

St Giles Hill Winchester



Neighbourhood Design Statement 2011 (revised)

Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by
Winchester City Council's (LDF) Committee on 28th September 2011

Why a Review?

The first Neighbourhood Design Statement for St Giles Hill was prepared in 2004 and subsequently adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Winchester City Council. Over the last 7 years it has proved to be a very useful and influential document, providing guidance for those wishing to carry out works in the area and receiving strong support from Planning Inspectors in at least 3 major planning appeals. However, in the light of experience there are instances where the advice in the Statement could be more clear. Additionally, progress has been made in evolving a strategy for the private streets on the Hill. The planning policy framework both nationally and for Winchester has also progressed and there is now a need to ensure that this Statement properly relates to current government policy and the saved policies in the Winchester District Local Plan Review adopted in July 2006. There is also a need to adopt the distinction between 'roads' and 'streets' set out in Manual for Streets published for the Department for Transport in 2007¹.

Contents

Introduction	pages 2-3
Boundaries of the Area	page 4
History	page 5
Area and Landscape Setting	pages 6-7
Planning policies	
Vistas	pages 8-9
Open Grassed Areas	page 10
Wooded Areas and Trees	page 10
St Giles Cemetery	page 11
Linear Spaces	page 12
Roads and Traffic	page 13
Settlement Pattern	page 14
Positioning	page 15
Driveways, Garages and Parking	page 15
Plot Size	page 16
Bulk of Buildings	page 16
Roofs	page 17
Walls	page 17
Windows	page 18
Gardens and Landscaping	page 18
Drainage	page 18
Preparation of the Statement	page 19
Annex: Environmental Improvement	page 19

¹ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/> "Roads are essentially highways whose main function is to accommodate the movement of motor traffic. Streets... while movement is still a key function, there are several others of which the **place** function is the most important." (Para 2.2 - emphasis added.) "People meeting one another on a casual basis strengthens communities..." (Para 2.2.5.)



CONSULTATION WITH THE RESIDENTS AT ONE OF THE OPEN MEETINGS DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE STATEMENT

What is a Neighbourhood Design Statement?

The Statement describes the area of St Giles Hill as it is today and highlights the qualities which are valued by those who visit and live on the Hill.

It has been prepared by the residents of St Giles Hill to set down the character and qualities of the area that they wish to retain and enhance so that the local knowledge and perceptions may contribute to the continuation of the high quality of its environment. As in 2004, this Revised Statement has been adopted by Winchester City Council as a Supplementary Planning Document to be taken into consideration when planning applications are made.

This is to ensure that further development and change is not prevented but is based on an understanding of the past and present which have contributed to the qualities of the area, and that new schemes will add positively to its future.

Who is it for?

The neighbourhood will change with new housing developments but also with the smaller adjustments to homes, open spaces, and streets that may alter the appearance and texture of the area. Some of these changes will not be subject to planning control.

The statement is therefore for the use of:

- Statutory Bodies such as Winchester City Council, Hampshire County Council and Southern Water;
- Planners, Developers, Architects, Builders, Designers and Engineers;
- Local Community Groups;
- Residents of St Giles Hill;
- Residents and users of the surrounding area.

How to use it

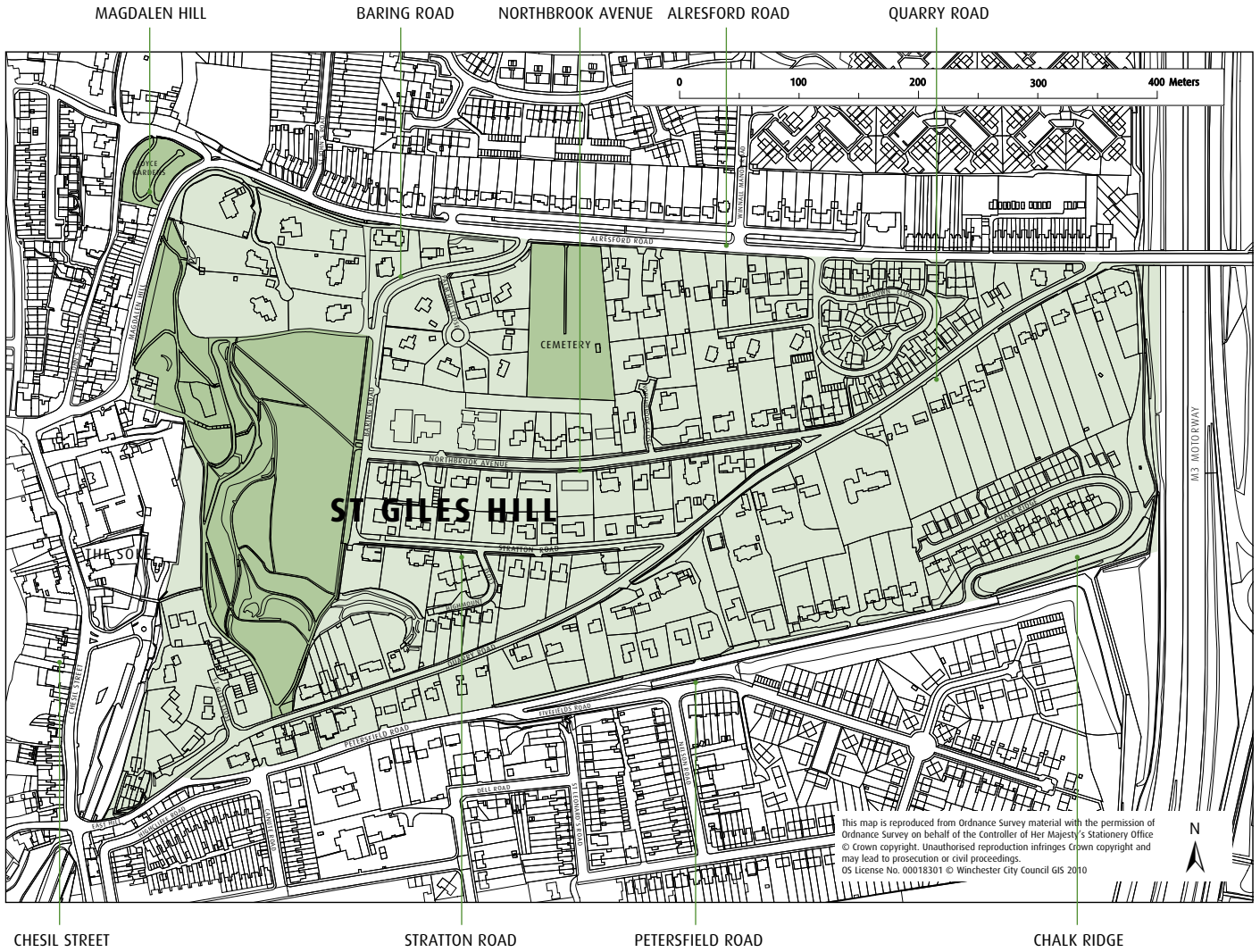
Statements in plain text are a narrative of the characteristics of the environment to be found on St Giles Hill and adjoining areas.

