstoke Canal (1778-1792), the extension of the railway from Woking westward to Basingstoke and Winchester (1840) and, finally, the creation of “Aldershot Camp” in 1854. In addition to these factors, more recently the construction of the M3 motorway has made the area more accessible and increased the pressure for development.

5.26 The Basingstoke Canal crosses the study area and is important as a historic feature within Rushmoor. It is also a valuable landscape and ecological resource forming an important green corridor through the Borough. The extension of the railway through the Borough has created strong linear movement routes which today sub-divide the built up area and form ‘green corridors’ some of which have visual and ecological value as a wildlife habitat and migration route.

5.27 Before the army arrived, Aldershot and Cove were small villages set amidst heathland and Farnborough consisted of two small settlements – one located close to the parish church, and the other (Farnborough Street) close to Farnborough North Railway Station. Aldershot at this time was a manor and was divided into common pasture, common arable fields with their strips, common meadows and common waste.



Cove in 2008

5.28 Aldershot Heath with its commoners rights was eradicated in 1854 when 2610 acres were given over to military training. A temporary encampment was established and later the permanent military town was built which greatly altered the appearance of the landscape. Today, while many of the original nineteenth century buildings have been lost, a number of important buildings and features remain and form part of the valuable historic character of Aldershot.

5.29 Like Aldershot, Farnborough was radically changed over a relatively short period of time by the arrival, in 1906, of His Majesty’s Balloon Factory from Chatham. It was later to become the Royal Aircraft Establishment, then the Defence Research Agency, and today is the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and QinetiQ site. The airfield became a commercial airfield in 2003 and today covers some 550 hectares, dominating the landscape south of Farnborough town.

5 Historic Context

5.30 The majority of the land, outside the urban areas of the Borough, is in Crown ownership. It includes the airfield, playing fields, other open space and large tracts of military training land occupied by the Ministry of Defence. The nature of the use and restrictions on access to much of this land has been important in influencing its conservation value and its appearance. The single most important and valuable wildlife habitat within the study area is the heathland. Although a number of areas of heath have reverted to woodland and scrub and have been despoiled by military activities, it remains an invaluable resource and provides much of the landscape setting of the Borough. It is a reminder of how much of the Borough looked prior to the development of the area in the last century.

5.31 In addition to the natural water courses in the study area, such as the Blackwater River and its tributary Cove Brook, there are a number of significant man-made water bodies such as the Basingstoke Canal and the flooded, disused gravel workings in the Blackwater Valley.

5.32 Although the Blackwater Valley was once mainly agriculture in character, the mineral extraction, urban development and new Blackwater Valley road have changed its character considerably. The ribbon of lakes along the length of the valley have important ecological and recreational value which as well as being important visual features within the Borough are some of the more positive aspects of the development.

5.33 The agricultural history of some areas, in particular Cove, influences key elements of the areas characteristics today. Trees planted to mark boundaries between fields when the land was in agricultural use are important in the leafy setting of many estates today. Not only do the trees have a hand in shaping the layout and form of new developments but they also act as a remnant of local historical interest.

5.34 During the 1960's and 1980's, the rapid growth in the population, allied to an increase in housing provision and employment, have created the urban mosaic which today forms a large part of the landscape character of the Borough.

5.4.3 Historical Associations

5.35 Many of the Borough's cultural links are closely associated with the area's ties with the British Army and its importance as a centre for aviation research and development. However, other historical associations within the area were also important in shaping and determining its landscape character.

5.36 Highwaymen were active on the heath at Cove Common during the latter part of the eighteenth century. Known as a highwayman's hideout, due to the rough and inhospitable conditions that existed, Jack Goddard's Moor at Cove Common was purchased by the government for military purposes in the middle of the nineteenth century and this practise gradually died out. Vine Cottage in Farnborough Road is also reputed to be associated with highwaymen.

5.37 There have been a number of prominent families and important landowners within the Borough. Perhaps the most famous was the Titchborne family whose association with the area dates back to the late sixteenth century when they became heirs to the Aldershot Manor.

5.38 Empress Eugenie, the exiled wife of Napoleon III, bought Farnborough Hill in 1881 and lived there until her death in 1920. To the south, she built St Michael's Abbey, as a burial place for her husband and son. Farnborough Hill and St Michael's Abbey, occupy twin conical hills either side of the railway line which bisects the town and act as prominent focal points and landscape features within the Borough.

Historic Context 5

5.39 The historical associations with the British Army are found throughout the Borough. The whole culture of the area is inextricably bound up with the military presence and its occupation of the area since the middle of the last century. Some of the major historical features include the Royal Garrison Church of All Saints (the so-called Cathedral Church of the British Army), the Royal Military Hotel, the South East District Headquarters, the Cambridge Military Hospital, the Fox's Gymnasium, the Duke of Wellington's Square and the Dakota Aeroplane. All act as reminders of a rich and varied history of the Army's presence within the Borough.



Duke of Wellington Statue

5.40 Numerous royal associations can be found in the Borough, which show the interest and involvement of royalty in the military role of Aldershot. Both Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort were keen visitors to the camp. Perhaps the best example of these associations were the Royal Pavilion (demolished in 1961) and the Prince Consort's Library which has been retained.



5.41 Aviation has played an important part in the history of the Borough from the early 20th century. The first successful British powered flight took place at Farnborough, piloted by Samuel Cody in 1906. A number of important buildings, celebrating the area's association with aviation from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, exist in the northern part of the airfield, including the Balloon House (the oldest building in the world continuously used for aeronautical activities), an aircraft factory, various workshops, offices and hangars.

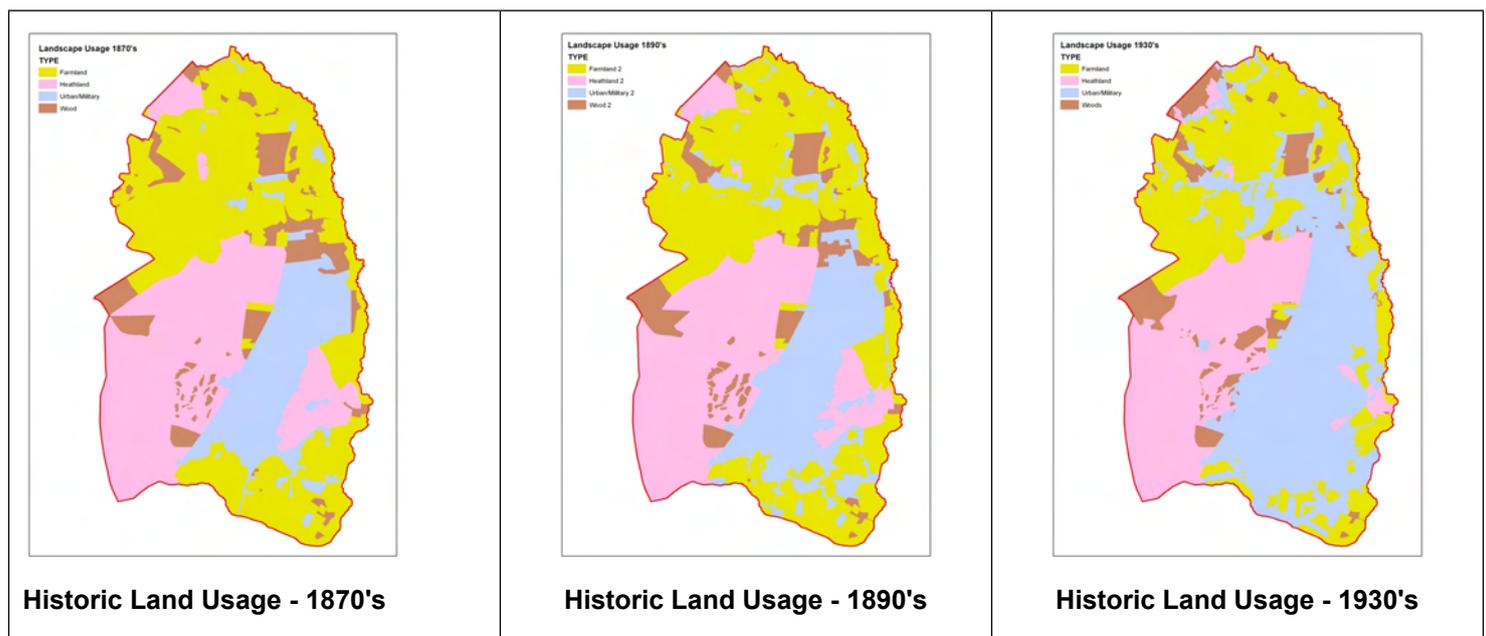
5 Historic Context

5.5 Agriculture and Land Use

5.42 Agricultural land forms a small but important part of the landscape within the study area. It acts as an important component of the strategic gaps which help provide the setting of towns and assists in retaining their individual character and special identity.

