

**Test Valley Revised Local Plan  
DPD  
2011 – 2029  
Regulation 22 – Submission to  
Secretary of State**

**Policy E4:  
Residential Areas of Special  
Character  
Topic Paper**

June 2014

# REVISED LOCAL PLAN

## TOPIC PAPER – POLICY E4: RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this topic paper is to provide context and rationale of Residential Areas of Special Character (RASC) in the Borough and to consider the approach of including a Residential Area of Special Character policy in the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan DPD 2011 - 2029.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The settlements within Test Valley contain a number of areas, which are characterised by low-density development often dating from the Victorian, Edwardian or inter-war periods. Such areas have been identified and are designated as Residential Areas of Special Character (RASC) due to their contribution they make to the quality of the urban fabric. The designation protects these areas from inappropriate development (such as the demolition of existing buildings, higher density redevelopment of the plots and loss or damage to established, mature gardens).
- 2.2 Any or all of the following criteria have been used when selecting Residential Areas of Special Character:
- a recognisable pattern of development which is not repeated on the same scale elsewhere in the settlement;
  - they occur within built-up areas of the Borough but outside conservation areas where other special controls apply;
  - they are homogenous areas with a recognisable development pattern and cohesive architectural character or style;
  - they consist mainly of low density developments of substantial houses generally set in mature landscaped settings;
  - they currently enjoy a special character and high level of residential amenity which should not be harmed through unsympathetic redevelopment;
  - they are located on a major approach to a built-up area.
- 2.3 In these areas the Council will seek to control the sub-division of plots or redevelopment to a higher density as this would seriously threaten their character. The Council will seek to maintain the sense of spaciousness in

these locations, and ensures that where development does take place, it does not involve the loss of trees or hedgerows. The design, layout and size of any proposed development should be compatible with the character of the existing built development in the area and should be landscaped to a high standard. Occasionally buildings have been demolished in Residential Areas of Special Character prior to planning permission for redevelopment being sought. The Council does not consider that the unsightly appearance of such vacant plots, which may temporarily detract from the character of these areas, is sufficient to justify densities of development higher than those normally would be permitted by the policy.

### **3 Policy Context**

3.1 Within the Borough Local Plan (2006), Residential Areas of Special Character are defined under policy SET 02. The policy identifies the following Residential Areas of Special Character:

- The Avenue, part of Whynot Lane, Bishops Way, the Pines and Croye Close, Andover;
- Winchester Road and Winchester Gardens, Andover;
- Winchester Hill, Romsey;
- Nos. 4 – 20 Southampton Road, Romsey; and
- Chilworth

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states (paragraph 58, p. 15) that Local Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies should aim to ensure that developments:

- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit; and
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials.

3.3 Paragraph 60 (p.15) of the NPPF specifies that planning policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

3.4 The Department of Communities and Local Government has prepared guidance in the format of National Planning Practice Guidance<sup>1</sup> (NPPG) to

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<sup>1</sup> NPPG (2014) <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/design/>

complement the NPPF. The NPPG contains guidance on 'Design'. Paragraph 3 states "Local planning authorities will need to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of the area as part of its evidence base, in order to identify appropriate design opportunities and policies." Furthermore to this, Paragraph 7 states that "development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development."

- 3.5 In addition, paragraph 30 states that "A Local Plan is essential to achieving high quality places. A key part of any plan is understanding and appreciating the context of an area, so that proposals can then be developed to respect it. Good design interprets and builds on historic character."
- 3.6 Further guidance on the specific character of Romsey is found in the Romsey Town Design Statement (2008) and the Chilworth Village Design Statement (2006). These are available on the Council's website.

#### **4 Residential Areas of Special Character**

##### ***Winchester Road and Winchester Gardens, Andover (Map 57)***

###### *Winchester Road*

- 4.1 This consists of a group of 17 detached houses dating mainly from the 1930's but includes a few late 19th Century and later 20th Century houses. These medium-sized individually designed houses set in large curtilages with mature gardens form a cohesive group of properties. The houses are traditional in style and are constructed of a mixture of brick, hanging tiles and render with clay tile roofing. This group has been included as a Residential Area of Special Character for the visual contribution they make on this important route into Andover from the South and the low-density character marks a transition between the built-up area and the adjacent countryside.

