

## **Completed Preliminary First Draft July 30 2017**

### **Our Vision for Ampfield**

Each household in the parish was asked to complete and return a questionnaire, with the purpose of seeking to identify and describe those characteristics that, in the eyes of the local community, make Ampfield a special place to live. The Ampfield Village Design Statement Team has taken the information derived from the responses to this questionnaire to develop a vision statement for Ampfield.

Our vision is of a community that will strive to:

- ◆ *preserve the semi-rural ambience created by Ampfield's setting within extensive and beautiful countryside;*
- ◆ *protect the local countryside and woodland from encroachment by seeking to prevent inappropriate and unjustified new development outside of the settlement boundaries;*
- ◆ *safeguard the character of its settlements. New development within the settlement boundaries should respect, complement and enhance the existing character of the neighbourhood in which it takes place.*
- ◆ *promote and encourage good design in all new development, recognising the important role design plays in creating and sustaining harmony and character in local neighbourhoods.*
- ◆ *safeguard its conservation area and historic buildings from intrusive development and unsympathetic alteration*
- ◆ *recognise and encourage the importance of wildlife to the parish and the role Ampfield's trees and hedges fulfil in that connection;*
- ◆ *attract younger people to the village, and enable older residents to stay by encouraging the provision of smaller, more affordable dwellings when the opportunity arises, together with the facilities they need.*
- ◆ *encourage and support local businesses provided they do not adversely affect the appearance, character or facilities of the Parish*
- ◆ *seek opportunities to improve road safety conditions across the parish for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike.*

## **The Ampfield Village Design Statement**

### **What is the purpose of this Design Statement?**

Change is a constant feature in our lives, and it applies equally to villages and the countryside that surrounds them. Over the centuries, external influences have changed the shape and character of Ampfield and they will continue to do so in the future. We can't stop this process nor indeed is the Village Design Statement intended to fulfil such a role by prohibiting new development, as, in the long run, that is neither healthy nor sustainable. Rather its purpose is to channel the change to ensure that the natural demand for development within our community can be guided along the lines that best suit the community's needs, is harmonious with its surroundings and can complement and enhance the community and its environment for a future period.

This village design statement will bring up to date the original VDS adopted by Test Valley Borough Council in 2003. A very professional piece of work, the original VDS has served the parish well over many years but more recently it is apparent that its effectiveness is gradually being diminished. It is simply being overtaken by events. There have been a number of developments within the parish that were not envisaged at the time of the original VDS and, in January 2016, TVBC adopted a new borough local plan.

Its purpose of this VDS will remain the same as its predecessor and that is to influence the operations and outcomes of the statutory planning process by providing a local context against which new development proposals within the parish can be assessed. This Village Design Statement records what is special about Ampfield in the view of its residents. It portrays the existing appearance and quality of its landscape, settlements and buildings by describing their features, and defining the characteristics that make them what they are. It sets out guidelines that are intended to ensure that the distinctive character of the Parish is retained, complemented and enhanced.

As a part of the overall VDS process, other factors that contribute to the appearance and character of the parish, such as roads, traffic, businesses, and employment, have also been considered.

This VDS is addressed to all who either live within the parish or outside and are proposing to make changes in the Parish that might affect its character and appearance.. Such changes include planning applications for new buildings, extensions to buildings, and proposals for more extensive developments affecting Parish settlements and landscape. It should therefore act as a reference document for:

*Residents, householders and businesses*  
*Designers, architects and highway and utility engineers*  
*Planners, developers and builders*  
*Statutory bodies, public authorities and utilities.*

**Its place in the planning process:**

Having been endorsed by Ampfield Parish Council, the revised VDS is submitted to the local planning authority, Test Valley Borough Council, for formal adoption. Upon adoption, the VDS will assume the status of a Supplementary Planning Document. This means it will have legal standing and must be taken into consideration by the planning officers when considering future planning applications within the parish. . It is also intended that the VDS will assist the Parish Council to formulate plans for safeguarding the appearance of the Parish and improving its amenities.

**How was it prepared? (Provisional draft)**

This VDS is the result of the combined efforts of many residents of the parish. Following discussions at the Annual Parish Assembly, a working group, comprising volunteers from across the parish, was formed. Its first job was to establish what needed to be done, together with a process and timetable of procedures to ensure it was done.

The initial step was to undertake a survey of landscape characteristics of the parish to record and describe the physical characteristics and character. To assist in this process, the parish was divided into five geographic areas, each of which had its own survey team. The teams explored the relationship between the countryside and the settlements and, within those settlements, the design of the built environment. They pulled together the effects of history, geography, landscape and settlement with a view to identifying and describing the key local characteristics; the unique characteristics that make Ampfield what it is.

At the same time, each household in the parish received a questionnaire, seeking their views on a wide range of subjects, pertinent to how residents would like to see Ampfield evolve over the next 10/15 years. The answers to each question were analysed. These, together with anecdotal evidence gathered in the questionnaire, were used in conjunction with the results of the Landscape Characteristic Survey to prepare a first draft of the revised VDS.

It is proposed to introduce the revised VDS to the parishioners of Ampfield at public exhibitions that will take place at the commencement of a period of formal public consultation. Any resulting amendments will be included into the VDS thus ensuring the revised VDS is an accurate consensus of the current views of the parishioners.

Throughout the process the draft documents will be submitted to the officers of TVBC on a regular basis for their scrutiny. The final draft will be presented to the Ampfield Parish Council for its endorsement, before being sent to the local planning authority for a second period of public consultation and subsequent adoption.

## **The Views of the Residents of Ampfield**

### **What they think about where they live:**

The residents of Ampfield are very aware of the importance of their surroundings. In particular, of those that responded to the questionnaire:

- ◆ 99% like the fact that living in Ampfield provides good access to the countryside, woodlands and wildlife
- ◆ 98% believe that woodland and countryside open spaces and views are key characteristics of the parish and materially influence the appearance and ambience of the parish. They like the fact it is a relatively peaceful place to live
- ◆ 94% like the fact that the parish offers attractive scenery and views. They believe that planting associated with new buildings should be sympathetic to the neighbourhood and designed to encourage wildlife and biodiversity.
- ◆ 92% believe that new buildings should not have a detrimental impact on areas of designated ecological importance or protected species.
- ◆ 90% believe that new buildings should have minimal impact on wildlife; wildlife corridors must be maintained. Extensive tree cover should be preserved and encouraged
- ◆ 90% like the fact that it is a safe environment in which to live. They believe that safe pedestrian passage beside the parish's highways should be maintained.
- ◆ 89% believe that local separation gaps between existing settlement boundaries should be retained. They say that the public footpath and cycleway networks are important to them.
- ◆ 86% say that Chapel Wood and Ampfield Wood are important to them.

### **Residents appreciate the role that good and sympathetic building design can play in enhancing the characteristics of a neighbourhood and a community. Of those that responded to the questionnaire:**

- ◆ 96% believe that the design of any new building should be sympathetic and sensitive to the key characteristics of the area in which it is built.
- ◆ 96% believe that the spaces between neighbouring buildings should be sympathetic and in keeping with the key characteristics of the neighbourhood.
- ◆ 95% believe that buildings should be in proportion to the size of their plot and in keeping with the key characteristics of their neighbourhood.
- ◆ 94% believe that that the buildings created by the subdivision of existing plots must be sympathetic and in keeping with the spatial characteristics of the surrounding area.
- ◆ 94% believe that new buildings should have off-street parking.
- ◆ 93% believe that wherever possible, new buildings should be set back from the road and sympathetic to the existing building line.

- ◆ 90 % believe that, wherever possible, front boundary hedges, walls and fencing of traditional local types should be preserved.
- ◆ 89% believe that new buildings should be particularly sympathetic and sensitive to any listed buildings or other heritage assets nearby.
- ◆ 89% believe that street signs and street furniture should be kept to a minimum.
- ◆ 88% believe that the design of any new building should be particularly sympathetic to the buildings nearby.
- ◆ 87% believe that sympathetic design in affordable housing is particularly important.
- ◆ 84% believe that innovative designs and materials should not be excluded, provided they are sympathetic and sensitive to the key characteristics of their neighbourhood.
- ◆ 80% believe domestic installations (e.g. oil tanks and satellite dishes) should be out of view of the road.
- ◆ 80% believe that If more houses are to be built, it is appropriate they should not be built on greenfield sites away from the local plan settlement boundaries

(Source: All the information provided above is taken from the answers to questions set out in the Ampfield VDS 2017, Parish Questionnaire)

### **Ampfield as it is today**

Ampfield consists of a number of communities, living in separated settlements of diverse character. 95% of the land is countryside, giving the Parish an essentially rural character; gently rolling countryside and mature woodland surround each settlement, separating it from the next, and providing each one with a sense of space and tranquillity.