When new developments or alterations are considered in this area, plans should be sympathetic to the existing conditions described.

Sections of green shaded text relate to items that provide guidance to be used when considering planning applications and in other decisions affecting the Hill. The 'LP' references relate to the saved policies in the Winchester District Local Plan Review which are supplemented in the more local context by this Neighbourhood Design Statement. Relevant paragraphs of national Planning Policy Statements are prefaced by 'PPS'.

Boundaries of the area

Although it is difficult to define a geographical area by using street boundaries, for the purpose of this Statement the area is generally that bounded by Alresford Road, Petersfield Road, M3 and east of, but not including, Chesil Street.



PETERSFIELD ROAD



EAST HILL



ALRESFORD ROAD



St Giles Church

The first written record of St. Giles Hill (St Giles Church – now demolished) is as late as the 12th century but there is earlier evidence of the use of the Hill.

Archaeological finds include artefacts from early Palaeolithic tools to later banks and ditches, dwelling sites, tumuli and grave

goods. The earliest burial chambers known in the immediate area are the Bronze Age bowl and round barrows on Magdalen Hill Down. Roman and Saxon remains and artefacts have been found on and near the Hill. The churchyard and cemetery of St Giles is known to hold significant remains not yet investigated.

St Giles Fair

The St Giles Fair was held annually from 1096 and at its largest, in the 13th century, was one of the most important fairs in Europe, attracting merchants from overseas and greatly stimulating foreign trade. The fair supported a permanent settlement 'Nova Villa' whose site included the flat land on top of St Giles Hill and extended eastwards to include Magdalen Hill Down.



THE CEMETERY OF ST GILES



THE SITE OF THE FAIR ON THE TOP OF ST GILES HILL

Public Park

The open land on top of the Hill was purchased from the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1878 on condition that the land be used solely for public exercise and recreation and that no buildings be erected thereon. In 1894 the land was increased by a gift from the Lord Northbrook.



THE RESTORED RAILWAY FOOTBRIDGE

Chesil Station

More recent changes included the building of a railway line in 1885 from Didcot to Winchester with a 441 yard tunnel under St Giles Hill, and the Chesil Street station built on land close to the slopes of the Hill. During the First World War a three mile long link to the north of the tunnel was opened to serve the military camps at Morn Hill and at Winnall Down which spread as far as Avington and accommodated some 270,000 men.

* from 'St Giles Hill, Its Place in History' Hugh Watson 1996



Area and Landscape Setting



THE HILL STANDS ABOUT 50 METRES ABOVE THE CITY OF WINCHESTER

The Hill forms part of the western edge of the South Downs, a chalk ridge extending from Beachy Head in the east. It stands about 50 metres above the city that has developed in the valley of the River Itchen. It is on the westernmost limit of the South Downs National Park with its east, south and west flanks in full view from the Park. Importantly, a large part of St Giles Hill was designated as a Conservation Area in 1981 and its boundary is shown on the map on pages 8 and 9.

From the city centre and elsewhere, St Giles Hill is seen to rise up a steep tree-covered slope to a grassy open summit which formed part of the site of the medieval fair. This serves as a viewpoint to the north, west and south and is a popular tourist attraction. St Giles Hill is characterised by open spaces. The beauty of the area is enhanced by the seasonal changes in vegetation, especially the trees and shrubs with their blossom and leaf colours. The large grassed open space is a valuable recreational resource.

Important views of St Giles Hill from the surrounding area include:



LOOKING WEST FROM THE MAGDALEN HILL DOWN BUTTERFLY RESERVE OPPOSITE ST SWITHUNS SCHOOL ON ALRESFORD ROAD



THE VIEW OF THE HILL LOOKING NORTH WEST FROM ST ANDREWS CHURCH IN CHILCOMB



LOOKING NORTH FROM THE SLOPES OF ST CATHERINE'S HILL



THE OPEN SPACE OF JOYCE GARDENS BY MAGDALEN HILL

The approach to Winchester from the east along Alresford Road is an important and historic entrance to the city along the remains of a Roman Road. There are sudden and dramatic views of the City and Cathedral as the road descends between the wooded slopes of St Giles Hill and the open space of Joyce Gardens fronting Magdalen Hill.