5.43 Prior to the changes which took place in the last century, both pasture and arable land could be found, particularly in the more fertile river valley and on the slopes of the North Downs to the south. Today, remnants of agricultural land are confined to areas around Badshot Lea (MAFF Grade 2 quality) and other parts of the Blackwater Valley (MAFF Grade 1 quality), but the land is generally poorly managed. Other areas of Grade 4 agricultural land exist on the edges of the study area, particularly to the north-west of Foxlease.

5.44 The maps below show the decline in agricultural land use, and the increase in development, in the borough in the period 1870-1930.



Landscape Pressures 6

6 Landscape Pressures

6.1 Human activity has over many centuries acted on the original landscape of the Borough and created a pattern of land use which altered the landscape and allowed it to evolve into what we see today. Farnborough and Aldershot had developed into small communities but with a vast area of heath to the west which remained little changed for a long period of time.

6.2 The two main pressures that have given rise to most changes in the Rushmoor landscape have been military development and the hidden pressure of general economic growth.

6.3 The arrival of the army in 1854 and the Royal Balloon Factory (later to become the Royal Aircraft Establishment) in 1906 are responsible for much of the landscape changes in the years up to the late 1960's. Since this time the changes in the growth of the economy as a whole has had the most significant impact. The results of these pressures has led to:

- i. urban and military expansion and development
- ii. the growth in roads and infrastructure
- iii. the exploitation of sand and gravel reserves
- iv. the increased use of the heathland for training and recreation

6.4 The changes in agriculture which have had such major effects on the landscape of other parts of Hampshire and the country as a whole, have hardly left their mark on Rushmoor where farming is now absent.



Tesco Superstore on former MoD land at Willems Park, edge of Aldershot town centre

6 Landscape Pressures



Soil erosion on the heathland resulting from military training near Caesars Camp

6.1 Military Use

6.5 The Aldershot Military town is sandwiched between Farnborough and Aldershot. The Crown Land in Rushmoor extends west of the A325 to include the heathland training lands and airfields. The MoD has release land in the past such as Willems Park. Some other areas were sold to construct the Blackwater Valley Road.



Farnborough Gate (former RAE sports ground)

6.6 Other areas disposed of by the MoD in the past include Southwood, Farnborough Airfield, and the former RAE sports ground near Junction 4 of the M3 motorway (now Farnborough Gate retail area). Policies have aimed to retain existing major buildings, many of which are listed such as Cambridge Military Hospital. Other smaller areas of MoD land have been declared surplus or 'alienated' in the past.

Landscape Pressures 6



Cambridge Military Hospital

6.7 The main purpose of the training areas west of the A325 is military training with conservation being a secondary objective. Defence Estates work with Natural England to manage the heathlands to ensure they are in favourable condition. Demands for more open heathland and less woodland for training by the army has led to large areas of scrub woodland being cleared. This has had the benefit of restoring areas to ecologically valuable heathland. The training lands are used for 'dry training' (as oppose to live firing range) for infantry and driver training with occasional use by tanks.

6.8 The training area is important as a local recreation resource and is controlled by Military Lands Bylaws. Since 2005 the heathland has become part of Natura 2000, a European-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the European Community Directives (i.e. Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation)⁽¹⁾. The Thames Basin Heaths supports important populations of vulnerable ground-nesting birds.

6.9 There is widespread concern that residential development close to the heathland increases the risk of disturbance from recreational activity such as dog-walking. Natural England are raising concerns over the cumulative impact of residential development on the basis that resulting increased recreational activity could impair the breeding success of important bird species. The Council is therefore required to carefully consider the effects of residential development on the heathland.

6.10 The council is working with other local authorities in the Thames Basin heath area to ensure all developments provide appropriate levels of mitigation to alleviate any negative impacts upon the Special Protection Area. This is currently achieved through developer contributions that pay for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) and SPA visitor access management and monitoring.

1 The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) was designated on 9 March 2005.

6 Landscape Pressures

6.2 Farnborough Aerodrome

6.11 The aerodrome is a vast area (some 17% of the Borough) and the majority lies within a strategic gap and contains Eelmoor Marsh SSSI. The area is the venue for the Farnborough International Airshow, and is was previously the home of the RAE.

6.12 The airfield was the first operational airfield in the country, dating from 1905. It was used for aviation research and development until 1990's, but in 1991, it was declared surplus to requirements by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

6.13 Farnborough Airport was transferred from the MoD to become a private business airport in the late 1990s and considerable investment has gone into bringing the airport up to a high standard. Control of the Airport was transferred to TAG Aviation with the understanding that the facility would be used solely for business aviation and the Farnborough Air Show.



Restored Transonic wind tunnel

6.14 The 'Factory Site' was disposed of by the MoD and has been developed as the business park IQ Farnborough .

6.15 Farnborough Aerodrome forms an almost unique landscape which, although of not high visual quality, is by the nature of its use exiting and because of its important historical links with aviation, a landscape with special qualities.



IQ Farnborough

Landscape Pressures 6



Runways at Farnborough Airport



Eelmoor Marsh, QinetiQ site.

6 Landscape Pressures

6.3 Urban Expansion

6.16 The Borough experiences rapid growth in the 1980's linked to structure plan policies for the expansion of the area. Farnborough and Aldershot now present a tight urban area to the east of the A325 which runs north to south through the Borough and east of the airfield.

6.17 The old Cove Radio Station site at Southwood was identified for housing in an earlier Local Plan and was developed in the 1990's. The area became more attractive to developers due to the improvements of road links such as the Blackwater Valley road.



Area of low density housing

6.18 A notable trend has been the pressure for infill housing particularly in the older parts of Farnborough where there are large plots. This has happened in the past and has the potential to change the character of these attractive and spacious residential areas.

6.19 Up until now opportunities for new development in Rushmoor have been limited to the redevelopment of existing urban areas, without the release of land from the MoD. In 2001, development proposals were announced by the Ministry of Defence as part of the Strategic Defence Review for the large scale redevelopment of the Aldershot Military Town. It identified 150 hectares (370 acres) of land to the north of Aldershot Town Centre as surplus to military requirements available for redevelopment.



Aldershot Centre for Health built on former MoD land.

Landscape Pressures 6

6.20 The Aldershot Urban Extension (AUE) site is located in the southern part of the Aldershot Military Town to the north of Aldershot Town Centre. The AUE is one of the largest and most significant brownfield regeneration sites in South East England. The Ministry of Defence, has already vacated over half of the land at the AUE, and will have vacated the entire site by 2014. Military facilities and activities are being relocated to other parts of the Military Town.



Housing built in the 1990's on the old Cove Radio Station (Ively Road)

6 Landscape Pressures



Looking out towards the airfield, RAE road.

6.4 Transport Infrastructure

6.21 The largest road improvement in recent years has been the Blackwater valley Road which links the A31 at Runfold in the south and the A325 at Frimley Bridges at Junction 4 of the M3 south. The road accommodates large traffic flows and has had an impact on the character of the Blackwater Valley Countryside.

6.22 Tongham Nursery near Aldershot Park was used as a borrow pit for the Blackwater Valley Road. This area has been restored as Tongham Pools.

6.23 Despite a number of mitigation measures associated with the road's construction, there are still concerns that the impact of particular parts of the Blackwater Valley will destroy the expansive, open, gentle character of the valley. There has been pressure for new development created by the increased accessibility the road has provided.

