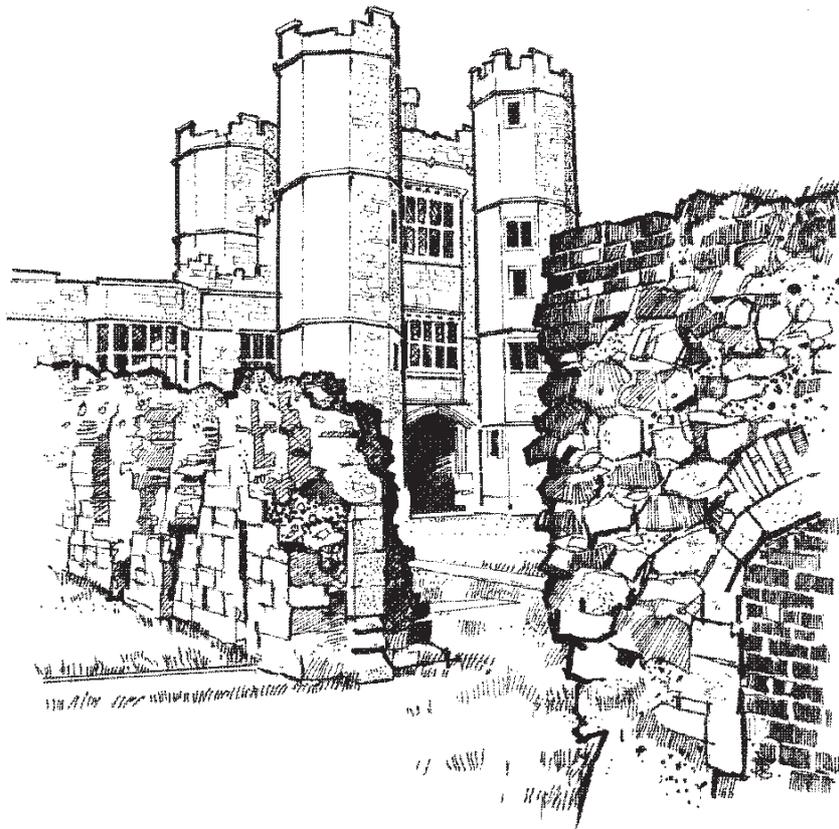


Conservation Area Character Assessment



Titchfield Abbey



FAREHAM BOROUGH
COUNCIL

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Conservation Area Character Assessment

Fareham Borough Council has designated 13 Conservation Areas that are considered to have special architectural or historic interest. They have been selected because each one has a character or appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The character of each area derives not just from the age and style of individual buildings but also from the way groups of buildings are arranged, the spaces between them, their historical significance in the development of an area and their use. Many other factors such as: open spaces, landscaping, trees and important views all interact to form the overall character of an area. In order to make informed decisions about development that affects the character of a conservation area it is essential to have a clear understanding of what makes the area special. This series of Conservation Area Character Assessments identifies the features in each conservation area that help to define its character. The appraisals are not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

The function of the character assessments will be to:

- identify the special character of the area that justifies conservation area status
- provide assistance in the consideration of planning proposals that affect the character or appearance of a conservation area
- identify areas that have potential for improvement

