

CABINET – 8 JULY 2002

LYMINGTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report makes recommendations regarding the adoption as supplementary planning guidance to the New Forest District Local Plan of the Lymington Conservation Area Appraisal. In December 2001 the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Planning approved the draft of the appraisal document for public consultation. Appendix 1 contains the text of the appraisal as now amended and recommended to be adopted. Appendix 2 summarises the representations in response to the consultation exercise. A copy of the full document is placed for reference purposes in the Member's Room.
- 1.2 The appraisal for Lymington is one of an agreed programme of six such appraisals for those conservation areas where there is the greatest continuing pressure for development. The appraisals for Milford-on-Sea and Fordingbridge are already adopted, and the appraisal for Lyndhurst is currently out to public consultation. The appraisals for Ringwood and Hythe are yet to be prepared.

2 THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 2.1 Organisations consulted comprised Lymington and Pennington Town Council, the Lymington Society, Lymington Chamber of Commerce. The recently formed Architect's Panel, the establishment of which was approved in July 2001, was also consulted, as was English Heritage. Responses were received from the Town Council, the Lymington Society, one private architect, and a firm of planning consultants. There was useful feedback from the Architect's Panel. There were no responses from members of the public.
- 2.2 One recurring comment concerned the lack of any reference in the Draft to the opportunity there should be to allow good examples of modern design in the conservation area. The Draft has been amended to allow for good examples of high-quality modern design in certain circumstances. Parameters for the kind of proposals that would be considered have been suggested, and some locations where modern designs would not be appropriate have been identified. In essence, though, it is not, on reflection, reasonable to proscribe modern design throughout the conservation area.
- 2.3 A second major issue that was raised concerns development in the burgage plots to the rear of frontages to High Street. The New Forest District Local Plan identifies groups of adjoining plots that should be retained as open and undeveloped parts of the town centre, and also identifies one area of adjoining plots where more intensive development would be allowed. That leaves a significant number of further plots, not specifically covered by either policy. There is continuing pressure to develop within the rear parts of many of the plots, and

the usual desire is to obtain maximum site value from the plot by developing it as intensively as possible. The draft of the appraisal suggests a level of intensity of development of these plots that, it is felt, would not be over-intensive. It is also strongly felt that the Council's very longstanding policy resistance to development within the best and most undeveloped burgage plots should be maintained. While clarifying the guidance in the draft appraisal, it is not proposed in the adopted version to alter the substance of the guidance on the subject.

- 2.4 English Heritage praised the draft appraisal, commenting that it was one of the best they had seen so far. They suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on the importance of only allowing developments that left intact the medieval pattern of Lymington, including the retention of plot boundaries. Guidance on this aspect in the appraisal has consequently been strengthened.
- 2.5 The Planning Development Control Committee at its June meeting commended the content of the appraisal and endorsed the suggested responses to the representations that had been made during the consultation period.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The cost of adoption of the Lymington conservation area appraisal is contained within existing approved budgets.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The benefits of having available as supplementary planning guidance a detailed assessment of the special interest and character of the conservation area, which can guide the submission and determination of proposals, is obvious. It should result in improved development proposals, better decisions and a higher standard of completed development.

5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no crime and disorder implications to this report.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That the Lymington Conservation Area Appraisal, as attached at Appendix 1 and with the amendments summarised in Appendix 2 as a result of the public consultation on the Draft, be approved and adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Further Information

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Background Papers

File:- 551.20.2

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS MADE FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

Representation:- Inadequate reference is made in the Appraisal to the opportunity to promote good, modern design, and allow examples of such buildings in places within the conservation area of Lymington.

Response:- It is accepted that the draft appraisal makes inadequate reference to good, modern design. An insistence on all occasions and in all locations on traditional forms of building should not be maintained. The adopted version of the text proposes parameters that define the circumstances in which modern designs are likely to be appropriate. It identifies possible development sites where only a traditional form of building would be acceptable. In general, however, good examples of high quality modern design, especially on sites where redevelopment of earlier unsatisfactory new buildings is proposed, is now welcomed in the appraisal.

Representation:- It is inappropriate to refuse to condone the use of flat roofs. Flat roofs have featured as an element in all great 20th century buildings.

Response:- Consideration of this is linked to the issue of modern design. The adopted version of the text recognises that, if there is a location where a design for a high quality modern building with a flat roof is considered acceptable, that is one circumstance where a flat roof would be appropriate. Otherwise the opposition to flat roofs in other circumstances is maintained.

Representation:- It is unreasonable to proscribe the use of materials other than natural materials.

Response:- This point is also linked to the issue of modern design. The adopted version of the text recognises that a design for a high quality modern building could use non-traditional materials that complement the materials used historically in Lymington, although equally traditional materials could also be used in a modern and innovative way.

Representation:- It is unreasonable to proscribe the use of modern or non-traditional high-quality materials in new shopfronts

Response:- The Council's Shopfront Design Guide allows that high quality non-traditional materials may or should be used in suitable shopfronts. The adopted version of the text now reflects that existing advice, and identifies suitable materials, such as marble, tiles and various metals.

Representation:- There is uncertainty about the extent to which development might be allowed within the burgage plots along High Street.

Response:- The long established policies in the New Forest District Local Plan are clear insofar as they refer to plots where development specifically will or will not be allowed. That leaves other burgage plots where no site-specific policy applies. The text of the draft appraisal suggested that in those plots there should not be development any more intensive than resulted in one third of the rear half of a plot being covered in building. The adopted version of the text retains but amplifies that guidance, without alteration to its intent.

Representation:- It is unclear which are historic burgage plots, and therefore to which plots policy refers. Mixed-use development ought to be allowed within

undeveloped parts of burgage plots, recognising the increased pressures there are for further building.

Response:- The adopted version of the text confirms that it is absolutely clear from documentary sources what the extent of the area within which burgage plots were originally laid out on either side of High Street. It is unimportant that there have been changes in the width and arrangement of some plots in the interim. The appraisal augments and is in conformity with the Local Plan, and is not a vehicle to introduce new or change existing planning policy. It is in any case inappropriate to change a long-established and well-supported policy such as that which prevents further development within the most intact burgage plots remaining in the town.

Representation:- Concern is expressed, especially by Lymington and Pennington Town Council, at the number of historic but unlisted properties in the town (e.g. the Railway Station) which are at risk of being demolished.

Response:- The appraisal is not a vehicle for securing the listing of buildings. Buildings are added to the statutory list by the DCMS in London as appropriate. DCMS has only recently refused to list Lymington Railway Station. Also, conservation area consent is needed for demolition of buildings in a conservation area.

Representation:- The site of Webb's factory should be in a conservation area.

Response:- The appraisal is not a vehicle for reviewing the boundary of the conservation area, a process which was undertaken and completed only in 1999/2000. It is not anticipated that the boundary of Lymington conservation area will change in the short to medium term. It would not in any event be appropriate to put the Webb's factory site in a conservation area, which is defined as being one 'of special architectural or historic interest'.

Representation:- Infill development should not be allowed to continue at such density, with maximum site development being achieved on every plot.

Response:- In some parts of the historic centre, where development is and has been intensive, a continuation of that level of intensity might be appropriate. Elsewhere the density of development should respect the need to preserve the character of the plots, spaces and layouts of local areas. The appraisal does not propose any change to established development control practice.

Representation:- If redevelopment takes place on the Post Office site, it might not be suitable to bring the new buildings back to the former building line at the pavement edge, which was abandoned when the 1960's development happened.

Response:- The text of the draft appraisal suggested that the creation of a space in front of the new buildings had not been in the interests of the historic character of the town. After further reflection that view is maintained, and the guidance relating to a return to the former building line is retained in the adopted version of the text. It is unnecessary to try to create a square to give added interest to the streetscene in a street with as great a sense of place as Lymington's High Street. However, if a proposal came forward to do this, it would be treated on its merits.

A large number of other small-scale alterations have been incorporated in the adopted version of the text, in response to the identification of factual inaccuracies or omissions or errors, or to make the intent of the text of the appraisal clearer. There is no substantive significance to such alterations, and the guidance in the appraisal does not alter as a result, and they have not been individually listed here.

Lymington

A Conservation Area Appraisal



NEW FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Lymington

A Conservation Area Appraisal

S U P P L E M E N T A R Y P L A N N I N G G U I D A N C E

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1 PREFACE

- 1.1 A conservation area is defined in legislation as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. ‘Conservation areas’ were introduced in 1975, and there are now 37 of widely differing sizes and types in New Forest District. It is important that the areas designated are genuinely considered to be of architectural or historic interest, and not just attractive areas to live or work in, however desirable that may be. The Council would not, for example, use the tool of conservation area designation specifically to prevent unwanted development in an area, if there was not a definite and extensive base in the area of buildings of architectural or historic interest. To show that there is a core of such buildings in an area, it is important that a Council should in writing assess and record the special interest of the area, either at the time of designation or else subsequently via a conservation area appraisal.
- 1.2 This conservation area appraisal provides supplementary planning guidance on the subject of the design of development in Lymington’s central conservation area. It does so by assessing and analysing the character of the conservation area, and then setting down what implications that has for future development. The appraisal amplifies the policies of the New Forest District Local Plan, and the policies relevant to the Lymington appraisal are referred to in Section 3. The policies are also cross-referenced where appropriate during the analysis and assessment in Section 4. The appraisal will guide the consideration and determination of the design-related aspects of development proposals in Lymington’s conservation area for some years to come.
- 1.3 There is no statutory requirement for local planning authorities to prepare conservation area appraisals. However, it is the strongest advice of English Heritage, the government’s adviser on issues relating to the historic built environment, that appraisals should be prepared for any newly designated conservation area. The advice goes on that appraisals should be prepared for all existing conservation areas, although it recognises that this may be difficult and impractical for a local authority with many conservation areas. Therefore English Heritage recommends that appraisals are at least prepared for conservation areas in town and commercial centres where there is the greatest likelihood of change and repeated development pressure.
- 1.4 New Forest District Council has therefore responded to this by planning a programme of appraisals covering the conservation areas in the towns of Lymington, Ringwood, Fordingbridge and Hythe, and the larger village centres of Lyndhurst and Milford-on-Sea. The appraisals for Milford and Fordingbridge have been formally adopted.
- 1.5 This appraisal has previously been issued in draft for public consultation, and been revised in the light of the range of comments received. Subsequently it has been adopted formally as supplementary planning guidance to the New Forest District Local Plan.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Lymington conservation area was first designated in 1977. Successive amendments to the boundary of the conservation area were made subsequently in 1988, 1992 and 1999. The effect was in each case to extend the boundary of the conservation area, containing more land within it.
- 2.2 Conservation area character is assessed in the appraisal under several headings. Under each heading an 'Analysis and Assessment' (a record of the elements present, and a judgement on how far they contribute positively to or detract from the conservation area) is followed by 'Implications For Development' (design considerations for future development). The headings are:-
- Settlement Origins, Location and Topography
 - Historic Development of Settlement and Structure of Area
 - Historic Uses and their Influence
 - Archaeological Significance and Potential
 - Architectural and Historic Character of Buildings
 - Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials
 - Characteristic Local Detailing
 - Character and Relationship of Spaces within Area
 - Streetworks and Public Utilities
 - Focal Points and Views within Area
 - Key Unlisted Buildings
 - Contribution made by Green Spaces, Trees and Natural or Cultivated Elements
 - Setting of Area and Relationship with Landscape
 - The Negative Elements - Extent of Loss, Intrusion and Damage
- Retention of the medieval structure of the Borough.**
- 2.3 It has been Lymington's good fortune as a historic town that its medieval structure - the roads and the blocks of development in between - has remained largely unaltered up to the present day. The extent and sequence of old burgage plots is retained with the pattern of cross and back lanes attached to the principal roads still obvious. The unusually complete framework of the medieval town results in the growth and development of the town being highly 'legible' on the ground. It is widely accepted as being important not to change this situation. This applies, not only to the 'bare bones' of the town - the plots and boundary walls - but also to the way and extent to which the land within the plots is used.

Importance of the peripheral areas of the conservation area.

- 2.4 The area of High and St Thomas's Streets represents the largest and best stock of historic buildings in any town within New Forest District. Despite modern intrusions, the mass of older buildings holds together convincingly and coherently as the core of the historic town. The conservation area in addition contains areas beyond the medieval Borough, that are either extensions of the medieval plan, or are closely associated with the life of the town (e.g. the boatyards), or which act as buffers to the medieval town at its edges. Even though there is not the same concentration of architectural or historic interest in these peripheral areas, their importance should not be underestimated. The Council's desire is to protect that which is of value within all parts of the conservation area, and it is clear that development at the edge also has an impact on the wider area.

Recent development and remaining development opportunities

- 2.5 Comparison of late 19th century maps with those from the mid-20th century shows that there was very little change in or addition to the town centre during that period. Then in the 1960's-1980's and still in the 1990's, redevelopment took place on many sites and infill schemes appeared. Many of these were on previously vacant or under-used sites, and few resulted in the loss of important earlier buildings. Most were on land to the rear of, or in the wings from, the main street frontages, and therefore are quite unobtrusive. Some now offer scope for further building or redevelopment to improve their appearance. The main result of that period of building is that there are very few opportunities for further such developments, and Lymington's town centre can look forward to a period of relative stability.

Need for high quality frontage development

- 2.6 Despite the wealth of surviving older buildings, there are aspects of development within the historic centre that are of concern. First, although greatly outnumbered by older buildings in sound condition, a number of large newer buildings of unsympathetic and outdated design in High and St Thomas's Streets are prominent. The 'Implications for Action' allow that, as opportunities arise, sensitive redevelopment with buildings of better design would be encouraged. Second, and of greater concern, the quality of development on many plots behind the main elevation to the street has become rather poor.

Need for high quality in development to the rear of sites

- 2.7 There is a perception of a declining quality in the central area, which is a result of many successive and usually small-scale additions or changes to properties over the last 40 years. The appearance of an intact and historic front elevation sometimes belies an unpleasant or disappointing rear. A proliferation of unsuitable forms, materials and details may combine with extensions which may have been too many or large. The continued adoption of such poor building practices and inferior designs can only serve gradually to diminish the

quality of the town centre. In order to reverse this situation, the aim is to achieve improvements to currently less than satisfactory sites, whenever suitable opportunities arise through the planning process, and not to be constrained by the poor standards adopted in the past. Therefore the 'Implications for Action' propose rigorous observance of suggested requirements for best building practice and high quality design throughout the key zones of the conservation area.

Opportunities for modern design in new development

- 2.8 There are just a few examples in the conservation area of unashamedly modern design of high quality from various times during the past 40 or so years. Lymington is a town where there is periodically likely to be pressure from architects and commissions from their clients for good modern design, rather than new forms of traditional building. Despite having a generally 18th century core, the principal streets contain buildings of many periods, and most of them are valued for their visual contribution to the conservation area. Irrespective of period, a building will fit into its context if it observes the conventions of scale, height, building line, orientation, colour etc that have been followed previously in that place. It is not considered reasonable to say that all building should be of a vernacular character. Especially given the examples of bad, unthinking modern design that have been perpetrated, and that look dated and inadequate today, there should be opportunity for good, high-quality modern design to add its contribution to the diverse character of the buildings in the conservation area.
- 2.9 Some recent publications add to the knowledge and understanding of the historic centres of the District's towns, including Lymington. The Environment Group of Hampshire County Council, with English Heritage, have published a series of archaeological studies under the general title of '**An Extensive Urban Survey of Hampshire's and the Isle of Wight's Historic Towns**'. These contain an archaeological assessment, summarising the archaeological knowledge of and finds from the area. The medieval and post-medieval history and architecture of the towns is detailed, and the potential of the town for holding and revealing archaeological evidence is then assessed. An accompanying archaeological strategy deals with the planning response to developments proposed in areas of archaeological importance, and addresses the issues of presentation and interpretation of the archaeological resource.
- 2.10 Early in 2000 a '**New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment**' was published, commissioned by the District Council, Hampshire County Council, the Countryside Agency and English Heritage. A part of this focussed on the principal settlements and their landscape settings, noting the evolution and character of the towns, how their relationship with the landscape should be managed, and the principles of the built form. Those principles suggest appropriate patterns, forms and scales for landscape management and new development, the aim being to ensure that changes help to reinforce and enhance local landscape character.

- 2.11 These documents give the Council a better understanding of the archaeology of its historic towns, and the relationship between those towns and the surrounding landscape. The District Council is considering whether to adopt the **'Extensive Urban Surveys of Hampshire's and the Isle of Wight's Historic Towns'** as supplementary planning guidance, but already the information contained informs decisions on matters having an archaeological dimension. The **'New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment'** has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

3 NEW FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

3.1 Design issues are often central to the consideration of development proposals in conservation areas, and many refusals or the conditions attached to grants of planning permission or listed building consent are related to those design issues. This appraisal, and particularly that part containing 'Implications For Development', is closely related to the policies in the New Forest District Local Plan.

3.2 The relevant objectives of the New Forest District Local Plan are:

Objective 3 Town centres

To enhance the attraction of town centres in the District.

