

SLEEPERS HILL

Local Area Design Statement



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Local Area Design Statement

by Matrix Partnership Ltd. for Winchester City Council

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BACKGROUND

Introduction

- 1.1 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 notes (PPGs) or Statements (PPSs) and in the Local Plan. However LADS are intended to provide more specific guidance that addresses some particular planning issue; in this case infilling in an established residential area.
- 1.2 Under the new planning system (introduced through the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), LADs are 'Supplementary Planning Documents' which will form part of the Local Development Framework for the District. They must conform to the principles set out within the Statement of Community Involvement. This LADS has been adopted by the City Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- 1.3 The Sleepers Hill Study Area is part of the wider suburban periphery that surrounds the historic city centre of Winchester, but in this instance it was developed, and substantially remains, as an area of particularly spacious low-density development with many relatively large and deep plots.
- 1.4 It is indeed the low-density nature of the Study Area that attracts developer interest in infilling. The study of the historic development of the area shows that there has been a progressive increase in density since the first developments were undertaken in about the 1870s. However, with central government seeking to increase housing provision, as well as high property values, there is clearly potential for further increases in development density. Several recent and current developments confirm the effects of these pressures.
- 1.5 One of the means by which the Government is proposing further substantial housing provision, and with least possible effect on open countryside and other 'greenfield' sites, is by concentrating on the redevelopment of previously developed or 'brownfield' sites including increasing development densities within existing built-up areas.
- 1.6 Current Government policy (PPS3) now recommends development densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare and therefore larger residential properties in areas that are not subject to special controls are coming under increasing pressure for redevelopment.
- 1.7 The Sleepers Hill Study Area is defined in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006) as an area where additional residential development will be permitted, although within certain constraints. The increase of residential densities within Sleepers Hill and other existing developed areas 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.
- 1.8 However Government guidance and Local Plan policies are also mindful of environmental sensitivities, and there is therefore a requirement that the special qualities and features of areas subject to potential redevelopment are identified and assessed and that they should be protected and enhanced to ensure the protection and encouragement of quality environments.
- 1.9 The protection of such environments requires a degree of strategic foresight in order to avoid their destruction through a process of incremental erosion including a progression of uncoordinated and piecemeal developments. In this instance, it also has bearing upon the wider setting of the city.

- 1.10 In order to address the issue of infilling, 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 Sleepers Hill. 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 urban design 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.
- 1.11 It should be added that the terms of reference for this study are limited to what might be defined broadly as urban design issues, and therefore transport-related issues did not form a significant part of the draft LADS. However, it is appreciated that transport issues are a point of real concern to residents and as a result this final version of the LADS includes commentary and guidance on transport issues, based on advice from the Highway Authority and technical work commissioned by the Sleepers Hill Association.

Planning policy background

- 1.12 An understanding of current planning policies and guidance is clearly important background for 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 Delivering Sustainable Development

- 1.13 PPS1, published in March 2005, provides up-to-date guidance from the Government on the broad requirements of sustainable development within the planning system.
- 1.14 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” (para.27.(iv).)
- 1.15 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” (para.17). It also confirms the need to draw up plans with community involvement.
- 1.16 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” (para.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.

PPS 3 Housing

- 1.17 A new Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing has recently been published, following a consultation draft in December 2005. There are several aspects of the PPS which are relevant to Sleepers Hill, including:
- One of PPS3’s objectives is housing should be well-designed and built to a high standard.

- Local planning authorities should develop a shared vision with local communities of the type of residential environments they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected (Paragraph 14).
- Authorities may set out a range of densities having regard, amongst other things, to the characteristics of an area. However, the density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of existing style or form (Paragraphs 46-51).
- Intensification of the existing urban fabric requires good design and more intensive development is not always appropriate. Successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality, and well designed schemes can enhance the quality of an area (Paragraph 49).

Local Plan policies

- 1.18 The Winchester District Local Plan (1998) has recently been superseded by the statutory Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).
- 1.19 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.
- 1.20 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.
- 1.21 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.
- 1.22 The Study Area is situated within the defined policy boundary of Winchester, and is therefore covered by Policy H.3. Policy H.7 responds directly to Government guidance, anticipating development within these areas achieving housing densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.

Objectives of the Local Plan Strategy

- 1.23 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

- 1.24 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

- 1.25 In accordance with PPS3, Policy DP.3 requires the efficient use of land including the Government's development densities.
- 1.26 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

- 1.27 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.
- 1.28 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."
- 1.29 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. PPS3 itself requires that, whilst efficient use should be made of development land, good design should be facilitated by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area.
- 1.30 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.
- 1.31 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.
- 1.32 In addition to the constraints identified within the local area, government guidance and Local Plan policies 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 PPS 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.

- 1.33 The analysis of the Sleepers Hill Study Area, 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.

2 ANALYSIS

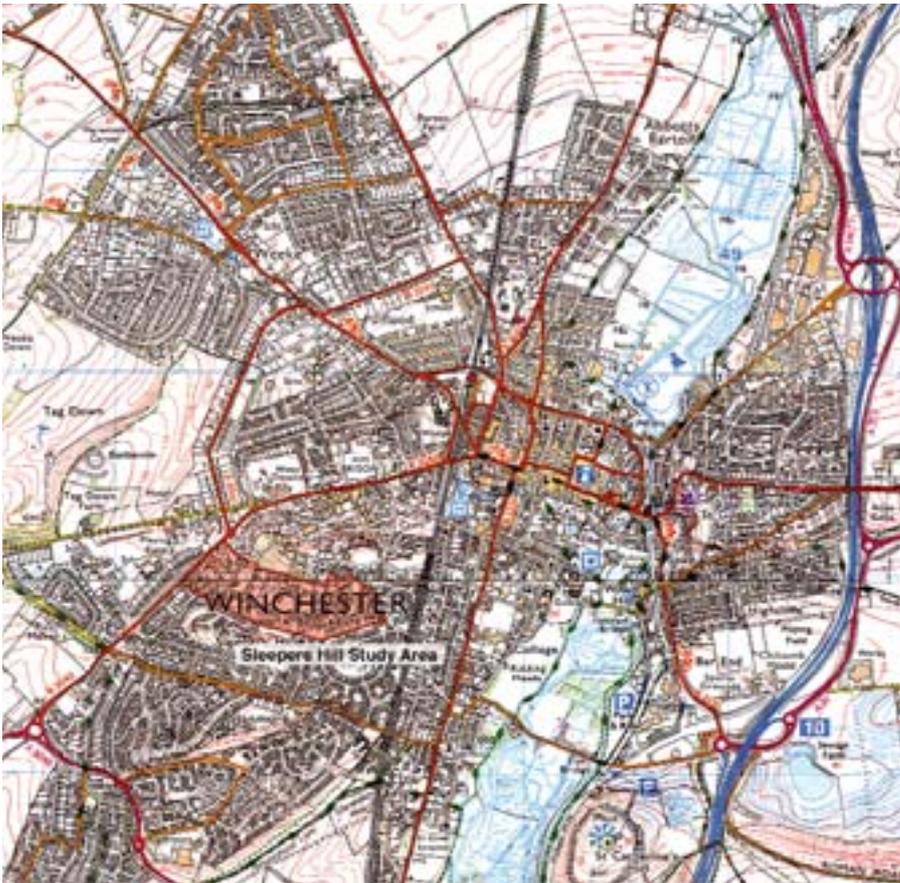
Setting and topography

- 2.1 Sleepers Hill is a well-defined suburban area of Winchester, situated on the western slopes of the River Itchen valley, and located about 1km south west of the city centre (see Figure 2, Location Map).



Figure 1: Aerial Photograph

- 2.2 The main features of the locality are its elevated position, and its generally spacious and leafy character that do much to make it such an attractive location. There is one main access route, Sleepers Hill Road that runs down the hill, connecting Romsey Road (B3040) to the west and Airlie Road, and ultimately St Cross Road (B3335) to the east, beyond the mainline railway. This road provides access to most properties on the hill. Additionally there is the short Airlie Lane cul-de-sac in the lower, eastern part of the Study Area that connects directly onto Airlie Road.



*Figure 2
Location Map*

2.3 The elevated nature of much of the Sleepers Hill area is enhanced by its location on a short spur or promontory of higher ground that projects east into the Itchen Valley. Sleepers Hill Road runs close to its ridge before descending more steeply towards the valley floor at its eastern end (see Figure 3, Topography, and Figure 4, Sketch Section). The elevated position of Sleepers Hill gives it, potentially, fine views across the valley to the east and south-east, although in reality these are substantially obscured by vegetation and, to a lesser degree, by buildings. Nonetheless it is clear that many of the houses on Sleepers Hill have been designed and orientated to enjoy the wider external views.

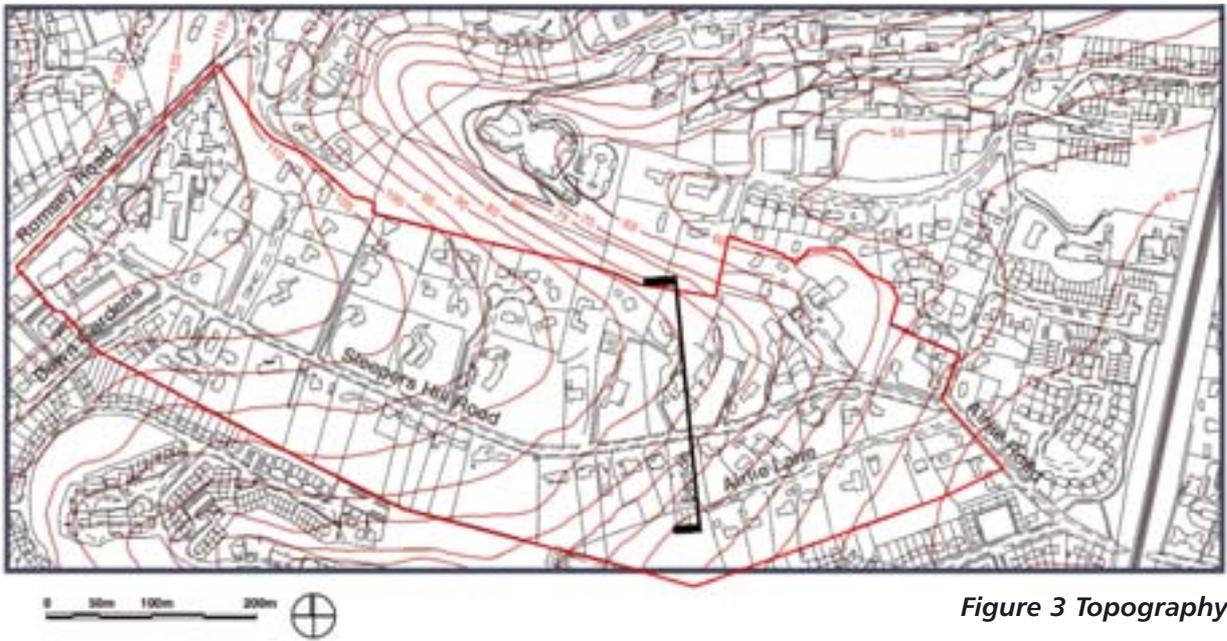


Figure 3 Topography



Figure 4 Section

2.4 It should also be noted that the locally prominent spur that is Sleepers Hill has significance in external views, notably from the east side of the Itchen valley. The most important of these views is from St. Catherine's Hill which provides a magnificent panorama of the historic city. In this view (see Figures 5A and 5B, View from St. Catherine's Hill and detail), the city centre is clearly defined by the dominating presence of the cathedral which is seen in close relationship with open fields and woodlands along the course of the River Itchen, as well as open countryside beyond. In the more densely developed city centre, development is clearly visible, as well as some of the larger institutional buildings on higher ground adjacent.



Figure 5a View from St Catherines Hill

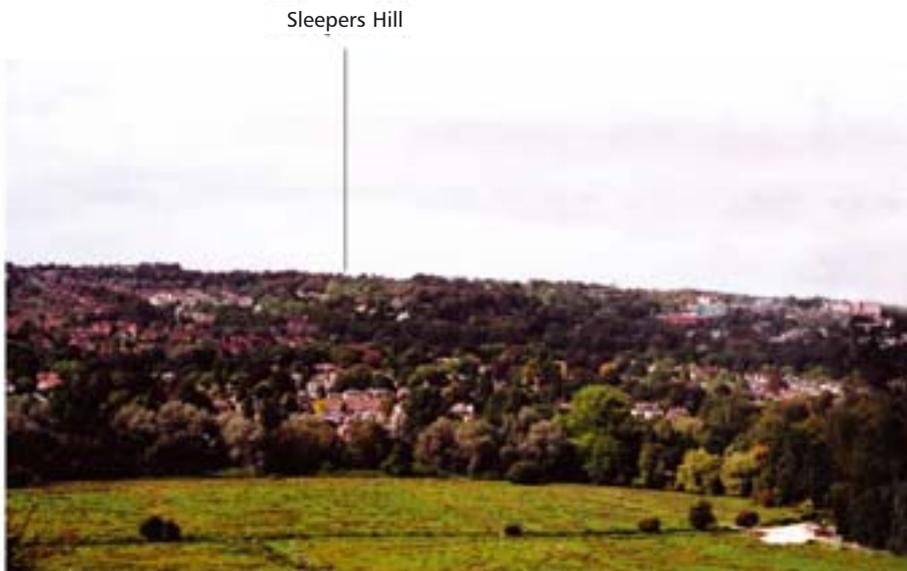


Figure 5b Section View from St Catherines Hill - detail

- 2.5 This view is rightly identified as being of strategic importance in the City Council’s Winchester Conservation Project 2003 (Para. 3.6, p96). The document states that strategic views are to be safeguarded in order to protect the silhouette quality of Winchester’s skyline. This study finds that this and similar views of Winchester have an additional importance; namely the quality of the visual relationship between a fine historic city centre and its surrounding suburbs and landscape. This view of the city centre is notable for its lack of intrusive modern development, and for its close relationship to its rural setting. It should therefore be protected for much more than its silhouettes, important as they are (it is interesting to note that this specific view is identified in the A.G. MacDonnell’s classic book ‘England, Their England’, and it is used at the culmination of the story as a representation of that which is quintessentially English).

