



# Tadburn Valley Design Statement

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This section of the Look at Romsey project was prepared by a team of volunteers in Tadburn Valley under the guidance of the Romsey and District Society and presented to Test Valley Borough Council in February 2006. It was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in January 2008.

## Area Setting

Tadburn Valley is situated on the south east side of Romsey, roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the town centre. It is a mainly residential area, of mixed styles and sizes, including flats, maisonettes, bungalows, semi- and detached houses. Growth began slowly in the 1920s and gathered pace in the post-war years, its population now being approx 900.

It finds favour with its inhabitants for its proximity to the town, to local schools and to the wider area of Southampton and the New Forest. It is considered, on the whole, to be a safe and quiet area in which to live, with particular features such as the Tadburn stream (Tadburn Lake) and Tadburn Meadows much appreciated. This is reflected in the fact that the average length of residence from our questionnaire respondents (25% of total) worked out at 21 years.



One of two chapels in the cemetery

Views of special interest are from the top of Cemetery Hill (and from the maisonettes in Nightingale Close) where one can see across the town to the Abbey and beyond to Pauncefoot Hill and the Salisbury Road. Residents of Chambers Avenue and Hillside Avenue benefit from the view of Cemetery Hill crowned by poplars, while Field Close and Eight Acres are enhanced by the backdrop of trees beyond the railway line at the back of the hospital.

## External Boundaries

Tadburn Valley is bordered to the south by Botley Road and to the west by the Southampton/Romsey railway line.

To the north, the boundary is formed by the Romsey/Eastleigh railway line, which since 1969 had been carrying mainly freight, until the building of a new station at Chandlers Ford and the re-instatement of a passenger service between Romsey and Eastleigh in 2003.

To the east we have designated the boundary as being Tadburn Meadows/ Chambers Avenue/ Allen Grove where they abut Halterworth.

Access: Most streets in the area connect directly into Botley Road and from there into Romsey and all other routes. Queens Close, Field Close and Eight Acres are cul de sacs which link into those streets. Footpaths come into the area from Winchester Road by the Sun Arch and from Botley Road along the river path. There are currently no designated cycle paths.

## History

The earliest reference to the area goes back to the Middle Ages. In the Patent Rolls of 1317 and 1334, there is a description of the old Spittle or Hospital of St Mary Magdalene, an almshouse which is said to have cared for lepers and probably stood on the land now taken up by the railway and the houses on the west side of Botley Road. In 1539 the building was converted into a residence for the Crown Bailiff. In later years, there was a tollhouse at the junction of Winchester Road and Botley Road.

The lower end of Botley Road, at least as far as Cemetery Hill, is known to have existed as early as the Middle Ages and was previously known as Portsmouth Road. A minor diversion at its junction with Winchester Road was needed when the railway was built in 1864-65 and, in the late 1920s, the Highways Authorities acquired sufficient extra land to straighten the alignment at the foot of the hill. A humpback bridge (Spittal Bridge) over the Tadburn Lake was replaced in about 1947 by the present flat bridge.

From 1919 until 1960 the road was classed as the A27, at which time through traffic from Southampton was diverted via Ashfield to the Romsey bypass and Botley Road was re-classified as a local road. In contrast, the development of Queens Close in the 1970s finally put paid to a long held plan to link the Romsey bypass with the (then) A31 Winchester Road (now A3090) to the east of Romsey.



Botley Road, flooded in 1909

The Tadburn Lake (from the Old English lacu, a small slow-moving stream) is a sub-catchment of the River Test. It rises to the east of Romsey and extends from Crampmoor to Broadlands where it joins the main river. The stream overflowed its banks in 1909, 1928 and 1960, causing damage to homes. There is evidence that the floods occurred when there was a combination of sudden heavy rainfall and especially high tides in Southampton Water.

The Tadburn was channelled around 1961, when its course was also slightly altered just upstream of Spittal Bridge. Although the river has been close to overflowing its banks on several occasions since, only one property in the area is known to have been affected by flooding.