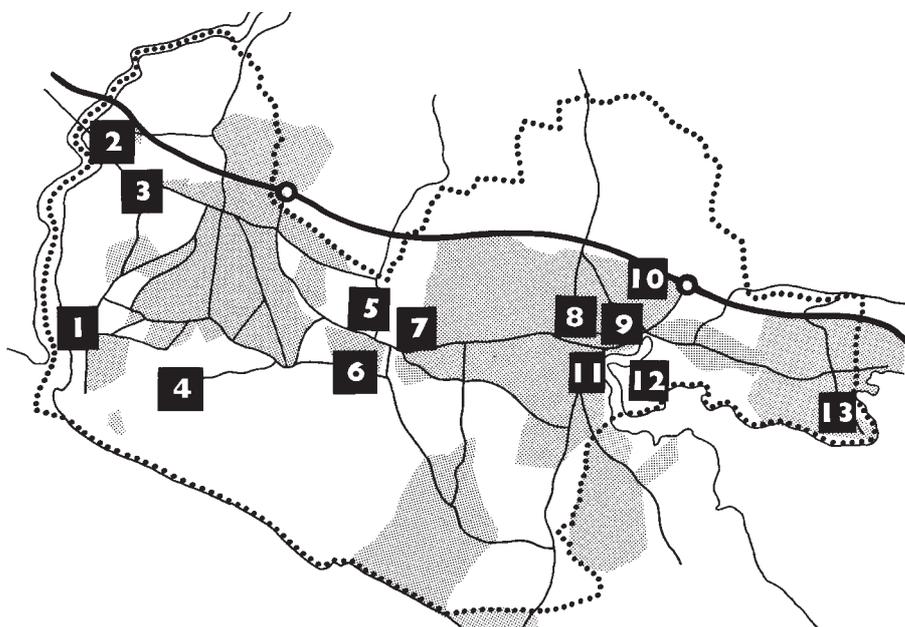
The Character Assessment Documents have been written as supplementary guidance for use with the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review which sets out planning policy to guide development until 2006. Chapter 6 contains specific policies for the consideration of development affecting the Historic Environment including Conservation Areas and this series of documents will provide an important reference for their implementation. Government Guidance concerning Conservation Areas can be found in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.

The Local Planning Authority has a duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to:

- determine which parts of the borough are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance
- formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any conservation areas
- pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the conservation area

Conservation Areas in the Borough of Fareham

- 1 Warsash
- 2 Swanwick Shore
- 3 Sarisbury Green
- 4 Hook
- 5 Titchfield Abbey
- 6 Titchfield
- 7 Catisfield
- 8 Osborn Road
- 9 Fareham High Street
- 10 Wallington
- 11 Town Quay
- 12 Cams Hall
- 13 Portchester (Castle Street)



Introduction

Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area was designated in 1994. It includes a portion of the Meon Valley, between the A27 north of Titchfield Village and the railway line from Fareham to Southampton. This part of the Meon Valley has considerable architectural and historic interest and provides a setting for a number of important scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings, notably those of Titchfield Abbey. The conservation area boundary is shown on the map on page 7.

Historic Development

This stretch of the Meon valley has a long documented history beginning with the foundation of the Abbey of St Mary and St John the Evangelist in 1232. The Abbey, granted by Henry III, was founded by Peter des Roches (Bishop of Winchester), and was the second of two Abbeys of the Premonstratensian order founded by him in England, the first being at Halesowen in Worcestershire. The order, founded in 1121 by St Norbert (Archbishop of Magdeburg) at Premontre in Picardy, had spread to England by 1140 and Titchfield was the last of 33 houses of the order to be established in this country. The order dressed in white to distinguish themselves from the black attire of the Augustinians and became known as the White Canons.

The Abbey existed for just over 300 years and comprised 15 manors, containing 60 villages and hamlets with 500 tenants. It was ruled by a succession of 20 Abbots, and details of its activities were documented in its records. The Abbey had a number of Royal visitors. Following their marriage at Southwick in 1445 Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou journeyed to Titchfield to continue their wedding celebrations at the Abbey. Their route crossed Stony Bridge, which is sometimes referred to as 'Anjou Bridge'. Richard II also visited the Abbey as did Henry V on his way to the French Wars.