### **Pressures for change to the character of our Parish**

Population growth in South Hampshire over the last 50 years has created relentless demand for development land. Over that period, Ampfield's proximity to the urban centres of Southampton, Eastleigh, Chandlers Ford and Romsey has put it under constant pressure from new development. The boundaries of these settlements creep ever closer and extend to the edge of Ampfield's eastern, southern and now western boundaries. As a result, there is a continuous risk that the charming natural character of the parish, with its semi-rural and wooded influences, is under potential threat.

#### Examples of such threats include

- ◆ encroachment of new development into the countryside,
- ◆ unsympathetic infill-development within existing settlements,
- ◆ ribbon development along roads
- ◆ sub-division of plots, which does not have regard to the size or proximity of the adjoining property or the character of the surrounding settlement
- ◆ new houses or extensions that are too large for their plots.

- ◆ Government planning policies, such as those to increase the level of house building, and to provide additional employment land to support economic growth

The planning policies laid out in the Adopted Local Plan 2011-2029, together with the proposals provided by this document once it is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document provide a considerable degree of protection against inappropriate and unjustified development. However, they should be consistently and robustly applied and enforced. Without them, the distinctive character of our countryside and its settlements would quickly be eroded, which is something the parish wants to prevent.

### **Opportunities to enhance our Parish**

Ampfield residents, in conjunction with the Parish Council, may be able to influence the local planning authority to adopt this VDS as a Supplementary Planning Document by contributing to its contents.

Provisions exist within the planning system to enhance the protection of valued areas of open landscape, woodland or historic settlements. In places where proposals for new development are likely to arise in the future, the VDS can place on record, in advance, residents' views about the character and value of that location.

Opportunities also exist to improve the appearance of the Parish by better care and maintenance of public and private land, and by encouraging high standards of architecture, design, new building and development.

In addition, although traffic is not strictly a planning matter, residents perceive that the increase in the noise and pollution from a rising number of traffic movements is a major threat to the character of the area. It has grown significantly over the last ten years, intruding more and more into the lives of residents. Improved road safety measures would be beneficial, together with due care and attention to the maintenance of the network of footpaths and open spaces.

## **The Geography and History of Ampfield**

### **The Geography of Ampfield**

Ampfield is located three miles to the east of Romsey and six miles southwest of Winchester; its old Village centre straddles the A3090, which connects the two. The Parish of Ampfield covers an area that extends three miles by two miles. At the eastern end of the Parish lie the suburbs of Chandlers Ford, in the Borough of Eastleigh. Elsewhere, the Parish is surrounded by countryside, abutting the Parishes of Braishfield to the north, Hursley to the east, North Baddesley to the south and, currently but under review, Romsey Extra to the west.

The Parish lies on land that slopes gently southwards. It is drained by tributaries of the Tadburn Lake stream to the south-west, and Monks Brook to the south-east. In agricultural terms, the soils in the Parish are generally poor, with large areas of acidic sand and gravel forming a ridge in the north, which was originally heathland, but is now Ampfield Wood. In the lower stream valleys to the south, the soils are heavier clays and in some places poorly drained, such as at Crampmoor and Ratlake.

### **The History of Ampfield**

#### Saxon Times

There is evidence that Saxons inhabited Ampfield, and that they came under the influence of the new church at Winchester founded in A.D. 636. Ampfield consisted of scattered hamlets belonging to the Manor of Merdon.

#### Medieval Times

Ampfield was part of the Parish of Hursley. Many small farms supported the isolated communities and gradually the woodland was cleared to make way for grazing land and crops.

#### 16th century

The 1588 Hursley Map shows that the lanes now known as Pound Lane, Green Lane and Lower Farm Lane were already in existence by that date, as were the field systems that we see today. Only a few buildings have survived from 1588, such as the farmhouse at Hawstead, but the site of many other dwellings that are shown on the 1588 map are now occupied by older Village properties, and these probably incorporate part of the original building, or use materials from it, such as at Yew Tree Cottage.

#### 17th century

Many of the traditional village buildings were built or rebuilt in the early seventeenth century e.g. The White Horse Pub, Green Lane Farm and some of the houses in Knapp Lane and Lower Farm Lane.

#### 18th century

In the early 18th century, Benjamin White built Ampfield House and the Ampfield Estate was established. The turnpike road was built through Ampfield, bringing the village within reach of the rest of Hampshire. New houses were built along the turnpike and the community grew.

#### 19th century

In 1809, the Enclosure Act was passed and approximately 2850 acres of common land in Ampfield were enclosed. The railway was opened in 1847; today it forms the southern boundary of the Parish. In 1841, the ecclesiastical Parish of Ampfield was established and St. Mark 's Church was consecrated. Ampfield became a civil Parish in 1894, and the link with Hursley was broken. In 1856, the first Ampfield School was opened in Knapp Lane, where it remained until replaced in 1896 by the current purpose-built school.

#### 20th century - the years before the Second World War

In 1932, the Ampfield Estate was sold and its farms became independently owned. Over the next few years, housing development quickly gained momentum. Some of the agricultural land was sold for the development of new settlements, such as Woodlea Way and Potters Heron Close. Simultaneously, parts of the eastern end of the Parish were laid out. Bungalows were built along the eastern end of Hook Road, and the Beechwood estate development began. The Potters Heron Hotel was built in 1937 and electricity reached Ampfield in 1938.

#### The Second World War

After being bombed out of their Southampton premises during the War, Vickers Supermarine moved to Hursley Park and re-housed their workers in a group of temporary buildings known as the Hutments at the corner of Hook Road and Hursley Road. Prior to the D-Day landings, Ampfield Wood and the Straight Mile became a holding area for invasion troops, notably from Canada.

#### 20th century- post war years

In 1948, the Council built the houses on Green Pond Lane and a number of bungalows were added along the south side of Ampfield Hill. During the 1950s and 1960s, new houses, built along the newly constructed Hocombe Wood Road and Hookwater Road, replaced the Hutments. The development along the Straight Mile was built after a subscription was made to save the trees and the houses themselves were located along service roads set well back from the main road. Again in the 1950's, the first of three mobile home parks was established at North Hill Copse, (now called St James), and in 1973, permission was granted to build Flexford Close.

#### 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Further development occurred as Ampfield moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Throughout the parish, the demand for increasingly large extensions to existing buildings continued unabated. There have also been a number of new houses built either through the subdivision of plots or by demolishing and replacing existing, smaller houses. Supplementing this incremental development, permissions have also been given so that a number of the settlement boundaries within the parish have been extended.



The construction of Morleys Green, an estate of 39 houses, has provided the parish with a number of much-needed smaller houses that are suitable for younger families and for those wishing to downsize. This development, together with the establishment of a designated village green area, has transformed the appearance of the centre of the village.

At Broadgate Farm, a previous brownfield site was converted into a settlement of large, executive homes, whilst along the A3090 westwards there has been an extension to the ribbon development along the south side of Ampfield Hill

One further development of note took place on the A3090 at the eastern approach to the parish, opposite the Potters Heron Hotel. Permission was given by the Planning Inspectorate to accommodate one family under policy COM 13 of the Adopted Local Plan 2011-2029 covering the obligations towards gypsies and travellers, within in the existing countryside.

## **Landscape Setting**

### Countryside

Ampfield's countryside is a large and well-preserved example of a landscape once common in the county. It is characterised by a rich mosaic of ancient semi-natural woodland, unimproved meadow, hedgerows and heathland that has largely survived agricultural change and suburban pressures.

The low areas of land to the south of the A3090 have been farmed for many centuries and are made up of small fields that are enclosed by well-established hedgerows, interspersed with copses and individual specimens of native trees. Around Ratlake, a typical example of English parkland can be seen. Ampfield 's countryside is dotted with small hamlets, which have grown up around farms, such as those at Lower Ratlake, Lower Farm, Gosport, Green Lane, and Crampmoor.