The South Downs Way National Trail leaves Winchester along the southern lower slopes of St Giles Hill, through Highcliffe and proceeds over the motorway into the National Park towards Chilcomb. From this path the whole of the south side of the Hill is in full view, and in particular the striking tree covered drop at the western end.

Highcliffe and Bar End are linked to St Giles Hill, covering the lower slopes of the Hill and the valley between St Giles Hill and St Catherine's Hill. All three neighbourhoods form the important south-eastern entrance to Winchester through which many visitors gain their first impression of the city.

There are important footpaths linking the city centre to St Giles Hill, with steps down to the area known as The Soke, off the hilltop to the southwest down to Quarry Road and a non-stepped path down to Alresford Road that provides access for pushchairs and people with disabilities.

Thus it is seen that St Giles Hill forms a link between the city proper and the surrounding countryside. It retains an essence of both, maintaining the grace and space characteristic of the area.



THE STEPS FROM QUARRY ROAD LEAD RIGHT TO THE TOP OF THE HILL



LOOKING EAST FROM THE ROOF OF THE WESTGATE AT THE TOP OF THE HIGH STREET



Vistas

The Hill stands close to the city centre and from the grassed open area there are panoramic views to the north, of Winchester, the water meadows, St Cross and St Catherine’s Hill. These views are a vital and treasured attribute of the Hill. Also important are the glimpses of many of the local landmarks that are possible through gaps between houses, particularly towards St Catherine’s Hill and the ridge leading towards Chilcomb. These vistas are unimpaired by buildings but may become filtered by vegetation which detracts from these local views. As the Hill is prominent, it can be seen from various points in the city and surrounding countryside including the Broadway and High Street, the M3 Motorway and the South Downs Way and Magdalen Hill Down within the National Park. Many of the houses are well integrated within the tree cover.

1 Any development should have rooflines that do not impact adversely on the important vistas and glimpses indicated on the map.

These must be protected, particularly:

- Panoramic or extensive views
- Glimpses between buildings
- Views inwards of the Hill from the south and west

Tree and hedge growth throughout the area should be managed to retain and frame vistas and glimpses.

LP Policies DP.4; CE.5; HE.4; W.1.

Identified Vistas to be Protected



Clockwise from east to west the important views include:



THE BUTTERFLY RESERVE ON MAGDALEN HILL DOWN (MANAGED BY THE HAMPSHIRE BRANCH OF BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION), ¾ MILE E



CHILCOMB AND ST ANDREWS CHURCH (C1060), 1¼ MILES ESE



TELEGRAPH HILL, 2 MILES ESE



DEACON HILL, 1½ MILES SE, IDENTIFIED BY A CLUMP OF TREES ON TOP

KEY:  Panoramic views  Glimpses  Conservation Area Boundary



ST CATHERINES' HILL - SITE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST AND SSSI, MANAGED BY HAMPSHIRE AND IOW WILDLIFE TRUST, 1 MILE SSW



ST CROSS HOSPITAL AND WATER MEADOWS, 1 MILE SW, VISIBLE FROM THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE GRASSY TOP OF THE HILL.



THE CITY INCLUDING WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL, WOLFESEY PALACE





OPEN GRASSED AREA

There are four types of open spaces found in the neighbourhood:

- open grassed areas: on top of, and the ‘bowl,’ to the south of the hill on the eastern edge of the neighbourhood.
- wooded areas
- disused cemetery, central on the northern boundary
- streets and footpaths, which provide linear spaces

Open Grassed Areas

The open grassed area comprises a part of the top of the Hill and the lower ‘bowl’ to the south, with several slopes, flanked by woodland and interlaced with a network of pathways ranging from gently sloped to steeply stepped. A signposted viewpoint overlooking the city is well maintained and frequently visited. Whilst the City Council is responsible for the management of this area of the Hill, local residents and volunteer groups are actively involved in its maintenance.

The open area is an essential recreational and access resource for people from a wide range of groups including residents, adjacent neighbourhoods, and city/regional tourism. Visitors arrive on foot, bicycle and by car. Parking facilities are limited to 4 spaces in a bay on Baring Road by the junction with Northbrook Avenue. The positioning of this bay interrupts the distant views across the park along Northbrook Avenue, hinders pedestrians using the designated footpaths and prevents service vehicles turning the corner.



A SIGNPOSTED VIEWPOINT OVERLOOKING THE CITY IS FREQUENTLY VISITED

2 The open grassed areas should be retained to provide opportunities for recreation and for people to meet together.

The short stay, off-street, visitor parking space should be relocated so as not to interrupt the vistas across the park or the safe flow of local traffic.

LP Policies DP.4; CE.5; HE.4; RT.2.

Wooded Areas and Trees

Wooded areas are an essential part of the area enhancing the visual appeal of the neighbourhood, providing visual privacy, and a natural weather break. The extensive tree cover, visible from the city and from other vantage points to the south and east, is recognised as contributing an important part of the city backdrop (see Winchester Conservation Area Project 2003).

Trees lining the shared surface carriageways contribute to the street scenes and the quality of vistas along these streets.