###### *4-52 and 1-59 Winchester Road*

- 4.2 This consists of a mixture of large and medium-sized houses dating from the late Victorian to mid-20th Century periods which are set back from the road and include frontages with trees, hedges and shrub planting. Some frontages are open and others include walls and paved front gardens. The houses are individually designed and are mostly detached with mature gardens. Some houses on the east side are semi-detached and there are some less homogenous buildings such as Flowerdew Court - (an infill block of flats) and the Golf Club (which is modern and set back from the road) which have been included because of their location. Houses in this area are mainly traditional in style and are typically constructed of red brick. Some include render and sham timber framing with clay tile or slate roofs. Some properties have been extended or altered but this area has been selected as a Residential Area of

Special Character as it has an established and cohesive quality and is on a major corridor route into Andover.

*Winchester Gardens*

- 4.3 This is a cul-de-sac consisting mainly of mid-20th Century detached houses, which are individually designed. The area is characterised by substantial houses set in generous plots behind dense laurel and beech hedging. The street is lined with trees; the gardens are mature with properties on the south side backing onto the golf course. The houses are mainly traditional in design and are constructed of brick and render with clay roofs. There are some examples of modern infilling on the southern side of the cul-de-sac

*Little Orchard Court and property no.1, Tyhurst Place*

- 4.4 These properties form a homogenous area with a recognisable development pattern and cohesive architecture and style present on Winchester Road. The properties are located within large plots with mature landscaping.

*Anton Road*

- 4.5 This area includes properties that are of a unique architectural style forming a recognisable development pattern and homogenous area. The properties to the east of Anton Road are traditional in style predominantly constructed of red brick. The properties to the west of Anton Road comprise of a cluster of medium-sized individually designed houses set in large curtilages with mature gardens forming a cohesive group of properties.

***The Avenue, part of Whynot Lane, Bishops Way, the Pines and Croye Close, Andover (Map 58)***

- 4.6 This is an extensive residential area consisting mainly of well-established large and medium sized houses set in mature gardens. Properties are generally set back from the road by wide grass verges and established trees.

*The Avenue*

- 4.7 The Avenue is a busy road with wide grass verges planted with pollarded trees. There is a mixture of house types. Houses on the west side vary from modern bungalows, semi-detached Arts and Crafts influenced designs to medium-sized detached houses. Properties on the east side are mainly larger 2-3 storey detached houses dating mainly from the Edwardian to pre-war periods with some later infilling. They are built of red brick, render, some with tile hanging and sham timber framing with larger gardens than those on the opposite side of the road.
- 4.8 There are a series of closes off the west side of The Avenue, created in part by subdivision of larger plots - for example nos. 11a-e The Avenue, Eversfield Close (a modern development of 4 large detached houses) and The Pines

which includes 8 houses built in the 1970's. Others such as the private, unmade track leading to nos. 11a-e The Avenue have been there for longer. This subdivision of larger plots forming backland development is precisely what Policy SET 02 seeks to restrict in the future. This area has been included as it is an important route within Andover and includes several large houses of architectural interest, which occupy large plots.

#### *Whynot Lane*

- 4.9 This is an unadopted, un-metalled road, which leads to Junction Mills and back onto the railway line. It consists of 20 modest properties (on the east side) built mainly at the turn of the 20th Century of red brick and render with clay tile roofs.

#### *Bishops Way*

- 4.10 This is an attractive tree lined road with grass verges, which developed in the late Victorian/early Edwardian period. Houses are mainly two-storey and are constructed of brick and/or render under clay tile roofs some include tile hanging and/or sham timber framing. The houses on the north side are small to medium sized and are set below the road level. Houses on the south side are more elevated, slightly larger and have generally bigger gardens than those on the north side.

#### *Croye Close*

- 4.11 This is an established and cohesive area of individually designed houses built around a curving cul-de-sac, which is bordered by grass verges, mature trees and shrubs. The houses which were built in the early part of the 20th Century are traditionally designed and mainly two-storey in height and are built in a mixture of brick, render, clay hanging tiles, under clay tile roofing.

