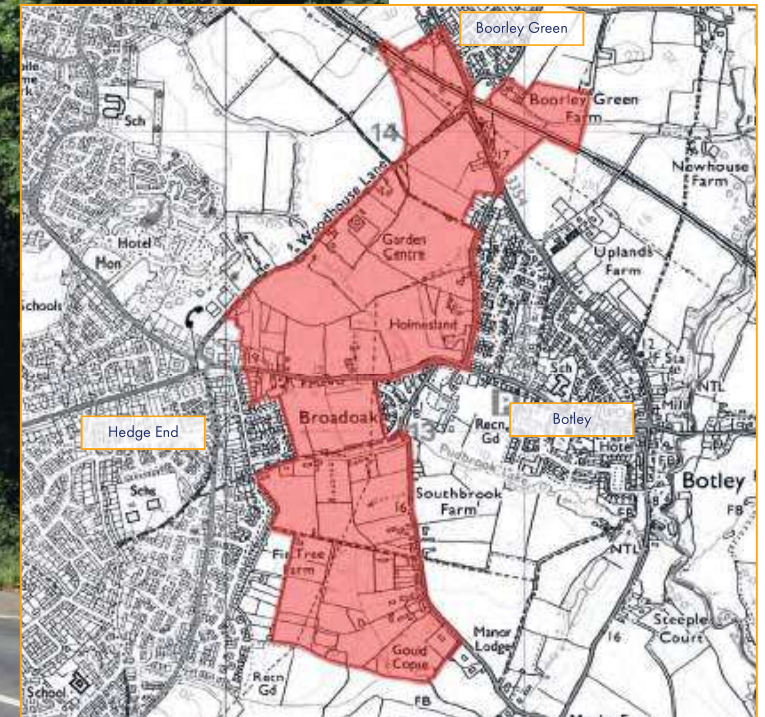


A photograph of a road scene. On the left, a grey speed limit sign with a red circle and the number '40' is mounted on a pole. The road is paved and curves to the right. A white van is driving away in the distance, and a dark blue car is parked on the side. Two people are walking on the grassy verge. The background is filled with dense green trees. An inset map in the top right corner shows a street grid with a red-shaded area labeled 'Hedge End' and 'Broad Oak'. Other labels on the map include 'Sch', 'Hotel', 'Mon', 'Schools', 'Woodhouse Lane', 'Firs Farm', and 'Renn Gd'.



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Following the completion and findings produced from the desktop study and fieldwork survey, a general description of each settlement outlining their overall character, settlement hierarchy level (shown in brackets), scale and identity is set out below.

Boiley has a 'small historic market town feel' comprising low density development and mostly traditional red brick houses with some small-scale industrial uses on the outskirts. The historical centre lies within a Conservation Area away from the settlement edge to Hedge End and Boorley Green.

Hedge End (medium town)

Hedge End is a town with a central core and is defined by late 20th Century and modern two-storey suburban residential developments, out of town retail / commercial uses to the west and office uses around Botleigh Grange.

The eastern settlement areas are mainly two-storey detached / semi-detached residential, with a scattering of individual dwellings and commercial units along Woodhouse lane and Botley Road.

Boorley Green is a low-density residential village, lying to the north of Winchester Road and the Fareham to Eastleigh railway line. Recent residential developments, most notably the emerging development at Boorley Park (on the former golf course), has significantly increased the scale and identity of the village.

The settlement along the southern edge lies between the confluence of Winchester Road and Maddoxford Lane, consisting of mid-to-late-20th century residential development.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Settlement Edge Character

Following the methodology, a summary of the settlement edge adjacent to the Gap, its characteristics and relevant features are set out below:

Botley

Established residential ribbon development along Holmesland Lane and Brook Lane to the north and south of the main A334 Botley Road currently forms the main Gap boundary. These larger detached plots, incorporating the former Holmesland Estate, comprise mature vegetation and woodland blocks which provide a consistent sensitive edge to Botley. Some residential Plots on higher ground to the north east do offer open views across the Gap and these buildings are more prominent when viewed from Hedge End.

The exception to the above is the main link road (A334) between Botley and Hedge End, which includes the Sparshatts car dealership that sits on the edge of the Botley development.

Proposed housing allocation (B02) will extend the settlement edge to the railway line. This will also include the proposed new strategic Botley Bypass link to Woodhouse Lane designed by Hampshire County Council.

Hedge End

Like Botley, the A334 forms a clear break in character to the northern and southern settlement edge. From the Maypole Roundabout running north along Woodhouse lane the settlement is defined by a mixture of commercial activities and residential dwellings. Nevertheless, the mature field hedgerow / highway vegetation that runs along much of its route provides a strong edge to the settlement. The exception being the garden centre businesses to the northern part of Woodhouse Lane which has an open frontage / car parking with limited landscape treatment.

