

14 Woodham and New Haw urban area characterisation

14.1 Introduction

- (i) The urban areas of Woodham and New Haw are contiguous and visually read as one. The M25 runs through the eastern end of New Haw, bridging over Woodham Lane. Woodham Lane itself is the main 'spine' route running east- west centrally through the middle of the urban area with secondary roads connecting to and from it, north and south. The southern edge of the urban area is partly defined by the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area , and the River Wey Navigation which cuts through the eastern edge of New Haw in a north- south alignment before entering the River Thames at Weybridge. The navigation is also designated as a conservation area.
- (ii) The Woodham and New Haw urban area is primarily residential, but contains an important local shopping parade at The Broadway and has small pockets of employment use.

14.2 Local Character Areas

- (i) Set in a relatively flat landscape but rising slightly to the north in the direction of Queen Marys Drive, the urban area divides into six broad character sub-areas as follows:
 - o Area of interwar housing in the Sheerwater Avenue vicinity - of distinct 'arcadian' character with trees and planting dominating the street scene.
 - o Large area of mixed housing west of the M25 and north of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area.
 - o The Broadway shopping core area - a planned post-war shopping parade at New Haw
 - o The Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL) on Woodham Lane and immediately adjoining the west of the M25 – also recognised as a distinct area by inclusion of the adjoining All Saints Church and associated car park
 - o The road and roundabout junction area of Woodham Lane, New Haw Road and Byfleet Road - adjoining New Haw lock on the River Wey Navigation
 - o Mixed age housing to both sides of the River Wey Navigation Conservation Area - off New Haw Road and Byfleet Road. This contains the National Grid reserve site on Byfleet Road where any development potential is constrained by overhead power cables and flood risk.



The Broadway, New Haw – a visually distinct character area

- (ii) Much of the identified character derives from the period in which the areas of housing were constructed, but other features such as built form, street pattern and layout, densities, local details and public realm all contribute.

