

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT - PORTSEA ISLAND COASTAL DEFENCE FLOOD RISK AREAS



Contents	Page
1.0 Introduction & Background	2
1.1 Aims & Objectives	2
1.2 Area of Study	3
1.3 Location & Extent	3
1.4 Geology & Topography	4
1.5 Climate	5
1.6 Historical Overview	5
1.7 Current Land Use	7
1.8 Open Space & Recreation	8
1.9 Transport	9
1.10 Protected Landscape & Ecology	10
1.11 National Landscape Character	13
1.12 Regional Landscape Character	14
1.13 Local Landscape Character Assessment	15
2.0 Landscape Character Area 1 - The Seafront	16
• Landscape Character Types	17
• Local Landscape Areas	19
3.0 Landscape Character Area 2 - North Coast	38
• Landscape Character Types	39
• Local Landscape Areas	41
4.0 Landscape Character Area 3 - East Coast	46
• Landscape Character Types	47
• Local Landscape Areas	49
5.0 Conclusion & Way Forward	56
Reference List	59

List of Figures	Page
Fig. 1 - Flood Risk Areas	1
Fig. 2 - Extent of the Study	3
Fig. 3 - Geology of the Solent	4
Fig. 4 - Portsmouth Topography	4
Figs. 5a-5f - Varied Topography	5
Figs. 6a-6d - Climate	5
Figs. 7a-7d - Historical Maps	6
Fig. 8 - Contaminated Land & Landfill	7
Fig. 9 - Admiralty Chart for the Seafront	7
Fig. 10 - Portsmouth Open Space	8
Figs. 11a- 11h - Recreation Images	8
Fig. 12 - Portsmouth Transport Connections	9
Fig. 13 - Solent - Valued Ecology	10
Fig. 14 - Portsmouth Open Space & Associated Harbour Designations	10
Fig. 15 - Marine Conservation Zones	10
Fig. 16 - Land Designations - The Seafront	11
Fig. 17 - Designations - North & East Portsea Island	12
Fig. 18 - National Landscape Character Areas	13
Fig. 19 - Hampshire Landscape Character Areas	14
Fig. 20 - Havant / Hayling Landscape Character Areas	16
Fig. 21 - Seafront - Landscape Character Areas	17
Fig. 22 - North Coast - Landscape Character Areas	39
Fig. 23 - East Coast - Landscape Character Areas	47

1.0 Introduction & Background

In 2006, a Strategic Environmental Assessment was carried out by Halcrow on behalf of Portsmouth City Council, identifying the areas in Portsmouth at risk of flooding from the sea, including the impact of predicted sea level rise. The areas identified were North & East Portsea Island, and the Southsea seafront (see Fig. 1). Coastal defence works are likely to occur in these areas to address the risk to households and businesses in the city, and will be implemented over the next 15 years, subject to government funding.

As part of this development process, the national planning guidelines will require an assessment of the impacts of those coastal defence works on the existing landscape that comprises the coastal strip of Portsea Island. In order to assess the impact, it is important first to understand what the existing landscape is, and its intrinsic value.

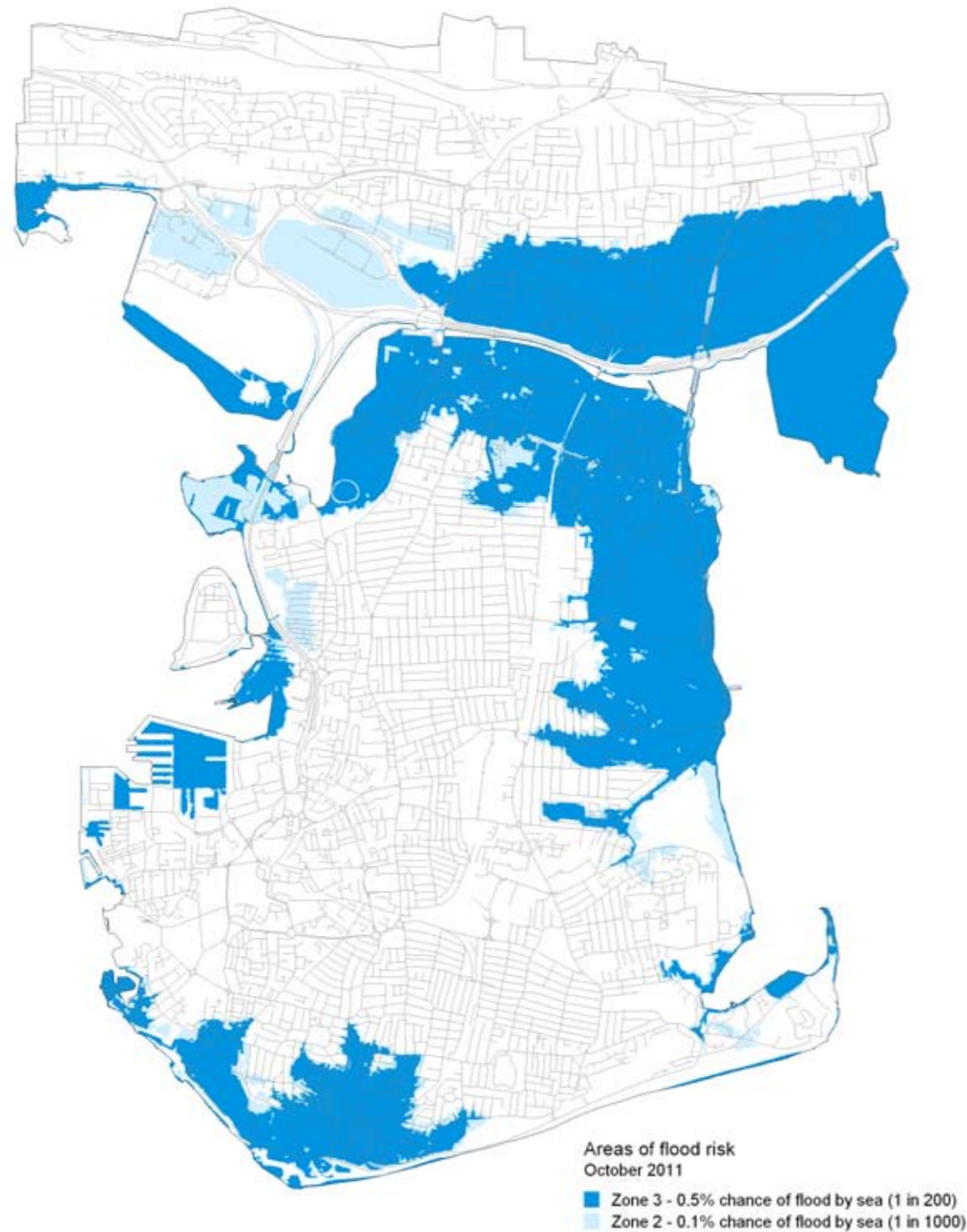


Fig. 1 - Flood Risk Areas

Landscape Character Assessment is a technique for looking at all the components of landscape, to understand how they combine together. These include the physical, perceptual, ecological, historic and visual aspects.

As well as protecting socially and environmentally valued landscapes under UK Law (The National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1974, The Local Government Act 1974 and The Environmental Protection Act 1995) the Council also under UK law have a responsibility to designated habitats and species. This is explored further under section 1.10 and in detail in the accompanying Environmental Technical Report.

1.1 Aims & Objectives:

This document sets out the existing landscape character for these areas, providing:

- Reference to national level landscape and seascape character assessments for the site's context
- Identification of landscape designations (including built and historic landscape designations of international, national and local importance)
- Brief history of the landscape and seascape – natural and human environmental factors and how these influence the existing landscape character
- Assessment of current land use, access and circulation
- Photographic/visual survey of landscapes
- Perceptual and experiential qualities of landscapes and seascapes
- Assessment of landscape and seascape values (importance), condition and sensitivity
- Guidance for future forces for change, e.g. conserve, enhance, strengthen
- Summary

The document will become integrated in to the Scoping Stage as a technical report which will be used to support any Environmental Statement required for the coastal defence scheme proposals.

1.2 Area Of Study:

As part of the Southsea and North Portsea Island Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Scoping stage, it has been identified that a landscape character assessment is carried out in the two coastal areas on Portsea Island shown on Fig. 2.

Area 1: Covers Old Portsmouth to Eastney (The Seafront)

Area 2: Covers the North & East Portsea Island (from Hilsea to Milton)

The study will focus on the coastal seascapes and strips of land extending up to the built/developed zone, rather than townscape itself within the city. Detail analysis of the townscapes is provided in the Council's Urban Characterisation Study, published in March 2011.

1.3 Location & Extent

Area 1 The Seafront

The seafront stretches from the Portsmouth Harbour entrance in the west through to the Langstone Harbour entrance in the east. It covers a distance of four miles, with a diverse character changing from built waterfront to semi-natural shingle beach. It incorporates substantial open space including Southsea Common and Canoe Lake Park, as well as heritage features of Old Portsmouth's defences, Southsea Castle, Clarence Pier, South Parade Pier, Lumps Fort and the promenades, and the Eastney coastline. It extends north to the line of residential and commercial properties of Southsea and Eastney overlooking the Common and seafront.

Area 2 North & East Portsea Island

This section covers approximately 8 km (5 Miles) miles of land between Tipner in the northwest and Milton in the south east, and incorporates land along Tipner Lake, the narrow Port Creek between the Island and the mainland, and the Hilsea Lines (19th Century fortifications) which stretch the whole of the northern run. The east section overlooks Langstone Harbour, enjoying far views over the harbour to Hayling Island and north to Farlington Marshes and beyond. It forms a narrow strip bound on the west side by the busy Eastern Road, and on the east by the shoreline itself, culminating in a wider section of open space at Milton Common. Adjacent land comprises dense industrial and residential areas, as well as large open space along the east of the island. For the purposes of this document, this area will be split between North & East Portsea Island.

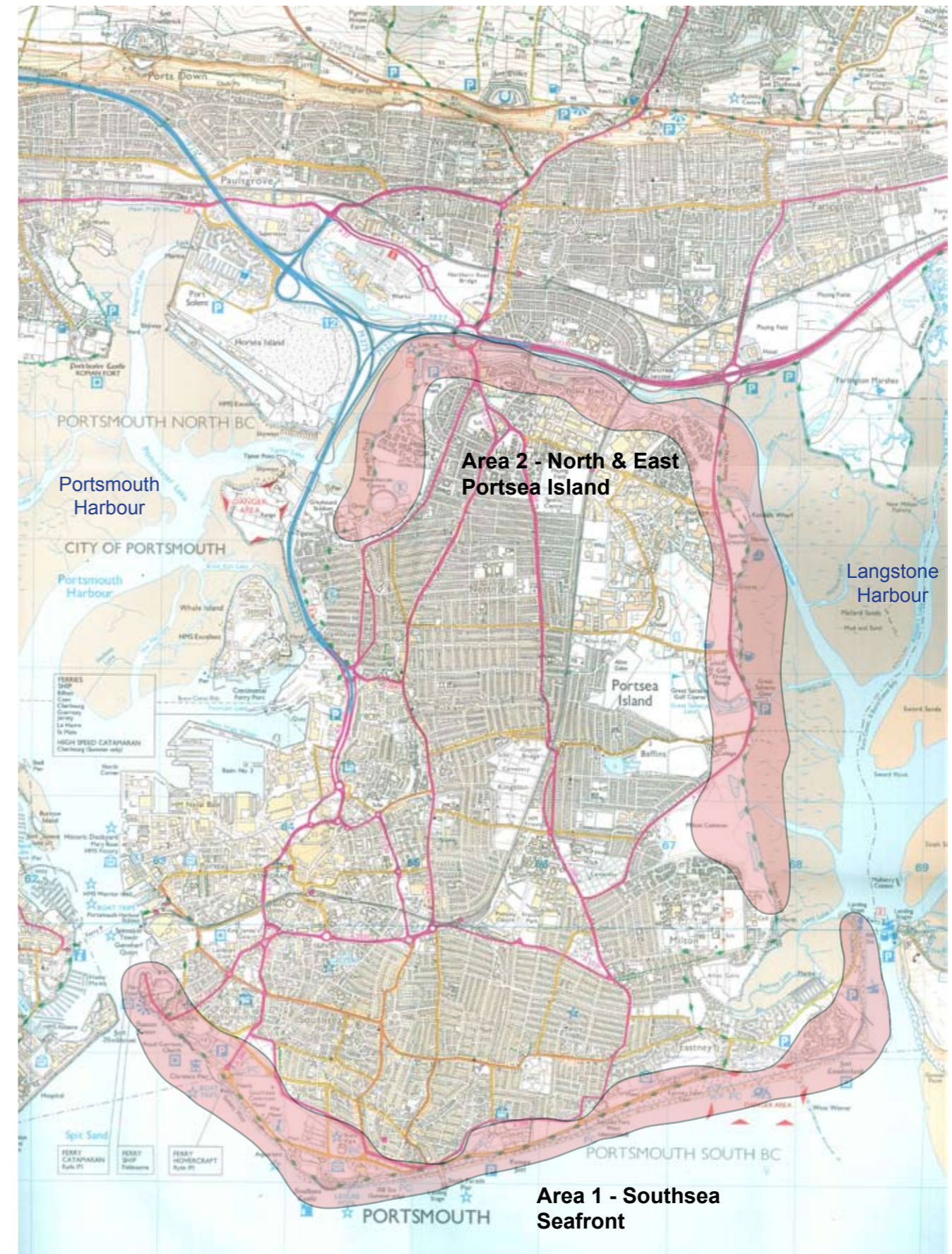


Fig. 2 - Extent of the Study

1.4 Geology & Topography

Portsea Island is part of a broad low-lying plain of flinty marine and valley gravels, underlain by clays, sands and gravelly deposits of gravel and brickearth. Underlying these are the Chalk and Tertiary folded strata, one of which forms Portsdown Hill where the chalk face has been exposed through natural fault and cutting (for the M27 corridor). Portsmouth's drinking water is piped down from these hills, where there are many chalk aquifers.

Large amounts of reclamation from the sea have changed the landform of the island, and have resulted in development immediately affected by tidal erosion and rising seas. Today, shingle and silt moved by the sea continue to amend the shoreline, as do man made defences and dredging. Furthermore, tidal areas influence greatly the perception of the area's geology and topography.

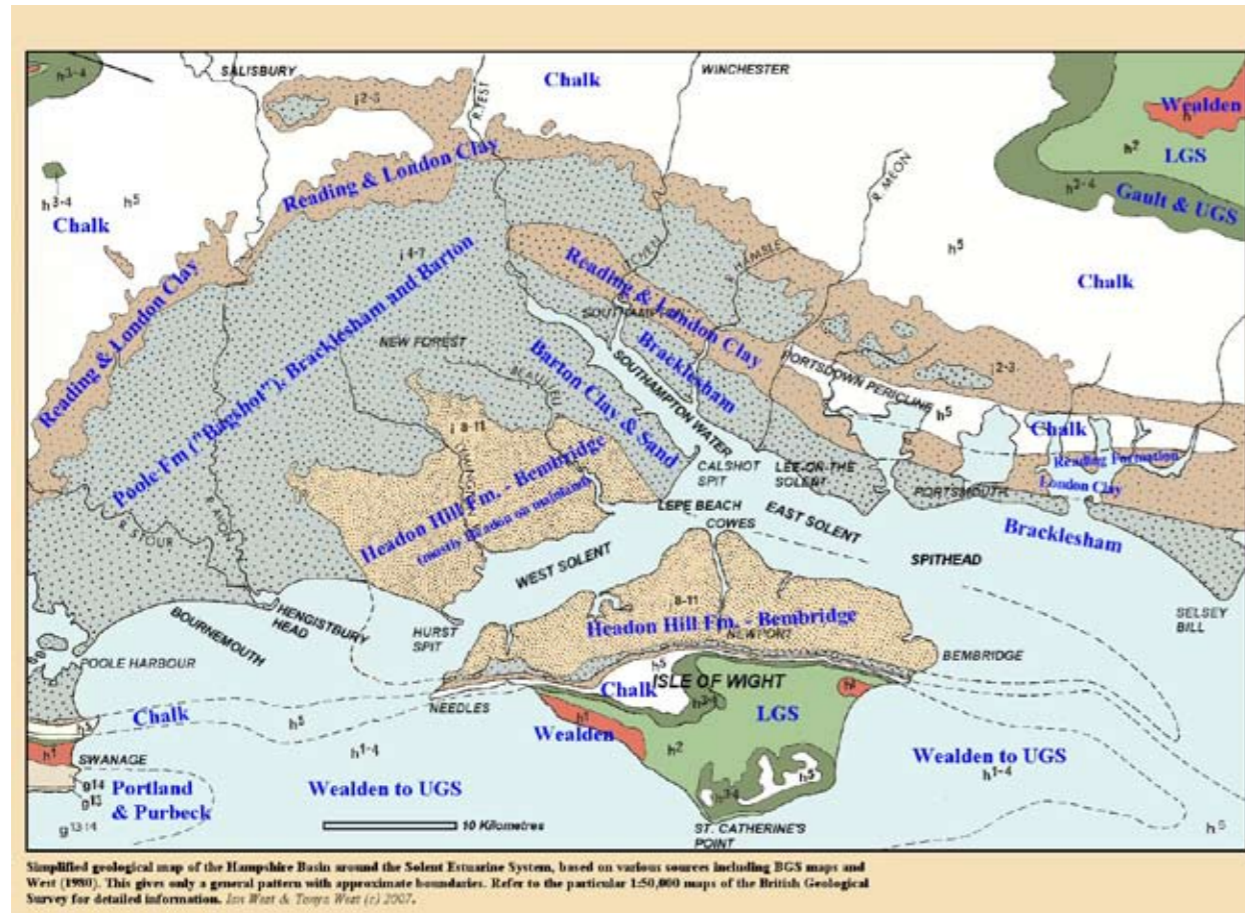
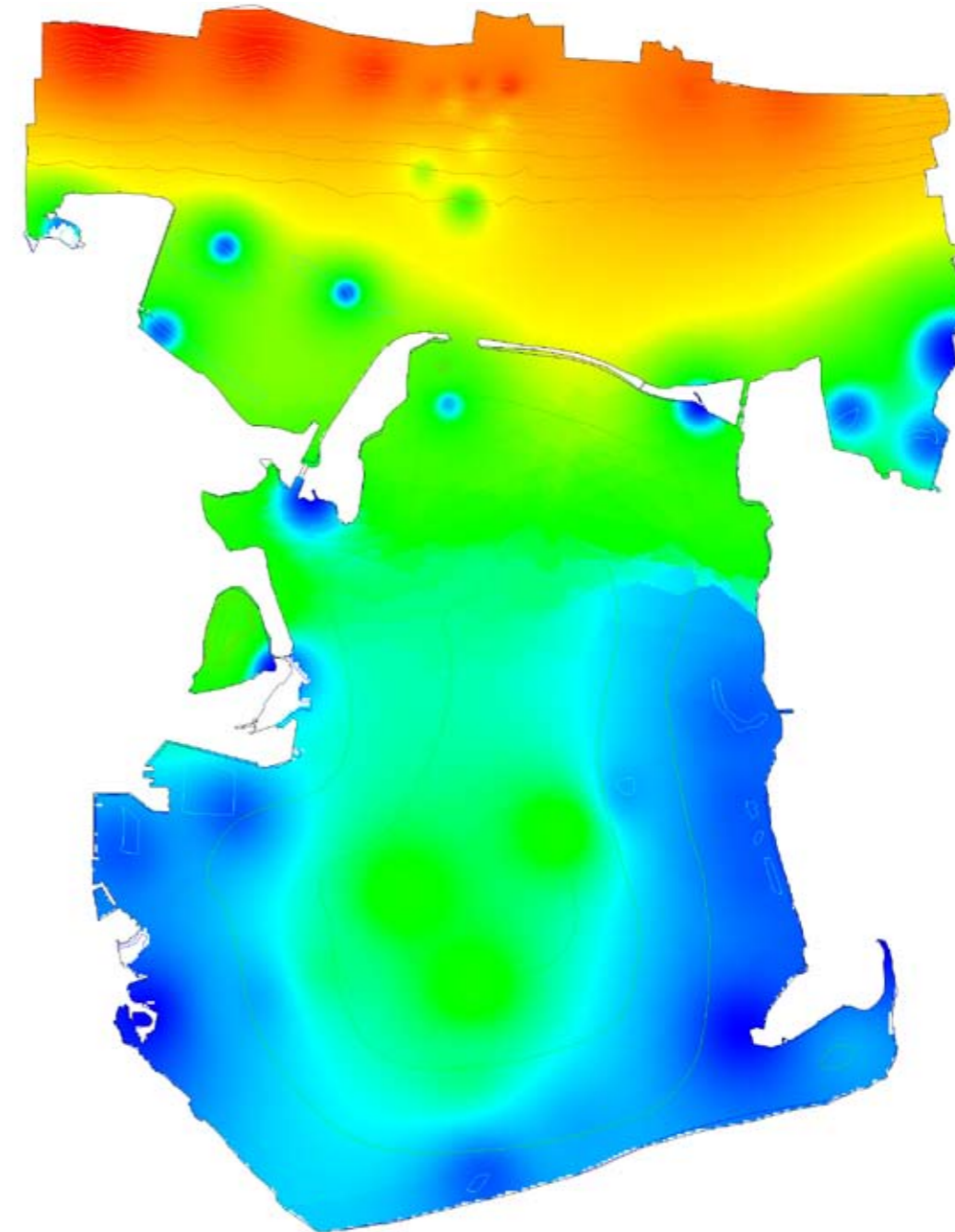


Fig. 3 - Geology of the Solent Source - British Geological Society

Fig. 4 illustrates the land height above sea level, and demonstrates how large a part of the island is vulnerable to flooding. Figs. 5a and 5b illustrate the natural form of the shingle beaches in the south of the island. Figs 5c, 5d, and 5e illustrate the harbour edge and mud flats of the eastern coast. Fig. 5f illustrates the salt water lake at Hilsea Lines where the land has been excavated for defence purposes to create moats and embankments.