The proposed employment (WE2) and housing allocation (HE1) to the west of Woodhouse Lane will potentially form a strong line of development stretching as far as the railway line.

To the south of the A334 Botley Road, suburban residential development forms an abrupt edge to the settlement, with remnant field boundary trees offering some relief to the adjoining paddocks and fields / settlement edge.

Boorley Green

The settlement edge of Boorley Green is largely defined by detached residential properties along Winchester Road and Crow's Nest Lane. Whilst this does create a partial hard edge to the residential areas, the single / two storey dwellings, combined with the rising levels and mature vegetation associated with the railway line, form some softer edges and limited open views between the three settlements.

Planning approvals for future residential developments will increase the urban character to the edge, most notably to the south of Winchester Road and along Maddoxford Lane.

Linkages

Movement Types

Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green are connected by the following links:

Roads

- A334 / Botley Road forming the main thoroughfare between Botley & Hedge End settlement - approximately 1 minute driving time;
- B3354 / Winchester Road linking Botley to Boorley Green - approximately 1 minute driving time;
- Woodhouse Lane linking Hedge End to Boorley Green / Botley via Winchester road - approximately 1 minute driving time.

Railways

- Section Fareham to Eastleigh linking Hedge End Station to Botley Station - approximately less than 1 minute experienced travelling between the settlements.

Public Rights of Way

- Bridleway No. 6 connecting Holmesland Lane to Woodhouse Lane - approximately 5 minutes walking time;
- Bridleway No. 17 connecting Brook Lane to Sovereign Drive / Marls road - approximately 10 minutes walking time;
- Footpath No. 18 connecting Brook Lane to Sovereign Drive - approximately 10 minutes walking time.



View of typical ribbon residential along Botley settlement edge - Holmesland Lane.



View of typical suburban settlement edge to Hedge End overlooking paddocks - East of Marls Road / Sovereign Drive.



View of residential properties along Winchester Road defining Boorley Green settlement edge adjacent to current settlement Gap.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Sense of Arrival / Leaving

Vehicle Users

A334 / Botley Road

Forming the main thoroughfare between the Botley and Hedge End settlements, and measured at approximately 0.4 miles, this route is characterised by ribbon development, some unsympathetic commercial activities detrimental to the local character.

However, separation, whilst brief, does encompass several landscape features that contribute to a sense of departure and arrival. This includes:

1. Winding road with large extents of mature vegetation;
2. Sunken levels associated with watercourses;
3. Grassed embankments preventing screening views of properties;
4. Historic residential ribbon dwellings with glimpsed views of paddocks and field boundaries behind.

Woodhouse Lane and Winchester Road

The Gap between Hedge End, Botley and Boorley Green is centred around the junction of Woodhouse Lane and Winchester Road (B3354) and the raised bridge over the railway line.

This, along with the mature tree belt and railway vegetation, provides a physical separation between the three settlements (approximately 0.2 miles between Botley and Hedge End/Boorley Green). The latter are only separated by the vegetated railway line. Nevertheless, the emerging housing allocation and Botley Bypass is likely to put further pressure on this small area of landscape to form the Gap.

Railway Users

The section of railway that lies to the north of Botley and Hedge End is mainly set within a vegetated cutting with limited visual connectivity to the surrounding settlements. The railway line will form the northern edge to the proposed housing allocations and DM24 sites.

Combined with the speed of travel, this is likely to reduce any rail-user experience of leaving/arrival between the three settlements.

Public rights of Way

Bridleway No.6

Bridleway No.6 to the west of Holmesland Lane lies on relatively higher ground and offers open views across a number of gently sloping grassed fields towards the vegetated watercourse and mature roadside vegetation to Woodhouse lane and Winchester Road.

The uninterpreted views over the adjoining fields creates a strong sense of countryside and a departure from the settlement. However, this is likely to be affected by the emerging HE1 housing allocation, DM24 sites and the proposed Botley Bypass to the north west.

Looking back to Botley from Woodhouse Lane, the bridleway runs alongside existing farmstead dwellings across the well vegetated watercourse from which open views are afforded across the fields towards properties along Holmesland Lane. The combination of the open landscape and individual character of dwellings give a strong sense of arrival to the Botley settlement.

Bridleway 17 and footpath 18

In contrast to the Bridleway No. 6, both rights of way to the south of the A334 offer a more enclosed experience. Bridleway No. 17 and Footpath No. 18 linking Brook Lane to the suburban Hedge End edge Marls Road / Sovereign Drive. With the exception of the woodland belt to the south-east section of footpath No. 18, both routes are similar in character in that they mainly follow winding gravel tracks that provide access to small scale paddocks and associated small scale detached dwellings.