- 2.6 Within this context, Sleepers Hill is an important part of the city's setting, providing a remarkably leafy setting that not only softens the effect of development and maintains a treed skyline in its immediate locality, but also which allows the higher density of development in the city centre to read clearly and distinctly from the surrounding suburban areas. Loss of tree cover on Sleepers Hill would therefore significantly diminish the quality of the setting of the city centre.
- 2.7 Section 3.7, Trees of the Winchester Conservation Project identifies the importance of trees in contributing to the character and quality of the Conservation Area, and it specifically mentions those on Sleepers Hill in this context, even though they are situated outside the Conservation Area itself. The document states, as the point of action, that these trees will be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, either as groups or individuals.
- 2.8 The issue of Tree Preservation Orders will be considered later in this study, but there is a clear message from this part of the study, supported by the Council's own policies, that trees on Sleepers Hill are of special importance in the wider setting of Winchester and that they should be protected.

Historic development

- 2.9 A study of maps of the Sleepers Hill locality provides an interesting perspective on the progressive development of Sleepers Hill (see Figures 6 - 14).
- 2.10 The first map studied shows that in 1871 Sleepers Hill was substantially open, unenclosed downland. Only the house Milnthorpe, that still exists, had been developed by that date, and in addition to a large garden in the immediate vicinity of the house, included an area of parkland as well as what appear to be stables and paddocks.
- 2.11 By 1894-5 several other large residential properties had been developed, mostly on the lower slopes, each having generous plots and often associated outbuildings. Sleepers Hill Road had been laid out by that time, then called St. Mary's Road, but the houses were clearly built to face the view rather than the road. In association with the first houses, it will be noted that tree planting was also taking place in gardens, parklands and shelterbelts.



Sleepers Hill area, Winchester, OH 1871

Figure 6 Sleepers Hill 1871 map

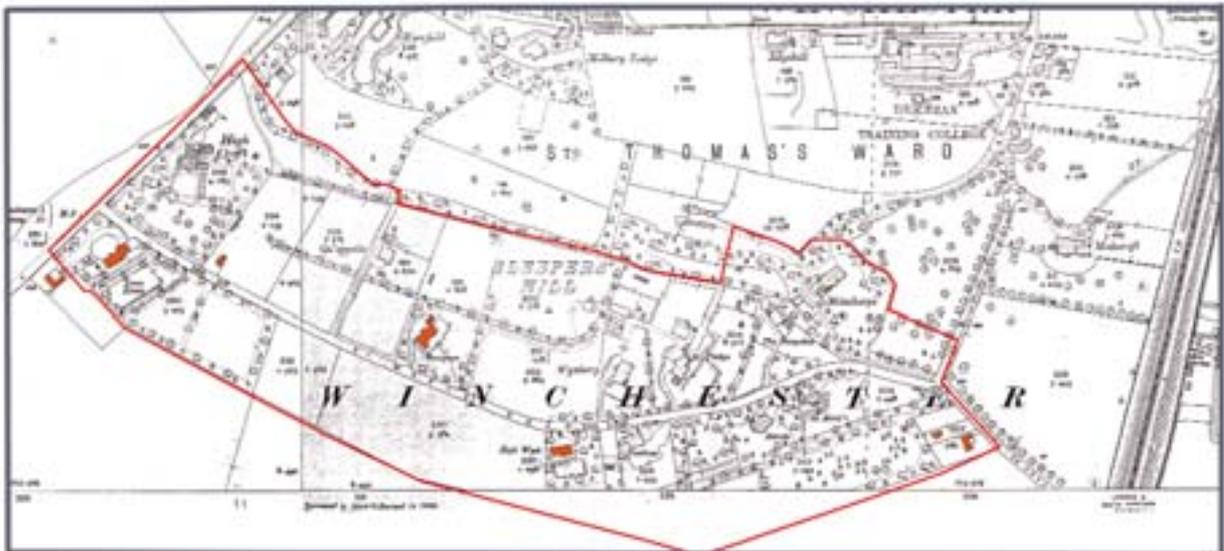
Assumption - development in area of interest is non-existent
 - Sleepers Hill Road (St. Mary's Road) is non-existent



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (St. Mary's Road), OH 1894-95

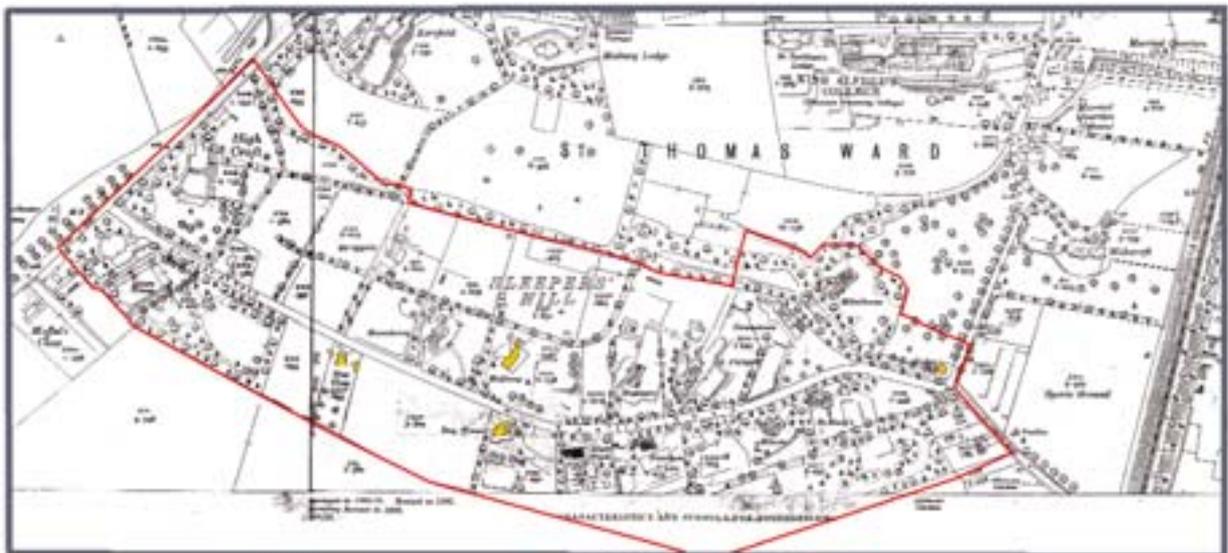
Figure 7 Sleepers Hill 1894-5 map

2.12 Reference to the 1908 and 1931 maps shows that there was little additional house building during this period (Dawn House with its extensive grounds was something of an exception), although additional tree planting was taking place. Trees planted at an earlier date would have been growing and maturing and gradually changing the character of Sleepers Hill to the generally wooded appearance seen today.



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (St. Mary's Road), OS 1908

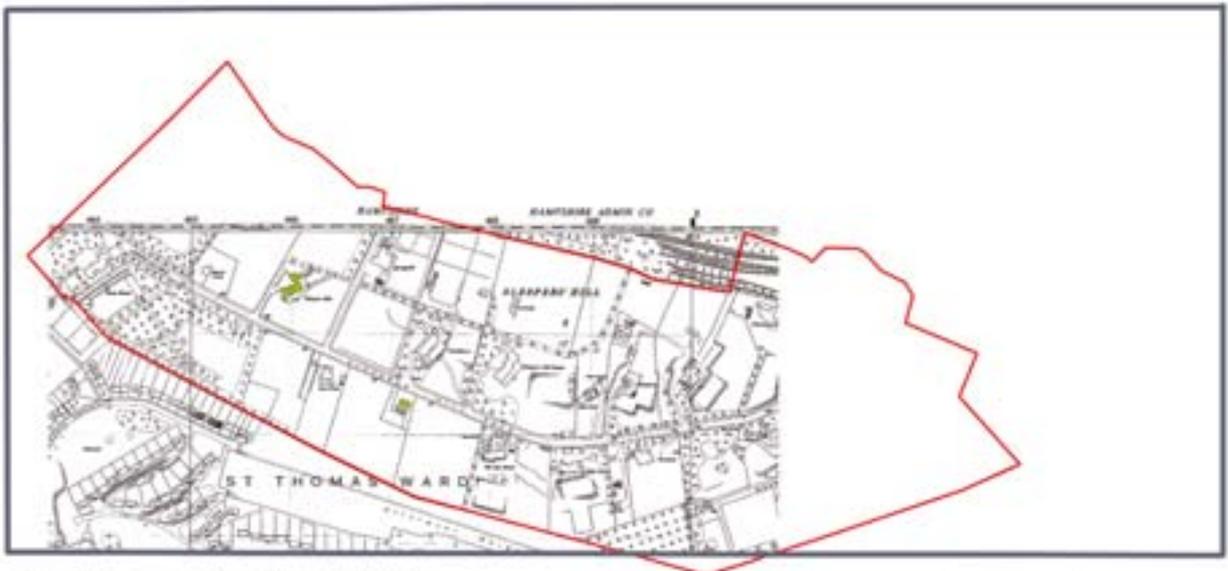
Figure 8 Sleepers Hill 1908 map



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (St. Mary's Road), OS 1931

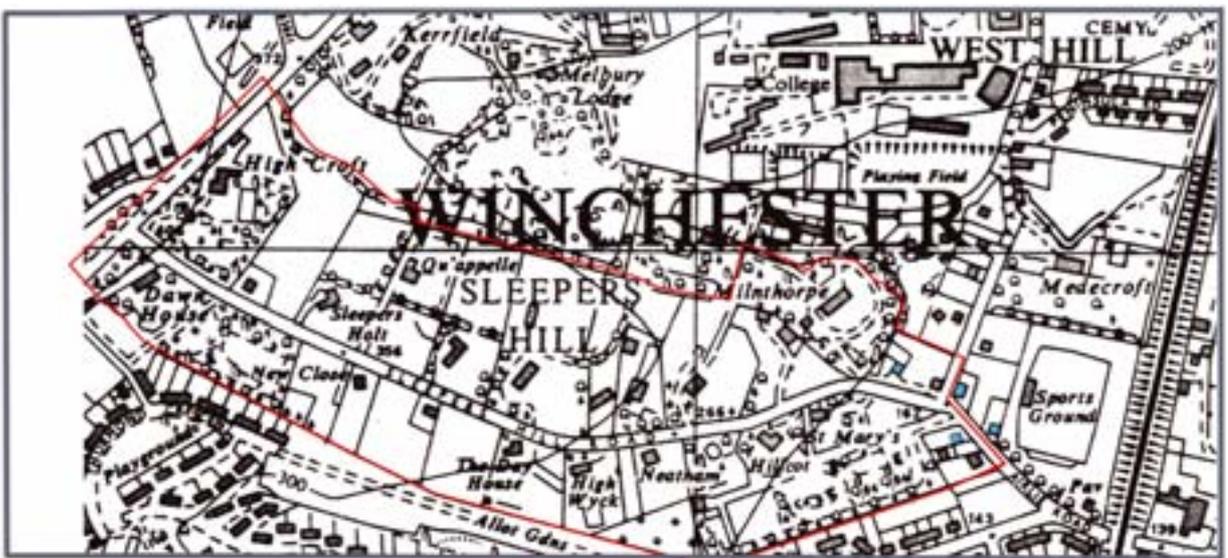
Figure 9 Sleepers Hill 1931 map

2.13 Whilst the 1920s and 30s were known for their extensive house building, and there was clearly extensive suburban development taking place in adjacent areas, Sleepers Hill still saw surprisingly little additional development. Building continued to be very limited during the 1950s and 60s, but between 1968 and 1983 there was a sudden surge of additional development on the hill. Plots became substantially smaller to accommodate the additional development, and development was generally typified by more traditional suburban forms, either cul-de-sacs, as in Sleepers Hill Gardens and on George Eyston Drive, or with building frontages facing onto Sleepers Hill Road.