Trees, shrubs and ground cover afford a natural ecological habitat actively supporting a wide range of birds, mammals and invertebrates. The vegetation provides an important biological corridor, linking wildlife habitats such as the butterfly reserve at Magdalen Hill Down, the water meadows and the reserve at St Catherine's Hill. Native tree and shrub species include:



WOODED AREAS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE AREA

Shrubs

Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
 Buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*)
 Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
 Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
 Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
 Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)
 Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)

Trees

Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
 Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
 Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)
 Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*)
 Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
 Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
 Yew (*Taxus baccata*)
 Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*)
 Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*)



St Giles Cemetery

The disused cemetery is an important open space for wildlife. Its boundaries include brick and flint walls and railings along Alresford Road. Close to the Roman grave in the centre of the site there is another early medieval grave. No archaeological work has been undertaken to establish the extent of the former buildings and the earlier history of the site. The wooded areas require management to preserve native tree and shrub species.

3 The wooded areas to the south and west of the open grassed area (see map) should be retained and managed to afford a wind break, provide framed vistas, enhance the appearance of the neighbourhood and support ecological diversity. This should be actively planned in consultation with Hampshire County Council's Biodiversity Information Centre and the City Council and form the basis of action by the responsible authorities, volunteer groups and others.

Mature trees require succession planning and residents are encouraged to plant future replacements using appropriate native species well in advance of the existing trees starting to decline.

Where new development is proposed, landscape schemes should include appropriate native tree and shrub species.

Substantial redevelopment of private property should, where feasible, be required to retain existing planting, or where not possible to provide substitute planting.

Particular attention should be paid to the high failure rate of re-planting on chalk and preservation is preferred to replanting.

LP Policies DP.4; DP.5; CE.5; CE.10; E.4; W.1; RT.2.





STRATTON ROAD IS NON METALLED AND PROVIDES A MAJOR ACCESS ROUTE FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS TO THE OPEN PARKLAND ON ST GILES HILL



PATH FROM QUARRY ROAD TO PETERSFIELD ROAD NEAR ALL SAINTS CHURCH



THE ROADS ON THE TOP OF THE HILL ARE UNADOPTED AND HAVE SOFT VERGES

Linear Spaces: footpaths, carriageway edges and verges

The streets on the top of the Hill are unadopted shared surface carriageways, and are characterised by soft, wide verges. They are predominantly tree lined. The pattern of some of the streets and footpaths on the Hill follow those of the medieval fair. Baring Road and Stratton Road are not metalled. Street lighting is subdued and of traditional, mainly Victorian, design. There is minimal street furniture. These shared surface carriageways have low levels of through traffic and provide major access routes for pedestrians and cyclists to the open parkland on St Giles Hill. A special character and sense of place of the neighbourhood is the use made of the streets as social areas, strengthening the sense of community. A survey on a typical January weekend indicated that twice as many pedestrians as cars used Northbrook Avenue. The streets are like wide pathways - places where people casually chat, where children play and ride their bikes, where older people move at their own pace and where dogs are walked. These characteristics are much valued not just by the residents but also by many others from adjoining localities and tourists visiting this historic city.

Well used footpaths connect streets in the area, forming a network of pedestrian routes down slopes. The main footpaths are:

- from Quarry Road to Petersfield Road near All Saints Church
- from the footbridge over the motorway (South Downs Way route) to Petersfield Road
- an extension past Chalk Ridge to Alresford Road.

Petersfield Road at the junction of Quarry Road and East Hill is an impressive entrance feature to the area with its tree lined road and an outstanding example of a large flint wall with a well designed entrance to the lower bowl of St Giles Hill nearby.

A significant number of the boundaries within and around the area are constructed of brick, flint and stone that enhance the visual appeal of the neighbourhood.

4

The informal and soft-verged streets at the top of the Hill are part of its special character and make the roads pleasant to walk along. They should not be formalised or significantly changed other than by appropriate and sympathetic surfacing.

Material used for road verges should be grass, bark chippings or gravel.

Raised kerbs should be avoided.

Footpaths are important features of the area: the routes should be kept and surfaces appropriately maintained.

The brick, flint and stone boundaries should, where possible, be maintained in their present form with the same materials, appearance and traditional construction.

New boundaries should be constructed preferably with brick and flint, hedges or railings. Where flint and brick is used, the local traditional appearance is encouraged. Railings where used, should be traditional in appearance and made of robust metal section. Fences generally should not be used as boundary treatment facing public spaces. Where fencing is erected open 'picket-style' fencing should be used, allowing new planting to penetrate and contribute to the street scene, in preference to a close-boarded style.

Where street furniture is being replaced or introduced, traditional designs and lighting should be used to maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

LP Policies DP.4; HE.5; T.8; W.1.



THE FOOTPATH FROM CHALK RIDGE TO ALRESFORD ROAD

Roads and Traffic

The road and street pattern is generally linear with three east/west running routes, (Quarry Road, Petersfield Road and Alresford Road) and subsidiary streets joining these routes. Junctions are often at acute angles. Residents on-street parking is minimal as most houses enjoy adequate space within curtilages.

The junctions at the top and bottom of Quarry Road are difficult with poor sight lines. These junctions are unsuitable for any notable increase in traffic. Quarry Road carries a significant amount of traffic, often at inappropriate speeds, that is using the route as a 'rat run' to avoid the main routes to and from Alresford Road, St Swithuns School and Winnall. This is detrimental to highway safety and the quality of the residential environment. Petersfield Road provides a major access route for Highcliffe residents. The junction between Fivefields Road and Petersfield Road is also at an acute angle with poor sight lines for joining traffic.

Pedestrians and cyclists make significant use of the main and subsidiary routes within the neighbourhood. County guidance is towards slow speed roads with surfaces shared by pedestrians and other traffic.



