

# Chichester Harbour Conservancy **Chichester Harbour AONB** **Landscape Character Assessment**



Chichester Harbour Conservancy  
**Chichester Harbour AONB**  
**Landscape Character Assessment**

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'D. Watkins' in a cursive style.

Dominic Watkins

Position

Director

Date

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Revision

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to provide an understanding of the unique landscape character and special qualities of the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) so as to inform the development of AONB Management Plans and wider planning policy.

In November 2018, Chichester Harbour Conservancy re-commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to undertake a “light touch” review and update of the 2005 Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment prepared by CBA.

The review confirms that the approach undertaken for the 2005 study remains appropriate with respect to Natural England’s current guidance on Landscape Character Assessment (2014) and Seascape Character Assessment (2012).

The updated forces for change in the landscape section was informed by the findings of the Chichester Harbour State of the AONB Report 2018 with respect to landscape character; biodiversity; cultural heritage; enjoyment, understanding and involvement; and socio-economic changes.

A high-level desk-based review of significant landscape changes since 2005 was undertaken using the most up-to-date available aerial imagery to inform a ‘rapid sense check’ to validate the descriptions of the 19 distinctive Landscape Character Areas identified within the AONB and the wider study area. The descriptions identify the landscape patterns and characteristics that combine to create the area’s distinctive character. For each character area, information on its key characteristics, landscape history, important views, forces for change, condition and sensitivity of the landscape is provided. Landscape planning and land management guidelines for each area are also provided.

The updated study found that the Chichester Harbour AONB landscape is in generally moderate to good condition overall, and its character areas are predominantly considered to be of high landscape sensitivity with areas of moderate-high sensitivity around the fringes of some settlements. The study provides updated evidence to support the understanding of the special qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB as defined in the AONB Management Plan:

- *The unique blend of land and sea – especially the combination of expanses of open waters, narrow inlets and intimate creeks.*
- *The frequently wooded shoreline.*
- *The flatness of the landform, unusual among AONBs, accentuates the significance of sea and tide and of distant landmarks across land and water.*
- *The open water of the central area of the Harbour.*
- *The overall sense of wilderness within the seascape.*
- *The particularly strong historic environment and heritage assets.*
- *The picturesque harbourside settlements.*
- *The wealth of flora and fauna, notably the vast flocks of wading birds add to the richness and diversity of the landscape.*
- *The unspoilt character and unobtrusive beauty.*
- *The very special sense of peace and tranquillity, largely engendered by the gentle way the AONB is used and closeness to nature that is experienced.*

It is recommended that the updated Landscape Character Assessment continues to be used by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, local planning authorities and land managers as a key tool for informing decision-making and monitoring the effects of landscape change on the AONB’s special qualities. The study is also intended to provide a key source of information for use by local groups, communities and other stakeholders with an interest in the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. In addition, it is recommended that the Landscape Character Assessment is kept under review and further updated in response to changing circumstances in the future as necessary.

## **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful for the advice and guidance provided by Richard Austin (AONB Manager, Chichester Harbour Conservancy) in the update of the Landscape Character Assessment.

*CBA  
February 2019*

## **User Guide**

The Landscape Character Assessment can be read as a whole, or specific sections can be consulted as required. The report covers:

- Section 1: Introduction – sets out the purpose and objectives of the assessment and the general approach and methodology followed.
- Section 2: Shaping of the Landscape – summarises the factors that have influenced the character of the harbour landscape as a whole, both physical and historic, and describes past and current perceptions of the landscape.
- Section 3: Forces for Change in the Landscape – analyses recent, current and possible future forces for change to the character of the harbour landscape.
- Section 4: Existing Character of the Landscape – describes Landscape Character Types, Landscape Character Areas and sets out planning and land management guidelines to reinforce the character of each area.
- Section 5: Summary and Recommendations – provides a summary of the special character and qualities of the AONB and makes recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 Chichester Harbour Conservancy commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) in 2018 to undertake a high-level review and update of the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Landscape Character Assessment produced and published in 2005 by CBA. This update will help inform the development of Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plans and provide planning and land management guidelines to assist planners, agents, developers and landowners in conserving and enhancing the distinctive character of the Harbour landscapes.

1.1.2 CBA are independent landscape, environmental and heritage consultants with over 40 years of experience, which includes expertise in landscape character assessment for protected landscapes such as AONBs and National Parks. The professional excellence of CBA's work has been recognised by national awards from the Landscape Institute and the Royal Town Planning Institute. CBA is a Landscape Institute registered practice.

### **1.2 Context**

1.2.1 Chichester Harbour is a unique blend of landscape and seascape of national significance, as recognised by its AONB designation. It is of equivalent importance, in terms of landscape quality, as a National Park. It was designated as an AONB in 1964 and is one of the smallest AONBs in the country, covering 74km<sup>2</sup>, of which 41% is water at high tide. It is located on the south coast of England between the cities of Portsmouth and Chichester and straddles the boundary between the counties of Hampshire and West Sussex. Backed by the South Downs, Chichester Harbour is one of four nearby harbours, the others at Portsmouth, Langstone and Pagham, and is the only one designated as an AONB. The channels and water of Chichester Harbour provide one of the most popular sailing areas in the country.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

1.3.1 The main aims of the landscape character assessment are to:

- Improve the knowledge and understanding of the Conservancy and its partner authorities regarding the special and unique qualities of the landscape character of the Harbour;
- Encourage a holistic approach towards the conservation and enhancement of character, within the framework of the new AONB Management Plan;
- Contribute to the development of good practice of integrated landscape characterisation;

- Improve the quality and location of development in the AONB by encouraging local authorities to adopt the assessment as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); and
- Identify areas within and outside the AONB boundary where significant land-use change or development could impact on the current character and special qualities of the AONB.

1.3.2 Key objectives of the study are to:

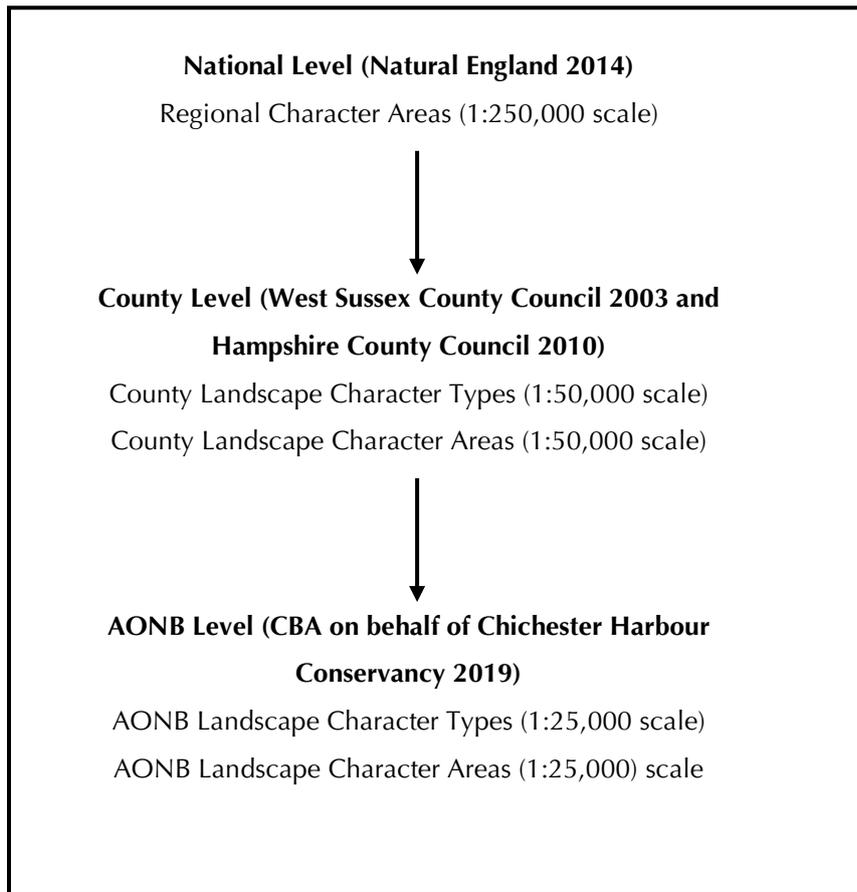
- Provide a description of landscape character types and character areas, taking a comprehensive and integrated view of landscape that encompasses physical, ecological, visual, historic and cultural factors;
- Identify past and future forces for change;
- Specify the broad management issues to be considered for each character area, i.e. to conserve, enhance or restore;
- Assess the sensitivity of each landscape character area to development and change;
- Describe the settlement character and landscape setting of selected settlements within the AONB;
- Provide local landscape management and planning guidelines for each character area;
- Recommend how the guidelines can be implemented; and
- Suggest indicators for monitoring landscape change.

1.3.3 The 2019 assessment builds on the landscape character information of the 1992 and 2005 Chichester Harbour Landscape Assessments, with:

- a wider study area beyond the AONB boundary, to take account of the character and setting of the AONB;
- an integrated approach to the characterisation of the Harbour;
- consultation with Chichester Harbour Conservancy for its preparation;
- the identification and description of unique landscape character areas;
- the provision of guidance as a decision-making tool for planners and land managers;
- the provision of additional support and justification for the AONB designation; and the identification of indicators for monitoring landscape change.

## **1.4 Relationship to other Character Assessments**

1.4.1 The National Character Areas map and Profiles provide a national context within which the West Sussex and Hampshire Landscape Character Assessments sit. Together, these provide the framework for the development of the Chichester Harbour Landscape Character Assessment. The relationship of the assessment hierarchy is shown in the box below.



**Box 1 – Relationship of the Landscape Character Assessment Hierarchy**

### **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessments and Related Studies**

1.4.2 West Sussex County Council carried out an assessment of the landscape character of West Sussex in 2003, which led to identification of 42 character areas. Land management guidelines are provided for each of the character areas. West Sussex County Council have also prepared *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (2005) based upon the identified landscape character types and areas. The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Ensure high quality new development which contributes to and reinforces landscape character;
- Conserve and enhance historic landscape character;
- Ensure the maintenance and renewal of the agricultural landscape;
- Conserve and enhance semi-natural habitats including securing the future of woodlands, hedgerows and trees as distinctive landscape features; and
- Promote and celebrate the value and variety of the West Sussex landscape.

- 1.4.3 *Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)* (2010) identifies the historic features and attributes of the Sussex landscape, to inform future landscape character studies;
- 1.4.4 *Sussex Extensive Urban Surveys (EUS)* provides an archaeological and historic analysis of principal settlements in Sussex (with East Sussex County Council).
- 1.4.5 *City of Chichester/Fishbourne Intensive Urban Survey (IUS)* provides a more detailed equivalent of the Extensive Urban Survey.
- 1.4.6 *Land Use and Habitat Change in West Sussex 1991-2001* provides an air photo interpretation of land use and habitat change, completing a thirty-year record of change.
- 1.4.7 A *West Sussex Local Distinctiveness Study* complements and expands on the landscape character assessment; providing an analysis of settlement form, pattern, building styles and local materials.

#### **Hampshire Landscape Character Assessments and Strategies**

- 1.4.8 The *Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment* (2010) provides a revision to the previous *Hampshire Landscape Strategy* (2000), which takes account of latest guidance and best practice. It provides individual assessments for landscape, seascape and townscape character areas.
- 1.4.4 At the district level Havant Borough Council have undertaken an integrated landscape character assessment of the Borough (which includes the Hayling Island part of the Chichester Harbour AONB). The *Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment* identifies 16 landscape character types and 41 landscape character areas, and includes historic landscape character assessment, analysis of settlements and assessment of ecology and biodiversity.

#### **Village Design Statements and Parish Plans**

- 1.4.9 Village Design Statements help describe the distinctive character of villages and their surrounding countryside and can inform local design principles based upon local character. Currently Emsworth and Northney and Tye (Havant Borough) and West Itchenor have adopted Village Design Statements. This landscape character assessment provides a useful framework for the preparation of further village designs in the future.

## 1.5 Approach and Methodology

- 1.5.1 The update to the Landscape Character Assessment study has been undertaken, following national guidance published by Natural England *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (2014) and *An Approach to Seascape Character Assessment* (2012). The update provides a review of the previous study in line with the new guidance and validates the previous character area descriptions with updates to text where required.
- 1.5.2 It has also taken into consideration the Chichester Harbour AONB *State of the AONB Report 2013 and 2018*, the *AONB Management Plan 2014-2019* and the emerging *AONB Management Plan 2019-2024*.
- 1.5.3 In carrying out the landscape character assessment, an integrated approach to understanding the physical, ecological, visual, historic and cultural factors that contribute to the character of the Harbour's landscape was adopted.
- 1.5.4 A multi-disciplinary team was established within CBA to develop the integrated characterisation. The team included a landscape archaeologist, a landscape planner and an ecologist. An innovative aspect of the approach was that the team, after initial background research, jointly prepared a preliminary classification of landscape character types and landscape character areas. This was done in preference to carrying out a range of separate specialist characterisations, with these only being brought together into landscape character types and character areas later in the process. Landscape character types and landscape character areas are defined as follows:
- **Landscape Character Types** are broad tracts of land with common characteristics of geology, landform, vegetation, land use and settlement that may reoccur across the area without being directly related to specific places;
  - **Landscape Character Areas** are unique areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics, both physical and experiential, that combine to create a distinct sense of place. They represent geographical areas of a landscape character type.
- 1.5.5 The approach adopted for the assessment also acknowledged the critical influence of 'seascapes' – the dynamic interface between land and sea on the essential character of the Harbour. It has been recognised that perceptions of the sea and often wide, open skies in the Harbour's seascapes vary from season to season, and are much influenced by the tide, ever changing light and weather conditions, and the effect of those on the texture and colour of the sea itself. The dynamics of early morning sea mists which burn off to reveal the Harbour, or end of the day spectacular sunsets are classic changes that evoke sensual and spiritual

responses. Whilst the variations of conditions are infinite and cannot be totally defined, the Assessment has sought, by careful description, to give emphasis to such intrinsic qualities through informed professional judgement.