The concrete liner, whilst detracting from the natural beauty of the stream, would therefore seem to have proved its worth and continues to allow for ease of silt clearance when this is necessary. Consent is needed from the Environment Agency for any works to or in the proximity of the river bank.

## Settlement Pattern

The earliest building in the area still standing is Orchard House, which stands next to the 'Sun Arch' (the eastern of the two railway bridges on Winchester Road) and is now known as Winchester House. (Its picture can be seen in the section on boundaries). It was probably built in the 16th or 17th century, and re-built in 1760. In the 1980s it was restored and converted into 4 flats.



Workshop behind Chapman's TV shop

The earliest building still standing in Botley Road is thought to be that at the rear of Chapman's TV shop. Built in brick, it was originally a bakehouse and stable. It is now used as a workshop for electrical repairs but the door to the hayloft is still in place at the upper storey.

The other houses in Winchester Road, and Botley Road as far as the Spittal Bridge, were built between 1860 and 1914. The electrical goods shop itself, which previously sold general goods, was built on the site of the original tollhouse, which by then had been moved to the Southampton Road. A similar general store was run by Mr Tom Viney from a bungalow at 23 Hillside Avenue for some years.

The only other shop now remaining in Tadburn Valley is Cycle World in Winchester Road. This was formerly a small supermarket and has been owned by the Whales family for several generations. Lloyds British, a crane company, operated its business from 86 Winchester Road for many years, until in 2004 the house and land was sold for re-development. Planning permission was then granted for the erection of 12 flats.

In the early part of the twentieth century, Tadburn Valley would have consisted of a small number of dwellings, a large area of farmland and the cemetery, which was opened in 1857, in order to meet the requirements of the Burial Act 1853.



Cycle World in Winchester Road

During the 1930s construction of new homes took place on farmland on the outskirts of town, to accommodate workers at the brewery and Wills Nursery. Rosedale Avenue, Hillside Avenue and Oakleigh Gardens were developed and Hampshire County Council acquired adjoining land for a Boys' Home, known as Palmerston House.



Aerial picture of Botley Road in the 1940s



Apartment block in Botley Road

In 2004, Palmerston House, latterly a Social Services area office, and a pair of semis in Oakleigh Gardens were demolished to make way for the most recent housing development in the area, the first phase of which consisted of a block of 12 apartments. Land to the rear was given outline planning permission for further residential development. In 2006 it was proposed to build two residential blocks as care homes for the Leonard Cheshire Foundation.

Tadfield Road development also began in the early 1930s with the last houses being completed in the 1950s.

After the Second World War, the return of many servicemen, combined with the baby boom of the late 1940s, saw the town in urgent need of more housing. 20 emergency prefabricated bungalows were built on farmland behind Hillside Avenue which was named Symes Road. In 1947, work began on the construction of family houses in Chambers Avenue and Allan Grove, on land bought by the local authority from the brothers of Montfort College.



Flats in Symes Road

The prefabs in Symes Road were replaced in 1971 by 4 two storey blocks of flats and 4 similar blocks completed the development of Chambers Avenue. These remained the property of the Borough Council until the 1980s when tenants were offered the right to buy. A considerable proportion of the residents in this area have been there since the original housing was built but younger tenants with families are beginning to move into the area.

Farmland to the north of Symes Road, originally owned by Romsey Abbey but having passed through several subsequent owners, was finally sold for development in 1969. Symes Road and Hillside Avenue were then extended over the Tadburn stream and the Eight Acres /Field Close estate was built. At the same time, farmland belonging to local butcher, Mr Drew, at the rear of Rosedale Avenue was sold for the development of Queens Close.

## Building Form

The building form in Tadburn Valley is varied as follows:

### Winchester Road (Section between the Two Railway Bridges)



Victorian terrace in Winchester Road

The houses are predominantly Victorian, built between 1860 and 1900, although on the north side there are terraces of Edwardian houses. No 86 is set well back in its own grounds from the other houses on the north side. A factory building of brick, with roof of corrugated iron, it still has a crane in situ for raising materials to the upper storey loft entrance. There are also two outbuildings – a converted air raid shelter and a brick built storage shed with corrugated iron roof. (This has been superseded by the planned development described earlier.)



