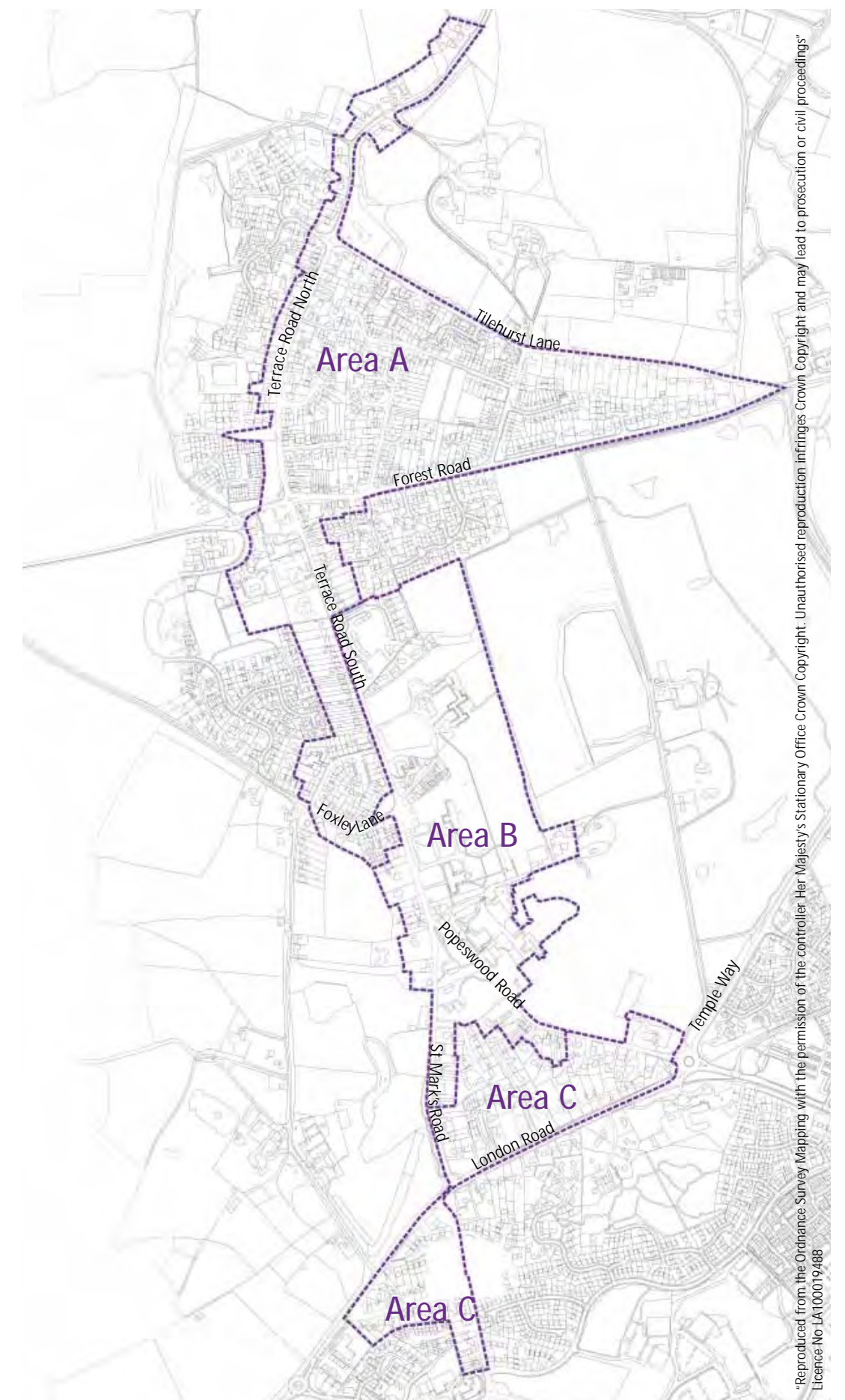


Chapter 1

Binfield - Popeswood study area

The character of Binfield and Popeswood area is predominately formed by streetscape, landscape features and boundary conditions. Architecture and house types within the area are very varied and in most locations do not strongly influence the character.



Structure

Area A: Binfield

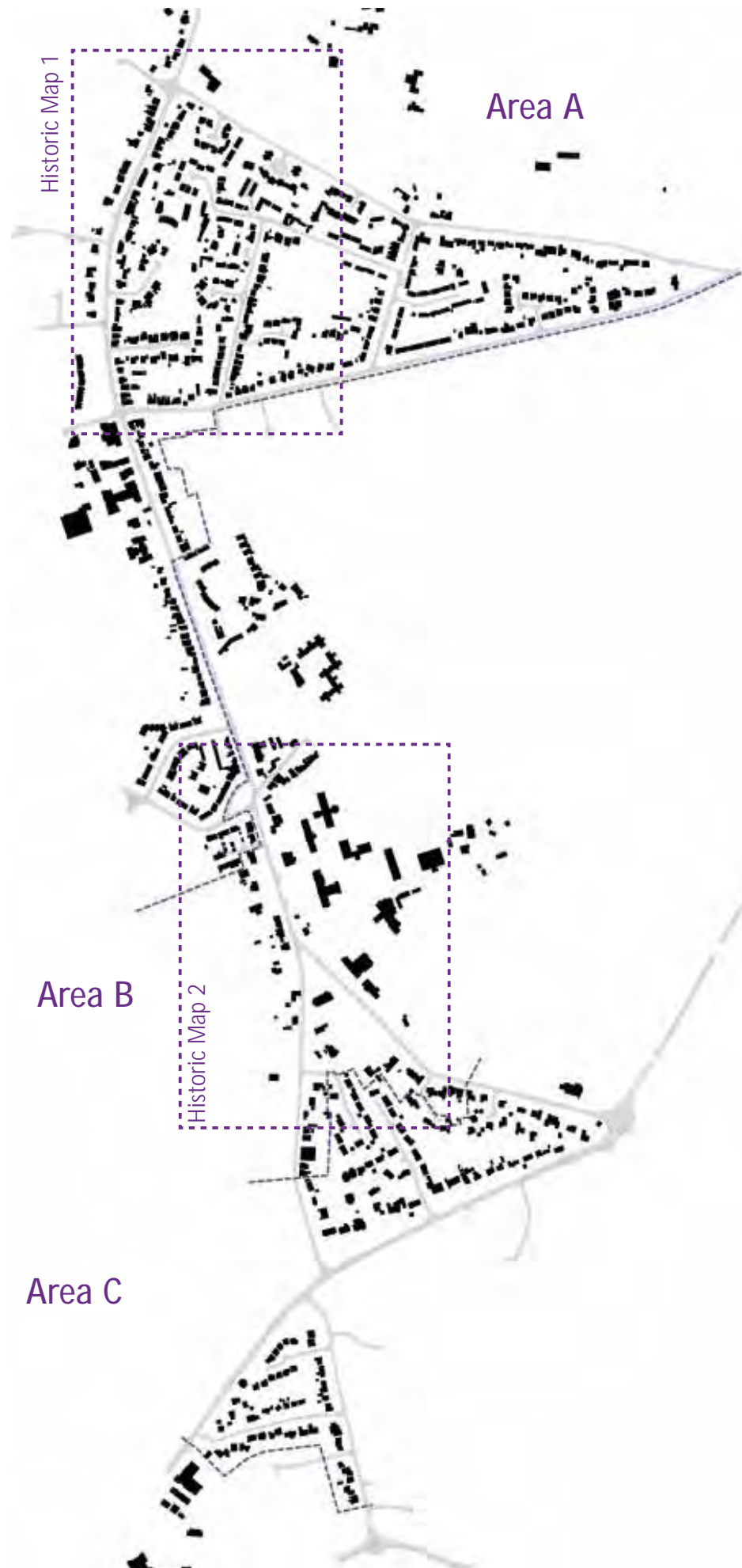
- The settlement pattern is based around a historic route along the ridge line, with secondary routes running eastwards down the hill to meet at a junction of Tilehurst Lane and Forest Road;
- Within this triangle there is a historic orthogonal layout of streets, that can be seen on maps dating back to 1843-1893;
- This settlement was a fairly loose collection of cottages along these streets in Victorian times and development of the area has taken place over time;
- There is generally a tight grain of development with relatively narrow plots and small scale building footprints along the historic routes, such as Rose Hill and Terrace Road North;
- Infill development in the form of a number of cul-de-sacs does not adhere to this overall character, however these cul-de-sacs are mostly situated within the block, behind the frontages of the historic streets, and so have relatively little impact on the character of the area as a whole;
- In the local centre and at the northern end of Terrace Road South, buildings are generally of larger footprint and massing;
- To the east, houses are set in larger plots and tend to have more space in between buildings;
- The Stag and Hounds Inn sits in an important location at the apex of the triangle along the approach to Binfield from the east;
- There are key views along streets to landmark features outside the area, such as the gates to Binfield Park Farm; and
- From the west of the area there are long glimpsed views of the wider landscape across the roof tops and sloping topography.