THE JUNCTION OF PETERSFIELD ROAD AND QUARRY ROAD



THE JUNCTION OF QUARRY ROAD AND ALRESFORD ROAD



THE JUNCTION OF PETERSFIELD ROAD AND FIVEFIELDS ROAD

The shared surface streets on the Hill are managed by the St Giles Hill Roads Company. Negotiations between the Councils, developers and the Roads Company have raised the opportunity to achieve improved local vehicle access involving the sympathetic resurfacing of Baring Road. There are opportunities for further works to benefit walkers and cyclists using these shared surface streets.



STRATTON ROAD IS UNMETALLED AND IS A MAJOR ACCESS ROUTE FOR PEDESTRIANS

5 The issues of traffic management at the junctions of East Hill and Quarry Road, Quarry Road and Alresford Road and Fivefields Road and Petersfield Road should be taken into account in development proposals: speed restrictions and pedestrian priority measures should be introduced wherever possible.

Measures to reduce the amount of through traffic using Quarry Road should be introduced.

Public consultation on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit throughout the area, and a 10mph limit on the shared surface streets, will be sought.

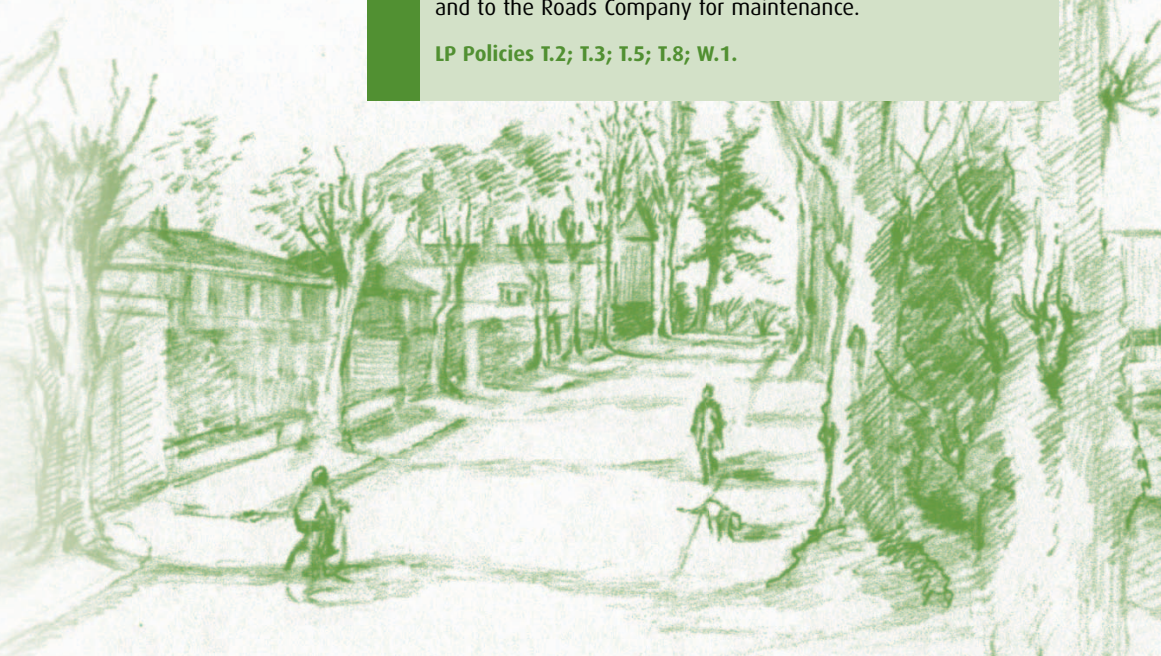
Pedestrian and cycle use of the subsidiary roads and of the main routes is a distinctive feature of the area and should be maintained by traffic management measures, such as narrowing of carriageways, and by reducing on street parking where it detracts from the street scene.

Baring Road should be resurfaced, preferably to an adoptable standard, to improve local vehicular access to the western part of the Hill.

All resurfacing of the shared surface streets should be carried out in a manner sympathetic to the character and sense of place of this part of the Conservation Area.

New development served by the unadopted shared surface carriageways on the Hill will be required to make financial contributions to the traffic management needs of the area and to the Roads Company for maintenance.

LP Policies T.2; T.3; T.5; T.8; W.1.





MODERN INFILL WITH CHANGE OF ROOFLINE AND ALLOWING FOR TREE COVER



OLDER SEMI DETACHED PROPERTIES SET BACK FROM THE ROAD WITH ROOM FOR SHRUBS AND TREES



OLDER PROPERTY CONVERTED TO FIVE DWELLINGS



SOCIAL HOUSING NEAR ALRESFORD ROAD

Settlement Pattern: Plots and houses

There is a variety of buildings on the Hill. Those at the summit are a mixture of spacious Victorian and Edwardian villas in large plots particularly along Baring Road, Northbrook Avenue, Stratton Road and Quarry Road. There has also been infill between these houses and along the lower slopes of the hill (Quarry Road and Petersfield Road and along Alresford Road to the countryside). More recent development using modern materials has utilised the steepest lower slopes (as great as 1 in 4) at Chalk Ridge, Highmount Close and Petersfield Road as well as a social housing area stretching between the eastern end of Quarry and Alresford Roads. Some of these modern developments have not blended into the setting but there are examples of modern landmark houses.

6 Buildings of uniform height and mass should be avoided and elevations should be broken up and articulated to fit in and respect the character of the area particularly where viewed from the public realm.

