

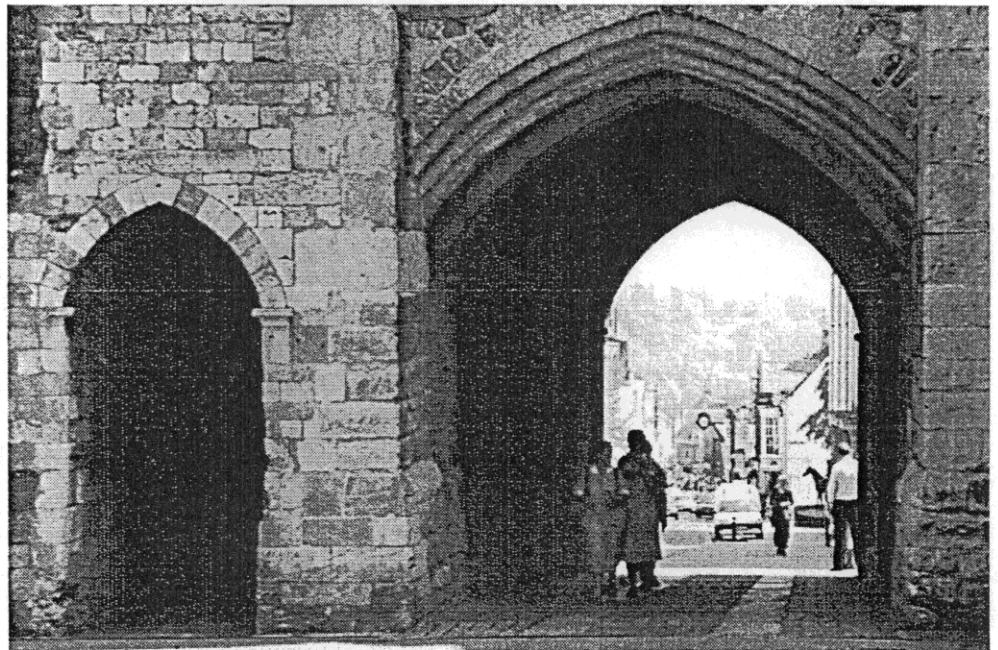
Historic core

Principal Characteristics

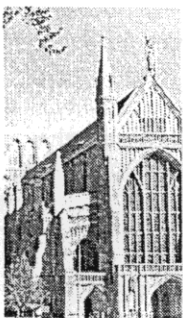
A key illustration of the essential elements of Winchester is in this view through the Westgate to the busy High Street and terminating in the wooded slopes of St. Giles's Hill.

City Centre

- Clear, historic character derived from the retained street pattern and buildings.
- Views from many parts of the old city eastwards to St. Giles's Hill. Occasional glimpses of distant downland enclose long distance views.



- Diversity of mood ranging from the busy commercial streets to the serenity and spaciousness of the Cathedral Close.
- The descent of the High Street from West Gate to the river is a progression of varying space, scale and character.
- The Cathedral and its Close is enfolded within the city centre. Its physical presence is often hidden, yet the Close retains a sense of activity central to the heart of the city.
- Contrast in scale and form between intimate, picturesque city streets and houses surrounding grand royal, civic, collegiate and religious buildings such as the Great Hall, Wolvesey Palace, Winchester College and the Cathedral.



5.2.1 A city centre with great depth and meaning, displayed in its set piece buildings and the precious street pattern dating back to Roman and Saxon times. Under the Saxons, the Venta Belgarum of the Romans, became a defensive burgh and the ancient capital of England. Today, the commemorative statue of King Alfred, first king of the English, is a popular landmark at the bottom of High Street.

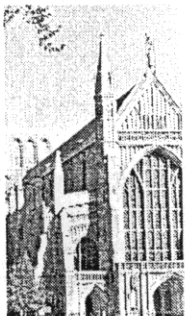
5.2.2 High Street is a largely intact piece of historic townscape. The view through West Gate, the major remnant of the old city walls, down the busy High Street towards the Itchen and across to the backdrop of St. Giles's Hill is particularly distinctive. The intimate scale of the High Street at its western end is interrupted and widens at the Cross and Broadway, changing the urban form from route to space in a distinctive manner. The Victorian Guildhall and tower is an important landmark within Broadway. Bay windows are a common architectural detail along High Street. The medieval mill buildings on Bridge Street, the east bank of the Itchen, are a reminder of the city's industrial heritage and the continued importance that the River Itchen has played in the life of the city.