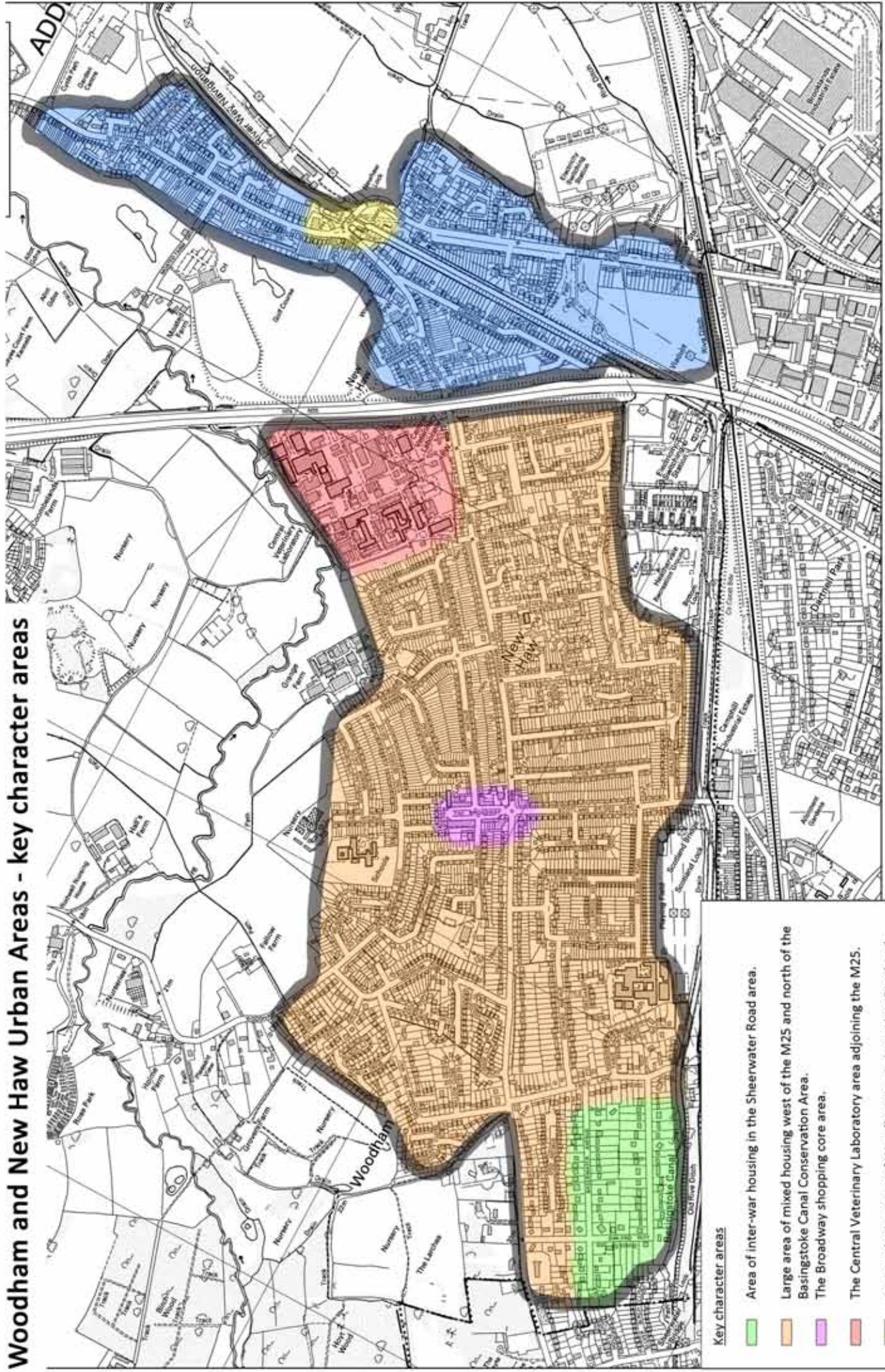
14.3 Historic development

- (i) This whole area remained predominantly rural in character until after the second world war. Previously it contained leafy lanes and roads running through open farm land with several local plant nurseries, all in close proximity to the Basingstoke Canal and the Wey Navigation, now designated as conservation areas.
- (ii) The only larger-scale developments in the late C19/early C20 were housing on Woodham Lane and New Haw Road near the river lock, which included terraced, semi-detached and small 'villa' type properties. Further housing from this period was built in small numbers on Byfleet Road.



The Basingstoke Canal at Scotland Bridge – a visually and physically important element of the local character