6.24 In Rushmoor there is a linking footpath along the length of the valley. The responsibility for the maintenance of the footpath is shared between the different authorities., and it is managed by the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership.

Landscape Pressures 6

6.5 The Urban Fringe

6.25 There are areas of the Borough which exhibit features of the urban fringe, such as dumping and uses such as scrap yards, car repairers and workshops. One of the areas is Hollybush Lane, Aldershot. Despite the allocation of the area for backyard industries, there is continued dumping and the area remains unattractive.



Development in the Blackwater Valley: the Blackwater Valley Road junction near South Farnborough

6.6 Climate Change

6.26 Climate change will have impacts upon all landscape areas within the borough, although pressures will vary between areas. Changes in climate include hotter, drier summers and cooler, wetter winters with an increase in extreme weather events.

6.27 The urban areas most likely to be affected will be areas of high density development. Green spaces within the urban environment are important to help cool buildings in hot weather by reducing the impacts of the urban heat island effect, they will also help alleviate flooding in extreme weather events by holding up water.

6.28 The Blackwater River, associated lakes and grassland areas and other wetland habitats within the borough are at a high risk from climate change, pressure will be put on the wetland habitats during increased periods of drought and also through flash flooding events where extra pollutants are often washed into the watercourses.

6 Landscape Pressures

6.29 Many areas of ecological importance will face pressure as the local climate changes and areas may become unsuitable for the flora or fauna for which protected areas have been designated. Without healthy green corridors species may not be able to migrate, resulting in local extinctions.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.1 Landscape Character Areas

7.1 At Jubilee Clump, at the Caesars Camp on the Hampshire /Surrey border, on a clear day the City of London is visible in the distance. When Rushmoor Borough is viewed from Jubilee Clump, it is characterised by gently undulating topography covered by thickly wooded vegetation with small pockets of urban development, punctuated by high-rise buildings and church spires. This view, perhaps more than any other, connects the present day landscape with its origins. The south-west and west of the district are still covered by the remnants of the wooded heath that once covered the area more widely.

7.2 Elsewhere Rushmoor Borough consists of two major urban areas; Farnborough to the north and Aldershot to the south. These are bisected by the military town, with its distinct wooded ridge, and the aerodrome. Within the urban zones, separate residential character areas have been identified along with industrial, business park, and public open space land use. Remains of earlier settlements and landscapes remain for instance at Farnborough Green and Cove.

7.3 The River Blackwater forms a major landscape zone, bounding the Borough to the south and east, with a sequence of distinct character areas running through this important strategic gap. These share a common topography and watersource, but differ in terms of scale, landuse and above all character.

7.4 In addition to the landscape character areas a number of important interrupting elements have been identified which are not large enough entities to form distinct character areas. This includes the M3 motorway and railway lines which are strong landscape features and tend to cut across areas of similar landscape character.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

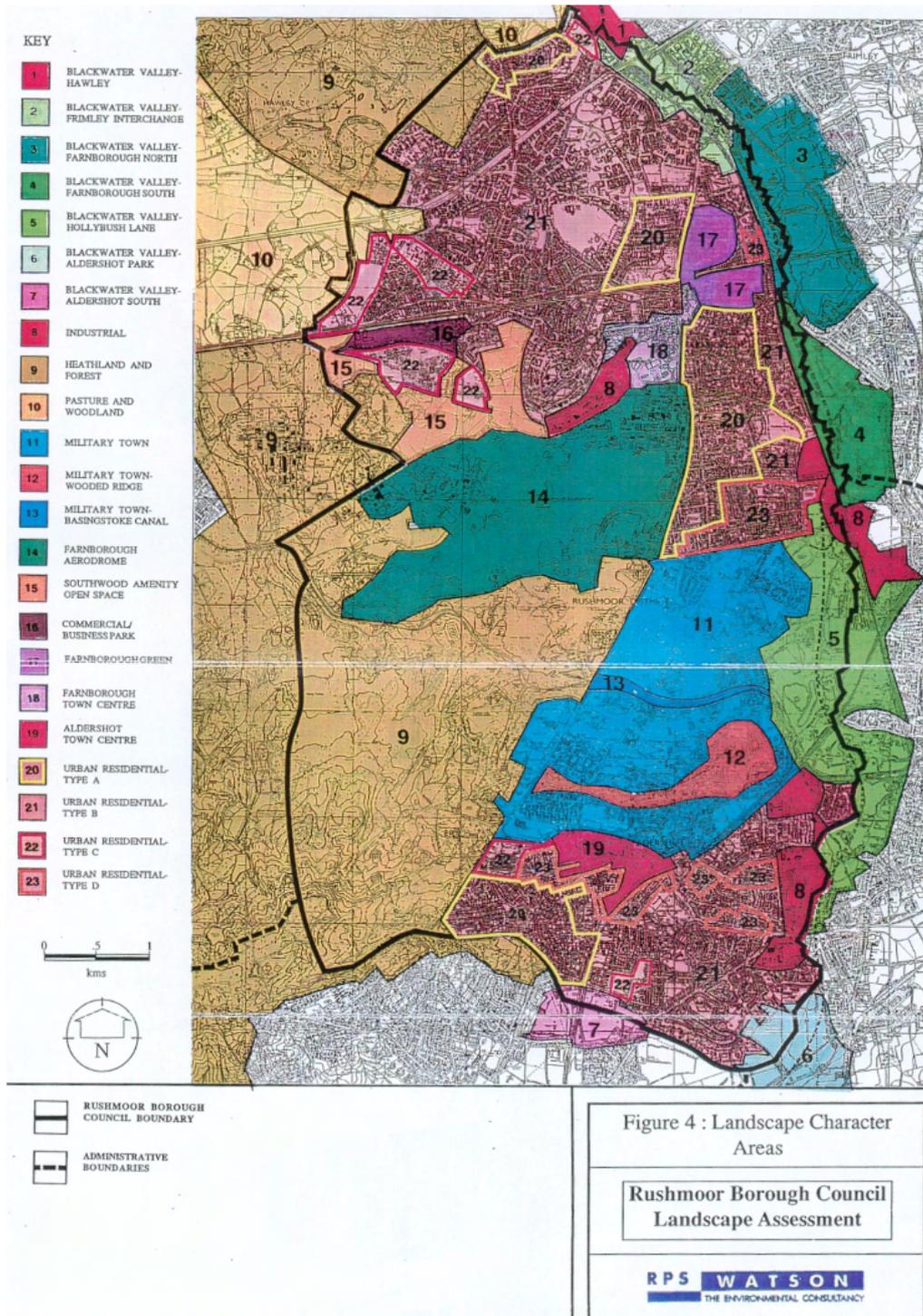
Box 1

Rushmoor's Landscape Character Areas:

- i. Blackwater Valley - Hawley
- ii. Blackwater Valley - Frimley Interchange
- iii. Blackwater Valley - Farnborough North
- iv. Blackwater Valley - Farnborough South
- v. Blackwater Valley - Hollybush Lane
- vi. Blackwater Valley - Aldershot Park
- vii. Blackwater Valley - Aldershot South
- viii. Industrial
- ix. Heathland and Forest
- x. Pasture and Woodland
- xi. Military Town
- xii. Military Town - Wooded Ridge
- xiii. Military Town - Married Quarters
- xiv. Basingstoke Canal
- xv. Farnborough Aerodrome
- xvi. Southwood Amenity Open Space
- xvii. Commercial/ Business Park
- xviii. Farnborough Green
- xix. Farnborough Town Centre
- xx. Aldershot Town Centre
- xxi. Urban Residential Type A
- xxii. Urban Residential Type B
- xxiii. Urban Residential Type C
- xxiv. Urban Residential Type D

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.5 The map below was prepared in 1994 by consultants RPS Watson and shows the landscape character areas which were identified. The map and the area boundaries have since been updated (see map on next page).