View along Kingsgate Street terminates in the bulk of the Cathedral roof. As one progresses, the tower forms a surprise view at the end of the street.

The narrow streets, fronted by varied but predominantly 18th century housing, are distinctive.



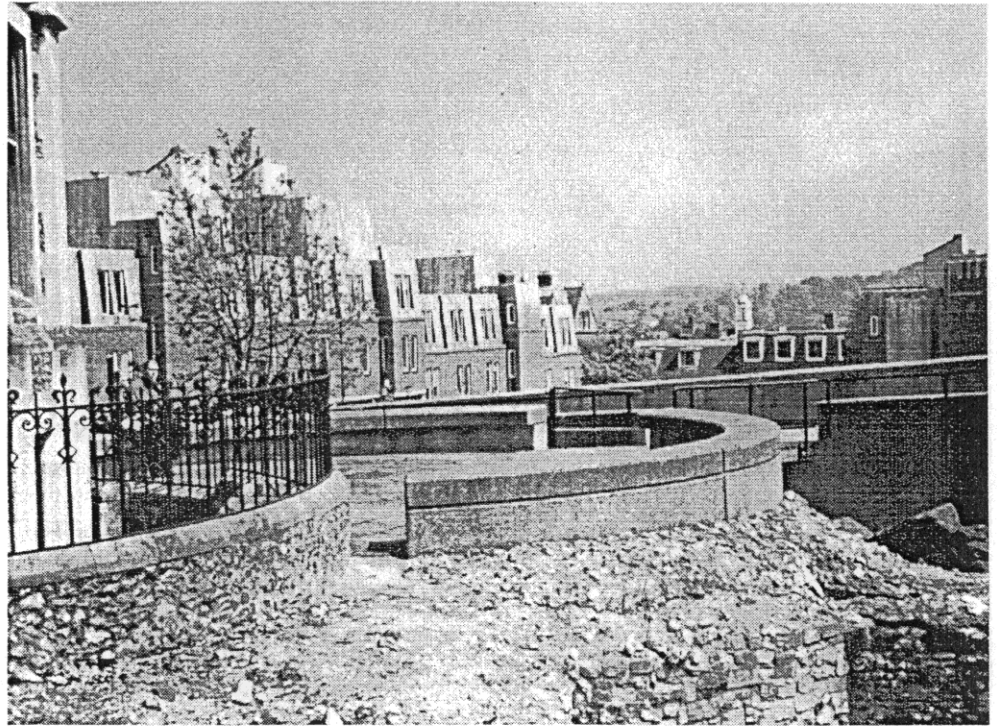
5.2.3 Despite its grand scale the cathedral does not overpower the area. The stately Romanesque cathedral tower surprises with sudden views from the surrounding streets. Such views from Kingsgate, Colebrook Street and Middle Brook Street, for example, are especially fine. Contained within the urban fabric, the progression of ecclesiastical buildings and open spaces are entirely appropriate. The Cathedral Close and Gardens give a tranquil space used by visitors, workers and residents for rest and relaxation away from the busy thoroughfares as well as a convenient traffic free route across town. This atmospheric space binds the cathedral into the core of the city.



5.2.4 The continuity and importance of Winchester as a former stronghold is reflected both in the massive, ancient Castle remains and the Great Hall with its strong links back to the days when Winchester held royal patronage. These mighty buildings contrast with close neighbours housing another facet of Winchester, that of the County seat and a significant administrative and civic centre. Despite their outward differences these buildings have a similarity in use because early magistrates, seated on benches, held court in the Great Hall. The view from the approaches to the Great

A strong juxtaposition of the massive flint walls of the old Castle and the modern forms of the County Architects Department offices.