The cluster of fields, vegetation and woodland blocks, combined with the rural tracks, limit any intervisibility between the two the settlements; and whilst the landscape is of a poor quality, there is still a sense of departure from each settlement.



View from A334 / Botley Road leaving Botley with the levels reduced as it crosses the watercourse and the Sparshatts car dealership on the left and ribbon development properties beyond.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green



View from A334 / Botley Road arriving at Hedge End. Beyond the large trees on both sides of the road, the view opens up to reveal the urban edge of Hedge End set around the Maypole roundabout.



View from Woodhouse Lane with established field boundary providing a clear sense of leaving the Hedge End settlement.



View from railway bridge and surrounding vegetation defines the junction of the three settlements.



View from higher ground along Bridleway No. 6 to west of Holmesland Lane offering open views to wooded horizons.



View along Bridleway 17 with gravel track access to individual properties and varying vegetation containment (field boundaries and woodland blocks).

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Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

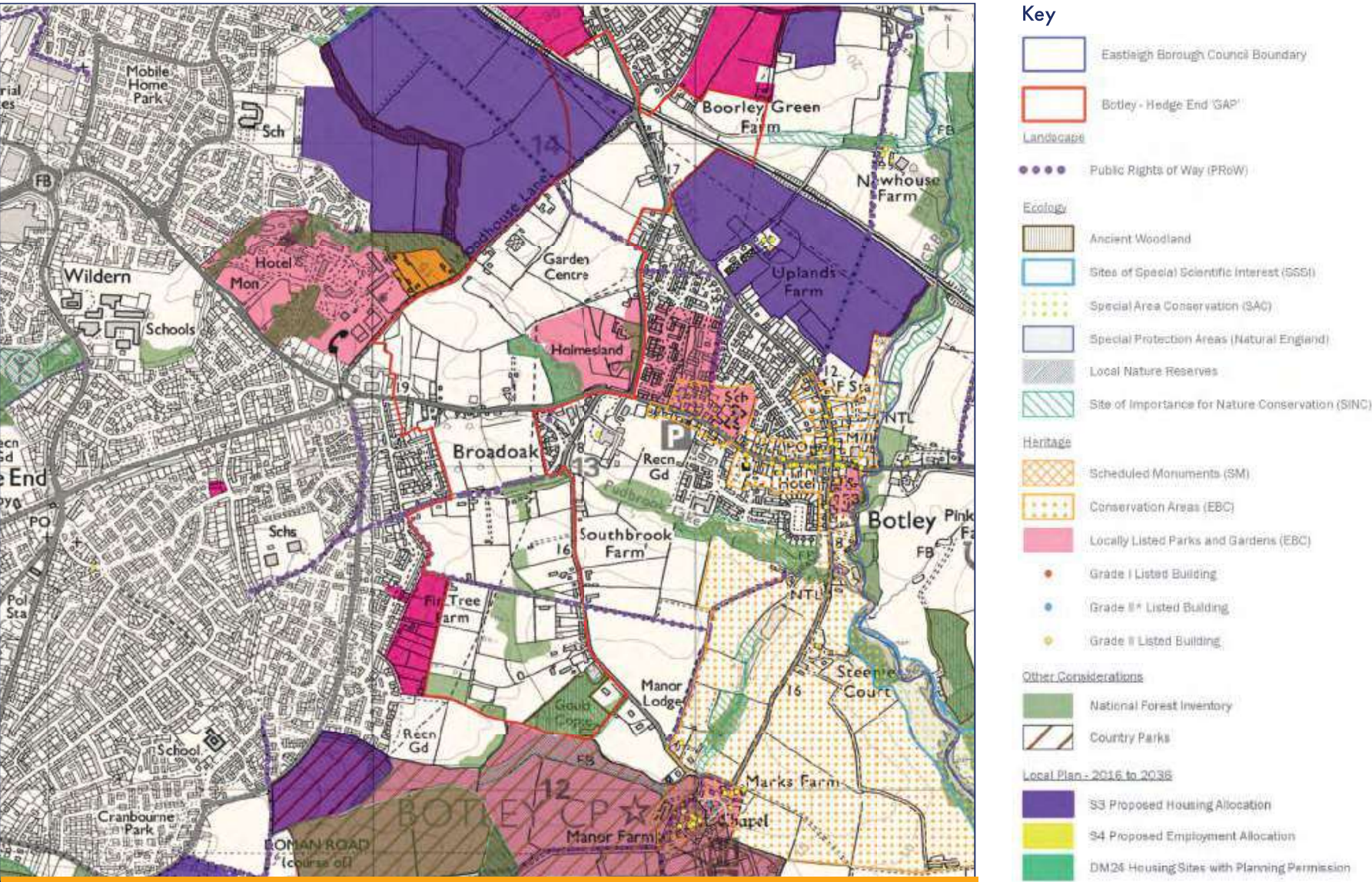


Figure I 2 - Area I Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green - Designations Plan

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Gap Description / Characterisation

This section of the report sets out a summary of the Gap character features to understand how these contribute to the physical and perceptual separation of each settlement.