Area B: Popeswood North

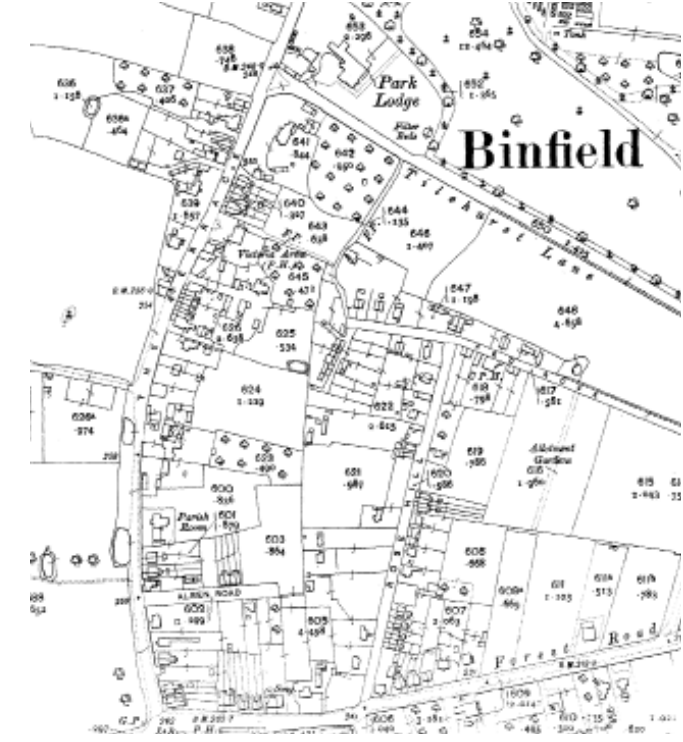
- This area is based around a series of large institutional buildings set in generous grounds on the east side of Terrace Road South;
- The west side of Terrace Road South has clusters of Victorian houses, which are subservient to the larger institutional buildings;
- Small linear plots, slightly increasing in size at the eastern end;
- A small open space at the junction of Foxley Lane provides a focal point along Terrace Road South, which is particularly important when approached from the south and this also marks the point where two character areas, this one and Binfield, overlap;
- Landscape gaps between the buildings allow views out of the area over the undulating land form to the east; and
- The junction of Terrace Road South and Popeswood Road is an important townscape node, particularly when approached from the north.

Area C: Popeswood South

- This area has two distinct triangles of development, one to the south and one to the north of London Road;
- London Road, a busy arterial route into Bracknell, separates these two areas, but it also has its own distinct character that influences both triangles;
- There is a clear hierarchy of streets within the southern development parcel, i.e. London Road - Beehive Road - Beehive Lane;
- The northern triangle is defined by larger plots and more substantial buildings along London Road and a number of separate cul-de-sac developments set behind the principal street frontages; and
- Long narrow plots.

