

COMPTON DOWN

Local Area Design Statement

by Matrix Partnership Ltd.
for Winchester City Council

DRAFT

CONTENTS:

1.0	BACKGROUND.....	3
	Introduction.....	3
	Planning policy background.....	4
	PPS1 Delivery of Sustainable Development.....	4
	PPG 3 Housing.....	5
	PPS 3 Housing.....	6
	Local Plan Policies.....	7
	Historic background of Compton Down.....	9
	Planning background of Compton Down.....	11
	The classification of Compton Down.....	11
2.0	ANALYSIS.....	14
	Character	14
	Setting.....	14
	Internal character.....	15
	Trees.....	16
	Roads.....	17
	Playing fields.....	18
	Entrances to Compton Down.....	18
	Summary.....	18
	Transport planning considerations.....	18
3.0	PUBLIC CONSULTATION.....	25
	Evaluation of features.....	25
	Main issues of concern.....	25
	Design proposals.....	25

Principal defining features.....	26
Features of local significance.....	27
Features of wider significance.....	27
4.0 DISCUSSION OF MAIN ISSUES.....	28
Introduction.....	28
Discussion of the main issues.....	28
Otterbourne Road Junctions.....	28
Internal Roads.....	29
Character Constraints.....	29
High Density Infilling of Individual Sites.....	31
Higher Density Localities.....	32
Lower Density Infilling of Individual Sites.....	33
5.0 GUIDELINES.....	35
Introduction.....	35
Development Guidelines.....	36
Landscape Guidelines.....	38
Transport Guidelines.....	40
6.0 CONCLUSION.....	42

DRAWINGS

Front cover: Aerial photograph of Compton Down

Figure 1	Location Map.....	10
Figure 2	Local Plan extract.....	12
Figure 3	Urban/landscape analysis.....	14
Figure 4	Tree Preservation Orders.....	16
Figure 5	Internal Road Constraints.....	21

APPENDICIES

1.	Local Planning Applications.....	44
2.	Transport Planning Considerations.....	46
3.	Report on Public Consultation.....	51
4.	Sustainability Appraisal.....	55

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Local Area Design Statements (LADS) provide supplementary planning guidance that works within the framework of existing planning policy, as defined in Central Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) or in the Local Plan. However LADS are intended to provide more particular guidance that addresses some particular planning issue; in this case infilling in an established residential area.

Compton Down is unusual insofar that it exists as an established residential area largely independent of other places and without an historic foundation or centre. It is expansive in scale with mostly large private dwellings set in correspondingly large, and generally very leafy, gardens.

It is indeed the spacious, low-density nature of Compton Down that attracts developer interest in infilling. To date, there has been a limited but growing pressure to redevelop, and this is evident from various planning applications and appeals. So far these pressures have been substantially resisted by issues relating to the inadequacy of the two access points into the settlement, but in the event of these constraints being successfully addressed, then there can be little doubt that such pressure would increase considerably.

Importantly, in addition to market pressures, Central Government is proposing further substantial housing provision. It is seeking to do this with the least possible effect on open countryside and other greenfield sites, concentrating in particular on the redevelopment of previously developed sites and increasing development densities within existing built-up areas.

Current Government policy (PPG3) now recommends development densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, and larger residential properties in areas that are not subject to special controls are therefore coming under increasing pressure for redevelopment. Other issues and constraints aside, current Government policy therefore encourages what are likely to be some significant changes in established suburban areas such as Compton Down.

Compton Down is defined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review as an area where additional residential development will be permitted. The policy to increase residential densities within Compton Down and other existing settlements is in line with government guidance, County Structure Plan and Local Plan policies, as a means of achieving defined housing targets in a manner that makes the most efficient use of land.

However the City Council is also mindful of the effects of such changes. It is aware of the concerns of many of the residents over the potential effects of increasing residential density, and it is anxious to ensure that the environment and welfare of Compton Down are not incrementally diminished through a

lack of strategic foresight. This aim is also in line with government guidance and Local Plan policies.

A concern of the planning authority is the eventual character, visual, traffic and even social effects that many uncoordinated individual and piecemeal developments could have. It is quite possible that many existing properties could be redeveloped over a relatively short timescale in a series of un-related and independent schemes of relatively high density. The eventual result could fly in the face of many aspects of good town planning and urban design practice, thus diminishing the overall quality of the Compton Down environment.

In order to address the infilling issue, Winchester City Council appointed Matrix Partnership Ltd., urban design consultants, to examine four specific localities in the District where this is a particularly live and pertinent issue, one of which is Compton Down. This Local Area Design Statement seeks to provide a balanced professional look at the issue, identifying the existing issues and situation, both on the ground and in planning terms. It seeks to identify the key issues that are being faced through the increase in development densities by infilling and provide design-led guidance on how this process of change can be successfully managed.

As part of the LADS study, transport planning consultants, Harrison Webb, were also appointed to examine the transport-related issues associated with any redevelopment proposals, and their report is included in the Appendix to this report. Also, late in 2005, Hampshire County Council undertook their own survey of traffic at the Hurdle Way and Shepherds Lane junctions at the entrance to Compton Down.

1.2 Planning policy background

An understanding of current planning policies and guidance is clearly an essential basis of a Local Area Design Statement. This section briefly outlines some of the more relevant planning policies and identifies what bearing they will have on the Statement.

PPS1 Delivery Sustainable Development

PPS1, published in March 2005, provides up-to-date guidance from the Government on the broad requirements of sustainable development within the planning system.

Relevant to this Statement, it confirms the need to “bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing” 27.(iv).

However it also confirms the Government’s commitment to protecting and enhancing the quality, character and amenity value of the natural and historic

environment in both rural and urban areas, and it states that “a high level of protection should be given to most valued townscapes and landscapes”. (17.) It also confirms the need to draw up plans with community involvement.

Additionally, it stresses the fundamental importance of good design in the planning process. It states that “Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.” (34.) It also adds that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate rather on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area generally. They should not however seek to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative, although local distinctiveness should be enhanced.

PPG 3 Housing

It is an objective of Central Government that everyone should have the opportunity of a ‘decent’ home. With an already high level of demand, the Government therefore seeks to increase the provision of housing, requiring that it should be well designed, attractive and of high quality.

Given the sensitivity of developing on greenfield sites and the need to achieve greater sustainability, this is to be done in large part by focusing on previously-developed sites within existing towns and cities and by making more efficient use of land.

Planning policies and standards are being reviewed, with a focus on existing towns and cities, with a declared priority of re-using previously developed land within urban areas.

A key feature of PPG3 is the encouragement of higher development densities, expressed in the much-quoted 30-50 dwellings per hectare requirement. The Government therefore envisages much higher densities of residential development than have previously been found in some suburban areas, but it also places corresponding emphasis on high standards of design, sustainable solutions and emphasis on quality and people.

As part of this drive to raise design quality, the Government also recommends that new housing should not be viewed in isolation, but must take account of the local and wider town or landscape context. Local character and identity should inform new development “without compromising the quality of the environment.” PPG3 requires that new development should not only respect but also enhance local character (56).

In defining revised development aims, the Government requires local planning authorities to develop a shared vision with their local communities of the types

of residential environments they wish to see. Clearly it intends that public consultation is to be part of this process.

PPS 3 Housing

A new Planning Policy Statement is currently in preparation, and a Consultation Paper was issued in December 2005. Whilst the paper is subject to alteration through the process of consultation, it nonetheless provides a good indication of current government thinking, and so a number of points that are relevant to this study are noted here.

The Ministerial Foreword of the Consultation Paper states that it expects local authorities to do more to bring forward the development of brownfield land (within which existing dwellings and their gardens are included) as part of a clear government priority. Annex C, Density, identifies that suburban areas fall within a slightly higher density range of 35-55 dwellings per hectare which, it states, should act as a minima.

However there are several other points that are identified in the Paper, relevant to Compton Down, that accept a number of constraints to development as follows:

- One of the three PPS3 objectives is that development should be sustainable, safe and designed and built to a high standard.
- Local planning authorities should develop density policies with local stakeholders and communities. (Para. 19) They should also “develop a shared vision with their local communities of the type of residential environments they wish to see”. (Para. 34)
- Plans and policies should be aimed at creating places, streets and spaces which are attractive, are of high quality, are informed by their wider context, have regard not just for neighbouring buildings but also for the townscape and landscape of the wider locality, have their own distinctive identity, and positively improve local character. (Para.s 34, 36 & 37) The section Greening the Residential Environment states that dominant landscape and ecological features should lead the design of the layout and that care should be taken to allow scope for retention or re-establishment of biodiversity within residential environments. It adds that “The key consideration should be whether a development positively improves the character and environmental quality of an area and the way it functions.”
- The approach to smaller developments, including the redevelopment of existing houses and gardens, should be developed as part of a wider strategy/policies for individual neighbourhoods. (Para.36)
- Although residential gardens are defined as brownfield sites, this does not necessarily mean that they are suitable for development. (Para.36)

- Local authorities may set ranges below those given in Annex C, but where this is so they must show a clear justification. (Annex C, 4)

Whilst it must be noted that this is only a Consultation Paper it is nonetheless regarded as important, and its content might be regarded in a similar manner to that of an emerging Local Plan.

Local Plan policies

The Winchester District Local Plan (1998) has recently been superseded by the statutory Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006

The emphasis of objectives in the recently-adopted Local Plan differ from the previous 1998 Plan insofar that there is greater emphasis on development and its effects. Whilst conservation, in the form of the protection of the natural and man-made environments, is identified among the five Key Principles of the Local Plan Review, new development is given greater prominence with, for example, the encouragement of development of previously developed sites also being listed as one of the Key Principles.

The greater emphasis on development is no doubt a reflection of the Government's aim to increase the provision of residential accommodation, and to do so by concentrating it in sustainable communities, including existing urban centres.

Some features of the 1998 Local Plan that sought to protect certain aspects of existing environments have been discarded, notably Policy EN.1. However there is now a new emphasis on the importance of a design-led approach to new development, and it is substantially through this process that densities can be increased whilst key features that contribute to the quality of the environment are to be identified and protected.

Policy H.3

Situated within the defined settlement policy boundary of Winchester, Compton Down is covered by this Policy. It responds directly to PPG3 Government guidance, anticipating development within these areas achieving housing densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.

It should be noted that the Compton Down Society objected to the Local Plan Review in 2001 because it applied Proposal H.3 (settlement boundary, then H.2) to Compton Down rather than countryside policies, on the grounds that it does not meet the criteria of sustainability. The objection was not successful, and Compton Down has accordingly been identified in the Local Plan under Proposal H.3. This position has been endorsed by the Local Plan Inspector, following the Public Local Inquiry.

Objectives of the Local Plan Strategy

Although development densities are likely to increase, considerable weight is placed in the Local Plan Review on a design-led approach to new development. The first Objective of the Local Plan Strategy requires that new development should follow such an approach in order to conserve and enhance the attractiveness of the District. The subsequent text expands upon this theme, stressing the need for new development to respond to the particular characteristics of each site and reinforce local distinctiveness, and it makes particular reference to the Government companion guides “By Design” and “Better Places to Live” that demonstrate how these principles can be applied.

Policy DP.1

This Policy requires that applicants need to demonstrate that relevant design principles have been followed through the submission of a Design Statement with each application. Emphasis is placed on design and sensitivity to the environment.

Policy DP.3

In accordance with PPG3, Policy DP.3 requires the efficient use of land including the Government’s development densities.

However the Policy reiterates the requirement for high quality design, stating that development proposals should respond positively and creatively in terms of design, scale and layout to the character, appearance and variety of the local environment, reflecting its distinctive development forms and patterns of building, spaces, townscape and landscape, and must incorporate in its design those features that are important to the history and form of the area. Also new development should not have unacceptable adverse impact on adjoining land, uses or property.