1.5.6 In summary, the study involved five main stages, namely:

- Identification of a study area;
- Desk Studies;
- Field Survey;
- Analysis and Reporting; and
- Stakeholder Consultation.

1.5.7 Each of these stages is described below.

### **Study Area**

1.5.8 A wider study area, extending outside the AONB boundary, was agreed at the outset with the Steering Group. This needed to be sufficiently broad to encompass areas beyond the designated area where significant landscape change or development could potentially impact on the character and qualities of the AONB. It also recognised that distinctive variations in character may not necessarily occur when the AONB boundary is crossed. The agreed study area therefore included the majority of Hayling Island, the urban fringe of Havant, the Emsworth to Chichester Gap (A259/A27 corridor), the western and south western Chichester Urban Fringe, and a broad corridor to the east of the A278 between Chichester and the Witterings. The boundaries generally follow visible, physical features such as roads, hedges and woodlands.

### **Desk Studies**

1.5.9 The desk studies included:

- Review of existing landscape character assessments relating to the study area;
- Collection and mapping of a wide range of information on the characteristics of the study area, including geology, landform, soils, drainage, land use, settlement, habitats, historic and social and economic data; and
- Definition of preliminary landscape character type and area boundaries.

1.5.10 The update involved a desk-based review of the latest relevant guidance, policy documents and local studies including the current and emerging AONB Management Plans and State of

the AONB Reports (2013 and 2018). Following this, a review of the previously defined character areas was carried out taking into consideration up-to-date mapping, aerial imagery and recent reports/studies.

### **Field Survey**

1.5.11 The field survey for the 2005 landscape character assessment comprised:

- Completion of field survey forms and taking of photographs;
- Noting of key features, variations in condition and evidence of pressure for change;
- Validation of the preliminary landscape character types and area boundaries; and
- Analysis of the relationship between settlements and their landscape settings.

### **Analysis and Reporting**

1.5.12 Analysis and reporting comprised:

- Synthesis of the results of the desk studies and field survey work to confirm landscape character types/areas;
- Analysis of the forces for change for which the issues identified by stakeholders in the Management Plan workshops formed an important basis;
- Preparation of detailed character descriptions;
- An evaluation of the overall condition of each landscape character area, assessed as good, moderate or poor. This was based upon an understanding of the physical state of the landscape and its intactness from visual, historic or ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character of an area. Condition may vary within a character area so any conclusions should be regarded as a summary of the overall situation;
- An evaluation of the overall sensitivity or development/change of each landscape character area. A broad statement of sensitivity to change was prepared. Sensitivity was assessed as high, moderate or low depending upon the ability of an area to accommodate change without adverse effects on its character. It should be emphasised that the levels of sensitivity identified are generalised statements that provide a pointer to issues that would need to be addressed in a planning policy development control or management plan context. Sensitivity is not absolute and is likely to vary according to the type/scale of change being considered. It is expected that further analysis would need to be carried out in relation to a specific proposal with significant landscape or visual effects, or when there are cumulative impacts of several developments;

- Identification of conservation, enhancement or restoration management strategies as appropriate for each landscape character area; and
- Preparation of planning and land management guidelines for each landscape character area.

### **Stakeholder Consultation**

- 1.5.13 Key stakeholders were actively involved in the assessments of 1992 and 2005.
- 1.5.14 The consultees included local councillors, parish councillors, local residents, nature conservation groups, farmers, land managers, and local planning officers. Two workshops were held to discuss the draft landscape character assessment and the comments made then informed the preparation of the final report.
- 1.5.15 For the 2019 update, stakeholder consultation took place through Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Planning Committee.

## **2.0 THE SHAPING OF THE LANDSCAPE**

### **2.1 General**

2.1.1 The diverse landscape character of Chichester Harbour has evolved as a result of a complex interaction of its physical structure, its fluctuating sea levels and changing shorelines, and its vegetation and land use. To understand the development of its distinctive and diverse character, it is important to identify the past/current physical and historic influences over time.

### **2.2 Physical Influences**

2.2.1 The basic structure of the landscape is fundamentally influenced by its underlying rocks and relief. Geology and the processes of weathering, coastal erosion and deposition, influence the shape and form of the landscape and its soils and drainage. In turn these have influenced patterns of vegetation and land use.

#### **Geology, Landform and Sea Level Change**

2.2.2 The underlying rock strata of Chichester Harbour is cretaceous chalk, laid down about 100 million years ago as a calcareous ooze on the floor of an ancient sea. The chalk sea floor grew progressively thicker through time, with the top 0.1m or more being a liquid mud, the next layer being slightly firmer and burrowed into by animals, and beneath that a permanent chalk sediment. Flint formed during and after the deposition of the chalk, within animal burrows and faults and joints in the chalk. Flint, green-coated chalk pebbles and the fossils of animals, plants and fish are all features of the chalk base geology of the Harbour. These are occasionally revealed along the channel edges.

2.2.3 By the end of the Cretaceous period (approximately 7 to 45 million years ago) the sea had retreated entirely from the Harbour area, leaving the soft chalk exposed to erosion. Dynamic geological episodes followed this retreat, lifting and folding the chalk, and to the east raising the centre of the Weald.

2.2.4 The early exposure of the chalk was relatively short-lived, with the Eocene period being characterised by changing sea levels, alternately flooding and revealing the land. During these periods of shallow sea flooding, the red and orange clays of the Reading Beds and the later London Clays were laid down and compacted as sediments on the sea floor. These beds are visible today at a few locations around the edges of the channels.

- 2.2.5 The Chalk, Reading Beds and London Clay together comprise the base geology of Chichester Harbour, over which is overlain the more recent drift geology of brickearth, alluvium and head (see **Figure 1**). These drift deposits were eroded from higher ground to the north and deposited in the Harbour area to form a flat coastal plain.
- 2.2.6 Over the past three glaciations Sussex was not fully covered by sheet ice. Instead, in the Chichester Harbour area, tundra conditions prevailed with permafrost developing during some periods. The development of the glaciers caused sea levels to fall with the English Channel retreating to a shoreline between Cornwall and Brittany. It is widely postulated that the sea floor of the Channel became a river valley landscape with a theoretical river known as the Great Seine at its centre, fed by a multitude of tributaries.
- 2.2.7 The current form of the Chichester Harbour landscape was created during this period, with streams, now creeks, feeding into rivers, now the channels, separated by low-lying flat plains of gravel and brickearth with sparse tundra vegetation, now the Harbour mud-flats and the low, flat to gently sloping peninsulas (see **Figure 2**). As the amount of water feeding into the streams decreased, their rate of sedimentation increased, causing them to become broader and shallower.
- 2.2.8 The sea level rose cyclically in the warm interglacials with increased global temperature and melting glaciers, causing the Harbour to again become sea floor. This process can be traced in the remains of raised beaches along the foot of the South Downs to the north, and around the Harbour associated with the 5m contour.
- 2.2.9 It is during this period of inundation and retreat that the brickearth, which constitutes most of the drift geology of the Harbour landscape, was laid down. Brickearth, a largely unstratified mixture of flinty clay, covers most of the land surface of the area.
- 2.2.10 The other, younger drift geology deposits within the Harbour are the marine and riverine alluvial layers associated with parts of Thorney and Hayling Island, with the streams and rivers feeding into the Harbour and with the heads of the channels.
- 2.2.11 As the climate began to warm at the end of the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago, the glaciers released their water through the network of tributaries and rivers into the sea, causing it to rise.
- 2.2.12 During the Early Neolithic period (c.4000-3000 years ago) the sea level apparently rose considerably, with the Harbour area becoming increasingly submerged and only the highest land surviving as islands. These sea waters receded again considerably through later

prehistory, in the Bronze and Iron Ages. This fall in sea level meant that the scouring action of the tides was increased, deepening the channels in the Harbour. During the Roman period until just before the Norman invasion, sea levels rose again.

- 2.2.13 For the next 250 years after 1048, sea levels appear to have stood-still or even fallen, but by the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, the sea rose rapidly, resulting in a massive inundation of the south coast in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This corresponds with the loss of Old Winchelsea to the east in 1297, and subsequent historical claims of land loss amongst local communities through to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For example, some 40 acres were lost in Thorney Island in the period between 1300 and 1340.
- 2.2.14 The Harbour mouth shape has been continually changing throughout the historical period. It forms an opening in the long section of shingle beach that stretches along the south coast of Hayling Island to Selsey Bill. The shingle beach is continually changing, with the action of the sea bringing-up eroded flint pebbles from the chalk sea floor and depositing them on the beach. The shingle is sorted by wave action on the beach, and then longshore drift moves the sand across the Harbour mouth and deposits it on the Winner Bank and the Stockers Sand beyond. These sand banks themselves change shape with the prevailing storm direction, and drift across the Harbour mouth. The most dramatic effect of this system is the changing shape of the sand and shingle spit of East Head, which can be seen to have moved 90 degrees to the north over the last 250 years.

## **Soils**

- 2.2.15 Chichester Harbour has three main types of soils covering the area reflecting the underlying geology, and local variations in slopes and drainage (see **Figure 3**). These are brown loamy soils, heavy clay soils and alluvial soils. These in turn have influenced present day landscape patterns and current landscape character.
- 2.2.16 The brown loamy soils have developed on brickearth drift deposits underlain by chalk, and are characteristic of the Chidham Peninsula, the northern parts of the Bosham and Manhood Peninsulas, and of Hayling Island. These deep, stoneless and well-drained soils are highly fertile and give rise to rich Grade 1 Agricultural Land used for growing cereals and for market gardening.
- 2.2.17 The heavy clay soils are developed on brickearth, underlain by Reading Beds and London Clay, and are a characteristic feature of much of Thorney Island, and the southern parts of the Bosham and Manhood Peninsulas. They are seasonally affected by rising groundwater levels. With adequate drainage they give rise to fertile Grade 1 and Grade 2 Agricultural Land used for

grazing cereals, market gardening etc. However, those developed on brickearth over Reading Beds on the Bosham Peninsula have historically been less easily worked, and this has contributed to the retention of woodland in this part of the Harbour.

- 2.2.18 The alluvial soils are deep, stoneless, clayey and fine silty soils, associated with reclaimed low-lying land in the north of Thorney Island and the fringes of Hayling Island. They have high groundwater levels drained by ditches and their lesser fertility and wetness means they are mostly used for permanent grassland.

### **Ecological Character**

- 2.2.19 Chichester Harbour includes very significant areas of semi-natural habitats that make a vital contribution to its diverse landscape character and it is an internationally important wildlife resource. The presence and distribution of these habitats is strongly influenced by geology, landform, soils and coastal processes of erosion and deposition. The main habitats are mudflats, saltmarsh, sand dunes, shingle, woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, fen meadow, coastal grazing, marsh and reedbeds<sup>1</sup>. These habitats and many of their associated species are prioritised in the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) for Hampshire and Sussex. Their importance is also recognised in National Character Area profile 126 South Coast Plain<sup>2</sup>.

- 2.2.20 The *Chichester Harbour AONB State of the AONB Report 2018*<sup>3</sup> provides a break-down of BAP Priority Habitat coverage within the AONB, including spatial representation on a map. Mudflats are identified as the most extensive category, covering 60% of the AONB. This area has increased by 57% since the previous State of the AONB report (2013). However, this is largely down to more accurate mapping and reclassification of habitats<sup>4</sup> and doesn't represent a significant change in ecological character of the AONB since the 2005 Landscape Character Assessment.

- 2.2.21 The whole tidal area of the Harbour is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its value for wading birds, shelduck and brent geese and its variety of different coastal habitats. Furthermore, the Harbour has been designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the 1971 Ramsar Convention, a Special Protection Area (SPA) for Wild Birds and a Special Area for Conservation (SAC).

- 2.2.22 Eames Farm, Gutner Point, Pilsey Island, Nutborne Marshes and Sandy Point are Local Nature Reserves.

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<sup>1</sup> Figure 3.7 within the Chichester Harbour AONB State of the AONB Report 2018

<sup>2</sup> Natural England, 2014

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.conservancy.co.uk/assets/files/cms\\_item/613/d-Chichester\\_State\\_of\\_the\\_AONB\\_Final\\_Report\\_2018-yB5tbNWzWj.pdf](http://www.conservancy.co.uk/assets/files/cms_item/613/d-Chichester_State_of_the_AONB_Final_Report_2018-yB5tbNWzWj.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Refer to paras 3.69-3.71 of the State of the AONB Report 2018

## Open water

- 2.2.23 The open water of the Harbour is a nursery ground for juvenile fish of many species that spawn in deeper waters offshore. It is a lifetime foraging area for many species of small, short-lived inshore fish, mainly associated with shallow water and sandflats. It is also a feeding ground for many species of adult fish that spawn offshore. A few species migrate through the Harbour in order to ascend the estuaries into the rivers to spawn. There is also an established population of common (harbour) and grey seals and porpoises within the Harbour.