Objective 7 Built heritage

To protect and enhance the archaeological and historic built heritage of the District; ensure that the integrity of buildings and places is respected; and promote public education and understanding of the historic built environment.

Objective 9 Environmental design

To encourage the highest possible standards of design in new development and in environmental improvements; and to provide attractive, stimulating and safe places in which to live, work and play.

3.3 The following policies are particularly relevant. The policies may be referred to in full with their reasoned justifications in the New Forest District Local Plan.

Policy DW-E1 General development criteria

Achieving appropriate and sympathetic development in terms of scale, appearance, materials, form, siting and layout of building.

Policy DW-E9 Protection of landscape features

Protecting open areas and landscape features which contribute positively to the visual character of an area.

Policy DW-E10 Protection of historic street and footpath patterns

Respecting historic road, street and footpath patterns.

Policy DW-E14 Alterations, extensions and repairs to listed buildings

Maintaining the historic character of the listed building stock.

Policy DW-E15 Demolition of listed buildings

Preventing demolition of all or parts of listed buildings.

Policy DW-E16 Setting of listed buildings

Preventing development which adversely affects setting of listed buildings.

Policy DW-E17 Change of use of listed buildings or of important buildings in conservation areas

Preventing uses which cause harmful alterations, or constrain proper maintenance.

Policy DW-E18 Exceptional development to enable retention of listed buildings or important buildings in conservation areas

Allowing on occasions development, otherwise considered contrary to policy, to enable retention of such buildings.

Policy DW-E19 New development in conservation areas

Preserving or enhancing conservation area character by protecting historic plot layouts, important views, significant open spaces, and valuable trees and landscape features, and by ensuring that development respects the best characteristics of the locality.

Policy DW-E20 Demolition in conservation areas

Preventing demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Policy DW-E21 Shopfronts in conservation areas

Retaining good traditional shopfronts, and obtaining new shopfronts in character with the area.

Policy DW-E22 Advertisements in conservation areas

Obtaining appropriate and sympathetic advertisements.

Policy DW-E23 Development affecting archaeological sites

Protecting valuable archaeological sites. Ensuring archaeological investigation and recording takes place where necessary.

Policy DW-E24 Archaeological field assessment

Obtaining assessment of archaeological potential of sites before development proposals are determined.

Policy LP-2 37 to 39 St Thomas's Street

Allocating site for retail/ office/ business, professional and financial services/ food and drink uses with residential uses on upper floors, and with emergency access between St Thomas's Street and St Thomas Park

Policy LP-3 Telephone exchange and post office

Allocating site for uses appropriate to town centres.

Policy LP-4 77-90 High Street/School Lane

Allocating sites for retail/ office/ business, financial and professional services/ food and drink uses with residential uses on upper floors, whilst retaining listed buildings and historic boundary walls, and providing for pedestrian access from Emsworth Road car-park to High Street.

Policy LP-5 Furniture repository, New Street/ Emsworth Road

Allocating site for community/ office/ business, financial and professional services/ food and drink uses with residential uses on upper floors.

Policy LP-6 Burgage Plots

Preventing development which encroaches into gardens or results in loss of boundaries in identified burgage plots. Limited rear extensions of High Street properties in these plots will be considered.

Policy LP-7 Library site, Cannon Street/ North Close and land to the rear

Allocating site on Cannon Street for library uses.

Policy LP-8 Builder's yard, Cannon Street/ Gosport Street

Allocating builders yard on Cannon Street for uses appropriate to town centres.

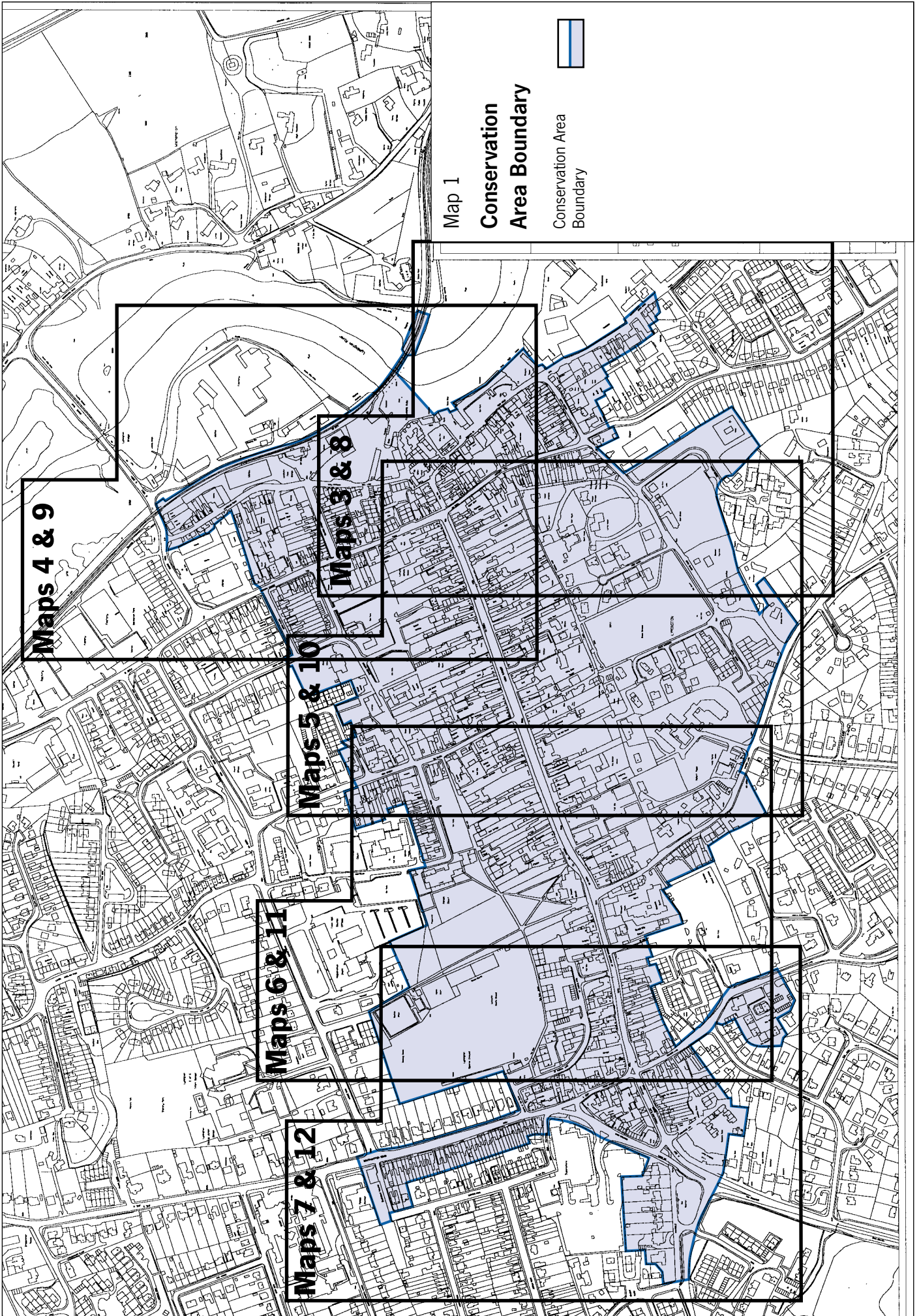
Policy LP-9 Earley Court

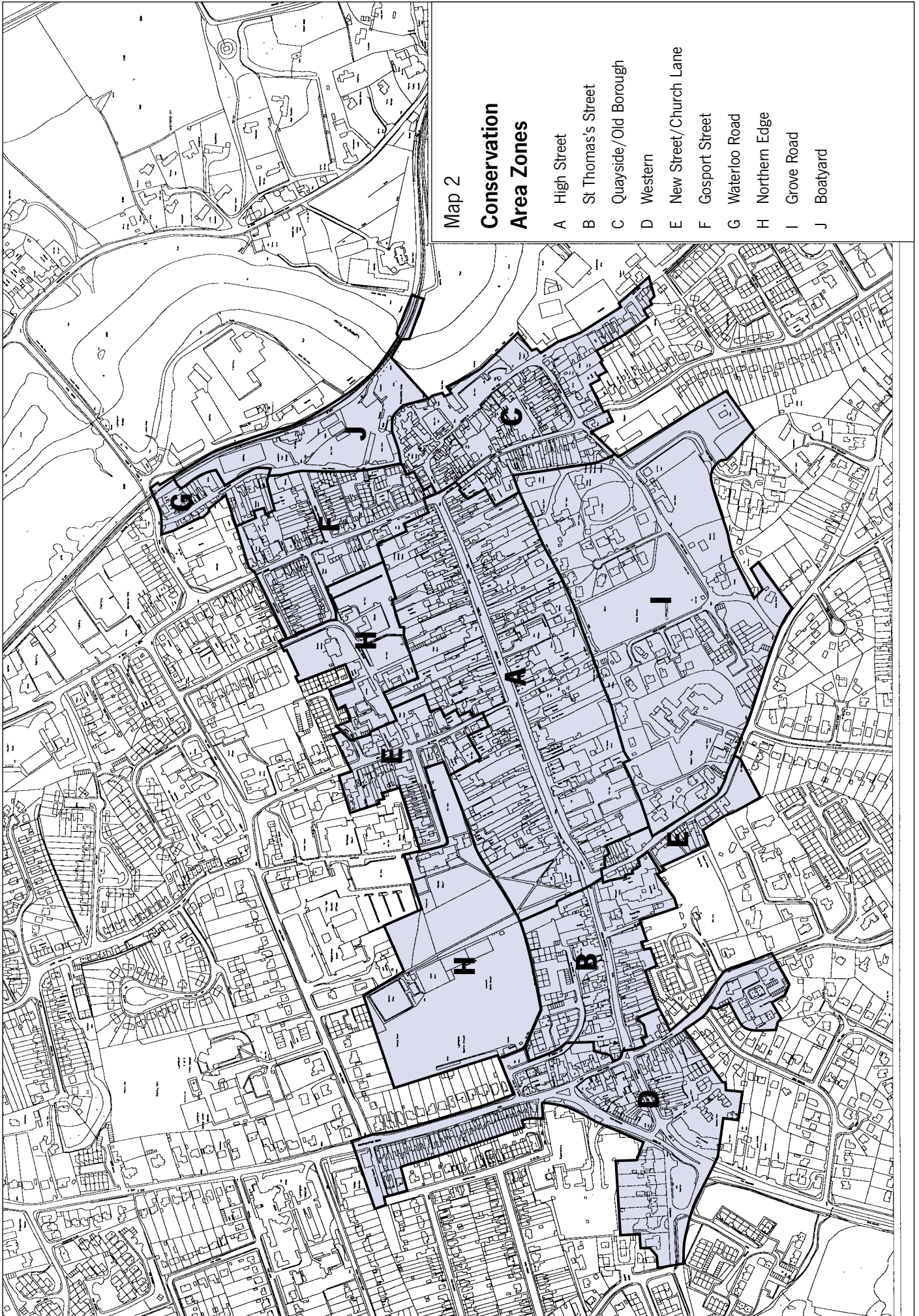
Encouraging proposals which improve appearance of buildings and of pedestrian route.

Policy LP-10 Rear of the fire station, Avenue Road

Allocating land behind the fire station for community use.

- 3.4 The appraisal expands on some of the above policies, making specific reference to particular sites, and identifying particular aspects of the conservation area in Lymington which should be protected. It provides a basis for detailed consideration of submitted development proposals by the District Council, and for formulation of those proposals by individuals and development organisations.












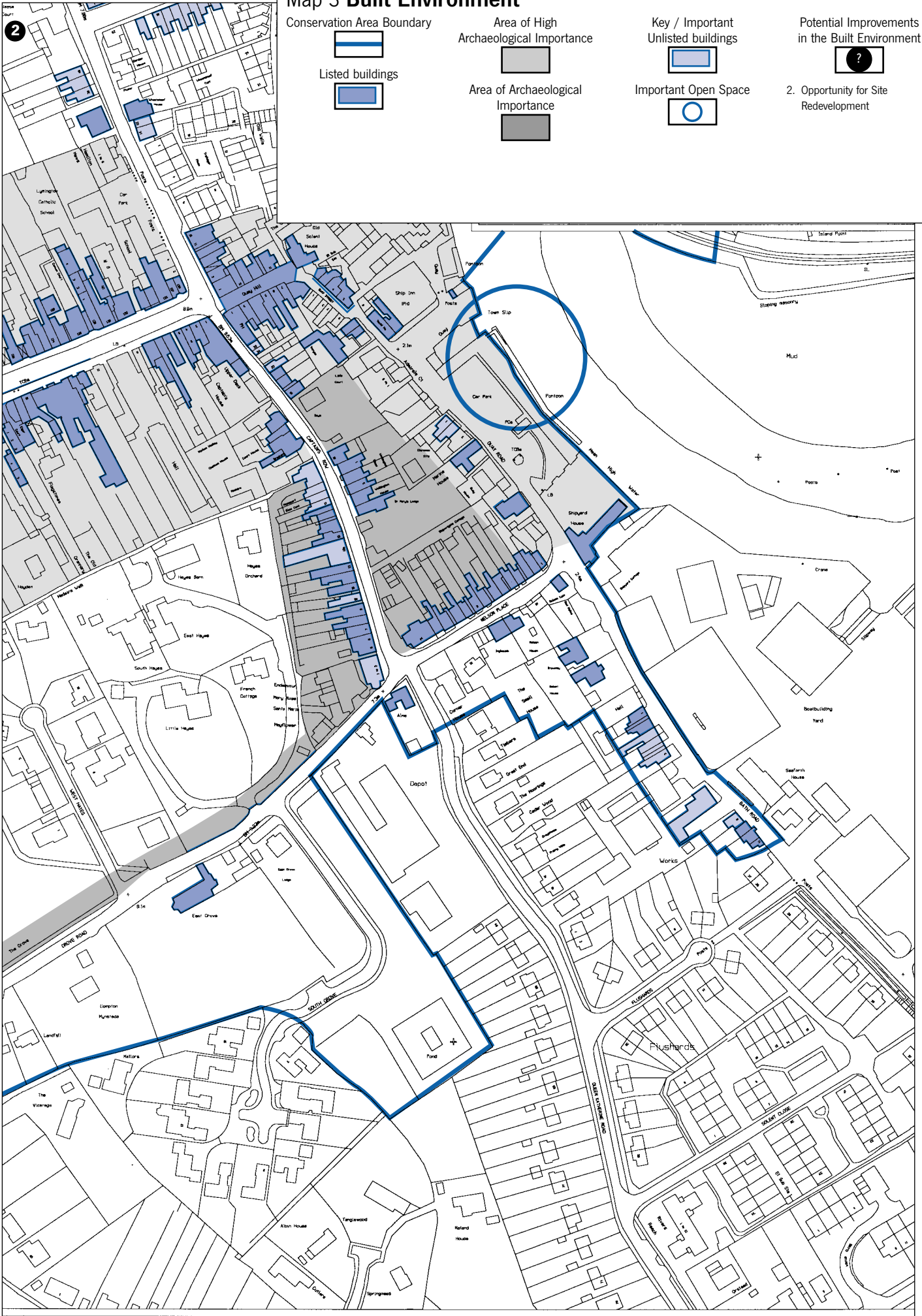
Map 2

Conservation Area Zones








- A High Street
- B St Thomas's Street
- C Quayside/Old Borough
- D Western
- E New Street/Church Lane
- F Gosport Street
- G Waterloo Road
- H Northern Edge
- I Grove Road
- J Boatyard