Land height above sea level (metres)

- 121
- 70
- 30
- 10
- 3
- 0

Fig. 4 - Portsmouth Topography Source - Urban Characterisation Study PCC Planing Department



Fig. 5a Shingle Beaches at Hotwalls by the Portsmouth Harbour mouth



Fig. 5b Eastney Beach - Natural colonisation of sea kale



Fig. 5c Shingle beach and mud flat in Langstone Harbour - low tide



Fig. 5d Mud flat and birds - Tipner Lake



Fig. 5e Colonising sea grasses - Langstone Harbour



Fig. 5f Salt water lake - Hilsea Lines

1.5 Climate

Being located on the south coast of England, and sheltered by the Isle of Wight to the south, the city of Portsmouth has an especially mild climate, enjoying some of the sunniest weather in Britain. During the summers, temperatures average 25°C / 77°F, peaking at more than 30°C / 86°F on the sunniest days, often with pleasantly warm evenings due to the urban heat effect of the city's buildings. The Portsdown Hills to the north of the city protect it from the worst of the northerly winds, but its proximity to the English Channel mean that winters tend to be a little wetter in Portsmouth, although they remain very mild, with temperatures rarely falling below freezing. Furthermore rainfall can still be high in summer months in spite of warm temperatures.

Strong winds from the south-west are somewhat tempered by the Isle of Wight to the south, however the seafront is still quite exposed, and is vulnerable to turbulent weather patterns and seasonal storms. The low-lying coastline is prone to flooding, and in coming years faces rising sea levels and more unpredictable weather patterns as a result of global climate change.



Summer event at bandstand green, 2009



Outdoor cafe terrace, Mozzarella Joes



Violent seafront storm, 2008



Violent seafront storm, 2008

Figs. 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d - Illustrations of Portsmouth's Seafront Climate

1.6 Historical Overview

A full historical report has been carried out by Wessex Archaeology for the Initial Assessment, and should be referred to for a complete background to the archaeology and history of Portsea Island. It also identifies key assets, potential opportunities and vulnerabilities.

Brief Overview

Mesolithic Times (4000 - 2200BC): There is evidence of human activity since pre-Mesolithic times in the area. Originally England was connected to Europe, the Eastern Channel forming part of the Solent river system. Today's city of Portsmouth would have been situated in an area formed by fertile river valleys. Hunter gatherers would have followed the routes formed by the rivers down to the coast. There is evidence of Mesolithic and Neolithic camps and burials on Portsdown Hill and in Langstone Harbour.

Bronze & Iron Ages (2200BC - 43AD): Portsea Island would have been created by rising sea levels following the end of the last Ice Age. Evidence of Bronze Age settlements have been found in Langstone and Hayling. The area had developed into salt marsh, islands and 'tributary' tidal rivers, to near current sea levels, by the end of the Iron Age.

Roman Times (43 - 410AD): The Romans invested considerably in the fertile south coast plain. Portchester Castle was built in the 3rd Century AD to defend the sheltered Portsmouth Harbour as a main route inland to Winchester & Chichester.

Anglo-Saxon & Viking Times: The Anglo-Saxons left evidence of fishing and salt reclamation around Portsea Island and again the area was key for protecting Wessex, but high tidal exposure and marsh climates made Portsea island unattractive to settlement. Wessex was eventually conquered by the Danish. King Canute and his sons created settlements along the Solent coast including at Bosham and the Isle of Wight.

Medieval Period (1066 - 1499): Small villages and farms dotted Portsea Island and Jean de Gisors established the town of Portsmouth for trading. Richard the Lion Heart gave the town a Royal Charter and King John used the port and to launch sea attacks on the French. A naval base and hospitals were established in the Old Portsmouth area.

Tudor & Stuart times (1499 - 1714): These gave rise to a boom in the development of Portsmouth for defence. Henry VIII built the forts which dominate Old Portsmouth and Southsea to this day. He also established earth ramparts in Eastney and Hilsea areas. The flat marshy grounds surrounding Southsea Castle were kept clear for the 'field of fire' and also used for gathering troops and storing arms. The deep channels were used for marshalling the fleet. By the 18th Century Portsmouth became the most important naval base in the UK. Salt was gathered from the Salterns, and farms and villages spread out.

Georgian times (1714 - 1837): The naval influence of Portsmouth continued, from which Nelson left to fight on the Victory. Batteries were developed along the seafront towards Eastney and at Hilsea. Fort Cumberland was built.

Victorian Times (1837-1901): The Victorians created much of Portsmouth and Southsea that we know today. Lord Palmerstone built the forts which dominate Portsdown Hill, the island forts in the channel and developed Hillsea Lines. Eastney Barracks and fort were built. The Victorians' love of the sea (and the Isle of Wight to which the Queen had a rail line built) saw the building of the two piers and promenade. Southsea developed rich residences which absorbed villages and farms (Great Salterns). The commercial Arundel canal still forms a channel in Langstone Harbour and the dockyard industries boomed.

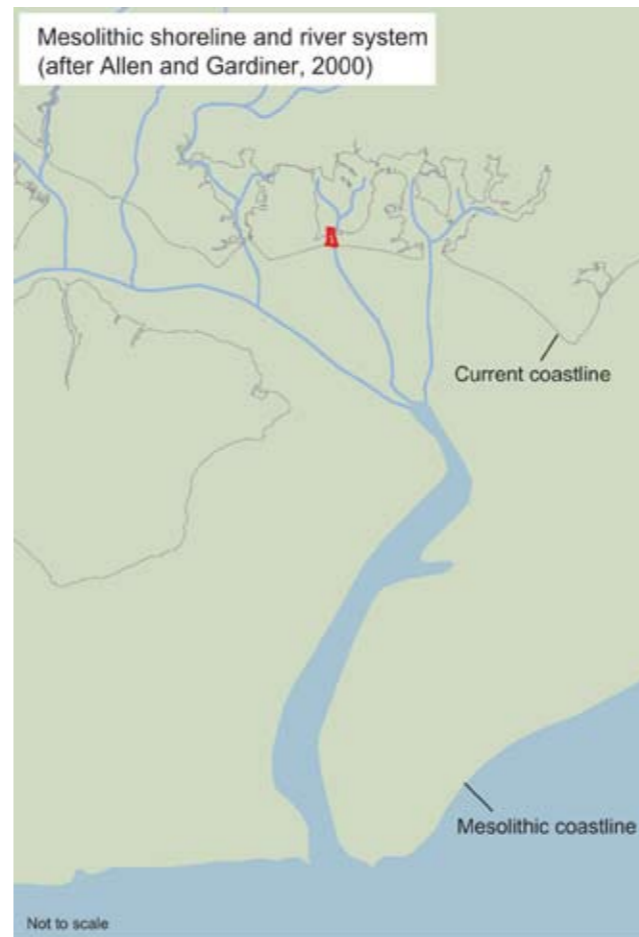


Fig.7a Mesolithic shoreline.
Source: Wessex Archaeology Report - 2:
Historic Environment Assessment

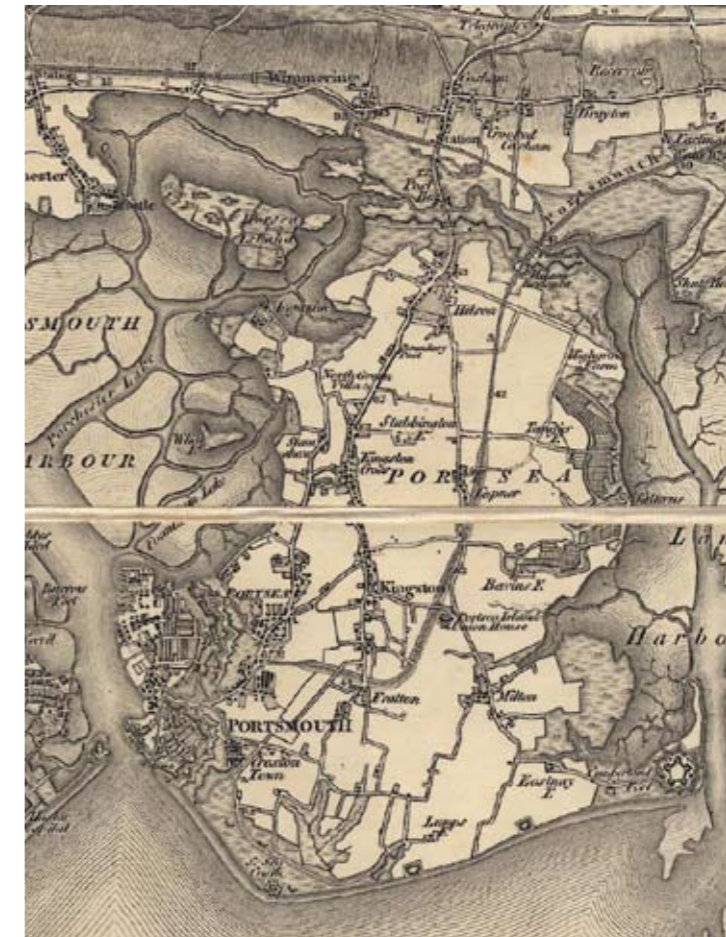


Fig.7b Ordnance Survey - 1st Series.
Sheet 10. Portsmouth 1805-1869.
Source: www.visionofbritain.org.uk

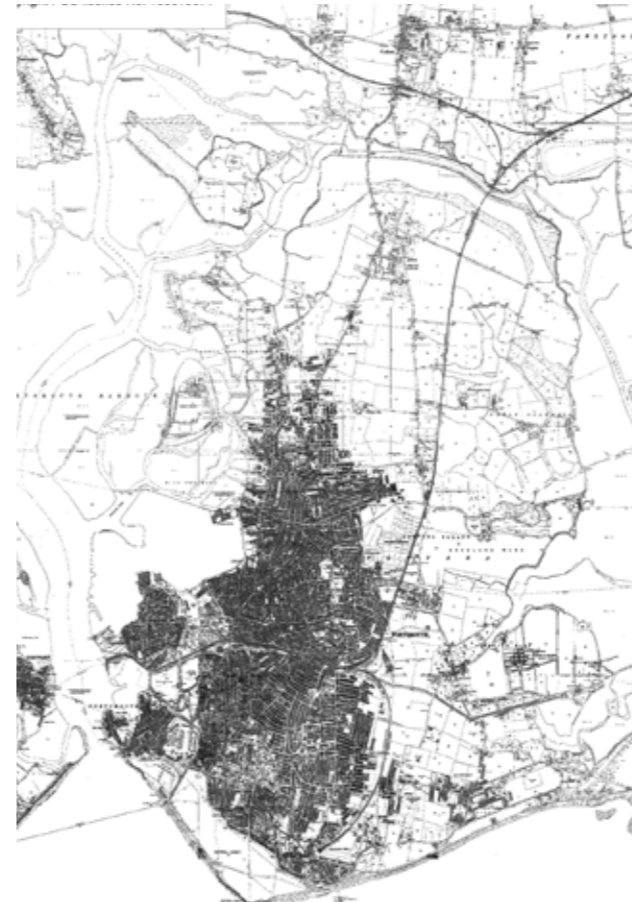


Fig. 7c 1898 Victorian Portsmouth
Ordnance Survey Source: PCC



Fig. 7d 1930 Portsmouth
Ordnance Survey Source: PCC

Twentieth Century: In the 20th Century housing development boomed across the island and along the base of Portsdown Hill with land continuing to be reclaimed, often over Victorian tipping sites. Furthermore, due to its Naval importance much of Portsmouth was destroyed during WWII. Further concrete defences such as tank trap blocks at Eastney and pill-boxes were built. Whole families were relocated to new housing in the outer suburbs of Paulsgrove and Leigh Park. Housing and public buildings required regeneration within the city during the following years.

Industry, tipping, reclamation and Post-war rebuilding have caused much contamination and these areas are evident in the map below (marked in blue). Several of these lie on the eastern coastline, and correspond with large areas of open space, including Milton Common & Great Salterns Estate, now a golf course and recreation ground.

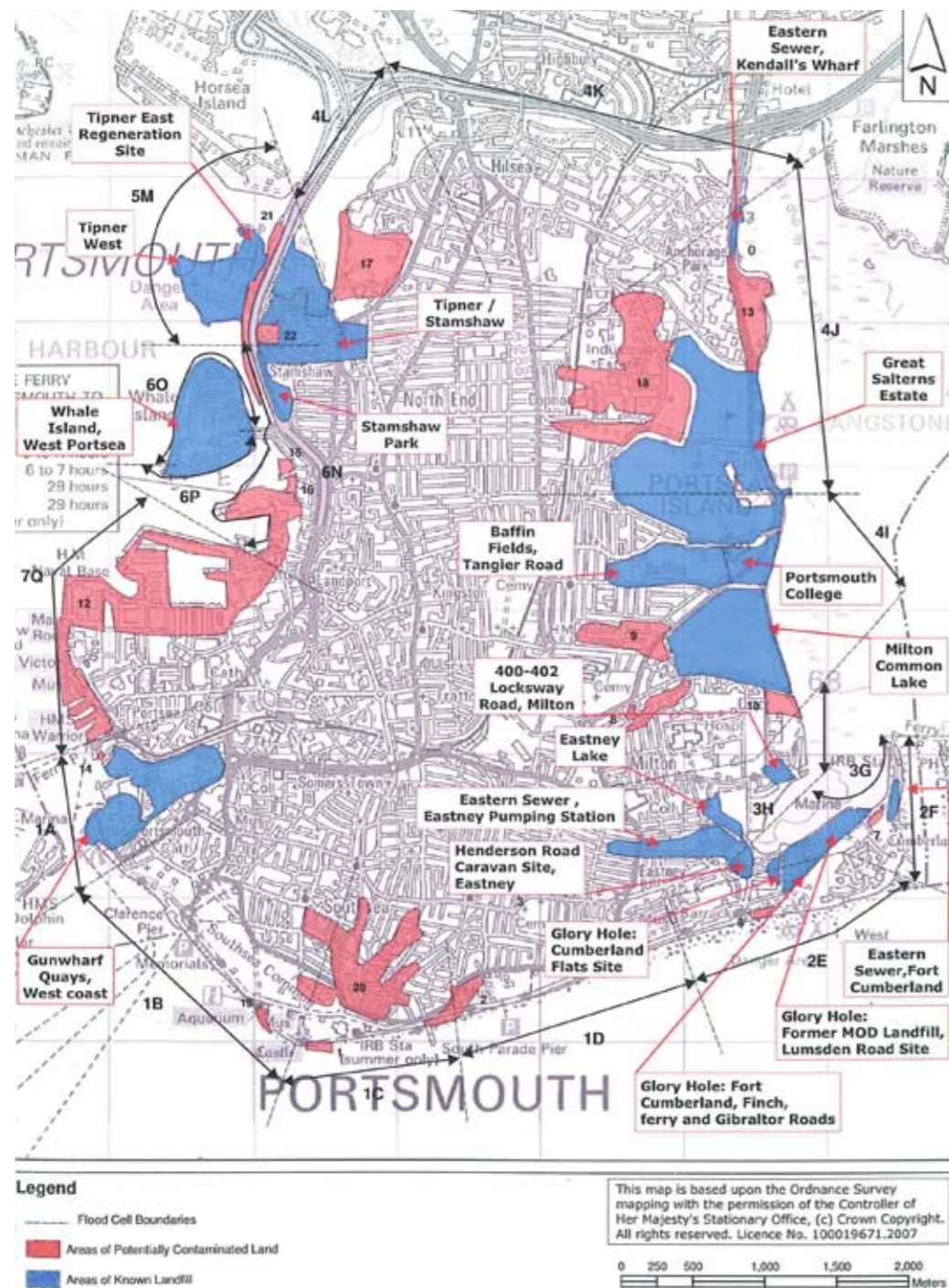


Fig. 8 - Contaminated Land & Landfill - Portsea Island
Source: Strategic Environmental Assessment Halcrow report

1.7 Current Land Use

Today, the majority of Portsea Island is artificial/man made in it's nature, with obvious sea defences and development right up to the valuable deep harbour edges and dredging of channels. The sheltered harbours are still booming with naval and recreational shipping. Fig 9 below illustrates the shipping routes approaching Portsmouth Harbour, and demonstrates the reality of the lively activity on the seafront on a daily basis. In contrast Langstone Harbour demonstrates a more 'naturalised' reclamation and utilisation of the nature of the harbour and marshlands.

Industrial & commercial development and housing dominate the island with busy transport routes linking it to the mainland along the western and eastern corridors, as well as across the Port Creek section along the north edge.

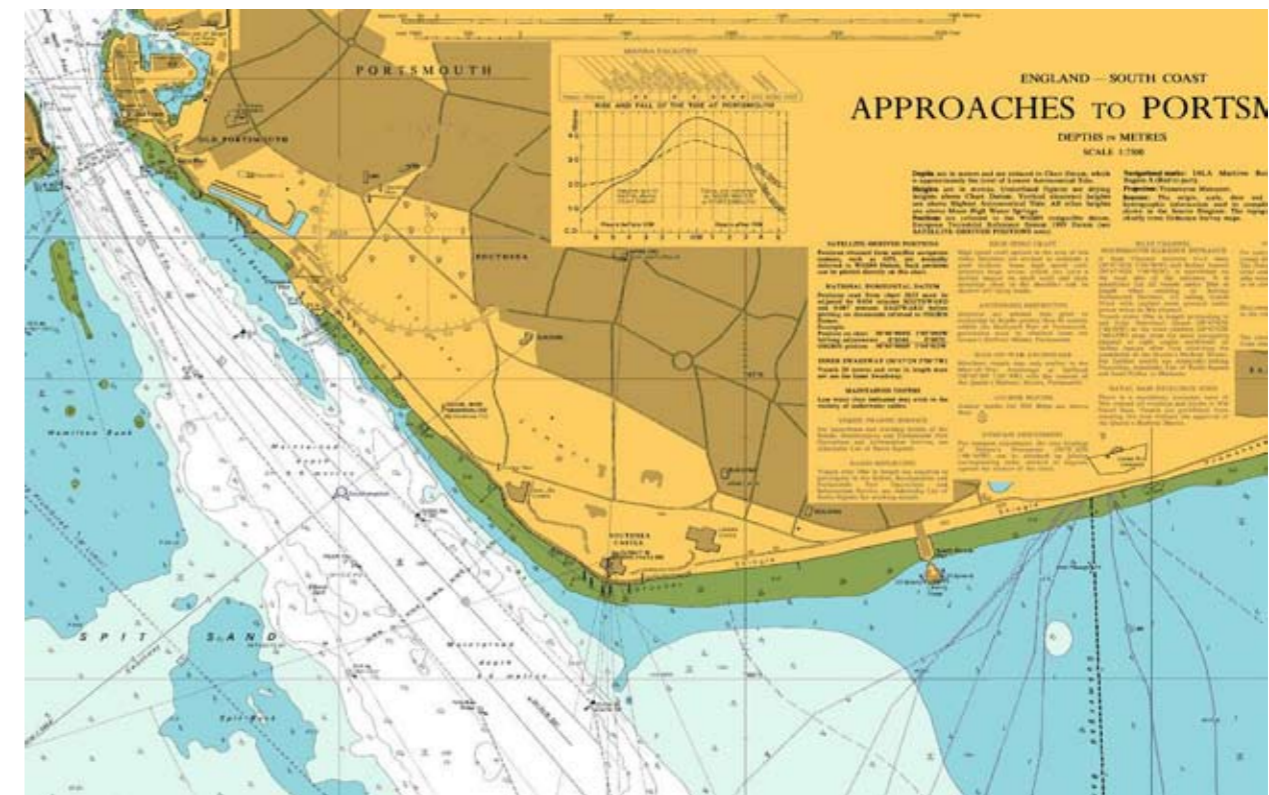


Fig. 9 Admiralty Chart Source: The Queen's Harbourmaster

1.8 Open Space & Recreation

The principle land use along the north, east and south sections of Portsmouth's coastline is recreation and tourism. There is a diverse range of public open spaces, including large formal areas such as Alexandra Park, Hilsea Playing Fields, Southsea Common and Canoe Lake Park as well as extensive informal areas such as Milton Common and Hilsea Lines. Southsea Common is the venue for several large-scale events throughout the year, including the Great South Run and the Kite Festival.