Semi-detached housing in Winchester Road

All the houses have two storeys and are of brick construction. The terraces have pitched, slate roofs and the later houses have gables. Three pairs of identical semis on the south side were built in 1869 and the pair named Victoria Cottages (99/101) is uniquely decorated with be-whiskered, plaster heads above the windows and a female head in the recess above the front doors. One or two properties have retained the original sash windows but most have changed to uPVC or aluminium. A number have added conservatories or extensions to the rear, and some have loft conversions.



Detail on house in Winchester Road



## Botley Road

A mix of terraced and semi-detached houses with some detached properties including bungalows. Structural changes have been few, though several are of significance, particularly an extension added to No. 42 and a porch added to No. 29. Some houses have had extensions added to the rear and several have had significant change to the windows and doors, with the addition of rendering over the red brick (notably Nos. 34, 42 and, on the opposite side of the road, No. 43). A loft conversion has been added to No. 48.



Terraced housing in Botley Road

## Rosedale Avenue

Nine bungalows and one chalet built in the mid-1930s and one chalet built in 1980. The properties are mostly in their original state – brick built with tiled roofs – with the exception of one which has cladding, one which is rendered and another which has added a porch.



Entrance to Rosedale Avenue

## Queens Close

Sixteen houses were built between 1970 and 1972 in two phases. Although by two different builders, they are of similar design, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced. Brick built, with tile hanging to the upper floor, they are roofed with Marley concrete tiles. None remains in its totally original state. Nos. 1 and 3 are probably the closest but their windows have been changed from wood to aluminium of roughly the original configuration. All windows and front doors have been replaced, mainly with uPVC windows and a variety of doors. The original ground floor front windows were glazed to floor level but most have now been bricked up to sill height.



Queens Close reflecting original design



Queens Close showing adaptation to design

Some owners have converted the original integral garage into a living room and erected an extra garage. In a few cases this garage too has been taken over as living space. Several properties have been extended to the rear or side, in two cases to two storeys, but planning permission for a second storey was refused to No. 9.

## Hillside Avenue



Bungalows in Hillside Avenue

There are twenty bungalows and four chalets of brick and rendering construction, which are mostly original with tiled roofs. Three bungalows have added extensions but have avoided interrupting the uniform roof line.



Traditional bungalow in Hillside Avenue

## Nightingale Close

The 24 maisonettes are unaltered in their original post-war design, being brick with tiled roof.



Maisonettes in Nightingale Close

## Oakleigh Gardens

This short row, built in the mid-1930s consists of three pairs of semi-detached houses. They are all of white rendered brick with hanging tiles under the main windows and they have tiled roofs. One property has a side extension and another has a loft conversion. A fourth pair was demolished in 2004.

## Tadfield Road and Tadfield Crescent



Houses in Tadfield Road

These 62 dwellings were built over a 20 year period and reflect 14 different styles. There are 14 detached, 20 pairs of semi-detached and two blocks of four terraced properties. Some of the houses have been extended into the roof space and some have had extensions added to the original structure. Few houses have retained their original features, such as Crittall windows; most have altered the external appearance, with replacement double glazing, doors and fascias in a wide variety of styles.



Original Crittall window

## Symes Road



Symes Road

The four blocks of two-storey flats are of brick construction, with white uPVC, shiplap-style panelling below casement windows and shallow, pitched tile roofs, devoid of chimneys. Each block entrance has a plain wooden door and flat porch roof, supported by a white steel pole. A pair of semis in the same design stands between the flats and the stream on the eastern side.



Garages in Symes Road

Blocks of garages are provided at the rear of the flats. These have recently been renovated but the two blocks by the river are particularly obtrusive, with the walls which border the river path being daubed with graffiti.