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (prev. St. Mary's Road), OS 1964

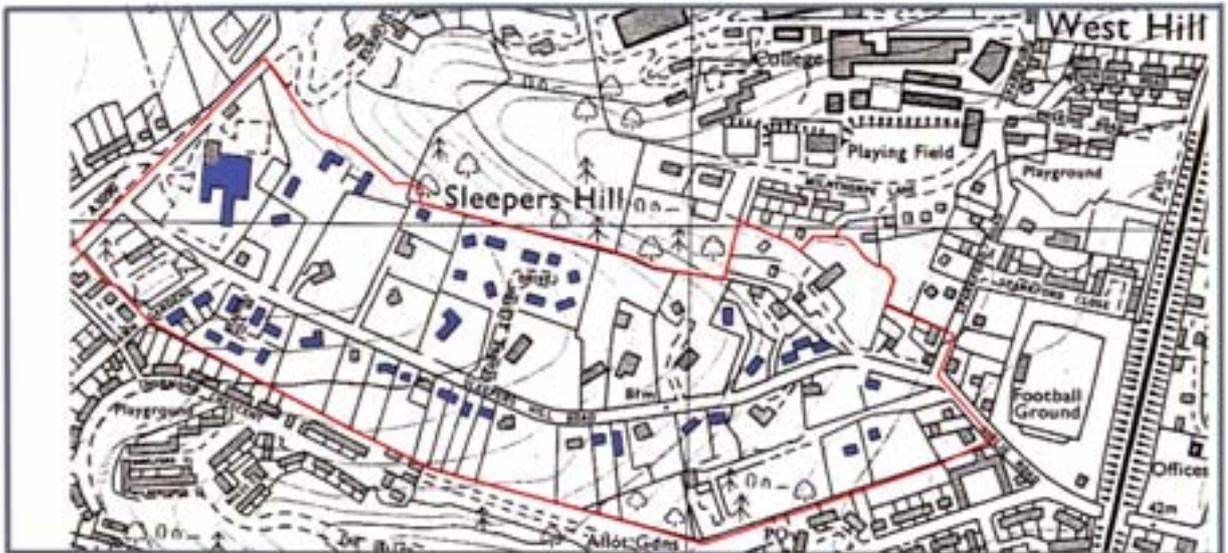
Figure 10 Sleepers Hill 1964 map



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (prev. St. Mary's Road), OS 1968

Figure 11 Sleepers Hill 1968 map

2.14 Further new buildings have been built from the 1980's up to the present time, and the effects of high land values and government housing policies have already been noted.



Development on Sleepers Hill Road (prev. St. Mary's Road), OS 1983

Figure 12 Sleepers Hill 1983 map



Development on Sleepers Hill Road, OS 2003

Figure 13 Sleepers Hill 2003 map

2.15 The story of development has therefore been an evolution of about 130 years from open downland to leafy suburb, but one that has been greatly accelerated in the last 30 or 40 years. This relatively recent intensification has clearly had an effect on the character of Sleepers Hill, as will be noted in the next section.

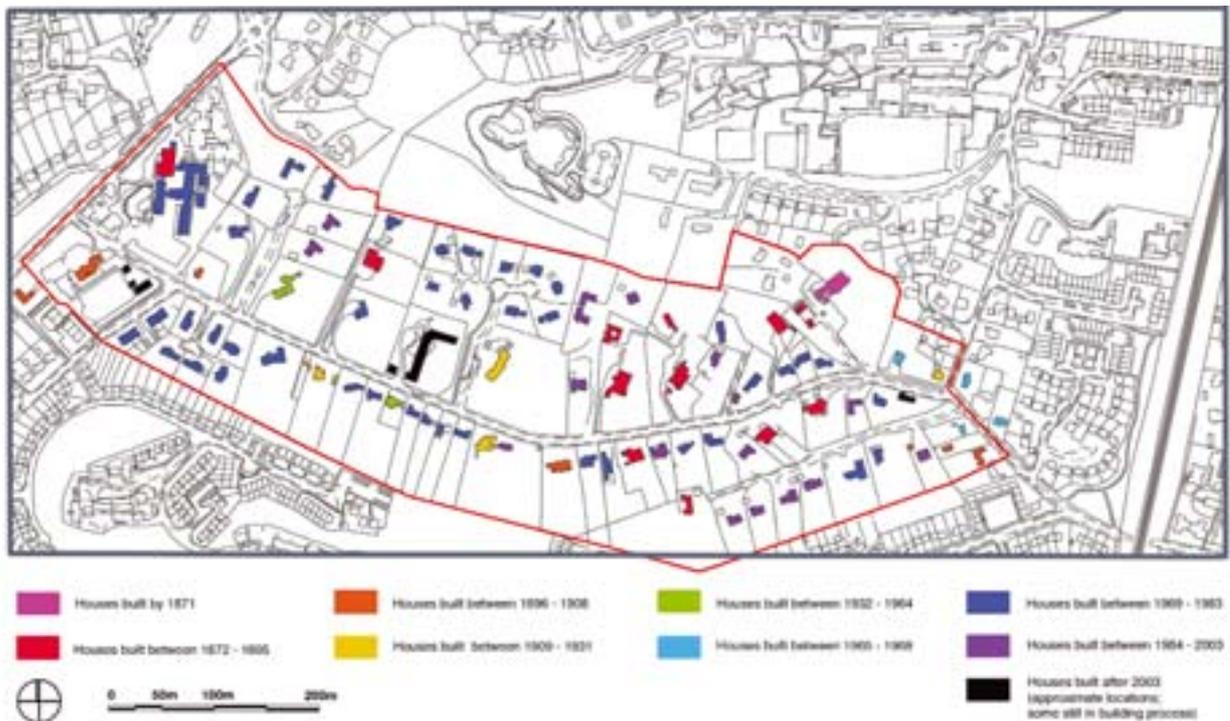


Figure 14 Summary of evolution of development

Character studies

2.16 The typical image or impression of Sleepers Hill might be described as being of large individual residential houses set in spacious and leafy surroundings, as typified by the view looking down the road, opposite The Day House about midway down the hill. The houses are often set well back from the road facing across the Itchen valley, glimpses of which can be gained from Sleepers Hill Road. The road itself contributes much to the character of the locality, being relatively narrow, generally with mown verges in front of hedges or timber boarded fences. Looking along the road, the impression is principally one of a mass of mature vegetation with buildings often partly or wholly obscured.

2.17 However, on closer examination, it is apparent that there are some clear variations in the character of the Sleepers Hill Study Area. These are described below and illustrated in Figure 15, Character Areas.

Character Area A

2.18 The predominant character feature of Sleepers Hill is that of large detached houses set in spacious grounds and surrounded and screened by mature hedges. As will be seen in the Character Areas drawing, this area extends along nearly the full length of Sleepers Hill Road. Several of the houses in this area are among those first developed on the hill, and were clearly built to enjoy the fine views across the Itchen valley. The houses do not therefore face the road, but are set well back from it and oblique to it. They invariably have substantial gardens that generally equate to the scale of the houses. There is generally a large lawn in front of each house, but the boundaries are mostly densely planted with generous margins of trees and shrubs. Given the scale and age of these properties, the surrounding trees are both numerous and mature, as well as tall. Seen on an aerial photograph, the woodland planting around the boundaries creates a well-defined series of cells containing each house and garden (see Figure 1, Aerial Photograph).

Character Area B

2.19 Along the lower, southern side of Sleepers Hill Road the general impression is very similar to that of Character Area A. There are several large, long-established houses in this locality (as

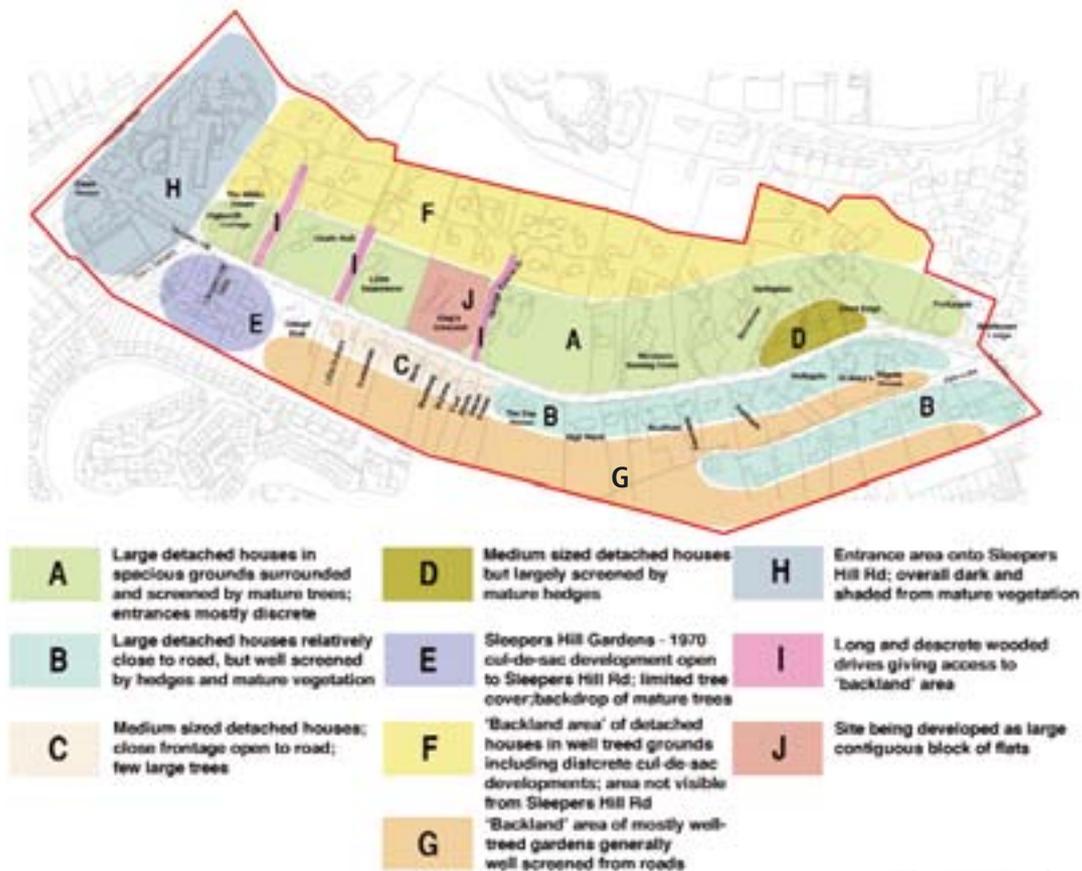


Figure 15 Character Areas

well some more recent infills) with mature and well-established trees and other vegetation along the boundary with the road. However the gardens, whilst still relatively large, are not as extensive as in Character Area A and the houses are situated rather closer to the road. This creates a loosely defined building line in this locality, although being set down below the level of the road, the effect of the houses is reduced.

Character Area C

2.20 Slightly further up Sleepers Hill Road, again on the south side, there is a short section of smaller and more recent houses. Although these houses have relatively long plots, the frontages are quite narrow and the buildings themselves face directly onto the road to create a clearly-defined building line. The houses are mostly of two storeys, but their density and the relative lack of vegetation make them much more prominent from the road. Whilst also individually designed, the general effect is quite different from what might be regarded as the more typical character of Sleepers Hill.

2.21 It is interesting to note that there is no mature vegetation in Character Area C of the size and character found on the rest of the hill, and it seems clear that this can be attributed to the higher density of development along the road that leaves little opportunity, or desire on the part of residents, for trees of woodland scale. The effect on the ground is that, where elsewhere the skyline is always dominated by mature trees, it is the roofs of houses in this locality that principally define the skyline. The contrasting lack of planting in this locality is also very apparent in Figure 1, Aerial Photograph.

Character Area D

2.22 This is a small area on the lower, northern part of Sleepers Hill Road. The houses are relatively small and plain by Sleepers Hill standards but visually they are substantially integrated by mature and well planted gardens and a strong backdrop of mature trees.

Character Area E

- 2.23 This 1970s cul-de-sac development is also quite distinct from what might be termed as the general character of Sleepers Hill, described above. The houses and gardens are relatively small, and unlike almost all other houses in the Study Area they repeat the same basic design. Whilst cul-de-sacs do exist elsewhere on Sleepers Hill, this is the only one that is apparent from the road. The effect of a loose inward-facing quadrangle is a marked departure in character terms, as are the open front gardens without hedges or fences. It should be noted that the background of tall trees is very important in helping to integrate such a different development into the wider Sleepers Hill scene.

Character Area F

- 2.24 Set behind the large houses and gardens that adjoin the north side of Sleepers Hill is what might be termed a 'backland' area. This is because it is physically and visually removed from Sleepers Hill Road. It would seem that the very large curtilages that formerly existed north of the road were divided and developed between the late 1960s and the early 1980s. Long cul-de-sac access roads were created off Sleepers Hill Road (see Character Area I) and about 20 houses have been developed in this area. Reference to Figure 1, Aerial Photograph, shows that each cul-de-sac is an enclosed space defined by a framework of mature woodland planting, as exists in Character Area A adjoining. Reached solely by private roads, and densely screened from external view, this area does not contribute directly to the appreciation of Sleepers Hill in the public eye.
- 2.25 However, whilst the area has no direct bearing on the public perception of the Sleepers Hill Study Area, except insofar that the taller trees in their curtilages contribute to the general sense of leafiness, it is important to note that the trees also contribute to the wooded appearance of the hill in wider external views of Winchester, such as that from St. Catherine's Hill.