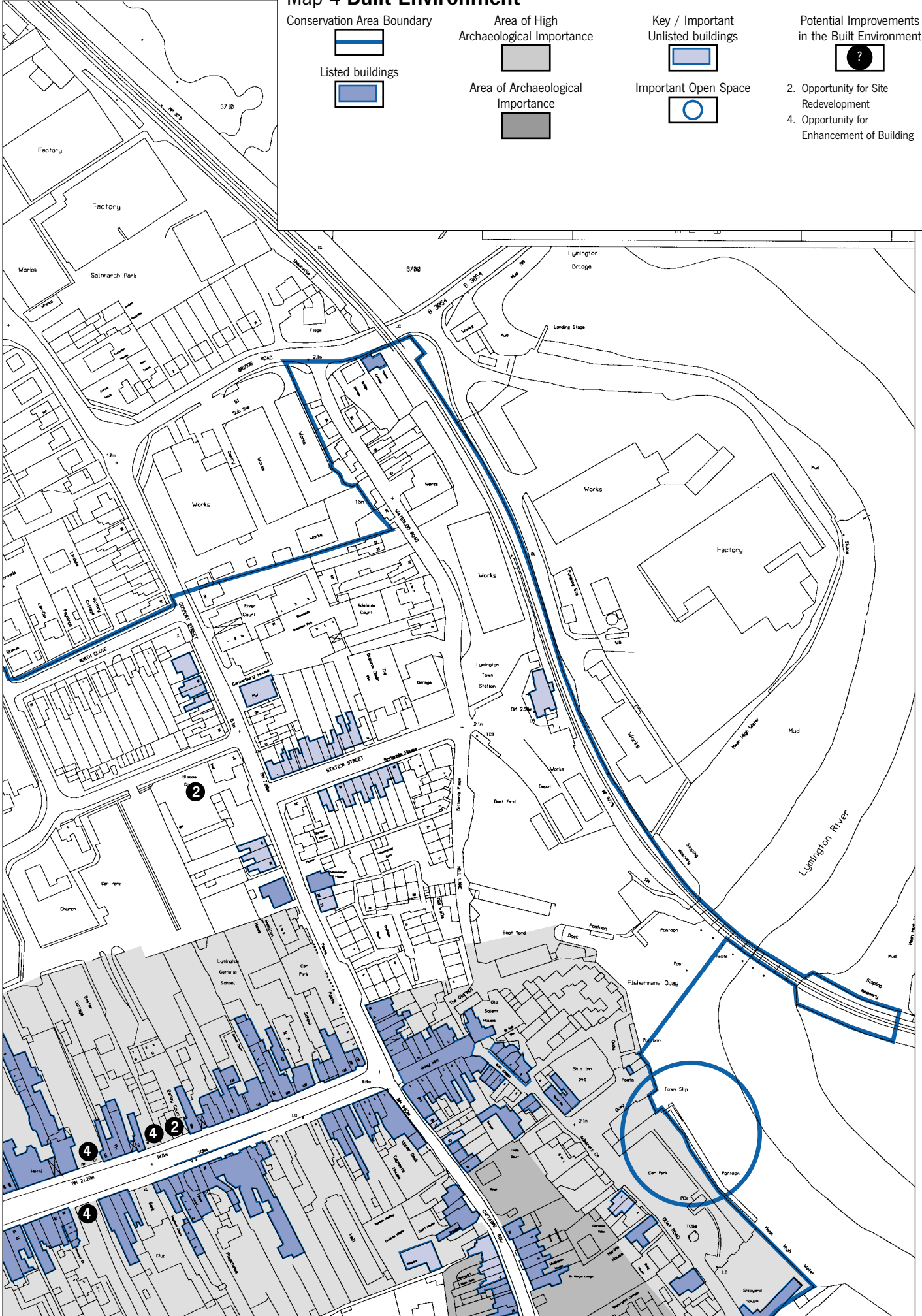
Map 3 Built Environment

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conservation Area Boundary | Area of High Archaeological Importance | Key / Important Unlisted buildings | Potential Improvements in the Built Environment |
|  |  |  |  |
| Listed buildings | Area of Archaeological Importance | Important Open Space | 2. Opportunity for Site Redevelopment |
|  |  |  | |



Map 4 Built Environment

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Conservation Area Boundary  | Area of High Archaeological Importance  | Key / Important Unlisted buildings  | Potential Improvements in the Built Environment  |
| Listed buildings  | Area of Archaeological Importance  | Important Open Space  | 2. Opportunity for Site Redevelopment 4. Opportunity for Enhancement of Building |












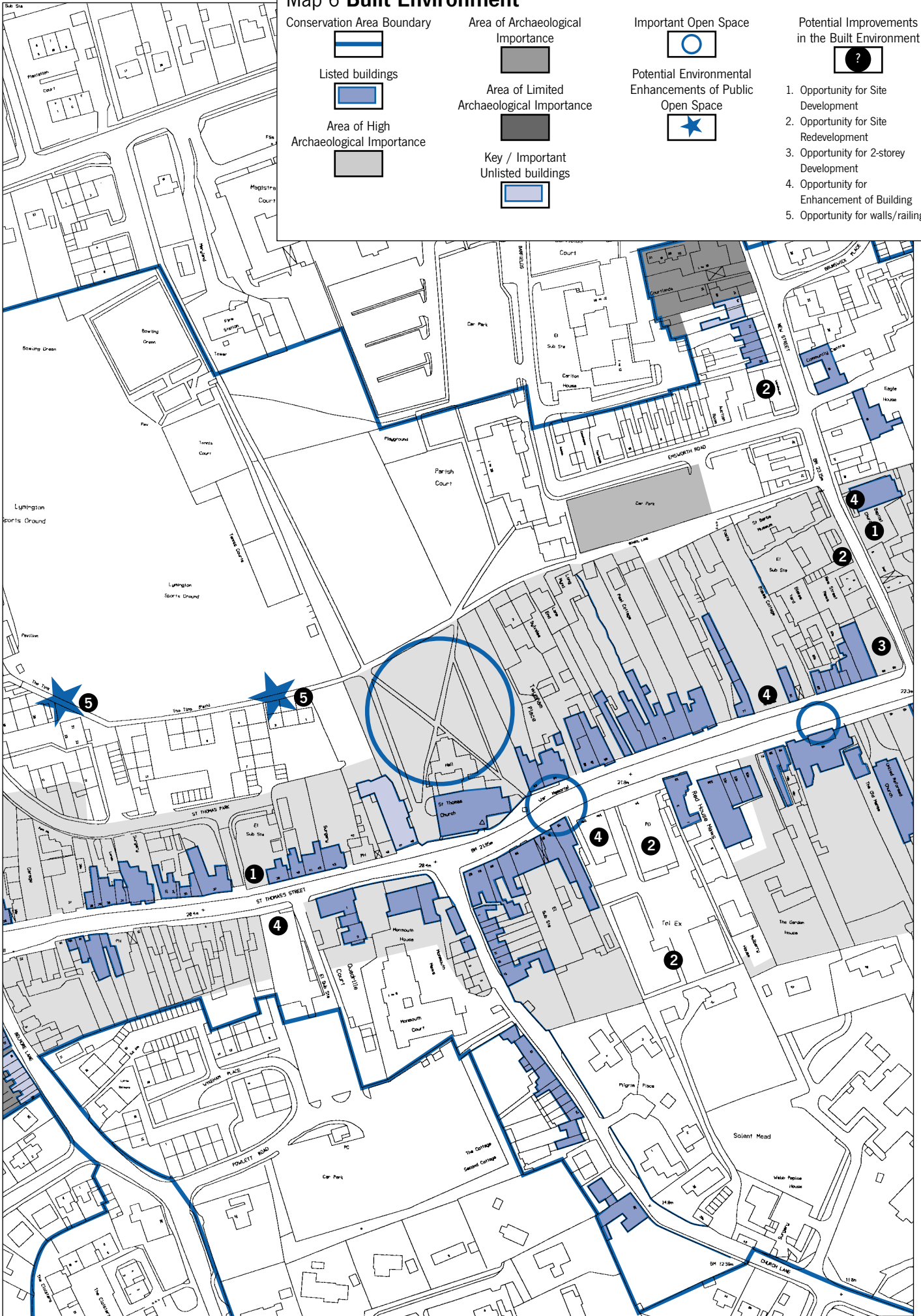
Map 5 Built Environment

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|--|---|---|
| Conservation Area Boundary | Area of Limited Archaeological Importance | Potential Improvements in the Built Environment |
| | | |
| Listed buildings | Key / Important Unlisted buildings | 1. Opportunity for Site Development |
| | | 2. Opportunity for Site Redevelopment |
| Area of High Archaeological Importance | Important Open Space | 3. Opportunity for 2-storey Development |
| | | 4. Opportunity for Enhancement of Building |
| Area of Archaeological Importance | | |
| | | |











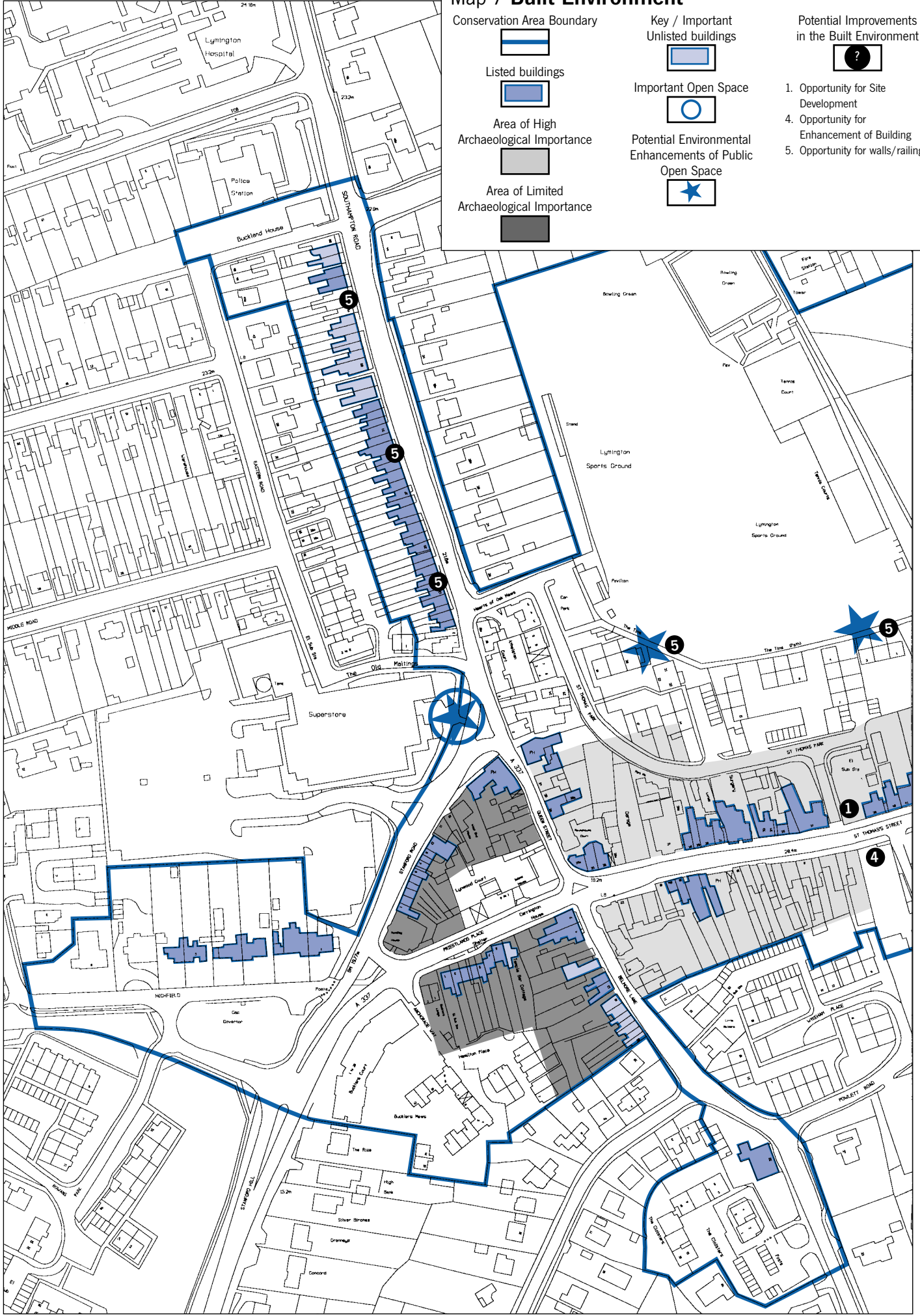
Map 6 Built Environment

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|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Conservation Area Boundary</p>  | <p>Area of Archaeological Importance</p>  | <p>Important Open Space</p>  | <p>Potential Improvements in the Built Environment</p>  |
| <p>Listed buildings</p>  | <p>Area of Limited Archaeological Importance</p>  | <p>Potential Environmental Enhancements of Public Open Space</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opportunity for Site Development 2. Opportunity for Site Redevelopment 3. Opportunity for 2-storey Development 4. Opportunity for Enhancement of Building 5. Opportunity for walls/railings |
| <p>Area of High Archaeological Importance</p>  | <p>Key / Important Unlisted buildings</p>  | | |



Map 7 Built Environment

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Conservation Area Boundary</p>  | <p>Key / Important Unlisted buildings</p>  | <p>Potential Improvements in the Built Environment</p>  |
| <p>Listed buildings</p>  | <p>Important Open Space</p>  | <p>1. Opportunity for Site Development</p> |
| <p>Area of High Archaeological Importance</p>  | <p>Potential Environmental Enhancements of Public Open Space</p>  | <p>4. Opportunity for Enhancement of Building</p> |
| <p>Area of Limited Archaeological Importance</p>  | | <p>5. Opportunity for walls/railings</p> |



4 THE APPRAISAL

4.1 Settlement Origins, Location and Topography

- Lymington is sited on land west of Lymington River at its lowest bridging point, and is built on underlying Plateau Gravels and Barton Sands, with alluvium on the edge of the river valley. The land rises quite steeply and uniformly for a distance of between 250 and 350 metres away from the riverside alluvial deposits, before levelling out. Most of the conservation area is on flat land, although the southernmost parts fall gently towards the estuarine saltings.
- The town is thought to owe its general location to the proximity of the salt pans (historically the largest in Hampshire), and the advantage of a natural harbour.
- There is no evidence for Roman settlement, and only the prospect of 'possible activity' in the Anglo-Saxon period in the vicinity of the conservation area. The Domesday Book survey (1086) recorded only six persons. At a time, during the 12th and 13th centuries, when the population of England grew rapidly, Lymington correspondingly grew in significance, becoming an important port with extensive French trade.
- The development of the town depended on successive Borough charters between 1184 and 1216, which created many burgage plots to enable the planned expansion of the settlement. There were 105 acres in the borough (known as 'The Hundred Acres') and ninety seven and a half new burgages at the end of the 13th century. The growth was a little uncertain, in part due to the town being repeatedly burnt down during raiding attacks by the French!
- Except in the Church, which has 13th century fabric, no part of that old town remains.

4.2 Historic Development of Settlement and Structure of Area

4.2.1 Analysis and Assessment

The Foundation of the Borough

- Historians are uncertain what was the sequence of phases of growth of the medieval town. This is largely due to the scarcity of tangible archaeological evidence that would help to pin down the extent and date of early sites. Reliance is placed on the interpretation of references in contemporary documents, and this is an imprecise activity.
- Nonetheless, it is thought that the earliest settlement was near the Church, and that there was also housing at the quayside in the 11th and 12th centuries. The Borough created as a result of charters was on the High Street, and consisted of at least two phases. There is the greatest uncertainty here about which areas came first, and it is possible that the extension to the Borough comprised the northern part of New Street.
- Thereafter, with a static or declining population, further expansion was for centuries very limited. The only significant new growth was St Thomas's Street, a post-medieval continuation of the High Street alignment. There would also have been a slow accretion of smaller buildings on some of the already established routes leading off the High Street, e.g. New Street, Gosport Street and Church Lane. There was also consolidation within the (probably) earlier parts of the Borough behind the quay, including Captains Row (known until recently as South Street) and Nelson Place. The extent of the Borough on its south side is thought to have been on the line of Grove Road.

19th and 20th Centuries

- The late 18th and 19th centuries saw terraced development lining existing or new streets, conspicuously on Southampton Road, which had become the principal route to the north in place of New Street. Other terraces were on Belmore Lane, Stanford Hill, New Street, Gosport Street, and on some new sidestreets such as Emsworth Road, Station Street and North Place.
- The plan of the 19th century town was still recognisably that seen in the mid-20th century. Only since the 1960's have new developments appeared, mostly residential. Most of these were on land that had been open, or not covered by major buildings, or within the grounds of larger properties. Gradually a large part of the open land within the medieval Borough was developed.
- That process has slowed down, largely due to the more obviously available sites being developed over the years. Within the open part of the burgage plots, some small-scale building has taken place, but there still remain significant sequences of adjoining burgage plots, the rear parts of which have stayed open.
- Throughout the post-medieval period right up to today, there has been no addition to or cutting across the Borough's highway network, which would confuse the clarity of the town's original structural framework.

The Burgage Plots

- 'Burgage' plots were the plots created at the time of the foundation or extension of the original 'Borough'. It is the layout of the plots, more than the buildings (which are post-medieval), that is the strongest evidence of the town's medieval origins. There is no extant record of the original layout of plots. The average depth of plot was about 100 metres and the average width of the plots was recorded as 30 feet. Some plots may have been wider by intent. It is known that half burgages existed. Certainly the intervening centuries have seen a process of change, whereby some plots have been amalgamated, or - more likely - subdivided.
- The intention is to keep the evidence of the plot layout, as it has developed, which primarily means retaining the boundaries and the linearity of the layout. It is not thought relevant to be able to show the original extent and dimensions of each plot. That debate is at best academic. The areas within which plots were originally laid out is known from documents, and it is within these areas that the Council's policies in respect of burgage plots will apply.

Zonal Analysis

- The large conservation area may be broken down into several zones, which aids analysis of character.
- **'High Street zone'**. All the properties north and south of High Street as far as the Church Lane junction, including the Parish Church of St Thomas. The plots all run back to the original rear lines of the burgage plots, still discernible and marked in part to the south by Madeira Walk, and in part to the north by School Lane.