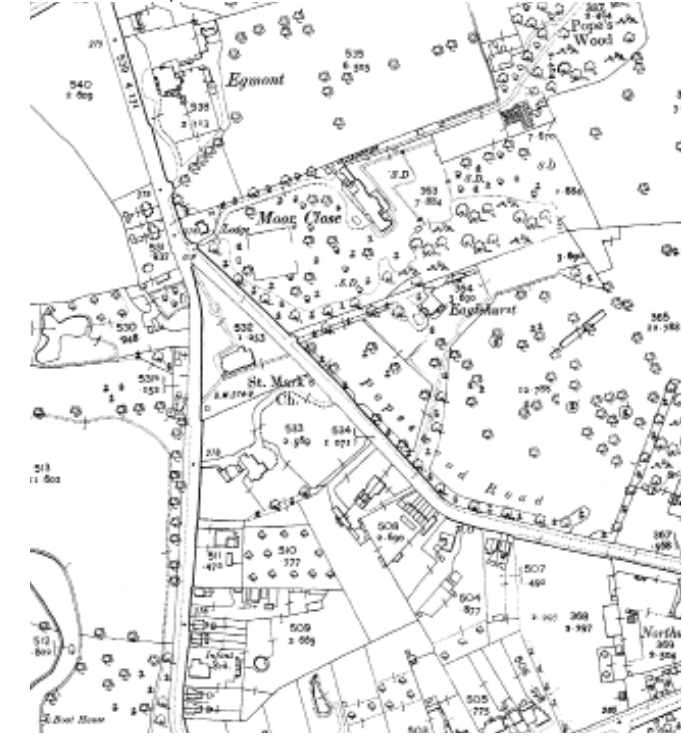


Historic Map 1



1904-1939

Historic Map 2



1904-1939

Landscape setting

Area A: Binfield

- Heavily influenced by surrounding open rural landscape, especially to the north and east;
- The surrounding landscape is an undulating landform falling to the east; pasture and maintained grounds; oak woodlands and parkland tree planting; medium sized fields bounded by hedgerows (to the north and west); and larger unbounded fields and golf course (to the east and south);
- The Binfield Open Clay Farmlands (Entec 2006) to the north are well enclosed with limited views and a strong contrast with the urban form;
- The Temple Park Open Clay Estatelands (Entec 2006) to the south are open with long distance views and a higher degree of intervisibility between urban and rural areas. The green verges and tree cover along the urban edge forms an important transition area; and
- There is strong contrast between the urban form between Tilehurst Lane and Forest Road and the open landscape around it.

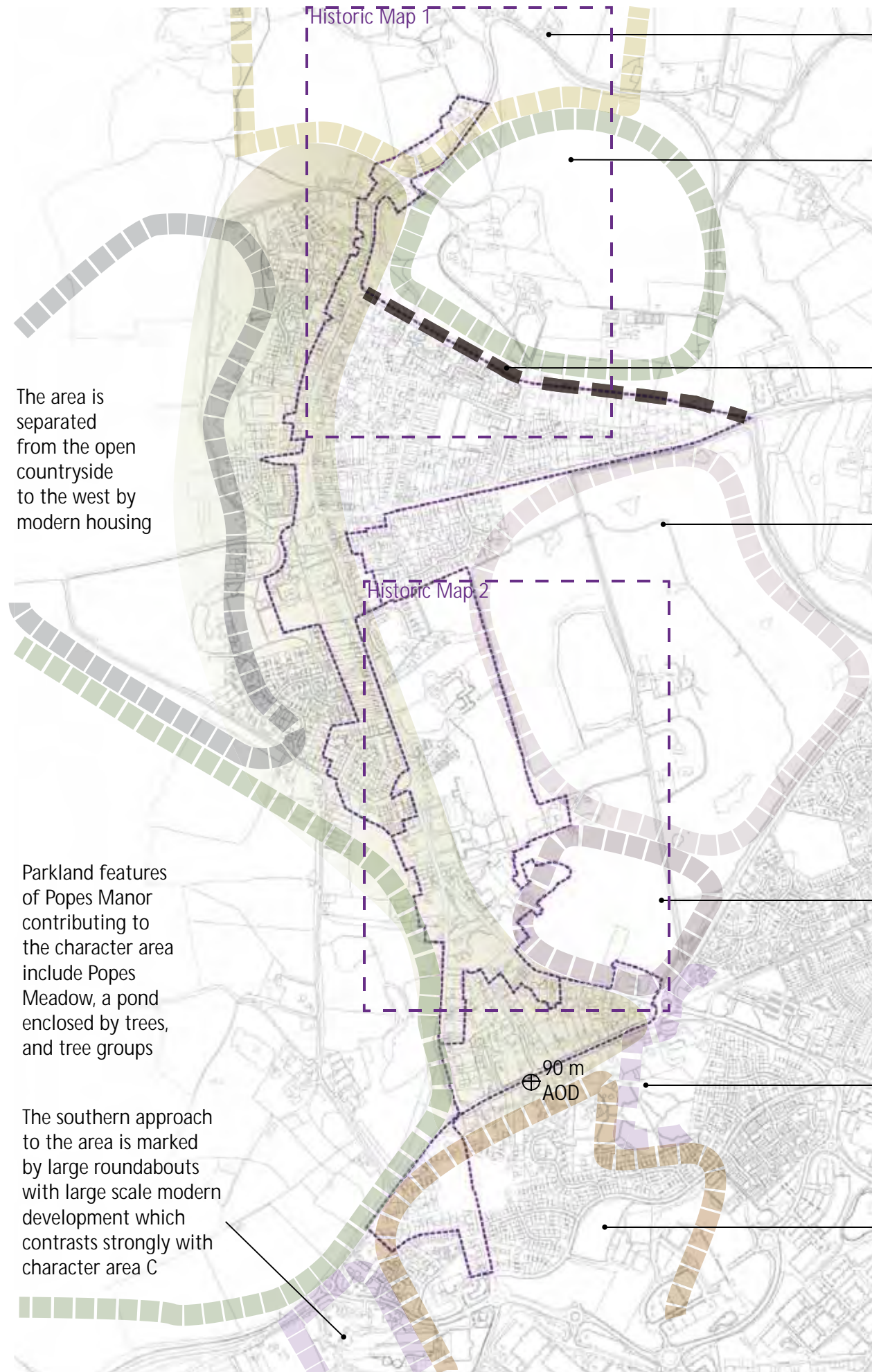
Area B: Popeswood North

- Heavily influenced by surrounding open rural landscape, especially to the east;
- The surrounding landscape is an undulating landform falling to the east; pasture and maintained grounds; individual trees, small woods, golf course planting and parkland tree planting; and larger unbounded fields and golf course to the east;
- The Binfield Open Clay Farmlands to the west are a mix of small pasture fields, linked woodlands and tree belts. These are well enclosed with limited views and a strong contrast with the urban form;
- The Temple Park Open Clay Estatelands (Entec 2006) to the east are open with long distance views and higher degree of intervisibility between urban and rural areas. The landscapes of this area flow into the urban form of Popeswood north, broken up by hedgerows and clumps of trees; and
- There is strong intermingling between the urban form and the open landscape around it.

Area C: Popeswood South

- Influenced by surrounding open rural landscape, to the north east beyond Newbold Park and west in Popes Manor;
- The surrounding landscape is an undulating landform falling to the east; pasture and maintained grounds; individual trees, small woods, golf course planting and parkland tree planting; and larger unbounded fields and golf course to the east;
- The Binfield Open Clay Farmlands to the west are a mix of small pasture fields, linked woodlands and tree belts. These are well enclosed with limited views and a strong contrast with the urban form;
- The Temple Park Open Clay Estatelands to the north east are open with long distance views and a higher degree of intervisibility between urban and rural areas. The landscapes of this area are clearly separated from the urban form of character area C by a strong belt of trees;
- The area is separated from the open countryside south of Popes Manor by a strong belt of trees along London Road, although this opens up as the line deteriorates opposite Merydene Court; and
- There is strong contrast between the urban form east of St. Marks Road and London Road and the open landscape to the west beyond it.