Development of smaller buildings would be more consistent with the character of the area.

The larger original Victorian and Edwardian houses should be retained and any infill development immediately surrounding them should be designed to harmonise with elements of that style and siting using traditional materials.

Elsewhere, the overall quality of the building and its design is more important than the style adopted.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; HE.4; HE.5; W.1.



PARK HOUSE - A MODERN DESIGN



ST GILES HILL AS SEEN FROM DEACON HILL SHOWS THE EXTENSIVE TREE COVER

Positioning

Houses are set back from the road with gaps between the buildings allowing vistas and glimpses across to the downland to the south and east.

Houses are also set down the slope allowing panoramic views over roofs towards the downland. Views inwards, of St Giles Hill, also benefit from the careful positioning of houses below the slope line, allowing the wooded tree cover to dominate the view, with attractive gable ends and rooflines appearing as glimpses between the tree cover.

The combination of positioning back from the road and down the slopes creates a sense of space. There are important gaps between houses allowing significant glimpses and vistas.



HOUSING SET INTO THE SLOPE ALLOWS PANORAMIC VIEWS OVER ROOFS



GAPS BETWEEN HOUSES ALLOW GLIMPSES ACROSS TO THE SOUTH AND EAST

- 7** The important glimpses and panoramic views indicated on the map should be preserved (see Policy 1).

Houses should be set back from the road with gaps of sufficient size between new buildings or building works to retain these important vistas and glimpses.

Where larger buildings are developed, broken roof lines using gable ends or hipped roofs where appropriate are important in order to avoid dominating the tree-covered view of the hill.

Careful positioning on the slopes is necessary with levels inset into the hillside to avoid dominating the slope and ridgelines.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; CE.5; HE.4; HE.5; W.1.

Driveways, Garages and Parking

Most driveways and garages are positioned to the side of houses with screening of parking areas being predominantly hedges and walls not closed fencing. Driveway material is mainly paving or gravel. (See also section on drainage).



DRIVEWAY MATERIAL IS MAINLY PAVING OR GRAVEL

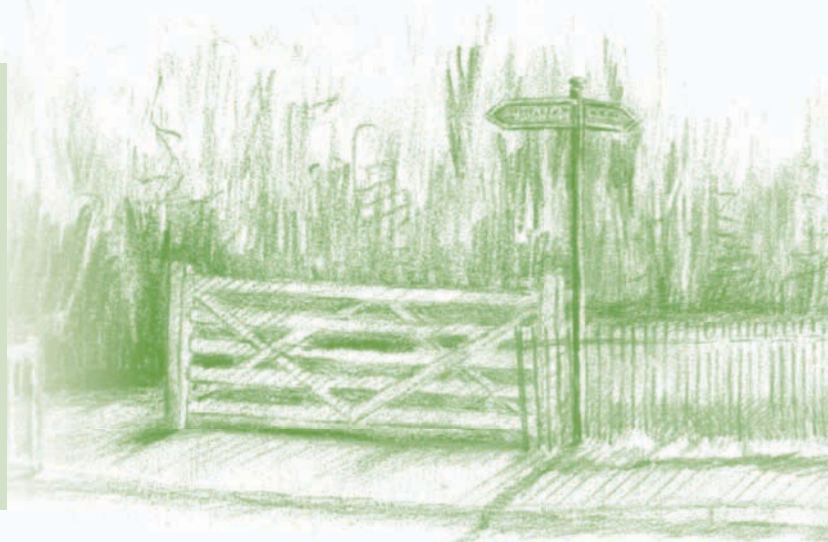
- 8** Parking should be adequate for the number of new houses proposed and should be beside houses, where possible, rather than intruding into the open frontage (see WCC Residential Parking Standards SPD).

Parking areas should be surfaced using porous materials; tarmac and concrete are inappropriate unless steep slopes preclude the use of preferred materials. The use of hedges, railings and walls as screening materials is preferred.

Garages and outbuildings should complement existing buildings.

Uncharacteristic flat-roofed garages should be avoided unless carefully integrated into a design utilising the slope.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; CE.5; HE.4; HE.5; T.4.



Plot Size

A survey of plot sizes showed that they are varied and reflect both the original spacious settlement pattern and more recent infill development. Approximate building footprint to plot size ratios vary from 9% to 31% with two-thirds having ratios below 21%. This low ratio in almost all areas contributes to the sense of openness, characteristic of the whole area and allows tree cover to establish. Plot ratio is a more reliable indicator than density in relation to the character of the area.

- 9** The building to plot ratio should be considered in relation to that of the neighbouring properties, and any scheme which results in a significantly different ratio is likely to be unacceptable.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; HE.5; W.1; (see also PPS1 and the 2010 amendments to PPS3 concerning design and density).



RECENT INFILL DEVELOPMENT



OLDER 3 STOREY PROPERTY CONVERTED INTO FIVE DWELLINGS

Bulk of Buildings

Two storey buildings form the majority in the neighbourhood, with broken roof lines and individual house units. Where buildings have a third storey, they are predominantly built within roof spaces. Ground levels are at natural ground level or in the case of steep slopes dropped down into the hillside. The pattern of buildings and the size of roofs are important factors in the overall perception of bulk. The lack of bulk is of key importance in maintaining the character and appearance of the area.



3 STOREY FLATS WITH BROKEN ROOF LINES AND TREE COVER

- 10** New buildings or building works should not dominate neighbouring buildings, break the existing skyline or close important gaps or local vistas (see map on pages 8 and 9).