## Chambers Avenue and Allan Grove

The 84 two-storey, three-bedroom, semi-detached family houses were built in the late 1940s, using steel reinforced concrete panels on a timber frame with concrete tiled roof (later known as REEMA houses). Roofs were either plain ridge or gable end. Whilst five properties retain the original structural features, a programme of work started in 2000 has provided the majority with brick outer facing and double glazed windows and doors. A variety of window patterns is now evident.



Semi-detached houses in Chambers Avenue

The conventionally built three-bedroom semi-detached houses at the higher, eastern end are brick built with gabled, tiled roofs with 'pebble-dash' upper storey facing and detached garages.



Flats in Chambers Avenue

As in Symes Road, the four three-storey blocks of flats at the western end are brick built under plain pitched, tiled roofs. The casement windows are uPVC double glazed with uPVC 'shiplap style' panelling beneath.



Houses in Eight Acres

Many of the semi-detached houses have been extended to the side or rear and, in some cases, the integral garage has been converted into an extra room. No 52, an end of terrace house, has doubled its size, by extending to the south, while the detached house at No. 59 has also added extra rooms on both floors by building into its garden.

## Eight Acres and Field Close



Bungalow in Field Close

This open plan estate consists of 54 semis, 26 terraced, 8 detached houses and two bungalows. They are all of similar design, being brick built, with hanging tiles on the front elevation. Roofs are of Marley concrete tile. The ground floor front window was originally full length but in many instances has since been bricked or panelled up, to waist height.

### Design Guidelines

- In areas where this is a predominant building form, new development should respect that uniformity.
- Alterations to properties should be sympathetic to the existing design.

## Materials, Fenestration and Chimney Details

As has been shown above, many householders in the area have made alterations to the original design of their building. In some cases this has been more drastic than others. Brick of varying hues is the predominant building material. Where rendering has been applied, it can detract from the overall design of a terrace, such as in Botley Road. Likewise the few remaining concrete frontages in Chambers Avenue are at odds with the new brick casings to the majority of houses.



Contrasting exteriors in Chambers Avenue

Where windows have been replaced over the years, many different styles have been chosen, without regard to surrounding properties, except where there is a common landlord, such as in Chambers Avenue and Symes Road.

Roof lines vary through the area. The flats in Symes Road, and many of the houses in Eight Acres, have totally bare roofs – lacking chimneys, any aerials have to be attached to the walls – while dwellings in other streets have a variety of aerials, cables and satellite dishes. Whilst recognising that such developments do not require planning permission, they can detract from the overall design. The only chimneys of any architectural interest are on the older properties in lower Botley Road and Winchester Road.



A selection of chimneys

### Design Guidelines

- Where windows are replaced, the original design should be retained where possible.
- TV aerials should be sited where least visible from the street.
- Chimney stacks of architectural interest should be retained where possible.

## Boundary Features



Hard standing, walls and hedges in Winchester Road

With the exception of Oakleigh Gardens (see above) and a few houses in Botley Road and Chambers Avenue, there is a general absence of boundary features. Indeed, Queens Close and the Eight Acres estate were purposely laid out with open plan gardens. However, many owners have replaced some of their garden frontage with hard standing, to allow for extra parking. This can be unsightly and in Winchester Road in particular many front gardens have been lost altogether.

The design of Symes Road allowed for no boundary markers, save where an area of grass meets the public footpath. As a consequence, there is no definition of what is public and what is private amenity space.

In the rest of the area, houses are bounded by low brick or stone walls, by plank fences or hedges, with gates of many designs. Original and identical brick gateposts are retained along the north side of Botley Road (Nos. 10 - 20). Winchester House in Winchester Road is screened from the railway by a line of firs.

### Design Guidelines

- The preference is for existing boundary features to be retained.

## Streets and Street Furniture

### Circulation/Parking



Parked cars in Botley Road

Whilst those streets in the area built since the 1960s were planned to take account of the need for car parking provision, older streets suffer for lack of it. The lower end, north side of Botley Road, in particular has lost part of its pavement in order to provide a stretch of designated on-street parking. This not only detracts from the view of the residents and looks cluttered but the parked vehicles also cause narrowing of the carriageway to such an extent that vehicles can often not pass safely and driving out of Tadfield Road is extremely difficult. Furthermore, the safety of pedestrians crossing between footpaths along the Tadburn Stream is potentially compromised.