Policy DP.4

This Policy requires that new development should maintain and enhance townscape and landscape including the retention of important public views, trees and hedgerows, open areas important to the townscape, and any other features important to the townscape.

This Policy includes specific comment on trees in relation to development. It requires that special care should be taken to ensure the future wellbeing of trees to be retained including canopy and root spread and space for future growth. The explanatory text also states that “Proposals that could lead to subsequent pressure for removal, or the premature demise of trees, should be avoided.”

In summary, it is noted that, whilst the former Local Plan Policy EN.1, that specifically protected the “spacious and well-treed” character of suburban areas has not been retained in the Local Plan Review, and that the Local Plan Review embraces Government guidance on increased residential densities, there is also conversely greater emphasis on the design-led approach to new development. PPG3 itself requires that, whilst efficient use should be made of development land, new development should be carried out without

compromising the quality of the environment, with local character being both respected and enhanced.

New policies in the Local Plan Review therefore enlarge upon this guidance, giving more specific guidance on the protection of characteristics and features important to both the immediate locality and the wider town or landscape setting.

One of the key tasks of this Local Area Design Statement must therefore be to consider the particular characteristics of this area and identify and evaluate their local and wider importance as a means of determining what is appropriate in terms of residential redevelopment. This requires a level of detailed consideration and sensitivity, and it is an integral part of this exercise that local residents and stakeholders should be involved in identifying those aspects that they consider to be of special value in defining their own environment. Once these characteristics and features have been identified, they effectively become the basis for defining constraints within which redevelopment can be carried out. Where the constraints inhibit the achievement of the Government recommended densities, then the extent of development areas will need to be more tightly defined or their overall density should be reduced.

In addition to the constraints identified within the local area, Government guidance and Local Plan proposals also rightly require individual schemes to show design flair and sensitivity that responds to the unique context of each site, and the particular characteristics of an area should provide inspiration and direction for design solutions. Both PPG and Local Plan policies require that new development should not only respect local environments but also enhance them. This aspect of development control will lie to a very large degree outside the remit of the Local Area Design Statement, depending on the specific response of individual developers and architects. Although more general principles can and should be defined within the LADS, each individual application must also be assessed on its own design merits.

The analysis of Compton Down, to be found in the following chapter of this Statement, seeks therefore to identify, through Character Studies and Urban Analysis, the key features that give the locality its own distinct value and sense of place.

1.3 Historic background of Compton Down

Compton Down is situated about 2 km south of Winchester on high ground on the west side of the Itchen valley (see Figure 1, Location Map). It is part of a loosely defined string of generally suburban development that has grown up along the Otterbourne Road between Winchester and Eastleigh and which includes Southdown, immediately to the south, and Otterbourne itself. Development on the west side of the Itchen valley dates very substantially from the 20th century and generally lacks historic origins. This contrasts sharply with the more traditional rural village of Twyford on the east side of the

valley. The ancient and largely traditional village of Compton Street is situated less than 0.5km north of Compton Down, but the two are wholly separate, both physically and in character.



Figure 1
Location plan

Although Compton Down was once physically joined with Southdown, the two have been separated by what is now the M3 motorway. The motorway, which is situated in a deep cutting adjacent to Compton Down, dramatically separates the settlement from both South Down and Shawford immediately to the east. The effect is further exacerbated because both road entrances pass over the motorway immediately before entering the settlement itself and it therefore has a moat-like effect, giving Compton Down the sense of being something of a separate enclave, independent and removed from surrounding places.

Compton Down's sense of the separateness is also defined by its physical situation. Whereas traditional settlements are generally closely related to the landscape, invariably set down within the topography, such as Compton, Twyford and indeed Winchester itself, Compton Down is situated on high ground above a well-defined scarp along its north side.

Compton Down is a somewhat artificial creation insofar that it is a settlement situated in a rural area but with little or no historic association with the

landscape. It has none of the traditional form, features or facilities of a traditional rural village, such as a church, post office/shop and village hall.

However some of the paths and tracks in and around Compton Down are ancient. It is understood from the Compton Down Society that Hurdle Way is a pre-Roman route, part of the South Downs ridgeway. The Romans later built a road south from Winchester, and this is now the route of the B3043, although the precise route of the Roman road has been substantially obliterated by the M3 at Compton Down.

The nearby village of Compton Street is understood to have Saxon origins, and Hurdleway, an area of land defined by Hurdle Way, Shepherds Lane and Coach Lane to the west, was the first part of Compton Down to be deforested to become medieval arable common land. The eastern part of Hurdleway is now occupied by the settlement of Compton Down. Shepherds Lane, which now forms part of the Monarch's Way trail, is more recent, initially giving access to New Barn in 1706.

The modern settlement of Compton Down first began to emerge in the 1920s as parts of the Chamberlain estate were sold for development. One or two buildings already existed, such as New Barn and Dairy Cottages, but otherwise much of the area was covered by orchard and remnant woodland. All of the orchard has now disappeared and only part of St Michaels Copse still exists, mostly in the form of ancient oak trees. There is apparently little second generation development in Compton Down, and therefore it is clear that intermittent, piecemeal development has been going on over an extended period, although mostly in the 1960s and 70s.

The remnant of St Michaels Copse is situated to the north of Shepherds Lane. This was Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland but over the years it has been progressively reduced to a linear scattering of old oak trees and some woodland flora. A planning application to develop at Shepherds Grove in 2004 was resisted by the Hampshire County Council Senior Ecologist and the Forestry Commission on grounds of damage to the still sensitive habitat of St Michaels Copse.

1.4 Planning background of Compton Down

The classification of Compton Down

Compton Down is defined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006) as a settlement subject to Policy H.3 which recognises that there is scope for redevelopment. (See Figure 2, Local Plan extract)

Figure 2, Local Plan Extract

Policy H.3

Residential development or redevelopment will be permitted within the defined policy boundaries of:

<i>Bishop's Waltham</i>	<i>Kings Worthy</i>	<i>Southwick</i>
<i>Cheriton</i>	<i>Knowle</i>	<i>Sparsholt</i>
<i>Colden Common</i>	<i>Littleton</i>	<i>Sutton Scotney</i>
<i>Compton Down</i>	<i>Micheldever</i>	<i>Swanmore</i>
<i>Corhampton</i>	<i>Micheldever Station</i>	<i>Twyford</i>
<i>Denmead</i>	<i>New Alresford</i>	<i>Waltham Chase</i>
<i>Droxford</i>	<i>Old Alresford</i>	<i>West Meon</i>
<i>Hambledon</i>	<i>Otterbourne</i>	<i>Whiteley</i>
<i>Hursley</i>	<i>South Wonston</i>	<i>Wickham</i>
<i>Itchen Abbas</i>	<i>Southdown</i>	<i>Winchester</i>

Under the Local Plan Review, Compton Down is subject to Policy H.3 that presumes in favour of residential development at the newly defined density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.

All the open countryside surrounding Compton Down, is subject to countryside policies, which express a general presumption against non-essential development.

It should be noted here that not all properties in Compton Down are covered by Policy H.3. The rather isolated finger of development along Hurdle Way that extends west from the main body of the settlement is excluded in planning policy terms, and lies within the countryside policy area.

Under PPG3, the reuse of previously developed land for housing is promoted with a national target of 60% identified. Local Planning Authorities are required to undertake 'sequential testing' as part of this process in which location and accessibility, existing infrastructure, the ability to build communities and physical and environmental constraints are identified as the criteria against which potential sites are to be assessed. Both the regional guidance A Sustainable Strategy for the South East and the Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 have similar requirements for what are also termed "urban capacity studies".

In response to this guidance, Winchester City Council undertook a study to identify the most sustainable locations for additional residential development. Compton Down was categorised as a Group C settlement where no further work would be undertaken to identify more housing sites. Group B settlements were identified as suitable for small amounts of housing and Group A settlements were to become the primary focal points to identify new development opportunities.

However in October 2000 it was recommended that Compton Down be re-classified as a Group B settlement and subsequently in the same month it was recommended to the City Council's Planning and transportation Committee that a two tier definition should be adopted that only distinguished between 'defined built up areas' and 'countryside policy areas'. Compton Down was thus included in the former group of settlements.

These developments, together with proposals by Bewley Homes to build on 6.2 hectares of land north of Shepherd's Lane, caused local residents considerable concern and which resulted in the settling up of the Compton Down Society. The Society's principal aim is to preserve the existing character of the settlement substantially through resisting pressures for redevelopment. The Society subsequently commissioned planning consultants to produce a report arguing the case for defining the settlement as countryside on grounds of its failure to meet the necessary sustainability criteria. The Society accepts that some further development can occur, but it actively opposes more significant developments.

Under the Winchester District Local Plan Review (Revised Deposit 2003), Compton Down was subject to proposal H.2. However a submission was made to the Local Plan Public Inquiry in April 2004 opposing this categorisation in favour of countryside policy. The Inspector's report was published in September 2005 and recommended that Compton Down should remain a defined settlement with a policy boundary (now Policy H.3).

Therefore, this Statement is written, for the most part, on the understanding that Compton Down is subject to Policy H.3 and that redevelopment pressures will therefore continue to exist.

2.0 ANALYSIS

2.1 Character

Setting

Compton Down is situated in what is defined in the Winchester City Council Landscape Character Assessment as the Hursley Scarplands Landscape Character Area.



The most notable features of the landscape are the quite dramatic scarp immediately to the north of Compton Down and to the east, the open valley of the River Itchen. To the north of the scarp, the landscape is typical open arable chalk downland with some prominent shelterbelts. To the south of the scarp, where Compton Down itself is located, the land is much more vegetated with numerous small areas of ancient woodland, plantation woodland, tree belts, hangers and hedgerows. This creates a very different landscape character, that is much more contained and visually enclosed, with a smaller sense of scale. In this sense, Compton Down with its own generous tree cover, blends quite effectively into the landscape to the south. The ancient and rather winding, alignments of Hurdle Way and Shepherd's Lane and irregularities in the layout of the settlement as a whole also help to integrate the settlement into its surroundings.

In terms of its relationship to its landscape setting, Compton Down is generally discrete and is scarcely seen from publicly accessible locations around it, except along its northern boundary. Development is well integrated into the structure of woods and hedgerows, and the many mature trees and the mass of other garden vegetation all help to incorporate the buildings into

the rural setting. (Houses along the southern side of Shepherds Lane have a generally open aspect to the south, but are scarcely visible in the context of the wider landscape because of the scarcity of public rights of way in the area)

In marked contrast to the generally very discrete landscape setting of Compton Down is the northern edge of the settlement along Hurdle Way. The escarpment to the north is quite a prominent feature in the wider landscape, the houses along Hurdle Way being visible over quite a wide area. Winchester Cathedral and several other landmarks in the city can be clearly identified from Hurdle Way, and conversely the houses along the crest of the ridge can be seen from many viewpoints including St Catherine's Hill, Oliver's Battery and of course from the village of Compton Street at the foot of the escarpment. The northern boundary of Compton Down is therefore part of the setting of Winchester.

Fortunately the many trees in and around Compton Down form a wooded skyline in these external views and they are most important in integrating development into the landscape that could otherwise appear somewhat raw and inappropriate. The variety of house styles, forms and materials (including colours and tones) are also an important aspect in this regard, as is the generous spacing between properties, that allows them to be seen in a comparatively green and soft setting.

To the east, roads dominate the immediate setting of Compton Down. As already mentioned, the M3 motorway is situated in a deep and wide cutting hard up against the eastern boundary of the settlement. Close to and parallel to the east side of the motorway is Otterbourne Road that provides the only road access into the settlement. There are direct views towards Compton Down across the cutting from the Otterbourne Road, and therefore this unattractive and quite brutal view is the overwhelming impression of the settlement available to the passer-by. Fortunately the amount and density of vegetation within Compton Down and on the cutting sides softens the effect, but nonetheless the motorway and adjacent noise barrier have a considerable and damaging effect on the setting of the settlement at its main points of arrival.

