

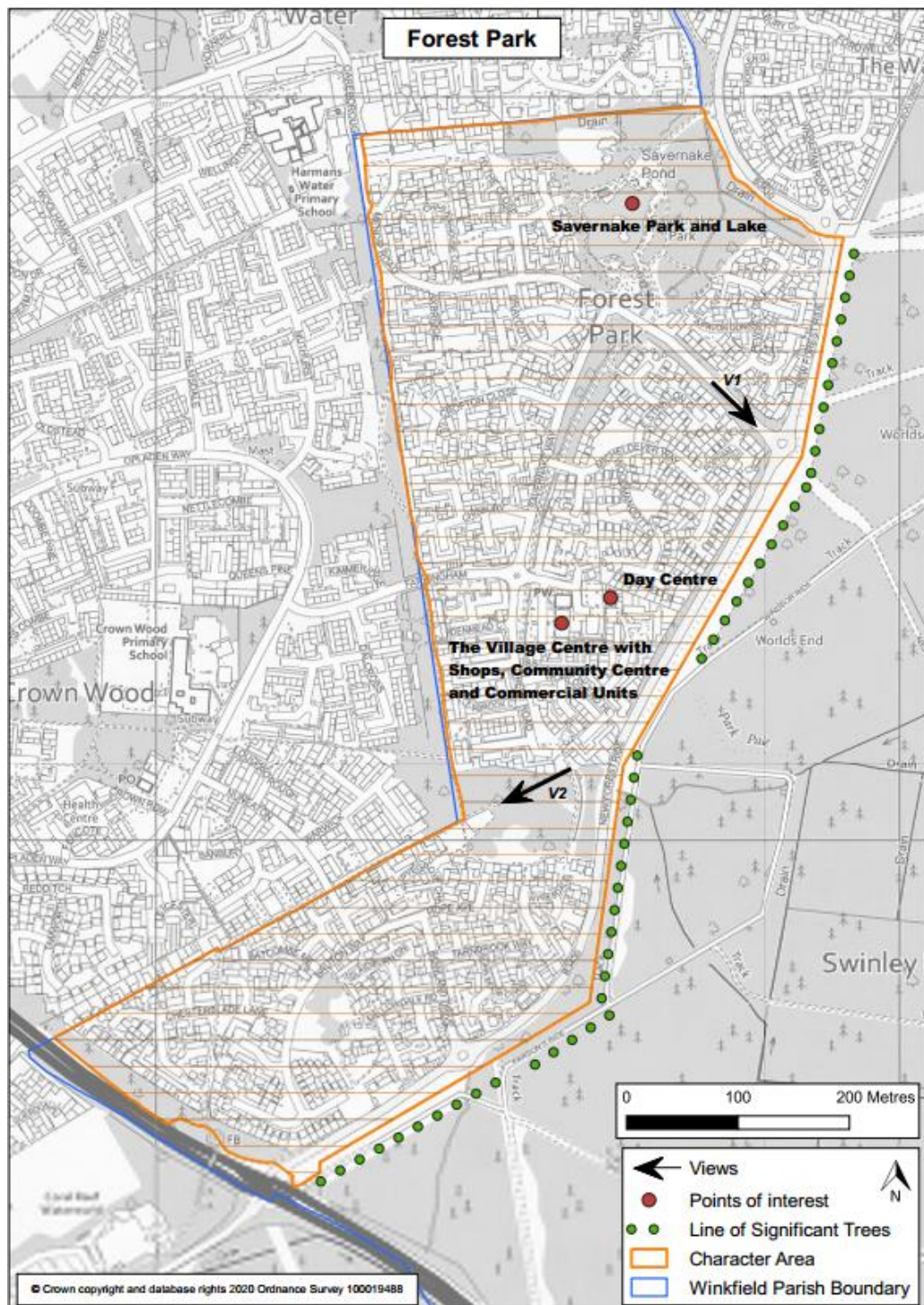
Character Assessment for Forest Park

Historical Context



Forest Park is a purpose built 1980's residential area between Ascot and Bracknell built as Bracknell New Town continued to expand. The New Forest Ride was deliberately built to the side of the development and edging onto Forest Land to protect the new residents from traffic.


The land was originally part of Swinley Forest and Crown Property.

The development has a range of accommodation to meet all needs with local shops and a Community Centre. Forest Park is sandwiched between New Forest Ride, A322, Blue Cycle way and Savernake Lake.



Locally Distinctive Contextual Features	
Type of Buildings	A good mix including starter homes and a day centre for the aged.
Main Uses	90% residential with a small number of industrial units.
Building Heights	Majority of two storey houses with 3 storey flats and town houses.
Prominent Building Materials	Brown brick of varying shades, interspersed with some red. Brown and red tiled roofs, some interlocking pantiles. A very limited range of materials. Minimal decorative features
Prominent Boundary Treatments	Mainly hedges, shrubs, mature trees. The New Forest Ride sees high fences screened with trees and hedges and quality high walls
Open Space/Vegetation	The development areas are interspersed with many small green gaps enclosed by tall pine trees.