On the ridge to the north of the A3090 lies Ampfield Wood. Originally, for many centuries, this area would have been a combination of barren heath and deciduous woodland but more recently has been planted with conifers or given over to horticulture. Beyond this ridge, there is farmland, which extends northwards to the boundary with Braishfield. On the western boundary of the parish lies the world famous Sir Harold Hillier Gardens.

The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) records that approximately 30% of the countryside within the parish boundary is classified as 'priority' habitats. There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Trodd's Copse, between Hook Road and Flexford, is a very fine example of ancient semi-natural woodland whereas Ratlake Meadow, north of the A3090, is described as one of the most species-rich unimproved meadows in the Hampshire Basin.

In addition to the two SSSI's, there are 19 areas designated as Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). The largest include Ampfield Wood, Nevils Copse, South Holmes Copse and Hocombe Upper Plantation. The remainder are spread geographically across the parish. There are also two areas designated as Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEI) – both sides of the A3090, east of the Potters Heron, and parts of Pound Lane. The residents of Ampfield are justifiably proud of their rich natural heritage.

One of the most important open areas in the parish is the extensive tract of countryside south of the A3090 that stretches from the settlement areas of upper Hook and Hocombe westwards towards Pound Lane. The eastern portion of this, which includes Trodd's Copse (SSSI), is designated the Ampfield – Valley Park Local Gap by TVBC in its Adopted Local plan 2011-2029 (Policy E3) as it separates Ampfield from Chandlers Ford and Valley Park. This principle is very strongly supported by residents.

The remainder of this tract, west of Trodd's Copse, is made up of small fields, hedgerows, several copses, and some wetland. Much of the land has historical importance. The evidence of assarted fields suggests the land has been farmed for centuries and, when combined with local areas of ancient woodland, has possible pre-historic associations (Test Valley Community Landscape Project). The entire area is highly prized locally for its natural beauty and its panoramic landscape.

There are other areas of open countryside that create important landscape gaps between settlements within the Parish. These are at Tadburn Meadows, at the bottom of Ampfield Hill and designated a SINC, Crampmoor, Green Lane, Gosport, and Ratlake. They are made up of small fields, hedgerows, and woodland that are typical of the area, and they create attractive space, around the settlements, and provide pleasant views into, and out of, them.

Ampfield 's countryside provides separation between the noise and intensity of the nearby towns and the peace and seclusion of its settlements. The unspoilt pastoral nature of the landscape, its attractiveness, its fine views and its seclusion are all very highly valued by the residents. The spread of suburbia from the southeast and the west has led to some urban encroachment into the landscape. Land, previously farmed, has been converted into storage compounds and other similar semi-industrial use. This detracts from the character of the countryside and people's enjoyment of it. It also creates more traffic along the rural roads and lanes.

Ampfield 's countryside is dotted with small hamlets, which have grown up around farms, such as those at Lower Ratlake, Lower Farm, Gosport, Green Lane, and Crampmoor. The maintenance of sustainable rural or semi-rural activities is important to protect the character of the countryside and to keep it ecologically viable. Ninety-five per cent of the Parish land lies in the Ampfield Countryside Heritage Area, one of only three such areas designated by Hampshire County Council. The Heritage Area also includes parts of North Baddesley, Hursley, Otterbourne and Romsey Extra. A report, prepared for Hampshire County Council prior to the creation of the Heritage Area, concluded that:

*"the main priorities will be to resist further sub-urbanisation of the area, to maintain its rich mosaic of habitats and landscape features, and to reduce the impact of urban and sub-urban influences on the landscape.*

## Woodland

Approximately one-third of the Parish is woodland, much of it recorded by Hampshire County Council as being of particular importance for nature conservation within Hampshire. The SINC's at Oxlease Copse (Crampmoor), South Holmes Copse, Grosvenor Farm, Gosport Wood, Purser's Great Copse and Nevils Copse are classified ancient, semi-natural woodland. In addition, there are large areas of deciduous woodland and many copses that lie on the adjacent farmland. They provide striking scenery against the back-cloth of gently undulating and open farmland. The presence of this woodland penetrates directly into the Village centre and also surrounds other settlements in the parish, giving a pleasing degree of seclusion and a natural rural quality.

Of the more extensive woodland areas, Ampfield Wood (SINC) is crossed by a number of public bridleways and footpaths, including the Keble Way and the Monarch's Way. These are used extensively for walking/rambling in quiet recreation and total seclusion. Hocombe Upper Plantation, another SINC that includes ancient, semi-natural woodland and borders both Hook Road and Hursley Road, is an example of a mixed plantation combining fine mature deciduous trees with planted conifers. This area of woodland provides an attractive outlook and setting for the houses on Hook Road. The footpaths through this wood again form part of the Keble Way and are highly valued by the residents.

Chapel Wood, purchased by the Parish in 1996, comprises five acres of mixed coniferous and deciduous woodland located next to St. Mark's Church. The woodland here is managed by volunteers as community woodland, it includes extensive open glades, a pond, a wet area and footpaths that connect to Knapp Lane and Chapel Hill, thus making it a pleasant amenity area for residents to enjoy.

Large areas of the local woodland are protected by Woodland/Area Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Most notable amongst these are those on either side of the Straight Mile and Jermyns Lane, much of the Hocombe area, part of Trodd's Copse, Sandpit Copse (Hook Road), parts of Ampfield Wood, and South Holmes Copse. There are also a number of specific areas of woodland in the Conservation Area, which are recognised for their importance as local landscape features.

Unquestionably, one of the important and distinctive landscape characteristics of Ampfield are the large, mature trees that border many of the roads through the Parish. The Straight Mile is a magnificent wide woodland avenue, arching almost completely over the A3090. Elsewhere, there are fine trees along the eastern end of the A3090, at the eastern end of Green Lane, and the north end of Pound Lane. In addition, Ampfield Golf and Country Club and many local gardens possess fine trees that contribute to the variety and splendour of the woodland environment.

## **Views**

Although the public footpaths in the parish offer many much loved landscape views, is perhaps from the settlements, the roads and the lanes that most people see and enjoy the best of the countryside views that define the landscape characteristics of Ampfield. The open countryside and woodland that creates such views very much reinforce the semi-rural nature of substantial areas of the parish. The existence of these important views serves to bring the real countryside into the everyday lives of its residents.

The following important views are numbered (in brackets) and shown on the map

- along The Straight Mile, in either direction (V1)
- along the A3090 around the White Horse pub (V2)
- along Ampfield Hill in either direction (V3)
- along the A3090 between Ratlake and St. Mark's Church (V4)
- along the upper end of Hursley Road (V5)
- along Hook Road (V6)
- from Knapp Hill, looking eastwards (V7).

The important views from footpaths in the north of the A3090 are those from:

- the bridleway at Red Gate in Ampfield Wood, looking north (V8)
- the bridleway from Bishop Cottage, looking north and west (V9)
- the footpath south of Bluebell Wood, looking north-east (V10)
- the Village Hall, looking south-west (V11).
- bridleway Wingham Lane looking west

South of the A3090, the important views from footpaths are those from:

- the lane and footpath at Crampmoor, looking south-east (V12)
- the lanes and footpath at Gosport Farm, looking east and south (V13)
- the footpath from the Straight Mile looking east and south (V14).

Whilst considering the value of the many fine views the parish has to offer, it is worth making the point that uncontrolled ribbon development, for instance at Green Lane and Ampfield Hill, tends to obstruct the prevailing views at these points and also erodes the gaps between settlements. Both the views and the gaps that create them are much valued by the parishioners and should be retained.

## **Nature and wildlife**

The heritage countryside of the Parish, with its small fields, extensive hedgerows, woodland and wetlands has great ecological value. At Trodd's Copse, sixty acres of mixed woodland and grass wetland bordering the south-western edge of the built-up Hocombe settlement has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In its accompanying citation, Natural England records that this area of ancient semi-natural woodland contains ten separate woodland habitats, of which four are considered nationally rare. This diversity supports an extremely rich ground flora making it one of the most botanically rich woods in Hampshire.

The habitat diversity within the boundary of the SSSI is increased by the presence of grasslands and fen-type vegetation. Together with the wood, the wide range of habitats is reflected by a diverse range of fauna, characteristic of ancient woodlands in central southern England.