Internal character

Whilst the setting of Compton Down varies considerably, the internal character of the settlement is surprisingly consistent, despite the variety of individual buildings. No doubt the somewhat uniform effect derives from the relatively recent development of the settlement as a suburban residential area. Densities are generally quite consistent across the settlement, (about 3.6 dwellings per hectare) and in particular there is no clearly defined village centre where densities and character change, as might be expected in traditional rural villages. If Compton Down can be described as having a centre, it must be the playing field, but there is little variation in the character of development that responds to this. In a place that has so little community focus, it is unfortunate that the sports pavilion that is the one public and publicly visible building does not make a stronger architectural statement.

(College House and Shepherds Down School are so tucked away as to have no public presence).

Despite this general uniformity, there are nonetheless some particular and more subtle variations in character in Compton Down.

Trees

Perhaps the most notable feature of Compton Down is its spacious and leafy character. The low density of development across the settlement has already been noted, and this is associated with a large amount of mature tree cover. The generous individual plots clearly have sufficient space for both generous sunny lawns as well as large mature trees.

Many of the larger oak trees, including those in St Michaels Copse, long predate development within Compton Down and they give the settlement a much greater sense of maturity than would otherwise be the case. The disposition of these trees helps to define some variation in character around Compton Down, and Shepherds Lane and Clease Way in particular have a distinctly wooded character.

In addition, development has existed in Compton Down long enough for a range of more exotic garden trees to become established, and many of these now make a significant contribution to the generally mature and leafy character of the settlement.

It should be noted that a number of trees within Compton Down are specifically protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and these are shown on Figure 4.

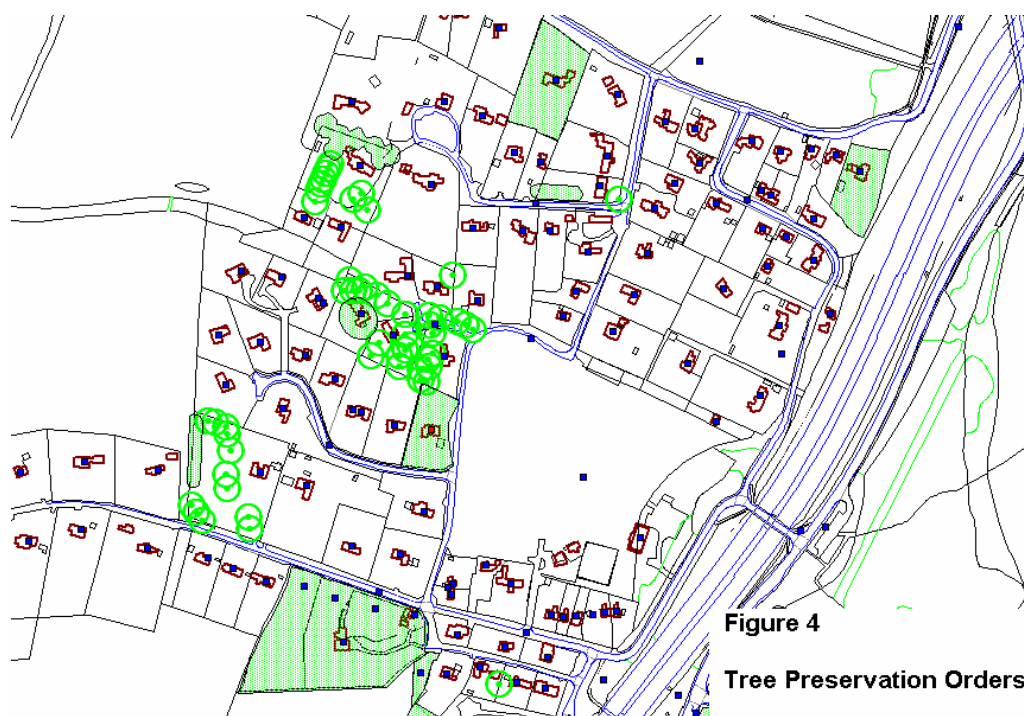


Figure 4
Tree Preservation Orders

Roads

Another principal defining feature of Compton Down is the character of the roads.

One of the most distinctive roads in Compton Down is Hurdle Way that runs along the top of the scarp that defines the northern boundary of the settlement.

Approaching along, say, Field Way from the south, there is a certain drama in emerging from the well-treed and contained environs of the body of Compton Down onto Hurdle Way with its open and extensive views to the north. The aspect and architecture of the houses enhances the character of the locality insofar that they acknowledge and respond to the views. Hurdle Way is clearly a popular route for walkers and it forms part of a much longer route and network of other footpaths in the area. Although not part of the defined South Hampshire Way, it is part of this ancient and long-distance downland route and so its essentially rural character should be seen within this wider landscape context.

The other principal route through Compton Down is Shepherds Lane which is part of the long-distance footpath, the Monarch's Way, that traces the flight of the Prince of Wales (later to be Charles II) after the Battle of Worcester. Here again, the character of this lane has a wider landscape significance. The lane is narrow and gently winding, sometimes with mown grass verges and at one point closely contained between hedges. Mostly large residential properties within extensive curtilages are set well back from the lane, and although the context is essentially suburban, the lane nonetheless retains a strong rural character. This is in part defined by the many large trees along the lane, and particularly the ancient oaks that formed part of St Michaels Copse, but also by the informal nature of the lane itself.

A feature of almost all roads within Compton Down is their narrow and informal character. It is understood that they are owned by the Chamberlain-McDonald estate, except for Field Close and The Spinney, and that their maintenance is undertaken by individual residents' groups such as the Shepherds Lane Housing Association. None, except for the more recent entrance roads and Field Close, have pavements, and the lanes are therefore effectively shared surface where walkers use the road. The carriageways are uneven in parts, narrow, vary in width and have no kerbs. All these features, together with several blind corners, contribute a distinct sense of quiet rural character and have the additional benefit of reducing traffic speeds.

Another point to note is that most of the roads are so narrow as to be single carriageways, and vehicles invariably have to pull over in order to pass. Several particularly narrow pinch points exist around Compton Down where garden boundaries press close to the single carriageway tracks, and some are as narrow as 3.3 metres or even less.

Another feature of the roads in Compton Down is the irregular alignment of garden boundaries and the variable width of verges. As noted above, some

residential boundaries extend right up to the edge of the carriageway, whilst others have generous verges. The irregular effect of roads within Compton Down is obviously very untypical of modern developments and adds further to the sense of rural informality within the settlement (it is understood from the Compton Down Society that the ownership of a number of these boundaries is contested).

Playing fields

The playing fields within Compton Down are the only public open space within the settlement, and it relieves the rather enclosed character of most of the rest of the settlement. However the playing fields have little other distinguishing sense of place, and most of the surrounding houses fail to acknowledge the central space insofar that they are either set well back within their own curtilages or they back onto it or are even heavily screened from it. There is therefore little sense of community focus and identity that a central space of this kind might otherwise have. There is certainly very little sense of it being a village green.

Entrances to Compton Down

As already noted, the two principal entrances to Compton Down are badly marred by the close and noisy proximity of the motorway that adds to the sense of isolation. The road bridges are bleak and utilitarian in design, and there is no defining feature that marks the entrance into the settlement. The vegetation, planted as part of the M3 works is now getting well established and will increasingly mitigate, but by no means eradicate, the negative effects of the road.

Summary

Although there is relatively little variation in character around Compton Down, it is clearly both pleasant to live in and to walk around despite its lack of community focus and facilities. House styles vary considerably, as do the treatments of individual gardens that are invariably beautifully maintained. There is none of the mundane repetition of so many mass-developed suburban areas elsewhere, but instead there is a strong sense of individuality that adds interest and contributes to the quality of the settlement.

2.2 Transport planning considerations

Transport, or more precisely access, is unquestionably a key factor in the planning of any future development at Compton Down.

Currently access is substantially limited by;

- The two principal access points off Otterbourne Road and
- Restricted internal roads.

Although the resolution of traffic and access issues into and around Compton Down lies well outside the remit of this document, specialist transport planning

consultants (Harrison Webb) were employed as part of this LADS study to give some input on transport issues. This related particularly to the two main access points from Otterbourne Road into the site, the inadequacies of which are currently restricting further development within the settlement. The City Council and others have long appreciated that the resolution of access issues could have a significant effect on the development potential of Compton Down.

Junctions on Otterbourne Road

The two access points into Compton Down off Otterbourne Road were constructed relatively recently as part of the M3 extension, but nonetheless they both fall short of the current requirements for safe operation in respect of visibility splays for prevailing through traffic speeds. Both the City Council and inspectors at recent planning appeals have refused planning permission on developments because of the sub-standard visibility splays of these junctions.

The Harrison Webb Transport Planning report is included as an Appendix to this LADS study. Although the Harrison Webb report found that Compton Down does not fulfil all the sustainability criteria for new residential development set out in PPGs 3 and 13, it notes that the settlement is nonetheless regarded in the Local Plan as sustainable in transport terms and therefore suitable for modest development, a view which the Local Plan Inspector has recently endorsed. The report notes that with about 125 dwellings in Compton Down at present with an average density of about 4 dwellings per hectare, the lower government threshold of 30 dwellings per hectare could in theory result in over 1,000 new dwellings in Compton Down, all other issues apart.

However the access and circulation restrictions are such that they are likely to remain controlling factors, and it is clear that the various constraints are such that nothing like these figures is ever likely to be allowed from either a transport or character point of view.

Harrison Webb consider that there is a marginal visibility problem at the junction of Hurdle Way with Otterbourne Road, given the existing speed limit of 40mph and the recorded speed of traffic. They consider that safety issues can be resolved here at relatively modest cost by additional speed control measures and the possible provision of a central pedestrian refuge (subject to detailed examination), and that there is insufficient justification for major engineering works to move the junction northwards to improve visibility.

At the Shepherds Lane and Otterbourne Road junction, they found that visibility was significantly compromised by an Armco barrier that appears to have been built in the wrong location. Its removal and re-installation should improve visibility considerably, although the normal recommended visibility splay of 4.5 x 120 metres is unlikely to be achievable due to the vertical alignment of Otterbourne Road.

Since the Harrison Webb study was undertaken, Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council commissioned a traffic survey of the Otterbourne

Road junctions at Compton Down. The conclusion drawn by the Councils' engineers from the survey was that anything more than a very few additional units in Compton Down (above existing permissions) would represent 'significant' development in transport impact terms and, in the absence of improvements to visibility, should therefore be resisted.

Since it is understood that Hampshire County Council (as the Highway Authority) will not promote improvements to the two junctions (or within Compton Down itself), greater levels of development will only be possible if would-be developers can resolve and fund improvements to the Otterbourne Road junctions themselves, to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. However, Hampshire County Council are reluctant to introduce lower speed limits along this section of Otterbourne Road, or to accept developer contributions in the absence of an acceptable highway improvement scheme.

Internal access

Harrison Webb have drawn attention in their report to the additional constraints on traffic movements within residential areas, based on the guidance in Design Bulletin 32, Residential Roads and Footpaths, Layout Considerations, and its companion guide Places, Streets and Movement.

These documents suggest certain standards for road widths, footways and other design features that are required in order to support defined volumes of residential development.

In short, the internal roads of Compton Down currently fall far short of the minimum suggested requirements, although these cannot always be precisely defined owing to a range of variable circumstances. There is, for example, little clear guidance on the layout of 'shared surfaces'. The appropriate level of development becomes, to some degree, a matter of judgement. Nonetheless the internal roads of Compton Down are an additional and significant limiting factor on any additional residential development.