## Mudflats

- 2.2.24 Chichester Harbour, in conjunction with Langstone Harbour forms the largest area of intertidal mudflats in the south coast of Britain. Most of the sediments in the Harbour are soft muds of clay and lime-rich silt particles and organic detritus that support rich animal life. These include marine worms, molluscs and crustaceans. The teeming life in the sediment and shallow waters provide rich feeding grounds for spectacular numbers (average over the last 5 years 47,000) wildfowl, waders and other birds such as shelduck, brent geese (5% of the world's population), coot, "dabbling" ducks, "sawbill" ducks, gulls and terns which use the Harbour during migration, over winter or breed there. The seasonally variable plant cover on the mudflats includes eelgrass stands and green and brown algal beds. The sands are bare except for what is left by the tides.

## Saltmarshes

- 2.2.25 Chichester Harbour contains the largest saltmarsh in the south-east region<sup>5</sup>, the seventh largest area in Britain<sup>6</sup>. Above the tidal flats are extensive areas of lower and pioneer saltmarsh characterised by a few dominant plants interspersed with bare mud. Cordgrass is overwhelmingly dominant, however, recently this has begun to decline, and generally in exposed localities and in certain cases, glassworts have reappeared.
- 2.2.26 The middle saltmarsh is marked by a general closing of the canopy, firmer substrata and the dominance of species such as sea lavender and sea purslane. Small patches of golden samphire and sea wormwood also occur. Nearly all the middle saltmarsh occurs beyond the sea walls, so is exposed to erosion. However, more extensive areas occur where protected by spits and on east facing coastlines.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/discover/around-sussex/wetland-habitats/saltmarsh>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.conservancy.co.uk/page/saltmarsh>

- 2.2.27 Upper saltmarsh is characterised by the appearance of grass and rush species. It represents areas only flooded by the highest tides, so very little marsh now occurs in front of the sea walls and tends to be behind it adjacent to the grazing marshes. The middle and upper saltmarshes are important roost sites for wading birds.

### **Shingle Beaches**

- 2.2.28 Fringing shingle beaches are quite frequent around the Harbour and where they are vegetated distinctive species such as sea beet, sea kale and yellow horned poppy occur.

### **Sand Dunes**

- 2.2.29 Compared with the rest of the southeast coast Chichester Harbour is unusually well provided with this habitat, with three separate systems at East Head, Pilsey Island and Eastoke Point. These show classic vegetation zonation ranging from vegetation of the strandline, where the movement of sand by wind and tide allows the first plants to colonise through shifting yellow dunes of marram grass to more stable 'grey' dunes where a turf often rich in clover and other low growing plants develop. In a few areas on the most stable areas dune heath develops with a rich lichen flora.

### **Coastal Grazing Marsh**

- 2.2.30 Extensive areas of coastal grazing marsh have survived in the Harbour. They often exhibit a transition from unimproved rushy saltmarsh to brackish wet grazing marsh grassland or rank couch grass grazing marsh, to unimproved non-coastal fen meadows and pasture. Some of the coastal grazing marsh is floristically rich where there is light grazing but becomes poor where grazing is ceased, and the grassland is ranker. The unimproved coastal grazing marsh behind the sea wall provides feeding ground for geese and major high tide wader roosts.

### **Reedbeds**

- 2.2.31 Reedbed communities are widespread in the upper parts of the Harbour inlets and in pools and creeks within embanked marshes. Of these, they are associated with freshwater and brackish sites and support breeding reed bunting and Cetti's warbler. The most important sites are on Thorney Island next to the Little Deep and at Fishbourne. The other main type of coastal reedbed is sea clubrush dominated vegetation which occurs around pools and as patches within the upper saltmarshes.

### **Meadows and Pasture**

- 2.2.32 A few unimproved meadows and pastures support a varied flora and birdlife, such as Warblington Meadow, Chichester Yacht Basin and Fishbourne Meadows. Some of this grassland is floristically rich with scarce species such as green winged orchid and adders tongue fern. Patches of scrub within these areas also attract a wide range of breeding birds.

### **Woodlands**

- 2.2.33 Oak forest once covered the land surrounding the Harbour and until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century oak coppice woods were quite widespread. Today most of it has been lost to other uses such as farming and housing. There are still tiny fragments around Chichester Harbour especially to the east and the north of the area. These attract breeding birds and support two heronries.
- 2.2.34 Old Park Wood and Salterns Copse are ancient semi-natural woodlands with rich ground flora. Furthermore, the gnarled old oak trees come down to a natural shoreline, which is a rare feature. They are dominated by oak but other species including hazel, aspen, cherry, crab-apple, guelder rose and dogwood occur.
- 2.2.35 The small number of other woodland areas are mostly plantations. The older of these date from 19<sup>th</sup> century plantings and include oak, beech, sycamore, ash and pine. The ground floras are typically species poor with bramble, bracken and ivy.

### **Arable Farmland**

- 2.2.36 There are large areas of arable farmland within the Harbour that includes both annual crops and grass leys (approximately 2,300 hectares). A few areas include field margins for example at Itchenor Park Farm, and on some parts of the Bosham Peninsula, but generally the biodiversity value of the arable farmland is relatively low.

### **Ponds**

- 2.2.37 Farmland ponds are a common feature within the Harbour, notably on the Chidham and Bosham peninsulas. Their ecological interest is generally low, partly because of their neglect. The tidal millponds such as at Birdham and Emsworth, are particularly valuable for their invertebrate interest.

### **Hedges and Scrub**

- 2.2.38 Patches of scrub occur locally along the coast and these include blackthorn and hawthorn thickets. Clumps and lines of oak are also a very typical feature. Often the oaks are stunted and of some age. Many grow on eroding banks and have their roots partly or completely exposed producing picturesque gnarled trees. Some of the scrubby banks have an interesting flora combining woodland and dry sandy bank floras.
- 2.2.39 Typical features are also the dense species rich hedgerows lining lanes. These have an abundance of species such as hazel and maple which are typical of old pre-17<sup>th</sup> century hedges. Some surviving field hedges are similar, but many have been cleared. There are also many remnant hedges of more recent date, consisting largely of hawthorn.

## 2.3 Historic Influences

- 2.3.1 Changes in the landscape of Chichester Harbour through time have contributed to its present-day overall character (see **Figure 4**). The following section deals with some of the primary themes in its development. It provides a context for the more detailed local landscape histories included in the character area descriptions.

### **Palaeolithic-Mesolithic Period (c.500,000 to c.4,500 BC)**

#### **Early Wooded Harbour Landscapes**

- 2.3.2 Finds of Palaeolithic flint tools show the Chichester Harbour area would have been used by our hominid ancestors during the drier and warmer periods. The Harbour riverside would have been an attractive place for those early hunters who could exploit the rich wildlife associated with this ecosystem.
- 2.3.3 The increase in warmth in the Mesolithic c.10,000 to 4,500 BC period brought changes in vegetation, and forest would have developed along the edges of the Solent River. The coastal plain is likely to have consisted of a series of different woodland types according to the soil type. The heavy soils are likely to have been dominated by oak woodland, whilst the lighter loamy soils may have had an oak-ash and lime woodland.
- 2.3.4 The Chichester Harbour area would have been a rich landscape for the Mesolithic hunters and gatherers, both as a forested landscape (before 6,400 years ago) providing game and woodland plants and resources, and as a flooded wooded Harbour (after 6,400 years ago), providing fish, shell fish and land-based resources. These people would have moulded the landscape through their activities, probably clearing openings in the forest to build temporary settlements and to attract game, and possibly coppicing areas of woodland to increase their usefulness. Scattered

finds of Mesolithic artefacts, evidence of a short-lived occupation site north of Bosham and tools found near Chidham do show that Mesolithic people were utilising the rich and varied landscape.

### **Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods (c.4,500BC to c.43AD)**

#### **Early Agricultural Landscape and Settlement**

- 2.3.5 A range of Neolithic sites has been found along the Harbour edge, ranging from temporary tool making sites to more extensive occupation sites. Whilst many activities such as fishing and the gathering of land and marine based resources would have continued, it is likely that land management practices in the Harbour would have dramatically altered in the Neolithic. This would probably have involved increased clearance of woodland for fields and more permanent settlement. This process would have continued and intensified during the Bronze Age and Iron Age, though artefacts from this period are currently less well-identified in the Harbour area than those of the Neolithic.

#### **Transhumance**

- 2.3.6 Whilst it is generally held that the Neolithic and later prehistoric periods were characterised by increased levels of sedentary settlement, it is the case that nomadism still continued through this period through the process of transhumance, whereby animals were moved from summer to winter pastures and back, and where their human drovers resided with the animals for the season, away from the permanent settlement centre. Across Sussex, it is now generally held that this process has moulded the modern landscape: the general north-south road network evident in the entire county is likely a remnant of late prehistoric transhumant drove-roads. Within this context it is possible that the north-south orientation visible in the Harbour landscape is also part of this pattern; likening the sheltered harbourside with its coastal resources, to the Downs and its pasture resources.

### **The Roman Period (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD)**

#### **Settlement and Roads**

- 2.3.7 The coming of the Romans would have had a major impact on the Chichester Harbour area in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, as they rapidly built up their main regional centre here. The Roman port for the town of Noviomagus (Chichester) was at Fishbourne, where a military base was built in 43AD as the first stage of Roman occupation, followed by the growth of the landing place between 45 and 75AD. There are many Roman sites and finds across the Harbour including

the Roman road on the line of the A259, the Palace at Fishbourne (just outside the AONB), the 'Port' granary at Fishbourne and the temple at Northney on Hayling Island.

- 2.3.8 The Romans needed building materials for their new centres and would have made bricks and tiles from the clays in the Harbour area, using kilns and furnaces. It is likely that stone would also have been imported from overseas, being brought to the Harbour by boat. Timber would have been required for firing kilns, iron furnaces and glass works, and for the construction of timber buildings. Woodland would have been cleared from the better soils, and crops would have been sown as the south of England was developed into a major corn growing and exporting centre of the Roman Empire. In addition to the above, since the Iron Age and possibly before, Chichester Harbour had been the location of concentrations of salt producing sites, a tradition that the Romans continued.

### **Agricultural Landscape**

- 2.3.9 With their legacy of open fields and small, coppiced copses developed from earlier prehistoric features, it can be considered that by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the Romans left the area, the landward area of the Harbour would have had a similar appearance to today. In addition, the Roman roads that linked Chichester to Portchester along the northern boundary of the Harbour area, have continued to be used for the transport of traded goods between the settlements of the area right through to the present day, and have provided a constant feature in subsequent reorganisations of the landscape (such as the late medieval and post-medieval field enclosures). For this reason, the fields around the Roman road can be seen to abut it and use it as a boundary feature, though they are many centuries later in date than the Roman road itself.

### **The Saxon Period (4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> century)**

#### **Settlement**

- 2.3.10 It is generally held that the Anglo Saxons landed on the Sussex coast in 477 AD. The son of the invading Chief Aella was called Cissa, and his name was given to the town of Regnum (formerly Noviomagus) as 'Cissan Ceaster', modern Chichester. The Kingdom of Sussex (the South Saxons) was converted to Christianity in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the Venerable Bede records that at about 680AD, prior to a cathedral being established at Selsey, there was an Irish monk who had a very small monastery at the place named 'Bosanham' "encompassed with sea and woods".
- 2.3.11 During the later Saxon period, the ownership of many of the local Sussex parishes were divided between the Manor of Bosham; the Chapelry of Bosham and the See at Selsey. The large

Manor of Bosham, which was owned by King Harold's father, Earl Godwin during the 11th century, held the parishes of Apuldram, Bosham and West Itchenor. The Chapelry of Bosham had its manorial centre at Chidham and held Funtington and West Thorney, whilst the See of Selsey (later owned by the Cathedral at Chichester when Selsey flooded in 1048) held Birdham and West Wittering. This complex pattern of landholding illustrates the importance of Bosham and Chidham as manorial centres during the early medieval period and hints at the desirability of all these local Sussex parishes with their fertile soils and fishing rights. Several villages that thrived in the early medieval period in the Harbour area have since been lost, or largely lost, probably due to Black Death population decreases, including East Itchenor, Warblington and Apuldram.

### **Trade**

- 2.3.12 In addition to being a Manorial centre and the location of an important chapelry, Bosham was also the major trading port of the Harbour during the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This trading port has reached significance in the history of the nation, as not only was it the property of Earl Godwin, but was also the point from which Earl Harold embarked for Normandy in 1064 at the start of the dispute for the throne that subsequently led to the Norman invasion and the Battle of Hastings. This embarkation is recorded in the Bayeux Tapestry, which depicts Harold standing at the door of Bosham church.

### **Medieval (1066 to 16<sup>th</sup> century)**

#### **Agricultural Landscape**

- 2.3.13 The Domesday Book records a late stage in the formation of the landscape. The woods and coppices that survived until the 20<sup>th</sup> century were probably shaped largely as they are today and were the subject of complex use and management. Open field agriculture was being practised in many villages, with meadows being maintained to support the oxen plough teams used to plough these fields. The shared open field cultivation system started to fall out of favour at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the Sussex coastal plain is one of the first areas in which enclosures of open fields started to take place. The shapes of the medieval open fields are often preserved in the outlines of the later enclosed fields. An example of this in the Harbour area is the fields north and east of West Wittering where the large open fields can be seen fanning out from the settlement, now divided into smaller fields following the same orientation.