The quality of the mosaic of the graded margins around Trodd's Copse is rare, and this supports a number of species of protected flora and fauna. The area also provides habitat for many interesting and unusual birds, such as the woodcock, grey partridge, goldcrest, and tree creeper.

A smaller and secluded SSSI at Ratlake is a grassland open area bordered by wetland and woodland. A report for Hampshire County Council concluded that: "it is a remarkable surviving historical landscape which includes ancient meadows and woodland, rich in plant and insect species and for which there is map evidence from 1588. This site includes substantial lengths of medieval deer park boundary banks and presents exceptional quality of evidence from the land enclosure history of the Hursley area"

In Ampfield Wood, about 25 years ago a team of ecologists from Southampton University carrying out a survey found 37 species of butterfly which included the rare Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Large Tortoiseshell, and certain fritillaries. There are also certain rare ecological features in the Wood, which may contribute to the survival of these species.

Where copses of native trees and shrubs have been allowed to grow into thickets, they provide excellent havens for wildlife and birds. Natural and planted hedgerows also provide wildlife corridors and habitats for flora as well as fauna, and, alongside roads and footpaths, they provide a wealth of visible colour. Similarly, the grass verges of the roads enhance the wildlife potential of the hedgerows. Many are remnants of ancient meadows and woodland and can often provide the sole remaining habitat in a landscape. The most ecologically important are designated *Road Verges of Ecological Interest* and/or *Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation* (SINC). Perhaps the best known of these locally is the stretch of verge that borders the northern carriageway of the A3090 from opposite the Potters Heron Hotel to Ratlake.

The open farmland provides fertile areas for small mammals and these, in turn, encourage owls, hawks, and other wildlife predators. The stream wetlands and the more waterlogged soils in the western, southern and eastern edges of the Parish provide habitats for aquatic flora and fauna. In addition, the Parish includes a number of ponds that help to sustain wide biological diversity within the parish and make a significant contribution to the range of ecological habitats available within the parish. These are features that are highly valued by the residents of Ampfield.

## **Planning Guidance**

**Introduction:** Of the respondents to the VDS questionnaire, 98% believe that Ampfield's countryside, woodland, trees, hedges, open spaces and open views are the key defining characteristics of the parish. In much of the parish, the open countryside and woodland will penetrate visually directly into the centre of the settlements

through gaps in and between the buildings in these settlement areas. This influences the appearance and ambience of the parish in a material way and provides substantial amenity and scenic value to the lives of both residents and visitors alike. (Text in brackets refers to the planning policies set out in the TVBC Adopted Local Plan 2016)

- 1) In order that this key landscape characteristic is maintained and enhanced, it is critical that the planning policies, as set out in the Adopted Local Plan 2011 – 2029 (ALP), that apply to development in the countryside are rigorously upheld.  
Thus, developments outside of the settlement boundaries should not be permitted unless:
  - a) it is appropriate such developments are in the countryside or
  - b) it is essential for the proposal to be located in the countryside.(ALP Policy: COM2, COM8 – COM14, LE 10, LE16-LE18))
- 2) To protect the key landscape characteristics of Ampfield, development outside the boundaries of existing settlements should not be permitted, unless there is clear evidence of overriding need for that development to be in the countryside.
- 3) In order to preserve the local character of open undeveloped areas, it is important that ribbon development and in-filling, which extends the current settlement boundaries or joins up clusters of buildings and settlements along the roads and lanes of the parish, should be avoided, where this will damage the rural characteristics of many parts of the parish. (ALP Policy: COM2, E1, E2)
- 4) Backland development on land outside the existing settlement boundaries and designated as countryside should be avoided. (ALP Policy: COM2)
- 5) The designated Local Gap, west of Hook Road and including Trodd's Copse (SSSI), should be continue to be given particular protection from development. Consideration should be given to extending the gap westward towards Pound Lane. (ALP Policy E3)
- 6) The existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Trodd's Copse and Ratlake should continue to be protected and properly maintained. The rules pertaining to the management of such ecologically important and sensitive areas should be recognised. (ALP Policy E2, E5)
- 7) Special care and consideration should also be afforded to Sites of Interest to Nature Conservation (SINCs) and in addition, similar should apply to a number of roadside verges that have been designated either as SINCs or Road Verges of Ecological Importance (RVEI). The rules pertaining to the management of such ecologically important and sensitive areas should be recognised. (ALP Policy: E2, E5)
- 8) The extensive area of open countryside either side of the A3090 at Ampfield Hill, known as Tadburn Meadows, separates the settlement areas in the village centre from that at the top of the western end of Ampfield Hill, Jermyns Lane and the Straight Mile. This is an important system of fields and hedgerows, which provides natural open space between and around the adjacent settlements and helps to determine the rural appearance and ambience of Ampfield. It is outside the settlement boundaries and acts as a western gateway to the original village. In view of its importance to the semi-rural character of Ampfield, consideration should be given to recognising this area as a Local Gap in order that it can be afforded protection against encroachment by development. (ALP Policy: E2, E5)

9) The tracts of countryside either side of the A3090 at Ratlake, extending from the parish boundary to St Mark's church, should also be protected from development. The area acts as the eastern gateway to the parish and again plays an important role in creating and maintaining the character of Ampfield. (ALP Policy: E2, E5)

10) Consideration should be given to the inclusion of these areas in any future review of the Important Landscape Features and local gaps. (ALP Policy: E2, E3, E5)

11) The woodland and large trees bordering the highways within the A3090 at Ratlake (both sides) and between the Potters Heron and St Mark's Church (north side), and at the eastern end of Green Lane should be retained. At Hocombe Upper Plantation, the trees along Hook Road and Hursley Road, and the beech wood at the road junction should be retained. (ALP Policy: E2, E5)

12) Landowners should be encouraged to screen storage structures erected in their fields, or place them in locations where they are less visually intrusive. (ALP Policy: E2, E5)

13) Where new planting of trees is planned or desirable, in conjunction with a new development, the planting of species native to the area, such as oak, beech, birch and hazel should be encouraged

### **Settlements**

The Parish of Ampfield is made up of a number of small historic hamlets but also includes a few larger settlements, mostly of recent origin. The two largest settlements, the village centre and Hocombe are about a mile apart. The Straight Mile, Ampfield Hill (west) and Jermyns Lane form a separate settlement area towards the western end of the A3090. The remainder of the parish comprises small hamlets; often formed around old farms.

To consider their character, the settlements have been grouped as follows:

1) Ampfield Village - centre: commencing with the original hamlet of Knapp, north of the A3090, the village settlement extends westward, both sides of the A3090, past the recent central development of Morley's Green, as far as Ampfield Hill (east) and includes Lower Farm Lane (the old main road), and Wingham Lane.

2) Ampfield Village – outer settlements: to the east these include Potters Heron Close, Potters Heron Lane, Hook Road (lower), Broadgate, Hookwood Lane and Woodlea Way; to the west, lie the Straight Mile, Jermyn's Lane and Ampfield Hill (east).

3) Upper Hocombe 'A': Hook Road (upper), Hook Crescent, Hocombe Wood Road, Hookwater Road, Hookwater Close and Hursley Road as far as Beechwood Crescent.

4) Upper Hocombe 'B': Hursley Road to Baddesley Road, Baddesley Road, including the mobile home parks, Flexford Close, Beechwood Crescent and Beechwood Close.

5) The Hamlets: Ratlake, Hawstead, Gosport, Pound Lane, Green Lane and Crampmoor.

#### 1) Ampfield Village – centre

Whilst the village has medieval origins, the current dwellings range in date from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The village has served as the focal point of the surrounding area since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It expanded in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century to provide housing for workers on the Hursley estate. During this time the church, the school and the village hall were built.

Much of its appearance and character are of that period although the older 17<sup>th</sup> century timber frames remain in the core of a number of the cottages and non-residential buildings. The majority of the village was designated a Conservation Area in 1989.

With the possible exception of the recent development, known as Morley's Green, and Green Pond Lane, the settlement pattern is of small groups of houses spread loosely and informally along the roads. Nearly all the houses front the roadside offering a diverse pattern of housing distribution, with little uniformity of layout. These distinct settlement areas are separated from each other by substantial landscape gaps of important amenity and scenic value, offering views to the countryside beyond.