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The northern approach to the area is set within small to medium sized fields enclosed by strong tree belts;

Parkland features of Binfield Park contributing to the character area include Park Lodge, South Lodge, North Lodge, park gates and substantial perimeter tree cover;

Tilehurst Lane retains remnants of its rural character: partially bounded by hedgerows; and roadside ditch/stream;

The open designed landscape features of Blue Mountain Golf Course within Temple Park Open Clay Estate lands contribute to the character area include the scalloped golf course landscape, perimeter hedgeline, and views eastwards

Newbold College historic park and garden lies partly within the area. Parkland features contributing to the character of the area include clumps of trees, open grassland and views eastwards

The eastern approach is marked by a large roundabout overlooked by the grounds of Farley Hall and open spaces which contrast strongly with character area C

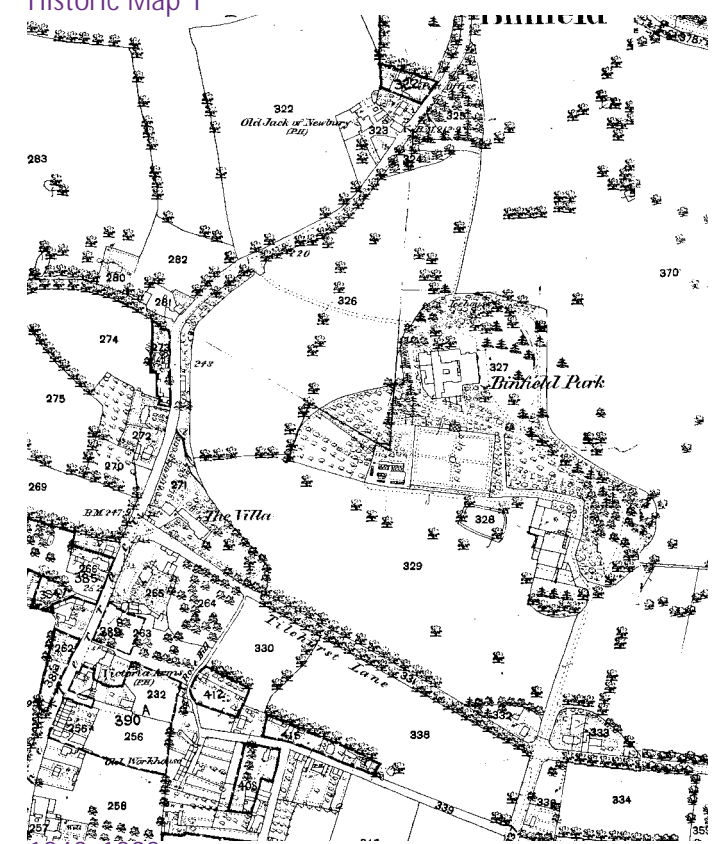
To the south and east, the character area is heavily influenced by the urban form of north Bracknell, although the parkland grounds and mature trees of Farley Hall separate the two areas

The area is separated from the open countryside to the west by modern housing

Parkland features of Popes Manor contributing to the character area include Popes Meadow, a pond enclosed by trees, and tree groups

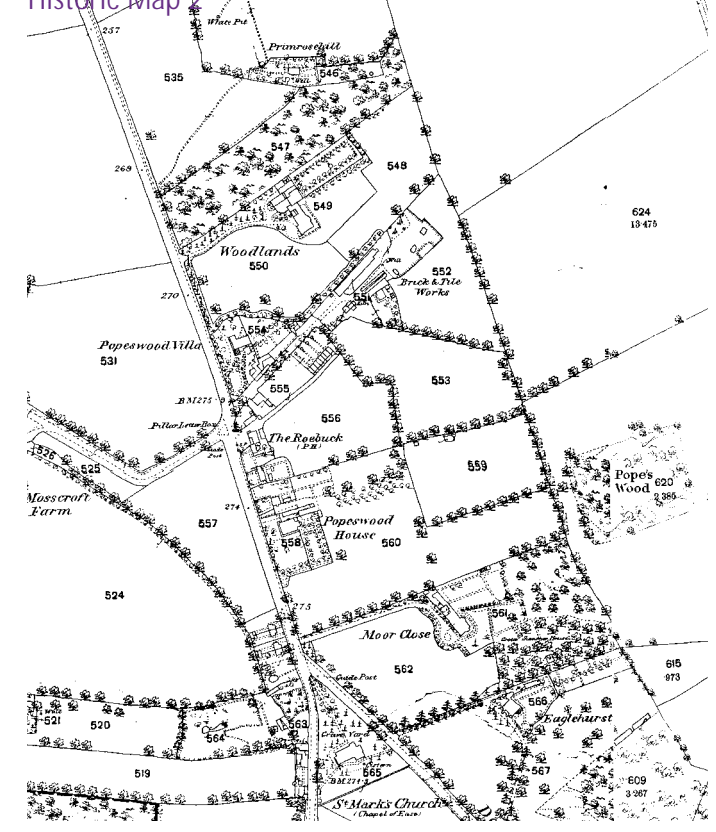
The southern approach to the area is marked by large roundabouts with large scale modern development which contrasts strongly with character area C

Historic Map 1



1843-1893

Historic Map 2



1843-1893

Area A: Binfield

The settlement of Binfield includes a built up network of streets running eastwards down the slopes from the ridgeline, where the main street and village centre is located.

Landscape character:

- Northern end contains medium sized well treed gardens;
- Southern end is distinguished by long narrow gardens;
- Good sized front gardens to the west side of Terrace Road North contrast with groups of houses backing onto the pavement opposite;
- Little open space except in two key locations: Knox Green in the centre of the village and the allotments in the centre of the eastern housing area;
- The Blue Mountain Golf Course creates a defined edge to Binfield;
- Long views eastwards from the break of ridge (eg area west of Rose Hill) to Cabbage Hill;
- Eastern slopes exposed to views from the Blue Mountain Golf Course landscape. Minor access roads which are orientated east – west enable views out from the centre spine, eg Terrace Road North; and
- Gradual transition from the rural northern gateway into Binfield to the denser urban character and from western approach down Foxley Lane.

Townscape:

- The townscape is characterised by relatively small scale cottage-like terraces and groups of development that sit close to the street frontage along the orthogonal street pattern of Terrace Road North, Rose Hill and the west end of Forest Road;
- On these streets, the townscape follows the slopes of the land with roof lines stepping down slopes;

- This pattern is not generally followed in the examples of cul de sac developments, although Coote Close is a recent example that fits much better into the townscape character than others;
- The pattern becomes more suburban to the east of York Road, with larger houses set behind generous front gardens;
- Important local focal points providing landmarks: Knox Green; Stag and Hounds Inn; Binfield Park gateways; and
- Local vistas: down York Road to the gateway to Binfield Park; down Terrace Road South to Knox Green; from Forest Road over open countryside.