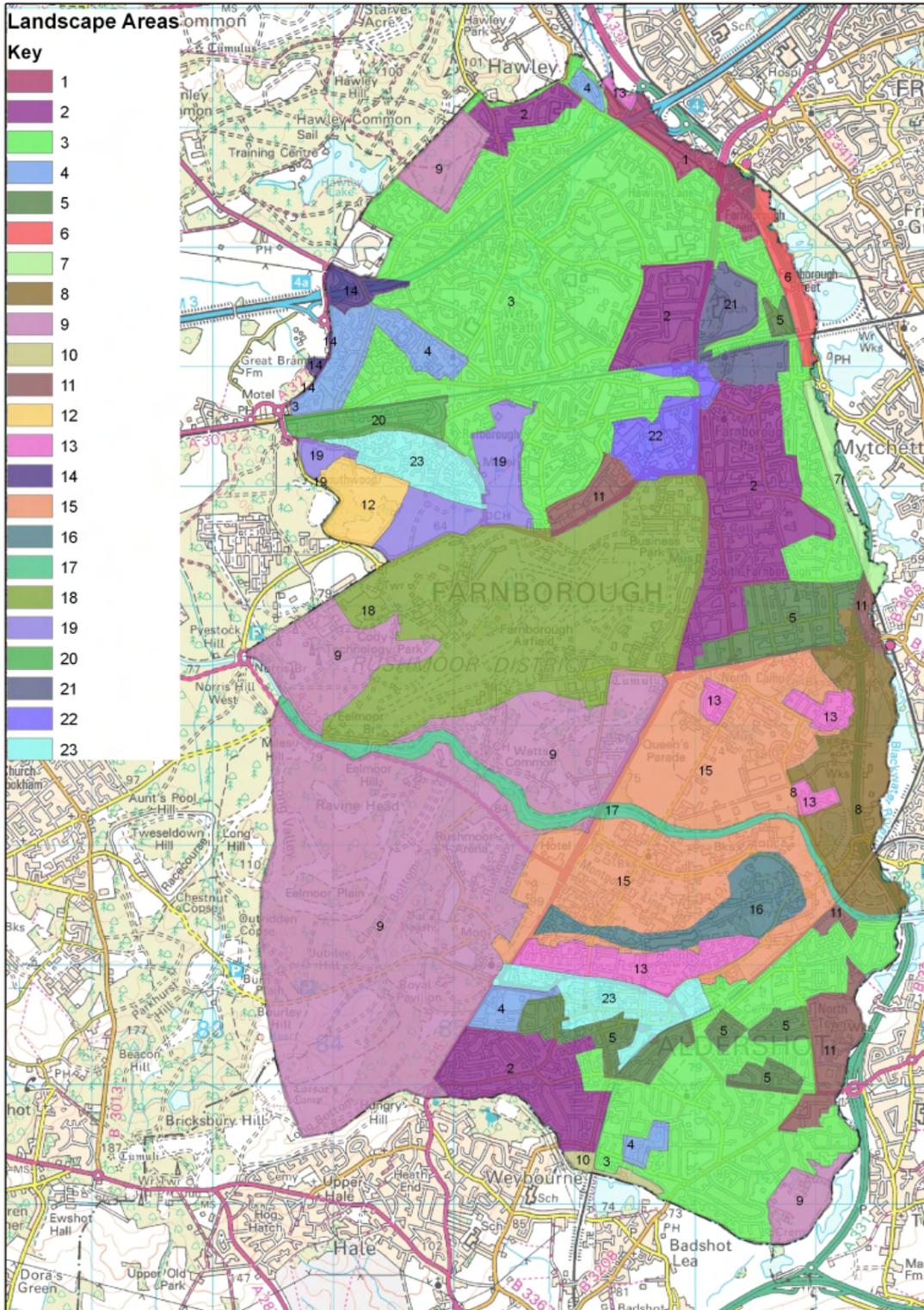


RPS Watson Landscape Character Areas (1994)

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.6 This map shows the updated landscape character areas as revised in 2009, the main changes are as a result of developments within the borough that have changed the landscape character within certain areas. A new landscape character area has been identified within the military areas, in particular the married quarter areas.

Landscape Character Analysis 7



Landscape Character Areas

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.2 Blackwater Valley

7.2.1 Hawley



Area 1: Hawley

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An extensive, river floodplain with a single meandering channel. ■ The floodplain is characterised by open semi-improved pasture. The fields are bounded by post and wire fences. ■ Valley enclosure is provided by mature blocks of woodland and occasional industrial buildings to south, east and north, with residential areas in a mature woodland setting to the west. ■ Some small new blocks of shrubby-woodland have been planted between the A331 dual carriageway and the river and associated footpath. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forms an important informal open space with a countryside feel and wildlife resource. There is some visual and noise intrusion from pylons and adjacent roads. ■ There are problems in some areas with public access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION ■ Retain the unity and open character of the river valley and ensure that longer views along length of valley are not lost. ■ Implement management strategy to stop scrub encroachment and maintain views of the river (landscape areas 6&7).

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.2.2 Frimley Interchange



Area 2: Frimley Interchange

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is an ornamental high quality landscape in the adjacent modern business park. Native type woodland planting and grassed embankments are associated with the roads. ■ Blackwater River present but inconspicuous. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The river valley is dominated by an extensive motorway interchange with associated man-made mounding that forms a major visual and noise intrusion. ■ The road associated signage and lighting columns form conspicuous but unharmonious landscape elements, reinforcing the feeling of a new man-made landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Strategic importance as a gateway to Rushmoor.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.2.3 Farnborough North



Area 3: Farnborough North

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An expansive open lowland river valley, degraded by earlier gravel extraction. ■ Belts of recent plantings and regenerating scrub with isolated mature trees form partial screening of water bodies and the surrounding land uses. ■ Blackwater River forms a single meandering channel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are extensive man-made lakes and remnant areas of idle land. ■ The Blackwater Valley Road forms a major visual and noise intrusion into the area. The roadside planting and mounding reduces the visual impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Retain long distance views of the valley. ■ Encourage reinstatement of the Blackwater River. ■ Encourage access to the lake and its environment. ■ Encourage management of lakes for wildlife.

Landscape Character Analysis 7



The Blackwater Valley functions as an important transport corridor, containing the railway at North Camp.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.2.4 Farnborough South



Area 4: Farnborough South

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A lowland river valley degraded and fragmented by past gravel extraction. ■ Enclosed semi-improved pastures with woodland blocks help to reinforce the fragmented nature of this section of the river valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackwater Valley Road forms a major visual and noise intrusion. ■ Extensive canalisation and engineering works to the Blackwater River associated with the Blackwater Valley Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Resist development to provide a buffer area between the Blackwater Valley Road and residential areas. ■ Maintain riverside planting to soften canalised treatment.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.2.5 Hollybush Lane



Area 5: Hollybush Lane

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A lowland river valley characterised by past gravel extraction. ■ Comprises a mosaic of landscape elements characterised by man-made waterbodies and remnant idle land. ■ There are varying scales of enclosure formed by extensive planted woodland blocks and regenerating scrubby woodland. ■ It includes a sewage works and a small industrial estate. ■ Two remnant small farmsteads with permanent semi-improved pasture are also present. ■ The Blackwater River forms a single meandering channel. ■ Character area extends west of existing Blackwater Valley Strategic Gap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Blackwater Valley Road forms a major visual and noise intrusion into the area. ■ Hollybush Lane provides the only vehicular access through this area besides the BVR. ■ The track is in a poor state of repair and is subject to fly-tipping and appears to have been widened from its original width. ■ Typical urban fringe land uses include scrap yards, grazing and overall poor land management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION, ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Retain character and scale of the landscape. ■ Discourage further unsuitable backyard development. ■ Improve public access. ■ Reduce impacts of backyard development area. ■ Tall developments should be restricted in this area.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.2.6 Aldershot Park



Area 6: Aldershot Park

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An open lowland river valley with the landform rising slowly to the south-east. ■ It contains an irregular large scale field pattern delineated by hedgerows and remnant hedge-row trees. ■ There are occasional woodland blocks. ■ There is an area of remnant parkland within Aldershot Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TERRY TO CHANGE THIS ISSUE POINT: The railway and the Blackwater Valley Road bisect the area and form a major visual and noise intrusion. ■ The low lying land is crossed by drainage ditches that flow into the single channel Blackwater River. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & CREATION ■ Conserve areas and character of remnant parkland. ■ Create a strong linear screening element between Aldershot and Blackwater Valley Road.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.2.7 Aldershot South