These gaps allow the open countryside and woodland that surrounds the village to penetrate scenically into its centre and give the impression of a semi-rural environment throughout the village. Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of Hook Road between Potters Heron Close and Broadgate Farm, where the fields extend down to Hook Road offering countryside views into the distance. Other good examples of this can be seen at the bottom of Ampfield Hill, between Pound Lane and the White Horse Public House and along Knapp Lane.

The Conservation Area comprises Knapp, St. Mark's Church, Chapel Wood and extends westward along the A3090 as far as Pound Lane on the southern side and Wingham Lane on the northern side. The Conservation Area includes 60% of the listed buildings in the parish. Outside of the formal Conservation Area lay a number of other important heritage areas: Lower Farm Lane (the old road to Romsey), Pound Lane and Green Lane. These areas include further informal groups of buildings, which are again separated by important open areas comprising ancient fields, small copses of trees and hedgerows. The lanes, fields and houses within these areas are clearly depicted on the 1588 Hursley map. Several of the historic buildings are listed and there are sites of archaeological interest.

In the past, ribbon development along the roads in the parish (such as that which took place on Ampfield Hill in the 1940's) began to erode the historic landscape gaps that are an important and attractive feature of Ampfield's settlement pattern characteristics. In these areas, where there would be an unacceptable impact on the character and nature of the settlement and a loss of important local landscape features, such as intimate views of open countryside or woodland, the sub-division of roadside plots should be avoided.



## Ampfield Village – Outer Settlements

### Hookwood Lane, Woodlea Way and Lower Hook Road

Hookwood Lane, Woodlea Way and the adjacent part of Hook Road is a small self-contained settlement, where building commenced in the 1930's. The settlement comprises a development of attractive, widely spaced detached dwellings of individual design set in large well-wooded and screened plots. The overall feel and appearance is that of a mature, spacious settlement, with a high degree of seclusion. The unmade, tree-lined roads, grass verges, gravel drives and wooded plots provide a sylvan setting for the houses. Woodland is an important feature of the settlement and should be retained.

The character of the settlement has been maintained over the years. A few more recently built dwellings on infill plots in both Woodlea Way and Hook Road have been successfully assimilated, due to their harmonious design and uniformity and the type of materials used and sit well alongside other properties of the settlement.

In the attractive countryside to the west and just outside the boundary of this settlement lies Broadgate Farm, a previous brownfield site, now improved into a development of large executive homes with some affordable, low cost homes, developed in accordance with local planning policy.

### Potters Heron, Potters Heron Lane and Close

Potters Heron Cottage was the original settlement with Broadgate Cottages a much later 19th century addition on the other side of the main road. The Potters Heron Hotel, a thatched motel dating from 1937, provides the main focus at this junction of the A3090 and the increasingly busy Hook Road.

Potters Heron Lane and Close lie either side of the hotel and comprise a small number of widely spaced detached houses of individual design, set on large-scale, well-wooded and screened plots, built along unmade roads at the same time as the original hotel. The tree screening between the hotel and the houses is particularly effective and provides a relatively secluded and private location for the residents.

### Ampfield Hill (West), Straight Mile and Jermyns Lane

The settlement pattern here is of large houses of individual design, built on very large plots, mostly over an acre in size, with some covering several acres. Those on the A3090, here named The Straight Mile, are located on separate service roads, either side of the road. The houses are very widely spaced, well set back from the service road, on plots that are in woodland, often quite dense. Each is well screened from the adjacent property.

On the A3090 at the western end of Ampfield Hill and on Jermyns Lane joining it from the west, there are a number of similar sized properties. These are also very widely spaced, set well back from the road on large plots and screened by extensive woodland. Some of these are much older properties that have been extended. Outwood Lodge (which originally marked the western end of the Hursley Estate) and Keepers Cottage date from the 19th century and several others (such as Little House) were originally bungalows built in the 1950's. The styles of the houses vary a great

deal. The Planning Authority, helping the area to retain a homogeneous appearance, has resisted sub-division of plots.

Apart from the nature of the settlement pattern, the key characteristic is the extensive woodland, which covers the whole area. The settlement is separated from the village by an attractive and striking landscape gap running north-south along Tadburn Valley, which affords fine views in all directions from the settlements and the road.

Upper Hocombe 'A' and 'B';

Hocombe is the only 'built-up' area in the Parish and contains about 65% of its houses. The developments at the eastern end of Hook Road, in Hook Crescent, in the lower west side of Hursley Road, in Baddesley Road, in Beechwood Crescent and in Beechwood Close commenced in the late 1930's and the architectural style of that period is still evident in many properties. Much of the development originally consisted mainly of bungalows built on a common alignment and at a similar distance from the roads, on plots with uniform frontages. Some have been modernised and extended in recent years, mainly in Hook Road, Beechwood Crescent and Close, Lower Hursley Road, and Baddesley Road. Many of the alterations and extensions have been well executed enhancing the variety and style of the properties. Some of these developments have been less successful in maintaining the building style and characteristics of the area. Due to the preservation of the many medium and large trees that have been planted, the area has maintained its attractive woodland setting.

Hook Crescent was developed in the late 1930's. It comprises a development of attractive, detached dwellings of individual designs set in a variety of sizes of gardens, some with a good number of trees. There has been some back land development but this has largely been well laid out in plots set in amongst the wooded surroundings. The overall appearance and feel is that of a mature and spacious settlement, the woodland providing an attractive backdrop for the dwellings.

The upper west side of Hursley Road, Hookwater Road and Close, and Hocombe Wood Road were built in the 1960s. The houses are detached, and laid out in a varied pattern on small plots, which provide limited scope for change. The architectural style is typical of the period and only a limited number of house design types were built. However, with a good number of green space areas where there are mature and semi-mature tree and shrubs, it has a characterful appearance.

Flexford Close, situated off Baddesley Road, is an established small cul-de-sac of modern housing built in the mid 1970's to a family of standard designs using similar materials and with open-plan front gardens. The great majority of buildings are set out on regular plot-widths, split up into small groups of detached and semi-detached through to short terraced rows of staggered lengths, each with reasonable garden space at front and rear. All houses were originally built with integral garages many of which have now been incorporated into the living space. Some have been extended and flat roofing been replaced with tiled pitched roofing which has created some individuality and enhanced their appearance. Many properties have also extended their hard standing to meet the increased demand for off road parking. It is edged with mature trees and bounded by the Monks Brook, Beechwood Close and Trodds Copse.

At the western end of Baddesley Road there are three mobile home sites comprising of approximately 100 mobile homes in total. These are attractively laid out in small well-kept plots. Many of which contain shrubs and small mature trees, giving the sites a pleasant appearance and a good degree of seclusion.

#### The Hamlets

Ratlake, Hawstead, Gosport, Green Lane and Crampmoor

These are the smallest settlements mostly dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century or earlier and were formed around farms at that time. Most appear on the 1588 map of the Hursley Estate. All are unique and individual settlements. They still exist as separate hamlets, their farmhouses and cottages surrounded by open countryside although few carry out any farming activity. Many have become private residences and the farm buildings converted to other uses. Crampmoor is still a working farm and the nearby cottages here appear little altered, although the original farmhouse itself has been replaced by a modern dwelling.

Near Green Lane Farm the design of several modern buildings that were built along the lane in the 1980s does not reflect the vernacular of the adjacent historic farmhouse. These dwellings form a small ribbon development along the lane, which has encroached onto the surrounding landscape.

The various Ratlake properties, either side of the A3090, date from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although some are rebuilds of much older dwellings, they are now private residences, most having been successfully converted from smaller cottages to form larger dwellings for modern living. The farm buildings have been sympathetically converted into offices (see section on Businesses)

The Hamlets remain largely unaltered in terms of their settings and period feeling.

### Planning Guidance

**Introduction:** The key issues concern the protection of the character of the parish from inappropriate and unjustified development and for which, when it is located in the countryside, there is no overriding need.