There are long, formalised paths such as the Tipner Lake route and the Victorian seafront promenade, used for recreation by numerous cyclists, runners and walkers. On the northern and eastern shoreline you can walk all the way from Mountbatten Centre at Tipner through the Hilsea Lines, across the Eastern Road and down the narrow coast path along Langstone Harbour to Milton Common and beyond. The eastern side links smaller patches of open space sandwiched between the busy Eastern Road and the shoreline. Likewise the seafront coastline allows open access along its entire length from one harbour mouth to the next. Together these openly accessible spaces make a very valuable resource that is unusual in a large city.

Only a small area at Kendalls Wharf on the northeast shore is privately owned land for commercial handling and sorting of shingle aggregates, with a footpath skirting this to the land side. In addition the eastern end of Eastney beach is owned by the MOD, but public access is allowed. At the farthest point access around the tip is only possible at low tide.

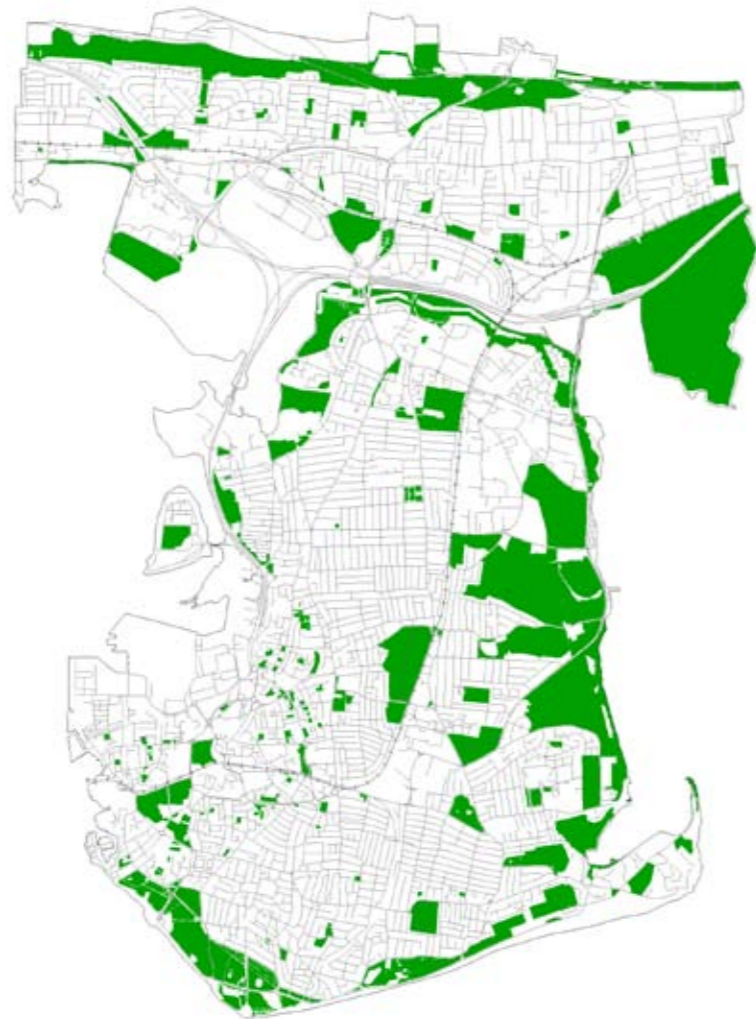


Fig. 10 - Portsmouth Open Space
Source: Urban Characterisation Study - PCC Planning Department



Trafalgar Bicentenary, 2005



Great South Run



Pompey FA Cup Win, 2008



Kite Festival

Figs. 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d - Illustrations of Large Scale Events on the Seafront



Figs. 11e, 11f, 11g, 11h - Informal Recreation - Seafront & North/East Portsea Island

1.9 Transport

Transport is a key issue for the city coastline, with the two busiest arterial routes along both west and east sides of the island, linking it with the mainland to the north and the A27/M27 running east-west. Furthermore the third busiest route off the island crosses the Port Creek at Hilsea, linking the northern suburbs of Portsmouth located on the mainland. The only railway line serving the island crosses the Port Creek further east dissecting the Hilsea Lines.

Along the seafront, a secondary route runs east-west between Old Portsmouth and Eastney. Portsmouth's strategic location means it forms the hub between the mainland and the Isle of Wight, as well as serving important ferry routes to France, Spain and the Channel Islands. At The Hard & in Old Portsmouth there are busy ferry points, and at Clarence Pier a transport interchange for the Hovercraft terminal. At South Parade Pier several bus lines terminate, and a bus route connects to the Hayling Passenger Ferry at Langstone Spit.

The influence of sea traffic on the Portsmouth and Southsea seafront is considerable, with boats, hovercrafts and ferries travelling to and from Gosport and the Isle of Wight, and various locations on the European Continent throughout the day and night, animating the seafront with continual activity. Furthermore there is a strong presence of naval sea traffic throughout the year. A short ferry ride at Eastney crosses the Langstone Harbour entrance to reach Hayling Island. It runs all year round, and is for pedestrians only.

The main arterial roads avoid the seafront, leaving it mostly clear of commuting vehicular traffic. However there is considerable vehicular access to the seafront from the city centre, Southsea and Eastney, the main routes being Pier Road, Osborne Road, Palmerston Road, creating key junctions.

There are many places to park in designated car parks and on some of the roads. On the seafront during the summer months the parking spaces fill up, especially during popular events on the Common, when additional temporary parking is provided on the grass in specific allocated areas. The roads along the seafront are wider than average, often combining echelon parking as well as ample two-way traffic.

The promenade that stretches along the whole seafront is mostly very wide and flat, up to 7 metres in many places. It is designated for pedestrians only but is unofficially used by cyclists too. Several footpaths cross the Common and Canoe Lake, connecting Southsea to the seafront.

A recent designated cycle lane along the Eastney seafront has been created as Phase 1 of a city cycling initiative, in an effort to cater for increasing numbers of cyclists along the seafront and to reduce the number of accidents to cyclists.

On the northern shoreline there is a well-used shared pedestrian and cycle route skirting Tipner Lake and connecting through the motorway junction to Cosham and Paulsgrove to the north. Through Hilsea Lines and along Port Creek are several informal paths, and running the full length of the east shore is a footpath. Furthermore, Eastern Road is a well-used cycle route for commuters into Portsmouth.

Two smaller pedestrian bridges cross Port Creek linking the island to the suburbs of Cosham and Farlington to the north. One spans over the full width of the motorway to the north of the creek, the other passes underneath it, through a tunnel.

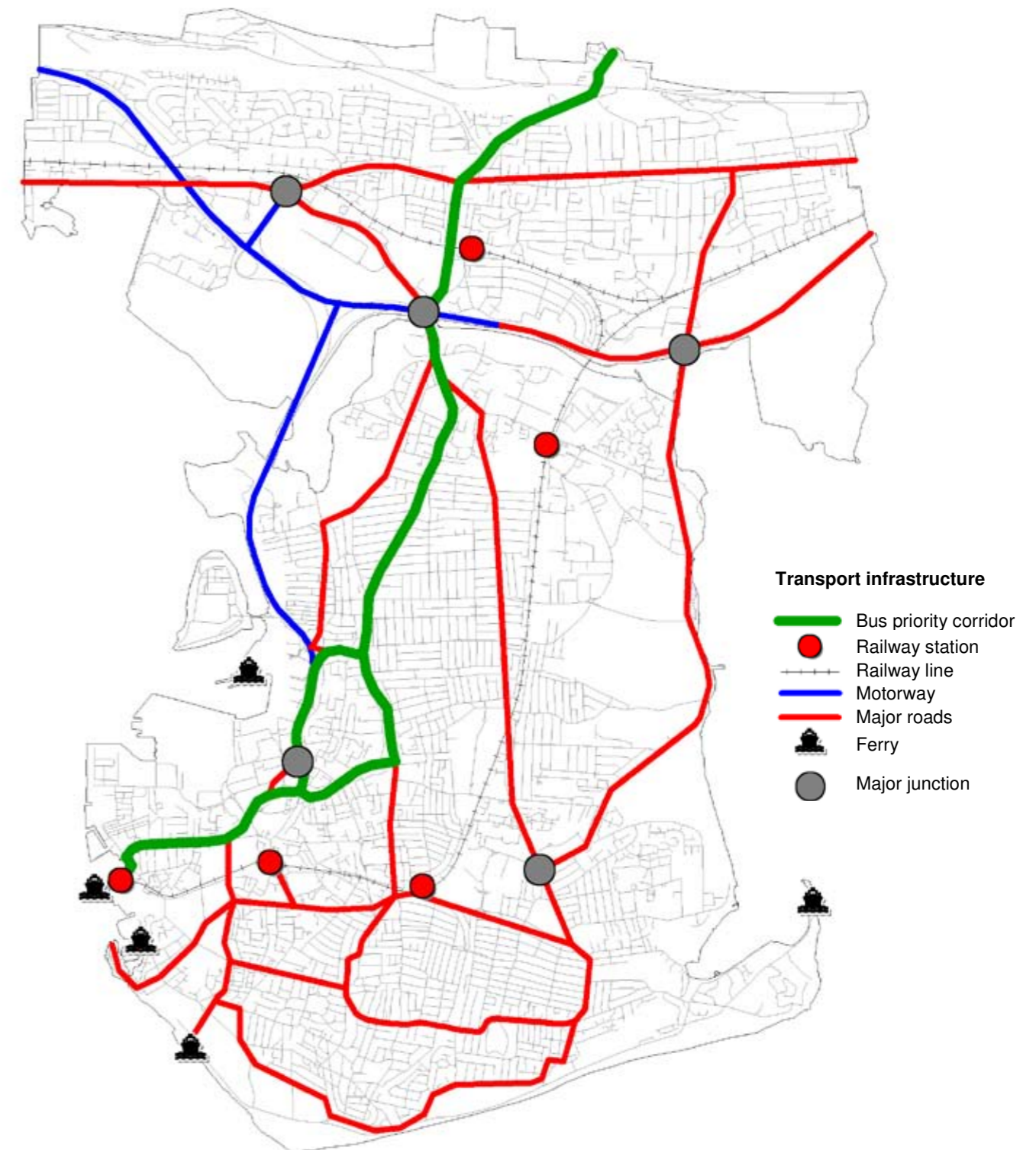


Fig. 12 Portsmouth - Transport Connections
Source: Urban Characterisation Study - PCC Planning Department

1.10 Protected Landscape and Ecology

A number of important designated landscapes affect Portsea Island. These are briefly described here. Full details are provided in the accompanying Environmental Technical Report.

Both Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours are internationally designated environments, protected under the Ramsar agreement 1971 (Wetlands of international importance), as well as the European Union Directives - Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992. They identify Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - for a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats; and Special Protection Areas (SPA) - for migratory bird species. Portsmouth Harbour is a SPA/Ramsar Site; and Langstone Harbour is a SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site. (See Figs. 14 & 17).

These two sites were initially identified under UK law (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to protect the country's best wildlife and geological sites. Furthermore Farlington Marshes to the north east of the island is protected as a SSSI.

Other nearby landscapes protected under UK Law include the South Downs and the New Forest National Parks (National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949). The former lies a few miles to the north and the latter is approximately 35 miles to the west of Portsea Island.

Several Marine Conservation Zones (Marine & Coastal Act 2009) exist in the Solent and the English Channel nearby (see Fig. 17). These aim to protect areas of value to marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology.

Biodiversity is registered and monitored nationally by UK Biodiversity Action Partnership (BAP), as well as through the Environment Agency, DEFRA and Natural England. Locally it is monitored by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre in partnership with Local Planning Authorities. There are Local Wildlife Sites at Eastney, Milton Common, Great Salterns and Hilsea Lines. These are valued for their informal heathland, wetland and woodland habitats. See www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk.

Heritage landscapes have been protected through Conservation Areas, listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments. Southsea Castle, Hilsea Lines and Fort Cumberland are all Scheduled Ancient Monuments. (See Figs 16 & 17)

Leisure land for sports and recreation is also monitored through Local Authorities to determine availability and requirements for development planning. PCC protects the open spaces and areas of nature conservation on and around the island under Policy PCS13 of the Portsmouth Plan (Open Spaces & Conservation). Fig. 14 illustrates these areas.

These protected environments have a significant effect on Portsea Island. Initial scoping on the effects of rising sea levels on the SSSI's has shown that in order to "hold the line" and protect the city from inundation there would be a potential loss of intertidal habitats around Portsea Island, ie. SPA and SAC designated areas. As a result the City Council has been working closely with the Environment Agency's Regional Habitat Creation Programme. The aim is to identify areas which might offset any potential habitat loss in a management plan to allow for natural coastal erosion where these special habitats could move inland, in locations further down the coastline.

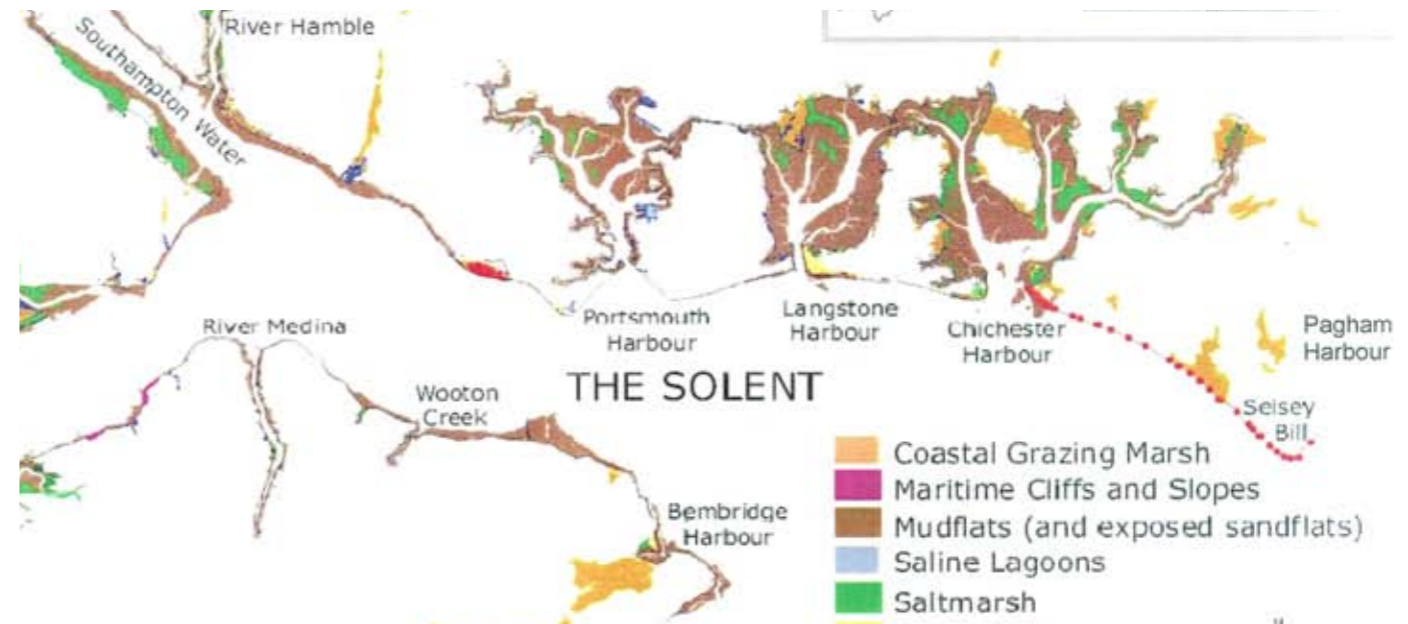


Fig. 13 - Solent - Valued Ecology Source North Solent Shoreline Management Plan 2005 Identified for the Regional Habitat Creation Programme (Environment Agency).

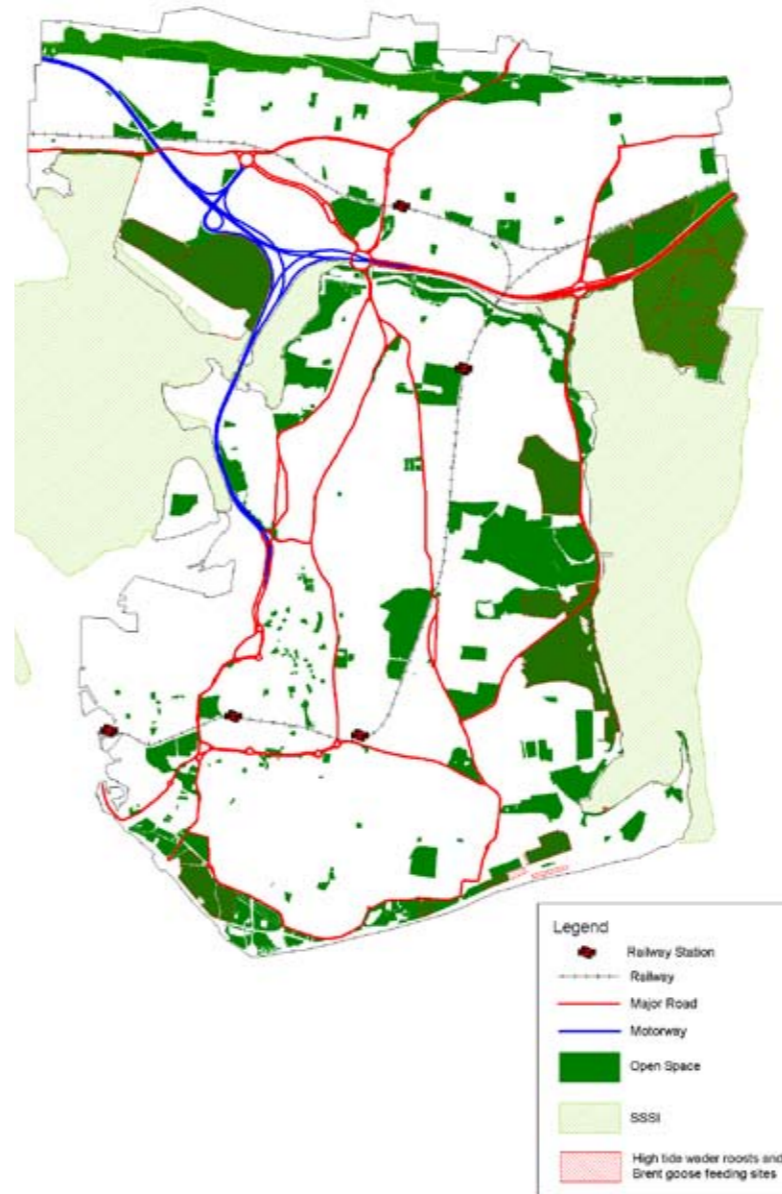


Fig. 14 - Portsmouth Open Space & Associated Harbour Designations Source: Source: Urban Characterisation Study - PCC Planning Department