- **'St Thomas's Street zone'**. Superficially similar to the High Street zone, but the plots are not as deep and generally narrower than on High Street. (Development of this street was probably not so much of a planned and deliberate process as in the case of High Street). This zone includes the recent development at St Thomas Park, inside the historic line of The Tins path.
- **'Quayside/ old Borough zone'**. Thought to be the earliest part of the Borough, this zone contains Quay Hill, Quay Street and The Quay, Captains Row, Nelson Place and the west side of Bath Road as far as No. 11. The plot sizes are much smaller than on High Street/ St Thomas's Street, and are contorted to fit the blocks of land and the alignment of Quay Hill. There has been some development behind frontages, replacing probable earlier commercial sites, and most of the buildings are of a domestic scale and in residential use. This zone includes the quay, which was well into the 20th century cluttered with wharves and slipways. It is probable that Quay Street was the original line of the river's edge, and that the land between it and the present quayside was created through a gradual process of land reclamation.
- **'The 'western' zone'**. This zone includes Queen Street and Priestlands Place, the upper end of Belmore Lane (including the Vicarage and its former grounds), the redevelopment at Bucklers Mews, and the east side of Stanford Road. Also included here are the villas on Highfields, and the long terraces on the west side of Southampton Road, similar in type to other housing in this zone. With the exception of Queen Street, the buildings are domestic in character. There are significant areas of housing redevelopment in this zone.
- **The New Street and Church Lane zones**. Strings of largely domestic and residential buildings on secondary streets first developed probably at the end of the medieval period. There are a number of public and community buildings on New Street. The later terraced development on Emsworth Road is also included in this zone.
- **The Gosport Street zone**. A densely developed area of housing from the last two centuries, including, as well as Gosport Street, the terraces on Station Street and North Close. There are substantial areas of housing redevelopment from the 1970's and 1980's in this zone.
- **The Waterloo Road zone**. Only here within the conservation area does there remain a group of lower, smaller cottages of a scale not found elsewhere in the town.
- **The 'northern edge' zone**. Two areas, split by New Street, of formerly open land adjoining the High Street plots, and to the rear of St Thomas's Street. Recent decades have seen a range of community uses sited here, as well as blocks of flats, surface car parks (on Cannon Street), and playing fields. The zone acts as a buffer between the medieval Borough and the newer town to the north.
- **The Grove Road zone**. The area forming a buffer to the south side of the medieval burgage plots on High Street, most of this land remained open until after the Second World War. Some large older houses remain, but most of the development (Solent Mead, Grove Place, Grove Pastures, West Hayes, and in the grounds of South Hayes) consists of large detached newer dwellings, but still with generously sized plots.

- **The 'boatyard' zone.** Between Waterloo Road/ Mill Lane and the railway, this zone was a waterside location, lined by river-related activities. The arrival of the railway limited the waterside aspect, and the zone now includes factory buildings and the railway station.
- The pattern of burgage plots was not continued beyond the medieval Borough. Only immediately east of New Street did a few plots on High Street run right back to Cannon Street, although it is not known whether these extensions to the depth of the plots were deliberate or piecemeal accretions.

4.2.2 Implications for Development

- **Development, including new road layouts, which cuts across the intact medieval and post-medieval street pattern and plot layouts, should be avoided.**
- **Development that is allowed within the burgage plots should be aligned along the direction of the plots. Development that seeks to develop at right angles to the direction of the plots by straddling or bridging plot boundaries (even if the boundary marker itself is left in place) should be avoided.**
- **New development, which introduces significant elements of building of a scale or intensity out of keeping with that of the original, extant pattern of building in that particular zone of the conservation area, should be avoided.**
- **Any development allowed in the rear part of burgage and other old plots should leave visible and accessible the alignments of plot boundaries, and should not obliterate evidence of old boundaries between two or more adjoining plots.**

4.3 Historic Uses and their Influence

4.3.1 Analysis and Assessment

- There are few examples in Lymington of buildings, the appearance or layout of which reflect their original intended use. The industry, on which Lymington's prosperity was based, the extraction and exporting of salt, was conducted well away from the town centre (at the saltings to the south), and there are no traces in the town centre of it.
- Redevelopment near the riverside has removed most of the buildings that had an association with the activities taking place at the quay or on the river. Only a couple of 'lofts', now in other use, remain on Quay Road. There is also a characterful old quayside warehouse at the rear of and forming part of the accommodation at the Ship Inn.
- Many of the cottages on Nelson Place and Captains Row were once the homes of fishermen or boatmen. Some still have a side passage, giving access from the street to a yard at the rear, and in some properties these side passages are referred to as 'sail-drying rooms' or similar.

- Relative to other local towns there are few outbuildings to the rear of the High Street and St Thomas's Street frontages, that are worthy of attention. Commercial pressure has led to the conversion and adaptation of those that there are. There is a small number of remaining two-storeyed small coachhouses at right angles to the plots behind properties near St Thomas's Church on High Street.

4.3.2 Implications for Development

- **Development on plots in the town centre, reusing or extending traditional outbuildings, or replicating in new development that type of outbuilding, should have a character, form, scale and less domestic detailing, typical of those buildings and the relationship they have with the principal buildings on site.**
- **Developments at and near the Quay and the waterside should leave undisturbed any evidence of features in buildings or aspects of the layout of sites connecting those buildings and sites with the maritime and river-related history of Lymington.**

4.4 Archaeological Significance and Potential

4.4.1 Analysis and Assessment

- There are almost no standing remains from the medieval or earlier periods, and there have been few significant archaeological finds either. The Church of St Thomas is, as often with a parish church, the only site where medieval fabric (13th century) is found.
- Most of the older buildings in the High Street date from the 18th century, with just a few obviously earlier, but it is possible that there may be the carcasses of much earlier houses concealed behind some of these frontages. The exploration during alterations of a house at Nos. 26/27 revealed a house of the very late 15th century beneath the apparently unexceptional building's skin. Usually medieval sites were redeveloped, but sometimes earlier fabric was re-clad externally, and the evidence buried behind plasterwork internally.
- For archaeologists all areas have some archaeological potential particularly in a medieval town centre where much development land is likely to contain evidence of earlier buildings or activities. Those sites where there has been repeated, periodic ground disturbance probably now have little potential, but undisturbed parts at the rear of the burgage plots are still archaeologically valuable.
- Much of the town centre is categorised in the Archaeological Assessment Document forming part of the Hampshire County Council/ English Heritage survey of Hampshire's historic towns as being of 'high archaeological importance'. This zoning covers all the burgage plots on the High Street (except for the modern redevelopment around the Post Office), the plots on St Thomas's Street (except the Waitrose store), and all the sites on Quay Hill, Quay Street and Quay Road.

- 'Archaeologically important areas' are identified on Captain's Row, the north side of Nelson Place, and a strip on the north edge of Grove Road, where a trial excavation suggested the boundary wall of the borough may have been located. The relatively undisturbed Emsworth Road car park is also 'archaeologically important'.
- 'Areas of limited archaeological importance' are identified in the west, comprising Queen Street, the east side of Stanford Hill, the south side of Priestlands Place and the upper end of the west side of Belmore Lane.
- The purpose of undertaking archaeological survey and investigation in the centre of Lymington varies, depending on location, but the common purpose would be to discover evidence revealing more about the extent and phasing of both the pre-Borough settlement and the medieval Borough. There is especially the possibility that finds in the quayside area would be waterlogged, aiding their state of preservation.
- There will be times when opportunities should be taken to investigate the standing archaeology of early buildings in the central parts of the town, on those rare occasions that major intervention in the fabric of such buildings is planned and allowed.

4.4.2 Implications for Development

- **Proposals involving significant ground disturbance on sites of archaeological importance will be subject to Policies DW-E23 and DW-E24, Section C2 of the New Forest District Local Plan.**
- **On rare occasions, when significant disturbance to the historic fabric of listed buildings is granted consent, the principles of Policies DW-E23 and DW-E24 of the New Forest District Local Plan would be applied to the recording of aspects of the standing archaeology of such buildings, whenever it is suspected on available evidence that items of substantial archaeological and historic interest would be uncovered during work.**

4.5 Architectural and Historic Character of Buildings

4.5.1 Analysis and Assessment

General Analysis

- In a large conservation area such as Lymington, there is inevitably a wide variety of building types and styles. However, even in the core area of High and St Thomas's Streets, there are common characteristics that begin to make possible character analysis, even if at first sight the streetscene seems so varied. These relate principally to scale, and to a lesser extent to height, building line and age of buildings.
- The planned straightness of High Street, and the regularity of the layout of burgage plots along the street (although that pattern has by now become a little diluted), gives to an extent a unified spatial identity to the town centre, despite the buildings on those plots now being so varied.

- Lymington almost contains its shopping frontages to the principal axis of High and St Thomas's Streets. (There are a few shopfronts in Queen Street, on Quay Hill and in Quay Street, and also at the top end of Gosport Street). Elsewhere the buildings are of domestic type, although conversions to non-domestic use may have taken place. In New and Gosport Streets there is a scatter of warehouses and public buildings. On Quay Hill and Quay Street, many shops still look like houses, and the retail use creates conflicts in accommodating display space and advertising within a historically appropriate domestic elevation.
- There are clear 'cut-off points' at the edge of areas of differing character, which reflects the distinct phases of development in the growth of the town. There is little merging of different types of area, which makes the task of character definition easier.
- There are important groupings of good buildings, but to concentrate on these too much takes attention away from the important point that the ensemble of buildings in the centre of the conservation area is so good and relatively intact. Just one example is opposite the Church (Nos. 56-62 High Street), which conspicuously closes out and shapes the views looking eastwards along St Thomas's Street, as it appears to curve round to run behind the Church.



- With the obvious exception of the Church, Lymington appears to be a town with almost no buildings of earlier than 18th century origin. It has already been noted that 17th century or earlier cores may be found in some houses with later casings. The small number of obviously 17th century buildings include some of the larger and more impressive houses on the edge of the historic centre, such as the Vicarage on Belmore Lane and Church Lane House. Monmouth House and Quadrille Court on St Thomas's Street are also earlier, evident from the recognisably narrower gauge and more clearly hand-made nature of the bricks.
- The buildings lining High Street, Quay Street and much of St Thomas's Street are essentially of the 18th century, and on the rest of St Thomas's Street, Queen Street, Captains Row, Nelson Place and Church Lane they are a mixture of 18th and early 19th century. New Street, Belmore Lane, Gosport Street and Bath Road are almost all of the 19th century or later. A long process of infill of vacant plots, piecemeal demolition and redevelopment has led to many buildings of most parts of the 19th and 20th centuries in the High Street, and also in New and Gosport Streets.

- The former burgage plots may no longer be reflected in the widths of current frontages. Many plots have been subdivided with separate narrow building frontages of one projecting or two small bays. Elsewhere, plots may have been amalgamated, either in the 18th century, or more recently. The width of frontage very broadly is related to the relative architectural importance of the building, until recently when some new building has applied ideas of horizontal repetition of elements along an accentuated and excessively wide and bland frontage. Such buildings may possibly occupy the width of more than one original plot. Woolworths and the frontage building of Earley Court are examples. Plot widths are more standardized on St Thomas's Street, and even more on the streets leading off the main axis, where much housing is in terraced form.

Zonal Analysis

- **High Street zone.** High Street is the most diverse part of the conservation area. Taking almost any run of adjacent buildings at random, there is a wide variety of heights, styles and periods. There is an almost equal division in many parts between two and three storeys, although two storeyed buildings with receding roofspace accommodation are overall more common. Four storeys (as in Lymington House) are quite uncommon. What unites the frontages, irrespective of roof height, storey height, number of storeys or roof form, is that the scale, i.e. the relationship between width and height, the disposition and proportion of openings, and the solid-to-void ratio within the wallspace, usually remains constant.



Two parts of High Street, showing buildings of similar scale, but varying heights, widths, materials and styles



There are many larger and more sophisticated buildings on the High Street, from Twynham and Ivy House to the Stanwell House Hotel. The smaller and lower buildings of a more humble character, and especially the two storey buildings, are fewer in number in most parts of the street, and less noticeable. There is most consistency on the south side near the bottom of the hill, where the pattern of adjoining 18th century buildings with two storeys, dormers and tiled roofs is noticeable.



Two storeys with restricted roof accommodation is the norm in much of the conservation area

The pattern of building does not continue nearer the church on the south side, where new building and redevelopment has not had regard to the characteristics of building elsewhere in the street.

- **St Thomas's Street zone.** There continues to be a variety of building styles and heights on the north side of St Thomas's Street, although there are rather more buildings of two storeys than three. The buildings on the south side are more modest in size, and uniformly of two or two-and-a-half storeys, and these are more truly representative of the built character of the street. Those that appear to have three storeys are all aligned with the ridges at right angles to the street and their gables facing the road, and the 'third floor' is no different in type to the attic space of buildings with ridges parallel to the street.



St Thomas's Street - generally two storeys, but three where roofs turn to face the street gable end on

- **Quayside/ old Borough zone.** Development here is generally low with only a few buildings with three storeys (Wellington House on Captains Row; houses at the upper end of Nelson Place). The late 18th or early 19th century houses on Captains Row and Nelson Place were built to a high standard and with sophisticated detailing, and were probably never merely fishermen's cottages. Cellars, well-detailed joinery, the remains of iron railings and small and delicate door canopies are recurring features. There is also a measure of uniformity about the small houses on Quay Hill, with a good range of original or rebuilt ground-floor bay or bow windows. There has been too much redevelopment on Quay Street and Quay Road for the original pattern of small cottages and riverside warehouses still to be evident.
- **The 'western' zone.** The principal characteristic in this zone is of terraces of brick cottages and small houses. The earlier terraces are shorter with more uniformity, e.g. on Stanford Road, Belmore Lane (although rebuilt following fire) and Priestlands Place. On Southampton Road, a terrace of almost 30 houses would have been the first example in Lymington of large-scale speculative building. They apparently are identical, but subtle variations in joinery and entrance details may have been provided by the builder on request for the first residents. The later continuation of that terrace to the edge of the conservation area was developed piecemeal over a period of about forty years.

The villas on Highfield are, compared with everything else in Lymington, on a grand scale, with huge window openings, imported materials and masses of decorative detail. They have the appearance of having been built at a time when there may have been an attempt to establish Lymington as a resort.

- **New Street and Church Lane zone.** Historically similar, but now having rather different characters, their common characteristic is that retail shopping has not spread from High Street down them. Church Street retains a mixture of 18th and early 19th century houses and cottages, including both small cottages and prestigious family townhouses with service wings. New Street still has some similar domestic property, but also has residential building from the end of the 19th and the start of the 20th centuries. In addition there are large institutional buildings here - school, Baptist Church, Literary Institute - which make for an uneven rhythm of building along the street. Completing the line-up are some more modern, or older but visually non-conforming buildings (like the 3-storey furniture depository), which further confuse the pattern of building in the street.



New Street - a more fragmented piece of townscape, with opportunity for redevelopment and improvement

- **Gosport Street zone.** The character of this street is largely domestic, with later 19th century 2-storey terraced cottages towards the lower north end of the street. Nearer High Street the buildings are more varied, predominantly with two or three storeys, and including much from the later 20th century. Those three storey buildings with parapets near the corner with Quay Hill have more in common with High Street. The 1970's development at Trafalgar Place is suburban in character, and its weak frontage relates poorly to Gosport Street. There are a lot of alterations to the older properties, especially at the north end of the street. Station Street retains only a little of its earlier character of cottages with grey header bricks and sash windows. North Close has an attractive, nationally recognisable style with semi-detached red-brick houses with bay windows.
- **Waterloo Road zone.** Alone in the conservation area the 19th century cottages in Waterloo Road are small and humble with low eaves, many aligned alongside the lane on their shallow plots.
- **The 'northern edge' zone.** Buildings here are large, often in public ownership or community use. Few of the buildings have a traditional form. They are however relatively low for their size. Residential buildings are in blocks of flats.
- **The Grove Road zone.** Most of the buildings here are from the second half of the 20th century, and are large and set in spacious grounds. A scatter of older buildings includes East Grove on Grove Road, although the justification for inclusion within the conservation area is more to do with the former boundary walls, the mature tree cover, and the location of the area within the medieval Borough.
- **The 'boatyard' zone.** With the exception of the unlisted but most attractive Railway Station, all the buildings here are industrial in type.

Rear Extensions

- On High Street, and to a lesser extent on St Thomas's Street, rear wings and extensions are common. They are seldom as high as the front roadside range of building, and usually occupy only part of the plot width, leaving the site open at one side. Many aspects of rear wings will vary - a lower ridge height, different storey heights, shallower roof pitches, different roof materials, and often an intricate and piecemeal assembly of attached forms and shapes, reflecting successive phases of extension. There tends to be an uneven gradation down from the front of the site through successively lower parts of building down to a low, possibly single-storey conclusion. In more recent times, detached outbuildings may have been taken into the rearward spread of the main building.



The intricacy of building form and rooflines at the rear of major buildings in High Street.