Current internal road constraints include:

1 Road and verge widths

It has already been noted that a particular feature of Compton Down is the considerable variation of the width of roads and verges. Although almost all roads are of single carriageway width, requiring vehicles to pull over in order to pass, there are some quite wide verges and reasonable overall widths between hedges. However in a number of places road surfaces are both very narrow without verges, and private gardens extend right up the road itself. In Cliff Way for example, the overall width between private boundaries is very limited (roughly measured at 3.3m).

These narrow sections are clearly well below the standards suggested in Design Bulletin 32, and without enlargement it would seem that they are bound to inhibit new development.

Whilst this study does not seek to provide detailed guidance on traffic issues, it is useful to note some minimum suggested requirements to highlight the issue. For example, roads serving;

- Up to 25 residential units should be a minimum of 4.1m wide,
- 25 – 50 units should be a minimum 4.8m wide, and
- 50 – 300 units should be 5.5m wide with a 2.0m wide pavement (1.35m min).

For roads of less than 4.1m wide it is a matter of judgement as to how many units can be served, but it is sure to be very limited. The limitations of internal roads within Compton Down are indicated on Figure 5, Internal Road Constraints.

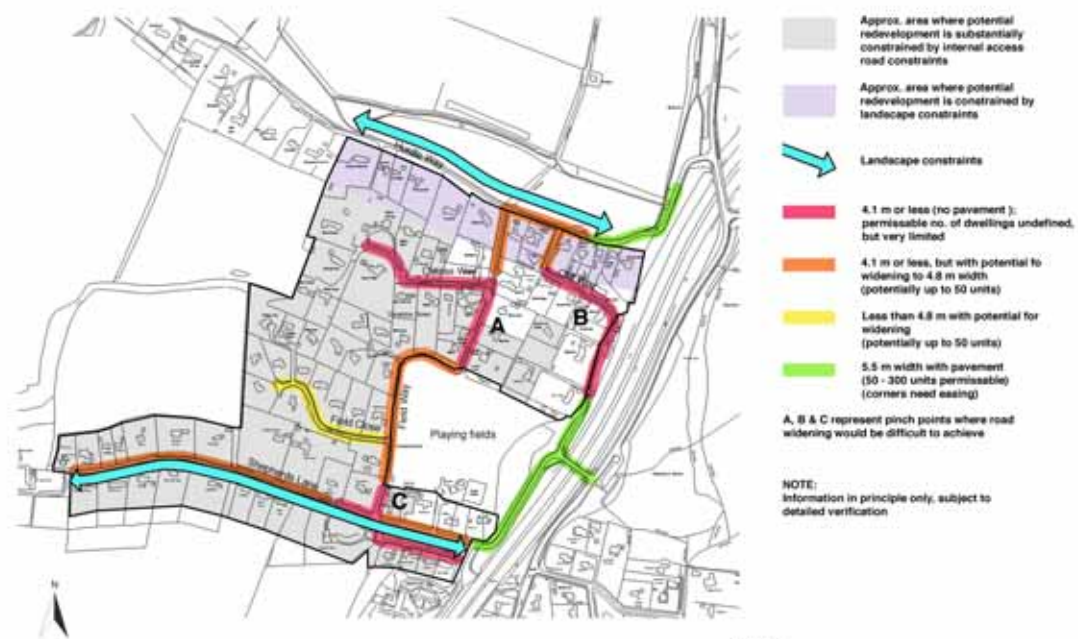


Figure 5
Internal road constraints

It must be stressed that this is certainly not a precise study and Figure 5 is very much a simplification, but it does give a helpful general indication of the implications of road width constraints on development potential within Compton Down. The drawing assumes that roads remain constrained within existing spaces between property boundaries. However it should be noted that the purchase of additional land for increased road widths could increase the redevelopment potential of Compton Down.

For the sake of studying the implications of internal roads widths on the development potential, it is assumed just for the purposes of this exercise that the issues of the two main access points into Compton Down can be overcome.

Colours marked along roads on Figure 5 indicate road width. It should be noted that the drawing shows both existing widths and roads that can potentially be widened without additional land purchase of existing enclosed private gardens. (Owners of land needed for additional road widening would be, in effect, in the situation of holding a ransom strip).

The drawing shows that the existing roads associated with the two junctions off Otterbourne Road are up to the suggested standard for providing access for up to at least 300 units (approx 5.5m width, plus pavement).

However beyond these short entry roads the level of accessibility diminishes markedly. To be noted in particular are three critical pinch points (A, B and C) that appear to strangle the potential for anything more than minimal increases in traffic – and hence development – levels beyond.

The main message to be taken from this drawing is that much of Compton Down is likely to remain out of bounds to any significant levels of residential development because of internal access issues, constraints associated with the two principal Otterbourne Road junctions apart.

2 Corners and sightlines

In addition to restricted road widths, there are also some tight and restricted corners and sightlines in Compton Down.

In particular, there are two sharp, blind corners on Cliff Way, and the junction of Shepherds Lane and Field Way is also significantly compromised. The junction has very restricted space, sightlines are extremely limited and there is no pavement or verge onto which pedestrians can easily retreat. The potential for improvement at the junction is also complicated by the location of three houses quite close to the road, which is unusual for Compton Down.

3 Access loops

In addition to minimum requirements for road widths, pavements and sightlines, Design Bulletin 32 also suggests developments of more than 50 units should be served by two access points.

Currently development immediately adjoining and to the east of Field Way has two such access points (via Shepherds Lane or Hurdle Way), but this requirement could restrict the potential for additional development on the western side of Compton Down.

4 Recreational character/value

The character study has found that the roads and lanes around the settlement are an integral part of its leafy and semi-rural setting. The irregular informal nature of the track and verges in Shepherds Lane, for example, are an essential element of the overall scene that defines the character of this part of Compton Down.

The wider recreational importance of both Shepherds Lane and Hurdle Way in particular has already been noted, and their rural informality is a character feature to be protected. (The character of Hurdle Way was acknowledged as an issue by the Inspector in the Longacre appeal).

It would however be very difficult to widen and carry out other 'improvements' along these routes, sufficient to bring them up to the required highway standards, without undermining their intrinsic informal and semi-rural qualities. Recreational and character issues are therefore likely to impose further constraints upon any significant development along these roads because of the sensitivities associated with their character and recreational value.

5 Private ownership

If potential developers are going to overcome the constraints of sub-standard roads within Compton Down, it will almost certainly be necessary for them to purchase strips of private gardens in the locality of the various pinch points that inhibit traffic movement.

In view of the number of properties that would of necessity be involved, and the apparent general antipathy of many residents to change, this is likely to be a very difficult issue to resolve, with a number of property owners in a controlling ransom situation. It is difficult to see how the small developments that are likely in this area will be able to provide sufficient incentive for potential developers to resolve these issues, not least with the additional issue of disputed ownership boundaries.

6 Estate ownership

It is understood from local residents that none of the roads within Compton Down have been purchased either privately or by residents' associations and that, with the exception of Field Way and The Spinney, they remain in the ownership of the Chamberlain-MacDonald estate.

This means of course that the estate remains in a controlling, and ransom, position on the roads themselves. The attitude of the estate to road improvements is not known, but nonetheless the need to deal with it is likely to add to the complexity, and probably to the cost, of making road improvements.

Summary

The potential for increased development in Compton Down is currently substantially limited by the two junctions onto Otterbourne Road and particularly by the sub-standard nature of internal roads.

The Harrison Webb report suggests that it is possible for the issue of the two Otterbourne Road junctions to be resolved relatively easily and not necessarily expensively. Harrison Webb understand that the operation of Otterbourne Road is currently regarded as satisfactory by the highway authority and consider that it is therefore not logical to suggest that even small amounts of additional traffic could, at a stroke, render its operation unsatisfactory.

However it seems that the inadequacies of the internal roads will remain a much greater long-term constraint. Relevant issues include restricted road and verge widths, blind corners, restricted sightlines, secondary access

requirements, the recreational/character value of the principal roads, private ownership issues associated with increasing road widths as well as ownership issues related to the Chamberlain-MacDonald estate ownership of the roads themselves.

Although limited in the depth of its consideration of transport issues, this study finds that the most accessible areas of Compton Down are likely to be close to the main entrances where there are fewer internal access issues to be overcome.

Nonetheless, the conclusions drawn by HCC's and WCC's transport engineers from their 2005 traffic survey has led them to the view that the constraints imposed by the existing Otterbourne Road junctions would only allow a very few additional units to be permitted, and this view has been supported in recent appeal decisions. Any improvements to these junctions would not be promoted by the highways authority, and they would therefore have to be resolved and funded by developers.

3.0 Public Consultation

A public consultation on the LADS study was held on 13 July 2005 and it was attended by about 30 local residents.

Following an introduction by Winchester City Council and a presentation by Matrix Partnership, workshops were held during which the following 3 principal issues were discussed:

- The evaluation of features of Compton Down
- Main issues of concern
- Design ideas/comments

The main points that arose from the consultation are given here, but a more detailed record can be found in the accompanying Appendix 3.

It was clear from the consultation that there is a genuine concern amongst residents for the future of Compton Down as a place with its own character and identity. Although it only has one particularly striking and unique feature, namely the local environment and setting of Hurdle Way, there was a real awareness of its other features, which although not remarkable or outstanding, are clearly much appreciated and valued by those who live in Compton Down. Understandably there was a clear feeling at the meeting, and in other representations that were received, that local residents do not wish to see Compton Down change either radically or rapidly through the introduction of significant additional development. There was a general acceptance that change will happen, but it was clear that the majority want it to be limited and extended over a period of time.

Most also seemed to value its rather exclusive and separate character and therefore wanted it to remain substantially as it is now, although there were one or two who expressed a preference for a greater range of accommodation and social mix.

Unsurprisingly transport issues were a major issue, particularly the effect of increased traffic on the well-loved semi-rural character of the roads. There was a broad body of opinion that the roads are already busy enough and that any additional traffic would represent an unacceptable hazard for pedestrians who are obliged to share the same surface as vehicles. It was also clear that issues associated with the Otterbourne Road junctions are a concern.

Although fundamentally suburban, local residents particularly valued the semi-rural qualities of Compton Down itself including the informal rural character of the roads, the many large trees and the wildlife. They are anxious not to lose these, and there was a concern that these intrinsic qualities should not be eroded through the adoption of urban solutions. There was a strong desire to avoid high-density developments in particular.

In examining possible scenarios for future development in Compton Down, the idea of creating a higher density centre around the playing fields was raised. In a settlement with no central focus, it was suggested that one option could be to create something of a village green character around the playing fields with higher development facing onto the open space. Interestingly this option was not at all favoured. Residents considered that such an approach would be out of character in the context of Compton Down. The favoured approach seemed to be for scattered and limited infilling across the whole area that allows the retention of its essential quasi-rural/suburban qualities, albeit at a slightly higher density.

3.1 Principal defining features

In the light of the studies carried out, including the public consultation, a list has been drawn up of the principal defining features of Compton Down that give it identity, quality and sense of place. This is not to say that some of these characteristics may not change and evolve, but the list provides a useful summary of the principal characteristics that will influence the subsequent Guidelines.

It is also useful to note certain features that have a wider landscape influence and also those that might normally be anticipated, but which do not feature as part of the defining characteristics of Compton Down. These are identified on additional lists below.

LIST OF PRINCIPAL DEFINING FEATURES

Suburban development situated in a substantially rural setting.

Compton Down has a sense of separateness from other settlements including Winchester, Compton Street, Shawford and Southdown.

Low density development consisting mostly of large residential properties in single family occupation set in large gardens.

Houses mostly set well back from roads.