Character Area G

- 2.26 Another 'backland' area is situated behind houses facing onto the south side of Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Lane, although in this instance it has not been developed. The long plots at the western end of this area have already been noted, and, despite very little tree cover, they are generally concealed from public view by the houses fronting the road and the quite steeply falling ground on the side of Sleepers Hill. In the lower eastern end of this Character Area, including Airlie Lane, the ground is more level and there is substantially more tree cover.

Character Area H

- 2.27 The northern end of Sleepers Hill Road adjacent to Romsey Road is difficult to define in character terms although the general impression is rather different from the rest of Sleepers Hill.
- 2.28 The entrance to Sleepers Hill off Romsey Road is certainly poorly defined visually and can be easily missed by the passing motorist. The Highcroft healthcare development on the northern corner of Sleepers Hill Road with its institutional building extensions and overcrowded parking areas is clearly out of character with the rest of Sleepers Hill.
- 2.29 Elsewhere the extensive use of close-boarded timber fencing and the defensive gates at Dawn House, as well as the rather dense tree cover that overhangs the road, create a rather enclosed and gloomy area. This does however enhance the sense of arrival onto Sleepers Hill proper as one emerges into the light and more open surroundings beyond.

Character Area I

- 2.30 Memorable and visually exciting features of Sleepers Hill Road are the three long, narrow lanes giving access to the cul-de-sac developments in Character Area F. The long tunnel-like

quality of these roads, particularly in summer, is a distinct feature of the Study Area. It is interesting to note the sensitive treatment of the George Eyston Drive entrance (by design or accident) that allows for safe passing at the entrance, but maintains the narrow carriageway beyond. Airlie Lane shares some of the features of this character area, but is generally more urbanised, being longer, more residential in character and serving a larger number of properties

Character Area J and other recent developments

- 2.31 Interrupting the contiguity of Character Area A with its large villa-style houses set in extensive gardens is the King's Crescent flat development currently under construction.
- 2.32 The large detached house that formerly existed on this site has been demolished to allow the construction of a single, 4 storey block of flats incorporating 14 units. The 'cell' created by surrounding vegetation that defines this plot, as previously described, remains unaffected, but it is clear that the new building represents a major departure from previous buildings on Sleepers Hill in terms of development form, overall scale and character. In particular, buildings on Sleepers Hill are fundamentally residential in character (the Highcroft development is situated on the edge of the area and is more closely associated with Romsey Road) even though some have been subdivided. However King's Crescent reads very differently from the residential character of the rest of Sleepers Hill because of its different height, mass, extent and character.
- 2.33 Whilst this study seeks to avoid reference to specific development proposals, two other recent developments are worth noting because of their effect on the character of Sleepers Hill and because useful observations can be made about them that might influence any future development.
- 2.34 Dawnhill is a recently completed development at the western end of Sleepers Hill Road adjacent to Dawn House. This development consists of a rather tower-like 4 storey brick block and a tightly developed courtyard behind high gates. The development, which is on a very constrained site, is situated very close to the road, and a combination of its height and proximity to the road has a strong enclosing influence on this section of the road. This, it might be argued, reinforces the rather enclosed character of this locality (Character Area H), but it certainly departs markedly from the wider character of the area in terms of set-back, density, height, development form and character.
- 2.35 Threeways is another recent building, in this case a two-storey brick building of traditional and carefully articulated form. This building, also situated very close to the road, makes an interesting comparison with Dawnhill. The entrance to the house breaks through an old brick wall to provide a front door directly onto the pavement. The proximity of the house to the road certainly affects the character of the locality, although in this instance the traditional design, the single unit form, the lack of a vehicle entrance and the subtle articulation of mass make it much more discreet in its overall effect.

Sleepers Hill Road

- 2.36 Another important feature of Sleepers Hill is Sleepers Hill Road itself. Sleepers Hill is a privately maintained road, but with public highway rights (see also below). Therefore access is not restricted and, being on a route between Romsey Road and St. Cross Road, motorists frequently use it as a cut-through. The public consultation and other comments have identified this as a long-running source of concern to local residents who dislike the intrusion of additional traffic on their road and on the otherwise peaceful environment.
- 2.37 The road itself, it is understood, was never built for the levels of use it now supports, and it is believed to be sub-standard in a number of ways including width, base construction, footways and drainage. It also has no lighting.

- 2.38 In terms of its effect on the locality, this study finds that Sleepers Hill Road makes an important contribution to the overall character and quality of the Study Area. The relatively narrow carriageway and its mostly green verges (well maintained by residents) and lack of kerbs, as well as the absence of lighting, do much to make the road, and indeed Sleepers Hill at large, softer and less urban in character than might otherwise be the case.
- 2.39 Other beneficial features of the road, if only from an aesthetic point of view, are the absence of on-road parking and the discreet and welcoming nature of drive entrances, although with one or two exceptions.
- 2.40 This study has found that there are two other more detailed and relevant features that affect the character of Sleepers Hill Road. These are the treatment of boundaries and gateways.
- 2.41 Many roadside boundaries along Sleepers Hill are defined by cut hedges that give a soft, leafy and more rural ambience. Vertical close-boarded timber fencing is also used, although it can give a rather more defensive and suburban effect. However at present the current combination and relative proportions of hedges and fences on Sleepers Hill is pleasing, although the preponderance of vertical board fencing at the western end of the road is, perhaps, slightly oppressive.
- 2.42 Entrances to private properties on Sleepers Hill are generally discreet and welcoming. Many driveways have no gates, and simple 5-bar or similar gates add to the semi-rural qualities of the locality. There are few really substantial gates on Sleepers Hill, but where they do exist they are found to impart a sense of defensive isolation to the public realm. Solid gates, that prevent any sight of the property beyond, are found to have an even more negative effect on the character of the road and the environment at large by reinforcing the sense of defensiveness and exclusivity and limiting the public enjoyment of the whole environment of Sleepers Hill, of which driveways, front gardens and house elevations are part.

Trees

- 2.43 This study has already identified the fundamental importance of tree cover in defining the special character of Sleepers Hill.
- 2.44 It has also been noted that tree cover is a consistent feature of all parts of Sleepers Hill irrespective of the various local Character Areas, with the only exception of Character Area C. On the ground, the general impression is of a woodland setting with the large individual houses (or groups of houses where more recent redevelopment has taken place), each situated in its own clearing. In fact there is no woodland as such within the Sleepers Hill Study Area, although there is woodland within the grounds of Melbury Lodge immediately to the north, but it is the overall mass of vegetation that gives this impression. Seen from the air (see Figure 1) the effect of individual clearings is even more marked, with a contiguous structure of mature trees defining a series of clearly defined cells within which buildings and gardens are situated.
- 2.45 The study of wider views has found that the same trees are an important element in the wider setting of Winchester, and the trees on Sleepers Hill are specifically identified as such in the Winchester Conservation Project. It will be remembered that this document states that, as a point for action, trees that make an important contribution to the visual landscape setting of the city will be protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 2.46 However reference to the map of Tree Preservation Orders for Sleepers Hill does not reveal the essential landscape structure (see Figure 16, Tree Preservation Orders). In comparison to the landscape structure that is apparent in the aerial view, the TPO plan appears irregular and haphazard. No doubt the orders that exist owe much to past planning applications, and it

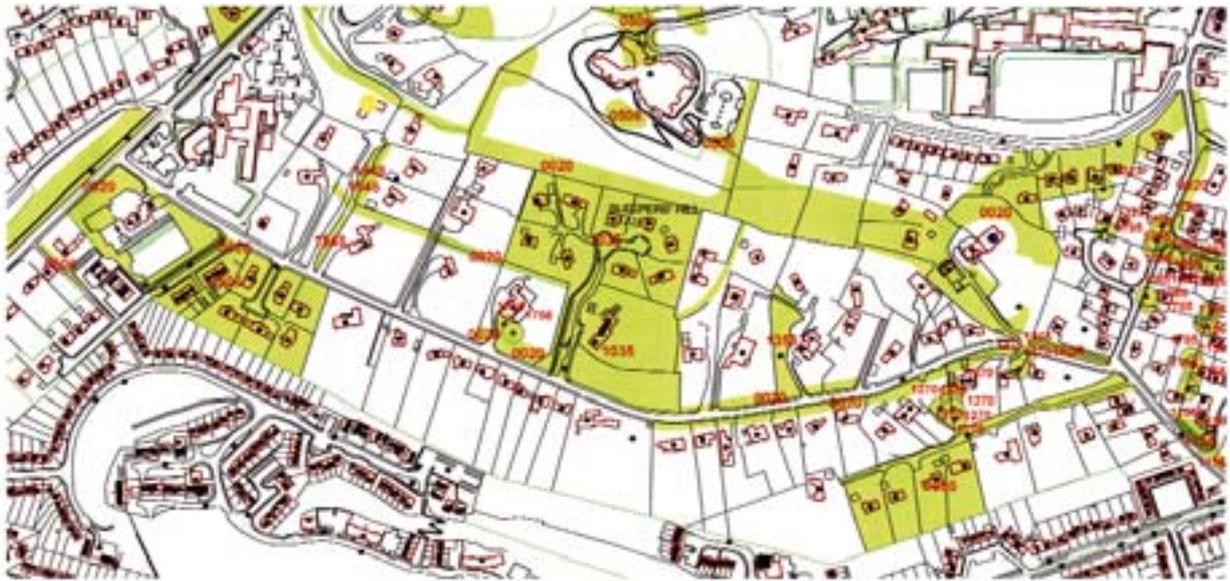


Figure 16 Tree preservation orders

would appear that a number of blanket orders have been placed on potential development sites as and when they have occurred, whilst other sites are not included.

- 2.47 The main point to note is that the structure of mature trees across the area is important, both from the point of view of local character and in terms of the wider setting of the city, and that it must be protected as a contiguous entity that will not be compromised by any future development options.

Transport Planning Considerations

- 2.48 The principal transport planning considerations revolve around:

Access to Sleepers Hill both at the top and bottom.

Internal constraints including width and pedestrian provision.

- 2.49 These issues, when combined with the legal status of the road and character concerns, result in transport considerations having a fundamental impact on the development potential of Sleepers Hill. This has long been recognised by the Council and others.

Romsey Road access

- 2.50 Romsey Road is one of the principal arterial roads into Winchester. It carries a 40mph speed limit and is lined on one side by mature beech trees providing an important landscape feature for this part of the City. It also forms part of the 'abnormal loads' network through the City. Sleepers Hill joins this busy road at right angles and on a severe adverse gradient. Visibility is restricted and far below required standards, particularly in light of the 40mph speed limit. In addition the corners are tight, leading to over-running as vehicles attempt to turn left out of Sleepers Hill. The poor visibility, tight corners, adverse gradient and speed limit combine to make this a very sub-standard junction.

- 2.51 This situation has been highlighted in recent planning applications particularly the expansion of Westacre. The sub-standard nature of the junction is also supported by its poor accident record (including a person injury) illustrating the difficulties faced by motorists and pedestrians.

Sparkford Road/Airlie Road access

- 2.52 Access to the bottom of Sleepers Hill is via its junction with Sparkford Road and Airlie Road. These are both residential roads. Sparkford Road has pinch points reducing the width to single

carriageway. Airlie Road has similar pinch points and leads to a single width carriageway tunnel under the main railway line. They are thus not suitable for high traffic flows.

- 2.53 Visibility at the junction from Sleepers Hill is good to the left but very poor to the right. From Sparkford Road visibility is poor in both directions and from Airlie Road it is poor to the right. In addition certain corners are very tight leading to over-running. Again, the poor visibility combined with tight corners makes this a difficult junction to negotiate. As with that at the top of the hill, this junction does not meet current standards and is a constraint on further development. Even if the issues of visibility and over-running can be overcome, the constraints imposed by Sparkford Road and Airlie Road themselves will remain.

Internal access

- 2.54 Sleepers Hill road runs approximately west to east for 900m falling some 75m during its course. The road is kerbed at the top and bottom but for most of its length there are only grass verges on one or both sides causing pedestrians to walk in the road, particularly during the winter. Street lighting is also poor. There are three culs-de-sac (Dawn Gardens, Sleepers Hill Gardens and George Eyston Drive) and several single track roads serving discrete groups of properties.
- 2.55 Although Dawn Gardens and Sleepers Hill Gardens are of reasonable standard (both being publicly maintained), Sleepers Hill road, George Eyston Drive and the single tracks fall well short of required standards in terms of width and pedestrian provision. Sleepers Hill road narrows to 4.3m near its junction with Sparkford Road and Airlie Road. This also coincides with the steepest part of the road, exacerbating the situation. The recommended standards for residential roads are set out in Design Bulletin 32 "Residential Roads and Footpaths" and its companion "Places, Streets and Movement". These documents advise certain standards for road widths, footpaths and other design features that are required to support defined volumes of residential development. Roads serving up to 50 dwellings should have a minimum carriageway width of 4.8m and a footway on at least one side. Where the roads serve 50-300 dwellings the carriageway width should be a minimum of 5.5m and have a footway on both sides. The current position falls short of that recommended for the circa 120 dwellings currently existing on Sleepers Hill.