The Abbey established 3 farms, 'Great Posbrooke', 'Rectory Barton' and 'Lee'. The buildings associated with the first of these remain, south of Titchfield Village, the second is thought to be the modern Fernhill and the third possibly Carron Row. They provided the Abbey with 1000 acres of arable land and 1500 sheep. A notable surviving feature is the series of fishponds built by the monks to the west of the abbey to provide a food source. These are included as part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The five ponds were arranged in series running down the valley side and drained into the Meon. A feeder stream was constructed to allow the lower one to be filled separately from of the upper

Site plan



four and the upper four could all be drained independently. After the dissolution the Wriothesley family continued their use for the commercial production of Carp.

Titchfield Abbey surrendered to the dissolution in 1537, most of its possessions having been promised to Thomas Wriothesley. Wriothesley, a loyal servant of King Henry VIII, had worked for Thomas Cromwell, one of the architects of the dissolution, since 1524 and his loyalty to the monarch was well rewarded. He benefited more than most from the disposal of monastic land in Hampshire acquiring 27 former monastic manors. The King granted him Titchfield Abbey in recognition of his 'good true and faithful service'. One quarter of all the monastic manorial properties given or sold by the crown between 1536-8 fell into his ownership and his loyalty to the crown was richly rewarded in the King's will.

Thomas Wriothesley replaced Thomas Cromwell as secretary to the King and was knighted in 1540. In 1544 he was appointed Lord High Chancellor of England. He was Constable of both Southampton and Portchester Castles, became Baron of Titchfield in 1544 and The 1st Earl of Southampton in 1547.

Having acquired the Abbey in 1537, Wriothesley set about turning it into his new fortified mansion and the resulting 'Place House' was to become the family seat for four generations. The surviving ruins comprise a mixture of the former medieval Abbey and Wriothesley's subsequent alterations and additions. The monastic Frater (refectory) was retained as a hall and the cloisters were converted into a courtyard. A large gatehouse was inserted half way along the Nave of the church, the remainder of which was converted into domestic apartments, and the alterations included an eastward extension to the chancel. The house and other buildings necessary for the functioning of such a high status household were surrounded by a deer park.

Thomas Wriothesley died in 1550 and the house passed to his five year old son Henry, the second earl. Edward VI was entertained at Place House in 1552 and Queen Elizabeth I visited the mansion in 1569. The second earl died in 1581 leaving £1000 for his funeral and £1000 for a family monument in St Peter's church (which can still be seen today) as well as further money for church alterations.

The third Earl, also Henry, invested in the economy of the village, reviving the local woollen industry and providing a market hall in the square. He is perhaps best known as a patron of Shakespeare. In 1611 the Earl completed reclamation of tidal land in the valley and the construction of what is believed to be one of the earliest canals in the country to retain a link from the village to the sea.



The fourth Earl, a royalist, entertained Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria at Place House in 1625. In 1647 Charles I fled to Place House from London where he was apprehended by Colonel Hammond before escaping to Carisbrook on the Isle of Wight, where he was finally captured.

When the 4th Earl died, Titchfield estate passed to his eldest daughter Elizabeth. On her death in 1680 it passed to her husband and when he died in 1689 to their son, whose two daughters inherited it upon the death of their mother in 1704. The daughters married the 1st Duke of Portland and the 2nd Duke of Beaufort. In due course the 5th Duke of Beaufort acquired both halves of the property and sold the estate to Peter Delme in 1742. In 1781 the Delmes partially demolished the building and re-used materials from it for the enlargement of their new Fareham residence, Cams Hall. The ruins of Titchfield Abbey are now a guardianship monument in the care of English Heritage.

Character Assessment

The conservation area is rich in architectural and historic interest. The ruin of Titchfield Abbey (Place House) sits at its centre on the valley floor and is a landmark visible from many viewpoints. The Abbey lies at the centre of a group of important Scheduled Ancient Monuments, which comprise the Tithe Barn, Stony Bridge and the surviving medieval fishponds. Other listed buildings consolidate the group, including Abbey Cottage, Place House Cottages and the Fisherman's Rest Public House (formerly the Railway Inn) at the junction of Fishers Hill and Mill Lane. To the south the Mill and Mill House are prominent, the former in particular due to its imposing scale.

