

13.1 Character

- 13.1.1 Alresford is an outstanding example of a medieval planned market town. It is sited on the wooded southern slopes of the River Alre, and consists of a compact historic commercial and residential centre, large houses in 18th and 19th Century parkland and a mill area with associated water features.
- 13.1.2 A series of fires led to an attractive form of re-building, predominantly in the 18th Century, using the medieval foundations, thus retaining its original layout. The 13th Century burgage plots are a fundamental characteristic of New Alresford and are in the main private spaces with the exception of a few rear publicly accessible courtyards.
- 13.1.3 The three main connecting streets offer a variety of small scale retail outlets and provides an attractive, lively feel for residents and visitors alike. The virtually continuous frontages create a strong sense of spatial containment and provide some fine Georgian architecture.
- 13.1.4 The sights, sounds and smells of the steam trains on the Watercress Line contribute to the overall vibrancy of the station area and also acts as a barrier between the historic core of Alresford and the 20th Century development to the south, outside of the conservation area.
- 13.1.6 The well wooded character of the Weirs area offers a quiet, peaceful retreat with informal surfacing, riverside walks, water features and minimal traffic.
- 13.1.7 The undulating landscape allows for considerable views into and out of the conservation area, enabling appreciation of the importance to Alresford of its well treed character, medieval layout, Georgian architecture, roofscape detail and materials, and its countryside setting.

13.2 Reasons for Designation

- 13.2.1 A conservation area is "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Given the high

number of Listed Buildings and the historical development of the town, it is considered that there is sufficient architectural and historical interest to justify the designation of a conservation area for New Alresford. Designation provides some additional controls which will aid the protection and enhancement of those qualities which contribute towards the special character and appearance of the area.

13.3 Boundary Justification

- 13.3.1 New Alresford's Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969, and extended in 1998. It extends north of Broad Street to include the causeway (which defines the western edge of Old Alresford Pond now designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest), Weir House and the adjoining medieval river system, laid out as part of Bishop de Lucy's canalisation of the River Itchen. Furthermore, it extends along both sides of The Avenue up to West Lodge, in addition to the station area. All of these areas contribute towards the unique character of New Alresford.
- 13.3.2 Wherever possible, the boundary has been defined using significant features which are both readily recognisable and offer a degree of permanence. It is drawn reasonably tightly around the village, following curtilage and field boundaries, roads and tree belts.

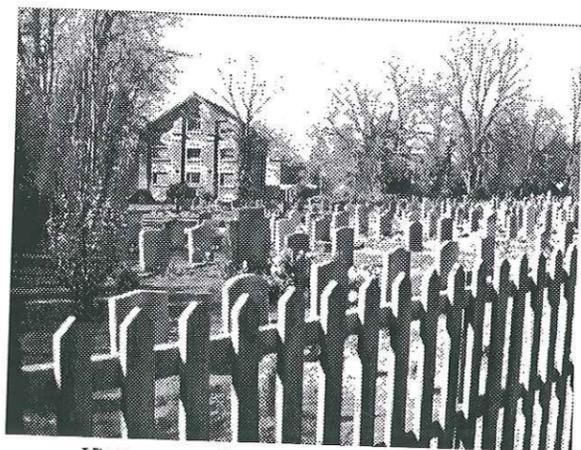
Station Area

- 13.3.3 Although clearly not as impressive as Broad Street, West Street or East Street, the station area contains a number of significant individual buildings, spaces and views, which contribute to the overall quality of the conservation area. The boundary recognises the historical importance of the railway and the impact it has had on the development of New Alresford.

The Avenue

- 13.3.4 A long narrow strip of land, it stretches from the west of Pound Hill to West Lodge and includes grass verges on both sides of The Avenue.

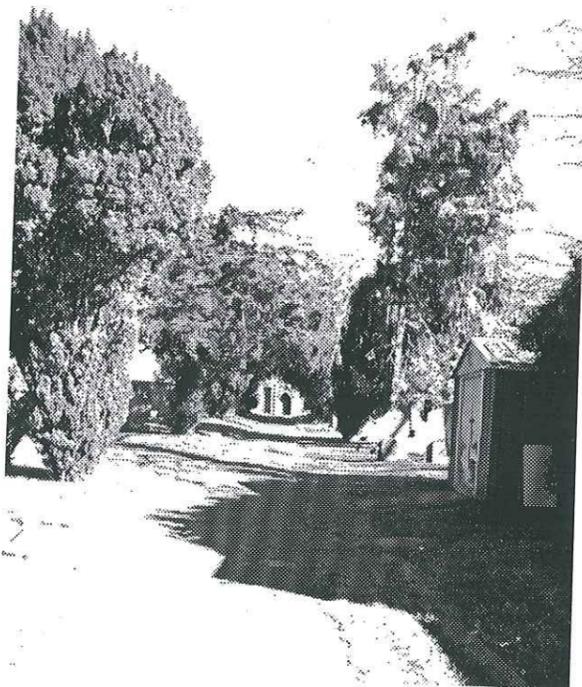
13.3.5 The Avenue provides a unique and grand setting for the western approach to New Alresford. The virtually continuous brick and flint wall and the mature regimented trees are visually significant both in their own right and for the contribution they make to the setting of New Alresford.