Legal status of road

- 2.56 Sleepers Hill is a highway that is privately maintainable. As such the Highway Authority has no powers to require improvements. Notwithstanding this, the Highway Authority is able to ask for repairs to be undertaken to obviate danger under Section 230 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 2.57 The private status of the road means that any works that may be proposed to 'improve' Sleepers Hill or its junctions (other than to obviate danger under the Highways Act) would require the consent of the relevant frontage owners, who are assumed to own the part of the road fronting their property. It is, therefore, unlikely that prospective developers would be in a position to undertake such improvements, or that the local authorities could accept developer contributions to enable such works to be undertaken on a private road. The same situation may apply at the junctions with Romsey Road and Sparkford Road, if the road/land is in private ownership.
- 2.58 The maintenance of Sleepers Hill is undertaken by the Residents' Association with all members contributing to the cost of the upkeep.

Character issues

- 2.59 The semi rural character of the area with good tree cover and generally discreet entrances has been highlighted elsewhere in this study. Many of the changes required to 'improve' the road and junctions are likely to adversely impact these characteristics. In particular it is noted that

the trees on either side of the road at the junction with Sparkford Road/Airlie Road are covered by Tree Protection Orders as are the trees on the south side of the junction with Romsey Road. To improve visibility at these junctions may affect some protected trees.

Summary

- 2.60 The two access junctions and Sleepers Hill road are sub-standard. It is, therefore, necessary to limit further development to prevent a material impact on the road and junctions, unless acceptable improvements could be achieved to both junctions and the width and pedestrian provision issues of Sleepers Hill road. It is understood that the Highway Authority will not promote the necessary changes so it would be for individual developers to pursue and fund the necessary improvements, if the legal position allows. If and when the transport issues are adequately resolved, any development should satisfy the other relevant guidelines in this Statement, including those relating to the character of the road and surrounding area (see Section 5).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

General comments

- 3.1 As part of the LADS study, a public consultation was held on 12th January 2006. This was attended by about 60 people.
- 3.2 Following presentations by Winchester City Council and Matrix Partnership, there was a general discussion of several immediate concerns followed by two workshops. The principal issues recommended for discussion were:
- The evaluation of the principal defining features of Sleepers Hill
 - Main issues of concern
 - Design ideas/comments
- 3.3 It was clear from the consultation that there is considerable interest in, and concern for, the future of Sleepers Hill and that residents are very anxious that the essential features of the locality, in particular its leafy setting, should be retained.
- 3.4 It was also clear that residents value the existing character of Sleepers Hill Road and do not wish to see it upgraded. On this subject there was a generally expressed view that that transportation studies should be part of the wider LADS study, although its scope at that stage was strictly related to planning and urban design matters.
- 3.5 A fuller report on the public consultation event is provided in Appendix 1 to this study, but some of the main comments and concerns included the following:

Summary of important features

- Overall tree cover and leafy surroundings
- The predominance of large, mature trees
- Wooded backdrop in wider views towards Winchester
- Semi-rural and unimproved character of the roads is part of the character of Sleepers Hill
- Peace and privacy
- Large detached family houses (1 house per plot), no blocks of flats (currently)
- Domestic character of the houses
- Individually designed houses
- No parking in the road

Summary of concerns

- The effects of additional traffic on Sleepers Hill Road including road widths and the existing soft verges
- Trees are a fundamental feature of hill and must be retained. Development should be placed well away from mature trees (numerous comments on this issue)
- The appropriateness of government-recommended densities being applied to established, heavily vegetated areas such as this/PPG3 densities and preservation of trees incompatible
- Loss of the informal, semi-rural character of Sleepers Hill Road
- The scale of new development that should be in scale with existing development

- Standard government development densities cannot be achieved if the character of Sleepers Hill is to be preserved
- Intermittent nature of TPO designations, particularly on sites likely for redevelopment
- Concern that the value of the LADS study will be limited without the political will behind it
- Considerable concern was expressed over the possible loss of peace and privacy through higher density redevelopment
- Concern over proximity of trees to development (especially at Kings Crescent). Also effects of future tree growth
- Concern over incremental effect of on-going development on traffic volumes. Where does one draw the limit?
- Road improvements in relation to the private status of the roads
- Concern expressed over the precedent of Kings Crescent in terms of mass and scale of development
- Concern over effects of construction traffic (Disturbance and damage to the road)
- Government guideline densities (30-50 dwellings per ha) would result in development out of keeping with the locality
- The 'backlands' part of the hill and its character should also be preserved
- The importance of Sleepers Hill trees in the wider setting of Winchester
- Numerous adverse comments on both Kings Crescent and Dawnhill developments as being inappropriate and out of character, particularly Kings Crescent
- The sub-standard nature of Sleepers Hill Road and access limitations at each end should necessitate a limit on traffic movements and hence new development
- Concern expressed at lack of input on transport issues (several comments on this point). Generally held view that traffic management issues should be an integral part of the LADS study
- Protect main stands of larger "strategic" trees. A potential cellular form of development
- Large blocks of flats inappropriate. Flats as such not objected to (some larger houses are already subdivided). However scale, mass and character were noted as important issues
- A general preference was expressed for the retention of existing larger houses rather than wholesale demolition (noted that existing houses probably would not qualify for listing, although it could be possible to identify some houses as having importance in the local area)
- New architectural treatments should "blend in" with existing buildings, and should not be "glaringly modern"
- Principle of slightly higher densities in 'backland' areas generally accepted, but these areas should remain contiguous in character with the rest of Sleepers Hill. Should remain "soft" in character, individual houses, access should remain in character (George Eyston Drive preferred to Sleepers Hill Gardens)
- TPOs should be extended on Sleepers Hill
- Sleepers Hill Road is unsuitable for additional traffic movements, and this should be a consideration affecting any additional development

Principal defining features

- 3.6 In the light of the studies carried out, including the public consultation, a list has been drawn up that defines the principal defining features of Sleepers Hill that give it identity and quality (it should be noted that these are general characteristics, and that there are exceptions to be found). There are of course other features that contribute to the Sleepers Hill environment, but the list given below identifies the principal characteristics that influence the subsequent Guidelines.
- 3.7 It is also useful to note that certain features of Sleepers Hill have an influence on the wider setting of the city, and these are listed separately.

List of principal defining features affecting the immediate setting of Sleepers Hill

- Overall effect of tree cover and the generally leafy surroundings
- The predominance of large mature trees (tree belts, notable tree specimens, boundary trees, skyline trees)
- Semi-rural and unimproved character of the roads
- Rooflines generally contained below tree skyline
- Defined building lines relative to the roads
- Individually designed houses
- Public views along Sleepers Hill not dominated by parked cars
- Generally discreet private driveway entrances

List of principal defining features of Sleepers Hill affecting the wider setting of Winchester

- Wooded backdrop in wider views towards Winchester
- Buildings set within, and largely screened by a well-defined structure of mature trees
- Mass, scale and materials of buildings in character with the wider setting

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Introduction

- 4.1 The study area contains only two listed buildings (Dawn House and Pyotts Cottage) and no ancient monuments. It is also listed within the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, which notes its historic development and well-treed character. In addition, it has a high quality environment that is well worthy of protection in its own right and which any new development must therefore respect. This Study also finds that its role in the wider setting of the city provides additional justification for the protection of key features, as already identified under the list of principal defining features.
- 4.2 Given the presumption in favour of residential development on Sleepers Hill, it is noted that there are four principal constraints that will limit ultimate development densities, apart of course from the willingness of landowners to redevelop in the first instance. They are:
- Highways issues associated with the safety and capacity of Sleepers Hill Road/Romsey Road junction and perhaps junctions off site at and beyond the eastern end of Sleepers Hill Road
 - Highways safety and capacity issues associated with Sleepers Hill Road and perhaps Airlie Lane (issues such as road width, construction of the road, footways, lighting, drainage etc.)
 - Safety and capacity of new and upgraded driveway entrances onto Sleepers Hill Road
 - Character constraints (including those that apply generally and those associated with highways issues)
- 4.3 This Local Area Design Statement is concerned principally with the urban design or character constraints, but nonetheless issues associated with transport and highways issues have been recognised from the start as additional constraining influences.
- 4.4 As far as this study is concerned, transport issues are likely to have a bearing if:
- Improvements to the Romsey Road junction change its appearance and character
 - Increased traffic levels adversely affect the character of Sleepers Hill Road (i.e. loss of tranquillity)
 - Increased traffic levels adversely affect the appearance and character of Sleepers Hill Road (either through physical damage such as over-running verges, or through improvements such as the addition of kerbs, footways, widening, signage, lighting etc.)
 - New or enlarged driveway entrances adversely affect the appearance and character of the road
 - Parking either on the road or visible within residential curtilages adversely affects the appearance and character of the road
- 4.5 As a prelude to the Guidelines themselves, a brief discussion of the main issues is helpful to explain some of the underlying arguments and principles that apply to them. These are discussed under the headings of density and development volume, the form of development, trees and other vegetation, the character of the roads and highway status and issues. The section on highway issues has been agreed with the Highway Authority, Hampshire County Council.

Discussion of the main issues

Density and development volume

- 4.6 Given a policy context that favours in principle development in the Study Area, albeit within certain constraints, two important questions that are almost inevitably raised during a design statement study such as this are how much development could take place and what form might it take?
- 4.7 In answer to the first question, it is clear that a study of this kind cannot produce a definitive upper limit from a character or urban design point of view, transport-related constraints aside.
- 4.8 It seems that any figure defined on the basis of character criteria will always be open to challenge when individual proposals come forward. It is quite possible for a carefully designed scheme to exceed expected capacity targets without necessarily compromising design constraints. Such situations have occurred elsewhere in the District where individual proposals have successfully exceeded the capacity estimated in the 2001 Winchester District Urban Capacity Study, for example. To set a new capacity figure under this study would only add further uncertainty and complication as and when future applications differ from it.
- 4.9 This situation therefore places the onus of achieving appropriate levels of development on the LADS Guidelines and the response of individual developers and architects, as well as the planning authority, to them. The development volume achieved on each site will therefore depend substantially on the imagination and sensitivity of all parties in achieving quality development within the Guidelines identified in this document. Development densities can of course be calculated theoretically on the basis of government guidance densities and site area, but it is clear that in a situation such as this, where character (and transport) constraints are going to substantially limit development capacities, these will be of very little value. The eventual development potential of each site can only be realised through an approach that is specific to each individual site within the constraints of the Guidelines and of course within wider planning and development legislation and guidance.
- 4.10 However where this LADS study can be of real assistance is in providing guidance for all interested parties in identifying the character and design issues that must be addressed if quality environments are to be protected and created in accordance with Government policy.

The form of development

- 4.11 Concerning the form of future development, one of the most obvious dangers is that high density infilling (by Sleepers Hill standards) could be out of character with the rest of the area with its generally large gardens, generous set-backs and restrained building heights.
- 4.12 The Guidelines therefore seek to maintain the generally spacious quality of the Sleepers Hill environment, avoiding dramatic and uneasy contrasts between relatively high-density redevelopments and larger less developed plots, especially where they are seen from publicly accessible locations, namely Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Lane. Particular care should be taken therefore with changes that affect the frontage onto these roads, including maintaining the more spacious leafy frontages and in constraining the mass of built form apparent from the roads. Whilst the 'backland' areas should remain contiguous in character with the more visible frontages, it would seem more justifiable, as a generality, that rather higher levels of development could be achieved in these areas.
- 4.13 Other features to be avoided are developments that are out of harmony with the established scale and character of the area. Examples might include the front areas of large original villa-style houses cramped by relatively small, high-density development, loss of the historic

context in the form of the more prominent and significant original buildings, and new development that fails to respect local building forms, scale, mass and materials although without necessarily replicating historic styles.

- 4.14 It is noted that two recent developments on Sleepers Hill at Kings Crescent and Dawnhill have been almost universally criticised by local residents, particularly at the public consultation, for being at odds with their context in terms of scale, mass, height, form, density and set-back from the road. Whilst it would be inappropriate for this study to undertake a detailed critique of these developments, it finds that there are features of both these developments that diverge from the established characteristics of Sleepers Hill, and which if repeated elsewhere in the locality would diminish the particular and special qualities of the area.
- 4.15 Concerning the effects of any new development on the wider setting of Winchester, it is considered that any new development should be generally recessive rather than intrusive in character. This is because the Sleepers Hill area acts as a supporting background to the principal focus of these wider views that concentrate principally on the city centre and its key buildings and other nearby civic and institutional buildings. Eye-catching development in the Sleepers Hill area would distract the viewer and weaken the subject of the view. Issues such as restraint in building form, scale, mass and height therefore apply additionally, and the use of materials also becomes a larger consideration. Clearly bright colours and extensive reflective surfaces should be avoided.