Built form:

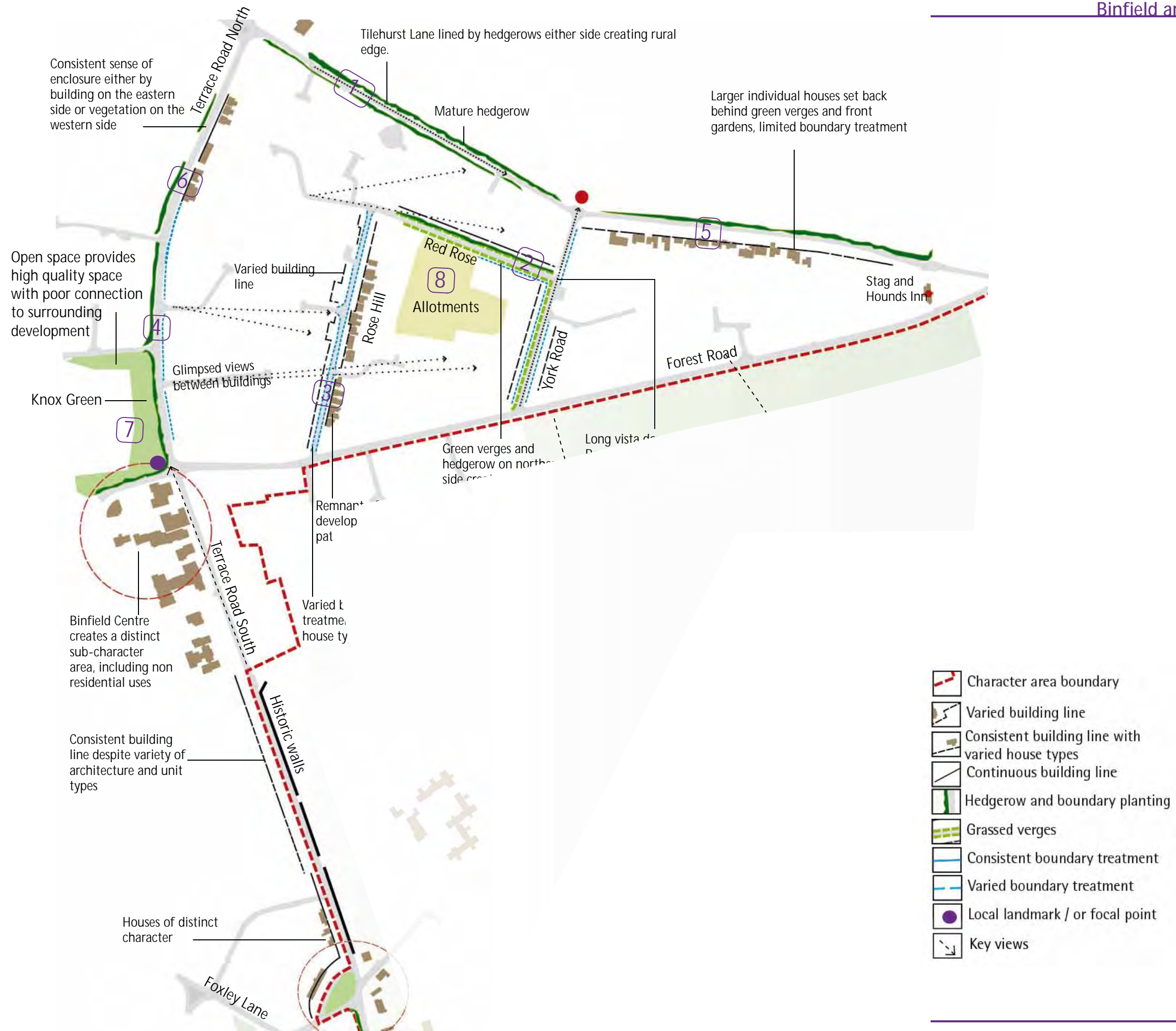
- There is a complex mix of small developments of different ages and styles;
- Remnants of Victorian development along the historic street pattern contribute significantly towards the townscape character ;
- However, overall, there is no coherent development form and the area includes a wide variety of architectural styles and house types;
- Generally the Victorian development is characterised by simple building and roof forms and relatively plain elevations;
- Along Terrace Road North some, although not all, of the more recent development fits well into the townscape; character established by the Victorian development
- The position of the building line relative to the street frontage varies from street to street; and
- The built form is predominantly 2 storey houses with some development of heights up to 3 storeys in the village centre.

Vegetation and hard landscape:

- Strong tree belts at the back of plots;
- Scattered trees in gardens;
- Ancient trees as at Knox Green;
- Hedgerows as at Knox Green and remnants of pre Victorian hedgerow at Tilehurst Lane;
- Strong roadside tree belts in the north, linking with tree planting to Binfield Park;
- Pavements to Terrace Road North repaved relatively recently with concrete block paving adds to character; and
- Front garden brick walls along Forest Road.

Boundary treatment:

- Varied boundary treatment with low hedges/walls and /or railings along residential streets;
- Terrace Road North is well enclosed/defined by either building frontage or high hedges and tree planting;
- Tilehurst Lane and eastern end of Red Rose are more rural in character with green verges, hedgerows and drains alongside road; and
- In instances where hedgerows run parallel to roads only distinct roof line of houses is visible over hedgerow.



Summary

The area has a positive character, which was established by the original pattern of streets and Victorian development. This historic development still contributes significantly towards the overall character of the area, although some of the more recent developments also make a positive contribution in terms of the scale of plots and buildings, their relationship to the street frontage and the simplicity of their forms and design. However, the modern village centre contributes very little to the positive character and recent development of bulky blocks of flats start to erode the character along Terrace Road South.

Recommendations

- Small scale infill development should respect existing building lines and boundary treatments;
- Houses should relate carefully to the topography and roof lines should reflect this, i.e. stepped roofline;
- The open landscape either side of Binfield, together with the open character of Popeswood North, should be retained to maintain a rural setting and the distinctive character of Binfield;
- Development outside Binfield Centre should not damage the existing mature trees;
- Development and landscape on extant rural plots should maintain strong links with the rural setting;
- Development with the intent of densification along St.Marks Road should be in the form of pavilion blocks and long, unbroken blocks are not suitable;
- Existing key views should be retained and new vistas opened up to Knox Green;
- Retain the transitional character of Foxley Lane; and
- Redevelopment along Tilehurst Lane should respect the rural character and setting of Binfield Park and retain the existing hedgerow.