The characterisation of the Gap is drawn from descriptions focusing on a combination of physical, historical, ecological elements uniquely present to the defined area.

They include a summary of landscape, related ecological and heritage designations, landscape features, access and green infrastructure.

Designations

Figure 1 3a opposite shows that despite its proximity to Botley Conservation Area and the protected River Hamble, designations within the Gap are limited to the following:

- 2 locally designated SINC associated with the woodland belts to the west of Holmesland Estate and Gould Copse;
- 1 Locally Listed Parks and Gardens associated with the former Holmesland Estate, which includes a number of mature trees.

Landscape Features

Topography

The topography of the entire Gap is relatively shallow following the watercourses that link to the River Hamble, with the exception (at the north east of the Gap) where the grounds rises gently to Holmesland Lane.

Development / Land Use / Vegetation

Land use within the Gap is largely a combination of paddocks / open farmland, woodland belts, ribbon residential developments with commercial (car sales, garden centres and agricultural use).

A mixture of small streams and associated riparian vegetation of varying depth weave through the Gap from the north-west to the south-east connecting into the River Hamble.

Openness

In keeping with the landscape character, the study area is split into two main landscape areas with open grassland/ farmland to the north; and enclosed small scale paddocks to the south.

Dense tree belts and woodland, combined with varying field boundaries, also influence its sense of openness and largely prevents intervisibility between the settlements.

Gap Boundaries

Landscape and urban features that define the current Gap boundary are summarised below:

- Established character of ribbon development with large rear gardens along Brook Lane and Holmesland lane forming the boundary to Botley.;
- Suburban housing to Hedge End with varying quality of defining field boundaries / oaks;
- Strong line of highway vegetation / field boundaries to Winchester Road and Woodhouse Lane with some encroachment associated with the garden centres and associated uses;
- The railway line vegetation and vegetated bridge;
- Woodland blocks to southern boundary.

Access through the Gap

Movement / Connectivity

- Motorists, cyclists and pedestrians along the A334, Woodhouse Lane and Winchester Road;
- Train passengers;
- Users of the PRoW network.

Presence of Green Infrastructure within The Gap

Key GI features that contribute to the Gap character include:

- Watercourses with mature vegetation and woodland blocks supporting key ecological connectivity to River Hamble;
- Some field boundaries provide a degree of continuity / green linkages;
- Railway line vegetation.



Typical view across open farmland looking north towards Boorley Green with the mature tree belt at the junction of Woodhouse Lane and Winchester Road.



Typical view of equestrian paddocks to South of A334 / Botley Road.



View from railway bridge overlooking the sunken railway Line and vegetated embankment looking towards Boorley Green.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green



Figure I 3a - Area I Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green - Field Findings Plan (North)

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Sub Areas & Observations

Informed by the desktop studies and field study observations the plan opposite identifies a series of sub areas (within the Gap) comprising one or more parcels of land that together have similar characteristics / features that contribute to the performance of the Gap function.

The plan also identifies a series of Observations which records key landscape / GI features and opportunities for enhancements to strengthen Gaps' function.

Sub Areas

Area I 1 - Cluster of pastoral fields close to the convergence of the three settlements and the elevated junction at Woodhouse Lane / Winchester Road where it crosses the railway line. The openness of the fields, combined with the associated field hedgerows, field oaks, railway line vegetation and associated topography, provides an important role in creating a sense of separation to the settlement edges of Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green. Note that the south western parcels is situated within the proposed HE2 allocation however it is understood that this has been set aside within the approved masterplan as retained Gap.

Area I 2 - This expansive grassland provides a strong sense of openness between the settlements of Botley and Hedge End experienced by users of the bridleway and properties along Holmesland Lane.

In addition to the sense of openness, intervisibility between the settlements



View across Sub Area I 1 showing open farmland in Boorley Green with field boundary and railway vegetation preventing views to Hedge End.

is contained by the wooded horizons and mature tree vegetation along Woodhouse Lane and Holmesland Lane. This creates a strong sense of countryside separation between the two settlements.

The proposed future Botley Bypass link to Woodhouse Lane will connect through the northern parcel is likely to affect the sense of openness particularly when viewed from higher ground near Holmesland lane.

Area I 3 - A cluster of established edge of settlement commercial uses (garden centre and pet shop) and farmstead dwellings.

The proposed housing allocation to the adjacent side of Woodhouse Lane is likely to have some impact on the isolated nature of this developed site and once completed may well form the future edge of Hedge End settlement along Woodhouse Lane.