Trees and other vegetation

- 4.16 The leafy, wooded character of Sleepers Hill was identified as being its most important characteristic during the public consultation, and its importance within the wider setting of Winchester has also been identified.
- 4.17 Sleepers Hill enjoys a clearly defined and well-established structure of mature trees that contains and defines within a cellular form the setting for development. This is a most important feature of the area, and it is essential that it should be protected and maintained. Similarly roadside vegetation along Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Lane is also important in defining the essential leafiness of the area.
- 4.18 Although the overall landscape structure is not identified as a recognisable feature in the current TPO map, it will be important that it is not eroded by new development. Obviously it will be important to ensure that development proposals do not encroach into the landscape structure. There is also a range of well-established site planning and construction safeguards for trees, covering such matters as paving, trenches and drainage near trees as well as protective fences to be erected during construction, and these should all apply.
- 4.19 However there is a much wider, but no less important consideration concerning trees if additional development is to be planned in the Sleepers Hill area. Whereas development might be undertaken within the various cells without damaging the main tree structure, there will be a real long-term threat to trees if development is planned in unrealistic proximity to them.
- 4.20 Large woodland trees that exist in abundance on Sleepers Hill cast long and often heavy shade (especially beech that is common in the area), and the placing of houses and gardens (particularly family houses) within their shade will create permanent pressures from the sun-deprived residents of these new developments. The temptation will be to progressively lop and even remove trees, even though they may be protected by TPO orders. This situation would place an undesirable and permanent onus on the Council to police the situation, and it is likely that when large trees do eventually die (or when they have to be felled for health and safety reasons) they will not be replaced with similar species of woodland scale. Whilst

it is accepted that there are examples of successful shaded residential environments, this study finds that the long-term risk to the wooded environment of Sleepers Hill presumes against a very close proximity between trees and development.

- 4.21 This study therefore recommends that all development proposals should demonstrate the effects of seasonal and diurnal shading across sites where development is proposed on Sleepers Hill in order to demonstrate that the reasonable enjoyment of those properties proposed will not be compromised through lack of sunlight and to ensure that trees will not be placed under long-term threat.

The character of the roads

- 4.22 The Analysis has identified that both Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Lane are important contributors to the essential informal and leafy character of the locality. Since there are no public open spaces, footpaths or the like, the locality can only be seen from the roads. The roads are therefore particularly important in defining public perception of the area. It has also been noted that, like the trees, local residents highly value the informal character of the roads and that they do not as a rule want to see them altered.
- 4.23 If the semi-rural character of the area is to be protected, then the various features of the road that contribute to this should therefore be protected, and changes that diminish it should be avoided whenever possible.
- 4.24 However it is also clear that increased use of the road, either as a cut-through or because of additional development, will diminish the character of the road. The general effect of increased traffic does, and will continue to, diminish the otherwise quiet, semi-rural character of the area, whilst increased traffic levels will ultimately also necessitate physical improvements to Sleepers Hill Road that are likely to compromise its existing character.
- 4.25 If character-damaging road improvements are to be resisted, it seems that there must come a point at which the volume of cut-through traffic is restrained. The definition of when such a point is reached and the implementation and management of such an initiative are well beyond the scope of this study, but nevertheless it does mark up the issue as one that should be addressed if there are not to be inevitable knock-on effects on local character. Certainly the Sleepers Hill Residents Association actively resists any changes to the road, including improvements to the junctions.
- 4.26 Also, Winchester City Council similarly has been resisting Sleepers Hill planning applications that result in increased traffic because of the substandard nature of the road and junctions. However, although applications have been recommended for refusal some have nonetheless been permitted whilst others have been refused, with the result that there is currently some confusion over the apparent inconsistency.
- 4.27 Whilst applications for larger developments seem likely to be refused on traffic grounds, several smaller applications permitted for their minimal traffic effect, could in fact incrementally and over a period of time result in similar or greater traffic impacts. If such creeping effects are to be resisted, it seems that there must similarly be a line drawn under additional permissions. This is what is proposed in this study, see below and Transport Guidelines (Chapter 5).
- 4.28 Should this happen, and further development is prevented on grounds of transport impact, much of this LADS study could become largely academic. However this study cannot assume this situation will remain for the duration of the life of the Design Statement, and therefore it considers the character constraints independently.

- 4.29 On the subject of road-related character impacts, the question might be asked as to what highway improvements might be introduced without undermining the character of the road.
- 4.30 This study finds that almost any such change to the road will result in the diminution of its current informal quality, and therefore the issue would be one of degree. The general lack of pavements, street lighting, on-street parking, kerbs and signage all contribute to the intrinsic quality of the hill and almost any change, including the widening of the carriageway, the paving over of grass verges, or the introduction of kerbs, lighting or signage would undermine that character to some degree. It is appreciated that these characteristics are not consistent (for example, there are already some pavements, kerbs and street lights), but nonetheless the central section of the road at least remains substantially unimproved. The grassy verges are also a distinctive feature, the loss of which, even on one side of the road would be unfortunate. Should some improvement be necessary nonetheless, perhaps a very slight widening of the road would be the least intrusive feature since it would probably have the least noticeable effect.

Highway status and issues

- 4.31 Sleepers Hill is a highway that is privately maintainable. As such the Highway Authority has no powers to ask for improvements. Notwithstanding this, the Highway Authority is able to ask for repairs to be undertaken to obviate danger under Section 230 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 4.32 It is the Highway Authority's view that without appropriate improvements to Sleepers Hill which would be necessary to accommodate the increased travel demands and impacts associated with future development in the area, Sleepers Hill, including its junctions with Romsey Road and Sparkford Road, will remain substandard. In this event the Highway Authority and its agents will raise objection to future development which will result in a material impact to Sleepers Hill and/or its junctions at either end (see also the Transport Planning Considerations, Chapter 2, and Transport Guidelines, Chapter 5).
- 4.33 The private status of the road means that any works that may be proposed to 'improve' Sleepers Hill or its junctions (other than to obviate danger under the Highways Act) would require the consent of relevant frontage owners, who are assumed to own the part of the private road fronting their property. It is, therefore, unlikely that prospective developers would be in a position to undertake such improvements, or that the local authorities could accept developer contributions to enable such works to be undertaken on a private road. The same situation may apply at the junctions with Romsey Road and Sparkford Road, if the road/land is in private ownership.
- 4.34 Where development proposals would not result in a material highway, or if the highway issues mentioned above are resolved during the life of this Design Statement, any resulting development proposals should satisfy the relevant guidelines in this Statement, including those relating to the character of the road (see Section 5).

GUIDELINES

Introduction

- 5.1 This part of the Design Statement defines a series of Guidelines that outline additional constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development on Sleepers Hill.
- 5.2 The Statement has already identified a range of existing features that are considered to be of importance in defining the character of the hill, 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 locality.
- 5.3 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 ones that should require very clear reasons and justification if they are not to be followed.
- 5.4 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 a similar level of design assessment by 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. It is intended that the Guidelines presented here will assist in this process in guiding the principles of development.

Development Guidelines

D1 DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Although regard should be given to Central Government and Local Plan recommended densities (30-50 dph), development proposals must achieve an appropriate balance between increasing density and respecting the area's character. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: Sleepers Hill has a strong sense of local identity, and it is essential that this is not diminished through inappropriate residential infilling. A number of key features that contribute to this character have been identified, and it will be important that these are protected. This will inevitably mean that gross development densities will be reduced, and possibly substantially so in a number of instances.

D2 SCALE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development in the Sleepers Hill Study Area should be substantially of the same scale, height and mass as adjacent buildings and in scale with its immediate surroundings, including its landscape setting. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: Whilst there is quite some variation in the scale and character of established residential development on Sleepers Hill, there are nonetheless local areas of contiguous scale and character (see Fig.15).

In order to retain the overall scale of the Study Area and its separate Character Areas, any

new buildings should be contained broadly within the overall mass of adjacent buildings, particularly in regard to building height. New buildings should therefore generally be of no more than 2 storeys in height, although a third floor within roofs may be acceptable.

The relationship of buildings to the skyline of trees is important, and new development should also remain essentially contained within the existing backdrop of trees (Character Area C excepted).

In addition, the scale, mass and height of any new development must be sympathetic in the context of wider views around the city.

D3 RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

Any new development in Sleepers Hill should be domestic in appearance and character, rather than having the appearance of apartment blocks or flats. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: Whilst the development of flats or apartments may be acceptable, it is important that new development should reflect the form, scale and character of domestic buildings so as to integrate with the more traditional character of Sleepers Hill.

D4 BUILDING LINES

Existing building lines along Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Road should be respected. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: Building lines along the southern side of both of these roads are generally well defined, and it is important that any new development should retain the same sense of spaciousness and scale in set-backs from these road frontages and having regard for the particular qualities of the different, more established Character Areas.

Conversely, on the north side of Sleepers Hill Road (Character Area A), any new development should follow the more irregular manner of existing development and avoid forming a clearly defined building line close to the road.

D5 FOOTPATH CONNECTIONS

New development proposals should seek to incorporate new pedestrian links through the study area. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: Currently all pedestrians are obliged to walk along Sleepers Hill Road or its verges (and pavements in small parts).

Development proposals, and particularly those of a more comprehensive nature, should seek to provide alternative internal pedestrian access options.

D6 ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT

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 setting and context of the locality. (Supplements Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: A feature of existing buildings in the Sleepers Hill area is that they appear, for the most

part, to have been 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 characteristics of estate development should generally be avoided including the excessive repetition of standard house types.

Comments received at the public consultation and elsewhere indicated that whilst there was an openness towards more contemporary styles, any new development should nonetheless respond to and respect, to some degree, existing building forms and materials, and that new buildings should not appear discordant within the context of their environment.

D7 HIGHWAYS DESIGN SENSITIVITY

Highways proposals associated with development in the Sleepers Hill Study Area should be appropriate to the setting of the area. (Supplements Policy T.2 of Winchester District Local Plan Review Revised 2006)

Comment: The study has found that the semi-rural and generally informal character of Sleepers Hill Road and Airlie Lane contributes to the semi-rural character of the area.

Any 'improvements' to existing roads should be made with particular attention to retaining their intrinsic semi-rural qualities, avoiding urbanising features. For new development, roads should seek to be understated and informal in character and should not be built to excessive highway standards.

Landscape Guidelines

L1 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

TPOs should be placed on visually or historically important trees or groups of trees and on trees that form part of the wider landscape structure on sites where planning applications are submitted or proposed within Sleepers Hill. (Supplements Policies DP. 5 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review Revised 2006)

Comment: It is noted that some of the more prominent trees are already protected by Tree Preservation Orders, but that the underlying landscape structure is poorly defined. It is nonetheless essential that the woodland appearance of the landscape structure should be protected. Where planning applications for development are submitted, or expected, all important trees on the site should be assessed and protected.

L2 TREE SURVEYS AND PROTECTION OF TREES

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 of their contribution to the overall setting and character of Sleepers Hill. The report should also detail proposals for any new planting. (Supplements Policies DP.1 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

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 Sleepers Hill, rather than just in terms of tree size, species, health etc. Whilst some tree loss may well 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 area, i.e. important skyline trees or trees that define established boundaries.

The Sleepers Hill area is included within the Hampshire register of Historic Parks and Gardens in recognition of its historical development and well-treed landscape. As well as protecting

important trees, new development should respect important surviving aspects of historic gardens.

Proposals must make realistic allowance for existing trees and the new planting that is needed to maintain the tree canopy in the long-term. This should include provision for their future growth and must also demonstrate a study of shading from nearby trees and how immediate and long term conflicts between residents and trees are to be avoided. In Character Area C and in the western part of Character Area G, where existing tree cover is limited, development proposals should demonstrate how the woodland character of Sleepers Hill will be enhanced by new planting.

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 Policies DP.3 and W.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006)

Comment: The space between buildings and roads in Sleepers Hill 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 should therefore be resisted.

Existing entrances into properties on Sleepers Hill are generally discrete in character, and any new proposals should be similar and designed to be visually as discreet and sensitive as possible, with particular regard to vegetation, gates and fences, signage and surfacing materials. Large and imposing gates should be avoided.

Transport Guidelines

The following guidelines have been agreed by Hampshire County Council. They should be read in conjunction with Sections 2 and 4 above, which address transport planning considerations and the status of Sleepers Hill in highway terms. Highways proposals associated with development and redevelopment should respect highways standards and be appropriate to the character of Sleepers Hill.