The problem of parking in Chambers Avenue has been partly alleviated by the building of unattractive but practical concrete ramps above some of the gardens on the northern side and digging into the hillside front gardens on the southern side. However, there are still places where on-street parking, for example at the junction of Saxon Way, is both unsightly and unsafe.

### Lamps and Overhead Cables



Overhead cables dominating the skyline

Throughout the area there is a mixture of street lamp designs. No one street has a uniform design and many are still not down-lighters. Footpaths, particularly those along the Tadburn stream, are badly lit.



In all the older streets in the area, overhead cables are a particular intrusion.

## Street Furniture

A standard pillar box, and a bus shelter are situated on Botley Road, near its junction with Hillside Avenue.



Junction box disfigured by graffiti



Electricity sub-station

Electricity sub-stations are in Botley Road, Rosedale Avenue, Eight Acres and Chambers Avenue. Grey distribution boxes, at the roadside, some decorated with graffiti, and inspection covers at cable junctions are evidence of the cable TV and phone services which were installed throughout the area in the 1990s. The routes of the cables can still be seen in those streets where the pavement surface has not since been upgraded. Inspection covers for this and all other domestic services are visible on every street, as are the yellow fire hydrant signs.

Fencing along the banks of the Tadburn stream occurs intermittently and somewhat arbitrarily. Some early chain link fencing is still in evidence but, more recently, substantial lengths of black steel and grey iron palings have been used. These are not only obtrusive but aesthetically mismatched. Bridge railings are of iron, painted light green. (Since the Report was submitted substantial improvements have been made to the Tadburn Stream pathway).



A variety of fencing alongside the Tadburn Lake



Steel posts from the gateway to the old pig farm

Two steel posts can be seen midway along the alleyway between Queens Close and Tadfield Road. These originally formed the gateposts into the pig farm and marked the boundary of the parcel of land identified in the tithe awards on which Queens Close was subsequently built.

## Footpaths

The only designated public footpath (no.3) comes into Tadburn Valley at the railway bridge by the allotments, following the line of the Tadburn Lake across Botley Road and along its southern side as far as the back of the garages in Symes Road. The surface is mainly of tarmac, except beyond Hillside Avenue where it becomes sand and gravel.

Ownership of the tarmac footpath along the northern side of the stream, from Rosedale Avenue to the far end of Eight Acres, is unknown. As a result, there has been no formal programme of repair for this much used path, which is steadily deteriorating, as tree roots begin to break through.

An old right of way, which pre-dates most of the housing in the area, runs from the 'Sun Arch' on Winchester Road, alongside the railway embankment, across the end of Tadfield Road and through a short alleyway into Queens Close, at the end of which it joins the footpath along the Tadburn Lake. The initial stretch of path from Winchester Road is unadopted and is therefore unlit and full of 'potholes'. It is much used by residents of Tadburn Valley for walking to the bus stop and the doctors' surgery.

### Design Guidelines

- Any traffic calming measures and designated on-street parking bays should be designed to complement as far as possible the existing design.
- Overhead power lines should be replaced by underground cabling wherever practical.
- Where possible, fences along the river bank should be of uniform design.

## Trees, Hedges and Other Landscape Features

Many different species of trees line the banks of the Tadburn Lake – alder, ash, elder, field maple, beech and even a wych elm, together with bushes of hawthorn and blackberry. These provide a particularly attractive view to the residents of those streets which back on to both sides of the river and are appreciated by all who walk the footpath alongside.

Turkey oaks have been planted in the open spaces bordering the path along the river at Eight Acres, which also has a large and attractive sycamore breaking the line of the garages beside No. 37.

There is also a splendid 70 ft weeping willow at the Eight Acres/ Symes Road junction and the small green at the end of Tadfield Road has been planted with firs, mountain ash and a couple of cherries.