View across the graveyard towards the rear of Station Mill, well treed open space bounded on two sides by footpaths.

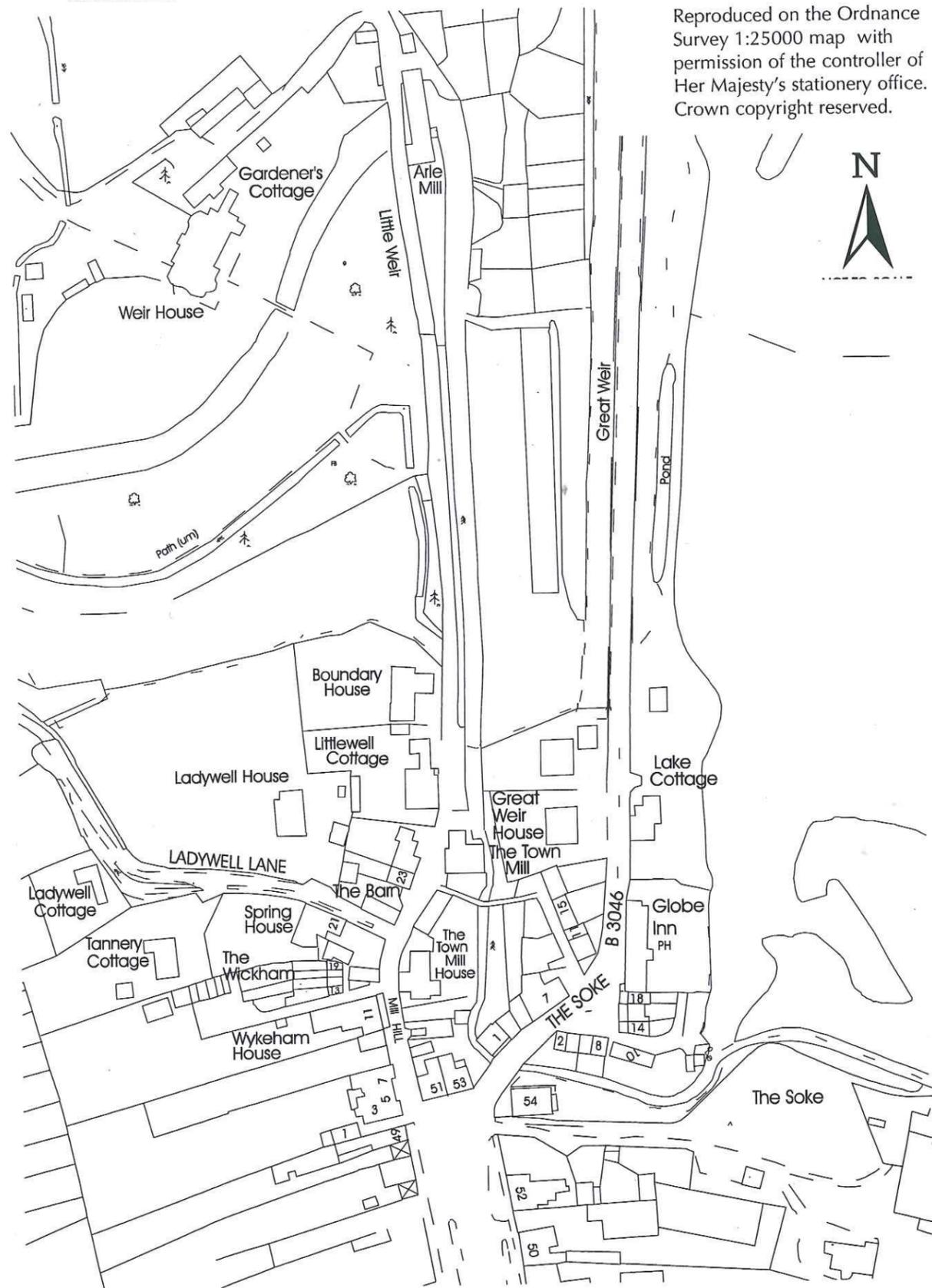


Edward Terrace, Sun Lane, fine example of a late 19th Century terrace.