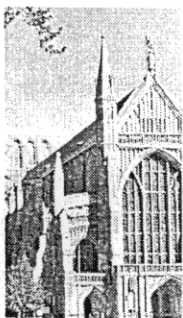
The eastern downland can be seen enclosing this view.



Hall, eastwards over the city to the enclosing downland demonstrates the clear relationship between the city and its landscape setting.

5.2.5 South of High Street, the picturesque and narrow streets such as Canon, College and St. Swithun Streets, are lined with Georgian and Victorian houses, built of brick, stone and pastel painted stucco, with undulating rooflines clad in plain clay tiles. These domestically scaled streets contrast with the adjoining, interlinked series of

Canon Street shows the small scale, medieval street pattern. The view terminates in the Tower of Winchester College.



tranquil, meandering ecclesiastical spaces and gardens around the cathedral. Tall stone and knapped flint walls define the Close, the Castle and Kingsgate and link the city to its cathedral and college.

- 5.2.6 Kingsgate Street is much quieter and retains its sense of history and picturesque character, with a superb view of St. Catherine's Hill at Ridding Meads. A memorable view of the cathedral roof dominates the narrow streets defined by Kingsgate Arch, the impressive flint and stone College walls and eighteenth century houses. The contrasting inter-relationship between the historic College buildings, Wolvesey Palace and the adjoining watermeadows is one of the quintessential elements of the city. Lush watermeadows and mature trees provide a strong pastoral setting to the complex of buildings. The smooth textures of grass and foliage contrast with the roughness of the ancient stone and flint walls.
- 5.2.7 The College of St. Mary near Winchester imparts its particular character to the area. The College Tower is an important landmark. This historic institution has held a central role in Winchester since its founding in 1382. Present day use reflects a way of life rooted in tradition. Book hugging pupils proceed through the narrow streets of this former medieval suburb, disappearing through gateways into intriguing courtyards, with trees overhanging the walls, and glimpses of some fine medieval and modern architecture.
- 5.2.8 The lush greenness of the southern water meadows provide an important backdrop and a strong sense of the country penetrating the city, see for example the view from the end of College Street. The remains of the historic Wolvesey Palace sit close to the city centre and southern water meadows and yet maintain a sense of conclusion sheltered behind massive flint boundary walls. The richness and diversity of the river corridor through the city imparts an ever changing link to nature. When overlain with the historic resonances of the city, one of the key elements of Winchester is defined.

Historic core:

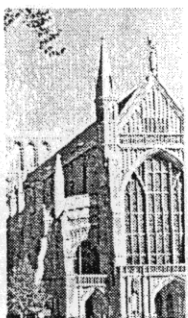
Principal Characteristics

St. Cross

- Retains a rural village character
- Ancient settlement based on almshouse foundation
- Close association with water meadows
- Spectacular views of chapel tower and St. Catherine's Hill

5.2.9 The medieval suburb of St. Cross is focused on the Norman chapel, hospital and the former almshouse lodgings of that name recorded in 1185 as "the house of the Holy Cross, outside the Walls of Winchester". The original Latin and French forms of Holy Cross have been mistranslated to provide a non-existent English saint.

5.2.10 The stunning flint tower, and 15th century additions preside over the surrounding quiet narrow lanes, and the expanse of the southern water meadows. 17th and 18th century terraces and large detached houses built of mellow brick, some colour washed, overlook and define the views towards the willow-lined River Itchen and meadows, with the dramatic backdrop of St. Catherine's Hill beyond. Views from the eastern paths running along the walls of the Chapel of St. Cross, and Cripstead Lane are particularly memorable. Knobbly textured flint garden walls, some with clay tile cappings, are an intrinsic part of the streetscape, together with the mature ornamental trees which overhang them. The tranquil village character remains intact, in sharp contrast with, and in spite of, abutting the traffic noise and fumes



The distinctive St. Cross Hospital



and more suburban character of St. Cross Road. St Cross forms part of a popular walk through the water meadows from Winchester.