Area 7: Aldershot South

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A small scale lowland river valley contained by extensive built up edges to the north and south. ■ Hedgerows with trees and linear waterside vegetation delineate the small scale patchwork of semi-improved pasture. ■ TERRY TO REVIEW WORDING OF LAST TWO DESCRIPTION POINTS: ■ Some small holdings extending into rural valley landscape from the surrounding built-up edges. ■ The Blackwater River forms a small, single channel through the valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A railway and pylons bisect and intrude into the area. ■ One extensive waterbody is present - woodland fringed, and visually separated from other parts of the landscape area. ■ Unharmonious mixture of built elements on the urban edge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT ■ Resist development. ■ Screen obtrusive buildings. ■ Encourage sub-division of fields appropriate to the pastoral character.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.3 Industrial



Area 8: Industrial

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Busy industrial landscapes overlooking the flat lowland landform of the Blackwater valley, at North Farnborough and in the vicinity of Invincible Road. ■ Large scale functional buildings are surrounded by large areas of hard standing and car parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The built form dominates with little mitigating vegetation present. ■ Fragmented open spaces formed by the buildings and extensive road network. ■ Visually harsh environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT ■ Planting and introduction of street trees to break up the dominant built form, and improve screening. ■ Redevelopment should incorporate green roofs and walls, and include trees, swales and permeable surfacing materials.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.4 Heathland and Forest



Area 9: Heathland and Forest

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mainly Military training lands. ■ A landform of flat or gently undulating plains, with occasional steeper, sloping escarpments and small incised valleys with streams. ■ A complex mosaic of open exposed heathland with extensive woodland and scrub. ■ A relatively quiet and peaceful landscape where the predominately natural sounds and extensive views combine to stimulate feelings of isolation and wilderness common to heathlands. ■ Seasonal colour changes. ■ Historic and regional significance of the heathland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The woodland and heathland habitats have high ecological value. ■ The network of roads, tracks and footpaths bisecting the area allow for extensive access, controlled by military by-laws. ■ Sporadic MOD developments set within and generally absorbed by the natural landscape including military training areas, an arena, a golf course and depots. The training areas in particular have eroded tracks and expanses of bare earth, which create severe local impacts on the natural habitat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION ■ Positive management working with MoD to retain heathland and forest landscape. ■ Regeneration of woodland to maintain ecological diversity ■ Heathland restoration.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.5 Pasture and Woodland



Area 10: Pasture and Woodland

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remnants of a flat, low lying, meadow pasture. ■ An irregular field pattern of unimproved wetlands. The areas of permanent pasture are divided by hedgerows with a high density of alder trees. ■ The area includes a number of small, scrubby woodland blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ecologically important wetland habitats exist. ■ The M3 motorway and interchange bisects the area and create major visual and noise intrusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT ■ Replant woodland. ■ Encourage management of areas of wetland habitat. ■ Prevent draining of any wetland.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.6 Military Town



Area 11: Military Town

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A flat open lowland townscape rising slowly to the wooded escarpment (classified as area 12). ■ A monumental and ornamental townscape characterised by large military buildings set in extensive open landscapes connected by tree-lined avenues in a grid-like pattern. ■ Spatial scale decreases around the wooded escarpment (area 12) and in the south. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Security is ever present with fences, barriers and military control points. ■ spatial enclosure formed by the buildings and trees. Spatial definition often poor with one space, leaking into another. ■ Some areas of run-down 1960's 'system - built' housing that are gradually being cleared. ■ The Aldershot Urban Extension will dramatically affect this area (see below). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION, ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Maintain avenues with replacement planting. ■ Maintain views to the wider landscape of ridge line woodlands. ■ Retain openness and monumentality. ■ Provide attractive local open spaces.

7 Landscape Character Analysis



Aerial View of the Aldershot Urban Extension Development Site



Artist Impression of the Proposed Aldershot Urban Extension

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.6.1 Military Town - Wooded Ridge



Area 12: Military Town Wooded Ridge

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A heavily wooded ridge with a high point on the west and a steeply sloping eastern end. ■ Contains the military cemetery with a highly manicured ornamental-treed landscape. The ridge provides distant views over Aldershot to the south and Farnborough to the north. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The landform and mature trees help cover a network of roads and building layouts which are more sinuous and less grid like from the rest of the Military Town. ■ Contains medium density military landuses supporting a range of buildings which vary in scale, including a former hospital and barracks. ■ Detracted by Centre for Health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Maintain heavily wooded character. ■ Maintain locally important views. ■ Encourage positive management of military cemetery. ■ Maintain and enhance the Cambridge Military Hospital as an iconic and historically significant landscape feature.

7 Landscape Character Analysis



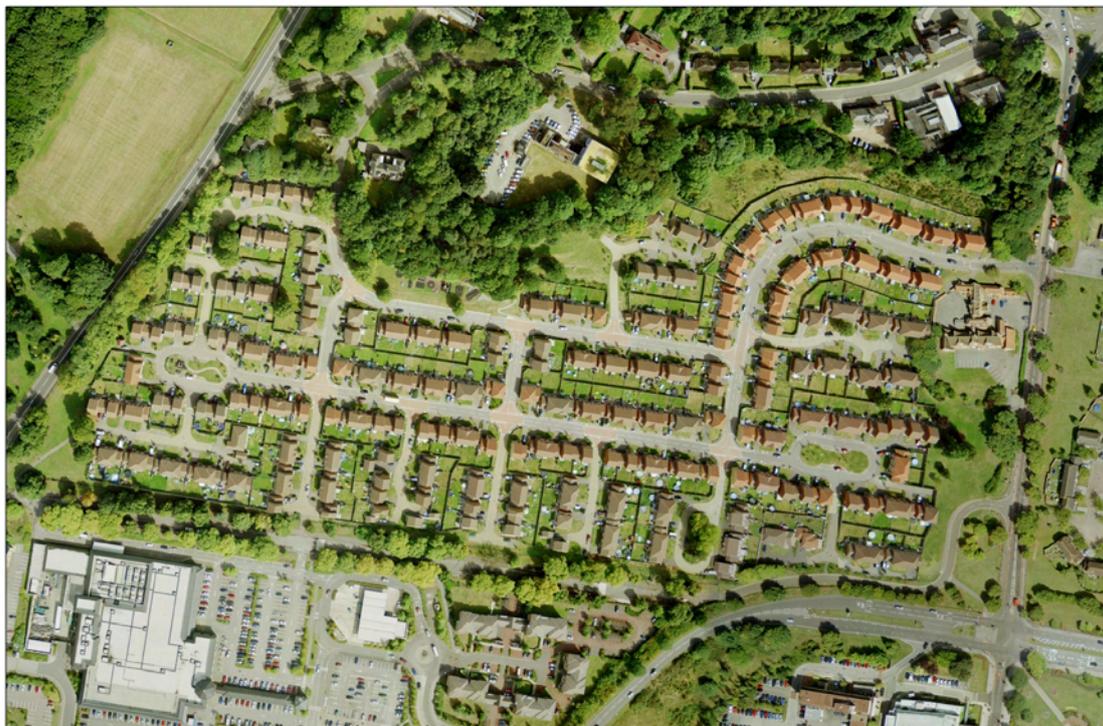
Long distance views over Aldershot from the Military Town Wooded Ridge.