### **Trade**

- 2.3.14 The trade in agricultural goods and wool built up during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries with stone being traded back from the Isle of Wight and Normandy. The growth of coastal

trade in corn from harbourside ports seems to have first occurred through Emsworth, which was designated part of the port of Chichester until 1680, when it became part of the port of Portsmouth. In conjunction with Dell Quay, the official quay for the Port of Chichester, Emsworth seems to have been the main medieval port in the Harbour and had a significant merchant fleet, as well as shipbuilding yards and a fishing industry.

## Post-Medieval and Modern (16<sup>th</sup> century to present)

### Trade and Industry

- 2.3.15 Shipbuilding started to become a major local Harbour industry during the medieval period and it seems likely that this would have been supported by the various coppices and woodlands around the Harbour. Shipyards at Emsworth and Itchenor built ships for both the Royal Navy and Chichester merchants during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with Bosham taking over from Itchenor during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Government concern over the shipbuilding industry's demand for timber led to many different constraints and inducements to landowners to encourage the growth of timber suitable for shipbuilding. The Weald of Sussex was considered an important source of timber but the difficulties of transporting timber through the heavy Weald clays would have meant that the shipwrights around the Harbour would have continued to look for local timber as a priority.
- 2.3.16 It is very likely that the presence of the shipbuilding industry ensured that the remaining remnants of area's historic woodland were retained and managed, as there was a ready market for their produce at the local yard. The least agriculturally productive land was the least likely to be cleared for farmland and so the heavy clays of the Reading Beds and London Clay ensured that the coppice and woodland over these soils have often survived to the present day. Old Park Wood and the copses close-by may well have supplied timber to the brick kiln on Bosham Hoe.
- 2.3.17 The farms in the immediate vicinity of the village ports of Bosham, Dell Quay, Itchenor, Birdham, Emsworth and Nutbourne would have supplied some food stuffs for export due to their proximity to the Harbour. The major exports during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries were wheat and malt, which were exported to the Low Countries, London and the West Country. It is also likely that coastal trading ships took bread and corn to the Naval Dockyards at Portsmouth and Gosport, and that trade with other parts of Sussex, Surrey and London followed the opening of the Chichester Canal in 1823. The harbourside ports also milled corn for local use and for export as flour, and most of the villages have the remains of a wind or tidal mill that are now important features of the waterside landscape.
- 2.3.18 During the peak period of corn export in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it is likely that there were 10 or more mills working around the Harbour. These mills were largely water or tidal mills, and Chichester Harbour is generally considered to have the largest historical concentration of tide mills in the country. Several mills or associated millponds remain today, including at Langstone, Emsworth, Nutbourne, Fishbourne and Birdham.

## Agricultural Landscape Change and Reclamation

- 2.3.19 The period prior to the repeal of the Corn Laws would have been marked by a considerable increase in the production of cereal crops as these were most profitable. The agricultural improvements of the period such as the introduction of the seed drill and rotational cropping had helped improve yields and there would have been some pressure to bring marginal land into cultivation, leading to some reduction in the wooded area. At the same time, experiments in land reclamation were undertaken, most notably along the Thorney Channel and the Bosham Channel. These reclamation projects were short-lived, with storms breaking down the sea defences. Remains of these projects, including remains of their embankments, can still be identified within Thorney and Bosham Channels. The most extensive area of surviving land reclamation in the Harbour is at the Deeps at Thorney and dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.3.20 Enclosures of the medieval open fields, commons and wastes was a feature of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape, with several Parliamentary Enclosure Acts surviving to document this change. This process of enclosure was conceived at the time to be a route to increased productivity and many areas of these regular surveyed fields can be identified. In addition to this formal enclosure process, earlier enclosures by agreement may have taken place during the preceding centuries. These fields enclosed by agreement are generally less regular in shape, predating modern surveying techniques, and it is possible that areas of fields enclosed by agreement may survive within Chichester Harbour. In addition to this enclosure of pre-existing larger fields, commons and wastes, a third process of field creation also took place within the Harbour; namely assarting. Assarting is the creation of fields through the clearance of woodland, or by cutting into the edges of commons and wastes. Some areas of Bosham Peninsula's fields appear to be the result of assarting as are some of those at Cobnor Point. The woodland shaws that still divide these fields are the remains of the larger areas of woodland into which the fields were cut. The process of assarting took place over many centuries, and whilst it is a general observation that the more regular fields tend to be later in date, this cannot be taken as an absolute rule to date the fields.
- 2.3.21 The introduction of steam and then the tractor, prior to the Second World War led to a further rationalisation of field sizes to suit the needs of larger machines. The straightening of less regular field edges has also been a feature of this process. Hedge loss appears to have accelerated during the last 50 years throughout the Harbour area, with fields becoming progressively larger. Localised changes have also had a dramatic effect on field structures, for example, the 1930s construction of the Thorney Island military base removed most of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosure fields on that peninsula.

2.3.22 In addition to the arable and pasture fields described above, historically the harbourside villages were frequently surrounded by small hedged paddocks that would have been used for the grazing of heavy horses, oxen or calves. In the areas where these have survived and not been ploughed for cereal production, they are now often used for horse grazing. They have a hedged character and are quite intimate in scale, the majority being no larger than 2 hectares in size. Many of these paddocks have been built on during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, creating 'backland' areas in which urban development has extended out into the former hedged paddock areas, either through hedgerow removal or by small-scale construction activities. Such landscapes are particularly common adjacent to the villages of West Wittering, West Itchenor and Birdham, close to the boundary of the AONB. In the modern landscape, the paddock and backland areas provide an important tree and hedge screen and buffer between the developed and undeveloped parts of the Harbour thus ensuring that the area retains an overall rural character.

### **Fishing Industry**

2.3.23 Whilst land-based agricultural activities in the Harbour have shaped the landscape dramatically over the past three-hundred years, the local fishing industry has also moulded the landscape in particular ways. In addition to the harbourside villages with their quays and fishing and boat-related buildings, the historic oyster industry has also made distinct additions to the mudflats within the channels. The raised enclosures of the oyster coves, or oyster beds, can be observed in many locations around Chichester Harbour, usually close to existing settlements or small clusters of houses.

### **Leisure and Recreation**

2.3.24 The growth of the urban population that followed the agricultural and industrial revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was followed by the coming of the railway. The London, Brighton and South Coast Railway adopted and promoted the concept of a visit to the seaside by train, and the development of coastal resorts followed. This growth extended to the coast either side of the Harbour during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A railway bridge was constructed at Langstone in 1866 to give access to Hayling Island, and a railway was constructed across the Manhood peninsula to Selsey.

2.3.25 The growth of seaside housing and hotels followed along the south coast of Hayling, and the Manhood peninsula. This process of incremental development continued into the 1930s and only started to be controlled by the introduction of town and country planning legislation in the 1940s.

- 2.3.26 Commercial traffic in the Harbour has declined steadily since the 1940s and 1950s and has been subsequently replaced by recreational boating. Since the War there has been a rapid growth in the popularity of sailing, which was considered a sport exclusively for wealthy individuals until the 1930s but is now more affordable due to changes in boat construction technology. The racing of sailing craft in the Harbour had its origins in informal races between fishing boats in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These became a sport of the gentry during the Edwardian era, with many fishermen supporting their income by acting as paid crew during the summer. Several sailing clubs were established around the Harbour following the First World War, including at Bosham, Itchenor, Hayling and Emsworth.
- 2.3.27 The post-War growth in available leisure time and the increased mobility of the population due to the motorcar have also contributed to an increase in demand for sailing facilities. The growth in recreational sailing caused a major increase in the demand for moorings and for marina berths, which are provided at several locations around the Harbour. At one stage the Chichester Yacht Basin, built on the site of earlier salterns, was the largest marina in Europe, though this is no longer the case.

## **2.4 Past and Current Perceptions**

- 2.4.1 Chichester Harbour has captured the imagination of many artists and writers and has been described through writing, poetry, painting and more recently photography and film.

### **Artistic Associations**

- 2.4.2 Some of the first illustrations of the Harbour, and of Bosham, appear in embroidery, as a part of the Bayeux Tapestry. One of the scenes shows Harold praying at Bosham Church.
- 2.4.3 British coastal painting evolved from the influence of Dutch artists during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and one of the exponents of the subject was landscape painter George Lambert who painted a view of the Chichester Channel showing Dell Quay in the early 1800s. The view of the landscape towards the South Downs and Chichester Cathedral is quite detailed and shows that a large part of the shoreline was wooded at that time, and that a windmill was located on the Dell Quay shore. A further view of the channel from a painting by George Wootton some years later shows what appear to be willow trees growing along the shore between Dell Quay and Fishbourne, and a ship being loaded from a warehouse beside the water.
- 2.4.4 During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, artistic colonies who had devoted their attention to rocky coasts began to take an interest in flatter coastal areas and their creeks, boats and villages. As a result, the Harbour started to become a magnet for artists who became increasingly interested in its

marshland and flat coastal areas. Many views of the creeks and boats on the Harbour and the small villages of Bosham, Birdham, West Wittering and Itchenor have been painted since that time. A watercolour of Mill Rytte on Hayling Island by Edward Duncan painted in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century shows a picturesque scene adjoining the Harbour.

- 2.4.5 Artists who have lived beside the Harbour included William and John Joy who painted delicate watercolours of the Portsmouth area in the 1850s, Charles Paddy who lived at Bosham and Hayling Island in the 1890s and Charles Dixon who lived at Itchenor from 1900 to 1934. Langstone windmill was restored by Flora Twort who painted in the Petersfield area during the early years of this century.
- 2.4.6 Many photographs of the Harbour villages were taken during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most probably by John Metcalfe of Chidham. These recorded village life and buildings, with some landscape visible in the background. One of the most noticeable features in these are the elm trees that once grew along the roads and lanes of the area, before the trees were killed by Dutch Elm disease.

#### **Descriptive Writings and Literary Associations**

- 2.4.7 Early records refer to the influence of the sea on the Harbour and the constantly changing shape of the land. According to the Ecclesiastical History written by the Venerable Bede in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Harbour entrance is described as being '*a slingshot wide*', although the actual width of a slingshot is not expanded on in any detail. Many of the early descriptions of the area refer to the villages such as Bosham and their famous inhabitants. One such person was Thomas Becket's companion and biographer, Herbert of Bosham. In later years, Tennyson's fictional writings about Becket contained a description of Bosham.

- 2.4.8 It is the villages, and in particular Bosham, that have preoccupied the writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1904, E V Lucas in 'Highways and Byways in Sussex' described Bosham as:

*'...the most interesting village in what may be called the Selsey peninsula. Yet how has its glory diminished! What is now a quiet abode of fishermen and the tarrying-place of yachtsmen and artists [there are few Royal Academy exhibitions without the spire of Bosham Church] has been in its time a very factory of history.'*

- 2.4.9 Other villages that have received attention from both artists and writers have been the '*...sleepy amphibious village of Apuldram, famous once for its smugglers...*' (E V Lucas, 1904). S P B Mais liked Wittering with its '*...ancient church in the trees, its quaint inn, the Old House at Home and its fishermen's thatched cottages with gardens full of holly-hocks*', while West

Itchenor was *'...an even more isolated and unsophisticated village than Bosham, with a ramshackle wooden pier jutting out into the entrance of the creek'*.

- 2.4.10 Another major topic of the writers, after the villages, is the loneliness and isolation of the Harbour itself. Clark wrote that at:

*'Chichester and Poole, there is silence and loneliness once more, save at the height of the yachting season. Wide expanses of muddy flats...where hundreds of birds feed at low tide'*.

- 2.4.11 The association between the mudflats and the abundant bird life in the Harbour is dwelt on by W H Hudson who describes the village of Birdham as a 'birds' home', which:

*'...doubtless acquired its name in early Saxon times on account of the great numbers of sea and water fowl that resorted to the spot in winter'*.

- 2.4.12 Change has also been a common theme up to and during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the nature of this change has been perceived in a number of different ways. The feeling of little change and unspoilt beauty is in fact to many people one of the great attractions of the Harbour.

- 2.4.13 The development of the Harbour as a sailing centre, although bringing change to the area, is generally regarded as having added to its character. In a description of the Harbour in the Evening Argus in 1962, a writer tells of:

*'...a country of great beauty, a low and level land with great expanses of water, dunes and saltings and long creeks biting into fertile fields...'* and of it being *'...a yachtsman's paradise, and colourful sailing craft skimming over sparkling water, amplify the enchantment already there. So do the clustered masts along the beaches at Bosham, Dell Quay, Itchenor and little beaches with no names at all'*.

- 2.4.14 It is perhaps the writings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century sailors that depict the Harbour best. For example, the influence of the tides and the changing weather on the character of the area is described by Alker Tripp. He tells of an evening in which he:

*'...sailed about in the dinghy among the sandbanks in the harbour, landing on the island shoals of the Stocker and Pilsey Sands. While the tide came up, we stood upon narrowing islands of ribbed sea sand and watched them gradually diminish under the creeping and relentless rise. The sun was low in the west and the place was complete solitude'*.

2.4.15 Lucas reflects on the way in which the state of the tide influenced his perception of the Harbour's beauty. At high tide he writes:

*'When every stragglng arm of the harbour is brimming full, when their still surfaces reflect the sky with a brighter light, and the fishing boats ride erect, Bosham is serenely beautiful and restful'.*

2.4.16 At low tide, however, his view is different and he describes how:

*'...the withdrawing floods lay bare vast tracks of mud and the ships heel over into attitudes disreputably oblique and stagnation reigns'.*

## **3.0 FORCES FOR CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE**

### **3.1 General**

3.1.1 The landscape, ecological and historic character of Chichester Harbour is dynamic and is constantly changing in response to natural processes and human activities. The cumulative effect of past change, as described in Section 2.0 has created the special and distinctive character of the Harbour that is valued today. The landscape will continue to change in the future. The pace and nature of change is accelerating which may impact on those qualities that make the landscape special. A key challenge is to understand, manage and direct future changes in a way that maintains the outstanding landscape quality and conserves and enhances its value features and attributes.