Relatively low levels of traffic allow roads to be used for recreation.

Informal, semi-rural character of roads. (Unadopted character, no kerbs, informal verges, no pavements, no street lighting)

Extensive views from Hurdle Way and general setting and aspect of houses along the road.

Predominance of mature trees and other vegetation.

Reduced scale of development relative to trees.

Individually designed houses, almost throughout.

Whilst all the features listed above influence the internal character of Compton Down, there are also some features that have importance in the wider landscape context. These relate either to the rural setting of Compton Down or the wider recreational uses that pass beside or through the settlement.

Features affecting the wider landscape context

Views to and from Hurdle Way northwards. The elevated and widely visible frontage along Hurdle Way is defined as part of the setting of Winchester.

Hurdle Way, although not part of the defined South Downs Way, is a locally popular recreation path that follows the line of the chalk escarpment.

Shepherds Lane is part of a defined long distance rural footpath, the Monarch's Way. The character of the road therefore has a wider landscape significance.

Features **not** generally present in Compton Down

Flats, houses in multi occupation, courtyard development and other high density residential developments.

A village centre. (i.e. a denser core of development and grouping of community services/facilities)

No individual buildings are individually particularly notable in providing local identity or character. (However, as noted above, the general setting and aspect of the line of houses fronting Hurdle Way is a defining feature).

A footpath network within Compton Down. (Pedestrian permeability is poor, and access within the settlement is exclusively restricted to roads).

4.0 DISCUSSION OF MAIN ISSUES

4.1 Introduction

Within its Local Plan categorisation as a defined built up area, there is currently a presumption in favour of residential development at Government guideline densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare in Compton Down.

However there are three principal constraints that will limit ultimate development levels and densities, apart of course from the willingness of landowners to redevelop in the first instance. They are:

- Highways safety issues associated with the two accesses off Otterbourne Road.
- Highways safety and capacity issues associated with internal roads
- Character constraints

A Local Area Design Statement is concerned principally with the urban design issues that might constrain future development, but the constraints imposed by the current inadequacies of the local highways have been recognised from the start as a limiting influence that is likely to be inextricably tied up with design considerations. Although detailed highways studies and proposals lie well outside the remit of a Local Area Design Statement, it was clear that to be relevant to the situation at Compton Down the LADS study needed to be informed to some degree by highways-related matters. An independent traffic consultant was therefore appointed to advise on transport planning issues as part of the study.

As a prelude to the Guidelines themselves, a brief discussion of the main issues is helpful in order to explain some of the underlying principles that are relevant to them. These are discussed under the three principal constraints headings listed above.

4.2 Discussion of the Main Issues

Otterbourne Road junctions

In the existing situation virtually no additional development is likely to be permissible. The Inspector at the Longacre Public Inquiry found that any development which “materially increases traffic entering and leaving Hurdle Way [junction] should be refused”. Reporting on the Shepherds Lane junction at the Highdown appeal, the Inspector found that, whilst one additional property would not be unduly hazardous, 4 additional dwellings represented a material increase that could unacceptably compromise highway safety. The application for 4 new houses was therefore refused permission.

It is clear that the resolution of the issues relating to the two Otterbourne Road junctions is critical if further development of any consequence is to take place in Compton Down. These issues are discussed in section 2.2 above.

Internal roads

As already reported in this Study, internal roads around Compton Down are severely compromised (see Figure 5, Internal Road Constraints). It will be seen, for example, that one does not have to travel far into Compton Down to reach roads of less than 4.1m in width. (Design Bulletin 32 recommends that, for internal roads, only 25 units can be served off a road of no less than 4.1m width, and although there is no quoted figure for road widths that are less than 4.1m wide, housing numbers are likely to be very compromised).

Given the problems of limited road widths, ownership issues (both of the roads and adjacent land), verges and lack of pavements, restricted sightlines etc., let alone design issues associated with the character of the roads themselves, it seems clear that the difficulties of achieving acceptable road standards within Compton Down itself are considerable. (It is noted on Figure 5, that properties on the east side of Compton Down, closest to the main access points, are likely to have more potential for redevelopment since they have fewer internal road access issues to overcome).

The difficulty of achieving acceptable standards of access within Compton Down by any would-be developer therefore raises the question of whether it would in fact be cost effective to undertake both improvements to the Otterbourne Road junctions and internal improvements, bearing in mind the many 'ransom strip' situations created by gardens that constrict the roads.

Another uncertainty is whether or not the highway authority has the locus to intervene and, if it has, will be prepared to allow additional access along such sub-standard internal roads, not least in view of their joint use as pedestrian thoroughfares.

Character constraints

This Local Area Design Statement study finds the following features of Compton Down are important in defining the essential characteristics of Compton Down, and ones that should be conserved and maintained:

- Generally large residential properties set in relatively large gardens.
- Houses mostly set well back from roads, generally 2 storey and of individual one-off design.
- Informal semi-rural and leafy character of roads within the settlement.
- The well treed setting including mature oaks in particular.

- The appearance and setting of Hurdle Way both in its own locality and as it appears in wider views and as a setting for Winchester.
- The quiet semi-rural character of Shepherds Lane in particular.
- The relatively low level of traffic movements insofar that this contributes to the quiet semi-rural character of Compton Down and relates to the shared surface function of roads.

In view of the above characteristics that are likely to become constraints to future development, two key questions must be how much development can Compton Down take to avoid unacceptably compromising these characteristics, and what form should it take?

As background to this question, it is noted that the Winchester District Urban Capacity Study, October 2001 identifies a total 16 potential new dwellings within Compton Down. However an appeal decision on the planning application for redevelopment at Longacre, Hurdle Way found that an application for 14 flats and 3 houses on a site currently containing just one house was acceptable and would not have a damaging effect on the character of the area, although the appeal was dismissed solely on traffic issues at the Hurdle Way/Otterbourne junction. Since this one application would have taken up almost the entire anticipated urban capacity of Compton Down, background material therefore provides little useful guidance on this subject, especially as the Local Plan does not limit development to the levels identified in the Urban Capacity Study.

It is also relevant to note that it was the particular manner in which the Longacre proposal was handled that achieved the approbation of the Architects Panel and the Director of Development Services, as well as the approval on this aspect of the Planning Inspectorate whereas a less carefully handled scheme would have been unlikely to be so well received.

In marked contrast to the Longacre application, the Inspector for the appeal at Highdown, Cliff Way, a site not significantly smaller than Longacre, found that just four dwellings resulted in a cramped development that would have unacceptable harm on the character and appearance of the area.

It seems clear from this situation that a study of this kind cannot produce a precise and defensible upper figure for future development. It seems that any such figure will be open to challenge when individual proposals come forward, in the way that the Urban Capacity Study has already demonstrated, and it could only add further to uncertainty over this issue as and when individual applications subsequently challenge it. Also, as policies and circumstances change over time, it would be misleading to suggest that there is necessarily a finite limit to the level of development.

Traffic and other issues aside for the moment, this situation therefore places much of the onus on producing levels of development that are acceptable

from a design and character point of view on individual developers and architects, as well as the City Council, and even ultimately the Secretary of State in judging appeals. High levels of design and design assessment are necessary.

However where this LADS study can, hopefully, be of real assistance is in providing guidance for all interested parties in identifying the character and design issues, as well as the principles of the transport issues, that must be responded to if the quality of environments are to be protected in accordance with Government policy.

This study provides a number of Guidelines that seek to assist with the process of both protecting a sensitive environment and in achieving quality design and the best use of land. However there is also a need to address the basic strategy for development in Compton Down, all of course dependent on the satisfactory resolution of other issues, transport in particular.

It seems that there are in essence three approaches to redevelopment that can be adopted, as follows:

- High density infilling of individual sites.
- Higher density localities.
- Subdivision of individual sites.

Another option put forward in two of the public consultation responses was to leave Compton Down itself unchanged, but to define a separate area of existing agricultural land to the west, outside the existing settlement boundary, and concentrate development there. This option has not been pursued because it is both contrary to Local Plan policy (and was rejected by the Local Plan Inspector) and because of the obvious access difficulties.

High density infilling of individual sites

The obvious danger of high density infilling on individual sites (high density by Compton Down standards might be regarded as about 20 dph or more), is that it will be out of character with the rest of the settlement with its large garden plots, generous set-backs from roads, and limited height. (The existing density of Compton Down was accepted as being about 3.6 dph at the Briarleas appeal) It can be readily appreciated that high density developments could easily result in dramatic and highly unfavourably contrasts that would be damaging to the character of the settlement.

As already noted, a defining feature of Compton Down is that of large, mature trees, and there is clearly a potential conflict in relation to high density schemes and large trees that are likely to require generous space around them for healthy root growth, future crown growth, visual amenity and scale. The problems of large trees shading small residential gardens is a longstanding problem associated with high density developments, and there have been innumerable instances of unrealistic proposals resulting in the

ultimate damage or loss of large trees. Trees and high density solutions are likely to be a real cause for conflict in a leafy environment such as Compton Down, and this also suggests that another approach should be preferred.

It is however noted that the high density proposals at Longacre were nonetheless approved in design terms, including trees, and it is accepted that sensitive schemes that need not adversely affect key features of the locality can be designed, although they do require very high standards of design response.

However, as a general principle, this study finds against high density schemes in Compton Down because they vary in intrinsic character terms from the rest of the settlement.

Also, if the overall total of units in Compton Down is to be limited to quite low levels by access constraints anyway, it seems far more satisfactory that, as a general principle, it should be spread more evenly across the greater part of the settlement where, at the levels anticipated, it is likely to be more sympathetically absorbed without potentially creating unfortunate inconsistencies in character.

Higher density localities

This option proposes that in some more appropriate localities higher densities could be developed. It is generally accepted, in terms of urban design good practice, that development densities should vary across settlements. This is certainly a traditional feature that arose for a number of good reasons, but in Compton Down this is not currently the situation.

A case could be put, for example, for creating a central village green character around the existing playing fields, but it has already been noted that this kind of approach was not at all favoured in the public consultation.

In the case of Compton Down, there would need to be a comprehensive strategy for this to work successfully. Without it, a few individual schemes that followed such a principle could prove wholly counterproductive by creating an unsatisfactory intermediate result that is neither one thing nor the other. With all the individual plots involved at Compton Down, and a generally strong opposition to development in Compton Down as a whole, there seems little likelihood of a comprehensive strategy of this kind succeeding.

Furthermore, the eventual effect could be seen as something of a pastiche. Compton Down is a comparatively modern development, and it has not been subject to the traditional economic and social influences that have governed the development of older settlements. With it highly unlikely that it will even achieve the mass to support the usual local facilities such as a shop, post-office, pub or church, the artificial creation of such a focus could itself be questioned on character grounds.

In view of the above arguments, and the lack of any other credible alternative approaches, this study does not find generally in favour of an area of relatively high density in Compton Down.

That said, it does however seem possible that an area of slightly higher density could develop in the north-east part of Compton Down (see Figure 5 Internal Road Constraints). The reason for this observation is that the locality represents what is likely to be the most accessible in transport terms, being close to the site entrances with fewer internal roads to negotiate and therefore potentially more suitable for development and attractive to would-be developers. The overall size of this area between the road frontages of Field Way, Hurdle Way, Cliff Way and the playing field frontage also means that it is possible that higher densities could potentially be achieved in this general area without adversely affecting the character of Compton Down as seen from the roads or other external views (frontage onto Hurdle Way and the need to maintain skyline trees are local constraints)

However this latter point on potential higher densities in the north-east quadrant of Compton Down is merely made as an observation, and there is insufficient justification for it to be a specific proposal in this study.