Period Detailing

- With so many old and traditionally constructed buildings still existing, there is much evidence of authentic period detailing. This serves as a 'visual library' for the construction in new buildings of such as dormers, eaves, verges, sills and window and doorway heads. Particularly in the case of dormers there are numerous examples of well-proportioned, small dormers, most with hipped, tiled roofs and tile-hung cheeks (although there are other combinations of forms and materials used).

Recent Building

- Recent building (from the last forty years) in Lymington is generally undistinguished. Very few significant redevelopments within the conservation area enhance the area. A few examples of smaller, single-building developments enrich the character of the area, and more recently some smaller schemes have contributed positively to the appearance of the town centre.
- Amongst the better buildings are Ford & Co.'s building next to the Church (1961), and Barclays Bank in High Street (1980's). The retail and residential scheme on the corner of St Thomas's Street and Belmore Lane is a relatively large scheme on two roads with varied elevations, detailing, materials and rooflines. A pair of successful but low-profile houses at 1 and 2 Twynham Place (near the Church off High Street) are effectively unseen in views until the immediate approach to them. These projects were all clearly innovative and modern in their approach as well as appropriate in their settings.
- Buildings of more traditional design, well executed in their construction and detailing, include Bucklers Lodge (1993) on Priestlands Place, Studio and Coachman's Cottage on Cannon Street at the rear of 101 High Street, and the mews housing (late 1990's) behind the former Anchor and Hope pub at the junction of Captains Row and Grove Road.
- Most recently the new Library on the corner of Cannon Street and North Close (opened in Spring 2002) has introduced a large and conspicuously modern building into a location on the fringe of the historic area.
- There have been too many examples, in all parts of the conservation area, of poor quality building without architectural merit. The worst problem, causing a building to stand out unacceptably, is to design buildings with huge footprints and single, simple but bulky and obtrusive masses. Woolworths and Tesco are obvious examples. Such buildings have depths too great to be spanned by traditional roof constructions, that nonetheless remain in correct proportion to the height of the walls. The unsatisfactory solutions are often artificial monopitched roofs concealing large flat roofs, or flat roofs without pretence to be anything else. The sheer size, height and length of unbroken pitched roof slopes is disturbing in views from distance to such buildings.
- A simple way of summarising the previous point is that in a conservation area with intricate layout and modest scale, it is almost impossible to introduce big buildings without disruption and visual harm. There may however be sites on the fringe of the historic area, where larger buildings could successfully be sited. The new Library is an example.

- Smaller flat roofs are often found also on rear extensions, usually of single storey, in locations where someone has in the past taken the decision that the building is out of sight, and the design therefore is not thought to matter. These always look like utilitarian buildings without any design aspirations, where no attempt has been made to marry the new into the pattern of the existing. Often such poor building masses are combined with ugly detailing and cheap materials, compounding the offence caused by these bits of building.
- From amongst the other design failings of newer buildings, one, referred to elsewhere in the appraisal, is the way the front elevations of some infill buildings wrongly accentuate their horizontal dimensions. All the older buildings accentuate the vertical dimension, and greater width is disguised by dividing the building into bays with contrasting treatment to break up the impression of width. Most buildings of the 1960's and 1970's ignore this principle, stretching the horizontal axis without adding any strong vertical detailing to counteract the width of the frontage.

Modern Design

- It is expected that in Lymington there will periodically be a desire from owners to commission modern designs for new building. It is unreasonable to state that modern design should not be allowed, just because the town is a historic conservation area. There are many examples of excellent modern design fitting well into famous historic contexts. It is needed however to identify possible development sites where modern design solutions, it is felt, should not be attempted.
- The perception of modern design varies greatly, but many people feel they dislike it and distrust modern design solutions. It can be difficult for people to assess the merits of a particular modern design, because they lack familiarity with its typical components. The danger is that this creates a climate where either nothing modern is allowed to be built, or else where 'anything goes'. There are good and bad modern buildings, just as there are good and bad traditional buildings.
- The precedents of buildings in High and St Thomas's Street from the 1960's and 1970's, which detract from the visual quality of the conservation area, serve to highlight the failings that buildings of a modern design should avoid. Despite the fact that redevelopment would replace some unsatisfactory buildings, there is a need to prescribe to some extent the type of building that could take their places. This applies especially where new buildings would be placed in the midst of a densely packed and visually strong collection of buildings, most of them of architectural interest.
- Where there are development opportunities away from gaps in the frontages of High and St Thomas's Streets, the constraints that would have to be placed on modern design are less rigorous. At the rear of those burgage plots where a measure of development would not be against policy a wider range of styles of building would be possible.

- Flat roofs may in a very few circumstances be acceptable, when they are an integral element of a modern building design of high quality. A majority of unquestionably good modern buildings incorporate flat roofs. However such buildings cannot readily be accommodated in many locations with development potential in a conservation area such as Lymington's, where there is such a strong precedent of traditional forms of building being adopted.
- A willingness to entertain modern design does not mean that the principle of resisting big buildings or buildings that are clearly out of scale should be set aside. Achieving suitable design in any context, and especially a historic one, always requires that considerations of respecting prevalent scale, height, building line and orientation must be observed.

Shopfronts

- Shopfronts, being at eye level, and intended to attract attention, have a disproportionate effect on the appearance of streets. The Council's 'Shopfront Design Guide', adopted as supplementary planning guidance, gives detailed design guidance on shopfronts, signage and advertising and also security shutters, and should be referred to by those proposing changes to or introduction of these features. There is in a historic street a concentration of 'period' shopfronts, even though many of the 18th century buildings would not originally have been built with integral shopfronts, these only being added later. There are in the cases of Victorian or later buildings opportunities to design a shopfront to conform with the period of the building.
- As with the buildings themselves, the shopfronts in many buildings from the 1960's and 1970's are bland and unattractive. They are the most likely to feature wide, unbroken sheets of glass, and they would usually benefit from applying the principles of subdivision and composition that are seen in traditional shopfronts.
- A particular concern is the design of security shutters and grilles giving protection to shopfronts. The Council shares the concern that shops vulnerable to frontal attack should be allowed to be protected. Nonetheless, from the range of available measures, some are visually sympathetic to buildings and in the streetscene, and some are very damaging, making a town's commercial centre look ugly and unattractive. Two of the main variants in design are whether the screen is solid or meshed (thereby preventing or allowing sight through into the shop), and whether it is external or internal. Included in this is how the shop appears both in daylight and at night when the shutters are down or closed. The provision of security shutters is a growing concern nationally, and historic streets will come under just as much pressure as other areas.

4.5.2 Implications For Development

- **New development in any zone identified within the conservation area should be of a scale that is not damagingly at variance with the established scale of traditional building and development in that zone. The style of new development should complement the character and styles of the established buildings.**

- Where a historic building with a domestic elevation has been converted to retail use, but retains the openings and undisturbed surrounding brickwork of its former residential use, schemes of advertising and display of goods should keep the domestic detailing on view, and not conceal it behind a planted shopfront.
- Where new development is allowed, building in the conservation area should not exceed three full storeys in height. On High Street redevelopment on small sites should have two, two and a half or three storeys, and on sites with wider street frontages, the mix of storey heights should reflect the balance of two, two and a half and three storey buildings in that part of the street. In St Thomas's Street any new development should be of two or two and a half storeys in height. Elsewhere in the conservation area new building should have the number of storeys that is most commonly found in the buildings in that street.
- Where building is proposed with accommodation in a 'half storey' in the roofspace, the dormer windows to that accommodation should be at a vertical plane set back from the plane of the wall, and should be significantly smaller than the windows in the wallspace below, with dormers of a size to match.
- Other than in the 'boatyard' zone, flat roofs should not be used on buildings, except where a clear case can be made in terms of good design for a small area of flat roof to be incorporated as a minor element in a larger building with traditional roof forms. Where a proposal for a modern building design is considered acceptable in its context, it may be that a flat roof could as part of such a proposal be appropriate and permissible.
- Buildings in the conservation area should not have footprints of a size that results in roofspans that cannot reasonably be spanned by simple or more complex roofs of traditional form and pitch, of moderate size, and that remain in correct proportion to the height of the walls below. An exception would be made if a proposal for a modern design on the fringe of the core historic area (e.g. such as the Library) were considered appropriate and incorporated a non-traditional roof form.
- New development with elevations facing the main streets of the core of the conservation area (High, St Thomas's, New and Gosport Streets) should avoid wide frontages with accentuated horizontal emphasis, which fail to observe the predominant vertical dimension in the architecture of the traditional buildings in those streets.
- All new development (including redevelopment) fronting New Street should aim to consolidate or reestablish a visual flow of building lines, that helps to create a more harmonious piece of townscape. Despite precedents in the street of visually non-conforming buildings of greater scale or more storeys, new development should be generally of two or two and a half storeys, with isolated points of three storeys to add interest and contrast to otherwise two-storey development.

- **Formation of or addition to rear wings on buildings with frontages to High and St Thomas's Streets should be at a height lower than that of the ridgeline of the main building, and should occupy a part only of the width of the plot. Where several stages of building already run back from the main frontage, attention should be given in any further extensions to an appropriate continuing reduction of height and attachment of smaller building masses towards the rear of the site.**
- **New or replacement shopfronts in commercial premises should be of high quality, and be modern interpretations of an established or traditional style, i.e. sympathetic to the character of the building and area, as required by Policy DW-E21 of the New Forest District Local Plan, and as detailed in the Council's Shopfront Design Guide.**
- **Security shutters and grilles to shopfronts should where possible be internal within shopfronts, and be designed so as still easily to allow sight into the shop at all times.**
- **Redevelopment on certain sites in the conservation area should observe the content of policy guidance published by the District Council in the New Forest District Local Plan. The relevant sites are the Telephone Exchange and Post Office (Policy LP-3); 77-90 High Street and School Lane (Policy LP-4); the Furniture Repository on New Street and Emsworth Road (Policy LP-5); the Library site on Cannon Street (Policy LP-7); and the Builder's yard on Cannon Street and Gosport Street (Policy LP-8).**
- **Where a redevelopment proposal on the frontages to High or St Thomas's Streets proposes the adoption of a modern design solution, such designs should broadly observe the typical solid-to-void ratios of surrounding buildings, should avoid extensive areas of glazed elevations, and should avoid a conspicuously flat-roofed treatment.**
- **Where a redevelopment proposal for a single dwelling or other building of comparable size in the rear parts of the burgage plots or elsewhere in the conservation area proposes the adoption of a modern design solution, such proposals should not exceed a height equivalent to that of two storeys. There is the opportunity at the rear of the burgage plots to feature low-profile rooflines.**

4.6 Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials

4.6.1 Analysis and Assessment

- Brick is the basic building fabric of most older buildings in Lymington. That fact is however not so obvious, as so many elevations are either painted or rendered. Roofing materials are, predictably, clay tile or slate. There is not one dominating combination of materials or finishes in use locally.

Brickwork and Walls

- The unpainted brick has a warm red colour with varying orange tones in the clay. In later or more prestigious buildings, other bricks were imported, good examples being the yellow/buff brickwork of Lloyds TSB bank (39 High Street) and Lymington House (73 High Street). Some 18th and earlier 19th century buildings, often in terraces, have overfired grey/blue headers producing a simple chequerboard effect, cottages in Stanford Road and at 15/16 Captain's Row being examples.



Stanford Road - brick listed buildings with grey-blue headers used throughout

- Seldom does the brickwork of all or most buildings within a terrace or group remain fair-faced, i.e. unpainted. Where that is the case, the warmth of the tones of the brickwork seems appropriate and more natural in the streetscene. Good examples are in Priestlands Place and at the upper end of Belmore Lane.
- It is very instructive to look at Nelson Place, where (almost) all the frontages are painted, and where, viewed from Captain's Row, it can be seen that the rears still have mellow unpainted brickwork. Painting of the fronts almost certainly took place in response to fashion, whereas now the perception is that the unpainted rears appear aesthetically at least as attractive as the fronts.



Nelson Place - painted brick facing the street, but the original unpainted brickwork survives at the rear



- Where brickwork is painted, there had for long been a restricted palette of colours - whites, creams, buffs etc.. By degrees, other pastel colours appeared, and now, especially in streets such as Quay Hill and Captains Row, a range of dark or bright shades of red, blue and yellow are also seen. The wider range of colours is largely restricted to some residential sidestreets, the limited palette of whites, creams etc being retained in High and St Thomas's Streets.
- Of those buildings where the walling is painted, a significant minority (maybe 3 or 4 out of 10) is rendered. The same range of colour referred to above is seen on painted render as on brickwork, although the surface texture is obviously smoother. Rendered older buildings are common in most parts of the conservation area including St Thomas's Street, High Street, Church Lane, Quay Hill and Quay Street and Gosport Street. The stucco villas on Highfield are prominent.
- Other than in the Church, on some bank buildings, and when used as dressings on prestigious buildings, there is little use of stone in Lymington. Carriage costs of stone from even the nearest source would have been hugely expensive. Stone is however relatively common used in steps from street level to the front door thresholds in streets such as High Street, Captains Row and Nelson Place.
- A very few buildings have mathematical tiles (tile hanging designed to look like brick facings when in place and pointed up), Wistaria House on St Thomas's Street being the best example.

Roofing Materials

- Both clay tile (more frequently found) and slate are common roofing materials. As a rule of thumb, tile is more likely on older buildings, buildings with steeper roof pitches and the more humble type of dwelling. Slate is more usual on houses in streets developed at a later date, e.g. Gosport Street and Southampton Road. However, many cases disprove that general analysis, especially where buildings have been reroofed in slate since the mid-19th century. Even a grand 18th century building such as Bellevue House, 48 High Street, has been roofed in slate. The extensive use of parapets above the front walls of buildings in High and St Thomas's Streets means that those roofs are less noticeable, their lower parts not being visible from street level. Clay tile is clearly the more appropriate roofing material in most parts of the town centre, with tiles being seen on many runs of adjoining houses, such as at the lower end of the south side of High Street, and continuing on Quay Hill.



Clay tiles are the most common roofing material. This view is on Captain's Row

- Most buildings in the town centre have one or more rear wings or ranges of buildings running off the main roofs at right angles and at lower levels. There tends to be a greater use of slate in these positions, as these parts of the buildings may be later, and may have shallower roof pitches. Even so, there is also an extensive use of clay tiles.
- Flags of worn Purbeck stone are found, but not frequently, on pavements (Church Lane) and more often in private pedestrian alleys leading off the pavements of High Street and St Thomas's Street. Of course, the listed cobbled surfaces of Quay Hill and Quay Street are well-known features of the town.

Modern Materials

- 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 above discuss the opportunity for modern designs on occasion. Modern design may propose the use of building materials from beyond the traditionally used range of walling and roofing materials, although equally traditional materials may be used in novel ways in modern designs. Modern materials or natural materials not normally used in this area can be of high quality and complement the appearance of the established materials in the historic core. Equally, materials other than timber could be used in shopfronts where the period of the building justifies a non-traditional treatment.

4.6.2 Implications For Development

It is accepted that there is no control over the painting and rendering of buildings, or over change of roofing materials, except where the building is listed, or where an Article 4 Direction has withdrawn those permitted development rights. Paragraphs below dealing with those issues therefore relate to those circumstances, but would also be used in negotiation on new development. At the least the paragraphs contain advice on best practice.

- **New development in parts of the conservation area where walls are predominantly of unpainted brick should employ facing bricks that are a good match for or complement well the local red stock brick with orange tones. Elsewhere in localities where there is a mix of buildings with painted brick, unpainted brick and rendered elevations, any of those finishes should be acceptable, except where there is a need to match or complement the materials of an existing building on the site.**
- **Unpainted brick buildings with the old Lymington stock brickwork (warm red with tones of orange) in good condition, especially those forming part of a group or terrace of such buildings, or with old unpainted brickwork with grey/blue headers, should not be painted, in order to retain on view the best examples of the once plentiful stock of buildings faced in the attractive local brick.**
- **Whether tile or slate, only natural roofing materials should be used on buildings of traditional construction, or on roofs of a historically appropriate pitch, whether existing or under construction, which are or will be clearly visible within the conservation area from publicly accessible vantage points.**

- **Natural clay tiles are suitable for use on roofs in most parts of the conservation area, and especially should be used when a roof will be seen alongside several other adjoining tiled main roofs, and is of a similar pitch to those roofs. Other than in those circumstances, natural slates are also suitable for use in most parts of the conservation area.**
- **Where a modern design proposal is considered appropriate, the use of modern or natural materials not normally used in this area, which are of high visual quality and which complement well the traditional materials in the area, should not be prevented. In the case of shopfronts, examples would include marble, tiles and various metals. Stone facings and bricks of a colour and texture very different to the typical bricks of the area should not be used, even in modern buildings.**

4.7 Characteristic Local Detailing

4.7.1 Analysis and Assessment

- In a town with so many remaining 'period' buildings, there are of course many period features to be seen. Few of those however are of types peculiar to the buildings of Lymington, rather being typical of those types and periods of building nationally. For example there is a very good and varied collection of Georgian entrance doors and doorcases, some quite individual and unorthodox in detail, not conforming to the purest models of classical Georgian proportion. On Captains Row and Nelson Place there is a repeated use of projecting door canopies resting on shallow scrolled console supports.
- Many buildings on High Street, and on the north side of St Thomas's Street, have upstanding brick-faced or rendered parapets rising above the front walls, concealing from view from street level the lower parts of the roofs behind. Usually there is a running projecting cornice on the wall at eaves level before the parapet continues. Parapets tend to be on those buildings with the wider frontages.