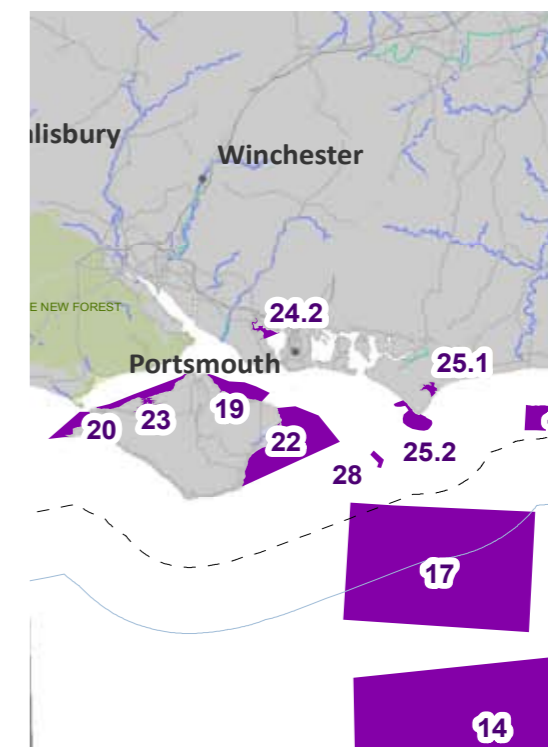
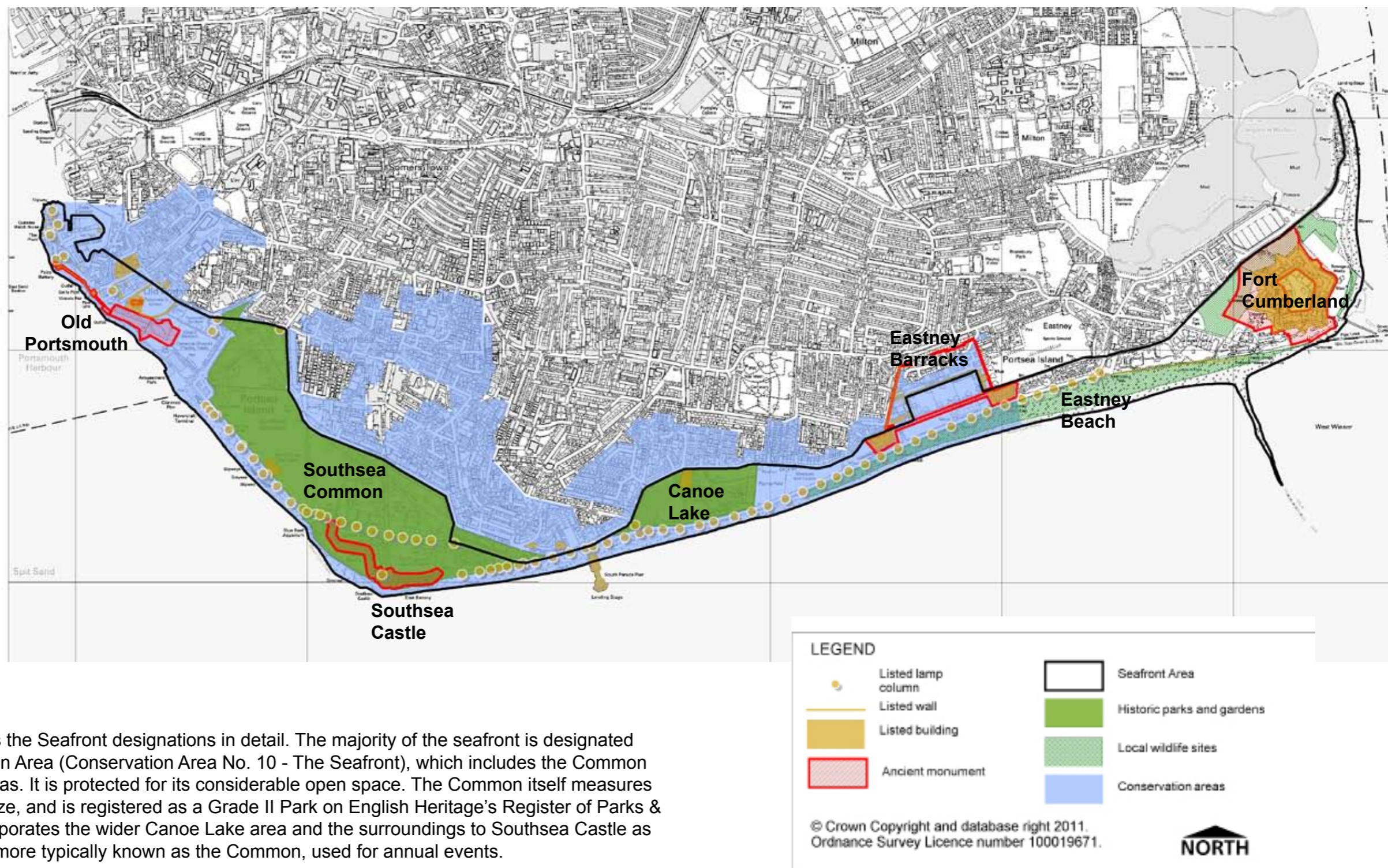


Fig. 15- Marine Conservation Zones - Recommendations. Source Balanced Seas Report



The Seafront

Fig. 16 illustrates the Seafront designations in detail. The majority of the seafront is designated as a Conservation Area (Conservation Area No. 10 - The Seafront), which includes the Common and adjacent areas. It is protected for its considerable open space. The Common itself measures 82 hectares in size, and is registered as a Grade II Park on English Heritage’s Register of Parks & Gardens. It incorporates the wider Canoe Lake area and the surroundings to Southsea Castle as well as the land more typically known as the Common, used for annual events.

In addition to the Common, the whole of Old Portsmouth, measuring 40 hectares, is protected as part of Conservation Area No. 4 – Old Portsmouth, conserving the built heritage of the old city. Between them, the two Conservation Areas contain up to 18 war memorials & monuments located along the promenade and throughout the Common. The most prominent is the Royal Naval War Memorial on Clarence Parade, built in the 1920’s.

Southsea Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, along with its batteries (ramparts), as is Fort Cumberland in the east, the Royal Marine Barracks in Eastney, and the fortifications and Garrison Church at Old Portsmouth. Lumps Fort in Canoe lake Park is on a Local List. Cumberland House Natural History Museum in Canoe Lake Park is a listed Grade II building, as are several of the structures on the Common and seafront, such as South Parade Pier, the Castle lighthouse, the historical lamp columns and the yellow-painted shelters along the promenade. Eastney Beach and land to the west of Fort Cumberland are protected as Local Wildlife Sites, the former for its colonising shingle flora; the latter for the informal heathland flora and fauna.

Fig. 16 - Land Designations - The Seafront

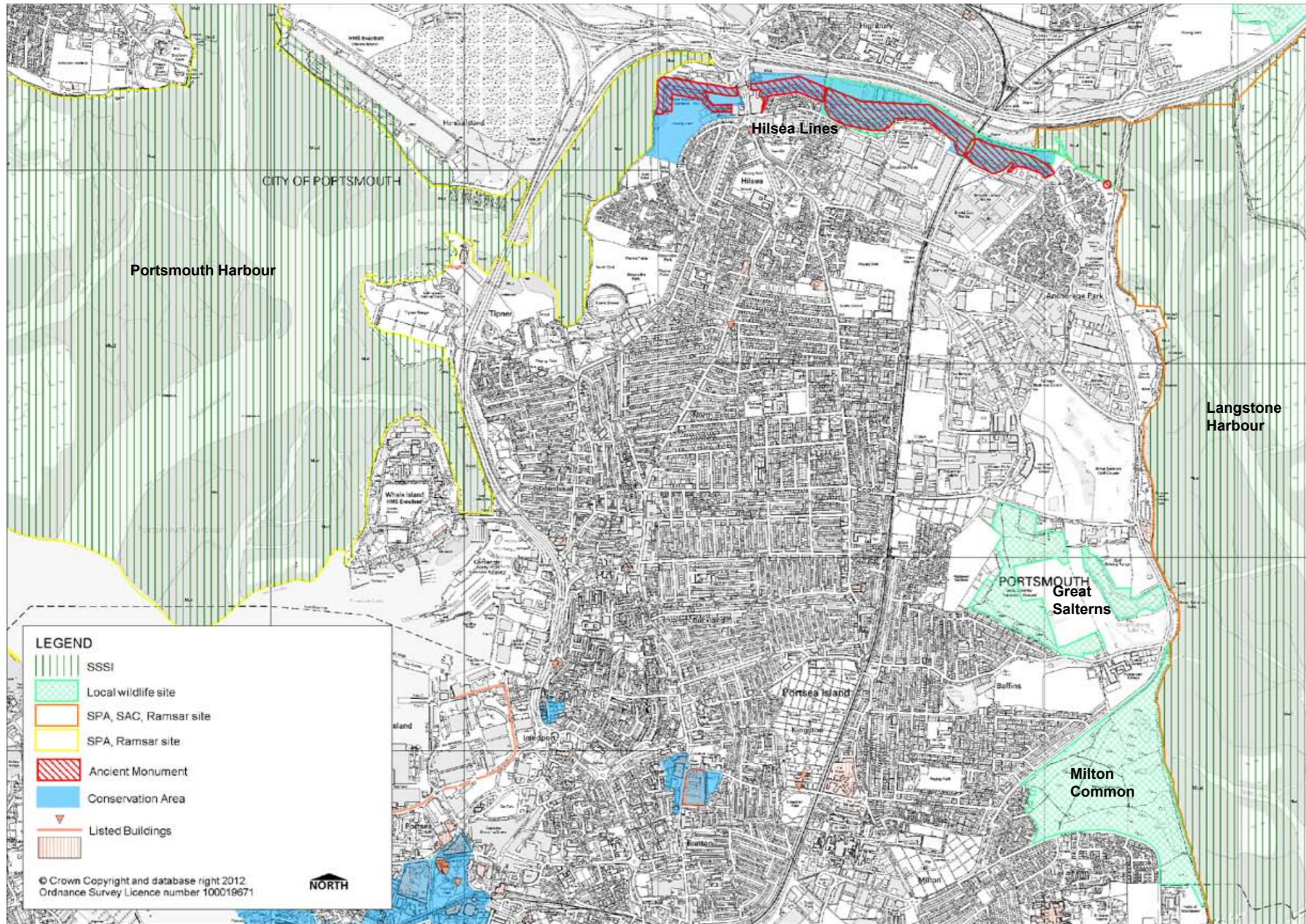


Fig. 17 Designations - North & East Portsea Island

North & East Portsea Island

Fig. 17 illustrates the designations in detail for North & East Portsea Island. The whole of the north-western edge of the island abounds the Portsmouth Harbour SPA/Ramsar site; and conversely the whole of the eastern edge abounds the Langstone Harbour SPA/SAC/Ramsar Site.

Most of the northern edge forms part of the Hilsea Lines Scheduled Ancient Monument and Conservation Area; the eastern section of this is protected as a Local Wildlife Site, valued for its woodland and wetland habitats.

There are three Local Wildlife Sites on the eastern side, including Great Salterns Great Salterns Lake, and Milton Common. These are valued as informal heathland and wetland habitats. Great Salterns House (now the Harvester Inn) is a Listed building.

1.11 National Landscape Character

So far what has been reviewed is the history, geology, land use and ecology of the two areas of Portsea Island to establish how the landscape has been shaped. Within this complicated layering of protection and identification, Landscape Character Assessments assist in clarifying the relevant issues to local areas, designated or not, within a hierarchy which helps define 'value' at the various levels: These are Local, regional, national and global in line with UK planning legislation and the European Landscape Convention to which the UK is a signatory. This helps us in understanding and managing our dynamic landscapes everywhere, in ways that recognise their diversity and the complex interplays of cultural and natural forces that influence their perception.

The hierarchy of LCA's in the UK begins with the National Landscape Characterisation of the English Landscape which identifies 159 National Character Areas and is published by Natural England. This is currently being rewritten (to be published in September 2012) to provide profiles that include a much broader range of information to inform decisions that affect the local environment, including; a detailed description of key landscape features and the most important elements of biodiversity and geodiversity; a summary of the natural benefits or ecosystem services; and 'environmental opportunities' to set out possibilities for future enhancement as well as negative 'forces for change'.

Each National Character Area is also assessed by county and then local authorities in increasingly smaller scales. This can provide guidance on areas for development, recreation and enhancement of biodiversity and unique landscapes through integrated strategies to manage change within a hierarchy of information, based upon recommendations of the recent National Planning Policy Framework.

At a national Level, Portsea Island is part of the National Character Area No. 126: **South Coast Plain, Character Type - Flat Coastal Plain. This is described as:**

'Major urban developments linked by the A27/M27 corridor dominate open, intensely farmed, flat coastal plain.'

Coastal inlets and 'harbours' contain a diverse landscape of creeks, mudflats, shingle beaches, dunes, grazing marshes and paddocks with long views from the Downs across the Solent and Isle of Wight.'

It concludes:

'The natural protected harbours have produced important intertidal wetlands which require conservation, as well as extremely fertile farming lowlands.'

However, there is also pressure for recreation and service ribbon development to continue, engulfing villages and expanding urban areas.'

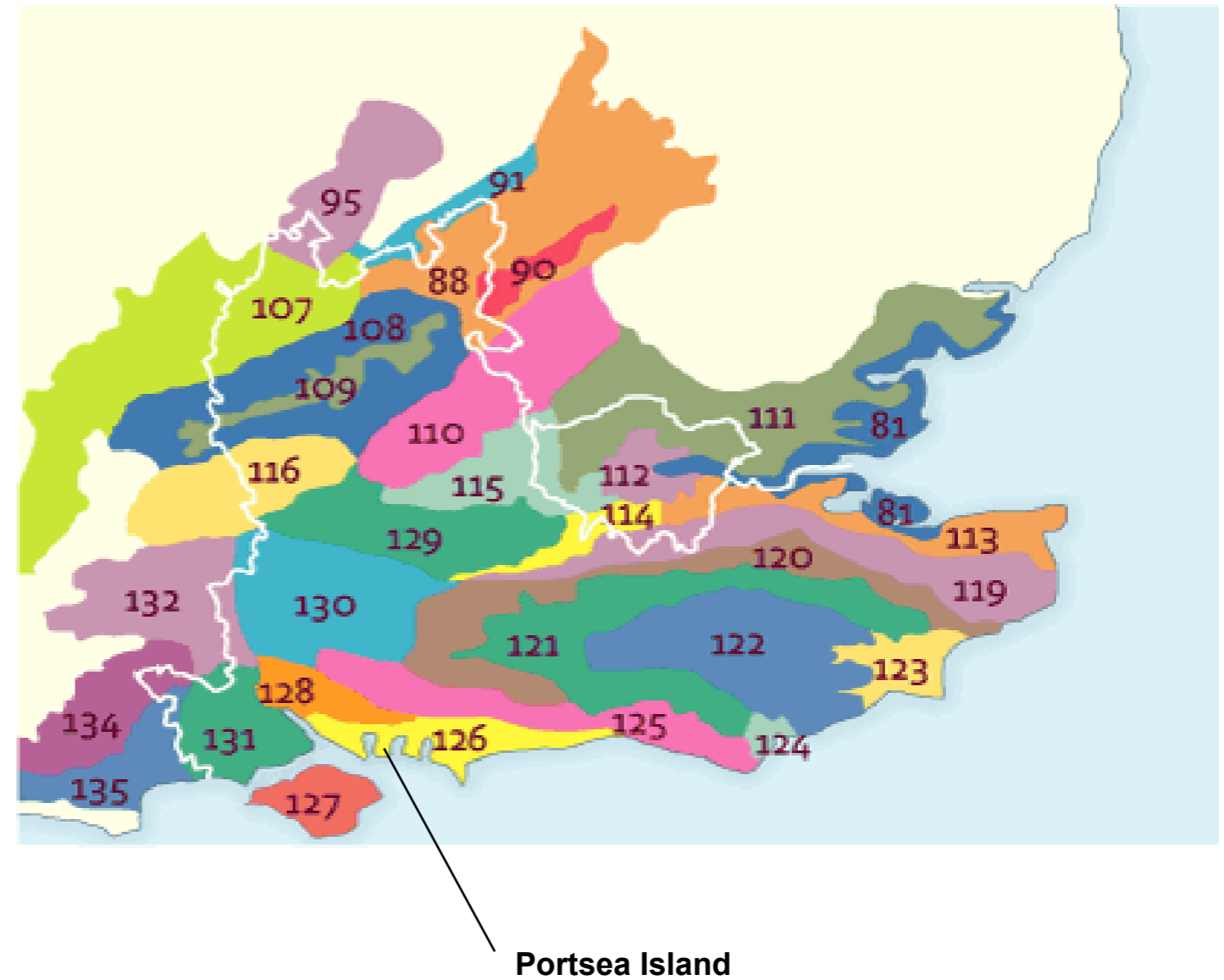


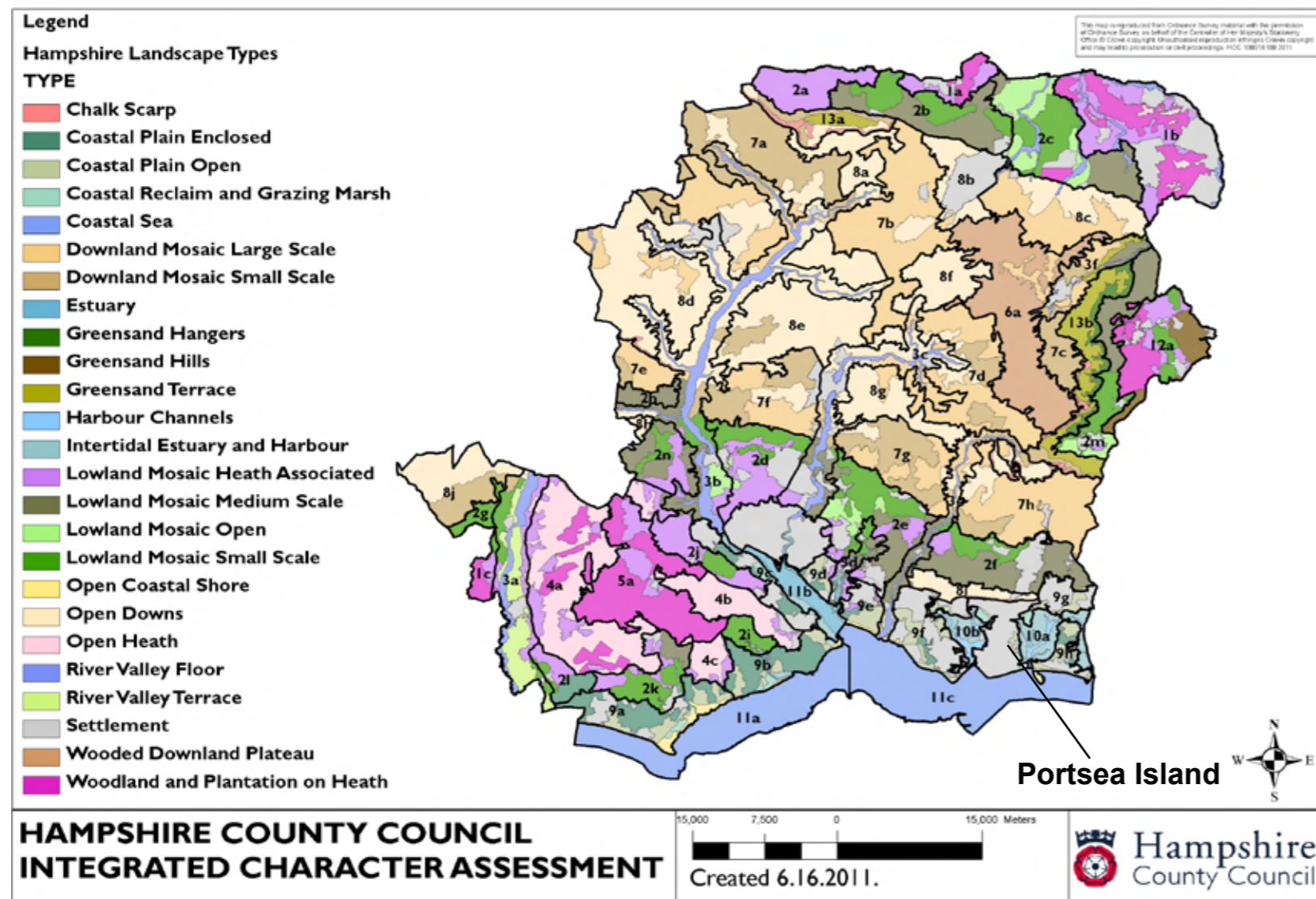
Fig. 18 National Landscape Character Areas
Source: Natural England

1.12 Regional Landscape Character Areas and Types

At a similarly regional level, Hampshire County Council have produced an integrated Landscape Character Assessment to provide a platform for more local assessments. It has detailed information of Landscape Character Types at the county level as well as background information on the underlying geology and hydrology of the region and identifying unique Landscape Character Areas and key land use and management issues.

In this map, Portsea Island is classed as “Settlement”, but is not detailed any further at this regional level. However, relevant landscape character areas adjacent to Portsmouth include:

- 8I - Portsdown Hill Open Downs**
- 10a - Langstone and Chichester Harbours**
- 10b - Portsmouth Harbour**
- 11c - Eastern Solent**



8I - Portsdown Hill Open Downs

Elevated and exposed, prominent chalk escarpment above Portsmouth. Long panoramic views north and south from the ridge which is dotted with Victorian forts. Tranquil species rich chalk grassland (BOA, SSSI and SINCs) as well as ample recreation space.