#### **Winchester Hill, Romsey (Map 59)**

- 4.12 This area includes 14 properties on the west side of Winchester Hill (from Mile End to Newlands) and is characterised by large, well established residential properties set in generous plots with mature gardens. Several trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. It consists of 12 houses and 2 bungalows of varying ages and sizes dating mainly from the early 20th Century (with some examples from the late 19th and 20th Centuries). The buildings are mainly traditional in form and are constructed of good quality materials. Some plots were sold off for redevelopment in the past (e.g. on land currently occupied by Windfield Drive) but the area still retains a cohesive character. Winchester Hill is an important route into Romsey with many of the properties in this section obscured from view behind dense, high laurel, holly and privet hedges. Its special character is in contrast with the higher density housing further north.

### **Nos. 4-20, Southampton Road, Romsey (Map 60)**

- 4.13 This group includes 9 imposing detached houses on the east side of Southampton Road. They consist mainly of two-storey individually designed houses using traditional materials (such as red brick or clay tile roofing) and two include sham timber framing. This attractive group of houses constructed in the early part of the 20th Century has been identified as a Residential Area of Special Control as it is on an important corridor route into Romsey and the houses occupy larger plots than the adjacent late 19th Century terraced houses.

### **Chilworth (Map 61)**

- 4.14 Chilworth is referred to in Pevsner & Lloyd's 'The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight' as "Southampton's richest fringe, with large houses, Surrey like in birchy gardens, giving way to rhododendron planted woodlands and then open country." Chilworth developed mainly in the early half of the 20th Century and is the largest and most established of the Residential Areas of Special Character. Historically, policies to protect the area have received strong support from Government appointed Inspectors at appeal<sup>2</sup>.
- 4.15 The area is characterised by substantial individual houses set in generous plots with an abundance of mature trees and shrubs which provide an attractive setting for the low density housing. It is important that those plots within the RASC boundary retain their individual setting. Chilworth was originally heathland and the acid soils support heather, rhododendron, pine and birch trees which are such a feature of the development. Many of the trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. Several streets include grass verges and mature trees, which also contribute to the quality and setting of the area. Boundaries vary but houses are mainly enclosed by mature hedgerows, some high wooden fencing and in some cases by low brick and stone walling.
- 4.16 Houses are individually designed but are mainly traditional in form generally two storeys high, some with detached garaging, and are constructed of a variety of good quality materials including clay roof tiles, handmade bricks and in some cases sham timber-framing. Windows include original metal or timber casements with individually set leaded lights to simpler modern replacements. There are examples of later infill properties, which although not necessarily the same style as the older properties, still manage to maintain the character and setting of the area due to similar sized curtilages and mature trees and shrubs.

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<sup>2</sup> 06/01573/FULLS – Planning Application for erection of a five bedroom detached dwelling

*Winchester Road*

- 4.17 There are two plots on Winchester Road with their frontages facing the junction of Birch Road. The plots comprise of substantial houses set within a mature landscaped setting. They enjoy a special character and high level of residential amenity.

## **5 Revised Local Plan DPD Public Consultation**

- 5.1 The Revised Local Plan DPD and Revised Local Plan Maps was subject to public consultation between January – March 2014. The Council has examined the merits of defined Residential Areas of Special Character and their significant role of protecting unique architectural characteristics and recognisable low density development patterns. It is proposed to include a Residential Areas of Special Character policy within the Revised Local Plan as follows:

### **Policy E4: Residential Areas of Special Character**

Development <sup>1</sup> within residential areas of special character in Andover, Chilworth and Romsey identified on map 57 – 61 will be permitted provided that:

- a) The size of any proposed or original plot, when sub-divided, is not significantly smaller than those in the immediate vicinity; and
- b) The development's size, scale, layout, siting and detailed design are compatible with the character of within the Residential Area of Special Character.