Parapets in brick and render topping the front elevations on St Thomas's Street

- In the High Street there are many bay projections, often through the full height of the building from ground level to eaves, but at times only rising from the upper edge of the shopfront surrounds. The bays are three-sided canted timberwork projections from the plane of the front wall, and are found in both two and three-storey buildings. The windows are all sliding sashes, often with two sashes paired side-by-side in the front face of the bay. They are often on buildings with narrow, one- or two-bay frontages giving some importance to what would otherwise be a plain and unnoticed minor building in the street. Several retain the original joinery around the sashes, with ornate cornices, well moulded corner sections, and fluted panels between the storeys. The use of these deep bays continued into the Victorian period, with windows and detailing of that period.



- There is a recurring use on first-floor balconies of iron railings, and one pattern, which was common nationally, was used repeatedly in Lymington. This style, often combining both wrought and cast iron, is known as 'Heart and Honeysuckle' and was designed in the 1770's by Robert Adam. They were cast in Central Scotland but distributed nationally, and are seen on listed buildings such as 29 High Street and the Angel Hotel opposite, and on good unlisted buildings such as 36/38/40 Gosport Street.



- There are relatively few front railings in Lymington, partly because almost all buildings front directly onto the pavement. On Captain's Row and Nelson Place, and shops with raised ground floors on High Street, stone steps rise to the front door, and railings run up alongside those steps. Nelson Place is one of the few locations where numbers of the old spear-topped front railings survive.



Stone steps and original railings on Nelson Place. Original railings are now rare

- Elsewhere the absence of railings is quite noticeable, as in Southampton Road. And where, again as in Southampton Road, new railings are put in place, they immediately look appropriate if of a traditional type. (Old photos clearly show that there were standard railings of traditional type fronting all the houses on Southampton Road, to the very great advantage of the appearance of those terraces).
- Lymington has an unusually large number of crinkle-crinkle walls, serpentine walls with continuous and regular undulations in their plan. Most are individually listed or form the boundaries to properties which are listed. Although not unique to Lymington, their presence is something of which most people are aware, especially where they are prominent, for example the walls lining parts of Church Lane. Although built in this way to give added three-dimensional stability, many are cracked or have been rebuilt, as they were only built with a single brick's thickness. It is said that these walls were built by French Royalists who took refuge here during the Napoleonic Wars.



Crinkle-crinkle walls, serpentine shapes created (maybe) by French refugees

- There are many roof dormers in the roofs in the town centre, especially in the buildings of two and a half storeys. It is notable that a very high proportion of these dormers are old and of a very traditional and unaltered style. The sizes are modest, the framing and construction appears light, rather than massive and topheavy, and the windows are balanced. Most are hipped with clay-tiled roof covering and tile-hung cheeks.
- There are a few, but not many, original shopfronts in the High Street and the secondary shopping streets of the town centre. Most are of mid-19th century date, and many of those are altered. On Quay Hill there is a group of bay- or bow-windowed shopfronts of generally early 19th century origin, but even these are later insertions in 18th century buildings.

4.7.2 Implications For Development

- **Proposed alterations should retain characteristic detailing of buildings, including purely decorative detail, to maintain local visual interest and distinctiveness. (See also Policy DW-E19 of the New Forest District Local Plan).**
- **In those few schemes for new development or redevelopment which may be proposed on the frontages of St Thomas's or High Streets, the incorporation within the design of the elevations facing the street of either parapet upstand walls or full-height bay windows could be considered, as these features are so evident in the established streetscene.**
- **Particular attention should be given to the retention within proposed developments of those crinkle-crankle walls or parts of such walls that are not already protected by virtue of being listed.**
- **Proposed new dormers should take their design lead from the many original and appropriate existing dormers in terms of their materials, size, form, construction and detailing. Likewise the detailing of window cills, the arches over window and door openings, and the verges and eaves of new or extended buildings, should replicate one of the types of such detailing on local traditional buildings.**
- **When proposing to erect or replace upstanding front boundaries to the terraces of houses on Southampton Road, consideration should be given to iron railings of an appropriately traditional style and height, in preference to any other forms of boundary enclosure. Favourable consideration would be given to any such proposals, or to similar proposals in other locations where it is known that front railings formerly existed.**

4.8 Character and Relationship of Spaces within Area

4.8.1 Analysis and Assessment

- There is in Lymington no square, market place, or central gathering space. The Borough was founded with straight and regular main and secondary streets, without occasional widening of streets to create smaller urban spaces.

Space in the Main Streets

- High Street is a wide thoroughfare, formerly able to hold within its width a freestanding Town Hall, and still holding regular markets. It does in itself have a sense of being an important urban space. The street is wider on its level part than further east on the hill, and particularly widens east of the Church, before the buildings on the north side (near Twynham House) turn back in towards the Church, thus shaping the view. St Thomas's Street is much less wide and less formally planned.
- Some of the lesser streets are narrow with a close sense of enclosure, as in Captains Row and the upper end of Church Lane. New and Gosport Streets have no distinctive character about their spaces, as redevelopment over the years has led to very diverse and fragmented pieces of townscape, with a range of heights, building lines and treatment of space at the fronts of buildings.
- Numerous alleys run off High and St Thomas's Streets, some leading to separate properties behind the frontages and others running through to land beyond the burgage plots. Many, particularly the pedestrian alleys, have strong character, either from the buildings lining the alley, or from their surface treatments.
- Alleys and paths also run across the back of plots in High and St Thomas's Streets in some places. Of these, Madeira Walk to the south of the High Street, runs between old, high brick walls towards Captains Row, becoming narrower and more like a 'smuggler's path' as it goes.



Haydens Court, one of the more attractive stone flagged alleys off High Street.



Madeira Walk, an ancient narrowing back path running between high walls.

- Most of the more modern and vehicle accesses lack that intimate character. An example is Earley Court, built in the 1970's, which looks drab and monotonous in the wider area fronting the shops.



Earley Court - a rather barren space surrounded by drab buildings

- The premises of Moore and Blatch (Bellevue House, No 48 High Street) are set back, with low, single-storey pavilion wings projecting forward at its sides. This distancing from the street emphasises the prestige of this very fine house within the street.
- By comparison, the Masonic Hall (No. 10) and the United Reformed Church (No. 47), set well back from the street, do not read as impressively in the streetscene, in part because the roadside walls, railings or trees lead the eye straight across the frontage gaps.



Bellevue House (48 High Street), the most important domestic house in High Street, set back to emphasise its splendour

- The redevelopment involving the Post Office also deliberately set the new buildings back from the street, seeking to create an urban space within the long run of High Street. The seats, cobbled areas and maturing trees help to mark the usual building line. The setbacks both here and at the adjoining site bring about a weak piece of townscape, accentuated by the dreadful aesthetic quality of the bland and featureless buildings put up in the 1960's.

Main Open Spaces

- There are no noticeable open spaces in the town centre, whether public or private, which are features within the streetscene. Occasionally, as at Chawton House on St Thomas's Street, good rear gardens are glimpsed through the gaps between buildings. Even the churchyard, the largest open space in the town, is not readily apparent from the street.

- The open rear parts of the burgage plots differ from one side of High Street to the other. To the south the gardens are largely secluded and private, whilst to the north many plots are overlooked from the land beyond off Cannon Street and School Lane, and used for car parking. The pattern of largely low-level building on the rear parts of these plots is obvious. On several an absence of walls at the end of the plots, especially alongside School Lane, causes uncontained space to appear to leak out of those plots.
- The Quay, as a large open space, only dates from the later 20th century, having been largely covered in building before then. This is the only place in the town centre where the town opens up to the river. It is unfortunate, but nonetheless a continuing certainty, that it will be largely occupied by parked cars. However an enhancement project during the first half of 2001 has created a better relationship between this space and the river for visitors to the Quayside, and has reduced the impact of the cars.



The Quay, recently given a major facelift to enhance its appearance and appeal.

- The zone outside the burgage plots on the northern fringe of the conservation area contains a lot of open space. Some has specific purpose, like the car parks, the churchyard and the sports ground, some awaits new community uses (the Library extension on Cannon Street and the Medical Centre behind the churchyard), and some is simply earmarked as open space. It has the character of a buffer zone, distancing the town's old centre from some more modern areas further to the north.
- In the zone south of High Street stretching to Grove Road, most buildings are post- World War 2 in generously sized plots, with good tree cover around. Few of the earlier large houses and villas survive, but the boundary walls to those properties alongside Church Lane and Grove Road are a reminder of the former character of the area.

4.8.2 Implications For Development

- **In keeping with the established practice, any new development fronting onto High and St Thomas's Streets should be built up to the pavement edge. (This ignores more recent practice at the western end of High Street on its south side of setting building lines back behind a much deeper paved area).**

- Development next to any of the alleys leading off High and St Thomas's Streets should have regard to the quality of elevations abutting or visible from the alley, the retention of interesting surface detail, and the quality of views gained along the alley.
- When forming proposals affecting any plot on High and St Thomas's Streets without boundary closure at the end of the plot, and especially those adjoining School Lane, consideration should be given to providing an appropriate upstanding boundary treatment (probably a brick wall) to terminate the plot.
- Opportunities should be taken when altering or refurbishing the more recently developed courts leading off High Street, such as Earley Court, to upgrade the appearance of the spaces, giving attention to surface treatment and landscaping. (Policy LP-9 of New Forest District Local Plan promotes the improvement of the appearance of the buildings and the pedestrian route in Earley Court).
- Where development within the plots on High and St Thomas's Streets is considered acceptable, that development should be of an intensity less than that of the building at the front part of the plot. Especially no more than one third of the land in the rear half of unintensively developed plots on High Street should be occupied by building. (Policy LP-6 of the New Forest District Local Plan identifies groups of adjoining plots on High and St Thomas's Streets where the burgage strip pattern of the old Borough is clearly recognisable, and where, as a consequence, development in the rear parts of the plots is restricted. Policy LP-4 of that Plan identifies an area between Nos. 77 to 90 High Street as suitable for a mixed-use development, with building within the plots which retains features of interest including the ancient boundary walls).
- Development in the Grove Road zone to the south of the Borough should retain the general impression of detached houses sited behind high boundary walls in generously sized plots in a well-treed landscape.

4.9 Streetworks and Public Utilities

4.9.1 Analysis and Assessment

Street Lighting

- The lighting columns used in many parts of the town centre are the original 'gas' columns, although almost all by now have replica lanterns. Even here deterioration and maintenance have over time caused many parts of the original equipment to be replaced. The older ones have cast iron standards with fluted bases, Art Nouveau decoration, and square lamps. New Street has crisp and simple modern columns.
- In short, there is a range of streetlights, new and old, modern and antique, small and tall, and ugly and pleasant. Fortunately, the taller, modern and more unattractive light columns are only found in the outer part of Gosport Street and on Cannon Street, and at the 'top of town' around Stanford Road.

Highway Surfacing

- The surfacing of roads, lanes and pavements in the conservation area is disappointingly commonplace. The square white stone setts surfacing the full width of Quay Hill and Quay Street are an exception, and there are old and worn Purbeck stone slabs on paths at the top of Church Lane and in the churchyard near the east and west ends of the Church where they meet the pavement.



The famous stone setts forming the surface to Quay Hill.

New Purbeck stone was laid on pavements in Church Lane in the mid-1990's, and very recently both York and Purbeck stone have been used in the refurbishment of The Quay in combination with high-quality artificial materials.

- Small concrete paving slabs, inlaid at the edges with smaller blocks, are the materials in almost universal use throughout the pavements of the town centre. Older and uglier and larger concrete slabs only remain further out on Gosport Street, and in a few other places. On the narrower pavements on, say, Captains Row, artificial blocks are used without any paving slabs. Bitmac pavements are almost unknown in the central area, and the potential for them to look extremely unsightly when they are excavated is quite obvious, when the surface of Ashley Lane is examined.

Street Furniture

- There is a periodic need for items of 'street furniture' to be replaced or introduced. This may be the responsibility of the District Council, or the highway authority, or one of the statutory undertakers (i.e. electricity, BTelecom etc.). Items are not introduced which are not necessary, or retained once they become redundant. In almost all cases, they are exempt from the need to obtain planning permission. There is however an onus on service providers to ensure that the items are well-designed, as inconspicuous as possible, and that full use is made of the benefits of rationalisation and combination of items, in order to reduce the amount of what has come to be known as 'street clutter'.
- The High Street is a location where there is likely to be an increase in the amount of street furniture. The recent introduction of CCTV cameras on columns is an example. There is also a concern that conditions for pedestrians crossing the road should be made safer, as at present lines of sight for both pedestrians and motorists are unacceptably impeded by parked vehicles. The solution is likely to include bringing the paved areas out into the highway in places, as has already been done at the New Street junction. There needs to be however a recognition that one of the main visual qualities of the historic High Street is its unimpeded openness and impressive width along its entire length. Streetworks need to respect the existing visual strengths of the High Street and complement them.

Wirescape

- It is a great benefit, but one that is taken for granted, that there is no 'wirescape' within the greater part of the conservation area, as all wires have for years been routed underground within the area.

4.9.2 Implications For Development

- **When opportunities arise, the chance should be taken to upgrade the style of streetlights, especially in the areas of Cannon and Gosport Streets, and Stanford Road, possibly by continuing the use of one of the types of streetlights already in use elsewhere within the conservation area, either of a traditional or better designed modern style. (On main routes, however, there remains a need to ensure an appropriate height and level of lighting).**
- **When opportunities arise, the chance should be taken to replace the damaged Bitmac surface of Ashley Lane with a more attractive surface material, with an appearance better able to withstand future surface disruption.**
- **Streetworks and street furniture in High and St Thomas's Streets should as far as possible be low level and placed close to the back edges of the pavements, and should avoid introducing tall items (including bollards) that intrude in otherwise uncluttered views along the street.**

4.10 Focal Points and Views within Area

4.10.1 Analysis and Assessment

- The strength of Lymington lies in its ensemble of buildings. Although there are many good groupings of buildings, no formal compositions direct attention towards a focal building. As a result very few buildings stand out in a dominant way. The Parish Church of St Thomas is an obvious exception, the low tower and the west end standing centrally in the view westwards along High Street.

In most other cases, the straight streets of the older town do not have a similar focal point closing out the views.
- Although important buildings line High Street, and the taller, more impressive pieces of architecture are more prominent than the humbler buildings, all the buildings, because of the processional quality to the route, remain in the flanks of views along the street. Looking along the street, it is the continuous variety in style and height on both sides that creates the visual interest.
- St Thomas's Street has more uniformity in its buildings, and the interest in the views along the street comes more from the subtle curve in the street's alignment, without the planned straightness of High Street.



St Thomas's Church tower and cupola close out the view along High Street.

- Church Lane has a pleasing curving alignment, and the view towards its upper end is framed by higher buildings at a point where the street narrows, suggesting arrival at a destination.
- Views to the rear of properties on High Street are more easily gained on its north side, where the land is more open. The quality of those views is mixed, showing the intricate nature of the roofscapes and upper floors of the frontage buildings and the pattern of their lower rear wings. On the debit side, the rear views also show up rather too many rear extensions and outbuildings without architectural or design merit, and of unsympathetic scale, form and detailing.
- Quay Hill is the best-known piece of streetscape in Lymington, where the buildings and street surface are both of high quality, and complement each other. Round the corner Quay Street is also well known, although here some buildings let the overall quality down, and the advertising and paraphernalia of retail use make it clear that this is the prime tourist area of the town.



Quay Street is well-known and small-scale. Retail paraphernalia can affect visual character.

- As referred to in 4.8.1, views along New Street are made fragmented by buildings of poor quality or nonconforming style and scale, and there is an absence in places of boundary features to lead the eye away in views along the street.

