

# Compton Village Appraisal

## Introduction

The residents take a pride in the village and wish to retain its character. They believe that the character of the village is under threat from development that fails to have regard to the context and form of the settlement. New development is not a bad thing per se but respect for the character of the village can be achieved within the constraints imposed by National and Local Planning Policies and Guidelines, aided by the Planning Guidelines set out in this document.

Compton Street is primarily a small settlement of old and newer development where trees, buildings, gardens and open spaces come together in typical English village setting. Trees are an important feature of the village.

## Planning context

The objective of this Village Appraisal is to inform a Village Design Statement (VDS) and to set forth the essential character of the village as perceived by the local residents, who have produced this document.

This appraisal has been prepared to contribute towards the adoption of a VDS as a Supplementary Planning Document, as part of the Winchester District Local Development Framework. The VDS will, when prepared and adopted, supplement the Local Plan Review. The VDS will therefore provide guidance to the planning process in maintaining and enhancing the character of the area. In the meantime the community would like the guidelines in the appraisal to be used to guide any development proposals that come before the Council.

Supplementary Planning Documents are written to be consistent with national and regional planning policies and guidance. They are prepared with the benefit of public consultation and adopted by the local planning authority.

This document has been prepared taking due account of Central Government development policy, particularly Planning Policy Guidance note 3 (PPS3) and Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1):

***'Local planning authorities should develop a shared vision with their local communities of the type of residential environment they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the local area.'* (PPS3, paragraph 14)**

***'Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunity for improving the character and quality of an area and the way in which it functions should not be accepted'. (PPS1 paragraph 34)***

***'Design policies should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape and access of new development. It is however proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness, particularly where this is supported by clear plan policies or supplementary planning documents on design'. (PPS1 paragraph 37).***

The key consideration should be whether a development maintains or positively improves the character and environmental quality of an area and the way it functions. The application of this approach to the planning and design for new housing in our village is strongly advocated.

This appraisal has been produced on a voluntary basis by a group of residents drawn from the whole of the village with professional assistance from Southern Planning Practice at nearby Twyford. We have sought to best represent the collective wishes of the residents.

We have developed for this appraisal a series of Planning Guidance Proposals, which are detailed after the village appraisal.

*Planning Guidance developed within this appraisal is cross-referenced to relevant policy in the Winchester District Local Plan Review using numbered paragraphs and shown in brackets. Planning Guidance are those issues, which should be considered when seeking or approving Planning Applications.*

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## Context / Setting

Compton - "Combe-tun," the settlement in the valley — well describes the old heart of the village in Compton Street, its origins can be traced to Anglo Saxon times. It is surrounded by countryside comprising the Compton Farm Estate, owned by the County Council and tenanted by farmers who manage the land. It is a unique backwater with its own 'sense of place' and within the village lies a designated conservation area encompassing Compton Street, Place Lane and Carmans Lane. In addition, there is a pleasant small estate comprising Attwoods Drove, with its houses built between the wars, and Martins Field which was constructed in the 1950's. Compton Village is, in the main, a 'linear village' that lies on an ancient east/west route known as Compton Street. The Street is rural in character, narrowing to single track at its western end. It is a no through road leading to a restricted byway. The boundaries of the Street are made up of mature trees and hedgerows which contribute greatly to the Conservation Area. To the south of Compton Street the land rises gently to the downs flanked by dense ancient woodland and tracks that overlook the valley. The conservation area contains a number of attractive historic buildings including the Manor House, Manor Farm with its impressive barns, the Church, 19th century school and a few 17th and 18th century cottages, which intermingle with more modern houses. In combination with the Statutory Listed Buildings, the walls, banks, hedges and trees are very important features which give the area a special character which is desirable to conserve.

## Compton Street Conservation Area



1. On entering Compton Village from Otterbourne Road you are immediately stepping into the conservation area. The conservation area comprises Compton Street and Carmans Lane and continues east across the Otterbourne Road to include Place Lane, a private unmade road.

2. On the south side of Place Lane stands a pair of brick/flint cottages and a collection of ancient barns. Manor House, one of the many Statutory Grade 11 Listed Buildings in the conservation area, marks this end of the village and the conservation area. This is a historic dwelling, the main part of the house having been built in 1632, but there are much earlier sections. Looking to the north of Manor House one can catch a glimpse through the trees of a Listed Barn (Circa 1700). The trees and character of this tranquil part of the village emphasise the rural nature of the area.