- 1) Future development should be located within the existing settlement areas to avoid encroachment onto the countryside or important landscape gaps. In-fill or backland development should be permitted within settlement areas only where it does not adversely affect the existing overall appearance of the settlement area; having regard to important scenic gaps, views, woodland, trees, hedges, etc. The building design, layout, and landscaping of any such development should be in harmony with the characteristics of its surroundings. (ALP Policy: SD1, COM2, E1, E2)
- 2) To protect the landscape characteristics of Ampfield, it is important to avoid ribbon development that extends the settlement boundaries or joins up clusters of buildings and settlements along the roads and lanes of the parish. Development outside the boundaries of existing settlements should not be permitted, unless there is clear evidence of overriding need for that development to be in the countryside. (ALP policy: SD1, COM2, E1, E2)
- 3) The subdivision of plots for building purposes should be permitted only where the design and layout of the resultant dwellings fit harmoniously into the settlement area and is in keeping with the local neighbourhood street scene. Entrances and boundaries to additional plots should conform to the

- character and scale of the settlement surrounding them. (ALP Policy: SD1, COM2, E1, E2)
- 4) The spaces between buildings arising from new development should be in keeping with the key characteristics of the neighbourhood and the existing street scene. Existing woodland, trees, hedges and verges should be maintained and protected. (ALP Policy: SD1, COM1, E1, E2)
  - 5) Planning applications in the conservation area should conform to the planning policies that apply to conservation areas. New development should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area by reflecting traditional building forms in terms of density, height mass and scale. (ALP Policy: E9).
  - 6) Consideration should be given to extending the conservation area to include upper Knapp, Pound Lane as far as Rose Cottage and Byways, Lower Farm Lane as far as Lower Farm and along the north side of the A3090 to the Old Farmhouse (Sleepy Hollow). The enlarged area would include Gosport hamlet and a number of historic buildings. This landscape is made up of woodland and ancient field systems and lanes that appear on the 1588 map. It has great natural beauty and provides a very attractive rural setting for the settlement and its old buildings. (ALP Policy: E9)
  - 7) Many of the settlement areas close to the old village centre and the A3090 contain highly valued heritage buildings. Where a development adjacent to a heritage building is proposed, the design, size and form of the proposed development must complement, respect or enhance the environment in which the heritage building stands. (ALP Policy: E9)

## **Buildings**

Spanning the centuries, the four most prominent buildings in Ampfield are the White Horse Public House, (early 17<sup>th</sup> century), Ampfield House (18<sup>th</sup> century), St. Mark's Church (19<sup>th</sup> century) and the Potter's Heron Hotel (20<sup>th</sup> century).

*The White Horse* dates from the early 1600's and is a timber framed building with brick infill panels, which has been extended sympathetically twice.

*Ampfield House* dates from 1750 with later additions and was the centre of the Ampfield estate until most of the estate was sold in 1932. The estate at that time included Crampmoor Farm, Green Lane Farm, Lower Farm, Philpotts (Old) Farm, Broadgate Farm and Home Farm (Knapp). It also included the Beechwood estate and the old brickworks at Flexford. *St. Mark's Church*, one of the earliest churches built in the neo-gothic style, was designed by the well-known Winchester architect, Owen Browne Carter, and consecrated in 1841. *St. Mark's* remains very much as it was designed and is instantly recognisable from the original sketches of the period. *The Potter's Heron Hotel*, an attractive thatched roof building was opened in 1937 at the junction of Hook Road and the A3090. It was rebuilt after a major fire in 1966 and extended in 1982 to provide an additional wing for the current accommodation

Altogether there are 26 listed buildings in Ampfield. These, plus a number of other buildings, have been identified as being of particular historical interest in the parish.

Although most are to be found within the boundaries of the village Conservation Area, a number lie outside.

Among the most noteworthy buildings are:

- Old farm houses, such as Gosport Farmhouse, built around 1750, and Hawstead Farmhouse, which is older and has been sympathetically restored.
- Labourers' cottages, such as Bishop Cottage in Wingham Lane, Marstan in Green Lane and former Hursley estate cottages in Knapp.
- Lodges of the Hursley Estate, such as Hawkers lodge in Knapp and Outward Lodge on Jermyn's Lane. The former has Tudor style central chimneystacks and the latter a superb example of unique Hursley chimneys.
- Yew Tree Cottage in Pound lane, part of which dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.
- The Old Vicarage built in 1750 and later extended.

Many of these buildings date from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries or earlier, Many other cottages in the village, especially in Knapp, Pound Lane, Green Lane and the outlying hamlets have timber cores dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, to which, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were added exterior tiling and other embellishments. Also built in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were no's 1 and 2 Broadgate Cottages.

The present Village School was opened in 1896 and extended in the 1990's, carefully incorporating the original architectural style. Adjoining this, at the junction of Knapp Lane and the A3090 is the parish war memorial.

The remaining buildings, approximately 70% of the total, were built in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the earliest were mainly in the Straight Mile, Potter's Heron Lane and Close, Hookwood Lane, Woodlea Way and the Hocombe and Beechwood areas. The most recent additions would be Morley's Green, Broadgate Farm and a small development on the south side of Ampfield Hill. Particularly in the case of the last three locations, sympathetic design and choice of building materials has been of great assistance to help them to blend into their village setting.

### **Street Scenes and building settings**

The key characteristic of the Parish of Ampfield, particularly in the village centre, is the intimate relationship between the settlement areas and the surrounding countryside. In a great many locations, the borders of the main thoroughfares through the parish comprise solely open fields and woodland, whilst in the settlement areas the views of the open countryside and neighbouring woodland are prominent behind and between areas of ribbon development. Even in those parts of the parish that are built up, such as Hocombe and Beechwood, there are a very significant number of fine, mature trees and areas of woodland, such as Hocombe Upper Plantation and the neighbouring Flexford Nature Reserve. It is, perhaps, this close liaison between the built environment and the natural environment that is the most prized by all the residents throughout Ampfield.

Within the parish, residents regard the street scene as being of prime importance. There is a strong preference for small scale developments and buildings that complement the existing scenic setting and that preserve the character of the area. As a result, the design of developments and the individual buildings within them are given great importance. Much emphasis is placed on buildings that are designed and sited to blend sympathetically with their neighbours and the surrounding area.

The design features that help create and retain a sympathetic semi-rural street scene include:

- ◆ *Positioning the building within the plot so that it does not dominate either its neighbours or the surrounding areas in general.*
- ◆ *Keeping the height of the building in proportion with, and complementary to, the neighbouring properties.*
- ◆ *Keeping the size and shape of the building in proportion to its neighbours*
- ◆ *Keeping the size of the building in proportion to its plot, avoiding large houses on small plots.*
- ◆ *Respecting local architectural forms.*
- ◆ *Respecting the original architectural style when extending.*
- ◆ *Preserving characteristic spaces between buildings.*
- ◆ *Preserving and providing trees and hedgerows to soften the impact of buildings.*
- ◆ *Historically, there has been no significant street lighting within the parish, except in areas that abut neighbouring parishes.*

In addition, the overall appearance of a building and whether it complements or conflicts with the existing street scene is heavily influenced by the choice of the building materials.

### **Existing building design in the various settlements**

The great majority of the buildings in the parish are dwellings and most of these are detached. With few exceptions, notably Green Pond lane and Morley's Green, dwellings across the parish are of individual design on varying sized plots, with differing frontages and settings. This is particularly true of dwellings in the village centre, the hamlets, the Straight Mile, Jermyn's Lane, Ampfield Hill, Potter's Heron Lane and Close, Hookwood Lane and Woodlea Way, Hook Road and Hook Crescent. Usually, they were constructed independently of each other over many decades and exhibit a wide range of designs and use of materials resulting in a great diversity of characteristics and styles.

However, for all the diversity in building designs, in these areas there remain a significant number of predominant local features. These include:

- ◆ *low rooflines,*
- ◆ *attractive use of roof hips,*
- ◆ *decorative gables,*
- ◆ *decorative clay tile hanging,*
- ◆ *plain tile, slate or thatch roofing,*
- ◆ *windows in proportion to the elevations*
- ◆ *good use of dormer and cottage style windows*
- ◆ *timber framed porches.*

In Hook Close, lower Hursley Road, Beechwood Crescent, Beechwood Close and Baddesley Road the dwellings were laid out during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a more uniform pattern. Within each road, the buildings were often built at similar time and, as a consequence, they exhibit many similar features in terms of style and materials. However, over the years there have been a large number of extensions/alterations to the original construction pattern that has provided for the variations in design at local levels seen today.

More recently, e.g. Green Pond lane (1948), upper Hursley Road, Hocombe Wood Road, Hookwater Road and Close (1960) and Flexford Close (1970), the housing developments tended to be laid out in a more uniform pattern, with similar sized plots, using a range of modern estate designs and materials.