Area I 4 - Associated with the former Holmesland Estate, this area is a locally Listed Park and Garden and consists of two larger dwellings set within mature parkland with associated tree cover. This plays an important role in defining the edge of settlement character to Botley along Holmesland Lane and curtails views to the Hedge End.

Area I 5 - Accessed via Woodhouse Lane, this parcel has been sub-divided into paddocks and is contained by roadside vegetation, mature woodland to the north and east, and varying depths of field boundaries to the south.

The glimpsed view from Woodhouse Lane shows that whilst the field provides an opportunity for long distance views in the direction of Botley, the mature tree belt associated with the watercourses to the north and east provides a strong visual barrier.



View across Sub Area I 2 towards Botley settlement edge.

Area I 6 - Combination of ribbon development, scattering of mature trees and paddocks to the rear provide a short lived but clear change of character from the built form edges to Hedge End and the wooded arrival to Botley. Whilst the horse paddocks are poor in landscape character, the remnant field boundaries and open nature contribute to the separation between the two settlements particularly when experienced from the A334 and bridleway No. 17.

Area I 7 - An unmanaged parcel of land contained on two sides by the existing Hedge End settlement. Two public rights of way wrap around the northern, western and southern boundary and the parcel is well screened by existing boundary vegetation.



View across Sub Area I 5 paddocks with woodland backdrop preventing views towards Botley.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green



Figure I 3b - Area I Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green - Field Findings Plan (South)

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Area I 8 - Cluster of horse paddocks and associated paraphernalia and boundary treatments. As identified within the landscape character, this area is relatively poor in landscape quality with certain areas exposed to the urban edge of Hedge End. The linear nature of vegetated field boundaries, whilst gappy, does contribute to the visual separation and sense of leaving / arriving at the two settlements, particularly when experienced from the rights of way network.

Area I 9 - Defined by a single dwelling and horse paddocks to the rear. The unmanaged field boundaries / heathland to the south and woodland block to the west curtails views, particularly when viewed from Footpath No. 18. Similar in experience to Area I 8, this area contributes to the sense of separation when leaving the suburban edge of Hedge End.

Area I 10 - Situated to the east of the DM24 site (Sovereign Drive), this parcel of unmanaged land is partially contained by scrub, mature vegetation and woodland to the south, separating the site visually from the nearby Little Hatts Recreation Ground, to the south. This unmanaged parcel provides a rural backdrop to Hedge End, although the adjacent woodland curtails views between the two settlements.

Area I 11 - Well defined grassland with established field boundary vegetation and tree cover, this area contributes to the rural settlement character along Brook Lane and open views further east towards Botley.

Area I 12 - Brook Lane ribbon development. This attractive line of properties, with its associated mature front and rear garden vegetation combined with woodland belts, offers clear break in character and intervisibilty between the two settlements. The mature vegetation backdrop offers a clear edge to the settlement before entering the paddock landscape beyond.

Area I 13 - An isolated parcel of land possibly linked to Hatts Copse Farm. Like Area 10, it is largely surrounded by woodland / copses, including the locally designated Gould Copse SINC. Its lack of public access and isolation means that its function in maintaining the Gap is relatively limited, albeit it does provide an attractive backdrop to the existing farm dwelling.



Typical view of equestrian paddocks to north of A334 (Sub Area I 6).



Typical view of equestrian paddocks to South of A334 (Sub Area I 6).



View from right of way overlooking Sub Area I 9 with tree coverage / scrub providing containment to settlement.



Ribbon Development along Brook Lane (Sub Area I 12).

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Opportunities for Green Infrastructure Improvements

Observations

1. Vegetated railway line embankment forms strong linear feature contributing to settlement separation.
2. A key node mainly experienced by vehicle users formed from a combination of raised road over railway line and mature tree planting provides a short-lived but small sense of leaving the three settlements.
3. Scope for associated Botley Bypass landscape mitigation to reinforce landscape character, address intervisibility to adjacent settlements and enhance sense of arrival/departure.
4. Protect edge of settlement character to Holmesland lane and Brook Lane to maintain soft edge and rural features.
5. Mature vegetation associated with watercourses provides clear sense of boundary.
6. Good example of rural roads / sense of leaving settlement with field hedgerows and trees providing symmetry on both sides. May be compromised by proposed future employment and housing allocations. Scope to improve frontage to garden centre to reinforce consistent landscape treatment.
7. Scope for improvements to field boundary vegetation to maintain connectivity and reinforce field pattern / visual separation and address hard urban edge.
8. Protect linear field boundaries, woodland blocks and tree belts to maintain visual separation and landscape character.
9. Address poor field boundary treatments to A334 to reinforce landscape setting and sense of leaving Hedge End settlement.