Rural character of Tilehurst Lane



Hedges and verges on Red Rose



Remnant of Victorian housing steps up the hill on Rose Hill



Village Centre



Houses on the southern end of Tilehurst lane are set behind grassed verges



Terrace Road North has a distinct local feel to it



Open space in central Binfield



Allotments

Area B: Popeswood North

The area provides buildings in high quality landscape setting and is a point of transition between Binfield and Popeswood.

Landscape character:

- Large grounds to institutions with amenity grassland and tree belts and clumps;
- Large to medium sized private gardens with significant trees (Parkham is of particular note) and mature tree and shrub boundary features;
- Small narrow gardens to houses on Chapel Lane;
- Variety of public and semi-public open space: St Mark's Church yard gardens (part is a PPG17 Open space); parkland of Newbold Park which extends between Newbold College and the golf course and includes Binfield Hall (PPG17 open space); ornamental gardens at the junction with Foxley Lane; grounds of Newbold College (formal and functional); grounds of Newbold School (enclosed within remnants of parkland landscape and woodland);
- Poorly defined edge to open landscape which creates a visual gap between Binfield and Bracknell centred around the Blue Mountain Golf Course;
- Strongly defined edge creating a visual gap between Binfield and Wokingham, which includes Popes Manor;
- Long views from the edge of development to Cabbage Hill;
- Eastern edge exposed to views from the Blue Mountain Golf Course landscape;
- Remnants of parkland features;
- Strong physical and visual relationship between Chapel Lane development, the Roebuck pub, Foxley Lane; and
- Strong vegetation relationship between the tree cover of Newbold School/Park, Parkham and Popes Manor. Historically these landscapes were laid out to different designs.

Townscape:

- Small pockets of Victorian development provide high quality focal points, especially development around junction of St Marks Road and Popeswood Road;
- All Saints Church and historic Newbold College buildings, form a group of imposing landmark buildings set in generous grounds; and
- In contrast, groups of small Victorian cottages set close to the street, are positioned in key locations at junctions or where roads change direction.

Built form:

- Clusters of Victorian development along St Marks Road and Popeswood Road, which is predominantly of 2 storey cottage scale houses in red brick set close to pavement;
- The buildings of institutional scale are generally higher than 2 storeys and are also grander in scale;
- Newer development is generally suburban with detached houses set in larger front gardens, allowing historic buildings to be focal points;
- To the east of Terrace Road South, elements of residential development follow the pattern of the institutional buildings with blocks of flats set in communal landscape; and
- Chapel Lane appears to be a remnant of a former hamlet and development alongside it has a distinct Victorian character and strong relation to its rural setting to the east.

Vegetation and hard landscape:

- Strong tree belts at the back of plots;
- Significant woodland blocks;
- Significant mature trees as at Newbold and Parkham;
- Strong mature roadside tree belts and hedgerows particularly in the south, linking with tree planting to Newbold Park and also along Terrace Road South;
- Landmark group of poplars south of Chapel Lane;
- Belt of trees north of Avon Court frame views east;
- Important collective group of trees at All Saints church, Newbold School/Park, Parkham and Popes Manor; and
- Swathes of amenity grassland.

Boundary treatment:

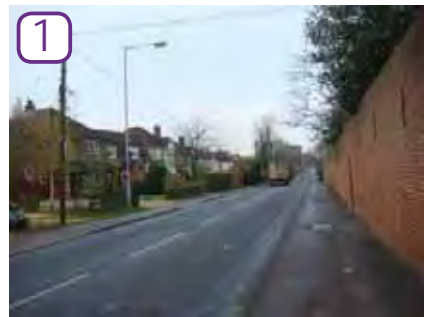
- Varied boundary treatment with low hedges/walls and /or railings along residential streets;
- Good definition and a high degree of enclosure, either by high boundary planting, brick wall or building frontage along St Marks Road;
- Visually not obstructing boundary treatment, i.e. low walls/ fences on east side of the northern end of St Marks Road and east of Popeswood Road. This allows views over countryside and towards institutions;
- Prominent high historic brick wall east side of Terrace Road South;
- Low brick walls with hedgerows along Terrace Road South; and
- Brick walls and gateways to Newbold College.

Summary

This area has a distinct and positive character, which should be retained. It is not only important in its own right but also as separation between Binfield and Popeswood. The contrast between the large scale of the institutional buildings and the small scale of the cottage developments is important to this character. The poor condition of some of the institutional grounds currently detracts from the overall quality of the spaces.

Recommendations

- Development should be small scale, in the form of cottages and subservient to institution building;
- Development should keep the open character;
- Proposals of high densities or the redevelopment of large plots, should take particular care to avoid the erosion of tree cover and any development should retain mature trees;
- To retain the local distinctiveness piecemeal development in the grounds of institutional buildings should be avoided and a comprehensive development plan should be prepared if the redevelopment of institution grounds become an issue;
- Land east of Newbold College and School and Binfield Hall appears most at risk from development pressure. Development on urban fringes should retain strong links between existing development and rural setting;
- Further research into historical records should be undertaken in order to identify significance of remnant plantings and landscape and townscape features;
- Existing key views should be retained and enhanced; and
- The two areas either side of Popeswood should be retained to maintain the openness and rural setting and the distinctive character of Popeswood north.