Tree lined avenues and security fences are important elements of the Military landscape.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.6.2 Military Town - Married Quarters



Area 13: Military Town Married Quarters

7.7 Area 12: Military Town - Married Quarters

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Managed estates with uniform structures within individual estates. ■ Principally open planned frontages. ■ Rigid and linear in form. ■ Limited access with ability to have strong control over transport access routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not visually stimulating with too utilitarian and functional appearance. ■ No personalisation of place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT, CREATION ■ Encourage more dynamic management of estates.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.7 Basingstoke Canal



Area 14: Basingstoke Canal

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A linear waterway running east-west through the centre of the borough. ■ The canal runs west out of the Military Town across open heath where it becomes part of the Heathland and Forest Character area. ■ The canal is generally lower than the surrounding landscape and reinforces individuality of the landscape. ■ The canal is elevated to the East and in the West blends with the heathland habitat, ■ Changes in flora and appearance occur across the length of the canal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An historic canal with associated bridges and a well used towpath which is shrouded by mature linear woodland. ■ It provides a valuable amenity and an east-west movement corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION ■ Ensure appropriate management to maintain floral diversity.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.8 Farnborough Aerodrome



Area 15: Farnborough Aerodrome

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<p>Within the aerodrome there are four distinct areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Airfield is fully enclosed by the fringing landscape elements. An extensive, flat, lowland landscape and hard paved runways and managed grasslands with some areas of high ecological value. 2. Farnborough Business Park (IQ), characterised by the airship hangar and dramatic formal landscaping. 3. Cody Technology Park, with hi-tech and large scale industrial and office buildings. 4. Airshow accommodation space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are views of low-level distant horizons with fringing mature woodland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Periodic noise intrusion from traffic and aircraft. ■ Management for airport safety can have impacts on the surrounding landscapes e.g. Reduction in tree heights as can be seen in affected areas shown on map below. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Need for a landscape masterplan to guide redevelopment. ■ Prevent closing of this important local gap with development. ■ Maintain important public views across airfield from road and establishments along Farnborough Road.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The sky forms an important element to this landscape.■ An exciting landscape enhanced by its historical connections with aviation.		
---	--	--

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.9 Southwood Amenity Open Space



Area 16: Southwood Amenity Open Space

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A large flat to gently undulating lowland open space, with man-made mounding. ■ The Cove Brook passes from south to north through the area and is realigned to its natural path. ■ It contains managed and improved grassland with a network of drainage ditches with associated linear mature lines of trees and small groups of trees within the grassland. ■ It is predominantly bounded by mature woodland to the west and south with low rise housing to the north and east. There are long distance views to these horizons. ■ The sky is an important element. ■ Part identified as a Strategic Gap but character area extends further west. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An amenity area which is highly valued in an area with little other open space. ■ It includes an intensively managed golf course with a rural semi-mature character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Encourage management to increase species diversity. ■ Maintain woodland edge.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.10 Commercial/Business Park



Area 17: Commercial/ Business Park

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A flat, lowland, newly created landscape comprising a low density, business park set within large open landscaped car parks (Southwood). ■ Bounded by a railway line to the north and new housing to the south. ■ The sky forms an important element above the generally flat horizon. ■ Spatial definition afforded by buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long-term uninhabited buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Encourage high quality landscape setting. ■ Need to maintain the planted landscape to screen buildings from highways.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.11 Farnborough Green



Area 18: Farnborough Green

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A relic small-scale undulating parkland landscape with a pastoral character. ■ Mature woodland blocks, hedgerows with trees and ornamental specimen trees produce an intimate mosaic of irregular fields, with more ornamental grassland areas. ■ A focal point is provided by buildings of considerable character. Associated formal gardens and landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is limited public access through footpaths and tracks, providing views across the surrounding wooded urban area. ■ The railway and narrow sections of housing separates and bisects the area and creates periodic noise intrusion. However, the deep railway cutting reduces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION ■ Maintain important views, with special attention given to the immediate setting of St Michael's Abbey and Farnborough Hill Convent within the landscape. ■ Retain intimate parkland character of the area. ■ Long-term access needs to be formalised.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

	<p>the visual impact of this movement corridor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ There is long-term pressure for development on fields.	
--	--	--



High quality landscapes at Southwood Business Park

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.12 Farnborough Town Centre



Area 19: Farnborough Town Centre

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evolved from a 1960's town centre with a generally flat landform. This area is currently under redevelopment (see picture below). ■ The oldest parts of the town centre have a wide streetscape with mixed low rise buildings. (The northern section of Queensmead is currently being redevelopment.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is little vegetation on the former streets, although there is some island bay planting in car parks to rear of town centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Create sense of local identity. ■ Encourage tree planting to reduce the exposed character. ■ Implement schemes and proposals in

7 Landscape Character Analysis

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This has been extensively added to with a pedestrian shopping area and later large scale covered retail arcade with associated car parking. ■ It has strong linear spatial definition in the older parts of the town breaking down in newest areas where large open car parks form large interconnecting spaces. ■ It forms the commercial and administrative centre for Rushmoor Borough as well as Farnborough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is no central feature or focal point. ■ Town centre lacks distinguishing features. 	<p>Farnborough Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (2007).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide design guidance.
---	---	---

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.13 Aldershot Town Centre



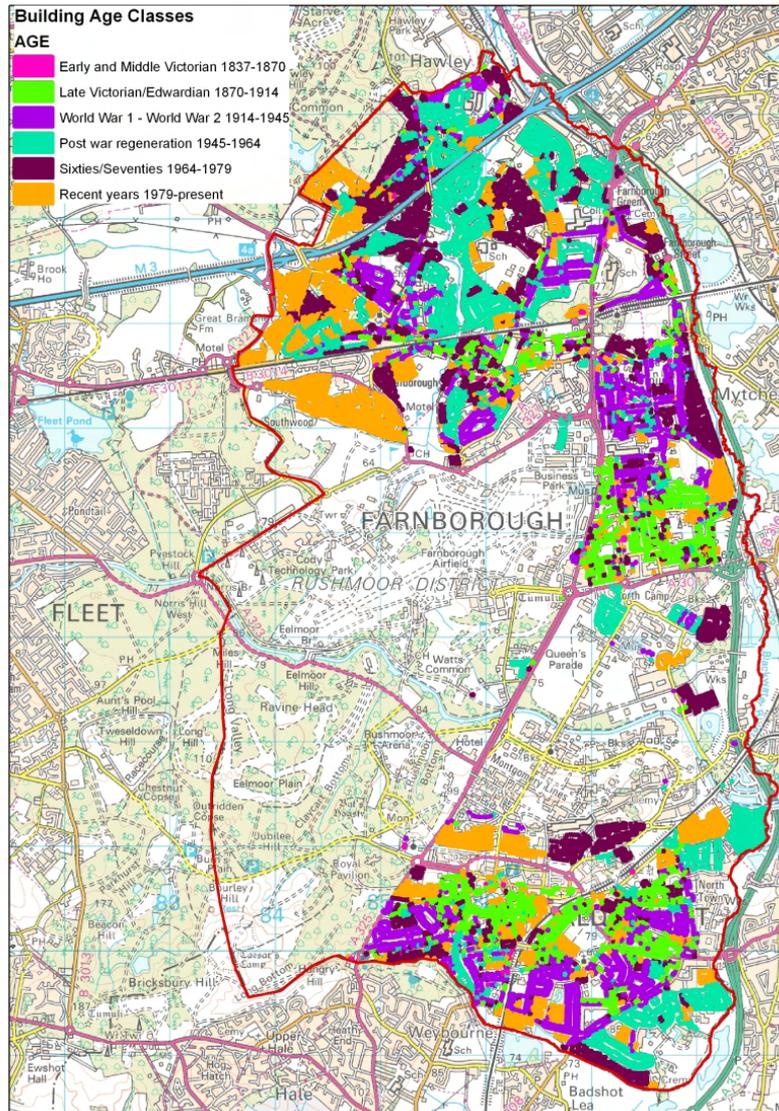
Area 20: Aldershot Town Centre

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A busy town centre on undulating topography, predominantly east and south facing. ■ The old style town centre, with Victorian roots, has a small scale irregular grid pattern of narrow streets. A modern shopping centre has been fitted into this street pattern. ■ There is generally low rise development of up to three storeys varying in age, with a range of shop frontages, prominent signs and pedestrian walkways. ■ A commercial and administrative centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is little or no street vegetation in many central streets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Preserve attractive older shop fronts. ■ Conserve sloping streetscape. ■ Implement policies and design proposals in <i>Aldershot Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document</i> (2008). ■ Increase street planting to add to Victorian character.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.14 Urban Residential

7.8 The map below gives an indication of the different ages of built structures within the borough. The age of the residential development has a large influence on the character of the area.