3.1.2 This section identifies the key forces for change that affect the character of Chichester Harbour. These include global, national and local changes, and they are considered under five main headings – Climate Change, Agriculture, Development, Transport and Traffic, and Recreation and Tourism. Given that socio-economic characteristics of the AONB and its surrounding areas play an important role, an overview of these is provided first, and they are also highlighted where relevant under each force for change heading.

### **3.2 Overview of Social and Economic Characteristics**

3.2.1 The *Chichester Harbour State of the AONB Report 2018* identifies the current socio-economic profile of the AONB. It provides an update to the *2013 State of the AONB Report*, although the Census data remains the same from the 2011 Census.

3.2.2 The social and economic characteristics of the Chichester Harbour AONB are greatly influenced by its location within the broader southeast region, and its proximity to the towns of Chichester, Havant, South Hayling, Portsmouth and Sussex coastal towns such as Bognor. Although some local services/industry including tourism and a wide range of water related businesses are of importance within the AONB, the economy is principally outward looking to the boundary towns and beyond. The AONB also, despite its unusual peninsula/harbour configuration, has mostly good communication links. The A259 forms the northern boundary to the AONB and the A27 runs parallel to this to the north, providing easy access to markets and clients for businesses located in and beyond the AONB. Due to significant out commuting to the surrounding towns, the AONB must not be seen as a discrete area in social and economic terms, but one that is greatly influenced by external factors, by its attractiveness as a location to live/for second homes, and by its relative proximity to expanding employment

centres. This has resulted in an increase in population and a high demand for housing within the AONB.

- 3.2.3 The southeast of England has a total population of 8.9 million people<sup>7</sup> making it the most densely populated region in England. This population increased by 0.6 million between 2001 and 2011, a rate increase of 7.9%. The ONS Population Estimates from mid-2016, estimates that the current population of the AONB is 10,585<sup>8</sup>. Protected landscapes generally have low populations due to restrictive planning policies to ensure that the purposes of the AONB designation are not compromised. However, although the population is low within the AONB the growth in the southeast region as a whole combined with these policies, leads to dense populations living in close proximity to the AONB and using it for recreation. Although the total population in Chichester Harbour AONB is approximately 10,585, there are almost half a million people within 10km of its boundary. It was estimated in 2009 that there were approximately 1.5 million visitors to the AONB each year, particularly concentrated in the summer season and at weekends. A decade later, this figure is likely to be much higher.
- 3.2.4 The differences in age structure of the population, when compared to the rest of the southeast and protected landscapes, is small, but overall protected landscapes have a slightly older population. This is true for Chichester Harbour, which has seen an increase in the number of people falling within the older age brackets. The age group with the greatest number of people is 60 to 69.
- 3.2.5 Census data from 2011 indicates that there are 5,069 dwellings within the AONB, with over half of the housing stock comprising detached properties. House prices in the AONB are on average 87% higher than those in the southeast as a whole. This suggests a lack of low-cost housing available to buy within the AONB. It also shows a dominance of larger style properties that are less likely to contribute to rural character. Added pressure comes from the large number of second homes within the AONB and wider area within Chichester District and Havant Borough.
- 3.2.6 Whilst overall deprivation is amongst the lowest in England, levels considered against the 'Barriers to Housing and Services' indicator are among the most deprived in the country. This is a result of the high property prices.
- 3.2.7 According to the 2011 Census data, employment levels are at 45%, which is low compared to 61% in the southeast region. This reflects the age ranges within the AONB, with 31% of the population retired.

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<sup>7</sup> Office of National Statistics, 2015

<sup>8</sup> As reported in Chichester Harbour AONB State of the AONB Report 2018

- 3.2.8 The most common businesses in the AONB are professional, scientific and technical services and wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles. Primary and secondary industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction are other common business types within the AONB. Micro-businesses are significant employers within the AONB and provide 45% of employment within the AONB. Tourism related businesses employ 9% of the employed population within the AONB.
- 3.2.9 Most of the development pressure in Chichester Harbour AONB is for residential use. Rural gaps between existing settlements are at risk, due to the pressure to develop in the wider southeast area.
- 3.2.10 A high-level review of available aerial imagery has identified several, small-scale housing developments that have taken place since the previous LCA<sup>9</sup>. These are located on the edge of settlements including Fishbourne, West Wittering, East Wittering and Hayling. These are identified in more detail within the relevant character area descriptions in Section 4.

### **3.3 Agriculture, Land Management and Diversification**

- 3.3.1 The historic analysis undertaken as part of this assessment has indicated that the pattern of agriculture within the Chichester Harbour AONB has fluctuated in accordance with changing economic circumstances and technological developments leading to changes in cropping pattern and overall landscape character. More recently, changes in Environmental and Countryside Stewardship have resulted in changes to agricultural land use. There will likely be further changes once Britain has left the EU and schemes are reviewed by Defra.

#### **Recent and Current Agricultural Change**

- 3.3.2 Post-war agricultural policy resulted in the intensification of farming in the area with a tendency for fewer larger farm holdings, mainly in arable cultivation. This agricultural change has brought about changes to landscape character as follows:
- Loss of peripheral boundary features such as hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
  - Decline in the numbers of farmland birds resulting from a shift from spring to autumn drilling;
  - Lack of maintenance of woodland coppice, hedgerows and other landscape features such as ponds reflecting a reduction of farm labour and a lack of skills to maintain these features;

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<sup>9</sup> CBA, 2005

- Reduction in livestock as farms have converted to arable due in part to a decline in farm incomes from dairying and beef rearing;
- Introduction of large modern farm buildings and complexes, and conversion of redundant traditional farm buildings into residential or rural industrial use;
- Increased pressure on farmers to diversify results in loss of traditional land management practices;
- Nitrate and phosphate fertiliser runoff into watercourses contributing towards water pollution; and
- Amount of land under Environmental Stewardship has declined since 2013 and the Countryside Stewardship scheme was introduced in 2015.

3.3.3 There are two Countryside Stewardship Agreements within the AONB, covering a total of 238.9 hectares. The coverage of agri-environment schemes within the AONB has fallen since 2013 State of the AONB report.

3.3.4 Growth of the market garden industry has also resulted in localised ‘industrialisation’ of rural farming character, with some expansion of crops grown under glass etc. Effects have included:

- Visual intrusion from glasshouses, large plastic polytunnels, plastic sheeting and irrigation equipment.
- Proliferation of signs associated with small scale ‘farm gate’ outlets.

3.3.5 There has also been an increase in pony paddocks associated with less viable agricultural land around the settlement fringes and as a result of the development of horse riding as a leisure pursuit. This often results in poor management of hedgerow boundaries and grassland, intrusive post and wire fencing and stable facilities etc.

### **Future Agricultural Change**

3.3.6 Whilst the effects of post-1945 agricultural changes on landscape character are well understood, future changes that may result from increasing competition in a global market place and post-Brexit funding for agri-environmental schemes are yet to become clear. There may be ongoing adverse effects on character, as well as important opportunities to enhance and restore character as a result of changes in policy. The potential scenarios include:

- A further increase in large arable farm units which may lead to further homogenisation of the landscape, reduction in biodiversity, and potential demand for more centralised and large-scale buildings such as grain storage facilities. However, larger units may also have

the resources, labour and capital to respond to environmental initiatives and carry out landscape and biodiversity enhancement in association with productive agriculture;

- Expansion of commercial market gardening could result in further pressure for large glasshouses and polytunnels in and around Chichester Harbour. Equally, there is opportunity to build on public interest in the origin of their food and focus on sustainable practices in regard to locally sourced and organic produce and environmentally friendly farming;
- A further loss of livestock which may lead to the abandonment and scrub invasion on grazing marshes; and
- Further pressures for diversification and new uses of 'marginal' land, including smallholdings, leisure uses and expansion of horse paddocks. Land used as paddock is more profitable than arable or horticultural land.

### **Diversification**

- 3.3.7 Due to financial pressures, diversification of farming is becoming generally more common. Micro-businesses already form a large part of the employment figures. It is likely that this will continue to be the trend as farmers look to diversify.

## **3.4 Built Development**

- 3.4.1 Built development is a very important pressure for change. Whilst national and local planning policies provide strong protection for the Chichester Harbour AONB, there are several key pressures within and around the AONB currently affect or may affect the character in future. These, in turn, are being driven by both changes in the economic and social character of the AONB and that of the surrounding region.

### **Peripheral Urban Development**

- 3.4.2 The large settlements of Havant and Chichester lie outside the AONB Boundary. Other urban centres of South Hayling, Emsworth and Southbourne, which lie partly within the AONB have also shown considerable growth since the Second World War. The impacts on the character of the AONB have been localised. However, there have been important indirect effects such as increases in traffic on the A27 trunk road, and the A286 and A259 main roads, which have locally reduced tranquillity and led to greater recreational demands within the AONB.
- 3.4.3 Whilst the relatively small size of the AONB precludes large developments inside the boundary, this has resulted in pressure on land in the surrounding region that would affect the character and setting of the AONB. At present, household growth within the surrounding

region of the AONB is not keeping pace with economic growth leading to pressure for new development sites. Potential urban extensions round Chichester, Fishbourne, Southbourne, Emsworth, Havant and other smaller settlements could result in:

- Loss of distinctive settlement identity;
- Erosion of rural character;
- Noise and light pollution;
- Visual intrusion and loss of important views;
- Disturbance to wildfowl;
- Water quality impacts from additional nutrient loadings; and
- Loss of tranquillity and of a sense of wilderness.

### **Village and Harbourside Housing Development**

3.4.4 The AONB is a sought-after area in which to live and spend leisure time. There is pressure to increase the size of villages and for infilling. A major attraction of the Harbour is its generally open rural nature with long views over water to a distant wooded structure. This attractive prospect and the proximity of the recreational facilities of the Harbour, have added considerable value to harbourside properties which are much in demand. There has been a trend for an increasing number to be owned by the large wealthy retired population of the AONB, by commuters and by second homeowners. This has the effect of further exacerbating the demand and has led to the enlargement of existing cottages and farmhouses, as well as infilling between existing properties. It is having an impact on the social character of the AONB with a lack of affordable housing. There is also pressure for redevelopment of traditional boatyards and holiday villages for large detached houses, reflecting a decline in the economic viability of these local Harbour industries. The decline of traditional boatyards is due to increasing costs, loss of traditional skills and a demand for motorised boats. Key landscape character impacts that result can include:

- Intrusion on harbourside landscape setting both from extensions to existing properties and from new properties caused by their increasing bulk, height, large reflective glazed areas, and unsympathetic colour treatment;
- Erosion of rural character from the introduction of suburban styles and materials;
- Loss of trees and vegetation;
- Adverse impact from associated development of jetties and slipways on natural foreshore and on nature conservation;
- Adverse impact from closely mown lawns extending to the water's edge with no natural transition retained; and
- Loss of traditional boatyard character.

- 3.4.5 Initiatives such as Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements help to promote good design, as supplementary planning guidance. Itchenor, West Wittering, Bosham, Emsworth, Northney and Tye and Langstone all have adopted Village Design Statements. Most of the settlements within the AONB also have Neighbourhood Plans in place or in progress. Conservation Area appraisals are also important considerations as part of planning decision making.

### **Tall Structures – Telecommunication Masts and Wind Turbines**

- 3.4.6 At present there are six telecommunication phone masts within the Chichester Harbour area. This relatively small number reflects restrictive planning policies within the AONB. However, pressure for extending coverage is increasing, with a number of recent planning applications. Current and potential adverse landscape character impacts include intrusion on characteristic views, and loss of a sense of remoteness and tranquillity. Siting of masts outside the AONB boundary, but in close proximity to it, also have the potential to affect AONB character.
- 3.4.7 The accessible wind resource is considered to be low within the AONB. There is some potential for wind turbines identified on Selsey Bill and offshore and outside the AONB. These would be likely to be far enough away to avoid any significant adverse impacts on landscape character. Small, private wind turbines could have localised impacts. However, applications for renewable energy projects have dropped to less than 1% of applications since 2013.

## **3.5 Transport and Traffic**

- 3.5.1 This is another very important force for change on the AONB, operating within and outside the Harbour area. The past development of the A27 trunk road has had a significant impact on tranquillity, particularly in the north and east of the area.

### **Chichester Bypass**

- 3.5.2 As a result of economic growth along the south coast corridor and increasing dependence on the private car, there has been major traffic growth in the Chichester area. The A27 bypass is heavily congested at peak times. There have been several studies carried out into potential improvements of the A27. These could potentially have adverse visual impacts on the AONB and cause further erosion of tranquillity.

## **Traffic Growth within the Harbour**

3.5.3 The 2018 Chichester Harbour Residents and Visitor Survey showed that of 1,076 respondents, 65% drive to Chichester Harbour, with 6.5% travelling by bicycle and 1% by public transport. There is major weekend congestion in summer associated with car borne holiday traffic moving onto and off the Manhood peninsula. West Wittering car park can attract up to 170,000 cars in a year. Out commuting from the Harbour also generates significant traffic movements. The main landscape character impacts include:

- Loss of rural tranquillity;
- Erosion of road edges and verges with local road improvements by kerbing, paving, highway lighting, visibility splays and signing, creating a more urban character; and
- Increased requirement for provision of parking in villages and rural locations. Traffic and parking impacts in Itchenor and Bosham are particularly noticeable.