Settlement Pattern

The street pattern in the conservation area has changed little from early maps, particularly the Titchfield estate map of 1610, with Mill Lane and Fishers Hill still following their historic alignment. Mill Lane leads north from the village along the valley floor and Fishers Hill climbs the eastern valley side to Catisfield from the junction opposite the Abbey.

Prior to the construction of the Turnpike in 1811, Mill Lane and Fishers Hill comprised the northern route from Titchfield to Fareham. The route left the village from Mill Street, followed Mill Lane to the junction opposite the Abbey (beside the Fisherman's Rest), turned into Fishers Hill, crossed the river at Stony Bridge and climbed the valley side to Catisfield. The continuity of this historic route has been severed by the Titchfield Bypass (A27) and other modern road alterations, but it and former footpath links from the village to the Abbey are evident on older maps. Footpath no.43 leaves the village as a northern continuation of the High Street, passing Old Lodge before crossing the A27, it can be seen on the 1610 estate map heading towards Place House. Another old path, also shown on the map, is bridleway no.82 which leads north from Fishers Hill, close to Stony Bridge. This bridleway climbs the valley side turning north east towards Henry Cort School. All the public rights of way are marked on the character assessment map.

The parkland that surrounded Place House can be seen marked on Speed's map of 1611 as well as the estate map of 1610. The latter marks land on the eastern side of the river as Fareham Park. The following maps show the development of the conservation area and the relatively small amount of change that there has been in the valley.

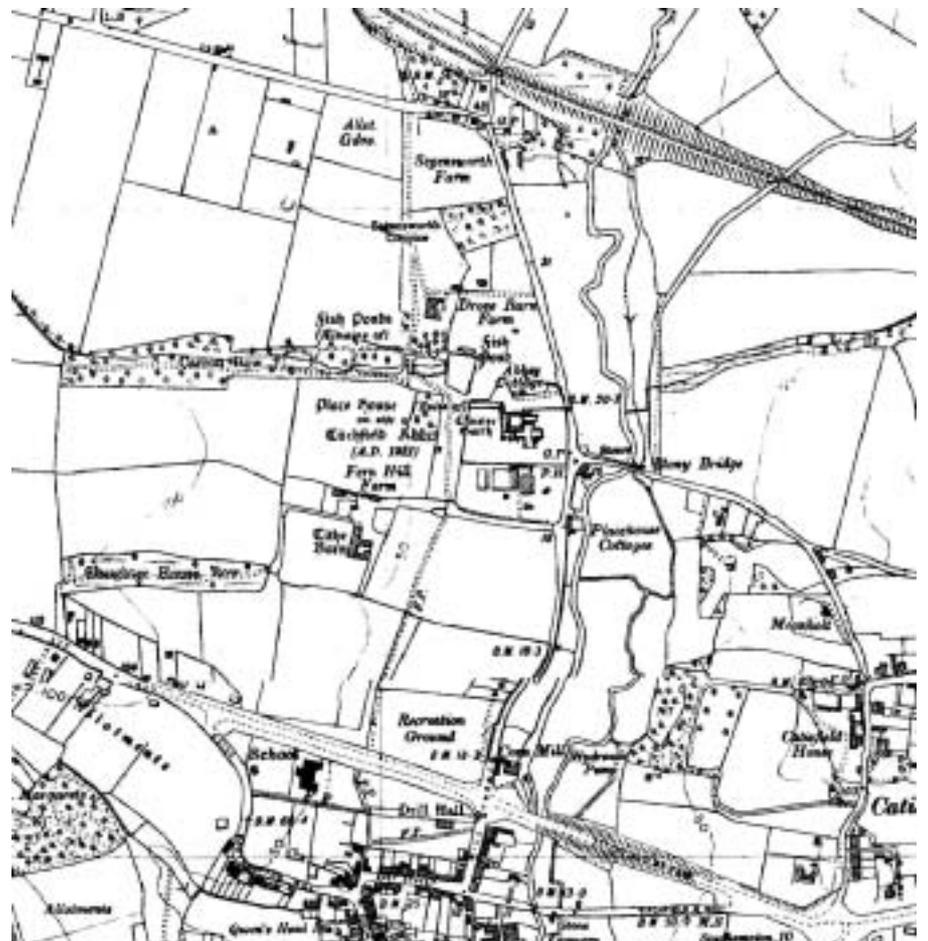
The roads in the conservation area are to a large extent rural in character. Mill Lane has kerb edging and a footpath on one side as far as the Abbey, after which it reverts to an informal country lane. Fishers Hill has no kerb edging or pavements for most of its length which reinforces its character as an informal rural lane. The nature of these roads is important to the rural character of the conservation area and further urbanisation should be resisted.