1 Car orientated Terrace Road South



2 Remnant Victorian development



3 Newbold College



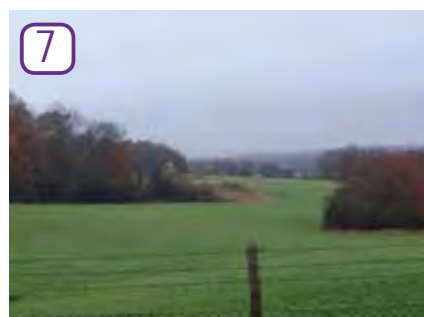
4 Gatehouse to Newbold College



5 Clusters of historic hamlets create focal points



6 Chapel Lane



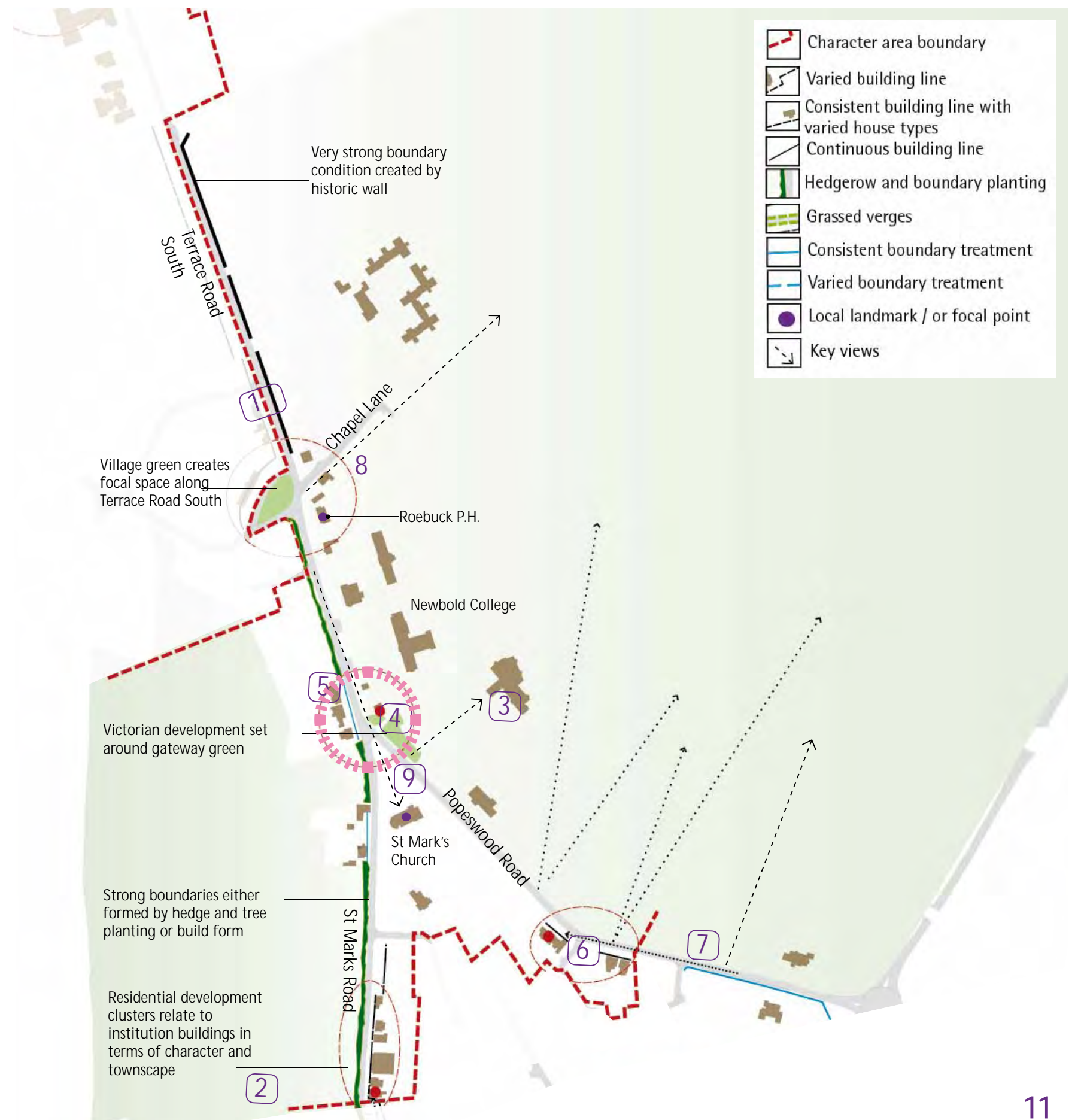
7 View east from Popeswood Road



8 Chapel Lane



9 All Saints Church with tree cover on foreground



Area C: Popeswood South

Popeswood South comprises three character elements, London Road and two development pockets, one on either side of it. These development pockets have similar characteristics, although they vary in scale of development.

Landscape character:

- In the northern triangle gardens are medium sized with strong mature vegetation boundaries. Gardens vary in shape and pattern creating a complex matrix to the rear of the houses;
- Good sized front gardens with mature hedgerow boundaries are a feature of the area;
- The northern triangle is a transition area between the rural influenced character areas A and B and the new town/modern character of Bracknell;
- The southern triangle has gardens of a smaller scale and more regular pattern, forming lines at the back of the houses;
- Very little open space except as incidental open space at the junction of London Road and Beehive Road;
- Strongly defined edge to proposed 'Binfield – Wokingham gap' which includes Popes Manor;
- Well defined edge to south of proposed 'Binfield – Bracknell gap' centred at the Blue Mountain Golf Course;
- Views of major groups of trees set within the northern triangle are a key feature; and
- The two triangles are linked by a common boundary with Popes Manor and London Road and mature front hedgerows but otherwise exhibit different characteristics.

Townscape:

- This area has very little townscape character in the form of focal points and landmarks;
- The characteristic pattern is suburban, with detached buildings set in gardens;
- Villas along London Road are substantial in scale and visually prominent and give a strong sense of place to the character area;
- On London Road towards the west, the character area ends abruptly with a series of small houses and bungalows and recent higher density development; and
- Local vistas: these are limited by the enclosing tree belts and urban development but there are significant views onto the wider landscape and townscape;

Vegetation and hard landscape:

- Strong tree belts at the back of plots on northern triangle;
- Scattered prominent trees in north triangle gardens and along Beehive Road;
- Mixed species native and ornamental mature front boundary treatment in both areas;
- Important roadside trees along London Road and Nevelle Close; and
- Remnant of former gateway at entrance to Nevelle Close.

Built form:

- Houses to the north of London Road are larger and set around segregated cul-de-sacs. These form distinct clusters of houses;
- To the south of London Road houses are more varied in terms of architecture;
- London Road has its own distinct character and accommodates buildings of greater height and massing;
- Varied built form with a mixture of house styles and forms;
- Streets tend to have a fairly consistent building line and set backs; and
- A pair of buildings at the south end of Popeswood Road create a gateway to Character Area B, Popeswood North.

Boundary treatment:

- Significant white rendered walling along London Road reinforces the character created by the villas;
- High degree of enclosure with high strong hedges along Beehive Road;
- Open character of Beehive Lane, including verges and low or no boundary treatment, which creates a more rural character for this part of the area;

- Boundaries are predominately hedges in combination with low walls. Higher walls without hedges in front are inappropriate for this area; and
- Variety to frontage treatment elsewhere – fencing, railings, walling, hedges and open frontages.

Summary

Overall the area has a positive character, although it consists of a variety of character influences and relates mainly to landscape features and the public realm rather than to the settlement pattern or built form.