Looking east through centre of churchyard.

Appendix 1



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Appendix 2: Detractors

Over time, the visual quality and character of a Conservation Area can be eroded by the cumulative effects of such things as:

- **minor alterations**
(eg. uPVC replacement windows and doors, non-traditional roofing materials, insensitively sited meter boxes, balanced flues and similar services)
- **inappropriate use of materials**
(eg. corrugated iron fencing, close materials boarded fencing)
- **inappropriate extensions/conversions**
(eg. scale, spaces, design, materials, satellite dishes, conversions wires, shopfronts, signs, garages)
- **removal and/or inappropriate replacement of features**
(eg. walls, railings, hedges, trees, points replacement of features of local interest)
- **inappropriate street furniture**
(eg. litter bins, shelters, barriers, hoardings)
- **poor maintenance, eyesores**
(eg. communal areas, parking, vandalism)
- **demolition and the creation of a 'gap' within the street frontage.**

Seemingly minor alterations and detailing can be sufficient to detract from the qualities of a building, or a focal part of the Conservation Area. Where the opportunity arises, attention should be focused towards improving existing/known problems, in order to achieve an enhancement of the Conservation Area.

The long term aim is for everyone to take responsibility for maintaining the area's special qualities and to give careful consideration to the appropriateness of alterations and new development. For example, inappropriately designed garages, the use of close boarded fencing and commercial signage can all detract from the overall quality of the conservation area.

Long term tree and hedgerow management needs to be given careful attention to ensure this valuable resource is sustained and

enhanced. Hedges play a particularly important role in defining boundaries to residential properties and in more rural areas are a more appropriate treatment than other more urban forms of enclosure.

It is, therefore, important to ensure that, as an area evolves, it does so in a sympathetic way so that the essential character of the area is sustained for future generations.

Opportunities for General Enhancements

Colour of Buildings

A townscape should be seen as a whole and not as individual units. This does not preclude the use of different colours, but it does mean colours have to work together within a street scene and not as individual units which can damage the overall picture. The correct colours are those which tone and relate well to each other. With the advent of modern, strong pigments, greater care is required in the choice and placement of colour, if Alresford is to retain and enhance its existing character.

Traditionally buildings were limewashed, a cheap available material used to protect as well as enhance a building. The earliest colours were retrieved from nature; ox blood, soot, charcoal, ochre and umber, while later classical buildings of stucco were often painted a colour to resemble stone. All these colours reflect the mellowness of the English countryside. Stronger, brighter colours are more suited to Mediterranean latitudes, as when these are viewed in a duller climate they appear too bright.

It is expected that unpainted brick and flint should remain unpainted as this provides a variety of richness and texture. If repainting is necessary the following points should be considered:-

- 1) the relationship of the building to adjoining building materials, i.e. brick, stone, flint.
- 2) the roof materials.
- 3) the style and location of the building i.e. terrace, detached.
- 4) the relationship of the proposed colour to colours on adjoining buildings.

Should any proposed change of paint materially effect the appearance of the building, then consent might be required from the Local Planning Authority. It is advisable to discuss any colour change with the Council's Conservation Officer.

Trees

Alresford is set in a well wooded undulating landscape, and while from the centre of the town this is not always apparent, from the Abbotstone Road this is more than evident. Mature trees to the south of West and East Street, The Avenue, within Cardew House, to the rear of properties in Broad Street and around the Weirs area, provide trees of significant townscape value when viewed above the rooflines of the three main streets. If Alresford is to retain this unique setting it is important to promote the planting and replanting of locally indigenous tree species where appropriate and discourage the planting of alien species in situations where they will have an impact on the landscape and undermine the character of the area. There is also a need to promote the local management of trees to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Shopfronts and Signs

The three main streets in Alresford have retained much of their 18th century character, successfully integrating 20th century business needs with residential properties. Alresford's retention of historic features, attention to detail and lack of intrusive and garish shopfronts and signs have been important in this respect. If its character and appearance are to be retained and/or enhanced. Care must be exercised in design, detail, colour, lettering and materials of its shopfronts and signs. Winchester City Council has produced guidelines under the title "Design Guidance for the Control of Shopfronts and Signs", to form the basis of applications and general guidance for retailers.

Retention of Burgage Plots

One of the fundamental characteristics of New Alresford is its burgage plots. It is important to retain this pattern and layout and resist any encroachment or expansion into these areas.

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