3. As you cross the Otterbourne Road into Compton Street, immediately on the corner stands 'The Chequers', a cottage once used as a public house and one of the oldest original dwellings in the village, although much of the old building has been removed. Further along is an attractive pair of cottages, formerly part of the Compton Farm Estate.



4. The village school built in 1838, with many later additions, is visible as you enter the Village. The majority of children who attend this school live outside the 'catchment area' of Compton and Shawford and travel daily to the school by car. In term time parent parking has become a source of concern with considerable congestion occurring along Compton Street at 'drop off' and 'pick up' times.



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5. Adjacent to the school stands the Norman Church built about 1150 with a later addition of a second nave completed in 1905. The church, together with 7 tombchests in the churchyard, are also Listed. The churchyard with its ancient yew trees gives this area a sense of importance and a feeling of a private and peaceful place. Opposite there are imposing beech trees which overhang and enhance the street scene and add to the charm of the conservation area.



6. On the other side of the road, overlooking church field, is Cherrycroft, a Listed brick and tiled cottage. Further along, development is in progress with four dwellings being constructed (in place of one). The courtyard style of development is out of keeping with the locality and erodes the linear nature of the conservation area. It also impacts greatly on the setting of the church and the Listed buildings as well as the nearby footpath which runs diagonally across church field. Parking provision, as part of the development, appears to be minimal and this could lead to more on-street parking in the vicinity of the school. Planning permission for this development was granted before Compton Village Association was formed.



7. Carmans Lane, an unmade lane with few dwellings, runs in a southerly direction from the Street culminating in a footpath to the downs and beyond. Along this lane stands Church Cottage, a Listed building of red brick under a tiled roof with ornate fascia, believed to date back to 1660. Opposite is Drove Cottage, a Listed 15th century timber framed house, possibly the oldest dwelling in the village. It was formerly a medieval hall house and was originally thatched.



8. St. Patrick's, a large property of Georgian appearance, is situated on the corner of Compton Street/ Carmans Lane. This is also Listed and was formerly built as a rectory in the 18th century. Adjoining the garden and fronting Compton Street is the Coach House to St. Patrick's. A significant Holm Oak stands behind the brick wall of this house dominating the street scene with arching foliage over the road.



9. Beyond this point, the Street is characterised by banks, hedges, brick/flint walls and mature trees of mixed species overhanging the highway from gardens of the houses that line the street. Properties, in the main, are large, well spaced and set in spacious mature gardens, reflecting the linear nature of Compton Street. These large gardens provide an invaluable refuge and habitat for birds and other wildlife.





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10. Meadow Cottage, a Listed red brick and thatched cottage stands back from the road with an established beech hedge forming a roadside boundary. Of particular note is Parsonage Barn, a substantial Listed thatched barn built in 1771, now converted to a dwelling house, which stands in large landscaped grounds with



attractive gardens featuring a combination of specimen trees and conifers.

11. In addition to the Statutory Listed Buildings there are a number of attractive large houses and cottages which all add to the charm of the Village.

12. Off to the right a small playing field, with a play area, exists for village children. Opposite is the start of a footpath, known as Welshers Lane. This footpath crosses the valley which is an important corridor for wildlife and leads into the network of ancient tracks that run through the woodland on the downs.

13. As you approach the western end of Compton Street at the junction with Attwoods Drove, the road bends at a sharp right-angle, making it particularly hazardous for both traffic and pedestrians. When travelling in a west to east direction, it is impossible to see traffic approaching from the left (southwards down Attwoods Drove) until you are beyond the give-way line.



14. Heading in a westerly direction from this junction, the road substantially narrows into a single track tarmac lane with a width varying between 2.8m to 3.5m, with no pavements and very few passing places. To the right-hand side are three listed terraced cottages set back from the lane with mature gardens and hedging to the front. Further along on the right side is Godwins Field, which is a row of around five small bungalows set back, with parking spaces to the front with hedges and banks on either side. Adjacent to Godwins Field is a Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century building, Yew Tree Cottage, which was originally thatched, and which has an ancient yew on the roadside.