Historic core: visually fragmented

Principal Characteristics

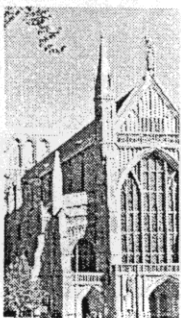
North Walls

- Dispersed sense of place and history
- Saxon street plan, and medieval city wall
- Mixed scale, use and age.

5.2.11 This character area takes its name from the knapped flint wall, which delineates the northern extent of the Roman based Saxon and Medieval city. The rectilinear street pattern signifies the Saxon origin, although redevelopment through the ages has masked the sense of history. Medieval half timbered cottages are juxtaposed between imposing Georgian townhouses, Victorian terraces and stark modern commercial buildings. This mix of scales, uses and materials creates a visually fragmented streetscape. However, Parchment Street, the focus of the medieval leather working trade, still retains its visual links with the old city, while the views along Middle Brook Street are memorable, with the Norman white stone Cathedral tower to the south and the lush green water meadows to the north.

5.2.12 Several important Victorian civic amenities, the library, built as the Corn Exchange and churches of various denominations are situated in this area, as are the 20th County Council offices; the well mannered and stately Queen Elizabeth Court built in the 1950s, and Ashburton Court. The grey concrete monumental blocks of the latter are considered by many to dominate and detract from the tree rimmed horizon, in the west of the city.

5.2.13 Views out to the surrounding downs are glimpsed from the North Walls area, but not generally visible from the enclosed streets with their north-south alignment. The whole area has a distinctly urban character, but some key views focus on leafy groups of large mature trees on Durngate and Hyde Street.



Historic core:
visually fragmented

Principal Characteristics

Hyde

- Early medieval suburb
- Tranquil rural character
- Close proximity to water meadows

5.2.14 Hyde Abbey, the burial place of King Alfred, was founded in 1110 and situated outside the north gate of the city. Today the remains of the 14th century gatehouse, and the nearby flint parish church are the clearly visible core of the historic settlement, although the 12th century Abbey no longer exists. Surrounded by 19th and 20th century housing, and bisected and bounded by the busy Worthy Lane and Hyde Street, Hyde is somewhat hidden. Its quiet streets and rich mix of architectural periods and styles add interest and variety to this part of the city. Brick and flint chequered walls are a frequent local detail.

5.2.15 The large mature trees and Hyde Mill stream running beside Saxon Road also retain a tranquil, rural character and are valuable landmarks, together with the parish church and abbey gatehouse. The surrounding water meadows, once belonged to and were managed by the abbey. The water meadow trees now provide an important backdrop in glimpsed views from the ends of several roads. West of Hyde Street the mix of light industrial use, heavily trafficked routes and gaps in the urban fabric mask and dilute the sense of place.

Historic core:
visually fragmented

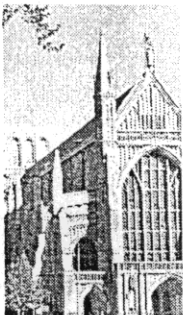
Principal Characteristics

Oram's Arbour

- Iron Age settlement site guarding river crossing
- Open green space in a Regency style suburb
- Elevated site, on the western edge of the city centre with views over the adjacent northern suburbs
- Picturesque terraces and lanes

Oram's Arbour

The police headquarters building is a prominent feature throughout the city



5.2.16 Oram's Arbour was once a Middle Iron Age defended enclosure, probably guarding the river crossing and is the earliest evidence of large-scale settlement in Winchester. It has been suggested that the market of the Belgae was held here, an indication of the early commercial importance of the settlement that became Winchester. Today only a 19th century earthbank, which runs parallel to Clifton Road, and is on the line of the Iron Age defences marks part of the site. The present open space, with its semi-mature trees, tall hedge on its eastern edge, criss cross of paths and monument, is the focus for the Regency style residences, whose painted stucco walls and Italianate detailing impart a refined and prosperous air to the area. The only, but significant, detracting feature is the Police Headquarters building that looms darkly over the space.