New development should be two or exceptionally three storeys in height with any third storey contained within the roof space. Three storey buildings will only be acceptable if they are visually compatible with the scale of adjoining properties.

New buildings on steep gradients should, where possible, be set sympathetically into the slope and present no more than a natural two storey facade when viewed from below.

In new developments, uniformity of design should not create long unbroken lines.

The development of a number of smaller separate units is preferred to a large single building.

Terraced houses arranged in small groups would be more appropriate than large blocks of flats in areas where higher density is achievable, consistent with other policies.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; HE.4; HE.5; W.1; (see also the 2010 amendments to PPS3 concerning density).



Walls

Wall material is predominantly mid-red brick, with some flint boxed with brick, found in outbuildings and many boundary walls. There are numerous examples of red hung tiling, on older and some recent buildings. Slate is frequently present in newer houses. Occasional bands of brick mark out the first storey.



Roofs

Roofs are a very significant feature of the area especially on the hill slopes that make up a large part of the neighbourhood. Roofs are often overlooked by neighbouring properties.

The predominant characteristics of the roofs derive from the late 19th century and early 20th century houses. The principal roofing material of these houses is natural slate or clay tiles. Most have steep pitched roofs with larger houses having additional gables. A number have hipped bays and hipped roofs and a few have turrets. Clay tiles and lead have been used on ridges and there are a number of decorative chimneys with clay pots. The more modern houses do not have the consistency of roof style found with the older houses, with significant variations in roof pitch regardless of roofing material. On these houses, the predominant roofing material is concrete roll tiles.



12 Extreme brick colouration and the use of coloured mortars are unsuitable.

Large areas of unrelieved brickwork should be avoided.

Materials such as the dominant brick, flint and tile should be used, particularly where the development is located near or faces out across the key view-points described in this Design Statement

Where flint and brick is used, traditional construction or appearance is encouraged.

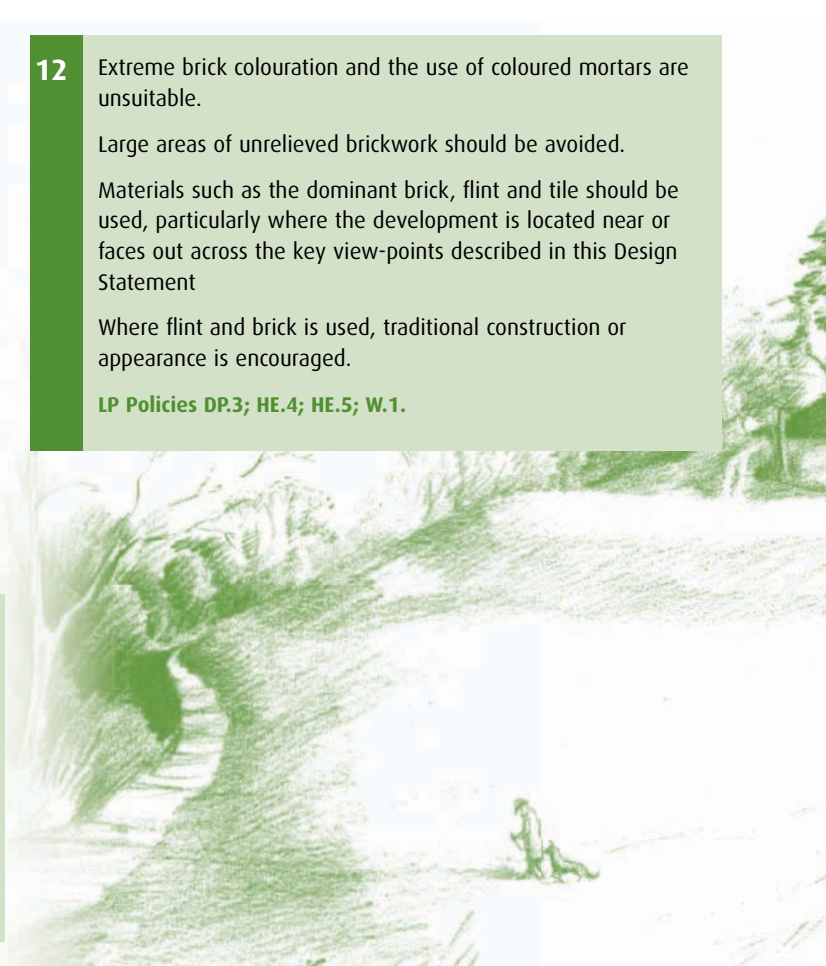
LP Policies DP.3; HE.4; HE.5; W.1.

11 The height and position of roofs should not obstruct important views and glimpses (see Policy 1).

Roofs should be pitched and covered with natural slate or clay tiles.

The use of additional gables, hipped roofs where appropriate, chimneys and decorative features consistent with existing local features will be encouraged.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; CE.5; HE.4; HE.5; W.1.



Windows

Frame materials include wood, steel, plastic and aluminium. Forms include vertical sash, casement, picture, Velux, Georgian and leaded lights. Replacement windows are predominantly kept to the form of the original.

13 Replacement windows should retain the form and materials of the original windows. Large expanses of windows could be visually intrusive in this setting and should be avoided unless used for buildings with exceptional design quality and appropriate tree cover.

LP Policies DP.3; HE.5; W.1.



Gardens and landscaping

Gardens contribute significantly to the overall impression of the area as heavily wooded and predominantly green. Both large and small plots contain mature native species of shrubs and trees, as does the wooded slope. (Native species are listed in the open spaces section of this Statement). Many of the gardens contain hedges and walls with some having fences.