3.5.4 Whilst there will always be a number of visitors who will continue to visit the area by car, notably the boating public who transport equipment, there may be important future opportunities to promote more sustainable forms of access. These could include improving public transport and provision of a better network of cycle routes and footpaths, thereby reducing some of the adverse effects on landscape character of car borne traffic. Local authority transport and accessibility plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans will be key to this.

## **3.6 Recreation**

3.6.1 Demand for recreational facilities, both water and land based, has been and looks set to continue to be a significant force for change.

### **Yachting and Cruising**

3.6.2 Yachting is the most popular water activity in the Harbour and has grown considerably since the Second World War. The Harbour is particularly well known for dinghy sailing activity. In recent years it has become increasingly popular as a cruising ground for sailing cruisers and engineered powered boats. Associated with the above growth has been a continued increase in demand for Harbour moorings, and marinas. The Conservancy has adopted policies to control the number of boats on the Harbour, with a current moratorium on additional swinging moorings and maintenance of undeveloped areas at the Channel heads.

3.6.3 Despite these policies, and the fact that boats and boating continue to be an integral and positive feature of the seascape, there are a number of adverse impacts on character that are associated with an increasing scale of activity. These are as follows:

- Loss of traditional boatyard character through conversion to marinas with standardised concrete structures and walkways and removal of older wooden boats;
- Visual impact of car parking at the larger marina sites;
- Loss of 'natural' shoreline from development of marinas; and
- Noise from motorised vehicles.

#### **Other Water Based Activities**

3.6.4 Windsurfing is confined largely to the open sea off West Wittering and Hayling Beach. Canoeing also takes place within a few areas of the Harbour. Neither of these have significant landscape character impacts. At present, the occurrence of personal watercraft is minimal. However, should this change there is potential for considerable landscape character impacts including noise and damage to sensitive habitats and wildlife. Water-skiing is prohibited by local byelaws.

#### **Land Based Recreation**

3.6.5 Demand for recreational facilities for Harbour users who are not engaged in watersports has grown during the last fifty years and looks set to continue. A significant part of the Harbour shoreline is designated footpath and is used by walkers and wildlife lovers. 855 of respondents to the 2018 Survey selected 'appreciating the scenery and views' as their activity within the AONB. Boating or sailing was the second most popular response.

3.6.6 As part of the AONB Management Plan the Conservancy makes provision for interpretation boards such as at key viewpoint sites, and for establishing more cycle routes including new wayfinding signage to encourage the public's appreciation of the area. There is limited active promotion of the AONB, as it is not an objective of the designation. Demand for recreation should be met, in line with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB.

3.6.7 Current impacts of recreation on landscape character are mainly localised, and include:

- Continued erosion of sand dunes at East Head, despite current management efforts;
- Damage and erosion to some footpaths;
- Adverse visual impact of car parking in some harbourside villages, e.g. Bosham; and

- Localised and seasonal reductions in tranquillity at sensitive visitor locations such as West Wittering car park, East Head, Bosham and Fishbourne.

3.6.8 Noisy sports such as motorbiking and go-karting also have the potential to have localised adverse visual and tranquillity impacts.

3.6.9 The 2018 Survey found that the majority of visitors to the AONB only stayed for 1 to 2 nights, and the most popular activities were boating or sailing, walking and visiting pubs and tearooms.

3.6.10 Results from the Survey are used to inform the AONB Management Plan, to guide objectives and in turn have the potential to overcome any potential further adverse effects on the landscape character and special qualities of the AONB.

### **3.7 Climate Change**

3.7.1 Climate change is a worldwide issue, and evidence of it is growing in the UK with trends towards increased temperatures and wetter winters, and more extreme weather events in the last ten years already identified. The scenarios produced by the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)<sup>10</sup> suggests that the UK could experience by 2080:

- An increase of current average temperatures by 1.1-3.2°C;
- Up to 50% drier summers and 30% wetter winters;
- More frequent summer droughts, winter flooding and storms; and
- A sea level rise of up to 83cm above current levels in the south east of England.

3.7.2 Whilst there are still uncertainties regarding exact changes at regional and local levels, it is clear there could be both direct and indirect impacts on landscape character. The potential implications for landscape character in the Chichester Harbour AONB include changes in habitats and species composition, habitat fragmentation, water resources, soils, agricultural land use, recreation and tourism, and cultural heritage.

#### **Changes in Habitat and Species Compositions**

3.7.3 Increases in sea levels, especially if coupled with increases in storm activity, may cause greater erosion of some habitats such as intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh, sand dunes and vegetated shingle, especially where there is limited potential for natural or managed realignment. This

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<sup>10</sup> UKCIP02 Briefing Report, 2002

would result in the intertidal zone being squeezed against the existing sea defences (coastal squeeze), with a consequent reduction in the overall value of the area for wildlife. Erosion of the more exposed areas of the Harbour has already led to the undermining of harbourside trees. Rising sea level may well increase the rate at which trees are lost, with a resultant detrimental change in the wooded margin of the Harbour. It could also result in intertidal mudflats becoming sandier, improving the habitat for some species such as oystercatcher, but reducing it for other species such as redshanks and dunlin. In addition, the dune slacks could be adversely affected by lower water availability in summer.

### **Habitat Fragmentation**

- 3.7.4 The Great Storm of 1987, between 15-16 October, had a devastating impact on Chichester Harbour. Other notable but smaller storms since then have resulted in flooding events, with the frequency linked to climate change. Extreme weather events have resulted in loss of individual, often mature hedgerow trees. These make an important contribution to the character of the Harbour area so an increase in frequency of storm events could have a detrimental impact.

### **Water Resources**

- 3.7.5 Drier summers may lead to reductions in groundwater level, and the drying out of ponds and watercourses. This, exacerbated by demands for irrigation, could result in less water being available to dilute pollutants reducing water quality.

### **Soils**

- 3.7.6 The heavier, less well drained soils in the Harbour could be subject to increased flooding during the winter.

### **Agriculture**

- 3.7.7 The agricultural land area may diminish. Rich agricultural land below 5m AOD is at risk of saline intrusion from rising sea levels. There may be an increased requirement for irrigation reservoirs to store winter rainfall and for use of sprinkling equipment etc. in summer. Traditional arable crops may also be replaced by more summer drought tolerant species such as sunflowers and maize. Extreme drought conditions may also lead to increased frequency of fires damaging crops.

## **Recreation and Tourism**

- 3.7.8 Warmer summers could encourage greater recreation and tourism in summer, exacerbating existing problems such as traffic congestion, and beach and dune erosion (see Recreation and Tourism Section).

## **Cultural Heritage**

- 3.7.9 Damage to historic landscapes and archaeological sites may occur through erosion from sea level rise and flooding, as well as through changes in farming practice and soil desiccation. Archaeology on the mudflats and shoreline is particularly vulnerable. Decay of building fabric over time could result from driving rain or increased solar radiation, reducing the durability of vernacular building materials and shortening building life expectancies.
- 3.7.10 The above analysis shows that the impacts of climate change on the landscape character of the Harbour are likely to be complex and interrelated, varying over space and time. The potential impacts will need to be monitored and there may be a need for much more detailed research to allow appropriate landscape management and planning responses to be developed.
- 3.7.11 There is an opportunity to develop sensitive and appropriate sea defence and managed realignment schemes in response to coastal squeeze (an adaptive planning approach).

## **3.8 Summary**

- 3.8.1 Key landscape character issues and challenges arising from the forces for change section are:
- Arresting the dilution of landscape character resulting from changes in farming practices including diversification and taking advantage of opportunities that may arise from future farming subsidy schemes;
  - Ensuring there is no major development inside the designated AONB;
  - Ensuring that any major development outside the designated AONB does not adversely affect character and setting of the AONB;
  - Avoiding damage to landscape setting from harbourside built development that is of poor design and introduces suburban styles and materials;
  - Reducing the high traffic levels outside and within the AONB which are eroding tranquillity;
  - Managing recreational use of the area so that it does not detract from the character and special qualities of the area;
  - Addressing the impacts of small-scale incremental changes in character; and

- Dealing with the effects of long-term climatic change and finding ways to manage those that do not result in damage to landscape character and loss of local distinctiveness, in particular taking advantage of the opportunities for managed realignment.

## 4.0 THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE

### 4.1 General

4.1.1 This section provides an overview of the character of the entire study area. It then describes variations in character in terms of the Landscape Character Types and their component Landscape Character Areas. It includes specific landscape management and planning guidelines for each of the Landscape Character Areas.

### 4.2 Overview

4.2.1 The Harbour is fully tidal. The tidal flow is in through Chichester Harbour and draining to the sea through a narrow outlet at Langstone Harbour. The coast is penetrated by distinctive tidal inlets that lead inland from the Harbour mouth via an open water pool to the A259 road which generally forms the northern boundary to the AONB. Saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats of the Harbour pool and inlets are broken by a maze of intricate channels and rythes. These inlets are in turn interspersed by open agricultural peninsulas with fields fringed by narrow margins of wind sculpted oaks and hawthorn and open coastal plain. As a result, there is significant variation and contrast in landscape character which is enhanced by the patterns of sea and land changing with the tide and seasons. In the flat landscape the vertical elements of church spires and old mills are also an important part of its character, as are the colour-washed red-roofed villages.

4.2.2 The open character of the flat agricultural peninsulas and of the coastal plain extends beyond the designated AONB boundary, within the study area. However, in parts, the large urban areas of Chichester, Havant and South Hayling have a strong influence on character, as do clusters of glasshouses and other roadside development.

### 4.3 Landscape Character Types

4.3.1 Landscape Character Types – are broad tracts of land with common characteristics of geology, landform, vegetation, land use and settlement that may reoccur across an area without being directly related to specific places. Within the study area 10 landscape character types have been identified (see **Figure 5**), all of which occur within the AONB designated area. These are:

- Harbour Mouth
- Harbour Basin
- Broad Inlets
- Narrow Inlets

- Minor Inlets
- Coastal Strip
- Harbour Islands and Peninsulas
- Lower Coastal Plain
- Upper Coastal Plain
- Large Coastal Peninsula

4.3.2 The key characteristics of each landscape character type are summarised below:

**A Harbour Mouth**

- Narrow opening between the sea and a marine Harbour basin;
- Typically enclosed by sand and shingle spits with associated dunes;
- Subject to strong tidal currents and prevailing winds;
- Sand banks exposed at low tide; and
- Views out to sea and along the coast.

**B Harbour Basin**

- Large, shallow marine basin with extensive sections of undefended natural shoreline;
- Large areas of open water at high tide;
- Mudflats and sand dominate at low tide;
- Extensive feeding grounds for waders and wildfowl;
- Fringing saltmarshes with an intricate maze of tiny channels;
- Open and exposed character; and
- Uninterrupted views and large skies.

**C Broad Inlets**

- Broad inlets sometimes with large branching inlet heads;
- Extensive mudflats exposed at low tide dissected by broad, straight and narrow forking channels;
- Large fringing saltmarshes with an intricate maze of tiny channels;
- Occasional projecting landing stages and jetties; and
- Open character with mostly undeveloped shorelines.

#### **D Narrow Inlets**

- Long narrow, typically enclosed inlets with winding channels;
- Woodlands and hedgerows fringe the shore;
- Mudflats dominate at low tide;
- Small patches of saltmarsh;
- Shingle shoreline; and
- Jetties, quays and landing stages are frequent features.

#### **E Minor Inlets**

- Very short and relatively narrow inlets;
- Mudflats and occasional patches of fringing saltmarsh are drained by narrow winding streams or rythes; and
- Typically enclosed character due to the presence of hedgerows, trees or built development along the shore.

#### **F Coastal Strip**

- Shingle and sand beaches with timber groynes;
- Linear, coastal urban development, interspersed by pockets of urban fringe farmland, coastal grassland, marsh and scrub;
- Holiday Village and Caravan Park development;
- Few hedgerows or hedgerow trees; and
- Exposed character.

#### **G Harbour Islands and Peninsulas**

- Flat to very gently sloping peninsulas and large islands, underlain by brickearth drift deposits;
- Coastal edge marked by low cliffs or low sea walls with occasional woodlands, scrub and hedgerows;
- Varied pattern of land uses, including large scale arable farmland, market gardening, low lying coastal grazing land, small hedged paddocks and open military land;
- Typically linear historic settlement pattern of villages and scattered hamlets;
- Recent modern harbourside development;
- Narrow winding country lanes; and
- Panoramic views of the Harbour from the sea wall or from slightly elevated open harbourside land. Views of the water elsewhere restricted by scrub, trees, hedgerows and sea walls.

## **H Lower Coastal Plain**

- Flat coastal plain underlain by brickearths;
- Arable farmland with large scale rectilinear field patterns;
- Low hedgerows;
- Pockets of low-lying grazing land, orchards and hedged paddocks around the edges of some settlements;
- Historic towns;
- A few small villages on slightly elevated land; and
- Extensive linear roadside development, sometimes divided by narrow green wedges.

## **I Large Coastal Peninsula**

- Large flat peninsula, underlain by brickearth drift deposits;
- Drained by many small streams and rythes;
- Medium-to-large scale arable field patterns defined by low hedgerows and/or lines of windblown hedgerow trees;
- Small pastures and hedged paddocks associated with the settlements;
- Large clusters of glasshouses;
- Linear settlement patterns; and
- Restricted views of the open water of the Harbour.