5.2.17 Surprisingly there are few views either to the city below or the eastern downland across the valley because of the dense vegetation along the railway embankment, although this is less so in the winter. To the east the former Union Workhouse is a landmark in the area. The ground rises to the west, and the narrow lanes and streets, which follow previous field boundaries, step down the steep gradients, or overlook the rooftops of houses in the streets below. The view from North View is particularly memorable. The pretty Victorian Step Terrace, with its houses featuring white painted windows and flowering front gardens stepping down the hill is distinctive.

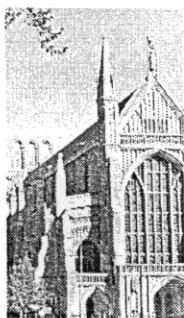
Historic core: visually fragmented

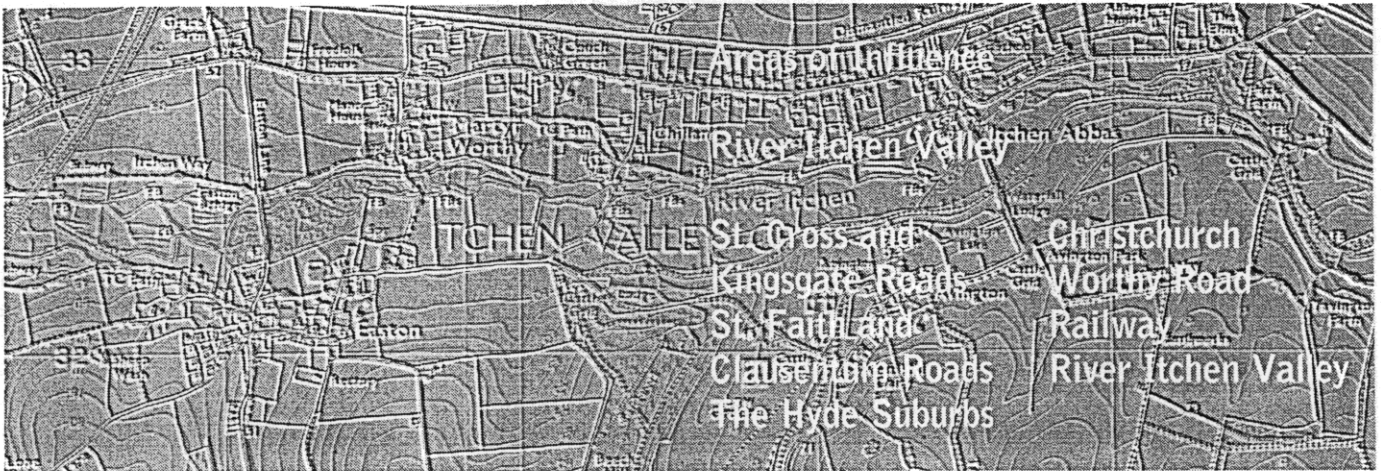
Principal Characteristics

- Historic manor now largely subsumed by surrounding modern suburbs
- Remnant rural character

5.2.18 The core of a small, now barely recognisable, manorial estate of Saxon origin situated on Stockbridge Road and Dean Lane. Its name derives from the Old English 'wic' denoting a specialised dairy farm is an indication of how the Saxons were careful to distinguish specialist or satellite farms from the main place of agricultural activity. The 12th century church is a landmark, amid the surrounding 20th- century suburbia, providing a welcome glimpse into the area's medieval past. Weeke Manor, and a thatched cottage to the west, also remain, together with a clump of trees and small green space this corner retains traces of a distant rural past.

Weeke Manor



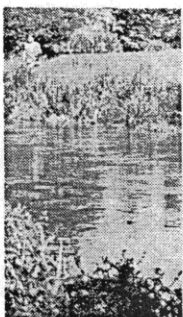


River Itchen Valley

Principal Characteristics

- Broad low-lying flat valley floor with enclosing landform of rising valley slopes
- Tranquil, secluded and unspoilt character within many sections
- Central section of Itchen Valley extends up to the perimeter of the historic core of Winchester providing a pastoral setting to the major historic buildings of the Hospital of St. Cross, Winchester College and Wolvesey Palace. The juxtaposition of mature landscape and striking architecture is particularly powerful
- Complex network of watercourses penetrate the city, including the main channel of the River Itchen with subsidiary and partly abandoned water channels and ditches, and improved or straightened sections including the Itchen Navigation penetrate the city
- Pastoral character with an intricate mosaic of watermeadows, hay meadows, improved pasture and paddocks

Hospital of St. Cross framed by the pastoral landscape and water meadows of the Itchen Valley and the green backdrop of Bushfield and Whiteshute Ridge.