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15. Next to Yew Tree Cottage is Old Orchard, a relatively modern (1960's) single storey house set in spacious grounds, which currently has planning consent to be enlarged and with an additional storey added.



16. The final property on the right-hand side of the lane is Martins Close, a 1920's house set in mature gardens with formal yew hedging. Unfortunately, and despite local opposition, planning consent was finally approved in October 2006 for demolition of the existing house and the erection of four houses (with six, five, two and one bedrooms respectively). This will form a cramped courtyard development which is totally out of keeping with the rural character of this conservation area of the village.



17. This intensive development threatens the viability of the mature hedgerows and trees as well as the 17<sup>th</sup> century listed barn of Compton End which abuts the lane at this narrow point. In addition, no account has been taken of the fact that there is no



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surface water drain in this part of Compton Street, and it is prone to flooding. The development means that there is less area to absorb ground water and any further development will exacerbate the current situation. Before any additional houses are built the provision of a highway surface water drain must be constructed as a priority.

18. On the left-hand side of this section of Compton Street from the junction at Attwoods Drove, there has been some infill building over the past sixty years, but this has all been of detached houses in a linear development with spacious gardens, mainly fronted with mature hedges. The penultimate building is Compton End, which is situated directly opposite Martins Close. It is a Grade II\* listed 17<sup>th</sup> century thatched property and barn, and a later listed gazebo. The mature topiary gardens are also listed by English Heritage, and this property has often featured in several magazine and books, including Country Life, dating back to the early 1900's.



19. Cox Croft Farm is the final dwelling on this side of the lane, with its livery stables and barns opposite. This is a council-tenanted farm engaged in the rearing of game-birds, with some additional livestock, and with running the livery stables. There is a substantial tree belt and open countryside to the north of Martins Close/Old Orchard, and the boundary between Martins Close and the farm is made up of mature trees and hedgerows. Open countryside to the west is designated as a 'strategic gap'. Beyond Cox Croft Farm, the single-track tarmac lane gives way to a narrow unmade pathway, which is a restricted byway leading to Oliver's Battery, and which is suitable only for walkers and horse-riders.



20. Of particular interest are the fields and woodland to the south which contain an ancient yew tree walk, and the established hedgerows and mature trees which characterise this part of Compton Street from the junction with Attwoods Drove. The capacity of this section of road (ie policy document – Movement, Access, Streets and Spaces) states that shared surfaces (pedestrians/cars – **where** no footpath exists) can accommodate developments of up to 25 dwellings. Currently the number of dwellings stands at 23, so with the additional three dwellings approved at Martins Close, this will already have been exceeded.



21. There are several concealed driveways, with poor visibility, emerging onto this single-track lane, and there is a need to challenge the statement/assumption by the Highway Engineer that this part of Compton Street is lightly trafficked and that it was, in his opinion, difficult to achieve a speed greater than 15-20 miles per hour.



22. There is also a need to ensure that any future development proposals satisfy all of the criteria in the adopted Local Plan Infilling Policy and related Supplementary Planning Document. In particular, criterion 1 which states 'local facilities that can be conveniently and safely accessed from the site on foot'.

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## Attwoods Drove and Martins Field



23. Re-tracing one's steps to the junction of Compton Street and Attwoods Drove gives the entrance to a pleasant mixed development of houses and bungalows. Almost immediately to the left, a turning leads into Martins Field, a small, agreeable, post war housing estate with a mixture of houses, two storey flats in groups



of four units, and a small number of bungalows. This cul-de-sac development comprises both rented and privately owned properties in almost equal proportion.



24. Near the entrance to the estate is the Reeves Scout Hall which was extensively refurbished a few years ago and provides very useful and much used facilities for groups both young and not so young, such as Play School, Scouts, Bridge Club etc. The shortage of garages locally leads inevitably to high density on road parking



in the area and this results in difficulty of ingress and egress. Emergency vehicles in particular have experienced this problem.