Building Ages Across the Borough

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.14.1 Type A



Area 21: Urban Residential (A)

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Covers Fernhill Lane, Empress Estate, Farnborough Park, Cranmore Lane/ Rowhill. ■ Low density, mature vegetation. ■ Well spaced detached housing set in mature vegetation. ■ There is a balance between built form and the surrounding vegetation. ■ Includes south Farnborough which is characterised by flat to gently undulating topography and a formal grid like street pattern. ■ Other areas have a predominantly undulating topography with a less ordered network of roads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significant vegetation is found within private gardens with little or none in public areas. ■ There is strong delineation between public and private open space. ■ Pressure for back garden development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Resist infill development which would increase density of the built-form. ■ Conserve and enhance mature vegetation. ■ Maintain distant views to the wider landscape.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.14.2 Type B



Area 22: Urban Residential (B)

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Covers Cove, Avenue Farm, The Grove, east Aldershot. Mixed, medium density/ open streetscape ● Rows of terraced and semi-detached housing forming open linear streetscapes ● Mixture of ages and form dependent upon builders and original purpose. ● The built-form dominates with the sky forming an important element of the landscape. ● The topography is flat to gently undulating. ● There are large blocks of uniform housing types and styles. ● Includes Redan Public Park with it's important public views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is little or no significant vegetation - usually small standard ornamental street trees set within mown grass. There are occasional single specimen trees or small clumps of large forest type trees. ■ Large scale expansive areas of open space are associated with schools. ■ The private front gardens visually connect with the street with few or no boundary fences, hedges or walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Retain and enhance existing vegetation. ■ Encourage street trees to reduce openness.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.14.3 Type C



Area 23: Urban Residential (C)

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Covers Southwood, Minley Road, Barningley Park/ Whitehouse Farm, Ashbury Drive, Beaumont Park, Brickfields and Highfield Avenue. ■ New housing, mature vegetation. ■ Closely spaced modern housing set within retained mature vegetation, along an irregular network of roads ending in cul-de-sacs. ■ The enclosed streetscape is characterised by walls and fences with ornamental planting. The topography is flat or gently undulating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The gardens are well planted but immature. ■ There is a balance between built form and vegetation. ■ It includes small areas of public open space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ENHANCEMENT & CREATION ■ Safeguard existing mature vegetation. ■ Encourage planting to create a sense of local identity/ character.

7 Landscape Character Analysis



Historic residential areas at Farnborough North.

Landscape Character Analysis 7

7.14.4 Type D



Area 24: Urban Residential (D)

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Covers Farnborough North, North Camp, Aldershot West End, St Georges Road, Waterloo Road, Ash Road/Newport Road, Belle Vue Road. ■ Victorian/ Edwardian Terraced. ■ Turn-of-the-century (1900s) terraced housing set on flat or gently undulating topography. ■ There are small front gardens with houses closely adjoining the street. Private car parking is on the street. ■ The built form dominates with individual street character formed by house character and styles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The narrow enclosed linear streetscape has little or no vegetation. ■ There is little or no public open space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ■ Maintain views. ■ Conserve special character of the streetscape.

7 Landscape Character Analysis

7.15 Green Corridors



Area 25: Green Corridors

Description of Character Area	Issues	Recommended Landscape Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ M3 Motorway ■ Railway Lines ■ Basingstoke Canal ■ Three road verges are classified as SINCs (Sites of Importance of Nature Conservation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide the opportunity for species to migrate. ■ Connecting larger green areas through green corridors also increases the likelihood of breeding between different populations, increasing their genetic variation and in turn their ability to adapt to external pressures such as human impacts and climate change. ■ Currently identified and safeguarded in Local Plan Review (see Proposals Map). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage replanting and gapping-up of linear woodland. ■ Facilitate attractive views/ vistas for people travelling through the Borough. ■ Improve road verges and their management to enable them to act as green corridors.

8 Conclusions

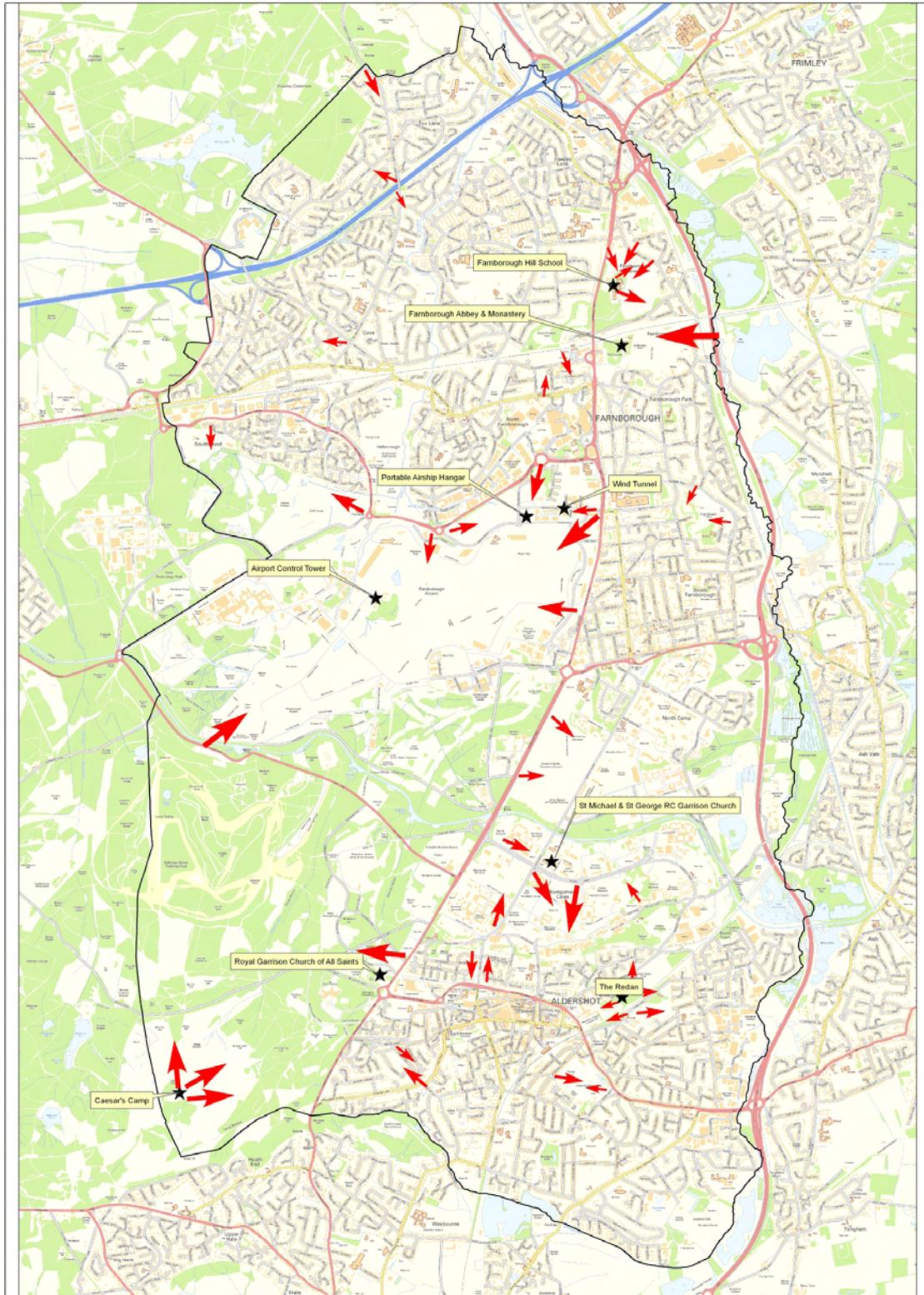
8.1 This document has sought to review and update the landscape character assessment undertaken in 1994. The majority of landscape areas are still relevant and are an accurate description of the local areas. In addition to the 23 areas proposed by RPS Watson another distinct landscape character area has been identified, this is within the married quarters estates of the military town.