A line of fir, laurel, pine and Leylandii trees of some height provides a front boundary to the houses of Oakleigh Gardens and screens them from the main road.

Thanks to the length of some of the tenancies in Chambers Avenue / Allan Grove, there is a substantial collection of mature trees, such as spruce, birch, willow and cypress spread through the various gardens. A very tall hedge of Leylandii wraps round the garden at the junction of Chambers Avenue with Saxon Way, and encloses an even taller spruce.

Trees in the cemetery include monkey puzzle, yew and Lebanon cedar, while the poplars can be seen from some distance. It is hoped to replace the ageing monkey puzzle with new saplings.

While many of the streets in the area have open plan gardens, they would benefit from more trees being planted, for example in Symes Road and Hillside Avenue, if the width of pavement would allow. However, mature trees bring their own problems, dependent on proximity to houses, footpaths or roadways and a balance needs to be struck between the demands of conservation and safety.



Trees in the cemetery

## Wildlife

The Tadburn stream attracts a variety of wild life, including a well-established duck population, mainly of mallard, one or two of which are white. Other species known to frequent the area are: pipistrelle bats, kingfisher, wood pigeons, grey squirrels and, in the water, occasional trout, water voles and rats.

A 'pond dipping' project in May 2004 showed that the water contained a large variety of life, such as freshwater shrimps, bull heads, water crickets, sticklebacks, horse leeches and broad worms, together with the larvae of caddis, giant crane fly and black fly.

### Design Guidelines

- **Planting of Leylandii should be discouraged.**
- **Where new or replacement trees are planted close to private gardens, non-invasive native species should be selected.**

## Open and Other Spaces

There are two open areas in Tadburn Valley – the small, circular green at the end of Tadfield Road planted out with firs, mountain ash and a couple of cherries – and the town cemetery, situated on top of the hill, halfway along Botley Road.



Trees on the green in Tadfield Road

The cemetery on Botley Road was opened in 1857. The two chapel buildings were designed by architect W.K Lower: one in the Gothic style for the Church of England members and one for the non-conformist denominations in the Italianate style. This latter is now Grade II listed. There is also a one-storey cottage (the Cemetery Lodge), with steep pitched roof, built originally for the use of the cemetery keeper next to one of the two entrances. Both entrances are guarded by high iron gates and the site is surrounded by a three ft high brick wall, topped with pitched tiles, fronting a privet hedge of some six feet.

Although now rarely used for internments, the cemetery is much appreciated by local residents who benefit from the open views and the screen of trees, and an initial meeting has been held to establish a voluntary group as 'friends of the cemetery'. There has been some damage in recent years from vandalism and the grounds are beginning to look overgrown and neglected. The keeper's cottage has been renovated and has been leased to Testway Housing to provide affordable housing.