Analysis and Evaluation

Analysis of Sub Areas

The Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green Gap separates three settlements which are at risk of coalescence, especially when the permitted developments and allocation sites are considered.

The Gap has been subdivided into 13 sub areas, as shown in Figures I 3a and I 3b, comprising one or more parcels of land that together have similar characteristics / features that contribute to the performance of the Gap's function. The existing characteristics of these sub areas were described in the previous section and an evaluation of their contribution to the Gap's function is set out below in a form of a matrix followed by justifications.

Area I 1 - This cluster of four pastoral fields contributes to the openness of the Gap and is important for the separation of the three settlements. The fields adjoin the proposed developments which, once implemented, will significantly diminish the current Gap between the three settlements. Whilst the existing railway line provides a strong, impenetrable, separation between Boorley Green and the settlements to the south, the cluster of pastoral fields with the associated field hedgerows, field oaks, railway line vegetation and associated topography, provides a sense of separation and preserves their identity.

Area I 2 - This area is important for the separation of the three settlements due to its openness combined with a good level of intervisibility between settlement edges. Whilst the area is relatively narrow, it does provide a sufficient perception of separation to maintain the separate identity of these settlements. The Gap is perceived from a bridleway connecting Botley and Hedge End which provides excellent view of both settlement edges. No

Gap I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green													
Criterion check for each Sub Area (Gap component area playing a similar function)	I 1	I 2	I 3	I 4	I 5	I 6	I 7	I 8	I 9	I 10	I 11	I 12	I 13
The area helps preserve the open nature of the Gap.	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
The area helps maintain the sense of separation between settlements.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
The area plays an important role in defining the settlement character.	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
The area plays an important role in separation of settlements at risk of coalescence.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
The land is necessary in preventing the coalescence of settlements.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●

TABLE I 1: Gap I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green Sub Area Matrix

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

changes are proposed to his area, as it is considered necessary to maintain the separation between the settlements.

Area I 3 - The garden centre area is developed and so not an open part of the gap, and enclosed from the wider gap by mature vegetation. However, the Council considers that in overall terms Woodhouse Lane forms a clear boundary to the gap along Hedge End's edge. The garden centre presents informal single storey buildings and is a use typical of the countryside. The Gap increasingly narrows at this point and is experienced from the footpath connecting the settlements. Botley's edge is clearly visible from just beyond the boundary of this site, and occasional glimpses of the garden centre development can be gained from the footpath through the mature vegetation in the summer months notwithstanding the low key nature of the current development. The Council concludes this area should be retained within the gap. The northern, less developed part, is experienced by walkers on the short footpath connecting the settlements and should be protected to maintain the open nature of the gap

Area I 4 - This area helps preserve the open nature of the Gap and is important in defining the character and identity of Botley due to the presence of a Locally Listed Park and Garden, creating a soft and vegetated edge to the settlement.

Area I 5 - This area contributes to the openness of the Gap and plays an important role in defining the character of Hedge End's edge. It should be protected from development to avoid diminishing the gap in its narrowest and most vulnerable part. Whilst the woodland wrapping around the area to the east provides screening and prevents intervisibility between Botley and Hedge End, the development of this area would significantly reduce the physical separation between the settlements and increase the risk of their coalescence.

Area I 6 - This area lies at the narrowest section between Botley and Hedge End and performs all Gap functions. The fields on both sides of Botley Road (A334) contribute to the perception of Gap's openness and the separation between the two settlements. Thanks to the open nature of those fields, and their predominantly undeveloped character, the sense of leaving / arriving to either of the settlements is maintained despite the short distance (approximately 300m). The fields also contribute to the separation of the settlements for viewers on the bridleway No. 17 to the south.

Area I 7 - This area is relatively open and, when experienced from the surrounding footpaths, it helps preserve the open nature of the Gap. However, the contribution is limited by the existing vegetation along the area's boundary. It is considered that the area plays an important role in defining the rural character of Hedge End's settlement edge and it plays an important role in separating Hedge End from Brook Lane development, which may in time become the south western boundary of Botley. The

Council has already removed the area to the east of Brook Lane from the gap designation prior to submission of the plan. The remaining relatively narrow overall gap between Hedge End and Brook Lane therefore increases in importance for the ongoing longer term separation of the settlements.

Area I 8 - This area comprises a cluster of horse paddocks, associated paraphernalia and boundary treatments, which contribute to the Gap's openness when perceived from the footpaths to the north and south. The area plays and important role in the visual and perceptual separation of Hedge End and Botley and does provide a sense of leaving / arriving at Hedge End. Due to the short distance from both settlements, inclusion of the area in the Gap is considered to be necessary to the Gap's function and the sense of separation between Hedge End and Botley.