8.2 Rushmoor remains a diverse mixture of landscape character types, particularly between the high density urban areas and more open landscapes of the heathland and forest and the Blackwater Valley.

8.3 Due to it's locality there is continued pressure on Rushmoor for further residential and commercial development, which has brought, and will continue to bring, opportunities for change. This pressure needs to be considered in light of the recommendations within this document to ensure that new developments add to local character and bring positive change on a landscape level.

8.4 The map below highlights a number of areas of high quality landscape and locally prominent buildings and features.

8 Conclusions



Locally Important Views

8.5 Areas of high value that have been identified as being 'at high risk' from inappropriate development, neglect and/or changes in land use are:

Conclusions 8

- Heathland and Forest
- Military Town - Wooded Ridge
- Cambridge Military Hospital
- Military Town - in particular area for proposed Aldershot Urban Extension
- Basingstoke Canal
- Area around St Michaels Abbey and Monastery
- Urban Residential Areas - Type A

8.6 Work between Natural England, Ministry of Defence and Hampshire Wildlife Trust is ongoing to bring the heathland training areas back into favourable condition. It is hoped that this work, alongside the work of the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership will ensure future development within the borough does not add negatively to the recreational pressure on this landscape, and it's ecologically important features.

8.7 The ecologically sensitive area of the Basingstoke Canal has been in decline over recent years, pressures on the area from management of adjacent land and recreational usage have led to a decline in floral diversity and the SSSI is currently in an unfavourable condition. Restoration and enhancement of this area is needed to retain the nationally important mix of species that the canal was designated for.

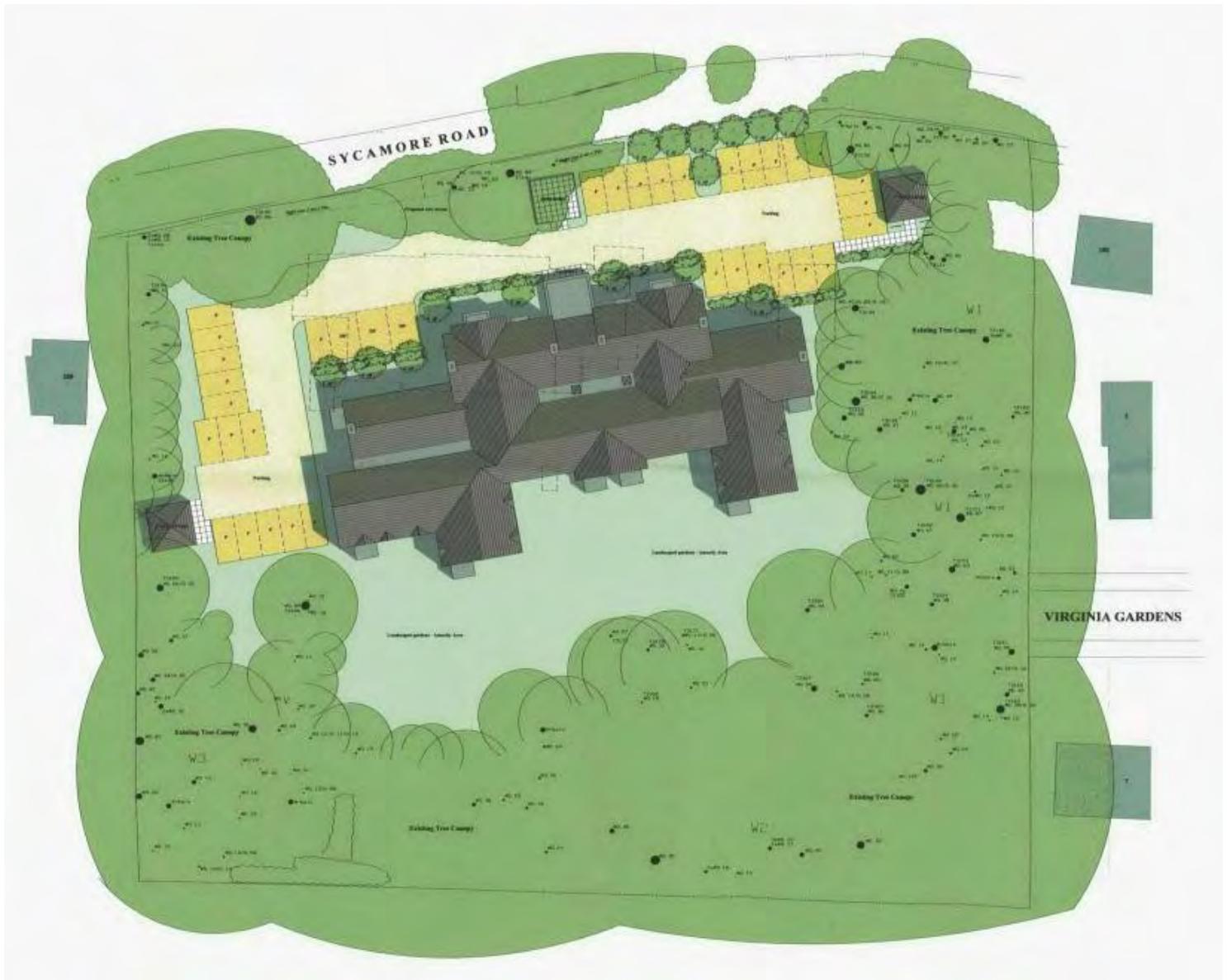
8.8 As well as the majority of the heathland and forestry areas much of the borough's remaining land, and it's history, is linked with the MoD and their ongoing review and development of their garrison and training requirements. The Aldershot Urban Extension area includes a number of listed buildings and areas of important local historical interest. It is important that in the design of this development consideration is given to how these important landscape elements can be retained and enhanced. The AUE Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance for developers in respect of these, and other, issues.

8.9 Recent development in the Military Town areas e.g. the Aldershot Centre for Health along the wooded ridge has had a negative impact on this prominent, green, landscape feature. Future development that detracts and interrupts the treeline on the ridge would further deplete the character of the area and should be strongly avoided.

8.10 There are pressures on the Farnborough Airfield landscape for further related development and increased flight activity on the site. These issues are covered in detail in the Farnborough Airport Area Action Plan, and are therefore not covered within this document.

8.11 In the residential areas of the borough there is continuing pressure to increase housing densities, especially in area 21 - Urban Residential Type A. The character of large, detached houses, set in large grounds means this area provides a number of opportunities for further development. Unsympathetic developments can negatively impact on these areas by removing their spacious nature and building uncharacteristic structures and forms. Sympathetic developments, such as that shown in Sycamore Road below, can increase densities within these areas whilst maintaining character and original features.

8 Conclusions



Sycamore Road Development Plan

8.12 This study has identified that there are some areas that have deteriorated since the previous landscape character assessment in 1994. To avoid further negative impacts on the local landscape character it is hoped that this evidence will aid the formulation of strong and effective landscape, countryside and environmental policies in the emerging Core Strategy.

8.13 It is recommended that:

- The importance of prominent landscape features is recognised in the Local Development Framework and strong policies are set out to protect and enhance these features.
- Important views across the borough are recognised and protected from inappropriate developments that will impair and reduce their value and character.
- A landscape management strategy is produced to improve landscaping within industrial areas, to enhance their appearance and improve their attractiveness to workers.

Conclusions 8

- Opportunities to improve the landscape character of the area should be considered further in the context of the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Policies should be developed and guidance produced to ensure new developments, especially infilling of existing urban areas, combine the need for higher densities with an increase in green infrastructure.
- Consultation should be undertaken with local residents to highlight locally important issues that affect the landscape character of the borough to inform future regeneration plans and developments.

9 Further Information

9 Further Information

9.1 This landscape character assessment (2009) is available online at www.rushmoor.gov.uk.

Statement 2

For further information contact Planning Policy:

Email: plan@rushmoor.gov.uk

Telephone: 01252 398 789

Write to:

Planning Policy Rushmoor Borough Council
Council Offices
Farnborough Road
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 7JU