However this study does recommend that the open character of the northern boundary of Compton Down should be maintained, in view of the recreational value of Hurdle Way and its importance in wider views, and this would presume against redevelopment on any scale. This recommendation does appear to run counter to the favourable response to the Longacre proposal. It should be noted that the brief for this study does not extend to commenting in detail upon particular applications, but the point bears repeating that if a proposal can be made with sufficient skill to avoid conflict with the Guidelines of this study, then it could well be acceptable.

Lower density infilling of individual sites

This option is the generally recommended approach of this report to any further development within Compton Down.

The gradual, incidental infilling of plots around Compton Down is wholly within the tradition of its development and results in the character of the development that is apparent today.

The issue of incremental infilling in the manner of most Compton Down development to date is addressed, for example, in the decision letters of appeals on Briarleas and Highdown. Both decisions identify the need to achieve development that finds “an appropriate balance between increasing density and respecting the area’s character” (Para 19, Highdown)

It is the conclusion of this study that, as a general principle, incremental development of individual plots at relatively low densities is the approach that is most likely to achieve development that fits within the established character and grain of Compton Down.

This is because such an approach would tend to avoid sudden changes in density – and probably the character of built development – and it would tend to avoid other design-related conflicts such as overlooking and domestic noise. It would also allow various defining features to be more readily retained such as trees and vegetation generally, and generous set-backs from roads.

It is accepted that development in this manner would be at densities lower than those defined in Government guidelines, but, as identified in the Highdown Appeal Decision, an appropriate balance has to be struck between increasing density and respecting the character of an area.

This approach is strengthened by the likely constraints on access, some of which will almost certainly remain a permanent and major restraint on the overall volume of future development. In this context it seems much more appropriate to spread development more evenly across Compton Down in the manner and character of existing development rather than create a few higher density infilling schemes.

5.0 Development Guidelines

5.1 Introduction

This part of the Design Statement defines a series of Guidelines that outline additional constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development in Compton Down.

The Statement has already identified a range of existing features that are considered to be of importance in defining the character of the settlement, and these are the basis for the Guidelines. These features, which largely correspond to those defined by local residents and interested parties, were identified in response to Government guidance that places increased emphasis on the requirement for development proposals to be sensitive to the particular features of individual sites and situations, as well as the requirement to achieve high standards of design. The general aim of the Guidelines is to ensure that any new development should retain, incorporate and be constrained by the more important and valuable features of the area.

The Guidelines listed below are not defined for the most part as absolute constraints that must be rigorously followed in each and every instance. To do this could strangle the very design responsiveness and flair that the Government seeks to foster. Rather, the proposals are identified as guidelines, but important ones that should require very clear and compelling reasons and justification if they were not to be followed.

It is accepted that such an approach will demand a high level of site assessment and design input on behalf of the would-be developer, and also a high level of design assessment on behalf of the Local Planning Authority in advising on and determining planning applications. Each site and application must be assessed on its own merits as well as its compliance with the Local Area Design Statement Guidelines and other relevant planning policies. Nonetheless it is intended that the Guidelines presented here will provide a clear and consistent justification and strategy that will assist in this process.

The relationship between vegetation and buildings is clearly an important feature that defines much of the essential character of Compton Down. Whilst the trees tend to dominate the scene, the buildings remain subservient, recessive and generally discrete. This is a fundamental quality of Compton Down, and one that needs to be substantially retained if its essential character is to be respected.

The existing characteristics of Compton Down are important, not just in terms of Compton Down's own environmental quality, but also because of the wider significance of the Monarch's Way footpath and Hurdle Way. Although both routes are bordered by development in Compton Down, their semi-rural qualities support the wider rural character of these two routes.

However, whilst the trees might justifiably be protected, there is little to protect either individual buildings or the informal semi-rural character of the roads. None of the buildings are listed, or otherwise protected (i.e. Conservation Area) and, whilst they are generally attractive, none appears to be of sufficient architectural merit to warrant listing. There is therefore little to prevent any new application proposing their demolition and redevelopment, as indeed has already been the case with “Longacre”.

However the Development Guidelines listed below identify a range of features of the built environment that are important and which any new development will need to acknowledge. These include scale, height, mass, building line, architectural treatment, etc.

Most of the Development Guidelines restraints apply to the visible built frontage facing onto lanes/roads within Compton Down and to development behind, where it has potential visual impact. Areas of least constraint occur behind the existing frontages (built or vegetative) where development can be carried out without overtly affecting the wider character of Compton Down itself.

5.2 Development Guidelines

D1 SCALE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development in Compton Down should be substantially of the same scale, height and mass of existing buildings. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

Existing buildings are subservient to the scale of the landscape and trees in particular, and any new development should respect this relationship. The overall scale of Compton Down, and particularly the relationship between the scale of existing trees and any new development, is a fundamental feature of Compton Down.

In order to retain the overall scale of Compton Down, any new buildings should appear to be contained broadly within the overall mass of existing buildings, particularly in regard to building height. New buildings should therefore be substantially of 2 storeys in height, but a third floor within some roofs may be acceptable.

The relationship to trees, and particularly skyline trees, will continue to be important especially along Hurdle Way where development proposals should ensure that the relationship between building scale and vegetation does not adversely affect external views.

D2 BUILDING LINE

Existing building lines within Compton Down should be respected. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

Although building lines are not very precise in Compton Down, most buildings have a generally common set-back from roads.

Whilst the individuality of existing development in Compton Down does not require a rigid adherence to common set-backs, it is nonetheless important that any new development should retain the same sense of spaciousness and scale in set-backs from roads/lanes.

D3 DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Although regard should be given to Central Government and Local Plan recommended densities (30-50 dph), development proposals must balance these with the corresponding requirement for maintaining the essential character features of Compton Down. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and H.7 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

Although the public consultation showed that local residents rated highly the current low density of development in Compton Down, including peace, privacy and space, these cannot of themselves adequately justify the prevention of any new development in Compton Down, given the framework of Government guidance and Local Plan policies.

However the various other constraints included in these Guidelines will do much to retain essential character features of Compton Down that give the appearance of lower densities and general openness. These, including likely access constraints, will significantly constrain the densities that might otherwise be achieved.

Clearly there may be some loss of peace and privacy through the process of redevelopment, but issues such as the relationship of new developments to surrounding properties must be carefully and sensitively handled, including matters such as the proximity of new development to site boundaries and overlooking. These issues will need to be satisfactorily addressed for development proposals to be successful.

D4 RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

Any new development in Compton Down should be domestic in appearance and character, rather than having the appearance of apartment blocks or flats. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

Public consultation showed that residents place a high value on the domestic characteristics of residential development in Compton Down.

Whilst the development of flats or apartments may be acceptable, it is important that new development should reflect the form and character of

domestic buildings, avoiding the more typical features of blocks of flats such as large mass, bulky proportions and extensive parking areas.

D5 ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT

Whilst the retention of existing properties in Compton Down is to be preferred, new development will be acceptable provided it is of high quality and individual design, raising the standard of architectural treatment, yet also discrete and paying particular respect to the particular setting and context of the settlement. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

A feature of existing buildings in Compton Down is that they appear to have been almost exclusively individually designed and, although they exhibit mostly traditional forms, they each have a separate identity. Any new development should maintain a sense of individuality and variety in its architectural treatment.

The public consultation discovered that there was a general preference for the retention of existing properties. However any new development should raise the quality of architectural treatment generally but it should be respectful of the existing character, avoiding any particularly striking landmark buildings.

D6 HURDLE WAY CONSTRAINTS

Any new development facing onto Hurdle Way should have particular regard for its effect on external views. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

In view of the significance of development along Hurdle Way in the wider setting of Winchester, as well as its recreational value, particular care should be taken to preserve the qualities of existing development along the lane including its relationship to open space within curtilages, the lane and the wider landscape setting.

These include the overall scale, mass and height of development, the use of materials, set-back from the road, tree cover seen in front of and between buildings, skyline trees, the character of adjacent properties and the individual villa style of houses including their open outlook.

5.3 Landscape Guidelines

The public consultation confirmed that the leafy character of Compton Down is one of its principal defining features, and it is clear that it is a fundamental feature that must be retained. Not only are the trees essential to the internal character of Compton Down, but they are essential in assimilating the

settlement into the wider landscape, particularly in views from the north in which skyline trees are prominent feature.

L1 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

TPOs should be placed on visually or historically important trees or groups of trees on sites where planning applications are submitted or proposed within Compton Down. (Supplements Policy DP.4 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

It is noted that some of the more prominent trees are already protected by Tree Preservation Orders, but it is essential that the wider wooded environment should also be protected when development is proposed. Where planning applications for development are submitted, or expected, all important trees on and immediately adjacent to the site should be assessed and protected.

L2 TREE SURVEYS AND REPORTS

All planning applications should be accompanied by a detailed tree survey and arboricultural report that incorporates an assessment of the amenity value of trees, and an assessment of their contribution to the overall setting and character of Compton Down. The report should also detail proposals for any new planting. (Supplements Policy DP.1 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

Whilst a tree survey and assessment is already a requirement of any redevelopment proposal, it is important that a proper assessment is made of the value and contribution of trees within each site to the overall wooded character of Compton Down, rather than just in terms of tree size, species, health, etc. Whilst some tree loss may be justifiable and acceptable as part of a redevelopment proposal, it is important to identify and, if necessary, protect trees that make a wider contribution to the character of the settlement. e.g. Important skyline trees or trees that define established boundaries.

It will also be important that proposals make realistic allowance for existing trees and their future growth. Particular care should be taken to ensure that existing trees will not overshadow gardens, thus making them targets for future lopping or removal.

L3 FRONT AREAS/ENTRANCES

Any redevelopment proposals should not result in frontages facing onto local roads being dominated by hard surfacing and parked cars. Site entrances should be designed to be as discrete as possible. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

Comment

The space between the front building line and existing lanes/roads in Compton Down is generally green and soft in character, and as such contributes to the leafy character of the settlement.

Redevelopment proposals that substantially increase the amount of hardstanding and the effect of parked cars in views from roads will therefore be resisted.

Existing entrances into properties in Compton Down are generally discrete in character, and any new proposals should be similar and designed to be visually as discrete as possible, with particular regard to vegetation, signage and surfacing materials.

5.4 Transport Guidelines

Highways proposals associated with development and redevelopment should respect highways standards and be appropriate to the setting of Compton Down.

T1 TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT

The scale and effects of traffic impacts need to be considered in the context of the totality of development in Compton Down, taking account of the wider development capacity of the settlement. (Supplements Policy T.1 of Local Plan Review)

T2 SEMI-RURAL CHARACTER OF ROADS

The semi-rural character of roads/lanes around Compton Down should be retained. (Supplements Policy DP.3 of Local Plan Review)

The study has found that the semi-rural character of roads/lanes around Compton Down is an important feature of its internal character, and one that helps to relate this otherwise largely alien settlement into its rural context.

Any 'improvements' to internal roads should be made with particular attention to retaining their intrinsic semi-rural qualities, avoiding urbanising features. Particular care should be taken over any changes to Shepherds Lane and Hurdle Way.

T3 PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Pedestrian accessibility in crossing roads should be improved as part of any junction improvements on Otterbourne Road. (Supplements Policies T.3 and T.8 of the Local Plan Review)

T3 ON-SITE PARKING PROVISION

On-site car parking provision should balance the need to minimise car use with a need to avoid overspill parking onto roads/lanes. (Supplements Policy T.4 of Local Plan Review)

T4 CYCLE PARKING

Any development proposals should encourage cycle use and provide adequate cycle parking facilities. (Supplements Policies T.1 and T.3 of Local Plan Review)

T5 PROVISION FOR SERVICE VEHICLES

Adequate provision should be made for service vehicles. (Supplements Policy T.4 of Local Plan Review)

T6 EFFECTS OF ACCESS TURNINGS

The character and visual effects of site access turnings should be minimised where possible. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and T.2 of Local Plan Review)

T7 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Developer contributions (106 Agreements) should be sought as a means of funding transport improvements and other measures made desirable or necessary by additional development. (Supplements Policy T.5 of Local Plan Review)

6.0 CONCLUSION

Although Compton Down is already defined as a settlement capable of taking increased residential development, this study confirms that there are three principal constraints to the amount of additional development that can be achieved.