10a Langstone and Chichester Harbours & 10b Portsmouth Harbour (currently no assessment)

Shallow clay, sands and chalk basins with hugely fluctuating seascape from fully covered at full tide to up to 90% exposed anaerobic and energy rich muds, shingle and sand. Popular for recreation, open, remote and isolated in contrast to surrounding built up areas with many varied skylines. Internationally important RAMSAR, SPA, SAC, BOA, SSSI. Largest areas of saltmarsh on the south coast and extensive (degenerating) cord-grass marsh. High densities of migrant and overwintering waders and wildfowl.

11c Eastern Solent

Former Pleistocene river, shingle (lightly extracted commercially) silty mud seabed. Major deep water shipping channel mainly on character area boundary. Sheltered from winds and with unusual tidal conditions by the Isle of Wight influence it is a very busy shipping route and recreational sailing area. Internationally important marine and coastal SPA and SAC.

Fig. 19 Hampshire Landscape Character Areas
Source: Hampshire County Council's Integrated Character Assessment

1.13 Local Landscape Character Assessment

Local boroughs within Hampshire have then carried out more detailed assessments again, detailing information to assist in both planning and biodiversity.

An example relevant to Portsmouth is contained within Havant Borough Council's landscape character assessment. Hayling Island at the south end of the borough illustrates some similar landscape attributes to Portsea Island (See Fig. 20 below).

Hayling Island Landscape Character Types include the following:

- Lowland open coastal plain to the south
- Open lower harbour plain
- Lowland coastal settlement
- Enclosed lower harbour plain
- Harbour Basin

Within these broader landscape character types, there are several local landscape character areas (LCA's) that are relevant to Portsea Island. These are:

- LCA 32 - Langstone Harbour
- LCA 34 - Sinah Common & The Kench
- LCA 38 - Langstone Harbour Mouth

Havant Borough Council also note that Langstone forms part of the three harbours (Portsmouth to the west and Chichester to the east) that create the largest intertidal area on the south coast of England.

It is important to be aware of how the Landscape Character Assessment for Portsea Island sits within this hierarchy of information and guidelines.

The next three sections detail the three specific landscape character areas identified for Portsea Island.

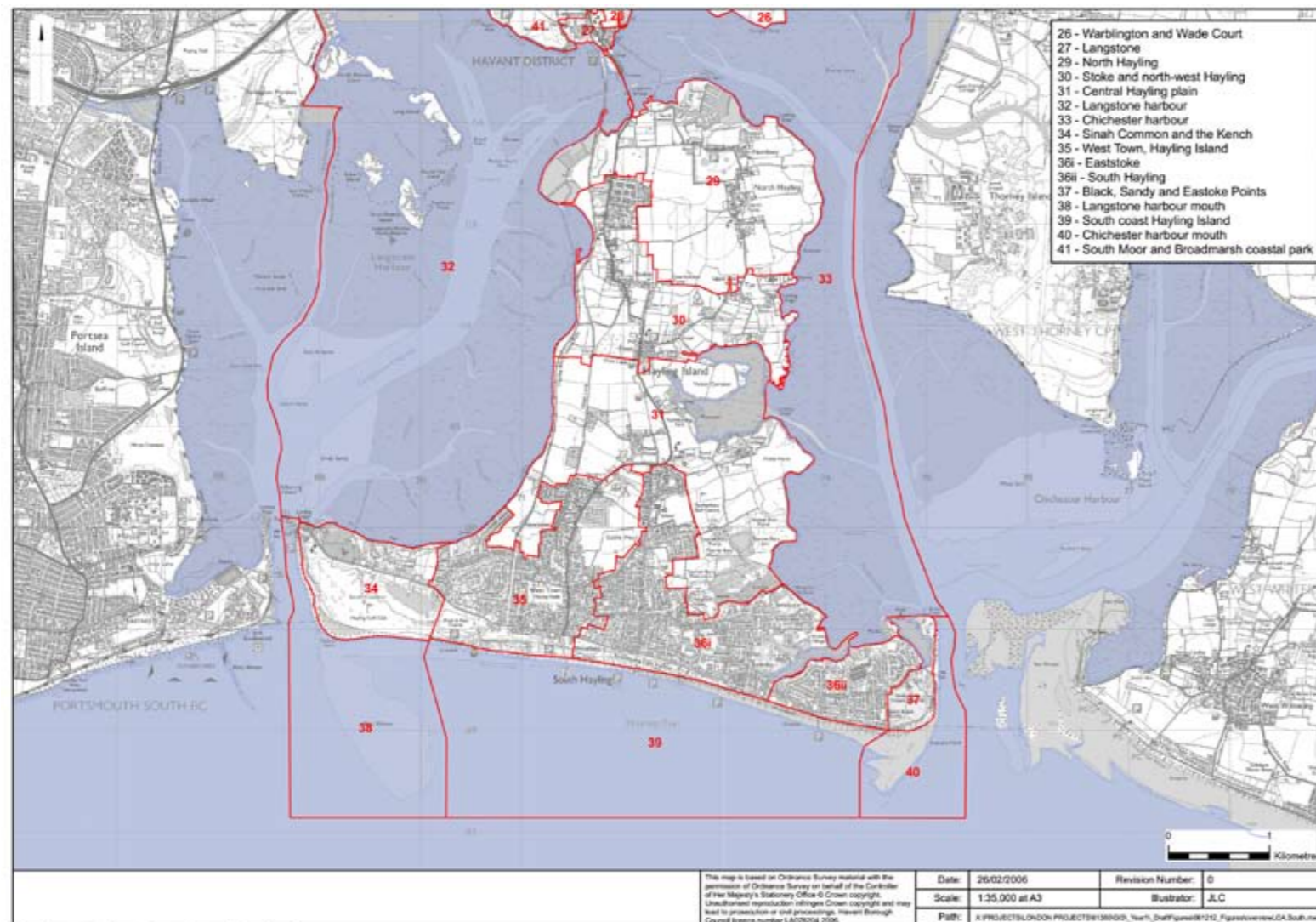


Fig. 20 Havant / Hayling Landscape Character Areas
 Source: Havant Borough Council's Landscape Character Assessment

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 1 - THE SEAFRONT

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 1 - THE SEAFRONT



BROAD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES

- A** Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences
- B** Traditional Seaside Pier
- C** Parkland & Promenade
- D** Shingle Beach

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

- A1** Old Portsmouth Point
- A2** Hotwalls & Defences
- A3** Long Curtain Moat
- A4** Southsea Castle
- A5** Fort Cumberland & Surroundings
- A6** Langstone Harbour Mouth
- A7** Langstone Spit
- B1** Clarence Pier
- B2** South Parade Pier
- C1** Southsea Common & Promenade
- C2** West & East Commons
- C3** East Promenade & Gardens
- C4** Canoe Lake Park
- C5** St. Helens Parade Sports & Recreation Areas
- D1** Eastney Beach
- D2** Southsea Holiday Park
- D3** Far East End

Fig. 21 Seafront - Landscape Character Types & Areas

2.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 1 - THE SEAFRONT

Key Characteristics

- Southern outlook with extensive views over Solent & Isle Of Wight
- Developed/formalised western end becomes gradually more informal towards east
- Extensive areas of public open space along coastline between built frontage and sea
- Predominant shingle storm beaches interspersed with historic sea defences & piers
- Exposure to elements - winds, storms and sunshine
- Predominant recreational land use
- Prominent heritage features - defence forts & recreational piers
- Considerable public access to shoreline open space

Designations

- SPA/SAC/Ramsar & SSSI - Langstone Harbour
- Conservation Areas - Old Portsmouth (historic city quarter), Seafront (open space)
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments - Southsea Castle, Old Portsmouth Defences, Long Curtain Moat, Eastney Barracks, Fort Cumberland
- Listed Buildings & Structures - Cumberland House Museum, Victorian lamp columns, promenade shelters, monuments & memorials
- Local List - Lumps Fort
- Local Wildlife Sites - Eastney Beach (colonising shingle flora), Fort Cumberland (heathland)

Component Landscape Character Types

A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences

Located at the two harbour mouths and on the strategic halfway point between, these landscapes feature historic defensive structures, such as walls, forts, towers, platforms, moats and bridges, as well as associated open space that would have been once used for military operations, but is now public green space. Linked to these areas are rock walls and sea defences that have been built to protect the forts behind. There are prominent landforms for viewing, oriented to the Solent and the two harbours.

B Traditional Seaside Piers

These are recreational piers built during the 19th and 20th centuries with associated buildings and development for the tourist industry, such as hotels, restaurants and car parks. There are two in Portsmouth, both markedly distinct from each other: Clarence Pier which is a land pier, ie. built along the coast; and South Parade Pier, a more traditionally-designed pier extending into the sea at Southsea.

C Parkland & Promenades

This landscape comprises extensive areas of open space and parkland with associated promenades along the seafront. It incorporates large open areas as well as many smaller spaces; recreational features such as sports and leisure facilities, gardens, play areas and small beaches.

D Shingle Beaches

Whilst there are short stretches of beach to the west side of Portsmouth seafront, its whole eastern extent is dominated by a long, wide, continuous shingle beach with associated promenade and parking, and landward development including barracks, a caravan park and disused military ranges. The beach is gradually stabilising with colonising vegetation.

Linked Townscape Assessment Areas

Old Portsmouth, Southsea, Eastney

Historic Development

- Coastline fortified for defence of city and country
- Wetland drained for military use, now public open space
- Residential suburbs/hinterland
- Recreational seafront popular with tourists - at risk from neglect/decline

Natural Landscape

- Ornamental parkland - limited wildlife value
- Informal wildlife sites in east end - greater wildlife value, at risk from surrounding uses / neglect

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences

Local Character Areas: A1 Old Portsmouth Point; A2 Hotwalls & Viewing Platform; A3 Long Curtain Moat & Kings Bastion



A1 - Old pubs and streetscape on Point



A1 - Open space seating and viewing at Point, with Gunwharf Quays & Spinnaker Tower beyond



A1 - View across the harbour mouth to Gosport



A1 - Internal harbour in Old Portsmouth



A2 - Open space & seating at Point Battery



A3 - Kings Bastion viewpoint above Long Curtain Moat, with Garrison Church to right



A2 - Shingle beach at Hotwalls, with Round Tower behind



A2 - Viewing platform outside Square Tower



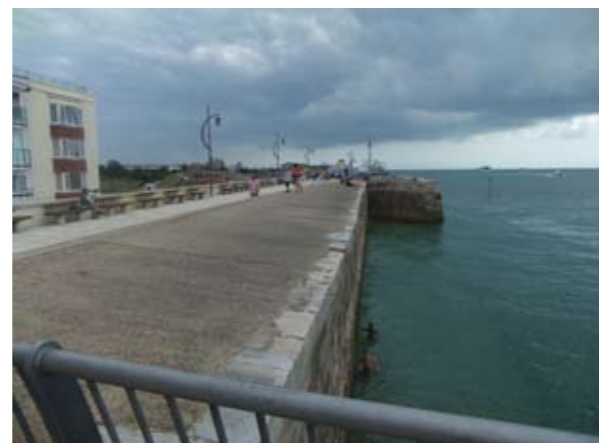
A2 - Saluting Platform and seats



A3 - Footbridge across Long Curtain Moat, looking east



A2 - Square to landward side of Viewing Platform



A2 - Defensive sea wall at Viewing Platform



A3 - Long Curtain Moat, from Kings Bastion viewpoint



A3 - Spur Redoubt and footbridge

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences

Local Character Areas: A1 Old Portsmouth Point; A2 Hotwalls & Viewing Platform; A3 Long Curtain Moat & Kings Bastion

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Historic defensive structures overlooking harbour & Solent - walls, towers, forts, platforms, moats & bridges
- Associated beach, rock walls and sea defences
- Predominantly recreational areas - historic places of interest & open spaces, with residential quarter

Historic & Built Environment

- Historical Conservation Area of Old Portsmouth, dating back to Tudor times
- Extensive protected built heritage
- Recently regenerated area
- High quality materials - stone, steel, timber

Experiential & Perceptual Characteristics

A1 Old Portsmouth Point

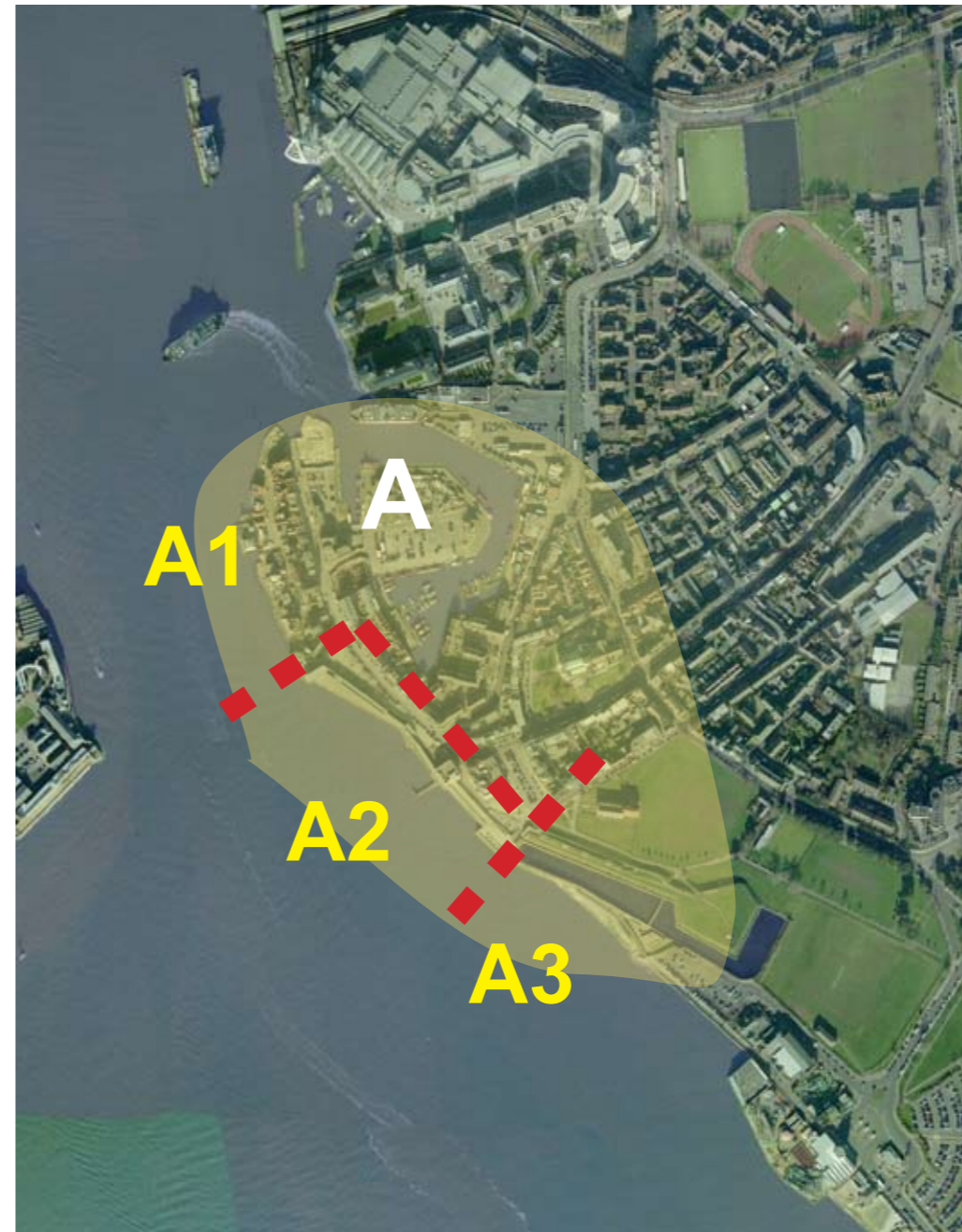
- Historical city quarter - original extent of city
- Distinctive historic buildings & narrow cobbled streets/footpaths
- High quality residential area
- Internal harbour and ferry terminal - busy water traffic & activity
- Pubs with outdoor seating areas
- Views contained within harbour and over to Gosport, Gun Wharf
- Prominent Spinnaker Tower to north
- Tranquility & visual interest of small internal harbour & boats, fishing area

A2 Hotwalls & Viewing Platform

- Dramatic built forms - high stone walls, towers and platforms
- Stark contrast of formal open squares behind with arches currently disused
- Views over Solent and busy harbour mouth
- Strong presence of pedestrians, both visitors and locals
- Hidden shingle beach - experience of surprise
- Being "part of the landscape" – multiple places to walk and explore with many opportunities for stopping and watching/observing/enjoying, sitting
- City hidden behind high walls
- Spectacular viewing platforms along tops of walls and moat
- Recreational fishing and jumping off old dock (Victoria Pier) in good weather
- Victoria Pier in state of disrepair
- Distinctive lamp columns

A3 Long Curtain Moat & Kings Bastion

- Excitement of crossing bridges and drama of moat walls and sea water in moat
- Distinctive lamp columns
- Tidal change dramatic - short reach reduces beach to narrow sliver
- Hard concrete bank/shore for informal clambering - interesting textural mosaic of granite setts and cobbles
- Spur Redoubt - interesting stone walls and narrow footbridge/tunnel
- Extensive formal green lawns and banks
- Prominent Garrison Church



Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths - rich heritage & diversity of spaces; panoramic views; open access
- Weaknesses - Victoria Pier in state of disrepair; Point Battery arches disused
- High quality landscape character – **conserve character**
- High sensitivity level - heritage
- Restrict any unsuitable development that would detract from the quality of open space and built environment - Point Battery Arches & Victoria Pier should be revitalised sensitively
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials in keeping with historic character
- Avoid obstruction of views from built frontage across open space to sea and historic assets
- Avoid obstruction of views along seafront and views in from sea
- Retain open access along seafront and links to/from city

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences
Local Character Areas: A4 Southsea Castle



Brian Kidd Way - main approach to Southsea Castle



Western promenade skirting "Bandstand Field", during a summer concert event



Castle and adjacent events field from eastern ramparts, with D-Day Museum in background



Promenade at castle tip, looking east



D-Day Museum as seen from Castle



Eastern ramparts looking west



Sea wall and defences at far eastern end



D-Day Museum frontage from Avenue de Caen junction



Eastern ramparts - seats



Castle moat at entrance

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences

Local Character Areas: A4 Southsea Castle

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Historical castle fort and ramparts on artificially raised promontory
- Headland of built heritage overlooking Solent
- Rampart highpoints for panoramic viewing
- Green open spaces for events
- Museum, Castle & Aquarium - sole recreation & tourism use
- Promenade walk follows headland edge away from road/cars

Historic & Built Environment

- Conservation Area - protected open space for heritage & recreation
- Scheduled Ancient Monument - Castle & Ramparts

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

A4 Southsea Castle

- Castle fort forms focus yet seems under-whelming on arrival
- Formal approach aligned to Southsea via Avenue de Caen
- Excitement of contact with water, drama of promontory
- Changing views/aspects overlooking Solent and to east or west
- Multiple routes for walking/exploration
- Multiple landscapes within overall – car parks, greens, ramparts, castle moat, avenues
- City hidden from Castle area behind lines of mature trees
- Distance from cars and buildings – sense of not being overlooked
- Hidden car park behind high walls
- D-Day Museum - modern brick building fronts castle approach
- Dramatic grass moat to castle - steep drop
- Panoramic viewpoints from ramparts
- Views seawards and landwards from ramparts very different - sense of being on edge
- Blue Reef Aquarium & Pyramids Leisure Centre - built forms are weak with poor quality edges and boundaries
- Poor quality castle railings & paths, seats and site furniture detracts from overall character

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – drama of contact with sea on castle promontory; castle/ramparts heritage; extensive open access; variety of spaces/paths; large green open spaces, mature trees; distance from buildings/roads
- Weaknesses – poor quality materials (sea defences), buildings (Blue Reef Aquarium), boundaries (castle railings); promontory path surface; bandstand field access/boundary
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - castle heritage
- Strengthen historic character of castle and ramparts, improve access where weak between castle and promontory footpath
- Seek options to improve poor quality development such as Blue Reef Aquarium & Pyramids Leisure Centre, ensuring high quality design and materials are used to provide a strong public realm
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use



- appropriate high quality materials to restore strong landscape character
- Introduce high quality boundary, furniture and paving treatments to promontory footpaths, castle & ramparts
- Encourage safe access to sea incorporated within any restoration/improvements to sea defences
- Encourage better relationship between bandstand field and promenade
- Avoid obstruction of views across open space to sea and along seafront
- Retain open access along seafront and links to/from city