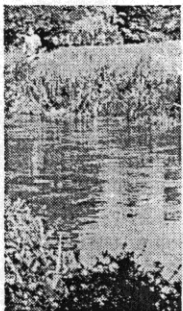
- Extensive native vegetation interspersed with more open areas provides a network of spaces and framed views varied in scale and sense of enclosure
- Internationally important areas of biodiversity interest with many sections designated as SSSI and submitted as a candidate Special Area of Conservation.
- High quality access from city to a network of footpaths and land accessible to the public within river valley including Winchester Meadows and Winnall Moor Nature Reserve, and the regional routes of the Clarendon Way, Nun's Walk and Itchen Way leading to Itchen Abbas; all of which are highly valued by local residents
- Pattern of linear communication routes within lower slopes of valley including the M3 between Shawford and Hockley, the B3335 and the southern section of the main line railway from Otterbourne to the St. Cross roundabout
- Significant views from river valley to key landmarks, notably St. Catherine's and St Giles's Hills, and framed or filtered views to the principal ridgelines containing the valley
- Strong archaeological and historical evidence within valley indicating the importance of the river in the development of the city

The Norman Chapel of St. Cross, with its robust flint tower, is an enduring symbol of the qualities of life in Winchester. This view is from Back Street



Distinctive townscape

St. Cross Road



5.3.1 One of the city's five major Romano British Roads, St. Cross Road aligns on the southern historic gate. An additional route, Kingsgate Road, forks west to the north of St. Cross, giving access to St. Mary's College, Wolvesey Palace and the Cathedral Close. Today, St. Cross still marks the entrance to the wider city. Despite the speed and volume of modern traffic, its historic character is clearly recognisable from the road. St. Cross Road has a leafy suburban character, as it passes beside the Victorian suburb of Christchurch, until it reaches the medieval suburb of St. Michaels and the historic city proper at Southgate Street.

Supportive townscape

St. Faith and Clausentum Roads

5.3.2 St. Faith and Clausentum Roads are quiet streets of Edwardian brick terraces and villas. Their regular street pattern and pleasant suburban character distinctly contrasts with the more organic nature of the historic core of St. Cross, with which it is contiguous. Views to the water meadows, that enfold the area, form an important and fresh green backdrop which imparts a specific character to these streets.

Winchester College's recreation ground at Ridding Meads is an integral part of the Itchen Valley green corridor. Note how the cathedral dominates the skyline.



Supportive townscape

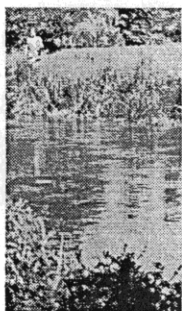
The Hyde Suburbs

Principal Characteristics

- Victorian and Edwardian housing area
- Close links to the water meadows

5.3.3 Hyde suburbs are an urban/suburban area of predominantly housing associated with the busy Worthy Lane and Hyde Street and the historic core of Hyde. It comprises pleasant, regular streets of suburban Victorian and Edwardian terraces and some modern housing, with industrial/commercial elements adjacent to North Walls, which historically was more industrial in nature. The garage on Hyde Street detracts from the scale of the street pattern. The eastern edge of this area has strong visual links to the adjacent water meadows.

Distinctive townscape



Worthy Road

5.3.4 Travelling south on Worthy Road, the mature tree-lined nature of the route is retained until the fork with Hyde Street, from whence it becomes more urban in character. The contrast is marked and constitutes an entrance point into the city. The green character is an important aspect of this route since, once beyond the built up area, the pastoral nature of the surrounding countryside so close to the city centre is very striking. Abbots Barton Farm, belonged to Hyde Abbey, the name derives from the Old English for 'barley farm' and was where the monastery grain was

stored. To the west lies the former Winchester Down which, during the Hundred Years War, was encamped by a detachment of the Hanseatic army in 1756. Until recently, Worthy Road defined the western edge of the northern water meadows. It is now lined by modern housing development (Character Areas 19A and B) which, due to dense tree screening, have minimal intrusion on the city's entrance.