As stated above, across the parish, many of the original smaller dwellings have been greatly extended. This is part of a trend towards more versatile and extensive living accommodation that shows no sign of abating, inevitably resulting in a stock of larger, more expensive housing. As a consequence, the stock of smaller, less expensive properties that might be suitable for starter homes or for older residents wishing to downsize has been depleted.

This situation, to an extent, has been partially remedied by the development at Morley's Green where, whilst it is impossible to escape the estate influence entirely, skilful use of design and building materials has allowed the houses to blend with the existing buildings in the neighbourhood. Although different in scale, the same can be said of the developments in Broadgate Farm and to a lesser extent, at the top of Ampfield Hill. The former, in particular, retains fine views of the open countryside between the large detached dwellings.

### **Consideration in building design in the settlements**

#### **The Village Centre**

Much of the village centre is in the conservation area and many of the buildings are of the Victorian era or older. With some exceptions, dwellings are small and medium in size and complement the intimate scale of the settlement and its narrow lanes. There is a wide range of styles and shapes, including a small number of 'period' semi-detached houses. Ampfield House (1750) and a number of other dwellings lie in more extensive plots at intervals through the village.

The variety of scale, form and design of the buildings, together with the position on their individual plots, avoids any sense of crowding or domination, either visually or physically, within the intricate rural landscape setting. The modest front boundaries of hedge and low brick walls, wooden fencing and natural gravel or paved driveways also suit the rural setting. Most have hedges along the front and side boundaries that afford privacy.

The characteristic design features of the village centre include:

- ◆ *A relatively modest scale of building and front elevations,*
- ◆ *Low rooflines,*
- ◆ *Attractive use of dormer windows,*
- ◆ *Fully hipped roof ends,*
- ◆ *Some decorative gables*
- ◆ *Plain and decorative vertical clay tile hanging,*
- ◆ *Timber cladding,*
- ◆ *Modestly proportioned windows with shallow arched brick lintels,*
- ◆ *Victorian and cottage style windows (twin pane casement and 'Hursley' respectively)*
- ◆ *Timber frame porches.*

Local and natural building materials predominate. The roofs of thatch, clay tiles and slate complement the existing rural setting. Plain tiles are mid-red or light brown.

Walls are generally clay brick, with some upper storey and gable walls being tile-hung or having timber boarding. Bricks were frequently sourced and produced from local brickworks; one of which, Michelmersh Brick Holdings Plc, remains popular and is often specified today. Windows tend to be painted white or stained to harmonise with the landscape and these forms are similarly reflected in the finishes to masonry and rendered panels.

#### The Straight Mile, Jermyns Lane and the west end of Ampfield

Traditionally, the buildings here are mainly large detached two-storey residences sited on very large plots, most built independently in the 1950s and 1960s to individual designs. However, more recently a number of the original residences have been demolished and rebuilt on a larger footprint, with greater visual impact on the surrounding area.

The buildings continue to be spaced well apart and heavily screened from the adjacent main road and each other. In the heavy woodland setting the most successful designs are those that have lower and steeper rooflines and more detailed and broken roof and wall elevations. It is the visual and spatial relationship of each design within the heavily wooded landscape of its plot that has determined the success of the design and the finishes employed, rather than any need to harmonise with neighbouring designs.

In such well-screened and large plots, building design rarely impacts on neighbours or those passing by. Extensions have been built, many introducing large additions towards one boundary, some introducing first floor balconies or verandas. In most of these instances the space and privacy of neighbours has not been significantly affected.

A wide variety of materials, both traditional and modern, have been employed in colours and textures that in most cases complement the wooded landscape surrounding.

#### Hookwood Lane, Woodlea Way, Potters Heron Close and Lane and Lower Hook Road

Buildings here are primarily medium and large detached dwellings sited on large plots, built independently from the 1900s to the present day, each to an individual design.

The wooded settings provide important local character, with the dwellings spaced well apart and screened from each other, giving an attractive and homogeneous overall appearance. In these informal wooded areas, the most successful designs are those that have lower rooflines, more detailed and broken roofs and elevations and are modestly proportioned and centrally positioned in relation to their plot dimensions. More recently, there has been an element of infilling, although the new properties remain similar in scale and design.

Examples of the design approaches include:

- ◆ *buildings set back from the front boundary to retain a belt of trees,*
- ◆ *generous spaces between dwellings,*
- ◆ *groups of dwelling types e.g. single- or two storey;*
- ◆ *individual designs that avoid modern estate type styles;*
- ◆ *steep to moderate pitch roofs;*
- ◆ *modestly detailed and proportioned front and side elevations;*
- ◆ *use of broken front elevations;*



- ◆ *low rooflines with limited use of dormer windows on front and rear elevations only;*
- ◆ *rooflines lowered to first-storey level on side elevations;*
- ◆ *cropped hipped roof-ends where closer to neighbour or boundary;*
- ◆ *tile hanging or differing finish on the upper storey.*
- ◆ *The roofs are of thatch, clay or concrete plain or interlocking tiles.*
- ◆ *Walls are brick or rendered, with some tile-hung upper-storey and gable walls (some with timber boarding).*

Hook Crescent, Hook Close, Upper Hook Road, Hursley Road, Baddesley Road, Beechwood Crescent and Close

Buildings here are all detached, mainly medium-sized with some larger dwellings. Most are sited on medium sized plots, and most were built between the late 1930s and the 1950s, many to individual designs. Some of the buildings are surrounded by trees or woodland, which provides character and screening. Many of the buildings are set out more formally along each road in similar positions relative to the boundary on plots of similar width.

There is a wide range of styles in these streets. Upper Hook Road, Hursley Road South and Beechwood Crescent and Close were originally laid out mainly with traditional bungalows of similar patterns. Many of these have been modified in recent years with expansion into the roofs, extensions rearwards or re-developed into two-storey dwellings, frequently in a more contemporary style. In those re-developed into two storeys, often the front elevations have been extended across the width of the plot. In so doing, a number have become oversized in relation to their plot and to neighbouring buildings. As a consequence, the original attractive nature of the street scene and character has been significantly altered.

The changes in the street scene have introduced a considerable degree of variability in the characteristic design features in these areas, especially in the Beechwood neighbourhood. Examples of the common design approaches include:

- ◆ *single family dwellings;*
- ◆ *lower rooflines;*
- ◆ *steep to moderate pitch roofs;*
- ◆ *use of broken front elevations;*
- ◆ *use of dormer windows on front and rear elevations;*
- ◆ *rooflines lowered to first-storey level on side elevations;*
- ◆ *hipped and cropped hip roof-ends where closer to neighbour or boundary;*
- ◆ *tile hanging or differing finishes on the upper storey.*

Hursley Road, Hocombe Wood Road, Hookwater Road and Close

Buildings here are all medium-sized detached two-storey dwellings, fairly densely sited on smaller plots, many with open- plan front gardens. All were built in the 1960's in small estate lay- outs, using families of related designs. The buildings are set out fairly formally on regular-width plots. There are some original mature trees in most plots and on the small but important green open spaces bordering the dwellings on the service road fronting Hursley Road. The general settings also owe much to new planting, established following building, which have now matured into effective landscaping.

Examples of the design approach for these developments include:

- ◆ *variations in dwelling designs and elevations;*
- ◆ *variable small spaces between buildings and staggered front elevation set-back distances, which give an open, spacious and attractive appearance;*
- ◆ *variation of brick and concrete tile colours along streets*
- ◆ *Concrete or plain clay tiles on some elevations also provide variations in appearance.*

### Flexford Close

This is a relatively high density cul-de-sac estate built in the 1970s to a family of standard designs using similar materials. The great majority of buildings are set out fairly formally on regular plot-widths with open-plan front gardens. All houses were originally built with integral garages many of which have now been incorporated into the living space. Some have been extended and flat roofing been replaced with tiled pitched roofing which has created some individuality and enhanced their appearance.

Mobile Home Parks (Wheelhouse Park, St. James Park and King Edwards Park)  
The three residential mobile home parks comprise pre-fabricated forms of functional, non-permanent single-family dwellings. The plots are attractively laid out along tarmac service roads, and the plots and common areas are well maintained and cultivated.

### The Outlying Hamlets

Most hamlets comprise several dwellings and some agricultural buildings of either traditional or modern construction. Some traditional farm outbuildings have been very successfully converted for alternative uses. Most buildings date from the 16th to 18th centuries and each design appears representative of its historical period. Although the buildings vary in size and style, overall they complement the intimate scale and informality of the hamlet and their surrounding rural landscape and lanes.