4.10.2 Implications For Development

- **Particular attention should be given to the appearance and character of those buildings, both listed and unlisted, which feature prominently as focal points in views along the streets of the conservation area.**
- **When forming or assessing development proposals on sites fronting the principal straight streets of the central part of the conservation area, the impact that the developments would have on the streetscene when seen in oblique perspectives should be taken into account.**
- **Opportunities should be taken, when considering redevelopment on any site which occupies a focal position within the conservation area, especially one which terminates a view along a street, to create a building which can justify its position at a focal point of the town.**
- **When forming or assessing development proposals which amend or add to the rear upper storeys of buildings on High Street, and especially those on the north side visible from School Lane or the Cannon Street car-parks, the impact of the development from distance should be taken into account, recognising that the skyline elements of these buildings is prominent from a number of locations beyond the plots.**

- **Proposals for development on New Street should where possible and where necessary establish boundary features at a height and on an alignment which help to establish a more continuous line of front boundaries when seen in views along the street.**

4.11 Key Unlisted Buildings

(The identification of 'key unlisted buildings' on the maps does not mean that these are the only unlisted buildings in the conservation area where there would be a presumption against demolition)

4.11.1 Analysis and Assessment

- Most of the key buildings in Lymington's conservation area are listed. There are besides many good unlisted buildings which complement the listed buildings and contribute to the impression of a wealth of older buildings in the centre. Few of these have major townscape significance in their own right, their roles being as the minor features in the whole composition. Unlisted buildings of strong character are more prominent in those streets with fewer listed buildings, such as Gosport Street.
- The buildings identified in the schedules forming part of the Article 4 Direction, which restricts permitted development rights on selected residential property in the conservation area, are those unlisted houses which best retain their original character and features. Amongst these, important groups are at Southampton Road and Captain's Row, where they reinforce the protection given to adjacent listed buildings, Station Street and Gosport Street, where few of the older buildings are listed, as well as groups in Bath Road, Belmore Lane, New Street, Quay Road and Priestlands Place. All the buildings from the Article 4 Direction schedules are identified here as key unlisted buildings.



- Some unlisted non-residential buildings in the lower part of the town are also important, and occupy key locations in the conservation area. The Station is an imposing building with polychromatic brickwork, tall stacks, steep gables and many round-headed window openings. The former Crown and Anchor pub at the top of Nelson Place was retained after its closure for incorporation into a housing scheme. The Methodist Church on Gosport Street brings some interest and variety into a rather fragmented piece of townscape, and has attractive front and side elevations.

- Of newer buildings, the most notable, although not listed, is 47/48 St Thomas's Street (Ford & Co), a modern building of 1961, with refined use of high-quality traditional materials - stone, brick, slate, tile and extensive glazing.



A building of 1961 and of distinct quality next to the St Thomas's Church.

- It is referred to above that there are very few outbuildings of traditional type, especially within the area of the old Borough of Lymington, and St Thomas's Street. This makes the retention of those that remain in anything like original condition important.

4.11.2 Implications For Development

- **Key unlisted buildings (including those identified in the text above and on the maps), either occupying focal positions in the conservation area, or having particular interest or character, should not be considered as candidates for demolition and redevelopment. (See also Policy DW-E20 of the New Forest District Local Plan).**
- **Unlisted buildings of traditional form fronting onto any of the medieval or post-medieval streets of the conservation area (High Street, St Thomas's Street, Queen Street, Stanford Road, Priestlands Place, Belmore Lane, Church Lane, New Street, Gosport Street, Captain's Row, Nelson Place, Bath Road, Quay Hill, Quay Street and Quay Road), which retain the essential elements of their original appearance, should, in the interests of maintaining intact the ensemble of older buildings in the historic core of the conservation area, not be demolished.**
- **Outbuildings of traditional character within the plots on High and St Thomas's Streets, which retain, or which after conversion to an appropriate new use could retain, their original character, should not be demolished.**

Map 8 Green Spaces and Views

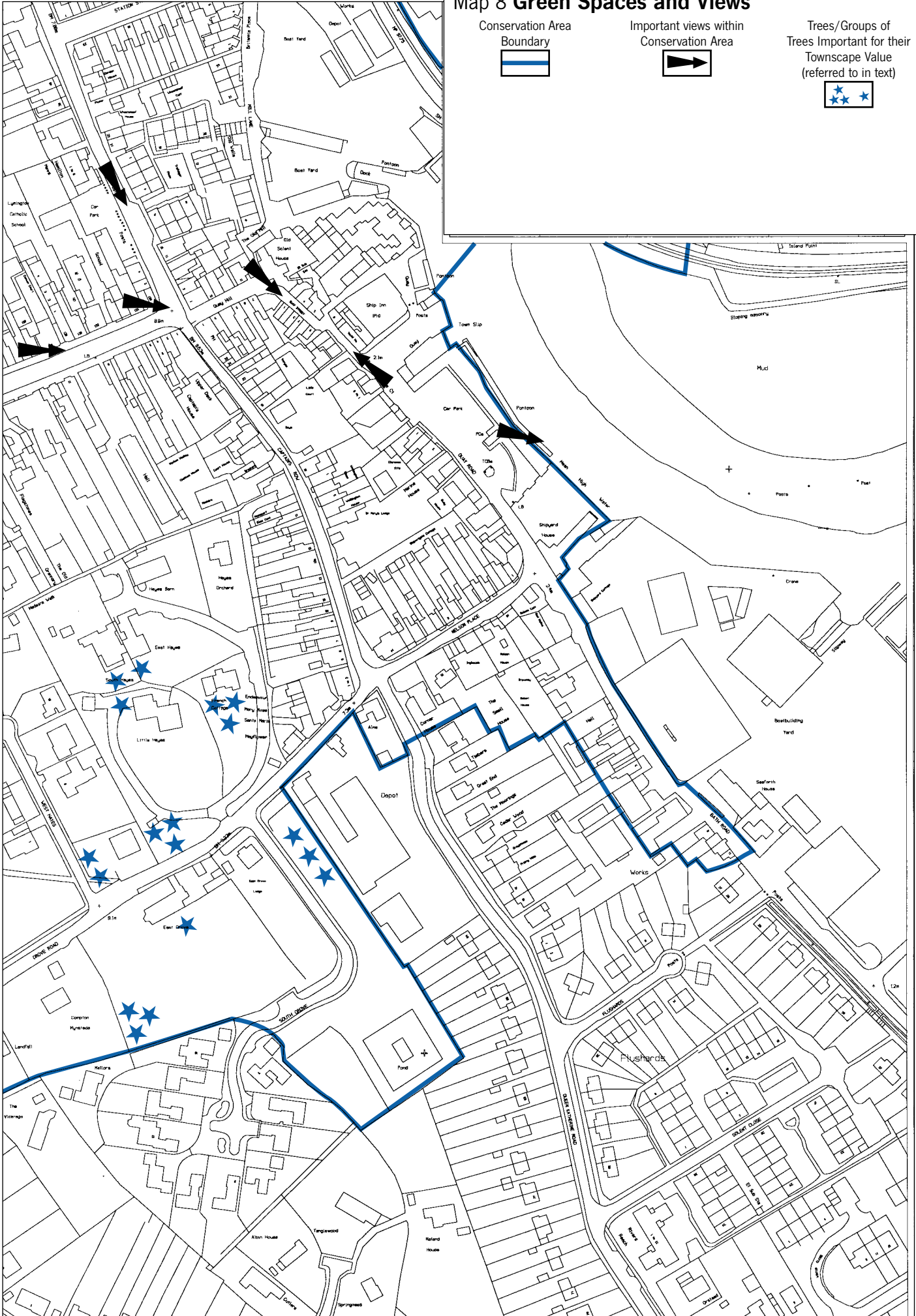
Conservation Area Boundary



Important views within Conservation Area



Trees/Groups of Trees Important for their Townscape Value (referred to in text)



Map 9 Green Spaces and Views

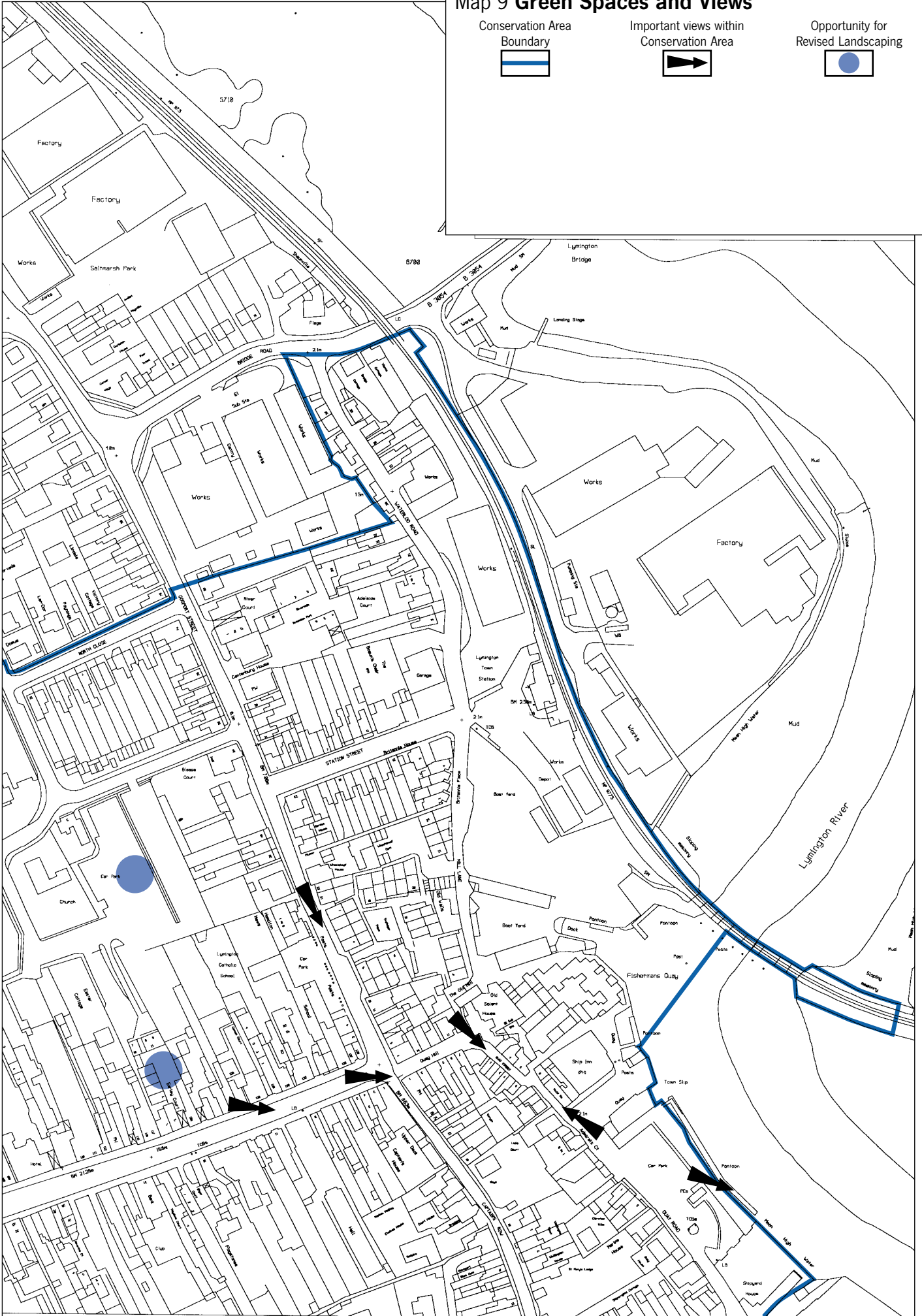
Conservation Area Boundary



Important views within Conservation Area



Opportunity for Revised Landscaping



Map 10 Green Spaces and Views

Conservation Area Boundary



Important views within Conservation Area



Significant Green Spaces




Trees/Groups of Trees Important for their Townscape Value (referred to in text)




Opportunity for Revised Landscaping



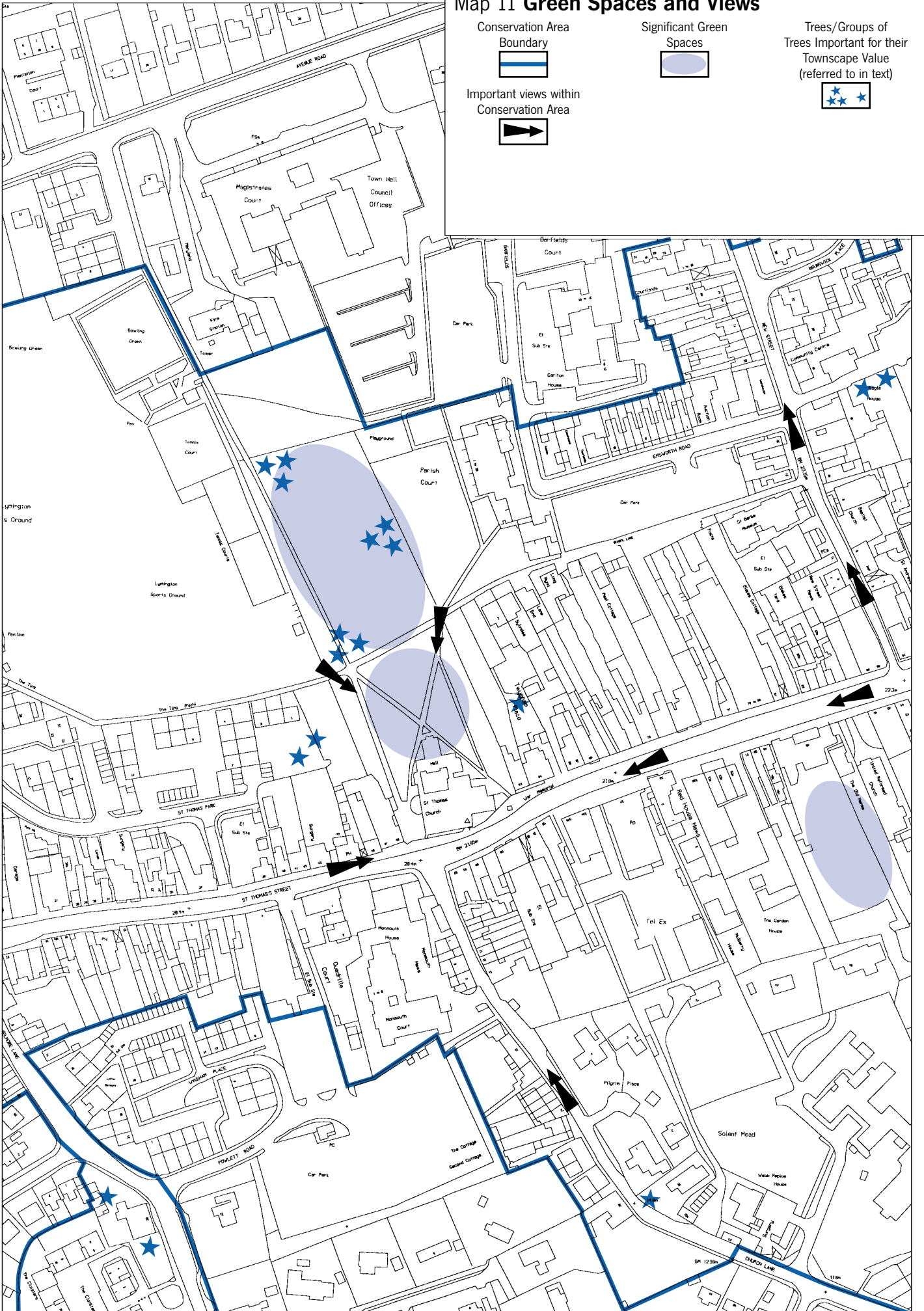
Map 11 Green Spaces and Views

Conservation Area Boundary


Significant Green Spaces


Trees/Groups of Trees Important for their Townscape Value (referred to in text)


Important views within Conservation Area

Map 12 Green Spaces and Views

Conservation Area Boundary



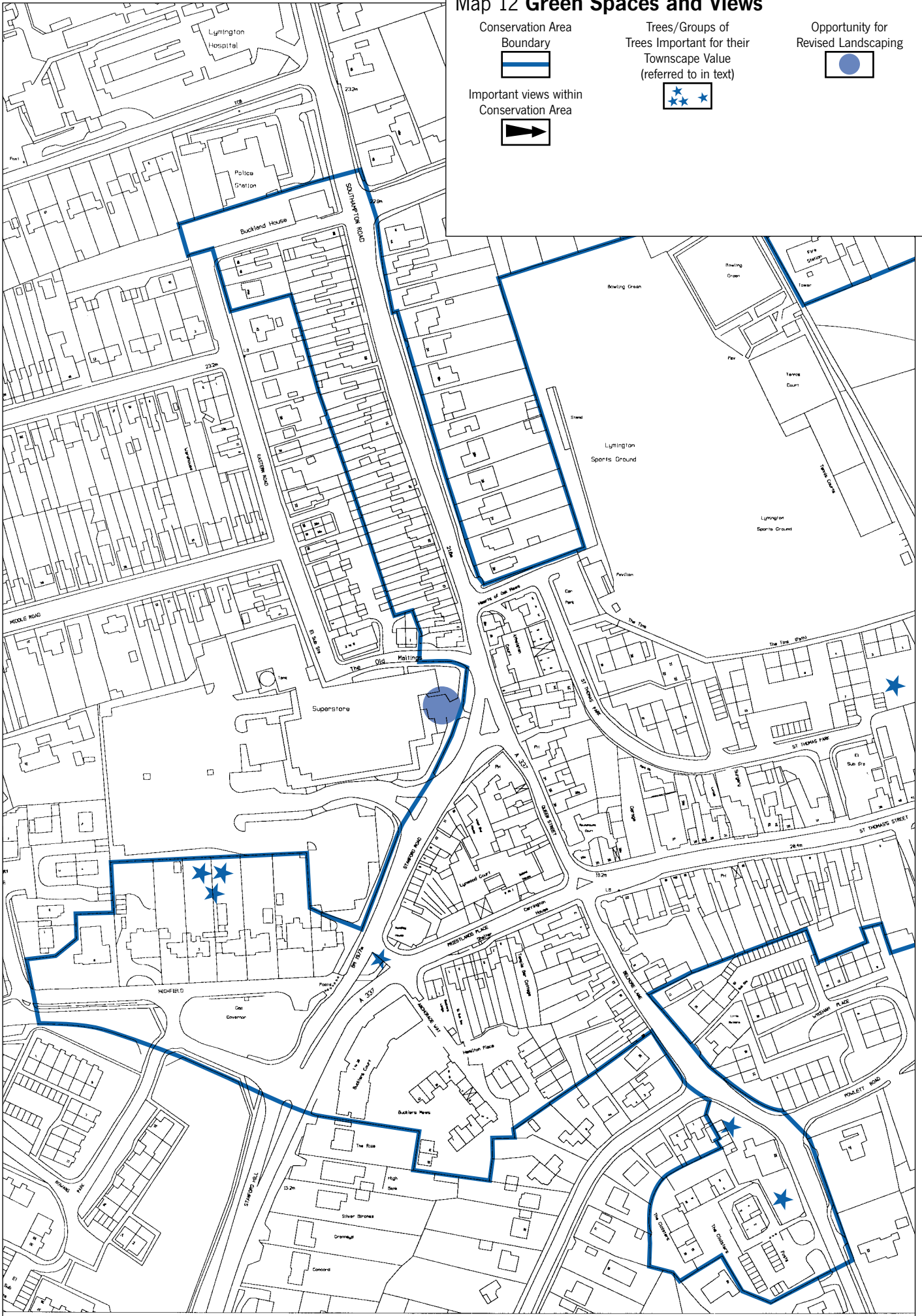
Important views within Conservation Area



Trees/Groups of Trees Important for their Townscape Value (referred to in text)



Opportunity for Revised Landscaping



4.12 The Contribution of Green Spaces and Features

(Trees with a trunk diameter over 7.5 cm in conservation areas benefit from some measure of protection, requiring notification to be given to the District Council before work to trees is undertaken. The Council may then make a Tree Preservation Order in order to be able to control such work).