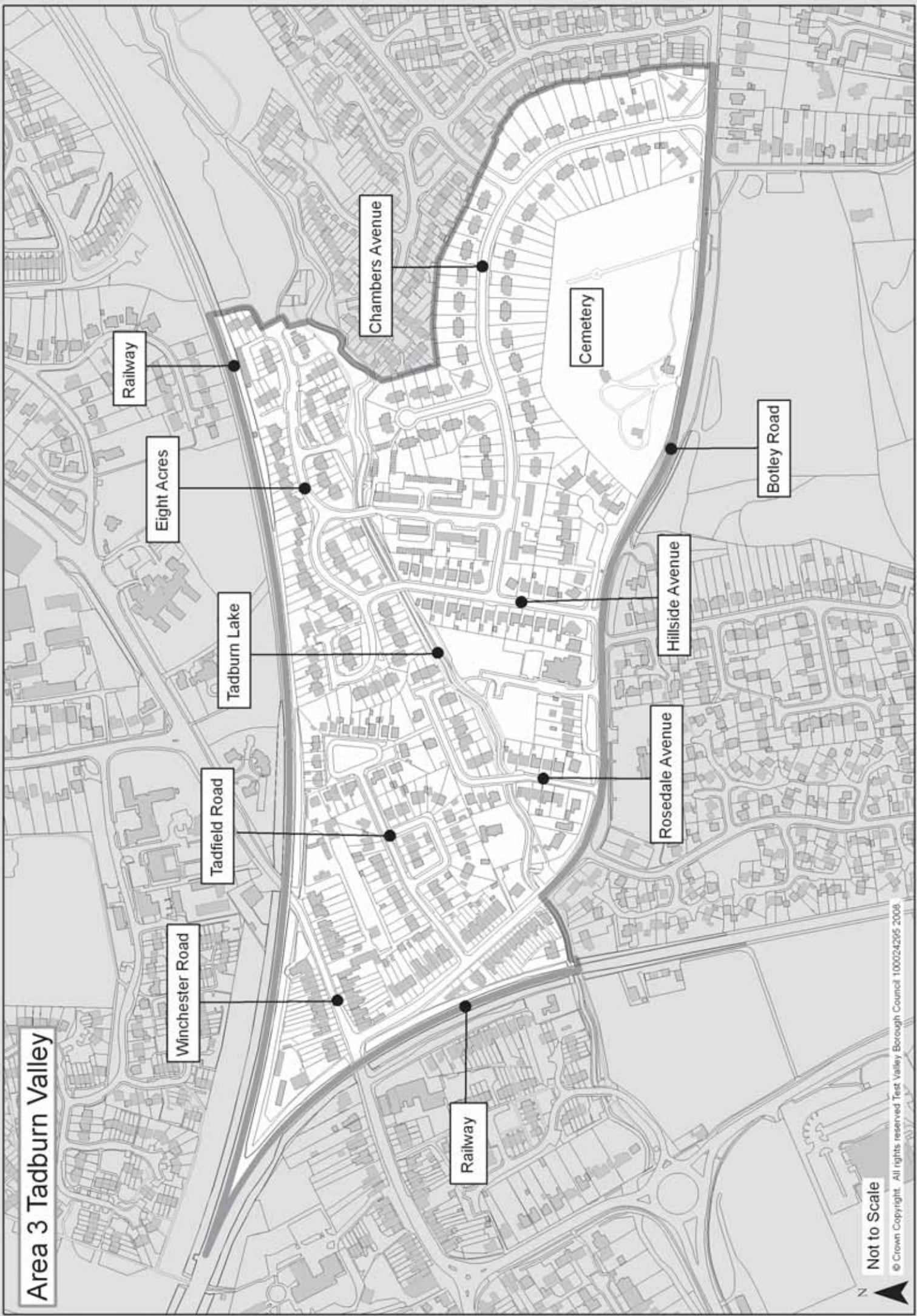


The Italianate chapel in the cemetery

Eight Acres/ Field Close benefit from the generous layout of the estate, which left several small open spaces laid to grass and planted with trees, such as alder and rowan.

Tadburn Meadows, an area of some 12 acres, falls within Halterworth's remit but it is used extensively by residents of Tadburn Valley for recreation and dog-walking.

# Area 3 Tadburn Valley



Railway

Eight Acres

Tadburn Lake

Tadfield Road

Winchester Road

Chambers Avenue

Cemetery

Botley Road

Hillside Avenue

Rosedale Avenue

Railway

Not to Scale

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## **Look At Romsey:**

### **Overview**

#### **Area 1 Whitenap**

#### **Area 2 Halterworth**

#### **Area 3 Tadburn Valley**

#### **Area 4 Tadburn Gardens**

#### **Area 5 Great Woodley**

#### **Area 6 Upper Cupernham and Winchester Road**

#### **Area 7 Lower Cupernham and Fishlake Meadows**

#### **Area 8 Romsey Old Town**

#### **Area 9 Town Centre, Outer Core**

#### **Area 10 Harefield and Little Woodley**

#### **Area 11 Woodley and Ganger**

#### **Area 12 Crampmoor and Highwood**