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Defences

Local Character Areas: A5 Fort Cumberland & Surroundings; A6 Langstone Harbour Mouth; A7 Langstone Spit



A5 - Local wildlife site - Fort Cumberland informal heathland, with housing beyond



A5 - Fort Cumberland - ancient monument - concealed from the outside



A6 - Far car park - outside Southern Water site



A6 - Sea defences and informal access at low tide around the far tip



A6 - Pier walkway over sewage outfall pipe into harbour mouth



A7 - Langstone Harbour and roadway, with boatyard to right



A7 - Marina and parking



A6 - Beach at far end overlooking harbour mouth with Hayling Island ferry point to right



A7 - Road at far end looking back towards Lifeguard station and University Research station



A7 - Roadway and beach at far end looking north towards Hayling ferry point and harbour

Landscape Character Type A Historic Harbour Entrances & Island Defences

Local Character Areas: A5 Fort Cumberland & Surroundings; A6 Langstone Harbour Mouth; A7 Langstone Spit

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Historic defensive structures - Fort Cumberland
- Associated open spaces, beaches, promontories and headlands
- Public access for recreation & tourism

Historic & Built Environment

- Scheduled ancient monument - Fort Cumberland
- Natural heritage - SAC/SPA/Ramsar/SSSi - Langstone Harbour
- Local Wildlife Site - Fraser Range Open Space

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

A5 Fort Cumberland & surroundings

- Impressive earth fortifications visible from air and glimpsed from surrounding edges; otherwise hidden at ground level; inaccessible except by appointment
- Informal heathland open space with large gravel car park
- Popular with local people walking, dogs, bird watchers
- Overlooked by stark housing to north and abandoned military fort to south (Fraser Range)
- Eastern site controlled by Southern Water, fenced, private
- Poor quality towers and rundown fence boundaries create air of hostility, neglect, detract from overall character

A6 Langstone Harbour Entrance

- Remoteness from city, with informality and quiet
- Informal access along beach for walking and boat launches
- Rundown quality of fences and sea defences
- High walls prevent access at high tide around point to Eastney Beach
- Fast flowing currents visible in harbour channel
- Close views over narrow channel to Hayling Island - similar remote beach
- Hostile presence of prison-like fences and boundaries, abandoned quality of car park
- Poor quality boundaries and infrastructure reduces overall character

A7 Langstone Spit

- Expansive panoramic harbour views from narrow land spit
- Dramatic presence of boats and marina – interesting forms and activity
- Marked influence of tidal changes on harbour - extensive mudflats at low tide
- Remoteness from city, with informality and quiet
- Reflective quality of light and open harbour views
- Ramshackle nature of buildings, associated clutter and informal parking

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – remoteness, peace; considerable beach access; extensive views; informality; human activity - boats & harbour entrance; open space & wildlife; fort heritage
- Weaknesses – weak/hostile boundaries & footpaths; poor quality car parks/ infrastructure; lack of high tide access around point; poor access to fort; Fraser Range in state of disrepair
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - fort heritage; wildlife heritage; informality



- Strengthen character of fort and surroundings, improve access where weak between hinterland and shoreline and around point; improve interpretation
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character whilst retaining sense of informality & quiet
- Introduce higher quality boundary, furniture, fencing and paving treatments to footpaths
- Avoid obstruction of views along seafront
- Retain open access along seafront and links to/from city
- Retain open views and informal character at harbour spit

Landscape Character Type B Traditional Seaside Piers
Local Character Area: B1 Clarence Pier



Concrete deck to seaward side of pier with traditional rides



Western promenade between raised parking area and sea wall, looking east towards pier



Viewing area overlooking hovercraft pad



Central promenade section between amusement arcades, rides & cafes



Hovercraft departing to Ryde



Transport terminal and streetscape at front of Pier, eastern section



View over car park towards Common



Pier structure beneath deck



Clarence Pier with Common in foreground as seen from Clarence Parade

Landscape Character Type B Traditional Seaside Piers

Local Character Area: B1 Clarence Pier

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Built pier extending along the land over shingle beach below with large open deck area to seaward side
- Recreational hub area of traditional pier amusements/activities with associated parking and promenade
- Transport junction – large bus and hovercraft interchange
- Distinct parts - western car park and promenade; central arcade section; eastern buildings with landward “square”; seaward deck with rides

Historic & Built Environment

- Traditional pier and associated recreational buildings of mixed character
- Central distinctive 1950's tower
- Poor quality materials - tarmac, brick, concrete, plastic

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Dated recreational pier hub in stark contrast to large expanse of Common open space behind
- Traditional seaside amusements & rides – sense of decline
- Summertime throngs of people and noises; sense of abandonment in winter
- Large amusements building with distinctive tower turns its back on sea - rear deck area under-realised
- Clashing building styles and garish colours - intense feeling
- Views to sea blocked by pier & hovercraft buildings
- Drab promenade section sandwiched between higher car park and sea wall, or as an arcade between low quality amusement/hotel buildings
- Abrupt end to distinctive lamp columns and quality of materials of Old Portsmouth
- Steep drop to narrow sliver of shingle beach - dangerous swimming
- Dominant presence of parked cars and large tarmac parking area unappealing
- Prominent blank end wall at western end of pier
- Visual drama of hovercrafts arriving/departing - popular, small viewing area
- Loud noise of hovercrafts impacts whole area
- Large transport junction – overwhelming scale of tarmac and parking - vehicle dominant
- Long views over adjacent green space/Common
- High fence of poor quality around MOD playing field detracts from quality of surroundings

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – pivotal hub/focus of activities; panoramic views to sea and across Common; hovercrafts
- Weaknesses – poor quality materials, architecture; separation/block from sea; pier in poor state of repair, deck area under-realised
- Poor quality landscape character – **strengthen**
- Sensitivity - adjacent Long Curtain Moat heritage; views from residences across Common, along promenade & from sea; Seafront Conservation Area (built heritage & open space); exposure to sea elements
- Strengthen landscape character of promenade, parking areas, pier deck and open spaces



- Encourage redevelopment opportunity as recreational hub area allowing enhanced public open space and access to deck/seaward side & improved transport hub
- Retain connection along seafront linking Old Portsmouth with Common
- Ensure sensitive treatment of eastern boundary to Long Curtain Moat and transition to Common open space
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to create a high quality landscape character
- Retain open views across Common to sea and along seafront, and from sea to Common & housing

Landscape Character Type B Traditional Seaside Piers
Local Character Area: B2 South Parade Pier



South Parade - promenade & streetscape overlooking beach



Pier - view looking back to land from head



Promenade on western section, with Pier ahead

Landscape Character Type B Traditional Seaside Piers

Local Character Area: B2 South Parade Pier

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Old-fashioned pier feature extending out to sea over shingle beach
- Prominent on horizon from west and east long views, and from sea
- Recreational hub area in state of decline
- Associated promenade and shingle beaches
- Adjacent built frontage of hotels, bars and housing creates strong backdrop/focus area
- Associated transport junction – bus stops/stands

Historic & Built Environment

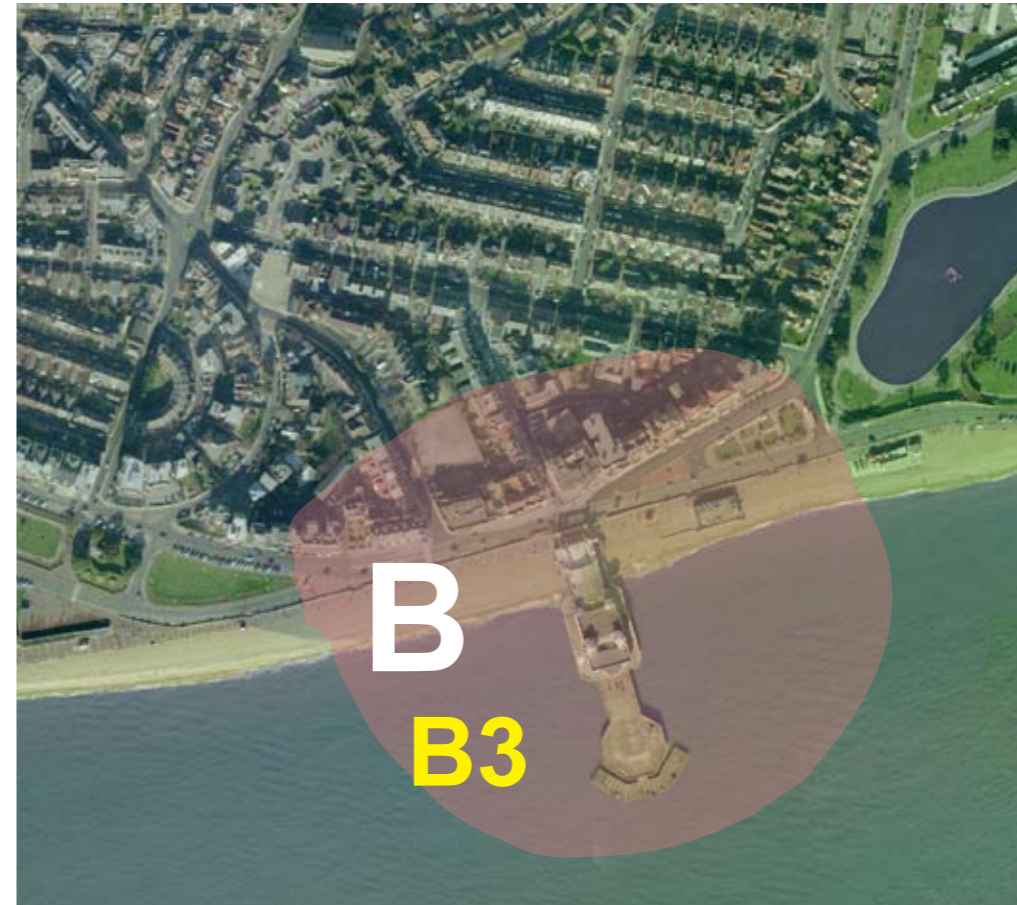
- Conservation Area - protected seafront & open space for recreation with strong built frontage
- Listed structure - South Parade Pier
- Distinctive/traditional pier and associated recreational building

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Dominant pier and South Parade buildings
- Air of neglect/abandonment - disused buildings & pier head, exposure, absence of people
- Panoramic views from pier over Solent and long views along beach towards west and east, and back towards South Parade
- Presence of prominent built frontage overlooking wide road and promenade
- Hard landscape - lacks softness
- Long shingle beaches to each side
- Wide road & traffic islands - strong presence of road traffic/ vehicular dominance
- Poor quality materials - tarmac, brick, concrete, plastic
- Mix of poor quality promenade & pier buildings and materials reduces overall character

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – heritage pier feature extending into sea; access to and views from pier head; formal promenade with built frontage overlooking sea/beach; active hub/ focus of activities
- Weaknesses - pier in state of disrepair and disuse; road is vehicular dominant, with changes in level restricting pedestrian circulation and access to promenade/shore; promenade lacks interest
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - views from residences across Esplanade & from sea; Seafront Conservation Area (built heritage & open space); exposure to sea elements
- Strengthen landscape character of promenade, road and public realm with new focal points along length, improved access between road and beach
- Retain connection along seafront linking East Common and Canoe Lake
- Encourage redevelopment opportunity of pier as recreational hub area allowing enhanced public open space to sides and on head
- Retain access to pier head & enhance with new recreational use
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character
- Retain open views across seafront open space to sea and along seafront, as well as views in from sea



Landscape Character Type C Parkland & Promenade
Local Character Area: C1 Main Common & Promenade; C2 West & East Commons



C1 - Expansive formal open space, with the prominent War Memorial on the horizon, beside a temporary dinosaur installation



C1 - Promenade with Victorian shelter, looking east



C1 - Naval War Memorial



C1 - Sea Wall and widened promenade adjacent the Blue Reef Aquarium, with the Common beyond



C1 - Timber groynes on beach



C1 - Wide avenues across the Common



C1 - Esplanade and parked cars separating Common from promenade



C2 - Ladies Mile - Footpath crossing Common



C2 - Eastern section of Common - formal sports recreation focus with D-Day Museum car park to right



C2 - Western section of Common - with eastern end of Moat in foreground; Clarence Pier to right

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Expansive open green space on seafront
- Flat land, occasional highpoints at edges
- Traditional promenades with open access to shingle beaches
- Large sea wall & defence structures
- Informal recreation, sports greens & formal large-scale events
- Mix of large open areas and smaller green spaces
- Avenues of mature windswept trees
- Bound by prominent high Victorian built frontage to north

Historic & Built Environment

- Conservation Area - protected open space for recreation
- Protected memorials, monuments, lamp columns and shelters
- Victorian footpaths, bandstand and gardens
- Tree-lined avenues - Ladies Mile, Avenue de Caen

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

C1 Main Common & Promenade

- Large formal open space between sea and city – grass, scattered trees
- Wide views across to buildings along north edge – sharp contrast – crisp cream-coloured frontages
- Expansive views out to Solent and IOW from built frontage
- Sense of exposure – few places to retreat
- Large scale of open green space unexpected
- Long formal promenade with distinctive lamp columns and shelters - Victorian/traditional character
- Distinctive zig-zag paving pattern - dated character
- Promenade and beach busy in good weather; empty otherwise
- Prominent war memorial creates its own focus area, but is disconnected from promenade
- Gently shelving shingle beach dominated by large drab buildings and noisy hovercrafts
- Promenade Impacted by cars and wide Esplanade road - separated from Common
- Massive sea wall defence – bleak concrete and tarmac character
- Poor/mixed quality materials - tarmac, concrete, stone
- Poor/mixed quality architecture - Mozzarella Joes & Rowing Club detract from beach character
- Dramatic sea storms cause over-topping of sea wall and occasional road closures

C2 West & East Commons

- Smaller grass areas dissected by trees/avenues/roads
- Sports areas - playing fields and tennis courts
- Derelict areas and poor boundaries detract from quality - skate park, tennis courts, moat & playing fields
- Wide roads divide up/enclose Common spaces
- Mature trees provide height and accentuate formal road/avenue structure
- Windswept tree forms
- Ornamental gardens with formal shrub beds and mature, historic character
- Presence of people picnicking and playing ball games in good weather



Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – extensive open space and access to seafront; panoramic views across Common to and from sea; formal promenade and memorials/monuments; green space and mature trees
- Weaknesses - tennis courts in poor state; roads are vehicular dominant; promenade quality declining; lack of interest on promenade; poor quality buildings on beach
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - views from residences across Esplanade & views from sea; Seafront Conservation Area (built heritage & open space); exposure to strong winds/storms
- Restore high quality landscape character of promenade, road and public realm with new focal points along length, improved access between Common and beach
- Improve/redevelop poor quality recreational facilities with new focus area, eg. enhanced sports hub
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character
- Encourage creative use of sea defences to enhance walking routes and seating opportunities
- Retain open views and access along seafront and between city and shore
- Enhance Common with new tree planting along footpaths
- Encourage high quality building refurbishments on beach to improve character

Landscape Character Type C Parkland & Promenade
Local Character Area: C3 Eastern Promenade & Gardens



Pyramids - rear face of massive leisure centre



Esplanade fronting Pyramids & Rock Gardens



Rock Gardens - entrance from Clarence Esplanade



South Parade - western section



Promenade on western section, with beach cafe and shelter



Beach and pier looking east



Beach west end with castle headland beyond



Promenade on western section, with large shelter and large open tarmac space - Speakers Corner



Promenade on western section, with Pier ahead, vacant development site to left



Formal gardens at eastern end of Common

Landscape Character Type C Parkland & Promenade
Local Character Area: C3 Eastern Promenade & Gardens

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Extensive public green space on seafront - formal gardens
- Traditional promenade with open access to beach
- Informal recreation
- Multiple layers of trees and vegetation create enclosed spaces
- Wide roads and parking areas
- Large prominent leisure centre
- Bound by prominent high Victorian built frontage to north

Historic & Built Environment

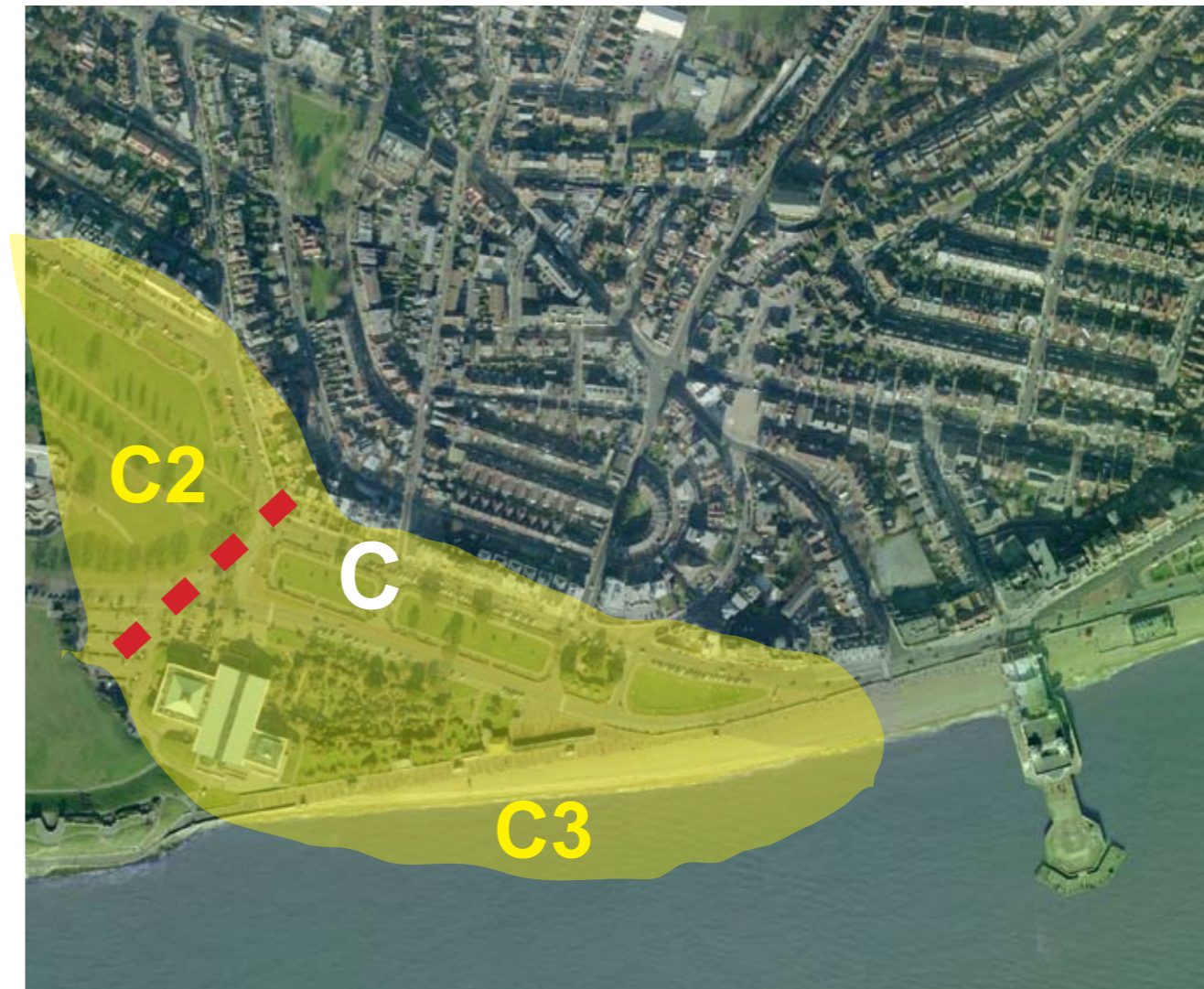
- Conservation Area - protected open space for recreation
- Protected memorials, monuments, lamp columns and shelters
- Victorian footpaths, bandstand and gardens
- Tree-lined avenues
- Modern leisure centre - Pyramids

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Wide roads divide up/enclose Common spaces
- Ornamental gardens with formal shrub beds and mature, historic character
- Tranquil rock gardens - pristine condition
- Wide traditional promenade bound by rock gardens to north
- Protected beach between castle promontory to west and pier to east
- Separation from road/parked cars - tranquility, popularity for bathing
- Victorian character enforced with ornate shelters and railings
- Poor quality modern shelter, kiosks and cafe building detracts from overall character
- Prominent Pyramids leisure centre building appears like fortress
- Poor quality open paved spaces to front and rear of Pyramids, and poor access into building
- Large empty hard space at Speakers Corner appears disused
- Long modern shelter at Spaekers Corner creates block to seafront