<sup>1</sup> Including extensions, alterations, sub-divisions and redevelopment

*The Council has identified a number of areas of special character in Andover, Chilworth which have distinctive characteristics. These areas have been identified as Residential Areas of Special Character. These have been supported by the community, in supplementary planning documents and at planning appeal.*

*These areas have a recognisable pattern of development which is characterised by low density. These areas typically have larger than average plots and often a similar architectural style; with mature landscaping and trees and have similar boundary features. The policy does not intend to prevent*




*development, but aims to retain their distinctive local character through the control of sub-division of plots or extension to existing buildings leading to higher density development and impact on those aspects that make that special character. The size of any original plot when sub-divided or any proposed plot is not significantly smaller than those within that part of the Residential Area of Special Character. The special character of each area is described in the Residential Area of Special Character background paper.*

5.2 The following maps illustrate the RASC boundaries.

**Map 57**

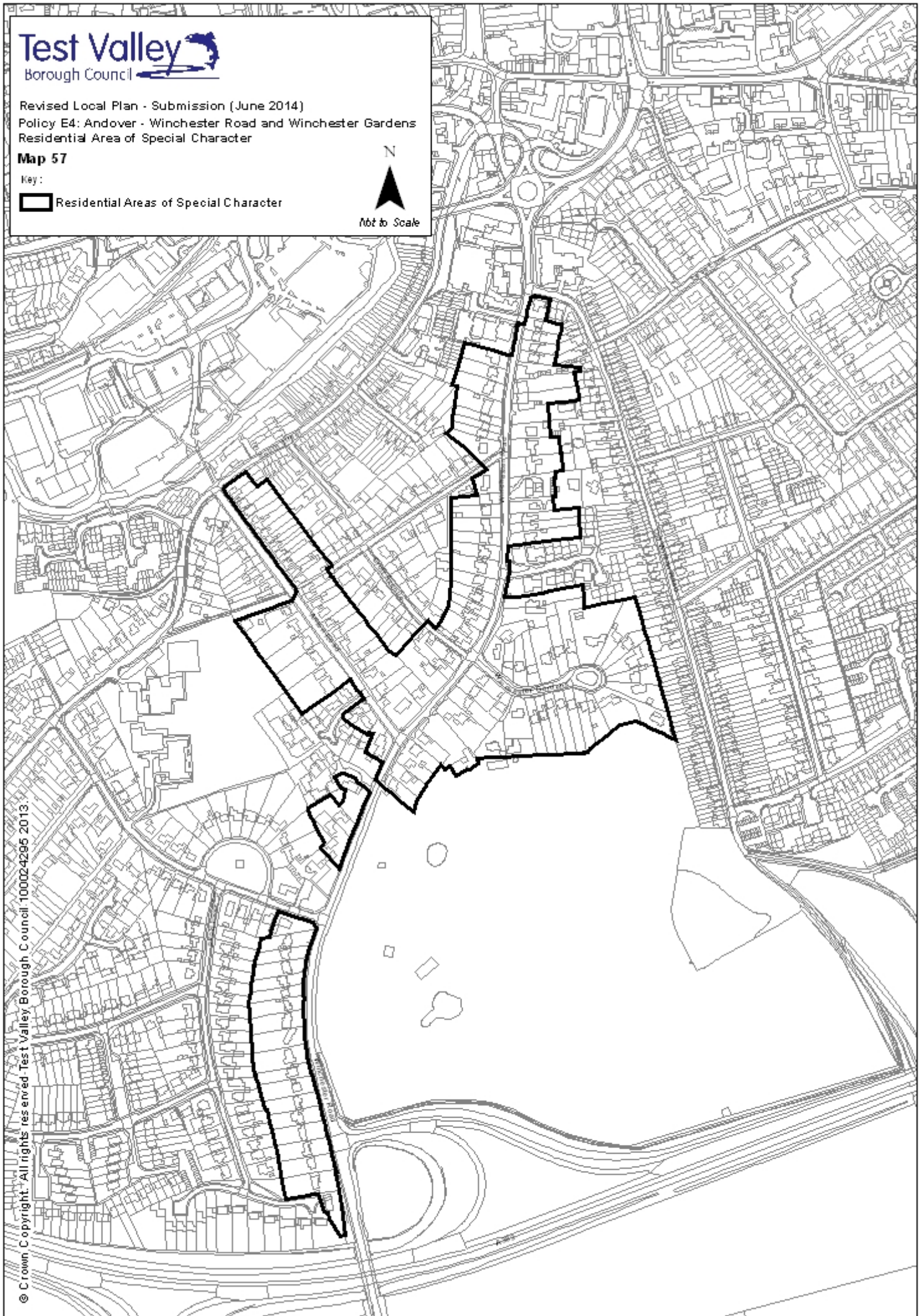
Key:

 Residential Areas of Special Character

N



*Not to Scale*




**Map 58**

Key:  
□ Residential Areas of Special Character

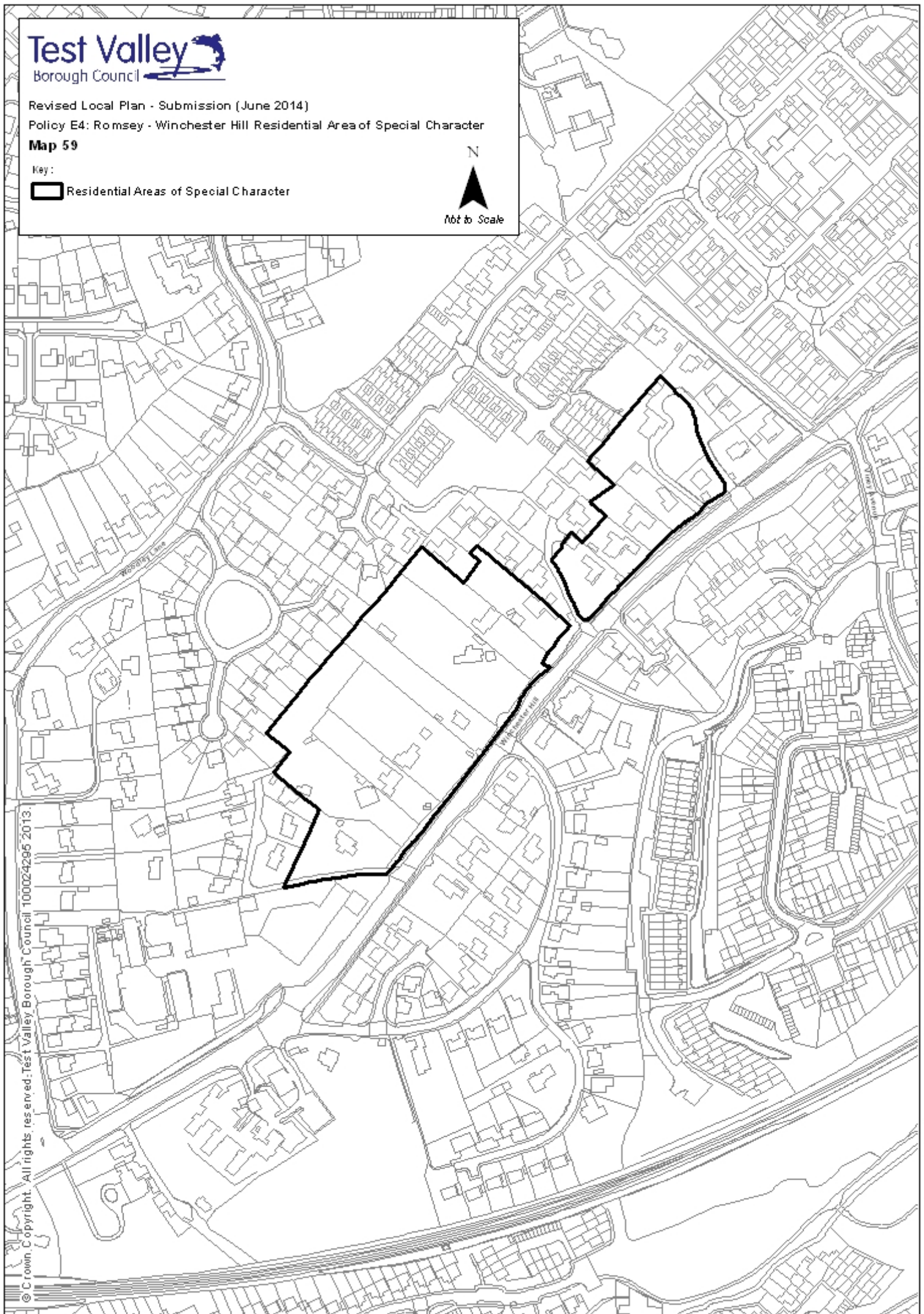


Key:


 Residential Areas of Special Character

N

Not to Scale





Key:

 Residential Areas of Special Character



**Map 61**

Key:

-  Residential Areas of Special Character
-  Borough Boundary