Distinctive and supportive townscape

Principal Characteristics

Christchurch

- A Victorian suburb of large stucco and brick villas and regular spacious streets
- Railway embankment provides an important green backdrop
- Spire of Christchurch is a local landmark

5.3.5 This prosperous and leafy Victorian middle class suburb, situated on rising ground on the western side of the River Itchen Valley, is fairly typical of its era. Its development was precipitated by the provision of improved sanitation, the coming of the railways in the mid 19th century, and the need to house railway management and college staff. Regular spacious streets contain large, painted stucco and brick villas, some Italianate in style, with well stocked, brick and flint walled front gardens. The pastel stucco bestows a light and airy character. The northern part of the area is particularly memorable, the stone spire of Christchurch crowns the brow of Christchurch Road and the former Peninsula Barracks form a powerful edge along St. James Lane. The railway track and wooded embankment define its western boundary, and provides a valuable green backdrop to much of the area.

Supportive townscape

The Railway

5.3.6 The Southampton Railway opened in 1839, with a station near where the north west corner of the city walls had been. The line imposes a strong edge to the western valley floor which can only be traversed by a series of ten characterful bridges or tunnels. The bridges at Park Road and Upper New Street are especially memorable as are the tunnels at Stockbridge Road and Lower Stanmore Lane. These 'crossing points' now mark the entrance to the historic city from the western suburbs. In most cases the change in character is immediate and surprising. The wooded slopes of the cuttings and embankments provide a crucial green back drop to, and delineate the suburbs of Christchurch (Character Area 7), Badger Farm and Stanmore (Character Areas 9A&B), Fulflood (Character Area 14A) and the eastern edge of Oram's Arbour (Character Area 5).

5.3.7 On the eastern side of the River Itchen, the line of disused railway is less clear, but nevertheless has influenced the shaping of the later city suburbs.

Distinctive and supportive landscape



River Itchen Valley

Landform and Landcover

5.3.8 The Itchen Valley is well defined, with the flat valley floor contained by the rising slopes of the valley sides. Three distinct valley sections are within the study area, comprising the north-south aligned southern section from Shawford to the centre of the city; the urban section of the river valley within the core of the city; and the northern section to Itchen Abbas with the notable transition beyond the M3 crossing from a north-south to east-west river alignment and a progressively narrower valley floor.