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – diversity of high quality gardens; panoramic views along seafront to Pier and Castle headland; Victorian formality of Esplanade, promenade & gardens; popular bathing beach away from cars/road; sense of containment between landmarks at east & west end
- Weaknesses – road/car dominant (restricts pedestrian access to seafront); blandness of newer building quality and paving materials (Pyramids, Rocksby's Cafe, Speakers Corner & Promenade)
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - views from residences across Esplanade & views from sea; Seafront Conservation Area (built heritage & open space); exposure to strong winds
- Restore high quality landscape character of promenade, roads and public realm with improved pedestrian access between Esplanade and beach
- Improve/redevelop poor quality recreational facilities at Speakers Corner and Pyramids



- Retain open views and access along seafront and between city and shore
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character
- Retain character of popular bathing beach

Landscape Character Type C Parkland & Promenade
Local Character Area: C4 Canoe Lake Park; C5 St. Helens Parade Sports & Recreation Area



C4 - Walled rose gardens tranquility



C4 - Walled Museum Garden



C4 - Cumberland House Museum



C4 - Canoe Lake



C5 - Cricket pitch and golf course beyond at eastern end



C5 - Esplanade & cycle lane abutting sea wall at eastern end



C4 - Cafe building overlooking lake



C4 - Disused stores building



C4 - Water play area popular in summer



C4 - Central tree belt and avenue



C4 - Frontage to Lumps Fort with beach huts facing promenade



C4 - Bowling greens



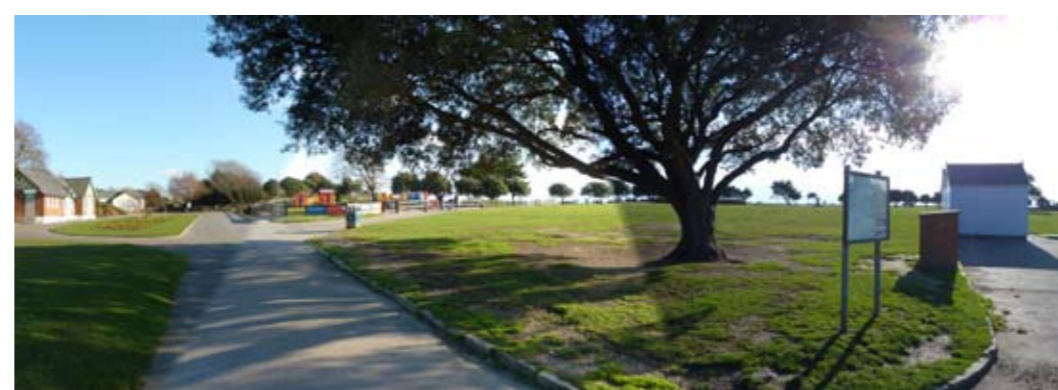
C4 - Summer picnic on green



C4 - Viewpoint on top of Lumps Fort overlooking seafront



C4 - Green open space in heart of park



C4 - Central pathway overlooking green



C4 - Parking area on seafront

Landscape Character Type C Parkland & Promenade

Local Character Area: C4 Canoe Lake Park; C5 St. Helens Parade Sports & Recreation Area

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Expansive open green space on seafront
- Traditional promenades with open access to beaches
- Informal recreation & tourism
- Flat land, occasional highpoints - defensive fort
- Diversity of large open areas and smaller green spaces
- Prominent lake - stately Victorian character
- Avenues of mature windswept trees
- Bound by residential built frontage to north

Historic & Built Environment

- Conservation Area - protected open space for recreation
- Protected memorials, monuments, lamp columns and shelters
- Listed building - Cumberland House Natural History Museum
- Local listed structure - Lumps Fort
- Natural heritage - sea-water lake, mature trees and historic parkland

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

C4 - Canoe Lake Park & Promenade

- Ornamental parkland - traditional features of green lawns, play areas, cafe, formal gardens, mature trees, tennis & bowling greens
- Multiple spaces - open green space and smaller enclosed spaces, eg. Rose Gardens & walled museum garden
- Large sea water lake popular for boating and crabbing
- Formal simplicity and order
- Formal promenade with beach narrowing and becoming steeply shelving at central point
- Poor quality cafe and disused stores detract from overall character
- Poor quality boundaries - Model Village & Lumps Fort, eastern end greens
- Poor quality beach huts and shrubbery mire frontage overlooking sea
- Busy road separates parkland from seafront
- Public toilets are inaccessible from promenade/beach
- Confusion of road markings/use of cycle lane can be hazardous for pedestrians

C5 - St Helens Parade Sports & Recreation Area

- Formal parkland for cricket & golf
- Access geared to St Helens Parade in lieu of seafront
- High fences of poor quality are divisive and detract from overall open character
- Long, monotonous sea wall divides road & promenade, creating a corridor effect
- "Route" rather than stopping place
- Beach starts to widen towards east
- Diminished character and use in comparison with western end (Canoe Lake Park)



Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – formal green parkland open space; large lake; cafe focus area; listed museum building; rose gardens retreat; fort highpoint; play areas; sports facilities
- Weaknesses - weak boundaries & infrastructure in parkland; buildings and recreational facilities in decline (model village, cafe & stores, pavilions), poor circulation around Lumps Fort; vehicular dominant sea road cuts off park from seafront; promenade lacks focus, paving in decline, long wall lacks interest
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - views from residences across St Helens Parade & from sea; Seafront Conservation Area (built heritage & open space); exposure to strong winds
- Restore high quality landscape character of parkland, promenade, roads and public realm with improved pedestrian access between park and beach
- Restore high quality recreational and sports facilities within park
- Enhance promenade experience with new focal points and sea wall/defences to incorporate seating and planting
- Retain open views and access along seafront and between city and shore
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to create a strong landscape character

Landscape Character Type D Shingle Beach

Local Character Areas: D1 Eastney Beach; D2 Southsea Holiday Park; D3 Far East End



D1 - Promenade, road and beach looking east



D1 - Popular promenade coffee kiosk



D1 - Fishermen on beach



D1 - Sea kale on beach



D1 - Monumental Eastney Barracks & entrance to Royal Marines Museum



D1 - Beach huts overlooking esplanade



D1 - Unused green space adjacent Eastney Baths, overlooking beach



D1 - Eastern end of promenade with white toilet block



D2 - Edge of beach beside Southsea Holiday Park



D3 - Far eastern end of beach adjacent Fraser Range, popular with naturists



D2 - Informal beach access between Southsea Holiday Park & Fraser Range

Landscape Character Type D Shingle Beach

Local Character Areas: D1 Eastney Beach; D2 Southsea Holiday Park; D3 Far East End

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Extensive length of shingle storm beach
- Public seafront access - informal recreation & tourism
- Flat land with artificial embankments/forts set back from shoreline
- Expansive sea views over Solent and long views along beach

Historic & Built Environment

- Listed building - Eastney Barracks
- Blocks of stone - listed structures
- Natural heritage - Local Wildlife Sites - Eastney Beach & Fort Cumberland Open Space

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

D1 Eastney Beach

- Long, wide, shingle storm beach
- Long, wide promenade stretch with little punctuation, far from sea appears featureless, monotonous
- Horizontal, empty landscape - little upright structure and few trees, scattered people
- Greater sense of quiet and remoteness towards east
- Presence of scattered people – walkers seeking quiet, fishermen, dogs
- Expansive distant views out to sea and along beach to Hayling (east) and South Parade Pier (west)
- Dominance of road traffic and parked cars
- Open space to landward side – monumental ex-barracks & museum set well back from road with formal lawns & hedges
- Land forts (highpoints) flanking barracks appear neglected, inaccessible, almost invisible
- Popular coffee kiosk forms focus point
- Interesting circular toilets building at St Georges Road junction
- Clustered beach huts - bright colours, separated from beach by road
- Poor quality toilets and beach huts at east end detracts from overall character
- Mix of poor quality buildings, boundaries and infrastructure reduces overall character
- Confusion of road markings/use of cycle lane can be hazardous for pedestrians

D2 Southsea Holiday Park

- Wide, stable shingle beach with large extent of colonising green vegetation
- Backdrop of poor quality caravan park hidden behind banks - informal track along edge
- Quiet, empty beach - occasional walkers and dogs
- Western end - disused open space at back of Eastney Baths
- Sense of informality, remoteness
- Poor quality boundary treatment
- Blocks/cubes of stone (listed defence structures) provide sense of rhythm, marking transition from hinterland to beach



D3 Far East End

- Remote eastern end - far from city, sense of quiet
- Views over to Hayling Island clear - relative proximity
- Hostile presence of abandoned military buildings behind high fences/walls (Fraser Range)
- Informal path access to Fort Cumberland Open Space appears unattractive, unsafe - poor surface, fencing
- Presence of scattered people – walkers seeking quiet, dogs, nudists
- Beach reduces to narrow sliver at eastern end

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – remoteness, peace; uninterrupted beach access; informality; expansive views; formality of barracks & museum
- Weaknesses - lack of definition/focus along promenade and road; weak boundaries, paths and infrastructure; derelict site (Fraser Range); wide beach inaccessible to some
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - views from residences on north side of Esplanade; beach wildlife site conservation; exposure to strong winds
- Restore high quality landscape character to promenade, road and public realm
- Enhance promenade experience with new focal points
- Retain open views and access along seafront and between residences and shore - consider limited access for those with disabilities
- Retain informal character to this area with sensitive treatment of materials
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences and public realm should use appropriate high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character
- Enhance shoreline access with new footpath around point for high tide access
- Encourage redevelopment of Fraser Range site with sensitive boundary treatments

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 2 - NORTH COAST

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 2 - THE NORTH COAST



BROAD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES

- J** Small Adapted Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
- K** Tidal Creek/Historic Defence & Open Space

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

- J1** South End Tipner Lake
- J2** North End Tipner Lake
- K1** Hilsea Lines - Far West end
- K2** Hilsea Lido/ North Tipner Lake
- K3** Port Creek / Hilsea Lines - Central & East Sections
- K4** Port Creek East End / Anchorage Park

Fig. 22 North Coast Landscape Character Area

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 2 - THE NORTH COAST

Key Characteristics

- Outlook across harbours and creek to nearby mainland and Portsdown Hills beyond
- Adapted/engineered shoreline
- Extensive areas of public open space and walking route(s) along whole extent
- Influenced by nearby motorway or road traffic/noise
- Influenced by busy transport routes/crossings
- Historic land defences create unusual landform and moats
- Extensive woodland area unusual for city
- Formality of western end changes towards informality in more remote parts of north and east
- Predominant recreational land use
- Adjacent housing and industrial areas

Designations

- SAC, SPA, Ramsar & SSSI - Portsmouth & Langstone Harbours
- Conservation Areas - Hilsea Lines
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments - Hilsea Lines
- Local Wildlife Sites - Hilsea Lines

Component Landscape Character Types

J Small Adapted Harbour & Harbourside Open Space

Tipner Lake forms the northeastern part of the larger Portsmouth Harbour. The smaller harbour area has been engineered along most of its length, and the whole of the western side is formed from reclaimed land that is now a prominent landfill site behind the M275 motorway corridor. The M275 bridges the harbour allowing a small channel through to the main harbour to the west. The east harbour edge is fully accessible and forms a continuous route from the Mountbatten Centre in the south to the Port Creek and Hilsea Lido in the north. Various open spaces extend right up to the harbour side, with an area of housing forming the hinterland, and dissecting the north and south ends of the harbourside.

K Tidal Creek & Historic Defences

A narrow tidal creek, known as Port Creek, with engineered banks, forms the whole of the north of the island, separating it from the mainland. The M27 runs parallel to its whole length along the north side. It is bridged by two road and one rail crossings, as well as two pedestrian bridges. The land to the south comprises a large swathe of informal open space incorporating Hilsea Lines, the historic earth embankments, associated batteries on the southern side (now largely disused) and moats on the north side. Much of the landscape is hidden behind scrub vegetation and Portsmouth's largest expanse of native woodland.

Linked Townscape Assessment Areas

Hilsea, Anchorage Park

Historic Development

- Coastline fortified for defence of city and country
- Land reclamation in harbours and engineered shorelines
- Major road and rail crossings to mainland from Portsea Island
- Recreational open space
- Residential suburbs/hinterland & modern industrial area

Natural Landscape

- Ornamental parkland on west side and at Anchorage Park - limited wildlife value
- Harbours - high conservation status for intertidal mudflats - flora and fauna including Brent Geese
- Informal wildlife sites along north/ Hilsea Lines - naturalised woodland, marginal habitat and ponds of high wildlife value
- Ditches, hedges, woodland scrub along west side - good wildlife habitat

Landscape Character Type J Small Adapted Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
Local Character Area: J1 South End; J2 North End



J1 - Tipner Lake looking northwest, with Sails of the South & Paulsgrove Landfill in distnace, with Portsdown Hills on horizon



J1 - Mountbatten Leisure Centre car park



J1 - Extensive open space with Hilsea housing in distance



J1 - Harbourside path and playing fields with housing in distance



J2 - Allotments adjacent to harbour footpath



J2 - Wetland area beside harbour path, just south of Hilsea Lines



J2 - Playing fields and pavilion just south of Hilsea Lines



J2 - Junction of paths and Hilsea neighbourhood with childrens play area



J2 - Scrub woodland edge on harbour side, looking southwest

Landscape Character Type J Small Adapted Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
Local Character Area: J1 South End; J2 North End

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Long but relatively narrow intertidal harbour (Tipner Lake) - artificially shaped (reclaimed land)
- Engineered harbour edge (sea wall) with no physical restraint (steep drop at low tide)
- Wide, combined pedestrian/cycle route along entire edge
- Intertidal harbour end - linked via narrow opening/bridge to greater Portsmouth Harbour to west
- Changing harbour character with mudflats at low tide; lake effect at high tide
- Outlook to west - close views over to M275 and landfill site
- Outlook to north - longer views to M27 and Portsdown Hills beyond
- Outlook to south - longer views to Spinnaker Tower and city towers
- Extensive public open spaces - greens, playing fields, allotments, sports centre
- Adjacent housing area - Hilsea

Historic & Built Environment

- Natural Heritage - SPA/Ramsar/SSSi - Portsmouth Harbour
- Residential neighbourhood - Hilsea

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Influence of changing light and reflection of sky/weather
- Influence of changing tides - high water/lake dramatically different to low tide mudflats
- Mixed use open spaces and housing to landward side create changing views and interest along route
- Well-used route for pedestrians and cyclists
- Emphasis on “route” rather than stopping - little opportunity to stop and sit
- Lit at night for evening access - popular with joggers & dog walkers
- Occasional access to beach/harbour (shingle and mud) down steps/ramp at low tide
- Sense of apprehension/risk of falling over edge at low tide - big drop; high tide - deep water

J1 South End

- Small, protected southern area opens out to main channel to greater harbour
- Long views to hills to north across harbour
- Views across to M275 bridge and beneath to Portchester Castle
- Large car park and sports centre create formal character with presence of activity
- Affected by blight of adjacent disused site & scrap metals site to west (Tipner)
- Extensive open grassland (playing fields) with housing on horizon to north and east - sense of empty expanse

J2 North End

- Impacted by steady traffic flow and noise from proximity of motorways to west and north
- Close views across harbour to landfill site to west (large mounded green hills appear prominent) with motorway in front
- Long views south to Spinnaker Tower and city
- Modern housing seen close by, through mature tree belt
- Allotments and housing set lower down than sea wall route
- Ditches and scrub edge with views across allotments and playing fields to housing beyond



Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – expansive harbour views; extensive access to waterside; formal foot/cycle route and sea wall/edge; variety of open spaces/ changing land uses/ views along route; changing quality of light/influence of weather
- Weaknesses – route rather than stopping/contemplative places; intrusive traffic noise; limited access to beach/harbour; monotonous edge treatment
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - open views across harbour from all points; natural heritage of harbour (protected landscape)
- Retain open views across harbour and open spaces
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences should allow for improvement to public realm with high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character
- Enhance route with stopping places and seating; consider improved low tide access to harbour without compromising wildlife habitat

Landscape Character Type K Tidal Creek / Historic Defences & Open Space

Local Character Area: K1 Hilsea Lines - Far West End; K2 Hilsea Lido; K3 Hilsea Lines Central & East Sections; K4 Port Creek East End / Anchorage Park



K1 - Western end with moat and harbour separated by pedestrian/cycle path



K2 - London Road looking north, separates western and eastern sections



K2 - Western end of creek leading to harbour, M275 to right



K2 - Moat in parkland at western end



K3 - Port Creek looking east, from London Road car park



K3 - Informal walking routes along moat side



K3 - Footbridge & railbridge crossing creek at eastern end, looking south



K3 - Informal open space - grassland and tree/scrub belts between motorway & creek to left; moat & Hilsea Lines to right (in woodland)



K4 - Open space links directly to Anchorage park housing area in east end



K3 - Tranquil moat with grassland enclosed by woodland, with seating



K3 - West battery in Hilsea Lines, site of ranger station



K3 - Glimpsed views from woodland on top of Hilsea Lines, looking east along Port Creek



K4 - Creek opens out at eastern end to Langstone Harbour; M27 ahead; Portsdown Hills on horizon

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Narrow tidal creek corridor (Port Creek) between mainland and Portsea Island
- Historical earth fort and ramparts on artificially raised promontory now used for parkland and informal recreation
- Distinctive landscape for Portsmouth – dense woodland and scrubland edge with moats and ramparts of Hilsea Lines to south
- Series of moats at foot of embankment slope (some saltwater), masked behind dense vegetation
- Multiple transport crossings to mainland spread out from west to east - vehicular, pedestrian, cycle, rail
- Impacted by steady traffic flow and noise from motorway to north
- Multiple routes for pedestrian circulation – hidden places, glimpsed views, layers of vegetation, enclosed areas, ponds

Historic & Built Environment

- Scheduled Ancient Monument - Hilsea Lines
- Natural Heritage - SPA/SAC/Ramsar/SSSi (Portsmouth Harbour - west end; Langstone Harbour - east end)
- Local wildlife site - Hilsea Lines
- Residential neighbourhoods - Hilsea, Anchorage Park
- Industrial estate - Hilsea
- Recreational uses: lido & play areas

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Influence of changing tides on creek corridor - high water/canal effect dramatically different to low tide mudflats/channel sides
- Mixed open spaces from formal parkland in west to informal woodland and ponds further east create changing views and interest along route
- Well-used route for pedestrians - walkers and dogs
- Busy road crossing divides character areas at western end

K1 Hilsea Lines - Far West End

- Formal moat and grass lawns at lower level creates ornamental parkland character
- Dense woodland masks earth embankment/batteries - occasional openings reveal former character
- Obscured/glimpsed views of harbour (seaward) and of cricket/rugby fields (landward) through woodland fringe at top of historic defences
- Quiet, hidden character of informal footpath at top of historic defences
- Contrast of permanent water in moat with changing water levels (tides) of harbour

K2 Hilsea Lido

- Built lido, car park and playground areas in transitional state of decline/regeneration
- Grass lawns and moat with curved bridge provides formal parkland character
- Harbourside footpath culminates at busy roundabout/road junction
- Impacted by steady traffic flow and noise from proximity of motorway to north and road to east

K3 Hilsea Lines - Central & East Sections

- Extensive stretch of woodland masking historic embankment and moats
- Informal character of dirt paths and native vegetation; multiple smaller enclosed areas



- Dog walkers, picnic benches - slower pace
- Graffiti, rope swings, dens in woodland - indication of informal use by children/youth
- Relative quiet, tranquility in woodland; muffled sound of traffic
- Sounds and smells of industrial area to south of woodland
- Glimpsed views of housing and industrial areas to south
- Perceived danger of crime/misuse (neglect/invisibility)

K4 Port Creek East End / Anchorage Park

- Transitional area of channel opening up towards east with views culminated by roadbridge
- Close views to north with busy motorway traffic visible
- Grass areas and informal scrub edge fronting creek edge with informal access to beach/creek at low tide
- Partial views through to modern housing area and formal open space to south (Anchorage Park)
- Spit extends into channel separating character areas

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – woodland landscape; defence heritage; variety of public open spaces/routes – extensive public access along whole coastline stretch; informality; hidden and glimpsed views; informal access to creek beach
- Weaknesses – intrusion of motorway noise; air of neglect; fear of crime
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - landscape defence heritage; natural heritage (woodland and ponds); informal character
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences should allow for improvement to public realm with high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character whilst retaining informal character of coastline stretch
- Retain public access throughout open spaces for encouraging a strong sense of connection between neighbouring housing and open space
- Retain diversity of landscape character - open and enclosed spaces, woodland, scrub, grassland and wetland
- Consider selective thinning of woodland to allow views to and from Hilsea Lines to north
- Retain informal access to creek beach at low tide

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 3 - EAST COAST



BROAD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE

L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

- L1 Langstone Harbour - NW corner**
- L2 Kendalls Wharf**
- L3 Sailing & Outdoor Centre**
- L4 Narrow Open Space**
- L5 Great Salterns House & Quay**
- L6 Milton Common**
- L7 Woods/ College Playing Fields**

Fig. 23 East Coast - Landscape Character Areas

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 3 - THE EAST COAST

Key Characteristics

- Outlook across large harbour to distant land masses: mainland to north and Hayling Island to east
- Adapted/engineered shoreline - banks, walls and boulders
- Extensive areas of public open space and walking route along whole extent
- Main transport corridor influences overall character and restricts harbour side spaces physically to narrow strip except at Common
- Informality of open spaces with some signs of disuse/neglect
- Adjacent housing areas - Milton, Baffins, Anchorage Park
- Adjacent green open spaces inland - golf course
- Isolated buildings/development along length provide focus of activity/interest

Designations

- SAC, SPA, Ramsar & SSSI - Langstone Harbour
- Listed Buildings & Structures - Great Salterns House
- Local Wildlife Sites - Milton Common, Great Salterns & Great Salterns Lake

Component Landscape Character Types

L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space

Essentially the eastern coast falls within one landscape character type - the strip of land overlooking Langstone Harbour, a large protected tidal lagoon, with wide sweeping views clear to the north, east and south. The harbour side itself is predominantly informal open space, linked by a narrow pathway along the shoreline, and running parallel to the Eastern Road, a major transport corridor to and from the mainland. A wide cycle/footpath runs along the eastern side of the road. There are areas of development punctuating this landscape, including an aggregates wharf, an outdoor centre, a restaurant and a mobile home park.