(The showing on the maps of trees or groups of trees is not a complete record of the trees in the area. Those trees that are identified are particularly important for their townscape value, and that importance is in all cases further qualified below. Other trees in the zone may be valuable and important or have a significant public amenity, and may already be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, or may be so protected in the future. The mapping of 'trees important for their townscape value' makes no attempt to plot the branch spread of that tree or group of trees).

(Trees do not stand for ever. They grow old, become diseased, require management, and sometimes die. Therefore the showing of trees on maps does not avoid the prospect that they may at times have to be felled, even those that are cherished parts of the familiar local scene).

(Further information can be obtained from the Council's Tree Team (Helpline - 02380 285330), and from the published tree strategy, 'Growing Better Together')

4.12.1 Analysis and Assessment

- At first sight green spaces and prominent trees are not a major part of the appeal and interest of the centre of Lymington's conservation area. The main, older streets offer very little green relief amongst the buildings, but to the rears, especially south of the High Street around Grove Road, a wide variety of big, impressive trees is obvious.
- The Churchyard and its later extension beyond the line of the rear of the burgrave plots is the main open space, but it is largely screened from the street by the Church itself.



The Churchyard is the town's most historic open space.

Grove Gardens is a large, rectangular municipal space of grass and bushes.

- Beyond the burgrave plots to the south there is a lot of green space on private land, most largely sensed rather than seen, being hidden behind the high old walls of the big villas that once occupied the whole area. To the north beyond the burgrave plots, open space is in the form of large geometric chunks of land, some set aside for general recreational use, and others awaiting community development projects.

- The most important open areas are those parts of some of the burgage plots that remain open. There are many private gardens, and paradoxically these are often the least appreciated open areas in the town. None are more important than the garden behind the solicitor's offices at No. 48 (Bellevue House), where the character of the garden perfectly complements the grandeur of the house in the street.



The magnificent, secluded private garden of 48 High Street.

- In the town centre there is little space for small front gardens. Southampton Road and Priestlands Place are the only obvious exceptions.
- Many trees feature strongly in the outer parts of the conservation area, either as individual specimens, or as groups. There are also areas where much new planting has been undertaken, with varying expectations of the eventual success of the impact of the planting on the townscape. The species found are very varied, although limes, horse chestnuts and planes are probably the best represented. South of the High Street, as large grounds were gradually subdivided, property owners found that they had inherited specimens of exotic and relatively rare trees, planted earlier by enthusiastic collectors, e.g. gleditsia, tulip tree, liquidambar, silver lime, thuya and strawberry tree, to name a few in the Grove Road area.
- Significant groups of trees are more obvious in the south of the area, and include:-

the rear of the churchyard, with masses of limes and horse chestnuts, none dominating, but reinforced by many new trees of the same species, all growing where they will be able to develop as big forest trees without causing problems or disturbance,



Mature lime and horse chestnut trees have room to thrive in the town's Churchyard.

The Old Vicarage on Belmore Lane, where a large group of roadside trees shows a perfect relationship between mature trees and old building, in this case oaks and limes framing the front elevation of the listed building,

Highfield, where good specimens of gracious trees such as walnut and cedar ideally complement the elegance of the listed villas. The belt of trees in the rear gardens also provides a buffer between the villas and the Safeway car park,

Grove Place, where roadside trees, including a massive thuya, stand close to and arch over, an old listed wall. Attention and repair have recently been given to both to ensure secure futures and a happy coexistence,

generally in the area of West Hayes and the grounds of Little Hayes further east, there are many stately, exotic trees (such as cedars),

lining the road approach to South Grove, a belt of Monterey pines has yet to grow to maturity, and will become a major landscape feature in the area.

- Amongst individual trees, the following are worthy of note:-

an oriental plane in St Thomas Park, a magnificent, healthy tree, visible from many points in the town, and one of the finest specimen trees in the whole of New Forest District. An excellent walnut close by is almost unnoticed by comparison with this giant amongst trees,



two large limes next to the parking area behind Twynham House / Ivy House on High Street adjoining the churchyard, also very prominent in the townscape, the copper beech at the junction of Priestlands Place and Stanford Hill, the most notable of too few street trees in the centre of the conservation area, an evergreen (holm) oak at the edge of the St Thomas's Street car-park in the grounds of Wykeham Place,

a huge Monterey pine in the grounds of Eagle House on Cannon Street, completely dominating views along the street, and prominent from the east side of the river in views to the town from the country. The silver birches alongside reinforce the impact of this fine tree.



A huge Monterey pine and silver birch trees at Eagle House overhanging Cannon Street.

4.12.2 Implications For Development

- **All the trees referred to above, whether in groups or single specimens, are amongst those in the conservation area which should be retained and managed for their outstanding contribution to the appearance of the area.**
- **Opportunities should be sought within the general area of the car parks on Cannon Street to make space to plant suitable specimens of appropriate forest trees in locations where there is a good prospect that they will grow to intended mature size without disturbance or conflict being caused with other users of the area.**

4.13 Setting of Area and Relationship with Landscape

4.13.1 Analysis and Assessment

- Most of the conservation area is on level land, and there are few views of note either into or out of the area. The exception is at the eastern edges of the area, where there are open views out to the fields and woods on the east side of Lymington River in Walhampton and Boldre. Views south to the Isle of Wight from Ashley Lane and other places south of High Street do not register strongly, being only a small, distant and incidental part of the wider scene.
- From the Quay the view over and along the river is limited by the curve of the river upstream around the industrial sites, the railway bridge which curtails the view at close quarters, and the mass of boats, pontoons and moorings which fill the view downstream.

- The siting of the Burrard-Neale obelisk on Monument Lane, Walhampton, so as to align with the High Street, is of course deliberate.
- The impact on the conservation area of development outside the area can be considerable, where the boundary occurs at midpoint along a road, as on Southampton Road and New Street. Particularly on Southampton Road it is recognized that development affecting the entirely modern buildings on the east side of the road (outside the conservation area) will have a close impact on the 19th century terraces opposite, which are within the conservation area.
- At the junction of Queen Street, Southampton Road and Stanford Road there is a roadside space outside the Safeway supermarket. The conservation area boundary runs through this area, with the landscaped area and hard surfacing at Safeway being outside the conservation area. This space appears rather lifeless and uninviting, and the blank, uneventful rear elevation of Safeway, facing the road, is not yet successfully screened by the young trees.
- Travis Perkins builder's yard on Grove Road is another site beyond the conservation area boundary where redevelopment, in this case for housing, is anticipated in a sensitive location on the fringe of the oldest part of the old Borough. The main objective will be to make sure that the new development knits together again the fabric of the town following the removal of the builder's yard.
- Viewed from the higher land north of Walhampton School, certain characteristics of the conservation area are very clear. The church with its tower and cupola is the highest building in the scene, but only by a little, and the general height of buildings in the centre is obvious, a few older and taller buildings (i.e. four storeys) standing out conspicuously. It is not a precedent to be followed, as modern higher examples just outside the conservation area (e.g. Madrisa Court on New Street) demonstrate. The impact of large buildings with flat roofs, long unbroken horizontal eaves lines, and massive scale and size, spreading away from the main streets behind modern frontages, is very pronounced in distant views. Examples such as Tesco illustrate how the impact of proposals should be considered from far as well as from near. The view across the river shows that mature trees generally rise to a level just above the height of the tallest old buildings.



The contrast between the urban surroundings and the fields in Boldre viewed across the river is striking.

- From Undershore Road at river level in Walhampton the impact of dormers in the townscape is very clear. From here also, the greater distance shows up how alien and uninspired the forms, outlines and colours of some more recent built developments such as Admirals Court on the Quay can appear when seen in context. Generally the view to Lymington from the water of the harbour and river is limited by boats and pontoons.



The town seen from Undershore Road in Walhampton. The impact of new development in such views matters.

4.13.2 Implications For Development

- **The impact on the conservation area of development on sites close to but beyond the boundary of the conservation area should be considered, especially where the boundary is drawn so as to cross a road at mid-point along a straight, or where development on only one side of a road is within the conservation area. (Examples are Southampton Road, New Street, Gosport Street and Bath Road).**
- **Opportunities should be taken to promote the revision of the layout of the area east of Safeway facing A337 to landscaping that does more to diffuse the impact of the end of the Safeway store on the streetscene.**
- **The impact of any comparatively tall or large developments proposed in the eastern part of the conservation area should be considered not only from adjacent and nearby locations, but also from vantage points close to Walhampton School on the rising land on the east side of Lymington River. The purpose is to assess the suitability of the massing and height of the proposed development within its wider context. (This applies particularly to sites on and north of High Street between the river and New Street).**
- **Development proposals within the area of the Quay, Nelson Place, Captain's Row and the lower part of the south side of High Street running back to Madeira Walk, should in addition be assessed from Undershore Road in Walhampton. The purpose is generally to assess the suitability of the massing and height of the proposed development within its wider context, and specifically to gauge the impact of the rooflines and of the fenestration at upper level.**

4.14 The Negative Elements - Loss, Intrusion and Damage

4.14.1 Analysis and Assessment

- Lymington is a fine historic town, but this appraisal highlights the fact that some aspects of the town require attention. Especially the overall standard of small-scale development at the rear of sites in the town centre needs greater care.



The kind of utilitarian and ugly development in the conservation area that should no longer be tolerated.

- Specifically there are several prominent frontage sites on High and St Thomas's Streets, where modern buildings from the 1960's and 1970's have entirely failed to match the visual quality of earlier building. Examples are the Tesco supermarket, the Woolworths store, the Waitrose supermarket on St Thomas's Street, the Post Office, and the building adjoining housing the Coral and Granada shops. Also nearby (No. 52) is the giant Ionic frontage of a large early 19th century house retained and undercut at ground-floor storey to face up a bland and dull parade of modern shops.
- The Bus Station on the lower part of the High Street presents an unattractive aspect to the main street, giving sight of large and utilitarian buildings at the back of the site.
- Earley Court off High Street is typical of a suburban style of building from the 1970's which paid no regard to existing character, but merely imposed an anonymous national style irrespective of location. The most jarring elements are the wide, bland frontage to High Street, the 'empty' feel of the courtyard itself, and the rear aspect to the car parks.
- While there are several examples in lesser streets of poor buildings or parts of buildings, there is a noticeable concentration of such developments in and close to New Street. These include the flat roofed single-storey Boots building, the Launderette, the ugly porch on the listed Baptist Church, the disproportionately large furniture repository of Langham Browne, and the ramshackle premises of Lymington Domestic Appliances.
- An important aspect of Lymington's interest as a historic town is the wealth of older buildings of quality and character. This includes unlisted buildings, often seen alongside the listed buildings, and forming with them a whole composition. This importance has been recognised by the making of Article 4 Directions, restricting permitted development rights on selected unlisted

dwellings. In some areas, especially where there are fewer listed buildings, there have been too many visually damaging and inappropriate modern alterations to homes, such as PVCu windows and doors, heavy artificial roofing materials, and removal of the detailing that gives character to the buildings.

- The use of PVCu as a building material is not supported in listed buildings, or on residential buildings subject to an Article 4 Direction. On commercial buildings or buildings in mixed use there are no permitted development rights, and some proposed alterations would be judged as development (requiring a planning application), if they have a material effect on the external appearance of the building. There are many unlisted buildings in this category that could easily be spoiled by the insertion of bad PVCu windows, or windows with visually conspicuous and jarring opening styles, or other clearly non-traditional elements.

4.14.2 Implications for Development

- **Opportunities should be taken and encouraged to redevelop the sites of, or improve the appearance of, buildings identified above, viz. the Waitrose supermarket on St Thomas's Street, the Tesco supermarket buildings and the Woolworths store on High Street, and the Post Office, Telephone Exchange and adjacent building housing Coral and Granada on High Street (No. 54). (Policy LP-3 of the New Forest District Local Plan allocates the Post Office and Telephone Exchange site (No. 54) for town centre uses).**



Redevelopment on and next to the Post Office site would be welcomed.

- **Opportunities should be taken and encouraged to develop the site on St Thomas's Street between Nos. 37 and 39 with a development of high quality and with a scale to match that of the surrounding traditional buildings. The building should have elevations of two or two-and-a-half storeys, and should incorporate interesting and well-detailed elevations on its side (west) frontage. The style and character of a development here should relate to the established character of the surrounding traditional and vernacular buildings. (Policy LP-2 of the New Forest District Local Plan allocates the site for mixed uses including retail, business or residential, and with access retained to St Thomas Park, and allows that the site could include parts of the blocked-off roadway alongside the vacant site).**

- **Opportunities should be taken and encouraged to develop or redevelop several sites on New Street, or to improve the appearance of the buildings. The sites include Lymington Domestic Appliances and the Langham Browne furniture repository on and near the corner with Emsworth Road; the Boots store on the High Street corner; the launderette (No. 11); the public toilet block; the porch attached to the Baptist Church; and the car park adjoining the Baptist Church. (Policy LP-5 of the New Forest District Local Plan allocates the sites referred to here on or near the corner of Emsworth Road for mixed uses including community, business or residential).**



The Boots store on High Street is a conspicuously prominent single-storey site, where a two-storeyed building is needed.

- **The opportunity should be sought to improve the character and appearance of the historic Tins path, by replacing the concrete panel fence on its north side by a wall or railings of more appropriate design.**



The concrete panelled wall alongside The Tins path badly needs replacement with something more attractive.

- **When opportunities arise, the character of Earley Court should be improved, either by partial or total redevelopment, or by works to 'facelift' the buildings so as to have a more aesthetically acceptable appearance.**
- **Where proposed alterations to unlisted commercial or mixed-use buildings of traditional appearance and construction are sufficiently significant in their effect on the external appearance to be counted as 'development' in planning terms, the use of PVCu and the adoption of fenestration with visually inappropriate opening styles should usually be avoided.**

5 SOURCES

- 5.1 The following books and documents will be useful in understanding further the context in which development decisions are taken in Lymington.
- New Forest District Local Plan (New Forest District Council, November 1999)
 - An Extensive Urban Survey of Hampshire's Historic Towns (Hampshire County Council and English Heritage, 1999)
 - New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment (Environmental Resources Management for New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council, the Countryside Agency and English Heritage, July 2000)
 - A Walk Through Lymington (Edward King 1990, Ensign Publications)
 - Lymington High Street, then and now (Robert Coles, 1984)
- 5.2 Supplementary planning guidance relating to specific probable development sites is sometimes prepared and published, and is in conformity with the policies and proposals of the New Forest District Local Plan. Currently there is no such guidance covering any sites affecting the conservation area.
- 5.3 Some supplementary planning guidance deals with general topics. Examples that could be relevant within the conservation area are:-
- Design for Community Safety
 - Landscape Requirements for New Development
 - Parking Standards
 - Access for Disabled People
 - Development in Town Centres: Developers' Contributions in Lieu of On-site Parking
 - Primary Shopping Frontages
 - Shopfront Design Guide