Titchfield Estate Map 1610

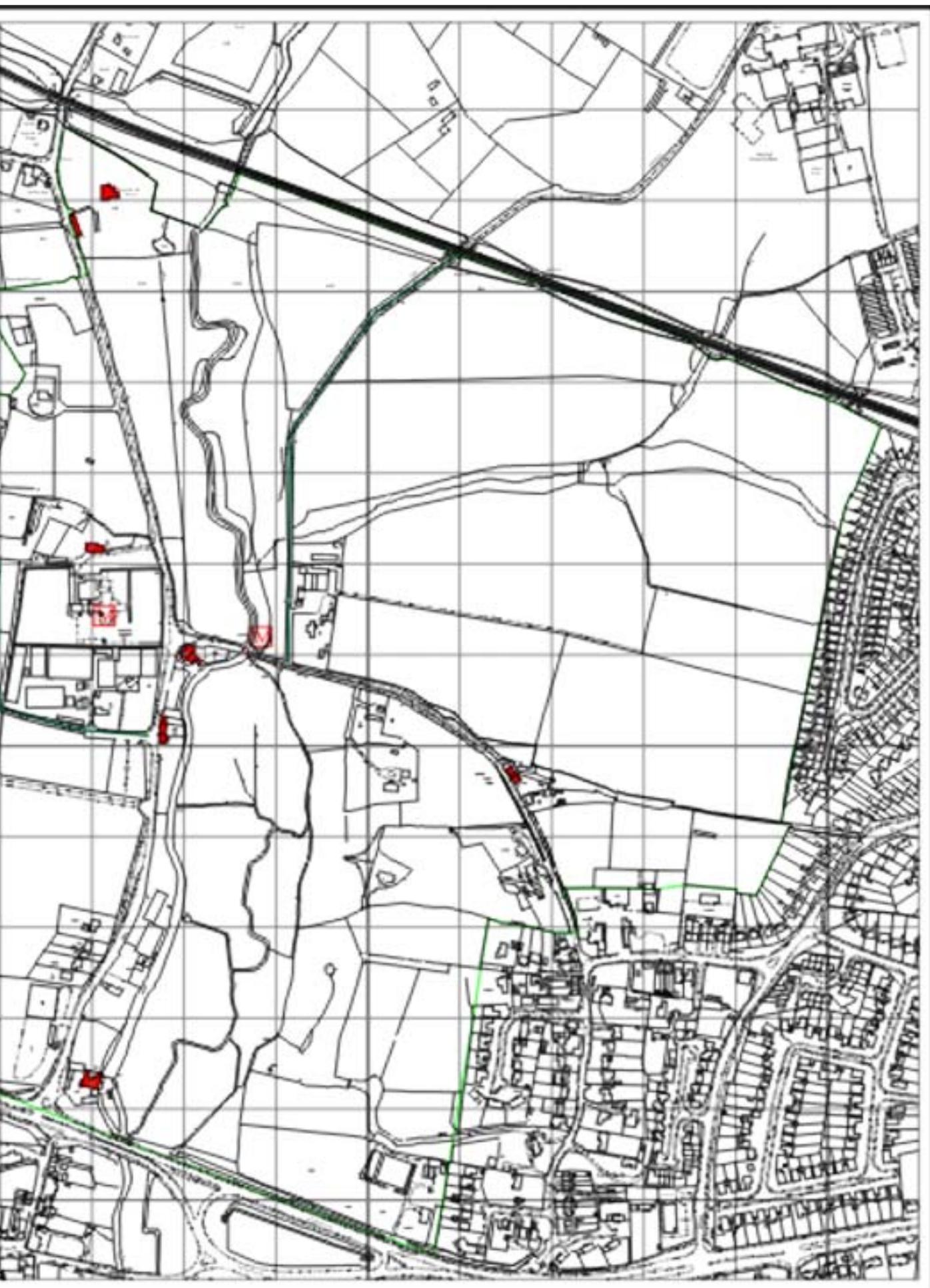


Ordnance Survey 1870



Ordnance Survey 1940





Views and Setting

Titchfield Abbey and the Tithe Barn rely for their setting upon the surrounding woods and open farmland. This wider setting provides a historic context for these important buildings. There are long views across the valley, looking both east and west, which encompass the historic rural setting. The sloping sides of the valley provide a remarkably unspoilt rural backdrop and there are many views from a distance of the historic buildings from the public footpaths in the area. Although the urban areas of Fareham and the Western Wards are close by, they are not evident. Particularly important views are marked on the assessment map. Apart from a small group of buildings north and west of Titchfield Mill and the garden centre immediately south of Place House, there is little intrusion from modern development. The land uses in the valley include open recreational use, horticulture and agriculture. This open stretch of the Meon Valley is also a vital and historic part of the setting of Titchfield village. Despite the existence of the A27 it provides a contrast to the closely built streets of the village and provides a link to its rural past.

Trees and Planting