14 There should be sufficient green space retained around buildings in order to facilitate tree cover.

Green landscaping should be provided at the front of the plots, between buildings and near the roadside. Replacement trees and shrubs should be native species, compatible with chalk.

LP Policies DP.3; DP.4; HE.5; W.1.

Drainage

A significant portion of the area is not connected to main drainage and relies on septic tanks. The geography of the area produces particular problems for drainage, and excessive water run-off regularly causes flooding at the bottom of steep roads and storm debris is carried down these roads. Residents would prefer all new development other than replacement individual houses to have access to mains drainage.

15 Systems to reduce water run-off need to be incorporated into new developments. Soft and green landscaping is preferable to hard landscaping, and should where possible, incorporate beneficial sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).

Hard surfacing should use porous paving, stone and gravel materials whenever possible.

New development should be connected to main foul drainage systems where possible.

LP Policies DP.3; HE.4; HE.5; W.1.

Preparation of the Statement

The original Design Statement was prepared during 2003/04 after extensive consultation involving multiple leaflet drops to over 500 households and local radio and newspaper advertising. Five workshops and open meetings, and four detailed survey team tasks were held over 7 months, with a cumulative attendance at these events of 287 people including young children and young people.

The decision to commence a review of this Statement was taken at a meeting of the Committee of the St Giles Hill Residents Association on 4th February 2009. This had been preceded in December 2008 by an encouraging informal discussion with Steve Opacic, the City Council's Head of Strategic Planning. The reasoning behind the decision is set out in "Why a Review?" on page 3 of this document. Essentially the Statement needed some modifications to bring it into line with current government policy and the saved policies in the Winchester District Local Plan Review adopted in July 2006. This would also provide the opportunity to refine some parts of the text in the light of experience and local changes. It was decided that the format of the Statement would remain essentially the same, changes only being made where necessary: a review not a re-write.

At the Association's AGM on 28th April 2009, Sue Broadbent gave a presentation on the Neighbourhood Design Statement and how residents could contribute in a positive way to influencing inevitable changes in the local area. Notice of the presentation had been given in the Association's Newsletter which is distributed to all 300 households in the area covered by the Statement.

The open workshop was held on 13th June 2009 in collaboration with Planning Aid South. As in 2003, it was facilitated by Philip A Turner Dip Arch (Oxford) Dip TP (Edin) RIBA MRTPI and was attended by 24 residents of the Hill and adjacent areas. One written submission was also received. Those attending divided into smaller groups to revisit and photograph the area and external viewpoints. Participants then added comments to the displayed text of the adopted Statement by way of 'post it' notes, followed by discussion.

An editorial team of four was established to consider the changes necessary. Written comments and the 'post it' issues were reviewed. The main planning issues arising were: recognition of the South Downs National Park and its relationship with the Hill; the importance of the Conservation Area; improvements to the unadopted roads; more flexibility on plot ratio and density to prevent overdevelopment; better definition of 3 storey buildings; design issues on slopes and better guidance on fences.

Local businesses and organisations providing services in the area were consulted, including two local developers, three sole traders providing consultancy services, two gardening contractors and two businesses. Traffic management and support for management for the trees lining the shared surface streets and better definition of three storey buildings were the significant issues raised. Other neighbouring community organisations were asked to contribute their views and general support for the changes was given, with particular mention made of the 'knock-on' effect of parking charges and the importance of reducing the impact and bulk of new buildings that were visible from existing houses situated below them on slopes.

Consultation on the final draft took place at two events on 16th and 26th April 2011 (with a combined attendance of 70). In addition the draft document was published on the City Council's website for a 6 week period inviting comments by 3rd June 2011. Three comments were received and incorporated, as appropriate, into the final document. The Revised Neighbourhood Design Statement was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the City Council's Cabinet (LDF) Committee on 28th September 2011.



Annex: Suggestions for Environmental Improvement

Habitat Improvements: New development should include features such as roosts and nesting sites to enhance habitats and encourage biodiversity.

Footpaths: The pathways around the grassed area on top of the hill afford convenient pedestrian access from and to adjacent areas (the city centre, Highcliffe, Winnall, Bar End and South Downs Way). They should be maintained to a sufficient standard for use by all, including push chair users and people with disabilities.

Street and Footpath Lighting: Proposals to unify the design of street lighting on the Hill, appropriate to the character of the Conservation Area, would be welcomed, subject to overall lighting levels remaining at a low, non-polluting level. To improve safety for users of the hill at night time modest improvements to the lighting of the footpaths across the Hill, preferably at low level, would be welcome.

St Giles Cemetery: This is an important wooded open space on the Hill. A long term strategy for its sustainable management, including its boundary walls, should be prepared by the City Council in collaboration with voluntary groups (see page 11).

Traffic: Highcliffe and St Giles Hill residents would welcome consultation on a change of priority at the junction of Fivefields Road and Petersfield Road.

Light Pollution: Minimising light pollution from Bar End Park and Ride sites and playing fields would be welcomed.

Noise Pollution: Winchester City Council should actively pursue with appropriate central government agencies an earlier date for resurfacing the M3 with low noise tarmac.

Aircraft Noise: The alteration of flight paths into and out of Southampton Airport in order to avoid the built-up areas of eastern Winchester is supported.



Produced by St Giles Hill Residents Association in co-operation with Winchester City Council for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

St Giles Hill Residents Association would like to thank Tricia Spink for the illustrations and Nigel Long for his extensive work on the graphic design and photography.