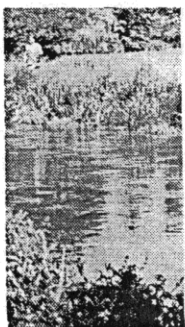
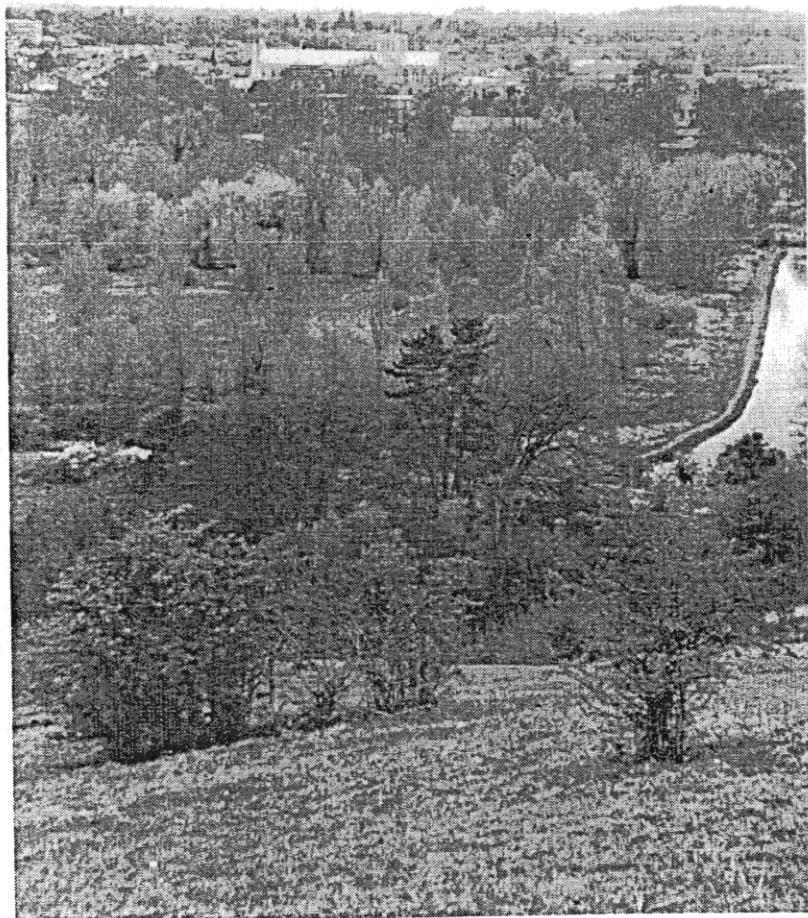
5.3.9 With the exception of the urban core, where the river is integrated into the built fabric of the city, the remaining sections of the valley are predominantly pastoral and well wooded. Clearly valuable for nature conservation, it should be recognised that the watercourses within the Itchen valley are part of a system that is almost entirely man made. A mosaic of species rich watermeadows and dry grassland interspersed with numerous small-scale woodlands, trees and scrub vegetation threads through the complex network of braided principal and secondary river channels, small watercourses and drainage ditches. Close to the city centre, recreational uses are integrated into the valley, notably Winchester College's distinctive Ridding Meads, together with other College sports fields and open spaces and the playing fields of the Sports Complex, west of Hyde.

Visual Appraisal

5.3.10 Many sections of the Itchen Valley have an enclosed and secluded character. The principal views from the valley are therefore often confined to local landmarks and adjacent features or glimpsed prospects of the rising valley sides. The most significant landmark features and views within the valley comprise :

- The distinctive form of St. Catherine's Hill rising above the eastern side of the valley floor

A memorable view of Winchester Cathedral over the Itchen valley from St. Catherine's Hill.



- The setting and buildings within the historic core of the city, notably St. Cross Hospital, Winchester College and Wolvesey Palace and grounds

5.4.19A series of supportive landscape areas extend up to or are contained within the framework of the distinctive areas of influence.

- The rising land of Winnall Downs and Chilcomb Down form an important skyline feature and define the limit of view to the open downs that enclose the setting of the city to the east. This pattern is continued to the south east with the broad sweep of open rolling downs that extend eastwards from Twyford Down and north of Hazeley Down to Fawley Down and forming a containing framework for the series of distinctive and impressive escarpments. This southern section of supportive landscape is particularly important in views from the northbound carriageway of the M3 and the approach into the city along the Morestead Road.
- The linear belt of woodland known as Duke's Drive that extends northwards from the Alresford Road and links into the woodland within Avington Park has also been included as an area of supportive landscape. Although more detached from the city, and beyond the visual envelope, it is a notable landmark and forms part of the pattern of memorable landscape features that are experienced in the approach into Winchester.
- The Vale of Chilcomb is also an important area of supportive landscape within the setting of the city. This bowl shaped area of rural landscape contained by distinctive escarpments is a notable feature on the eastern side of the city and prominent in the principal approaches into the city from the east as well as from the M3.
- A significant area of connective land is located to the east of Winnall Moors and includes the area of open, predominantly arable downs that extend across the valley. Although this area lies beyond the visual envelope of the city it forms an important link and transition between the adjacent distinctive and supportive landscapes that are essential to the setting of the city.
- A linear section of connective land has been identified adjacent to the eastern side of the M3 and extending into the western section of the Vale of Chilcomb. Although the impact of the motorway, and the Works area and Sewage Farm to the north-west of St. Catherine's Hill are significant detracting features, the area nevertheless forms an important link and setting for the adjacent areas of distinctive and supportive landscape that are essential features in the setting of the city.