The existence of a large number of trees, individually and in groups, makes a vital contribution to the rural character of the conservation area. There are some significant groups of trees, such as Carron Row, which runs west up the valley side from the historic fishponds, others follow the field boundaries, the river, the railway line and the roads. Important trees act as a buffer from the adjacent urban areas. All the trees in the conservation area are protected.



Landscape Assessment

The Fareham Borough Council Landscape Assessment was undertaken in 1996. The study aimed to provide a definitive appraisal of the landscape resources of the borough to be used to inform planning decisions. The assessment identifies the protection of Titchfield Abbey and its historic landscape setting as one of its priorities for the enhancement of the Meon valley. The area has been designated an area of Special Landscape Character in the light of its conservation interest; part of this interest is the historically important complex of buildings, landscape and fishponds at Titchfield Abbey.

Historic Landscape Assessment

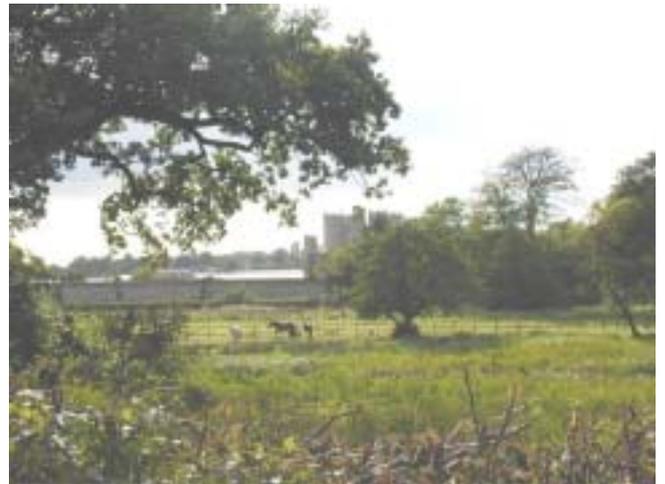
The Historic Landscape Assessment (HLA) is a countywide study undertaken to identify and understand the historic development of today's landscape, it has identified over 80 Historic Landscape types.