Area I 9 - This area contributes to the Gap's openness and the character of Hedge End settlement edge. The woodland block to the east provides a strong visual barrier and, further to the east, the footpath continues to run through a large area of countryside before reaching Botley. However the area should be protected from development to avoid Hedge End's sprawl to the east and the coalescence with the ribbon development along Brook Lane, which may in time become the south western boundary of Botley. The Council has already removed the area to the east of Brook Lane from the gap designation prior to submission of the plan. The remaining relatively narrow overall gap between Hedge End and Brook Lane therefore increases in importance for the ongoing longer term separation of the settlements.

Area I 10 - This area of unmanaged land plays an important role in defining the character of Hedge End's suburban edge and currently helps maintain the sense of separation between Botley and Hedge End. The area should be protected from development to avoid Hedge End's sprawl to the east and the coalescence with the ribbon development along Brook Lane.

Area I 11 - This area of well-defined grassland, with established field boundary vegetation and tree cover, plays an important role in defining the character of the Botley village and contributes to the openness of the Gap. The area is located in the vicinity of the settlement edge and its inclusion in the Gap is considered necessary for the separation of Botley and Hedge End.

Area I 12 - This area comprises Brook Lane ribbon development and is located half way between Botley and Hedge End. Whilst it does not contribute to the Gap's openness due to its largely developed nature, it does help define the settlement character and maintain the sense of separation between them.

Area I 13 - This area of private farmland is open. It does not contribute to the perception of the Gap from publicly accessible areas. However, it plays

an important role in defining the rural setting of Hedge End's suburban edge and currently helps maintain the sense of separation between Botley and Hedge End. The area should be protected from development to avoid Hedge End's sprawl to the east and the coalescence with the ribbon development along Brook Lane.

DM24 Site (Sovereign Drive)

The site was identified within policy DM24 and so removed from the settlement gap only as a result of permission for development being granted on appeal in 2015 (APP/W1715/W/14/3001499). This permission has now lapsed, and a further application refused in 2020. The site will no longer be identified in a policy in the Local Plan. The 2015 appeal Inspector placed substantial weight on the fact that, at that time, the Council had not met its 5-year land requirement and on the national imperative to boost housing supply, over the relatively limited harm to the fundamental intentions of the local gap policy. The context for the decision is now significantly different because the relative merits of Settlement Gaps are being reviewed on a consistent plan led Borough wide basis, and the emerging Local Plan has identified 10 years of housing supply. Therefore the area should be considered afresh.

The Council considers that the rear gardens of properties on Sovereign Drive backing onto this area provide a strong settlement edge to Hedge End. This area contributes to the openness of the gap and plays an important role in defining the settlement edge and the perception of leaving Hedge End, particularly when viewed from the public footpath (Botley 18) to the north. This area also provides a green link from this footpath to the recreation ground in the south. The boundary is largely defined by mature hedge planting with associated hedgerow trees. While there is no inter-visibility with Botley to the east, the area should be protected from development to avoid Hedge End's sprawl to the east and the coalescence with the ribbon development along Brook Lane, which may in time become the south western boundary of Botley. The Council has already removed the area to the east of Brook Lane from the gap designation prior to submission of the plan. The north – south orientation of the Hedge End – Botley gap maintains separation between the existing settlements and the development along Brook Lane, whilst also setting a clear gap for the ongoing longer-term separation of the settlements. The Council concludes that this area should be reinstated in the settlement gap.