Linked Townscape Assessment Areas

Milton, Baffins

Historic Development

- Protected harbour
- Farmland/large estates (Great Salterns) used for Post-War landfill now used as recreational open space
- Coastline fortified for sea defence - engineered banks, walls
- Major road corridor to/from mainland
- Residential suburbs/hinterland

Natural Landscape

- Grassland and ponds on Milton Common - good wildlife value
- Langstone Harbour - high conservation status for intertidal mudflats, sea grasses - flora and fauna including Brent Geese
- Ditches, hedges, woodland scrub along east side - good wildlife habitat

Landscape Character Type L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
Local Character Area: L1 Langstone Harbour - NW Corner; L2 Kendalls Wharf



L1 - NW corner of Langstone Harbour, looking north and east towards M27, Farlington marshes, and Portsdown Hills in distance



L2 - Kendalls Wharf from north (enlarged view using zoom lens)



L1 - Mudflats detail



L1 - Informal footpath access along coast strip, with buffer of scrub vegetation separating busy Eastern Road from shoreline



L1 - Eastern Road, main arterial route dominates eastern coastline



L1 - Informal crossing place on Eastern Road



L2 - Car park outside Kendalls Wharf



L2 - Kendalls Wharf - aggregate yard, looking north



L1 - Informal footpath edge, far north corner



L1 - Engineered bank with shelving shingle shoreline



L2 - Footpath outside Kendalls Wharf



L2 - Footpath outside Kendalls Wharf, heading towards Sailing Centre



L2 - Footpath outside Kendalls Wharf, north side, through small section of woodland

Landscape Character Type L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space

Local Character Area: L1 Langstone Harbour - NW Corner; L2 Kendalls Wharf

Key Characteristics & Land Use

- Large protected tidal harbour with expansive views over to land masses to east, north and south (Farlington Marshes & Hayling Island)
- Narrow land section along harbour side of linked, mixed-use, green spaces between road and harbour edge
- Informal footpath along edge, with some access to beach
- Engineered shoreline (banks and walls) with shingle beaches and mudflats exposed at low tide
- Impacted by steady traffic flow and noise from busy primary transport route to/from mainland (Eastern Road) close by
- Large Common area of informal grassland and ponds (Milton Common)
- Sailing/Outdoor centre & playing fields - formal recreation
- Pub and associated derelict wharf residue of former estate
- Industrial aggregate sorting & delivery - Kendalls Wharf

Historic & Built Environment

- Natural Heritage - SPA/SAC/Ramsar/SSSi - Langstone Harbour; Farlington Marshes
- Natural Heritage - local wildlife sites - Great Salterns & Great Salterns Lake
- Listed Building - Great Salterns House (Harvester Inn)
- Residential neighbourhood & industrial estate - Baffins, Milton

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

- Changing tidal harbour character with mudflats at low tide; sea water at high tide
- Expansive far reaching views over harbour to land masses to north, east and south
- Influence of changing quality of light and reflection of sky on harbour character
- Informal character of dirt path along shore edge with some open access to beach at low tide
- Walking "route" with little opportunity to stop and reflect, except at Common
- High sea walls along some sections, with derelict quay feature
- Busy road impacts character heavily although planting screens views of cars considerably
- Filtered views inward across road corridor to open space beyond, city buildings just visible on western horizon
- Presence of sea birds, sea grasses and people foraging at low tide

L1 Langstone Harbour - NW Corner

- Diversity of spaces from open to enclosed including small patch of pine woodland, mown grassland road corridor & scrub wetland fringe
- Hidden character on shoreline where screened from road
- Narrow footpath along shoreline
- Views over to Farlington Marshes and hills beyond
- Views of Kendalls Wharf built forms and sounds of activity to south
- Dangerous road crossing to north section (Anchorage Park) and housing area

L2 Kendalls Wharf

- Industrial aggregate sorting and delivery yard on shoreline - forms of cranes & piles of shingle
- Privately owned aggregate yard - sole area of no public access on whole coastline stretch
- Busy road junction with trucks crossing/turning
- Air of informality/neglect on boundaries with adjacent car park and access road



poorly defined

- Informal dirt path skirts palisade fence boundary, flooded area in heavy rain
- Small area of pine woodland provides enclosure along coast route

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – transitional quality of tides; far views; quality of open sky and reflection of light; informal harbour edge/access to shore; vegetation screen between shore and Eastern Road
- Weaknesses – busy road to cross - poor connection to Hilsea Lines/Anchorage Park; noise intrusion; poor quality boundaries & path - wharf; flooding of footpath
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - Natural heritage in harbour; Informality
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences should allow for improvement to public realm with high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character whilst retaining informal character of coastline stretch
- Retain public access throughout open spaces for encouraging a strong sense of connection between neighbouring housing and open space
- Improve connection / crossing on Eastern Road for pedestrians
- Retain and enhance native vegetation screening between road and shoreline
- Improve boundary to Kendalls Wharf & pedestrian access across entry to yard

Landscape Character Type L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
Local Character Area: L3 Sailing & Outdoor Centre; L4 Narrow Open Space; L5 Great Salterns House & Quay



L3 - Sailing/outdoor centre with narrow path on edge of harbour



L3 - Playing fields and open space with outdoor centre to right



L4 - Informal grassland spreads into harbour, making a break in the engineered edge



L4 - Grassland/scrub edge with dirt track pathway along harbour edge



L4 - Derelict fence along edge of open space strip



L4 - Occasional stepped access to beach



L5 - Great Salterns House - now a Harvester Inn with outdoor seating on



L5 - Derelict landfill area adjacent mobile home site



L5 - Mobile homes on harbour side, north of Great Salterns House



L5 - Land to south of Harvester Inn looking north, showing narrow strip between roadway & harbour edge



L5 - View west over Eastern Road and open space beyond



L5 - View north from Great Salterns Quay along harbour edge



L5 - View west from Great Salterns Quay - steep drop to bottom edge

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

L3 Sailing & Outdoor Centre

- Prominent modern sailing/outdoor centre creates landmark on harbour edge
- Informal road access leads to boat store, playing fields and associated high climbing wall
- Boat ramps protruding into harbour create local change to beach character; opportunity to stop & observe activity but no places to sit
- High fences lend impression of fortress mentality
- Views over harbour and to Kendalls Wharf to north
- Narrow track along shore edge on top of sea wall - restricted access
- Open space playing fields and pavilion with parking at south end

L4 Narrow Open Space

- Open space thins down to narrow strip between road and harbour - traffic clearly visible and audible but planting and hedge belt screens views of cars
- Sea wall breaks down to provide an informal edge of sea grasses and access to harbour
- Narrow track along shore edge on top of sea wall - restricted access
- Derelict fences and landfill site detract from quality of character

L5 Great Salterns House & Quay

- Prominent Harvester Inn - originally Great Salterns House on harbour side
- Poor quality mobile home site and associated boundaries to north side
- Poor quality materials/spaces around Harvester Inn detract from quality of overall character
- Busy road runs right along harbour edge for long section - intrusive noise
- Open views to harbourside from car drivers on road, but road set down lower than harbour edge restricting views to harbour itself
- Narrow track along shore edge on top of sea wall - restricted access
- Derelict quay provides viewing point but appears little used

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – extent of public open space; informality; occasional beach access; expansive panoramic views; changing landscape – tidal nature, weather; changing route along edge - leisure facilities
- Weaknesses – intrusion of noise and proximity of busy road; poor quality edges/ boundaries; narrow access path; danger of crossing road
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - Natural heritage in harbour; Informality
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences should allow for improvement to public realm with high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character whilst retaining informal character of coastline stretch
- Retain public access throughout open spaces for encouraging good circulation along coastline
- Retain informal access points to beach/harbour
- Widen footpath access along shore without compromising informal character
- Restore Great Salterns Quay as a recreational feature or remove
- Clean up landfill site and restore to good use



- Encourage improved development with native vegetation screening at mobile home site
- Improve rear area of Harvester Inn to enhance use and character of harbour edge

Landscape Character Type L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space
Local Character Area: L6 Milton Common; L7 Woods/College Playing Fields



L6 - Panoramic harbour view - naturalised edge allows extensive beach access at low tide for foraging



L6 - Rock edge treatment to prevent bank erosion



L6 - Flock of Brent Geese on mudflats



L6 - Milton Common from northern edge looking south



L6 - Seat overlooking harbour - more encouragement to stop and sit/reflect



L6 - Extensive informal grassland with scrub, view from south looking north and west



L6 - Pond - wildlife refuge, picture of tranquility



L6 - North end - mown grassland meeting Eastern Road edge, with Portsmouth College beyond



L7 - Far south end - path narrows back to small strip with University campus playing fields to right



L7 - Woodland edge and informal footpath at south end of Common (looking north)



L6 - South end of Common - engineered edge resumes



L6 - Greater presence of people walking

Landscape Character Type L Large Naturalised Harbour & Harbourside Open Space

Local Character Area: L6 Milton Common; L7 Woods/College Playing Fields

Experiential / Perceptual Characteristics

L6 Milton Common

- Large area of informal grassland and ponds
- Sea wall breaks down to provide an informal edge of boulders with open access to harbour
- Relative distance from buildings and Eastern Road traffic provides character of peace & tranquility along harbour edge; opportunities for sitting and reflection
- Dovecots, gravels and garden plants at small memorial area seem incongruous but show sign of community spirit
- Three large ponds provide inland water areas with wildlife interest, contrasting character to harbour
- Popular with dog walkers

L7 Woods/ College Playing Fields

- Open space narrows at south end of Common
- Sea wall returns, height difference at low tide; limited access to harbour
- Dirt track skirts block of scrub woodland with brambles - unkempt character
- Mesh fences allow views through to playing fields and nondescript college buildings
- Poor quality fencing and boundaries with playing fields detract from character

Evaluation & Future Strategy

- Strengths – expanse of natural open space; informality; open edge/access to harbour encouraging stopping and exploration; distance from roads and buildings encourages tranquility; extensive harbour views
- Weaknesses – poor quality edges/boundaries, site furniture - air of neglect
- Mixed quality landscape character – **enhance/strengthen**
- Sensitivity - Natural heritage in harbour and on Common; Informality
- Ensure that any new works to sea defences should allow for improvement to public realm with high quality materials to restore a strong landscape character whilst retaining informal character of coastline stretch
- Conserve value of wildlife site and encourage better interpretation of it
- Retain public access throughout open spaces for encouraging good circulation along coastline, and open access to harbour/beach
- Improve boundaries/fencing to make safer/more appealing



CONCLUSION & WAY FORWARD

Conclusion

The nature of a landscape character assessment is to understand the existing value of a landscape, to help guide future development and safeguard its future for generations to come. This document has looked in detail at three areas of Portsea Island - the Seafront, the North and East Coasts, which are areas identified as being at risk of coastal flooding in future years, with associated risks to the city of Portsmouth.

The process has shown that the three areas are distinct in their character, influenced by the land or sea that they look out over, and the nature of what has happened to them to shape their use and character. However they also have aspects in common.

Defence

Portsmouth is a densely built city on an island on the south coast of England. Its coastal location overlooking the Solent, protected by the Isle of Wight, has influenced how it has grown and developed as a strategic naval defence over the last 500 years. Its main defensive forts are located all along the south coast, from the towers and ramparts at the western harbour entrance, to Southsea Castle on its headland half way along the coast, and the eastern forts including Fort Cumberland at the south-eastern tip. It also has less well-known defences along its northern coastline – the Hilsea Lines, now masked in woodland.

The need to operate an island defence has influenced the very nature of the coastal landscape itself, creating artificial viewpoints on embankments and ramparts, with associated moats and open spaces in an otherwise flat coastal plain. Its very history of defence has created unusual land forms and defences that are now distinct to Portsmouth's identity. The fact that these historic defensive landscapes are retained with as much public access as they currently allow, lends much value to the city of Portsmouth. Its access to substantial cultural heritage contributes greatly to its attraction to tourists.

More recent defences comprise stone and concrete embankments and walls, which have influenced the character of the shoreline between the historic areas. They illustrate the island's defence against the sea, and have affected the way that harbour and creek edges are now engineered banks and walls. These are clearly evident along the whole eastern edge of Tipner Lake, the edge of Port Creek, and the Langstone Harbour edge.

Harbours

The two large harbours to the west and east of Portsea Island are intertidal zones, almost totally enclosed – with narrow harbour entrances. Their expansive nature of extensive mudflats at low tide providing a haven for wildlife, then changing to being completely submerged at high tide, has influenced the character of the harbour sides dramatically. The panoramic views, the changing light and weather patterns are distinctive to the harbour sides. The harbours themselves form part of one of the largest areas of intertidal mudflats in the country.

Open Space

The distribution of open space and recreational land use along the coastline demonstrates a cultural movement that started with the Victorians towards valuing the seafront and parkland for human enjoyment. The shift towards conservation of natural land and sea scapes for their ecological value has also influenced the sheer quantity and range of public open spaces all along the island's coastline. These include large formal areas such as Alexandra Park, Hilsea Playing Fields, Southsea Common and Canoe Lake Park as well as extensive informal areas such as Milton Common and Hilsea Lines. These provide tremendous value to local people, as demonstrated in public consultation survey work carried out in 2009 for the Council.

Connection

Large open spaces would have less value if they were not connected to each other in some way, and in the North, East and South Coasts of the island, they clearly are, allowing access to almost 10 miles of continuous coastline. Again these range from long, formal paths such as the Tipner Lake route and the seafront Promenade, to the smaller informal paths through Hilsea Lines and down the east coast. They are used for recreation by numerous cyclists, runners and walkers throughout the year. The very fact that it is possible to walk all the way from Mountbatten Centre at Tipner through the Hilsea Lines, across the Eastern Road and down the narrow coast path along Langstone Harbour to Milton Common and beyond - a distance of five miles, is quite remarkable for a city. As a composite landscape, this makes a very valuable resource to the city, in a time when accessibility to open space is vital for ensuring the health and well-being of the nation.

It is interesting to observe that in recent times when people complain about the stress of life, that there is an increased desire to retreat away from the hubbub of city life. Portsmouth is a very densely populated city, with busy arterial traffic routes to west and east sides linking it to the mainland to the north. It therefore increases the value of what is available here on the island to avoid having to travel far, (or off the island) that local people can reach extensive open space and experience a contact with nature close to their homes. This can lead to a greater awareness and appreciation for the importance of global nature conservation. It can also help reduce the pressure of visitor impact on adjacent sensitive landscapes such as the New Forest & South Downs National Parks.

The freshness and power of the everchanging seascape attracts visitors no matter what the weather. The numbers of people present on cold wintry days right down at the tip of Eastney prove that the remoteness of the location is desirable and not in any way an impediment to value. Furthermore it may well be that on an island there is even more heightened desire to reach the outermost points of the coastline, and experience the physical limits - to see what surrounds you; and to feel the elements.

Diversity

The range of formal and informal landscapes along the coastline creates a rich spatial experience. It can give us a clear sense of appreciation for ordered, tidy places as well as quiet, peaceful places. It means that there is room for everything, for historical grandeur as well as natural tranquility and wildlife conservation.

The formality of the city's historic defences conveys a strong sense of majesty and power, and gives us an understanding of what life was like in Portsmouth in the past. On the other hand, where there is an informal character, it reflects the distance from the formality of the built city, and makes that sense of retreat from the city and the direct contact with nature possible.

Both types of landscape are valued and both need to be addressed in the future to conserve or strengthen their character where it shows signs of being weakened. There is an opportunity to incorporate improvements to the landscape character and public realm in the strengthening of sea defences in these areas.

It will be important to respect the sensitivity of each area when designing the specific defences to all areas. Clear recommendations have been made in the future strategy for each section in the three areas to indicate what is appropriate treatment.

Quality

Apart from Old Portsmouth where the quality of materials in the formal designed landscape illustrates a clear investment in conservation in recent years, there are large parts of the hard fabric of infrastructure of the southern seafront and north and east coasts that show signs of neglect. This differs from formal to informal areas, and the character of one area may not be better or worse than another. Furthermore, what might be expected of one landscape is not necessarily the same for another. The diversity of landscape characters is what makes it special.

However there are signs that an informal character can become dangerous through neglect, where the perceived character of a place can become hostile and unsafe. Poor footpath surfaces, consistent muddy puddles, blighted signage and disintegrating boundary treatments - rusting metals, broken concrete, all illustrate the neglect and together make a place less appealing and accessible.

Informal access to the shore or beach is something to be encouraged, allowing people the chance to unwind and feel comfortable. In these types of areas, subtle improvements in landscape materials can enhance the nature of a place without changing its value from a quiet place to a more busy one. This would have the effect of making the coastline safer and thus a more integrated and accessible one.

In most of the local landscape character areas identified, it is the improving of paving and landscape materials, quality of boundary and edge treatments that will make a difference to the long term character of the places, ensuring their continued value for years to come.

Along some stretches such as the Seafront, the creation of new focal points will enhance what is currently lacking interest. These might involve recreational or leisure opportunities to define better hubs of activity. The promenade could be enhanced with seating, artwork and planting, and new sea defences should embrace a sense of imagination in their design, encouraging human interaction similar to the defences at Old Portsmouth, where people clearly feel a part of the exciting historic landscape.

Way Forward

Improvements to the landscape character of the coast areas covered in this report will be incorporated into future sea defence works where it is possible. In order to appropriately assess the design and impact of the sea defences, it will be necessary to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This will include a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, focusing specifically on landscape character.

Under this section, there will need to be photomontage images from key viewpoints demonstrating that the designed defences do not detract from the current landscape character of each area, and that design has been carried out to conserve or enhance each area's character.

If impact is unavoidably significant, such as raising of ground levels that affect views or access to the coastline it will need to demonstrate how these are suitably mitigated. In other words how they will demonstrate significant value to the public realm and appreciation of the natural & historic environment that comprises and surrounds the Portsea Island coastline.

Reference List

Portsea Island Coastal Strategy Study - Strategic Environmental Assessment - 2008, Halcrow Group Ltd

Urban Characterisation Study - Portsmouth City Council Planning Department - 2011

Southsea & North Portsea Island, Hampshire - Report 2: Historic Environment Assessment, Wessex Archaeology, 2012

Environmental Technical Report, Royal Haskoning, 2012

The Portsmouth Plan (Portsmouth's Core Strategy), Portsmouth City Council Planning Department, 2012

North Solent Shoreline Management Plan, Environment Agency, 2005

Conservation Area 10 - The Seafront, Portsmouth City Council

Conservation Area 4 - Old Portsmouth, Portsmouth City Council

Conservation Area ? - Hilsea Lines, Portsmouth City Council

National Landscape Characterisation of the English Landscape, currently being rewritten

Integrated Character Assessment, Hampshire County Council, 2011

Landscape Character Assessment, Havant Borough Council, 2008

Increasing the Use & Enjoyment of Accessible Open Spaces in Portsmouth (Public Consultation Study) , Brilliant Futures, 2009

You can get this Portsmouth City Council Information in large print, Braille, audio or another language by calling 023 9284 1406

© Crown Copyright and database right 2012. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019671.