T1 TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT

The scale and effects of traffic impacts need to be considered in the context of the totality of development in Sleepers Hill, taking account of the wider development capacity of the area. Due to the inadequacy of Sleepers Hill and its junctions with Romsey Road and Sparkford Road, no further development which (individually or cumulatively) would result in a material increase in transport impact will be permitted, unless Sleepers Hill and its junctions can be improved to meet recommended standards. (Supplements Policy T.1 of Winchester District Local Plan Review)

Comment: Sleepers Hill and its junctions with Romsey Road and Sparkford Road are substandard in highway terms (see Chapters 2 and 4 for details). Development which would lead to a 'material' increase in traffic using the Road and its junctions will be resisted. For the purposes of this Guideline, 'material' relates to a traffic increase of 5% or more, whether resulting from a single development or the cumulative effect of several proposals.

Once this limit has been reached, no further development which increases traffic impact will be permitted, unless the problems at Sleepers Hill road and its junctions have been resolved.

T2 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 and private driveways. (Supplements Policy T.4 of Winchester District Local Plan Review)

T3 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 Winchester District Local Plan Review)

T4 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

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

CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Although Sleepers Hill is defined as an area capable, in principle, of taking increased residential development, this study confirms that there are four principal constraints to the amount of additional development that can be achieved. These are:
- 1 Highways issues associated with the safety and capacity of road junctions
 - 2 Highways safety and capacity issues associated with Sleepers Hill Road
 - 3 Highways safety and capacity issues associated with driveway entrances
 - 4 Character constraints
- 6.2 Whilst detailed highways issues lie largely outside the brief of this study, nonetheless it has been noted that changes to the roads and junctions and increased traffic levels generally are likely to adversely affect the peaceful, semi-rural character of Sleepers Hill. From the point of view of this study, such changes should be resisted.
- 6.3 This study has found that, whilst it is inappropriate to define any new development capacity, it can and does provide a number of Guidelines that provide the basis for ensuring that any future development protects and enhances those key features that make Sleepers Hill the quality environment that it is today. It is, nevertheless, clear from the assessment of the highway status and characteristics of Sleepers Hill that development capacity will be very limited unless or until the constraints are overcome.
- 6.4 It must be noted however that the application of these Guidelines is certain to result in lower development densities than might otherwise be achieved.
- 6.5 The basis for this view arises from the review of planning policy background. Both government and Local Plan policy is clear that infilling must both respect and enhance environmental character and quality, of which Sleepers Hill is well endowed. This study identifies and analyses those features that contribute to its special character, and provides the necessary justification (PPS3, paragraphs 46 and 47) for development densities to be less than the minimum defined density (i.e. 30 dwellings per hectare) where appropriate in site-specific instances.
- 6.6 This study has found that the leafy, woodland character of Sleepers Hill is its most important feature, and the Winchester Conservation Area Project specifically identifies the wider importance of its trees in the landscape setting of the city (both the Conservation Area Project document and Local Plan policies support the retention of the trees).
- 6.7 Additionally, the Inspector's Report on the Local Plan Review refers specifically to the issue of tree cover, stating "there will be examples where the space about buildings in an area, often combined with the type and extent of tree cover, is so much an intrinsic part of its character, that even the lower end of the density threshold cannot be successfully achieved without harm being caused."
- 6.8 This study finds, on the basis of the analysis undertaken, that Sleepers Hill must be considered to be of this level of sensitivity, and that if the requirement to maintain and enhance local character, including the protection of important trees, is to be taken seriously, then redevelopment densities below the normal minimum will be justified in some, if not all, instances.
- 6.9 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.

6.10 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 and that, within the guidance set by Government, Local Plan policies and the detailed, place-specific Guidance provided in this Statement, Sleepers Hill can accommodate change in a manner that need not compromise its own special environment.

APPENDIX 1: Report on Public Consultation

Review of the event

A public consultation event on the LADS study was held on 12 January 2006 and it was attended by about 60 people. The public consultation began with an initial introduction by Winchester City Council followed by an illustrated presentation by Matrix Partnership.

The main presentation consisted of a summary of the relevant national planning guidance from central Government, followed by a review of the 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, 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 the 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 by 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 sought to analyse the Sleepers Hill study area in order to achieve an objective understanding of what gives the locality its own particular character. This included studies of its progressive development from maps, as well as studies of topography, character and wider external views. The presentation also included a photographic study of various characteristics and associated issues (see attached copy of the presentation, Appendix 2).

Following the presentations, two workshops were organised during which the following 3 principal topics were recommended for discussion:

- The evaluation of the principal defining features of Sleepers Hill
- Main issues of concern
- Design ideas/comments

It was clear from the consultation that residents greatly value the quality of their environment, and there was consequently a genuine concern for the future of Sleepers Hill as a place with its own distinct character and identity. Although there was a general acceptance that change would continue to take place, there was also a realistic and helpful debate about how changes might be undertaken without destroying the essential features of the locality.

Of the various qualities of Sleepers Hill, residents value in particular its leafy, semi-rural qualities, and they were particularly concerned that these and other defining qualities of the hill should not be lost. It was also apparent from the meeting that some current/recent developments on the hill are generally disliked as being inappropriate and out of character.

Unsurprisingly, traffic was identified as being a major concern to local residents. It was explained that transport issues lay outside the terms of the Matrix brief, but there was a call from those attending that transport issues should be addressed as part of the study.

Summary of comments

Part of the Matrix presentation identified a range of what were termed 'principal defining features' that contribute to the character of the locality. Those attending were invited to agree or disagree with the provisional list and to add any further items. Residents were clearly in support of the features identified by Matrix, and some additional features were also submitted. The following list includes both the features identified by Matrix, generally endorsed by residents, as well as the additional features, including those submitted separately in writing.

- Overall tree cover and leafy surroundings
- The predominance of large, mature trees (tree belts, notable specimen trees, boundary trees, skyline trees)
- Wooded backdrop in wider views towards Winchester
- Semi-rural and unimproved character of the roads is part of the character of Sleepers Hill
- Peace and privacy
- Large gardens
- Large detached family houses (1 house per plot), no blocks of flats (currently)
- Domestic character of the houses
- Relatively low rooflines, especially in relation to trees
- Defined building lines relative to the roads
- Character of older houses
- Individually designed houses
- No parking in the road
- Discreet signage
- Intermittent views to the south
- Low density of development
- Openness and space
- Generally discreet private entrances off Sleepers Hill Road
- Front areas not dominated by hard surfaces and parked cars

Concerns

- The effects of additional traffic on Sleepers Hill Road including road widths and the existing soft verges
- The appropriateness of government-recommended densities being applied to established, heavily vegetated areas such as this/PPG3 densities and preservation of trees incompatible
- Drainage issues
- New higher density developments overlooking existing properties/loss of privacy
- Loss of wildlife
- Loss of the informal, semi-rural character of Sleepers Hill Road
- Intermittent nature of TPO designations, particularly on sites likely for redevelopment
- Concern that value of the LADS study will be limited without the political will behind it
- Considerable concern was expressed over the possible loss of peace and privacy through redevelopment

- Concern over proximity of trees to development (especially at Kings Crescent) Also effects of future tree growth
- Concern over proximity of buildings to Sleepers Hill Road. Building line should be protected
- Concern over incremental effect of on-going development on traffic volumes. Where does one draw the limit? (Issue raised concerning the difficulty of the County getting involved where the road is in private ownership) Possibility of developer contributions for improvements noted, but also effects on character
- Concern expressed over the precedent of Kings Crescent in terms of mass and scale of development
- Concern over effects of construction traffic (disturbance and damage to the road)
- Concern over private status of road with additional development (maintenance, one-way traffic, developer contributions to improvements, speed restrictions)

Other comments

- Government guideline densities (30-50 dwellings per ha) would result in development out of keeping with the locality
- Concern that Government guidance will result in buildings of inappropriate height
- 'Backlands' part of the hill and their character should also be preserved
- Scale of new development is a key issue
- Trees are a fundamental feature of hill and must be retained. Development should be placed well away from mature trees (numerous comments on this issue)
- The importance of Sleepers Hill trees in the wider setting of Winchester
- Numerous adverse comments on both Kings Crescent and Dawnhill developments as being inappropriate and out of character, particularly Kings Crescent. Too close to trees
- Nature of Sleepers Hill Road and access limitations at each end should necessitate a limit on traffic movements and hence new development
- Concern expressed at lack of input on transport issues (several comments on this point). Traffic management issues should be an integral part of the LADS study
- The species and qualities of different tree species should be a consideration. Larger trees, such as beech, define the character and have a wider effect and these more "strategic" trees should be retained
- Areas containing "strategic" trees should be excluded from density calculations
- Effect of drainage works on trees
- "Strategic" trees and tree belts should be protected
- LADS should ensure a long-term strategy for maintaining larger "strategic" trees
- Street lighting on Sleepers Hill would be inappropriate
- Protect main stands of larger "strategic" trees, new boundaries defined by smaller trees. A potential cellular form of development
- LADS study should define development densities
- Public views from Sleepers Hill Road are very limited - they are mostly from houses and gardens
- Overall character of Sleepers Hill is strongly influenced by the semi-rural character of the road, including carriageway width, and lack of kerbs and pavements ('Soft' edges should be preserved generally)

- Close boarded fencing. Accepted in moderation (maintenance benefits) although hedges generally preferred
- Mixed views noted on the standard of verges along Sleepers Hill Road
- Some reduction in garden sizes not objected to.
- Light and orientation are important considerations in any redevelopment proposals
- Large blocks of flats inappropriate. Flats as such not objected to (some larger houses are already subdivided). Scale, mass and character are however important issues
- Social housing issues discussed, including effect on density (considered that social housing requirements encourage higher development densities to maintain densities). Thought that provision of social housing would be more appropriate elsewhere
- Rooflines should be related to treelines (building height implications)
- Individually designed buildings are part of the character of Sleepers Hill
- Important that parking should not dominate frontages onto roads
- Building materials discussed. One attendee found timber visually disruptive, and preferred brick
- Effects of new drainage works (Building Regulations issue)
- A general preference expressed for the retention of existing larger houses rather than wholesale demolition (noted that existing houses probably would not qualify for listing, although it could be possible to identify some houses as having importance in the local area).
- New buildings should respect existing architectural styles and those fronting Sleepers Hill road should have “presence”
- New architectural treatments should “blend in” with existing buildings, and should not be “glaringly modern”
- Treatment of street boundaries/entrances should be subject to control
- Principle of slightly higher densities in ‘backland’ areas accepted, but these areas should remain contiguous in character with the rest of Sleepers Hill. Should remain “soft” in character, individual houses, access should remain in character (George Eyston Drive preferred to Sleepers Hill Gardens)
- Low density of development encourages wildlife
- Mass and height are important considerations
- Any new buildings should be in scale with existing development
- Unrealistic to seek to achieve standard government development densities if the character of Sleepers Hill is to be preserved
- Tall buildings adjacent to roads are inappropriate
- TPOs should be extended on Sleepers Hill
- Milnthorpe, the first house to be built on Sleepers Hill should be included in the study area
- Tree cover in ‘backlands’ should be protected as well as privacy
- Sleepers Hill Road is unsuitable for additional traffic movements, and this should be a consideration affecting any additional development
- Further development will reduce the biodiversity of the hill
- The view was expressed (with general agreement) that the Inspector’s comments in his report on the recent Local Plan Inquiry about valuable tree cover substantially limiting future development fully apply to Sleepers Hill

- Is there a requirement for archaeological investigation before building work is carried out?
- Developers should ensure that off-street parking is available during building work

Results of Consultation on Draft LADS

The Local Area Design Statement was drafted taking into account the results of the initial public consultation. The draft LADS was formally published for public comment on 13 July 2006, for a period of 6 weeks.

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, statutory notices regarding the consultation were placed in the local press and copies of the LADS were made available at the Council's offices. An electronic copy of the LADS was placed on the Council's website and residents within the Sleepers Hill study area were contacted directly by letter to advise them that the LADS was being published and what the consultation period was. Letters were also sent to community groups and other 'stakeholders' within the area. Known development interests with specific interest in Sleepers Hill were also directly notified in writing that the consultation on the LADS was commencing. Copies of the LADS were sent to statutory consultees, Winchester City and Hampshire County Councillors for the areas affected and the local MP.

The Council received 18 written responses to the consultation, including responses from the Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council and Sleepers Hill Association. The other responses were all from residents living within the Sleepers Hill area, or local Councillors. Feedback from the initial public meeting and the formal written responses received, indicated a general agreement with those aspects of the LADS which seek to maintain the character of each area, subject to various detailed suggestions. The main issue raised in relation to the LADS was however transport, particularly the access limitations to the area.

In relation to the key issue of transport, there was a suggestion that the transport study commissioned by Sleepers Hill Association should be included within the LADS as an appendix. This request was not accepted because the report was commissioned by a third party and the Highway Authority did not necessarily agree with all of its content. It would also have been inconsistent with other LADS. It was, however, decided that a new section (in Chapter 2) be added, based on the text suggested by the Sleepers Hill Association. This would be consistent with other LADS and would draw on the conclusions of the Sleepers Hill Association transport study, helping to justify the relevant Guidelines within the document.