Built And Landscape Character	
 	<p>This character area is a stretched out development with a community hub in the middle. There are several large different sections within the neighbourhood with fixed boundaries/roads. Each section has different housing styles with similar characteristics which flow into each other and all are surrounded by woodland areas/roads to enhance separation.</p> <p>Forest Park is made up of a good mix of reasonably high density housing comprising terraces, detached, semis, bungalows, flats and an Age Concern day centre. It has excellent green connectivity in terms of footpaths and cycle ways and many children's wooded play areas.</p> <p>Immediately surrounding the character area and contributing significantly to the sense of semi-rural living are the wooded areas of The Thames Basins Heath SPA, Crown Estate Forests and Savernake Lake.</p> <p>The community hub has a public house with garden, mini supermarket, takeaways, children's nursery and a recycling point. To the rear are a number of commercial units for a small range of businesses.</p>

	<p>A feature of the design is cul-de-sacs most with gentle bends. Boundaries outside the cul-de-sacs tend to be wooden fences or walls with hedges.</p> <p>Boundaries inside cul-de-sacs tend to have open frontages with little distinction between properties.</p>
	<p>There are two informal through routes: Farningham Way/ Opladen Way and Opladen Way/ Bowland, used as "relief roads" when the A322 is congested.</p> <p>Several mini roundabouts set to lawn and galvanised steel street lights and signage give a distinct suburban feel. There are also small pockets of landscaped areas.</p>
	<p>Many roads have different colour road surfaces and some have small Granite inset blocks: black for normal roads and red for the "smaller" ones. This differentiates and adds character.</p> <p>The "main" internal roads tend to be reasonably wide with softly rounded landscaped junctions and wide pavements with lawned edges or continuous shrubs. Other internal roads can be narrow.</p>
	<p>Housing is shielded from The New Forest Ride by high walls, fencing and positive landscaping. No housing faces the road.</p> <p>House styles tend to be grouped by road or area and flow well into each other.</p>
	<p>The colour palette is mainly red and brown brick with red or brown roof tiles. There is very little white but there is the odd area of timber frames with brick infill.</p> <p>Houses are mainly conformist to a set pattern e.g. two cul de sacs have identical houses but vary only in the colour of brick or maybe colour of windows or flat roof porch to pointed porch.</p> <p>In tandem parking and front facing garage doors are common.</p>

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

Forest Park is well laid out and caters well for pedestrians and cyclists with good connectivity.

The community has a thriving and well used Community Centre.

Easy access to forested land, ponds and children's play areas.

Short glimpsed woodland views from most properties with evergreen and deciduous planting

Better than average wildlife variety and numbers.

Main roads and footpaths help to define the area and separate the settlements.

The green open spaces between the sections of the roads and the views from World's End.

Negative Aspects

No crossing point on the New Forest Ride into the woodland.

Inadequate off street parking facilities for vehicles.

Conversion of garages to habitable accommodation adds to on street parking issues in some areas.

Detractors



On street parking makes some locations difficult for refuse vehicles and emergency services

Landscape

The area lies within the 5km TBH SPA buffer zone and partly within the 400km zone. It is relatively flat but with inclines on Worlds End Hill towards New Forest Ride and Crown Wood. Rhododendrons feature on The New Forest Ride. The area houses a mix of more deciduous trees to the North moving towards pines in the South. There is a good mix of evergreen helping to maintain the green character of the area through the winter.

Valuable Views Worthy of Protection



Left: **V1** dense forested woodland to the East of New Forest Ride.

Right: **V2** one of the wide cycle and pedestrian routes that form an eastern boundary.



Standing next to Age Concern looking West, there are open vistas of Bracknell.

Visible Landmark Features

None.

Essential Individual Trees Providing Character

Lines of trees on both sides of New Forest Ride provide a welcome green outlook.



Design Guidance

Landscape and Vegetation

Landscaping should form an integral element in layout design, making provision for new planting and sensitive boundary treatments. Significant trees should be protected from development.

Proposals should include (where appropriate) enhancements to Green Infrastructure.

Woodland plays a particularly important role in providing a distinct setting for development within the area and should be protected and maintained.

Any new building should not compromise the existing network of pedestrian paths and cycle ways. Nor should it compromise the landscaping treatment, the multiple children's play areas and small green gaps. Any larger developments should be well screened from public view as should any associated access roads.

Design

Development should reflect the predominant form in terms of existing height, scale, bulk, spacing, form and appearance of buildings.

Frontages will be of varying size but should always be open with boundaries defined by soft landscaping.

Future development should follow the multiple winding cul de sac style, wooded gaps and community within community approach.

Development should avoid dominant, incongruous extensions and alterations to a building, both in relation to itself and neighbouring buildings and spaces and will not unreasonably harm the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties or persons using outdoor space.

Other

As a purpose built housing area there is very little scope for new development and the area is likely to remain largely unchanged. Over time the pressure for off street parking may seriously impact on the character of front gardens and the street scene.

Future development needs to be mindful of sporadic flooding and extra run off.

Listed Buildings in the Prescribed Area

None

Non Protected Buildings/Features Worthy of Protection/ Heritage Assets

None