Recommendations:

- Long unbroken building frontages should be avoided and separated buildings in larger plots, with the character of villas, are suitable for this location;
- Development along Popeswood Road and St Marks Road should be of smaller scale. Buildings should either be set back behind hedges/walls to allow existing Victorian Houses to remain as focal points or should pick up historic building lines;
- Retain separate identity of the two triangles;
- Further research into historical records should be undertaken in order to identify significance of remnant plantings and landscape and townscape features; and
- Existing key views should be retained and enhanced.



1
Pair of 'white' houses forms gateway development to Popeswood Road



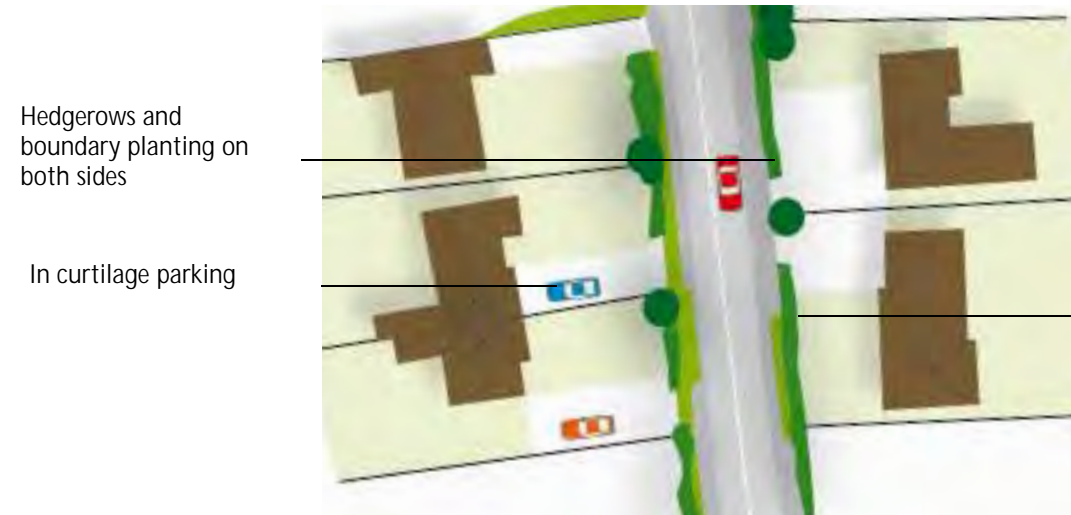
2
Western section of London Road is of lesser quality



3
Beehive Road is lined with high hedges and verges



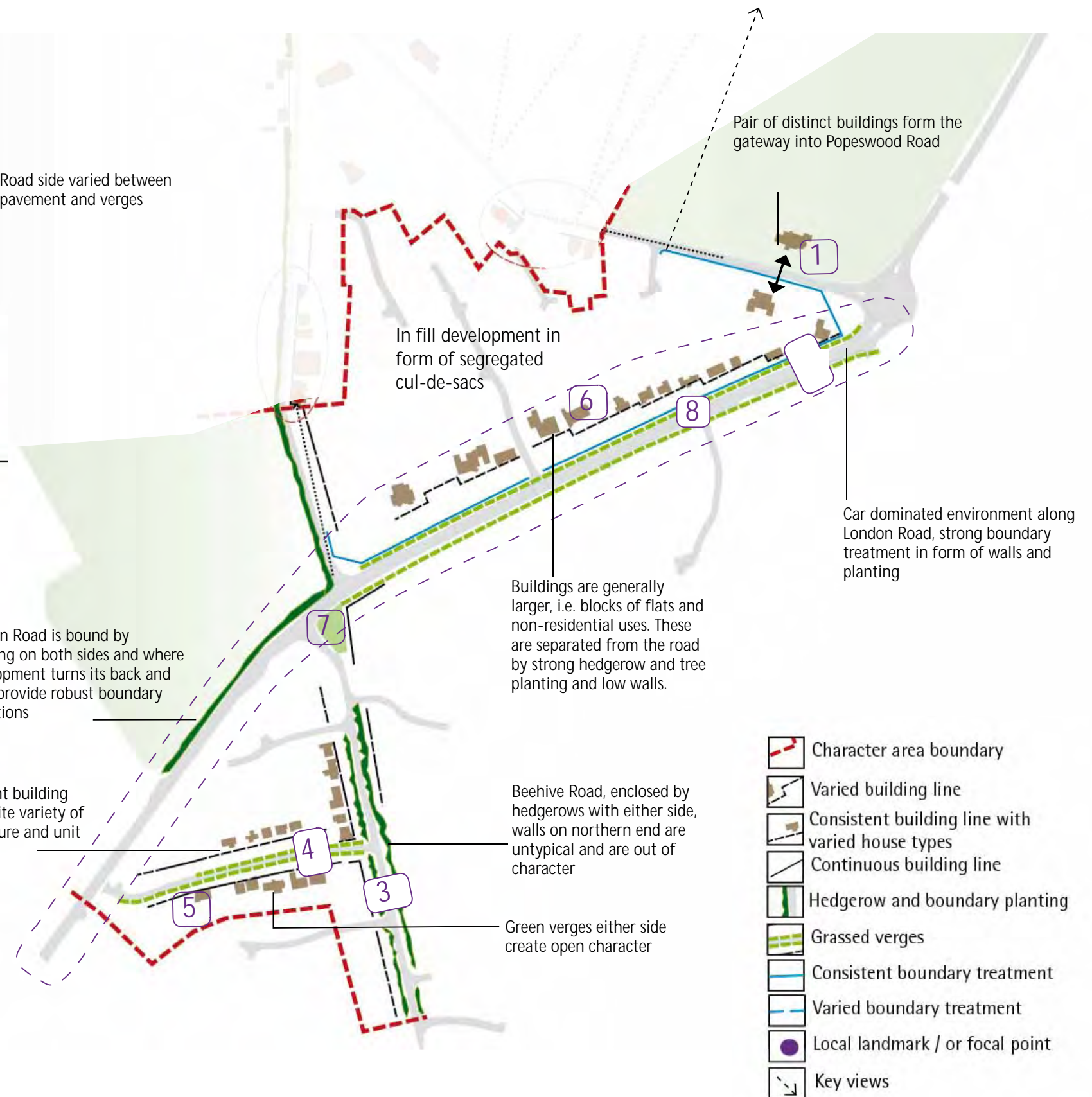
4
Rural character of Beehive Lane



Road side varied between pavement and verges



Plan and section showing detail characteristics of Beehive Road. Beehive road is typical for residential streets in this area.



7 Open space at the junction of Beehive Road and London Road



8 Characteristic boundary treatment along London Road



5 Cottage on Beehive Lane shows on example in a varied character area.



6 Large houses set back behind gravelled forecourt on London Road