Woodham and New Haw Urban Areas - key character areas

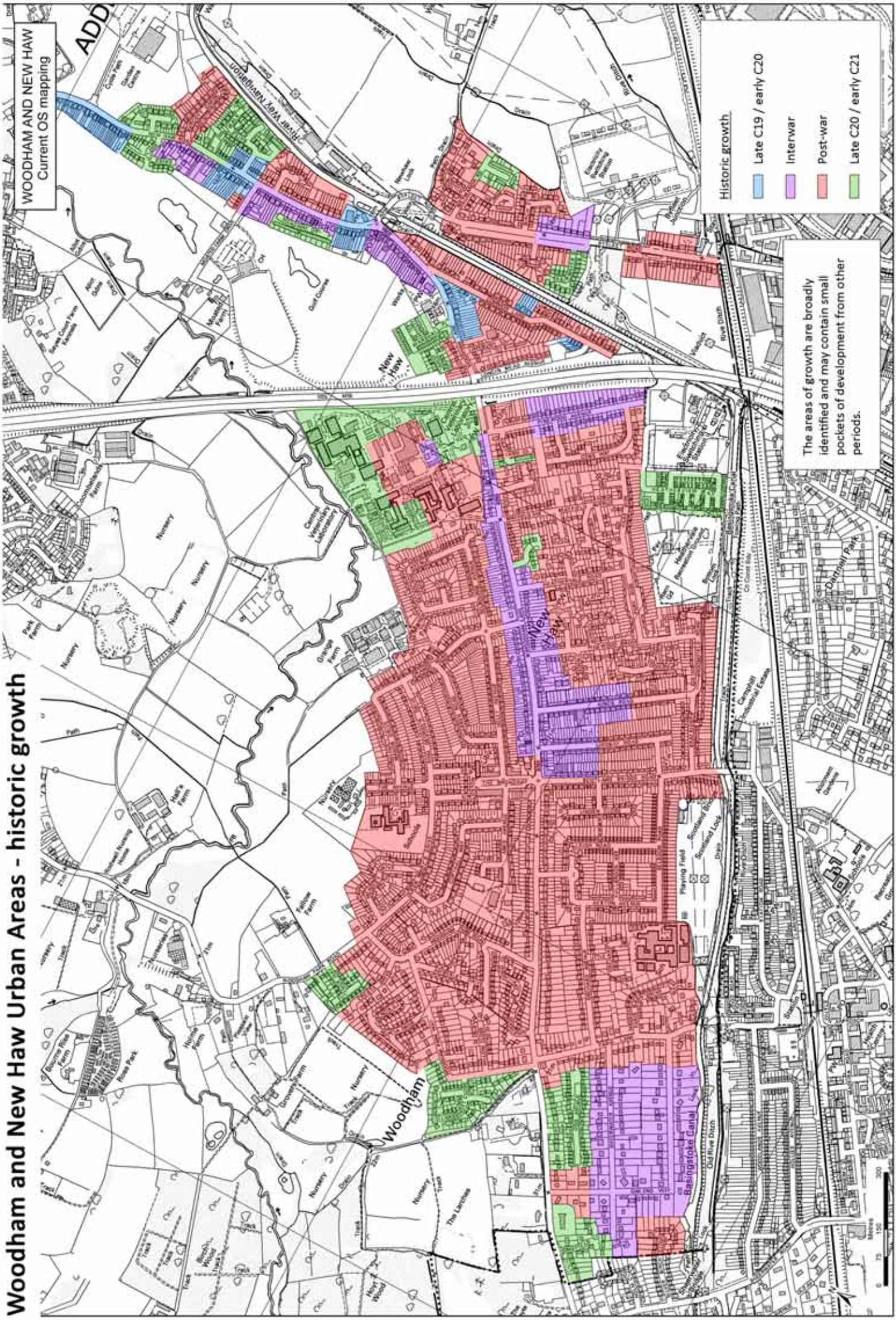


Key character areas

- Area of inter-war housing in the Sheerwater Road area.
- Large area of mixed housing west of the M25 and north of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area.
- The Broadway shopping core area.
- The Central Veterinary Laboratory area adjoining the M25.
- Area at the junction of Woodham Lane, New Haw Road and Byfleet Road.
- Mixed housing to both sides of the River Wey Navigation
- Conservation Area in the New Haw Road and Byfleet Road area.

Predominant character areas shown, although small pockets of different character may be found within these areas. Boundaries are indicative only.

Woodham and New Haw Urban Areas - historic growth



- (iii) The present character of the area developed in the inter-war period, initially along the south side of Woodham Lane and in the Sheerwater Avenue area. The Black Prince public house on Woodham Lane adjoining what was to become The Broadway, was built in 1937. There followed a fast expansion of new development immediately after the war on both sides of Woodham Lane. This included the shopping parade area at The Broadway, a planned development reminiscent of the new town movement of that period with adjoining streets formally laid out in regular patterns and housing designs typical of the period. Further housing was built either side of the Wey Navigation, in the eastern part of the urban area.



The Black Prince pub adjoining The Broadway at New Haw is a locally distinct landmark

- (iv) Smaller infill developments have been constructed in the latter part of the C20/earlyC21, mainly on the northern edges of Woodham and off New Haw Road.
- (v) Urban area housing is identified by historic character types on the accompanying map (refer to common features in the Appraisal Parameters). These are:
- (vi) [Housing Character Type 1](#)
Paragraph 14.3 (ii) describes the development in this period, which was very small scale.

- (vii) [Housing Character Type 2](#)
The housing from this period displays typical characteristics, particularly the presence of large scale mature trees lining the roads. Pevsner describes the impact of this vegetation in Sheerwater Avenue as....."the effect of trees on commonplace elevations and layouts is startling".



Inter-war housing lines both sides of Woodham Lane

- (viii) [Housing Character Type 3](#)
The post-war building boom included much of Woodham and New Haw. The large estates of housing constructed along and to the north and south of Woodham Lane make up the vast majority of the urban area, with street patterns and house types typical of those being developed at that time throughout the country. The first buildings for the Central Veterinary Laboratory were also constructed at this time.



Post-war bungalow development on Selsdon Road, New Haw, typical of the period.



Airey Homes on Mayfield Road – prefabricated construction in the post-war period



All Saints Church on Woodham Lane, New Haw – a distinct C19 local landmark

(ix) Housing Character Type 4

In the latter part of the C20/early C21 small quantities of housing were constructed, mainly infilling gaps on the fringes of the area.

14.4 Landscape setting, trees, views and landmarks

(i) The urban area is set in a relatively flat landscape in the meadow fringes of the Rivers Wey and Thames. This results in few significant views into or out of the area. It is very well stocked with mature trees as previously highlighted, many of which lined the country lanes prior to development. The key visual and physical landmarks in the area that help visitors to navigate are:

- Scotland Bridge over the Basingstoke Canal. This also acts as a visual indicator to the visitor as a place of arrival, entering and leaving new Haw.
- The Basingstoke Canal
- The group of The Broadway shopping parade, the squat tower on the Woodham Car Centre and the White Hart pub, all located directly on or leading to the roundabout on Woodham Lane.
- All Saints Church on Woodham Lane, dwarfed by the M25 road bridge adjoining but still a recognisable local landmark.
- The Wey Navigation and the New Haw lock area



The squat tower form at the car dealer premises by the roundabout at The Broadway/Woodham Lane is a clearly recognisable local skyline feature.