These are;

- 1 The operation of the Otterbourne Road junctions
- 2 The operation of internal roads within Compton Down,
- 3 Character constraints.

As is already well known, addressing issues associated with the two junctions on the Otterbourne Road is critical if further development of any consequence is to take place within Compton Down. Initial transport advice undertaken by consultants as part of this study expresses the view that improvements can be made at relatively modest cost. HCC and WCC's latter traffic study confirmed the current inadequacy of these junctions for additional loadings, and made it clear that improvements are necessary before anything more than minimal additional development can be permitted within Compton Down. This one constraint is likely to severely constrain further development until such time as any would-be developers can resolve and fund the necessary improvements.

In addition to the Otterbourne Road junctions, the internal roads within Compton Down were found to be severely restricted and significantly below minimum highways standards. It was also found that the process of improving internal roads to a standard sufficient to allow any notable redevelopment is likely to be very difficult and complicated, certainly in relation to conventional design standards and guidance. Again, the onus for this work will fall on would-be developers.

In addition to these difficulties, this study has also found that any improvements to internal roads would have to ensure that the semi-rural qualities of the roads themselves, that are intrinsic to the character of the settlement, must not be compromised.

In addition to the transport matters, wider character issues are also likely to limit the amount of additional residential development in Compton Down. This study has identified what are several important characteristics that give Compton Down its identity and which need to be protected, as required by Central Government policy. It has not however been possible within this study to define a maximum limit on potential residential development in Compton Down from a character point of view because the redevelopment potential is so dependent on the individual characteristics of each site and the manner in which each design solution is achieved. (The situation of the October 2001 Capacity Study and the Longacre application was noted)

Having studied the defining characteristics of Compton Down, and the different possible approaches to redevelopment, this study recommends that

any future development should generally be undertaken as relatively low density incremental infilling, irrespective of transport constraints, in the manner in which it has been undertaken to date, and subject of course to the various Guidelines provided here. This approach is seen as tying in with the likelihood of access exerting a significant and permanent constraint on the potential level of additional development in Compton Down.

It should be noted that the approach of relatively low density incremental infilling that respects the existing character of Compton Down has been supported by some recent decisions at appeal in favour of relatively low density development. This emphasises the need to strike a compromise between the efficient use of land and the need to maintain local character.

Critical to the application of this principle must be the exercise of reasonable, sensitive and balanced judgement in the consideration of each individual planning application, weighing the often opposing issues of protection and change.

This places new demands on the skill and application of both would-be developers and planning authority alike. Professionally handled, the view is expressed here that the balance between protection and change can be successfully managed even with the resolution of access issues, and that, within the guidance set by Government, Local Plan policies and the detailed, place-specific Guidance as provided in this Statement, Compton Down can accommodate change in a manner that need not compromise its own special environment.

APPENDIX 1

Local planning applications

Silkstede Priors, Shepherds Lane

99/01203/OUT

03/02239/REM Planning permission granted 6 Nov 2003

3 new houses.

Longacre application

03/01744/FUL

In 2003 Abbotswood properties submitted proposals for the redevelopment of Longacre, Hurdle Way. Demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with 14 flats and 3 houses. One large 3 storey block of flats, but substantially of the appearance of a single large house, and with a smaller connected development behind that included the 3 houses. Mostly basement parking under the main building. The proposed building was of largely traditional appearance consisting of brick walls under pitched tiled roofs.

The planning application was refused on several grounds. However the Inspector at the subsequent Public Inquiry found that there was insufficient justification to refuse permission on grounds of sustainability, the effects on the character of the area or highway capacity. The Inspector found that there were also two issues of highway safety, namely the safety of walkers and others on Hurdle Way and the safety of the Hurdle Way/Otterbourne junction. He found that neither the character of Hurdle Way would be adversely affected, nor that traffic speeds would be likely to increase and that walkers could continue to safely share the road with the slightly increased number of vehicles. The design of the proposals was found to be satisfactory, but the scheme was refused on the inadequacies of the Hurdle Way/Otterbourne Road junction.

Land adjacent to Ashcroft, Shepherds Lane

3 Shepherds Lane

03/02852/FUL

1 additional dwelling

Planning permission granted 17 March 2004

Shepherds Grove, Shepherds Lane

04/00707/OUT

2 new dwellings- withdrawn

04/03001/OUT

1 new dwelling

Planning permission granted 11 February 2005

(Objections by HCC ecologist and Forestry Commission) Remnant of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland. Habitat management proposal.

Highways - no evidence of demonstrable harm.

NB Officer's report recommended refusal.

Briarleas

04/1148462

Application for single house accepted on appeal.

The Inspector found that one additional dwelling represented “an appropriate compromise between the need to maintain this character and the need to make the most efficient use of land.” He also considered that the substandard nature of surrounding roads favoured only one additional dwelling.

Bewley Homes application

In 2001 Bewley Homes objected to the emerging Local Plan Review and proposed the development of 6.2 hectares of agricultural land adjoining Compton Down, north of Shepherd’s Lane. The site adjoined the existing settlement on two sides. The objection was not accepted by the Council and was pursued at the Local Plan Public Inquiry in 2004. The Local Plan Inquiry Inspector recommended against including the land within the settlement boundary and the adopted Local Plan Review excludes it from the H.3 boundary.

Land adjacent to Highdown, Cliff Way

Two applications and two appeals. Appeal A for 4 new dwellings and Appeal B for 1 new dwelling. (Submitted January 2004) Appeal decision August 2005.

On highways issues, the addition of 1 new dwelling was considered not to be unduly detrimental to the safety of the Shepherds Lane junction onto Otterbourne Road, whereas the addition of 4 new dwellings (in addition to 3 dwellings already permitted elsewhere in Compton Down) was considered to represent a material increase detrimental to highway safety.

On design issues, it was noted that whilst 4 new dwellings would accord with national guidance on residential densities in PPG3 and local policy, PPG3 also requires that the quality of the environment should not be compromised. The Inspector found that 4 dwellings on the site would create a cramped form of development out of character with and harmful to the particular context of Compton Down. One dwelling was found not to compromise the character of the area.

Appeal A for 4 dwellings therefore failed and Appeal B for one dwelling was permitted.

APPENDIX 2

Transport Planning Considerations (Harrison Webb)

- 1 The **location** of Compton Down (CD) is regarded as sustainable in transport terms (see PPG 3, PPG 13) in the Local Plan. Policy H.3 of the adopted Winchester District Local Plan says that CD is one of a number of small settlements suitable for appropriate (see Policy DP3) residential development. It appears that this stance is based on a need for local services (eg schools) to remain viable. Few small settlements have much in the way of public facilities but collectively they are available amongst adjacent settlements. Council policy is to concentrate new housing within existing settlements. The Inspector's report on the recent Local Plan inquiry has confirmed the status of Compton Down as an H.3 settlement.
- 2 The above policy stance was supported by the Planning Inspectors at the appeals in 2004 for proposals by Abbotswood Properties Ltd at Longacre, Hurdle Way, CD (one for 12 flats and 5 houses, one for 6 houses). One Inspector specifically states that it is "a sustainable site close to a bus service to Winchester on Otterbourne Road".
- 3 In our view, CD does not fulfil all the sustainability criteria set out in PPGs 3 and 13 for new residential development:
 - focused on existing towns and cities
 - provide accessibility to jobs, education, and health facilities, shopping, leisure and local services
 - seek to reduce car dependence by facilitating more walking and cycling, by improving linkages by public transport between housing, jobs, local services and local amenity and by planning for mixed use
 - a sequential site search for housing sites should proceed as follows:
 - re-use of previously developed land in urban areas
 - urban extensions
 - around nodes in good public transport corridors
 - villages will only be suitable locations for development if it can be demonstrated that additional housing will support local services, such as schools or shops, which could become unviable without some modest growth and that there is a local need for further housing.

However, CD could comply with the last of these criteria.

- 4 As the Local Plan Inspector has accepted current policies (e.g. H.3) then “modest growth” must be presumed appropriate in sustainability terms.
- 5 In effect, this leaves urban design and highways matters as controlling factors in respect of planning applications. This is being addressed via a Local Area Design Statement. It is pointless to consider design and layout matters if safe access cannot be provided, so highways matters are critical. Two Inspectors have reached similar conclusions, dismissed appeals and refused planning permission on highway safety grounds relating to the junction of Hurdle Way and Otterbourne Road. A third Inspector has recently allowed a single new dwelling in CD.
- 6 The **junction of Hurdle Way and Otterbourne Road** was constructed relatively recently, when the M3 extension was built. Current visibility requirements for the safe operation of such priority junctions are set out variously in Design Bulletin 32 and originally in TD 42/95 (1995).
- 7 **Minimum visibility** along the main road is related to traffic speeds or speed limits (40mph in this case). If the prevailing speed of traffic exceeds 37.5 mph (60 km/h) in 85 cases out of 100 in wet weather (an 85th percentile speed) then visibility should increase from 90m to 120m according to TD 42/95. In both cases, the distance is measured 4.5m back from the kerb line on the minor road (visibility is often expressed in the form 90m x 4.5m). A degree of judgement is allowable to take account of local circumstances (eg accident record and the distance back from the kerb line on the minor road from which visibility is measured). For a speed limit of 40mph, visibility should be 120m. This assumes that a proportion of vehicles will exceed the speed limit. However, the speed limit criterion is only used if actual speeds are not known. In this instance, they are known (via speed surveys).
- 8 Until recently we had not seen accurate drawings that enabled us to quantify the degree to which visibility may be compromised. We concluded initially that if the degree of compromise on visibility was marginal (say 115 to 119m, although this is purely judgemental) then, in the absence of a related accident problem, it may be appropriate to accept reduced visibility. However, it would be preferable to consider this in conjunction with the introduction of speed control measures to ensure speeds did not rise further. There is no evidence of a speed/visibility-related accident problem on the basis of a study by D M Mason, Engineering Consultants Ltd.
- 9 If visibility was significantly compromised (say 90 to 114m), then there are at least **three possible responses**.
- 10 First, speed control measures could be introduced to reduce 85th percentile wet weather speeds below 37.5 mph, making main road visibility of 90m or more acceptable.

- 11 Second, the junction could be redesigned by moving it further away from the bridge crest and offer 115 (say) to 120m visibility.
- 12 Third, some combination of the above that made visibility of 90 to 115m (say) acceptable.
- 13 We have now had sight of a drawings (A.037/1 and /2) produced by D M Mason, Engineering Consultants, dated April 2004. This work was undertaken for Abbotswood Properties. This drawing shows that for an eye height of 1.05m, there is just over 90m visibility in a vertical plane and around 120m in a horizontal plane in the critical southerly direction. Visibility must be achieved in relation to drivers' eye height and the height of objects in the road (e.g. cars, pedestrians). Drivers eye height should be taken as between 1.05 and 2.0m above the carriageway adjacent to the kerb line. A degree of discretion applies to object heights. Heights as low as 0.6m apply if small children are likely in the road unaccompanied (e.g. on residential roads). We consider this does not apply in this instance, so inter-visibility should be based on object heights between 1.05 and 2.0m.
- 14 We have also had sight of speed survey results undertaken by D M Mason. These show that the equivalent wet weather 85th percentile speed is less than 36 mph (57.9 km/h). The existing visibility is compliant on this basis as the relevant threshold is 60km/h for visibility of 90m x 4.5m.
- 15 However, the subsequent introduction of additional speed data collected by Hampshire County Council apparently indicated an equivalent wet weather 85th percentile speed of about 38 mph (61 km/h). This marginally exceeds the speed threshold of 60 km/h, above which visibility should be 120m.
- 16 One further consideration applies if improvement works are being considered. **Pedestrian access** across Otterbourne Road in this area is poor, given the observed speed of traffic. If improvements also addressed this issue, the sustainability of Compton Down would be enhanced and safer conditions for all road users achieved at the same time.
- 17 **Our current view** is that solutions to this marginal visibility problem are available at modest cost. We recommend consideration of speed control measures, including reactive signs and pedestrian refuges to effectively narrow the carriageway. The latter would increase pedestrian accessibility and safety. The absolute minimum refuge width should be 1.2m but a width up to 2.0m would be preferable. The carriageway width on the bridge over the M3 is 7.3m. The maximum width of road vehicles permitted in the UK is 2.5m. This suggests there is scope for a refuge.