The landscape types that have been identified for the land included within Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area include pre-1810 parkland, valley floor with fields, small parliamentary enclosures and recent scattered settlement. The detailed information is too complex to include in this document but the data and further detailed information relating to the historic landscape assessment, including charts and maps, can be accessed on the Hampshire County Council web site at <http://www.hants.gov.uk/>.

The Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings

Titchfield Abbey is in the guardianship of English Heritage, and is managed on their behalf by the Titchfield Abbey Association (a volunteer group). West of Abbey Cottage, within the strong tree belt known as Carron Row, is a series of medieval fishponds that form part of the scheduled ancient monument. These step down the valley side and connect to the River Meon. The Abbey ruins (which include surviving examples of medieval encaustic tiles) together with its related medieval fishponds, the Tithe Barn and Stony Bridge form an important group of Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The nearby Tithe Barn is a Grade I Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is 157 feet long and 46 feet wide with eight bays and two hipped wagon entrances; the walls are built of stone and brick under a massive hipped roof with tie beams, collars and arched braces. The felling date of its main timbers has been identified using dendrochronology, as between 1407/9; the



porch is a later addition of 1560. The barn is the only surviving monastic agricultural building at Titchfield and is one of the finest medieval barns in the country.

Fern Hill Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed building to the west of the barn. It comprises a timber framed bay, possibly of a hall house, that abuts a two storey stone cross wing with red brick dressings, it has later C19 additions to the west. A date stone of 1689 is incorporated in one of its walls.

Stony Bridge, a Grade II listed building and an ancient monument, crosses the river linking Fishers Hill to Mill Lane. The present structure, according to the Victoria County History, bears the date 1625, although the date stone is now too worn to be decipherable.

North of Place House the conservation area contains two grade II listed barns. The barn at Carron Row Farm dates from the C17th or early C18th but may be earlier. The barn at Segensworth House may date from as early as the C16/17th century. Segensworth house dates from the C18/ early C19th and its origins are not known; it is also listed Grade II.

The timbers of 1 Place House Cottages, to the east of Mill Lane, have been given a felling date of 1447/8 using dendrochronology. This pre-dates the dissolution of the Abbey in 1537. Evidence suggests that the building was a grammar school by 1540 and it is likely that it was the monastic school of the Abbey. It is therefore an important survival. No's 2 and 3 Place House Cottages, also listed buildings, date from the late C17, or possibly earlier.

Other structures in the group around Place House include Abbey Cottage, a Grade II listed building, which has a C16/C17th core, extended and remodelled in the late C19th/ early C20th. The Grade II listed Fisherman's Rest public house is prominently sited at the junction of Fishers Hill and Mill Lane. It has four C18th bays in red brick with grey headers laid in a chequered Flemish bond. The building has a C19th bay in red brick to the north. Half way up Fishers Hill on the north side is a terrace of C18 Grade II listed cottages. They are constructed of local red brick and tile hung on the front elevation.

To the south, Titchfield Mill with its two iron water wheels and the Mill House are both Grade II listed buildings. These were on the northern extremity of the village and are now severed from it by the Fareham-Southampton Road (A27). The Mill, dated 1830 on an iron plate above the wheel, is a red brick building of five storeys with a slate double mansard roof. The Mill House, attached to the west side of the Mill, completes this historic group, which has recently been converted to a pub.



Traditional Architecture and Materials

The older buildings in the conservation area are characteristic of rural vernacular buildings found in this part of Hampshire and include examples of building types from the medieval period onwards. Both oak timber framing, the principal building material of rural Hampshire in the middle ages, and local red brick, which became widespread in the early eighteenth century, are in evidence. By contrast, the masonry used in the conversion of the abbey into Place House is Caen limestone, which was imported for the construction of many high status buildings in the county in the Middle Ages.