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

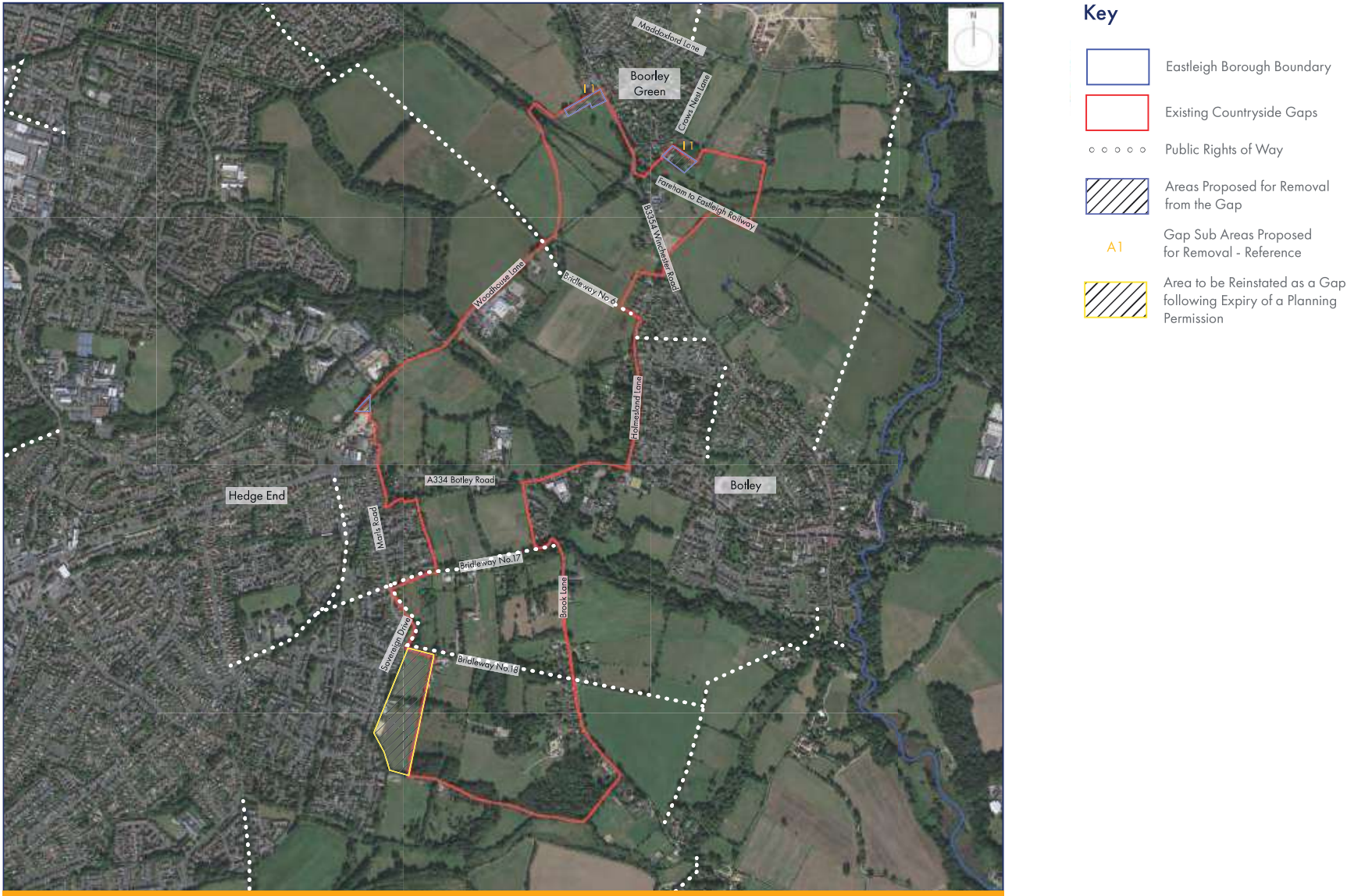


Figure I 4 - Area I Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green - Gap Amendment Plan

Gap Analysis - Area I Botley, Hedge End & Boorley Green

Area I Conclusions and Recommendations

Areas to be Removed

Following the characterisation and evaluation of the Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green Gap we recommend the following areas for removal (see Figure I 4).

- Sub Area I 1 - Already developed land that forms settlement edge to Boorley Green and doesn't contribute to the Gap function.
- Small area next to Woodhouse lane to reflect the boundary of the industrial land use defined by vegetation.

Proposed Gap Boundary Description

The slightly revised Botley, Hedge End and Boorley Green Gap provides sufficient land to ensure physical and perceptual separation of these settlements and to protect their character and separate identities.

Whilst the western edge is currently defined by the existing Hedge End settlement and proposed future allocations and approved developments, the eastern edge generally has a strong, uniform, rural character which provides a robust edge to the Botley settlement.

Opportunities for Gap Enhancements

Provision for Future Landscape Mitigation

Adopting Green Infrastructure principles, we have set out below a series of enhancement recommendations that together could help to supplement and reinforce the Gap function. These include:

- Retaining the visual separation between Boorley Green and Botley settlements by reinforcing the landscape character consisting of field boundaries / woodland belts, which together should inform future masterplan proposals for proposed housing allocation along its northern edge and the proposed Botley Bypass.
- Reinforce field boundary and highway boundaries with hedgerow planting. This should apply to the both the edges and throughout the Gap to support visual separation, provide ecological connectivity opportunities and reinforce local landscape character.
- Retain semi-rural character to ribbon development along Holmesland Lane and Brook Lane by maintaining balance of development and mature vegetation cover to garden plots.
- Protect and conserve setting to Holmesland Registered Park and Garden to complement the settlement edge character.
- Retain and enhance important woodland / coppice and associated watercourses that combined provide a clearly defined natural barrier and supports a strong sense of physical / visual separation whilst supporting biodiversity and ecological connectivity through the Gap.
- Where possible address hard urban edge to Hedge End edge by ensuring any future development is sensitively designed with positive frontages to the settlement edge with provision for generous landscape buffer planting that can reinforce the landscape character and integrate with the footpath network and public open space provision.