25. At the junction of Martins Field and Attwoods Drove, the former Village Shop and Post Office can be seen directly opposite on the other side of the road. Turning left at this junction leads directly into Attwoods Drove, another small and pleasant housing estate, this time comprising a number of pre-war houses, either semi-detached or in groups of three units, a group of post war



semi-detached houses and some older style and modern bungalows. A large central green enhances the appearance of the estate, which again has an almost equal proportion of both rented and privately owned properties.



26. At the northern end of the estate, the road finishes near the parking area adjacent to the modern bungalows and a single track, at first concrete and later gravel surfaced, continues in a northerly direction and provides access to two small Hampshire County Council owned farms known as Yew Tree Farm and Attwoods Drove Farm. Each farm has a small modern farm house adjacent to their respective farmyards. Vehicular access ceases at the topmost farm (Attwoods Drove Farm) but a public footpath continues, which eventually links up with Badger Farm

Road. The views across the open fields, which have traditionally formed a "lung" between Compton and the Badger Farm and St. Cross outskirts, are particularly fine.





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## Planning Guidance

The appraisal has been produced to reflect the views of the local community and for guidance to those considering development change within the village. The issues, which are of importance and significance to the community, are set out as Planning Guidance Proposals. They apply to the whole village and are set out below:

### **Landscape**

1. The key focal points and distant views should be preserved to maintain the character of the area. (DP4, HE4). These are shown throughout the appraisal.
2. Developments should respect the landscape, trees, hedges and wildlife. (DP3, DP4, HE4, HE8)
3. Public open spaces and the school playing fields throughout the area are a significant part of the landscape. They are valued as local amenities and should be retained. (RT1, RT2)
4. The overall spacious effect of the settlement pattern should be conserved particularly the quality of the landscaping. (DP3, DP4)
5. Private gardens should generally be retained and only developed if this would not be unduly harmful to the character of the area.

### **Building**

6. New building should be restricted to sites within the village envelope. (H.3, T.1)
7. New building in Compton Street should reflect the **linear form** and not involve development in depth. (DP3)
8. New developments should be architecturally harmonious with the character of adjacent, existing buildings. (DP3) They should not jeopardise the safety, privacy, security, light or enjoyment of nearby property owners.
9. The quality of building, their style and the materials used should complement those of the surrounding built environment. (DP3). Where practical building lines should be preserved.
10. New buildings should respect the scale of neighbouring buildings and not break existing skylines. They should not obstruct attractive public views. (DP3, DP4, HE5, HE8)
11. Extensions should respect the existing character of the road by retaining trees and public views. (DP4, HE8)
12. New building should not generate additional on-street parking. (T4, W7)
13. Front gardens should be retained and not be converted to car parking spaces. (DP3, DP4, HE16)

### **Trees**

14. Mature trees are an important feature of the neighbourhood. New development should seek to retain mature, healthy trees. (DP3, DP4, HE16)
15. The continuity of the villages' mature trees and hedgerow structure should be encouraged, especially the groups of mature trees and hedgerows shown in Figure 2, which contribute to the street scene and integration of the villages with their countryside setting. (DP.3, DP.4, CE.5)
16. New planting should use locally sourced indigenous species. (DP.3, DP.4)

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### **Conservation area**

17. Where appropriate, conserve and promote the use of traditional building materials, including thatch, clay tiles, natural slate, flint, local brick and colour-washed brick and natural flint. All building materials should be of a high quality and long lasting. (DP.3, HE.5)

18. Conserve and promote the use of design characteristics of the village e.g. half-hipped roofs, traditional wooden and cast iron casement windows. (DP.3, HE.5)

19. Conserve existing traditional boundaries such as brick and flint walls, yew and non-coniferous hedging, iron railings and metal estate fencing. (DP.3, HE.5, HE.8)

20. Dwellings in new developments should be arranged to create attractive, sociable spaces and a sense of place. (DP.3, DP.5)

21. The division between public and private space should be clearly defined, but walls and fences should not be used more than necessary. Boundary hedgerows and planting should be used to soften the visual impact of new development and car parking. Coniferous hedging should be avoided and native species should be used. (DP.3)

22. New dwellings, extensions and outbuildings should be designed to complement the existing property and its neighbours both in terms of its architecture and materials. (DP.3, HE.5)

23. In general all new development should respect the characteristics of the village and should enhance the conservation area.

### **Highways**

To be added