The local red brick was laid in a variety of bonds, some of which were decorative, sometimes using the distinctive locally made blue/ grey headers which can be seen forming a chequered Flemish bond on the front elevation of the Fisherman's Rest.

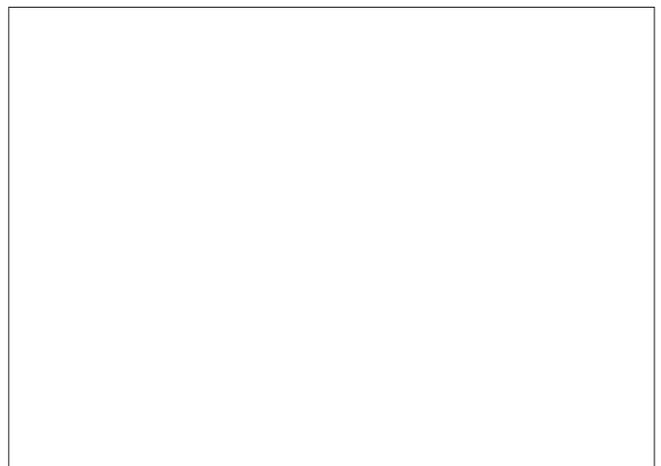
Red clay tiles with a characteristic double camber, which gradually superseded the use of thatch, are the predominant roofing material. Place House Cottage and Abbey Cottage both have crested clay ridge tiles. By contrast Titchfield Mill is roofed in natural slate, which became widely available in the nineteenth century. The presence of chimneys is an important characteristic of the older buildings and these should be retained. Timber is the predominant material used in the construction of windows, traditionally in the form of either side opening casements or vertical sliding sashes.

The local materials, building styles and architectural details found in the conservation area are important to its architectural and historic character and should be retained. The use of appropriate materials and design in new development is essential in order to preserve the special architectural or historic character of the conservation area.

Potential for Improvements

There is potential for improvement in terms of the visual impact of the buildings, retail areas and car parking at Abbey Garden Centre. There is also potential for improvement to reduce the visual impact of the modern buildings adjacent to Fernhill Farmhouse.

The possibility of improvements in these areas should be explored in any future planning applications.



Features to preserve and enhance

- Titchfield Abbey (Place House) and its enclosing walls, a Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- The Tithe Barn, a Grade I listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and Fern Hill Farmhouse;
- The medieval fish ponds at Carron Row and associated tree belt;
- Stony Bridge over the River Meon, a grade II listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- The tree lined lane of Fishers Hill and the listed cottages and absence of kerbs fronting it;
- The buildings grouped around the junction of Fishers Hill and Mill Lane, including Place House Cottages;
- The barns at Carron Row Farm and Segensworth House;
- Titchfield Mill and the Mill House;
- The unspoilt informal rural setting provided by the Meon Valley;
- Important views of the Abbey and other historic buildings in their landscape setting;
- Trees and other planting of importance to the landscape character of the valley.

Planning Control in a Conservation Area

- Conservation Area consent is required for the demolition of some unlisted buildings (It is always advisable to contact the council to confirm whether a particular proposal will require consent).
- It is an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy trees in a conservation area without the consent of the local planning authority. The local planning authority must be given 6 weeks prior notice of any works to trees within a conservation area.
- Permitted development rights that make a planning application unnecessary for some minor alterations and extensions to dwellings are more restricted within a conservation area. You are advised to contact the council concerning proposed works to determine whether or not an application is required.
- The detail of planning applications is carefully considered in the light of impact upon the special character of the conservation area. Applicants are encouraged to discuss ideas for development proposals with planning officers prior to submitting an application.

Contacts:

Advice and guidance leaflets concerning conservation areas and listed buildings can be obtained from;

Mike Maude-Roxby Conservation Manager

Mike Franklin Conservation Officer

Environment Group

Department of Planning and Development

Fareham Borough Council

Civic Offices

Civic Way

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