- 18 We do not think that major engineering works to move the junction northwards are justified, given the lack of accident risk.
- 14 We presume that **the junction of Shepherds Lane and Otterbourne Road** was designed and constructed at the same time as that for Hurdle Way. However, in this instance, visibility is significantly compromised by an Armco barrier erected to safeguard the M3 below.
- 15 There remains a need to consider **what is meant by “modest growth”**. There is scope within Compton Down for hundreds of new dwellings if the spacious existing plots are developed to the Government’s preferred minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Existing density appears to be around 4 dwellings per hectare. It is estimated that there are of the order of 175 dwellings currently at this very low density. Increasing the density to the Government threshold would result in over 1,000 new dwellings, with a total settlement size of 1,300 dwellings.
- 16 Every hundred dwellings will typically generate and attract a total of the order of 60 vehicle movements in a weekday morning peak hour and quite possibly many more, depending on the characteristics of the households involved.
- 17 Recognising this potential traffic impact, design and layout guidance for new housing suggest size thresholds that affect layout requirements such as traffic flow, emergency access and so on.
- 18 Design Bulletin 32 (Residential Roads and Footpaths, Layout Considerations: HMSO, April 1992) and its companion guide (Places, Streets and Movement: DETR, September 1998) suggest the following criteria:
- The recommended minimum width of internal road for the free movement of traffic within a development rises from 4.1m (up to 25 units), 4.8m for 25 to 50 units and 5.5m for 50 to 300 units
 - the guide is vague about the width of space shared by people and vehicles but quotes an example of a minimum width of 7m overall for such spaces
 - a road serving up to 50 dwellings should be either a loop or a through road or a cul-de-sac with a footpath link that could be used by vehicles in an emergency
 - a road serving between 50 and 100 dwellings should preferably be a loop or through road or at least contain a footpath link capable of use by vehicles as above

- a road serving between 100 and 300 dwellings should have two points of access or form a loop served by one point of access
 - shared surfaces could serve up to 25 dwellings in a cul-de-sac and up to 50 dwellings where junctions with roads with footways are located at each end of the shared section.
- 19 Carriageway widths on Hurdle Way vary between 3.8m and 4.7m according to appeal evidence and we assume this excludes the grass verges. These verges could be used by pedestrians in many instances, in dry weather at least.
- 20 The road layout is essentially two longish cul-de-sacs with narrow road links between them and there are two external accesses via Hurdle Way and Shepherds Lane. There are no footways within the settlement.
- 21 Subject to a transport assessment that confirmed adequate operational capacity of the two external access junctions (which seems likely), these characteristics and guidance suggest a maximum settlement size of well under 300 dwellings, largely on the basis of the lack of internal footways, the limited carriageway widths and the variable width and condition of grass verges. Determining the upper threshold for settlement size in these circumstances is a matter of judgement.
- 22 **We suggest that there may be scope for up to a maximum of 100 new dwellings.** These would generate an additional 60 or more vehicle movements in a peak hour. This of itself should not create a congestion problem at the access junctions. The distribution of new dwellings within the site is predominantly an urban design matter. Individual accesses onto the road network will obviously have to offer a safe level of visibility and appropriate room for vehicle manoeuvring.

APPENDIX 3

Report on Public Consultation

The public consultation began with an initial introduction by the Forward Planning Team Manger of Winchester City Council followed by an illustrated presentation by Charles Gardner of Matrix Partnership.

The main presentation consisted of a summary of the relevant national planning guidance from central government, followed by a review of the (then) existing Winchester District Local Plan (1998) and the (then) emerging Winchester District Local Plan Review Revised Deposit (2003). The consultants acknowledged the sensitivity of issues associated with significant change in an already established and well-loved area, but explained that meaningful discussion of arguments both for and against change must be conducted within the framework of Central Government and Local Plan policy.

In very broad terms, it was explained that central government is seeking to improve both the provision and quality of housing and to do this in a sustainable manner, minimising the development of 'greenfield' sites concentrating in particular on the more efficient use of existing and previously developed land, 'brownfield' sites including increasing densities within existing urban areas.

It was explained that whilst Government policy encourages redevelopment to higher densities it also places new emphasis on quality and the conservation and enhancement of existing environments of value. The identification of features of positive value that contribute to the quality of the locality is therefore important in the process of evolving the recommendations of the Local Area Design Statement.

The presentation topics also included an analysis of Compton Down, and traffic and access issues were an important part of the presentation and subsequent discussions.

During the latter workshop part of the public consultation, the following issues were discussed:

- 1) Identification of special features of Compton Down
- 2) Main issues of concern
- 3) Design ideas/comments

About 30 people attended the public consultation and, following the presentation, attendees were divided into groups for the workshops that lasted for about an hour. Unfortunately the tight timescale of the evening prevented a feedback session at the end.

In addition to the workshops, those attending were invited to return any additional comments, and a special Comments Pages including a map of the settlement was made available.

Principal findings

1 Identification of special features of Compton Down

Low levels of traffic allow use of road for walking, cycling, riding and children's play.

Low traffic levels also encourage non-car transport and therefore helps build a sense of community.

Separateness from Winchester.

All single family occupations and no or few flats and houses in multiple occupation.

Development does not generally exceed 2 storeys.

No courtyard development.

Large plots.

Extensive views north from Hurdle Way.

Low levels of domestic noise.

High standard of housing stock.

Mature trees and hedgerows important.

Wildlife in private gardens.

No street lighting.

Semi-rural character of internal roads.

High standard of public area maintenance including verges (sometimes maintained by residents' associations).

2 Main issues of concern

Danger of radical change of character and loss of present semi-rural environment

Increased traffic (and pollution) including safety and capacity issues associated with junctions off Otterbourne Road and sub-standard nature of roads within Compton Down

Loss of valued features identified above

Effects of traffic, visual impact and urban solutions in a semi-rural context

Imbalanced mix of house types (Preponderance of large family houses). More varied mix wanted especially for the young and old who wish to remain in the locality. (However there was also view, though often not directly expressed, that many residents do not want a more diverse property – or social - mix types in the area)

Adequacy of existing services and infrastructure to accommodate additional development

Opposition to high density schemes, such as the Longacre application, having a detrimental effect on the character of the area

3 Design ideas/comments

New development should not be disproportionate to the existing size/scale of the settlement

Not opposed to new development in principle, but it must be in character with Compton Down including density, tranquillity and general leafiness

Slow, piecemeal development in keeping with present character

Possibly 15 -20 new dwellings acceptable

Distribute new development widely across Compton Down

No natural or obvious area for higher density development

Prefer individual developments, not estates

Contemporary design acceptable

Issue of conflict with other policies – small dwellings/affordable housing

Do not wish Compton Down to be perceived as a separate settlement – no need for a 'village green'

'Village green' scenario not endorsed by local residents. Do not want change to existing character

A proposal to develop a small area (about 25 houses) of the existing field, outside the existing settlement boundary, opposite the end of Field Way to avoid overloading the rest of Compton Down.

Another similar suggestion favoured no change in the existing settlement, but that the two fields immediately to the west of Field Close, north of Shepherds Lane and south of Hurdle Way should be developed, and that this would have the advantage of creating a more mixed community that would include young families.

Summary of comments received from the Compton Down Society:

No demolition of existing buildings

No flats or houses in multiple occupation

Plots of 0.25 acre

Single family dwellings only

No new internal roads or widening/altering existing internal roads

No reduction in existing trees, vegetation etc.

In general two storey buildings only

Reported that all roads within Compton Down are owned by the Chamberlain-MacDonald estate except for Field Close and The Spinney

Reported that former Southdown School granted planning permission for conversion to flats

Reported that in 1970s 1 acre was required to build a new property. (An application for a new house on a 0.75 acre plot went to appeal)

1980s Development at The Spinney. 0.5 acre plot was the informal planning authority standard. (Application on a 0.33 acre plot was turned down because the garden was considered too small).

APPENDIX 4

Sustainability Appraisal

The Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes have emphasised the need for local authorities to encompass a wide range of environmental, social and economic issues. One way in which the Winchester Local Plan Review does this is to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the development plan policies in accordance with PPG12: Development Plans. This can be found in Appendix 3 of the Local Plan.

It should be noted that the main aim of a sustainability appraisal is to ensure that the policies in a development plan are compatible with each other and the general sustainability aims. Where policies fail to be compatible or sustainable, they should be reassessed to see if amendments should be made.

This Local Area Design Statement follows the same procedure as the Local Plan whereby 13 main themes are identified, such as Resources, Pollution and Biodiversity, but with 28 tests/indicators. These are listed in a chart and each proposal is assessed against each of the relevant tests. The effects are scored as follows:

- Positive effect
- ?• Possible positive effect
- x Negative effect
- ?x Possible negative effect
- 0 Neutral – no relationship or significant impact

The appraisal found that not all 28 tests/indicators apply or are relevant to the Guidelines. Transport, Basic needs equality, Economy, Employment, Health Treatment, Health Protection, Crime, Fear of Crime, Sustainability awareness, Equity, Local needs use, Self-development and Involvement were all neutral with no relationship or with insignificant impact in each case. They have therefore been omitted from the chart.

D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Guidelines
?x	?x	?x	0	0	0	Land use
?x	?x	?x	0	0	0	Resource use
0	0	0	0	0	•	Protection of resources
0	0	0	0	0	0	Pollution
•	•	•	0	•	•	Protection of diversity
?•	?•	?•	0	0	0	Access to wildlife/nature sites

0	0	0	0	0	0	Local needs provision
?x	0	?x	0	0	0	Housing provision
?•	•	?x	0	0	0	Access
0	•	?x	0	0	0	Road safety
0	0	?•	0	0	•	Leisure provision
0	0	?x	0	0	0	Leisure access
•	•	•	•	•	•	Protection of the built environment
•	•	•	•	•	•	Urban design
•	•	•	•	•	•	Local identity

L1	L2	L3	Guidelines
?0	0	0	Land use
0	0	0	Resource use
0	0	0	Protection of resources
0	0	0	Pollution
•	•	•	Protection of diversity
•	•	0	Access to wildlife/nature sites
0	0	0	Local needs provision
?x	?x	?x	Housing provision
?x	?x	?x	Access
0	0	0	Road safety
•	•	0	Leisure provision
0	0	0	Leisure access
•	•	•	Protection of the built environment
•	•	•	Urban design
•	•	•	Local identity

Sustainability Appraisal findings

The main findings are that the Guidelines support, in large part, sustainability objectives. However, the various landscape-related Guidelines that seek the

retention of trees, and also development Guidelines that seek to preserve the scale and character of the area could well result in lower densities of development than might otherwise be achieved, and therefore there are some possible negative effects. However the value of trees and the scale and nature of development are such as to outweigh the loss of additional potential development.