Also, Guideline T.1 and its explanatory text were expanded to resist development which would result in a 'material' increase in traffic (defined as up to 5% increase) unless/until the junctions and/or Sleepers Hill itself can be improved.

Detailed wording changes were made in response to comments questioning the descriptions of various character areas or suggesting inclusion of references to listed buildings and historic gardens. Most other changes made relate to updating the LADS to reflect the status it will have when adopted, or to correct inaccuracies. The Environment Agency submitted comments on the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 3 of the LADS) and some changes were made as a result.

A detailed breakdown of all the comments, and the officers' recommended response to these, was considered by the City Council's Cabinet on 17 January 2007, when it was resolved to adopt the LADS, subject to the changes summarised above.

APPENDIX 2: Copy of the public consultation presentation

LOCAL AREA DESIGN STATEMENT

Sleepers Hill, Winchester




Programme

Welcome and introduction

Planning policy background
Character and urban analysis

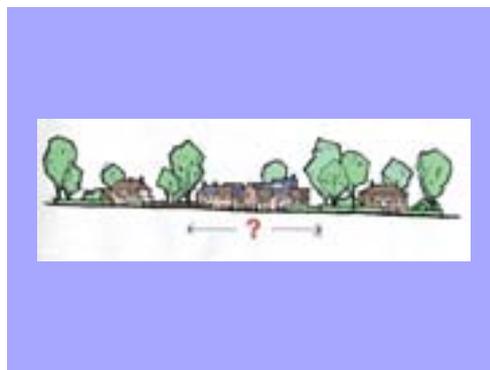
Identification of defining features

WORKSHOP

- 1 Evaluation of defining features
- 2 Principal issues of concern
- 3 Design comments

Proposals/work in progress

Feedback/discussion

The purpose of a Local Area Design Statement

To address specific planning issues in particular places
Adopted as planning guidance

Does not seek to promote or maximise development

Seeks to provide design guidance and a more comprehensive overview to ensure that future development will be of better quality and less piecemeal



Approach:
A clear sequence of reasoned thought based on:

- Central Government guidance
- Local Plan Policy



Planning policy background
PPG3

Everyone should be able to have a decent home
Increase in housing provision (including social trends)
Greenfield sites to be avoided
Concentration on existing urban and brownfield sites and sustainable locations
Higher densities (30-50 dwellings per ha)

Corresponding emphasis on high standards of design and quality
Must take account of local and wider context
Quality of the environment should not be compromised
Should develop a shared vision with local communities - consultation



Planning policy background
Local Plans

County Structure Plan

Winchester District Local Plan (1998)

Winchester District Local Plan Review Revised Deposit (2003)
-the emerging Local Plan



Planning policy background
Winchester District Local Plan (1998)

Conservation a Key Objective
Does not seek to maximise the potential for redevelopment or promote it
Seeks to control development to protect the city's special character and setting

Policy EN.1
Special policy seeks to protect more spacious and well-treed areas including Sleepers Hill.
(Retention of trees, avoidance of subdivision, harmonisation of new development in size, mass and height and retention of space around buildings)

Also Policies EN.5 and EN.9
(Appearance, character, scale, mass, design, materials, layout, siting, Protection of landscape features)



Planning policy background
**Winchester District Local Plan
 Review Revised Deposit (2003)**

Conservation is still a key Principle but with greater emphasis on development than before
 Previous Policy EN.1 discarded

A new emphasis on design-led approach
 Although densities can be increased,
 Key features that contribute to the quality of the environment are to be identified and protected
Proposal H.2 30-50 dwellings per ha.
Proposal DP.1 Design Statement required with each application
Proposal DP.3 Requires efficient use of land and high quality design
 Development to be related to local environment
 - development forms, patterns of building, spaces, townscape, landscape and historic background
Proposal DP.5 Retention of public views, trees and hedgerows



Planning policy background
**Summary of changes in
 Central Government policy**
 - and reflected in Local Plan policy

Facilitates increased urban densities

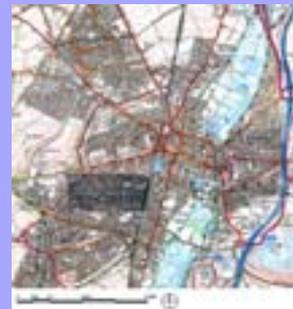
BUT
 with greater emphasis on design quality and design-led solutions based on the analysis of particular localities in determining what is appropriate in each instance.

Key tasks of the Local Area Design Statement:
 Identify particular local features or characteristics that give each place its own distinct value and sense of place
 Identify and assess any features that affect the wider city context
 Identify the potential for enhancing local environments through new development



Key inputs to the Local Area Design Statement

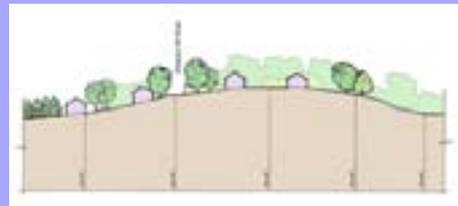
- 1 What are the principal constraining features?
- 2 What are your principal concerns?
- 3 Any design ideas?



Location plan



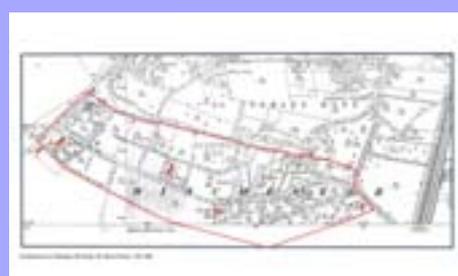
Topography



Sketch section

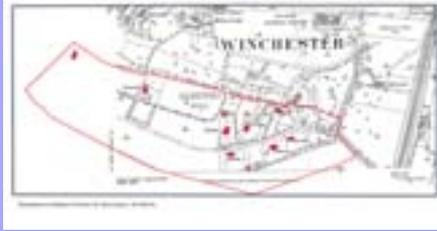


Historic evolution - 1871



1908





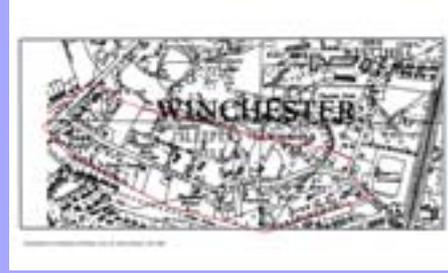
1894-5



1931



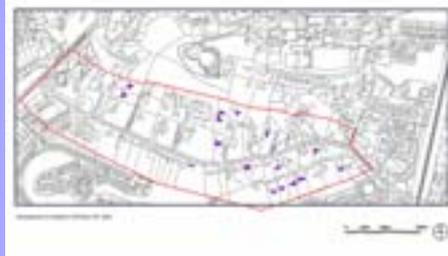
1964



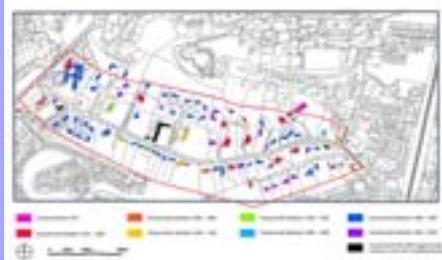
1968



1983



2003

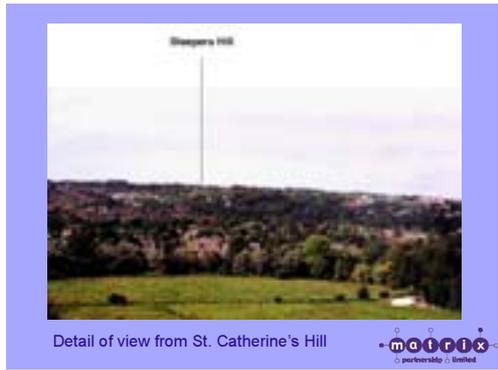


Summary of historic evolution



Aerial view







Character areas



Driveway entrance 1



Driveway entrance 2



Driveway entrance 3



Driveway entrance 4



Boundaries 1



Boundaries 2



Boundaries 3





Recent walls and gate



Boundaries and entrances



Change through redevelopment



A tradition of evolution



Change of character



Differing architectural character 1



Differing architectural character 2



Cul-de-sac development - George Eyston Drive





Sleepers Hill Gardens cul-de-sac



Extension of existing building -
Westacre Nursing Home



Demolition and redevelopment -
King's Crescent



Redevelopment
at Dawnhill 1



Comparison -
edge of road development



Redevelopment
at Dawnhill 2

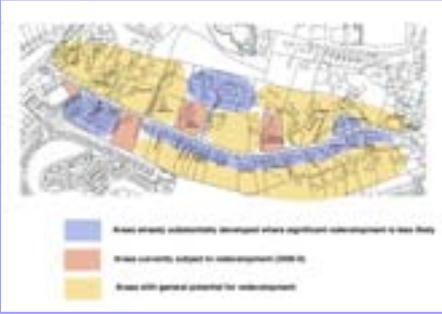


Adjacent comparison
- Highcroft Cottage



Highcroft redevelopment?





Potential redevelopment opportunities



Issues of height, mass, character and the effect on trees



Where do the children play?



Possible Principal Defining Features

- Overall tree cover and leafy surroundings
- The predominance of large, mature trees (tree belts, notable specimen trees, boundary trees, skyline trees)
- Wooded backdrop in wider views towards Winchester
- Semi-rural and unimproved character of the roads
- Peace and privacy
- Large gardens
- Large detached family houses (1 house per plot), no blocks of flats (currently)
- Relatively low rooflines, especially in relation to trees
- Defined building lines relative to the roads
- Character of older houses
- Individually designed houses
- No parking in the road
- Discrete signage
- Intermittent views to the south
- Low density of development
- Openness and space
- Generally discrete private entrances of Sleepers Hill Road
- Front areas not dominated by hard surfaces and parked cars



Comments page



APPENDIX 3: 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 District 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. There are a number of plans and policies which are relevant to the tests/indicators used for this appraisal. The most relevant are the Winchester District Local Plan Review, Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (Transport), and Planning Policy Statements 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), 3 (Housing), and 12 (Local Development Frameworks). The Local Area Design Statement refers in more detail to these, as appropriate, in Chapter 1.

Planning regulations require that a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is carried out of plans which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. Given the nature of the LADS, the fact that it is supplementary to a statutory Local Plan and the results of the Sustainability Appraisal below, it is concluded that this LADS is not likely to have significant (harmful) effects on the environment. In commenting on the draft LADS, the Environment Agency has agreed that there is no need for an SEA

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 proposed Guideline 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. These are Transport, Basic needs equality, Economy, Employment, Health Treatment, Health Protection, Crime, Fear of Crime, Sustainability awareness, Equity, Local needs use, Self-development and Involvement which 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	D7	Guidelines
0	0	?x	?x	✓	0	0	Land use
✓	✓	?x	?x	✓	0	?✓	Resource use
✓	✓	0	0	✓	✓	?✓	Protection of resources
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Pollution
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Protection of diversity
?✓	?✓	0	?✓	✓	0	0	Access to wildlife/nature sites
0	0	0	0	✓	0	0	Local needs provision
?x	?x	?x	?x	0	0	?x	Housing provision
0	0	0	0	✓	0	?x	Access
0	0	0	0	✓	0	?	Road safety
0	0	0	0	✓	0	0	Leisure provision
0	?✓	0	0	✓	0	0	Leisure access
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Protection of the built environment
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Urban design
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Local identity

L1	L2	L3	L4	Guidelines
0	0	0	?	Land use
✓	✓	0	?	Resource use
✓	✓	✓	?✓	Protection of resources
0	0	0	0	Pollution
✓	✓	✓	✓	Protection of diversity
✓	✓	0	?	Access to wildlife/nature sites
0	0	0	0	Local needs provision
?x	?x	0	?	Housing provision
?x	?x	0	?	Access
0	0	0	?	Road safety
✓	✓	0	0	Leisure provision
✓	✓	0	0	Leisure access
✓	✓	✓	✓	Protection of the built environment
✓	✓	✓	✓	Urban design
✓	✓	✓	✓	Local identity
T1	T2	T3	T4	Guidelines
?x	0	0	0	Land use
?✓	0	0	0	Resource use
0	0	0	0	Protection of resources
??	0	0	0	Pollution
0	0	0	0	Protection of diversity
0	0	0	0	Access to wildlife/nature sites
?x	0	0	0	Local needs provision
x	0	0	0	Housing provision
?x	?✓	?✓	0	Access
?	0	?	0	Road safety
0	0	0	0	Leisure provision
0	0	0	0	Leisure access
✓	✓	0	✓	Protection of the built environment
0	?✓	0	✓	Urban design
?✓	✓	0	✓	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 LADS has identified the value of trees and the scale and nature of development in the area as one of the key features which contribute to the character of the area. It is the purpose of the LADS to identify and protect such characteristics and this is consistent with Government advice (e.g. PPS3). Accordingly, the potential negative effects are acknowledged, but the benefits of maintaining the character of the area are such as to outweigh the loss of additional potential development provision. The LADS provides for additional development in the area but sets out guidelines for this which should result in more sustainable development overall.

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