14.5 Uses and activities

(i) As previously described the area mainly comprises housing, together with a thriving local shopping parade at The Broadway, and other local facilities including schools, commercial activity, community uses and local recreation grounds. Other small groups of local shops are mainly empty or no longer thriving. Key areas of other uses can be identified as:

- The Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) group of buildings dating from the post war to current day
- The semi-commercial area in the vicinity of the roundabout by the River Wey Navigation, which also includes a small number of shop units interspersed with housing. Some properties are currently vacant and are visually unattractive.



Trees create an arcadian street scene – Sheerwater Avenue, Woodham



The White Hart pub by the roundabout adjoining the Wey Navigation at New Haw is the focus of this semi-commercial character area

14.6 Streets and buildings

- (i) The key road hierarchy within the area is largely historic, based on the earlier network of country lanes as described in the introduction. Spreading from this are the secondary roads serving the various housing areas. Within this network there is the formal street layout of The Broadway and the residential roads linking to it. The Broadway with its central boulevard is very distinctive, but this visual quality does not continue in the immediately adjoining housing areas as would be expected.
- (ii) Woodham Lane creates a very distinct east-west route and much of the housing has grid iron form and layouts, of suburban character, fronting on to the streets. The presence of many large mature and visually imposing trees lining roads is an important contributor to the local character.



Distinct mature avenues of trees line Woodham Lane

14.7 Local details

- (i) There is no specific local detail to respect in this urban area. Generally the existing varied housing styles and types can be recognised as existing context, and should be reflected in the form of any new development, albeit in a contemporary interpretation.

For example, those areas of late-Victorian housing typically show use of red and yellow brick and natural slate and clay tile roofing. Their detail is in the decorative bargeboards, attractive bay windows and porches and other such features, which enhance local character. Interwar and post war housing generally reflects suburban character of the period with large hipped and pitched roofs topped by chimney stacks above rendered, pebble-dash or brick walls. They often have bay windows and porches as architectural features. Front gardens are bounded by low walling and hedges.



Design on Sheerwater Lane is influenced by Arts and Crafts architecture, and illustrates the type of local detail that could be reflected in new development

14.8 Public realm

- (i) The most significant areas of public realm are:
 - The Broadway – with seating and a pedestrian friendly layout and environment
 - Public recreation and open space adjoining the Basingstoke Canal and River Wey Navigation, including Heathervale Recreation Ground.

14.9 Traffic and parking

- (i) As elsewhere there are high levels of fast moving traffic impacting on local character, particularly on the main through routes of New Haw Road, Woodham Lane and Byfleet Road, particularly at peak periods.
- (ii) The Broadway shops and local schools create high levels of movement and vehicle activity, and pedestrian movement improvements and safety measures have been constructed. No significant parking issues have been identified in the area, and local community facilities appear well served by parking.



The M25 bridges over Woodham Lane, visually screened from the public realm

14.10 Negatives – pressures, issues and threats to local character

- (i) Chapter 5 identifies those negatives common to all the urban areas. Issues and threats specifically impacting on the Woodham and New Haw urban area are:
- Poor signage and access to the River Wey Navigation and the Basingstoke Canal.
 - Visually weak environment at the small shopping parade on Woodham Lane, adjoining The Broadway.
 - Visually weak environment in the vicinity of New Haw Road / Byfleet Road roundabout.

14.11 Positives – opportunities, enhancement and improvements to local character

- (ii) Chapter 5 identifies those opportunities common to all the urban areas. Opportunities specific to the Woodham and New Haw urban area are as follows:

Local Issue 1

Poor signage and access to the River Wey Navigation and the Basingstoke Canal

Visitors to the area are not easily made aware of the presence of these important features which contribute to local character.



New Haw lock on the River Wey Navigation – a tranquil area of public realm within the urban area

Recommendation

Enhance public awareness of and access to the River Wey Navigation and Basingstoke Canal
Consider review of improved signage and parking/access with the appropriate authorities.

Local Issue 2

Poor local environment at the shopping parade on Woodham Lane.

Recommendation

Prepare environmental improvement scheme in liaison with the local traders and Surrey County Council Highways.



Shopping parade at Woodham Lane - a thriving local centre which suffers from poor surfacing, sporadic parking and dated street furniture..

Local Issue 3

Poor local environment in the vicinity of the New Haw Road / Byfleet Road roundabout

Recommendation

Prepare environmental improvement scheme in liaison with local community and Surrey County Council Highways.



Environmental improvement opportunity at New Haw Road / Byfleet Road roundabout.

Any enquiries about this paper or the LDF should be directed to:

Urban Design Officer
Runnymede Borough Council
The Civic Centre Station Road
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 2AH

Tel 01932 425278

email: ldf@runnymede.gov.uk
www.runnymede.gov.uk

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