Similar to the village centre, the predominant design characteristics include:

- ◆ steep and low rooflines;
- ◆ decorative gables;
- ◆ decorative clay tile hanging;
- ◆ plain tile, slate and thatch roofing;
- ◆ modest proportion window and elevations;
- ◆ cottage-style windows;
- ◆ timber framed porches.

In Green Lane, some post war buildings have been added but because they are dissimilar to the adjacent older buildings in design details, general proportions and materials, their integration has been of limited success.

## Planning Guidance

- 1) Development should integrate, respect and complement the character of the area in which the development is located. Development should not be permitted if it fails to harmonise with the character and quality of the local area in which it is located. (ALP Policy: SD1, E1, E2)
- 2) Within existing settlement areas, the type of dwelling, the design, style and features, the size in relation to its plot, the position within the plot, the roof height, the gaps retained between a dwelling and its neighbours and the materials used should all be in keeping with and complement the characteristics of the local surrounding neighbourhood. (ALP policy: SD1, E1, E2, LHW4)
- 3) The size, scale and design of a new dwelling or dwelling extension should have regard to and be in proportion with the overall size of the plot in which it is located. The character of the neighbouring dwellings should be taken into account together with adjacent countryside, trees and woodland. (ALP Policy: E1, E2, LHW4)
- 4) In all future new development, the existing building, surrounding characteristics and features should be taken into account in order to provide overall harmony in the local street scene. However, provided it is in keeping and blends in with the surrounding area a measure of variety in the style, shape and size of new buildings is important. New clusters of buildings should avoid sterile uniformity of building alignment, architectural style and elevations and use a variety of different materials and finishes.. (ALP Policy: E1, E2)
- 5) Where an existing building is to be extended, the design should complement and harmonise with the style, detail and material of the original and the overall appearance of the dwelling in its neighbourhood. There should be no significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. (ALP Policy: E1, E2, LHW4)
- 6) The roof heights of new dwellings or new extensions should be maintained in proportion to those of the adjacent properties. Rooflines should respect those of nearby properties in order to provide a harmonious street scene. Fully hipped roofs or single-storey fully hipped pitch roof extensions should be used where the introduction of a two-storey gable end would detract from the light or amenity of an adjacent dwelling or is uncharacteristic of the area in which it is located. ((ALP Policy: E1, E2, LHW4)
- 7) The dimensions of any new buildings should be proportionate to the size of their plot and be in harmony with the key characteristics of their neighbourhood. (ALP Policy: E1, E2, LHW4)
- 8) The spaces between neighbouring buildings should be in keeping with the key characteristics of the neighbourhood and where there are established characteristic gaps between neighbouring dwellings in the locality these should be respected and new dwellings should not detract from the existing development form and layout . (ALP Policy: E1, E2)
- 9) Where there is a planning application for new clusters of dwellings, there should be regard for the need for smaller, lower cost homes. Such homes should be built to the same high standards of design, amenity and materials prevalent in the parish overall. In the centre of the village, Morley's Green

- is a good example of how this is can be achieved. (ALP Policy: COM2, COM 7, E1, E2, E5, )
- 10) Buildings created by subdivision of plots must be sympathetic with and complement the spatial characteristics of the neighbouring area. (ALP Policy: E1, E2)
  - 11) Wherever possible, new buildings should be set back from the road and by in harmony with the existing building line. (ALP Policy: E1, E2)
  - 12) Domestic installations (oil tanks, satellite dishes, etc.) should be out of view of the road or appropriately screened to minimise the visual impact. Off street parking should be available whenever possible. (ALP Policy: E1, E2)
  - 13) New buildings and extensions should carefully consider and minimise the impact on wildlife and the local ecology. Wildlife corridors should be maintained. Where trees, hedges and woodland exist new development should allow these to be retained whenever possible, (ALP Policy: E1, E2, E5)
  - 14) Conversions, extensions or new build of commercial/utility properties should be designed to fit sympathetically within their neighbourhood in terms of scale, form and materials. (ALP Policy: COM2, E1, E2, E5)

## **Businesses**

### **The business environment**

Ampfield is a good location for small businesses: South Hampshire is a large and rapidly growing local market place, and there is a good supply of skilled labour in the area. Southampton, Eastleigh and Winchester are within ten miles of the Parish, and the road system provides quick access to these towns, to their main-line railway stations and to Southampton Airport. Rents are lower in the country than in the towns, and the working environment is attractive.

### **Existing Businesses**

The largest business in the Parish is Hillier's, one of the leading horticultural and arboriculture businesses in the UK. Its nurseries, propagation units, distribution depot and offices are in or neighbour the Parish. It owns a large amount of land around Knapp and its Head Offices are in Ampfield House.

Other businesses in the Parish include a children's nursery, an equestrian centre, stone-masonry, small-scale auto-engineering, furniture and joinery, architecture and several small technology or service-based businesses.

Farming has declined in recent years. Of the eight farms that were working in Ampfield in 1945, only three productive units remain: Crampmoor Farm, Hawstead Farm and New Barn Farm. At the remaining farms, the land tends to be let out for grazing livestock or for keeping horses. Their buildings have been re-developed in various ways to provide accommodation for new businesses:

- At Ratlake Farm, the buildings have been sympathetically converted to high-quality offices, and are let to small businesses. This conversion could serve as a model for the re-development of disused rural buildings.
- At Green Lane farm, the farm buildings now accommodate several light industrial businesses
- At Broadgate Farm the former storage and distribution buildings have all now been removed and the site has been sympathetically re-developed for housing.
- Gosport Farm discontinued working fairly recently. It has attractive brick-built farm buildings some of which are used for temporary storage.

Leisure businesses in Ampfield include a pub (The White Horse), a hotel (The Potters Heron), a restaurant (Keats) and a par-three golf club. All are well patronised, and appear to be thriving.

### **Future trends**

The increasing popularity of home working, evident over the last two decades, has encouraged a number of residents to start up small business from their own homes. This is expected to continue.

Ampfield's attractive geographic location is expected to continue to attract small businesses into the parish. In general, business start-ups should be encouraged, provided that their activities are of a nature and on a scale that would be suited to the local semi-rural and residential environment. Few residents would support the construction of substantial new office or industrial buildings but the sympathetic conversion of existing buildings, such as disused farm buildings, would be an acceptable alternative to dilapidation.

However, it must be born in mind that the construction of new outbuildings to accommodate the expansion of businesses that started in the home, or the conversion of existing ones, may be detrimental to the privacy and amenity of neighbours in certain locations, in particular within the conservation area or in the proximity of Ampfield's heritage buildings. Also, an increase in the number of workers on a residential plot is also likely to cause parking problems, increase traffic in the locality and detract from the amenity of neighbouring homes.

### **Planning Guidance**

- 1) The construction of new commercial or industrial premises in the countryside should not be permitted unless there was clear evidence of overriding need that such development should occur in the countryside. (ALP Policy: COM2, LE16, LE17)

- 2) The sympathetic conversion of existing buildings, such as disused farm buildings, is an acceptable alternative to dilapidation. Whenever existing brick, stone or timber buildings are converted to suitable business use, the scale, design and materials of the conversion and any extensions should be in keeping with, the local surroundings. (ALP Policy: COM2, LE16)
- 3) Consideration should be given to the need for landscaping and screening such as hedges, fences, or walls that is sympathetic with the surrounding area to minimise visual intrusion. Unsightly temporary structures should be screened in order that they can blend with the landscape. (ALP Policy: E1, E2, E5)
- 4) Where planning policies permit the construction of new buildings or extensions to assist the expansion of existing businesses, the scale of the development and its design and layout should be appropriate to the surrounding landscape. Existing outbuildings on residential plots, such as garages, could be converted to business use, provided that there is no significant adverse impact on the amenity value to local dwellings in the neighbourhood, visually or environmentally. (ALP Policy: COM2, E1, E2, LE16, LE17)
- 5) When considering businesses use careful consideration should be given to the effect on neighbouring premises and homes with regard to potential vehicle movements, parking facilities, opening hours and general amenity value.
- 6) When permitting future business activities in the parish, it is important that the semi-rural nature of the parish is recognised and respected.