## **4.4 Landscape Character Areas**

4.4.1 The assessment has identified 19 distinctive Landscape Character Areas within the study area, 18 of which occur within the AONB designated area. These are unique areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics both physical and experiential that combine to create a distinct sense of place. They represent discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape character type. The distribution of the landscape character areas is shown on **Figure 5**, and they are described below together with guidelines.

4.4.2 For the Landscape Character Areas that lie entirely within the AONB designated area or straddle the boundaries (see Section 1.5.8), each character area profile is structured as follows:

- **Key Characteristics** - Summary of character.
- **Overall Character** - General analytical description.
- **Landscape History** - Analysis of the historic evolution of the character area.
- **Historic Features** - Summary of the visible historic features (within the AONB only).
- **Biodiversity** - Summary of habitats/species (within the AONB only).
- **Views** - Summary of characteristic views.

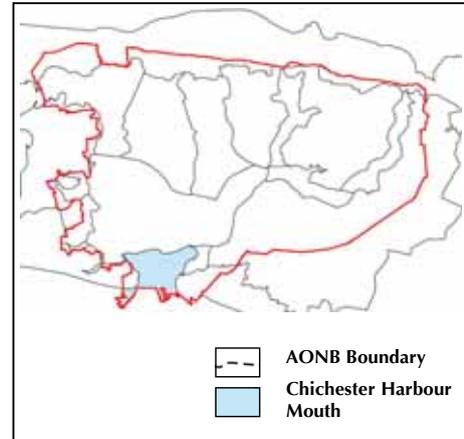
- **Settlement Character** - Description of settlement form, pattern, edges, buildings, setting (within the AONB only).
- **Issues** - Summary of local forces for change (within and outside the AONB).
- **Condition** - Statement of overall condition of the landscape (within the AONB only).
- **Sensitivity** – Sensitivity of the landscape to development/change (within the AONB only).
- **Landscape Planning and Land Management Guidelines** - Character Area Guidelines for Planners and Land Managers (for the AONB only).

4.4.3 For the Langstone Harbour Head Landscape Character Area that occurs within the Study Area, but lies entirely outside the AONB designated area (see Section 1.5.8), the character profile is structured as follows:

- **Key Characteristics** - Summary of Character
- **Overall Character** – General Analytical Description
- **Key Issues** – Summary of the local forces for change that could potentially impact on the AONB.

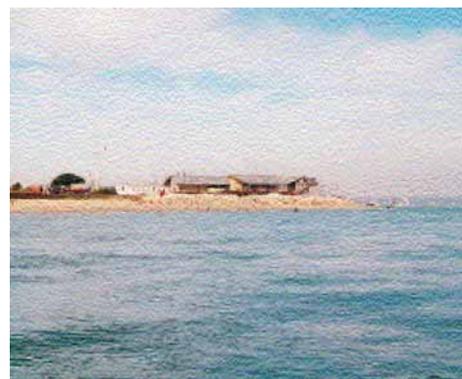
4.4.4 In addition, the landscape character area guidelines, generic landscape planning and land management guidelines for harbourside housing development and sea defences are set out in Section 4.5.

# A1 CHICHESTER HARBOUR MOUTH



## *Key Characteristics*

- Narrow opening to the sea enclosed by the projecting shingle and sand spits of East Head, Black Point and Eastoke Point;
- Large sandbars of The Stocker and The Winner exposed at low tide;
- Constantly shifting sands and shingle are subject to strong prevailing winds and currents;
- Sandy beaches at East Head attract colourful summer crowds;
- Dune systems, dominated by distinctive marram grass vegetation at East Head and Eastoke Point;
- Long views out to sea, including to the Isle of Wight and inland across the Chichester Harbour Central Basin.



## **A1 Chichester Harbour Mouth**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Narrow opening to the sea enclosed by the projecting shingle and sand spits of East Head, Black Point and Eastoke Point;
- Large sandbars of The Stocker and The Winner exposed at low tide;
- Constantly shifting sands and shingle are subject to strong prevailing winds and currents;
- Sandy beaches at East Head attract colourful summer crowds;
- Dune systems, dominated by distinctive marram grass vegetation at East Head and Eastoke Point; and
- Long views out to sea, including to the Isle of Wight and inland across the Chichester Harbour Central Basin.

### **Overall Character**

- 4.4.5 Slightly elevated spits enclose a narrow Harbour mouth of open water and sandbars. The view is dominated by the horizontal sands, the sea and the sky, with the mood determined by the weather and the wind. The area is very exposed, being the part of the Harbour most open to the English Channel. Here the power of the sea is most easily appreciated. On East Head and at Eastoke Point, dune systems have been formed by the wind carrying sand off the exposed parts of the Harbour mouth and depositing it a short way inland. These dunes have an unstable and dynamic character subject to continual process of erosion and redeposition. Winter storms threaten to break through the narrow 'hinge' of the dunes at East Head where they join the West Wittering car park. On winter days the dunes are probably one of the most exposed and isolated areas of the Harbour, whereas in the summer it becomes a favourite place for sunbathing and boat mooring. Whilst development at West Wittering and at South Hayling is visible from this area, overall it retains an undeveloped character.

### **Landscape History**

- 4.4.6 Since the final inundation of the Harbour basin 5,000-6,000 years ago, the Harbour mouth has been the primary entry point between the open sea and the rest of the Harbour. The bar at the Harbour mouth is essentially soft and is subject to deposition of silt and sand. The tidal scour keeps the bar low, however, the higher the water level, the less effective the tidal scour, reducing the size of shipping that can enter the Harbour. As a historic port, this tidal scour action and the build-up of the bar has been a key factor in the viability of the Harbour and its trade economy.

4.4.7 The expanses of sands within the Harbour mouth are the result of the past 5,000 years of deposition, including the process of longshore drift, whereby smaller particles of sand are carried by wave action from further down the coast to the west, and into the Harbour mouth area. Stocker's Sand and the Winner are products of this process, which has also resulted in the dramatic movement of East Head. At the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century East Head lay across the Harbour mouth; over the past 250 years it has turned a full 90° to its current position, moved by the dominant storm direction from the west. The partner spit at the other side of the Harbour mouth, Black Point, is more stable and over the same time period has grown rather than moved.

#### **Historic Features**

- East Head is a dynamic spit of sand dunes located within the Harbour mouth.
- Black Point is a stable spit, changing little in comparison to East Head. Since 1810 its northern tip has enlarged through further deposition.

#### **Ecological Features**

- Sand dunes at East Head overlying a shingle spit with a distinctive zonation of beach and dune vegetation. The main dunes have been built up by marram and the flora includes species such as dune fescue, sea spurge, sea holly and sea bindweed. The older dunes have a continuous carpet of vegetation dominated by a good variety of mosses and lichens. East Head is also rich in birdlife, including waders, ducks, gulls and geese.
- The saltmarsh to the rear of East Head is notable for its wealth of glasswort species and the nationally scarce lax flowered sea lavender and golden samphire. The transition from the saltmarsh to the dunes is particularly unusual and is dominated by the rare sea heath.
- Black Point has undisturbed dune habitat on its western side. Significant species include Sea Holly and Sea Kale. The dunes blend into saltmarsh, being a relatively unusual feature.

#### **Views**

- Long views through the Harbour mouth to the open sea;
- Views from the Harbour mouth of the low Hampshire and West Sussex coastlines, and southwest to the Isle of Wight.

## Key Issues

- Sea level rise and erosion could lead to the loss of existing saltmarsh and is a long-term threat to East Head. There is the possibility that the sea will breach through the narrow 'hinge' of East Head;
- Major and minor oil spillages are a potential threat to the quality of the open water and the beaches due to the proximity of the international shipping lanes in the Solent and the risk of discharges from cruising boats;
- Large seasonal crowds disturb tranquillity, and cause erosion of dunes at East Head;
- Poor quality development on adjacent areas of South Hayling and West Wittering and hangars on Thorney Island intrude in some views from this area.

## Condition

- 4.4.8 The condition of area is generally good both visually and ecologically. The area has a natural character, relatively unaltered by man, with relatively few detracting features. The condition of the semi-natural habitats is also relatively good, although some erosion of marram dune has occurred.

## Sensitivity

- 4.4.9 The area has a high sensitivity to change that would alter its natural qualities and intrude on its openness.

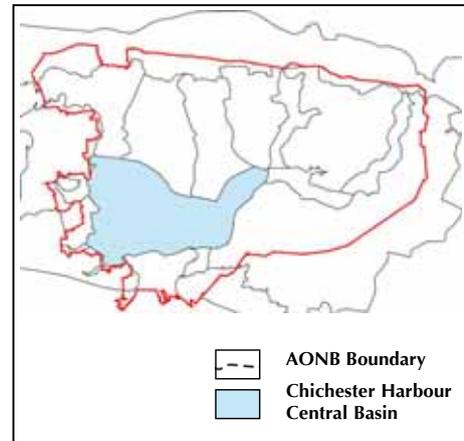
## Landscape Strategy

- 4.4.10 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

## Planning and Land Management Guidelines

- Control and manage public access to prevent erosion of sensitive dune and saltmarsh habitats;
- Continue programme of boardwalk and fencing at East Head;
- Ensure 'soft' engineering techniques are used for any sea defence measures for the 'hinge' at East Head;
- Consider the visual impact of any new development in adjacent character areas, avoiding any additional intrusion in views.

## B1 CHICHESTER HARBOUR CENTRAL BASIN



### *Key Characteristics*

- A large, uniform expanse of open water at high tide. Colours vary from grey to blue-green, depending on weather conditions;
- Dramatic change at low tide when extensive mudflats, beaches, sandbanks, and saltmarsh are exposed;
- Network of straight and many small, winding water channels;
- Big skies give a keen sense of the weather;
- Smooth, horizontal lines of the water and the low coastal edge, occasionally broken by vertical yacht masts;
- Distinctive low growing shingle and saltmarsh vegetation;
- Mudflats provide rich feeding grounds for large flocks of wading birds;
- Popular sailing area;
- Largely undisturbed character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity;
- Impressive panoramic views of the Harbour and its peninsulas, with the distant backdrop of the South Downs.



## **B1 Chichester Harbour Central Basin**

### **Key Characteristics**

- A large uniform expanse of open water at high tide. Colours vary from grey to blue-green, depending on weather conditions;
- Dramatic change at low tide when extensive mudflats, beaches, sandbanks, and saltmarsh, are exposed;
- Network of straight, and many small winding water channels;
- Big skies give a keen sense of the weather;
- Smooth horizontal lines of the water and the low coastal edge, occasionally broken by vertical yacht masts;
- Distinctive low growing shingle and saltmarsh vegetation;
- Mudflats provide rich feeding grounds for large flocks of wading birds;
- Popular sailing area;
- Largely undisturbed character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity;
- Impressive panoramic views of the Harbour and its peninsulas, with the distant backdrop of the South Downs.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.11 Chichester Harbour Central Basin is a large area of enclosed, marine open water at high tide with a mostly gently shelving shoreline. It changes dramatically at low tide when vast areas of mudflats and sands are exposed to view, together with fringing saltmarsh. Some of the saltmarshes are particularly attractive during the summer when the sea lavender and sea aster form a purple haze over the marshes. The low tide landscape is normally viewed from a level that is just above the low watermark. From here it appears remarkably open and expansive in character. There are extensive panoramic views across the open water to the adjacent peninsulas, and the South Downs forms a distinctive backdrop. Views to the shoreline sometimes have a wooded appearance where hedgerows, hedgerow trees and established woodlands merge together. In the southwest of the area, buildings and marina development on adjacent areas of Hayling Island are conspicuous. Despite this and the presence of cruising boats, sailing and beach activities, much of the area has an undisturbed remote character, and it can be surprisingly tranquil.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.12 Throughout early prehistory Chichester Harbour was subject to the changes brought by rising and falling sea levels. Alternately the Harbour basin was dry valley floor, and under seawater.

The channels that lead from the Harbour mouth are the expanded remains of the prehistoric river tributaries which once flowed along their courses. The final inundation of the Harbour basin took place between 5,000 and 6,000 years ago.

- 4.4.13 The most dramatic human-led landscape changes in the vicinity of the Harbour basin have been the development of a coastal edge over the past 100 years, for housing and recreation; creating a more urban edge to the character area in parts. Prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, coastal development in this area was limited to small-scale industry, such as brick kilns and salterns, and to individual farmsteads and other buildings.

#### **Historic Features**

- Pilsey Island with its causeway and land reclamation posts which can still be seen protruding above the Harbour muds;
- Channels and rythes which are historic features in their own right and are subject to change through time.

#### **Ecological Features**

- Very extensive mudflats which are major feeding grounds for wading birds and wildfowl;
- Around Ella Nore there is extensive unembanked and ungrazed upper and middle saltmarsh behind a shingle bar, also in the Horse Pond area;
- Pilsey Island is a complex of dune system, shingle vegetation and saltmarsh. The saltmarsh is sheltered within the arms of the island including lower, middle and upper saltmarsh. It has a very rich flora noted for scarce species such as golden samphire and sea lavender. The outer shore of the island comprises rich and varied vegetation particularly on the stable shingle. The dunes are dominated by marram but include small areas of lichen rich dune grassland.

#### **Views**

- Panoramic views of open water, mudflats and the Harbour peninsulas, and wooded margins against a backdrop of the South Downs.

#### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise and erosion could lead to the loss of existing saltmarsh, and of sand and shingle spits and islands;
- Risk of erosion of saltmarsh from wash of motorised craft;

- Major and minor oil spillages are a potential threat to the quality of the open water, to the saltmarsh and to beaches due to the proximity of the international shipping lanes in the Solent, and the risk of discharges from cruising boats using the Harbour;
- Any increases in the number of moorings, buoys and channel markers could be visually intrusive.
- Hangars on Thorney Island and some poor-quality development on Hayling Island are intrusive in some views;
- Further development including marinas, and above ground berthing facilities on the adjacent peninsula areas could erode the undisturbed character of the area, and adversely affect saltmarsh.

### **Condition**

- 4.4.14 The condition of the area is overall good both visually and ecologically. There is some localised erosion of character from sea defences which are shored up with broken concrete and brick.

### **Sensitivity**

- 4.4.15 This seascape has a high sensitivity to change that would alter its natural qualities and its open and undisturbed character. The area is particularly sensitive to development and change on the edge of the adjacent peninsulas.

### **Landscape Strategy**

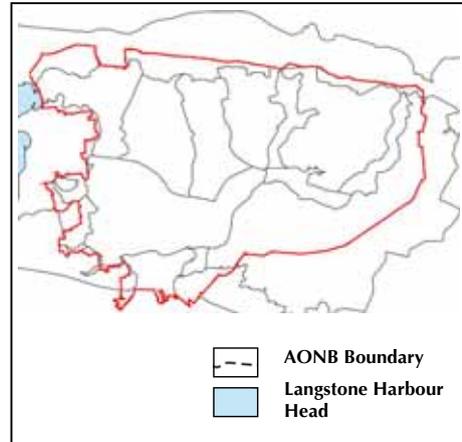
- 4.4.16 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the largely undisturbed, tranquil and remote character of the area;
- Uphold the Conservancy's moratorium on moorings in the area;
- Conserve the natural habitats that support the waders and the wildfowl;
- Manage use of the area by motorised craft to avoid erosion of saltmarsh;
- Uphold planning and management plan guidance regarding intertidal structures. Where replacement structures are allowed, consider the use of timber;
- Seek improvements to the visual appearance of the existing sea defences, particularly at the southern end of Thorney Island, around Selsmore and Eastoke and near Ella Nore.

- Consider the impacts of any development in adjacent character areas avoiding additional visual intrusion, damage to undisturbed character and adverse impact on sensitive saltmarsh habitats.

## C1 LANGSTONE HARBOUR HEAD



### *Key Characteristics*

- Broad, shallow inlet of Langstone Harbour;
- Large, tidal mudflats crossed by the broad channels of The Deeps and The Lakes;
- Bridge Lake Channel provides a navigable link to the New Cut in Emsworth Channel Head;
- Cluster of small, rough grassland and/or saltmarsh islands e.g. North Binness Island and Long Island.



## **C1 Langstone Harbour Head**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Broad shallow inlet of Langstone Harbour;
- Large tidal mudflats crossed by the broad channels of the Deeps and The Lakes;
- Bridge Lake Channel provides a navigable link to the New Cut in Emsworth Channel Head;
- Cluster of small rough grassland and/or saltmarsh islands, e.g. North Binness Island and Long Island.

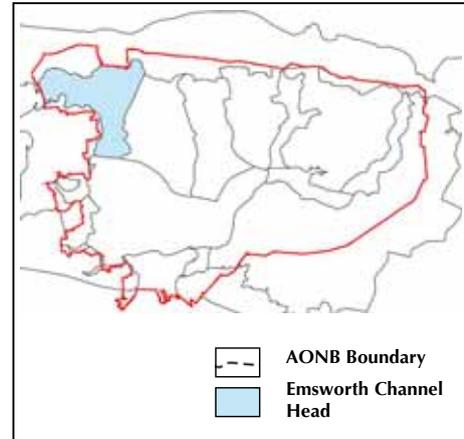
### **Overall Character**

4.4.17 This character area, outside the AONB boundary, is distinctive for its combination of vast tidal mudflats, saltmarsh, small grassland/saltmarsh islands and very broad open water channels. Like Chichester Harbour its vast flocks of wading birds and wildfowl contribute to the richness and diversity of the seascape. Langstone Bridge marks the boundary with Emsworth Channel Head.

### **Key Issues**

- No significant issues have been identified as likely to impact on Chichester Harbour AONB.

## C2 EMSWORTH CHANNEL HEAD



### *Key Characteristics*

- Broad inlet bounded by the gentle slopes of Thorney and Hayling Island, and of the lower Coastal Plain to the north;
- Intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh;
- The broad, straight Emsworth Channel forks into several narrow channels and rythes;
- A wide range of historic features including the New Cut, old wooden posts marking the channels, oyster beds such as Fowley Island and tide mills at the water's edge;
- Moored yachts in upper parts of the Emsworth Channel;
- A few commercial fishing boats operate from Emsworth;
- Long uninterrupted views;
- Open character.



## **C2 Emsworth Channel Head**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Broad inlet bounded by the gentle slopes of Thorney and Hayling Island, and of the lower Coastal Plain to the north;
- Intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh;
- The broad straight Emsworth Channel forks into several narrow channels and rythes;
- A wide range of historic features including the New Cut, old wooden posts marking the channels, oyster beds such as Fowley Island, and tide mills at the water's edge;
- Moored yachts in upper parts of the Emsworth Channel;
- A few commercial fishing boats operate from Emsworth;
- Long uninterrupted views;
- Open character.

### **Overall Character**

- 4.4.18 The large, open Emsworth Channel Head Character Area comprises extensive areas of mudflats fringed by saltmarsh at low tide through which the Emsworth Channel flows. North of Hayling Island the inlet is particularly open and expansive, narrowing a little before it joins the main Harbour pool. The winding creeks and channels in the saltmarsh have carved an intricate pattern, distinctive of a saltings landscape, and it supports large numbers of wildfowl and waders which add movement to this dynamic coastal environment. The marshes are relatively undisturbed. However, built development and marinas around some of the edges of the character area and a high density of moored yachts along some of the channels, reduce tranquillity. Long, mostly uninterrupted views are characteristic of the area.

### **Landscape History**

- 4.4.19 Until the construction of the New Cut in 1820, the main access to Emsworth was along the Emsworth Channel. Over the past millennium, Emsworth has been an important town for trade and fishing, and as the sole connection between the town and the Harbour mouth, the Emsworth Channel would have been an important communication route. In the 1670s there was a general reorganisation of the system of customs ports, and Emsworth was realigned to the Port of Portsmouth. This realignment appears to have encouraged trade to go to Emsworth, making the Emsworth Channel even busier.
- 4.4.20 The New Cut severed the high ground at the channel head, where the causeway of the 'Wadeway' had previously provided the sole connection between Hayling Island and the

mainland at Langstone. This new channel linked the Emsworth Channel with Langstone Harbour and was part of a larger project to create a canal from the River Arun to Portsmouth. This New Cut was a significant event in the landscape history of Emsworth Channel Head, not only necessitating the construction of the first road bridge to Hayling Island but also stimulating Langstone Harbour as a landing point.

- 4.4.21 Trade continued to grow steadily until about 1850, when improved inland communication and the increased size of sea-going vessels caused the trade at Emsworth and Langstone to decline. The Emsworth Channel became a quiet backwater rather than a primary shipping route, and through the 20<sup>th</sup> century recreational activity began to create a new character. In addition to the importance of the Emsworth Channel Head to trade and cargo vessels, Emsworth was also a significant local centre for the farming and dredging of oysters. Extensive areas of oyster beds can be seen in the channel muds near Emsworth on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1907-1910 OS map, and remains of these can still be seen. This 19<sup>th</sup> industry flourished until in 1902 a new sewer was built at Emsworth, discharging raw sewage straight into the Harbour, over the oyster beds, which resulted in a ban on their sale.

#### **Historic Features**

- Fowley Island, with its historic embankments;
- Historic remains of old communications routes including Hayling Island causeway and the New Cut, and the old wooden posts marking the channels;
- Remains of historic fishing features, including oyster beds;
- North edge of the channel head has several historic settlements with tide mills on the water's edge.

#### **Ecological Features**

- Extensive areas of mudflat and saltmarsh which attract large flocks of wading birds and wildfowl. Gutner Point is a large saltmarsh with a narrow upper saltmarsh zone and extensive middle and lower saltmarsh. Sea lavender, golden samphire and the native cordgrass have been recorded here;
- Narrow strips of middle and upper saltmarsh also occur along the northern coast of the Emsworth Channel Head.

#### **Views**

- Long views southwards to the Harbour mouth;
- Long views to the historic settlements of Langstone and Emsworth;

- Long views to the South Downs and to the Portsdown Hills west of Havant.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise and erosion could lead to the loss of existing saltmarsh;
- Risk of erosion of saltmarsh due to wash from motorised craft;
- Run-off/pollution from adjacent areas – built development, car parks, holiday villages;
- Any possible oil spillages that could adversely affect water quality, the mudflats and saltmarshes;
- Potential pressure for new marinas and berthing facilities on the coastal edges which could erode undeveloped character;
- Gasometers at Emsworth and in Havant, and tower blocks in Havant, are intrusive in long views from the water.

### **Condition**

- 4.4.22 Overall condition is good. The open water, mudflats and saltmarsh are a cohesive visual unit showing good survival of characteristic features. However, there are some detracting features around the edges such as sea defences constructed of visually intrusive materials along parts of the Thorney Island, Warblington and Hayling Island shorelines.

### **Sensitivity**

- 4.4.23 The sensitivity of the landscape to development and change is high. This area is particularly sensitive to any development, e.g. marinas on the channel edges which could erode undeveloped, undisturbed character or is visually intrusive due to its scale, form and mass.

### **Landscape Strategy**

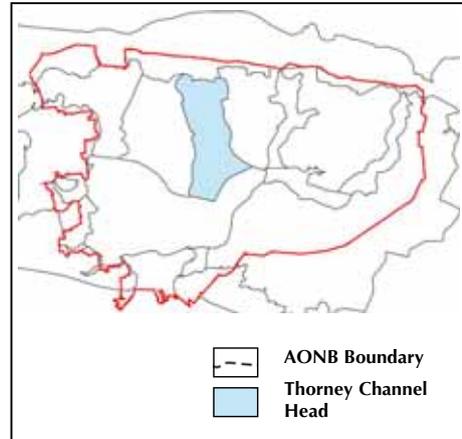
- 4.4.24 The appropriate strategy is conservation.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the natural habitats that support the waders and wildfowl;
- Uphold the Conservancy's moratorium on additional moorings;
- Manage recreational use by motorised craft to prevent erosion of saltmarsh;
- Uphold planning and land management guidance regarding intertidal structures. Where replacement structures are allowed consider the use of timber;

- Seek improvements to the visual appearance of the sea defences particularly along the Thorney Island, Hayling and Warblington shoreline. Where new sea defences are allowed, ensure the use of sympathetic soft engineering techniques;
- Consider the impacts of any development in adjacent character areas avoiding visual intrusion, damage to undisturbed character and adverse impacts on sensitive saltmarsh habitats.

## C3 THORNEY CHANNEL HEAD



### *Key Characteristics*

- Broad inlet with a largely undeveloped shoreline; Mudflats and saltmarsh are exposed at low tide, intersected by the main Thorney Channel and the narrower forking Prinsted and Nutbourne Channels;
- Intricate network of smaller winding channels and rhythes;
- Isolated and undisturbed Nutbourne Marshes are a haven for wildfowl and waders;
- Harbourside trees, copses and hedgerows merge together in views from the water to give the impression of a wooded shoreline;
- A few small groups of yachts moored along the line of the main channels;
- Many historic features including worn elm posts between Cobnor Point and Pilsey Island, marking the attempted 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation of the inlet, and the Second World War discarded military equipment;
- Peaceful, tranquil and undisturbed character.



### **C3 Thorney Channel Head**

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Broad inlet with a largely undeveloped shoreline;
- Mudflats and saltmarsh are exposed at low tide, intersected by the main Thorney Channel and the narrower forking Prinsted and Nutbourne Channels;
- Intricate network of smaller winding channels and rythes;
- Isolated and undisturbed Nutbourne Marshes are a haven for wildfowl and waders;
- Harbourside trees, copses and hedgerows merge together in views from the water to give the impression of a wooded shoreline;
- A few small groups of yachts moored along the line of the main channels;
- Many historic features including worn elm posts between Cobnor Point and Pilsey Island, marking the attempted 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation of the inlet, and the Second World War discarded military equipment;
- Peaceful, tranquil and undisturbed character.

#### **Overall Character**

4.4.25 Thorney Channel Head is a broad inlet dominated by open water at high tide and by intertidal muds and saltmarsh at low tide. The broad, straight Thorney Channel flows through it, fed by smaller forking and winding channels. The Nutbourne Marshes are characterised by extensive marsh grasses, sea purslane and localised tracts of colourful sea lavender. Moored boats line parts of the Thorney Channel. However, overall the area has a remote, undisturbed and tranquil character.

#### **Landscape History**

4.4.26 Historically this broad channel head was linked with the Emsworth Channel along the now enclosed channel known as the Great Deep. On the 1805-1810 OS County Series map, the Channel extended as a deep channel as far north as Nutbourne, though this northern extent has now largely silted up. When Thorney ceased to be an island, with the 1870 reclamation of the Deeps, the direct connection between Thorney Channel Head and Emsworth Channel Head was severed. At this point Thorney Channel became the sole water-based connection between Nutbourne and Prinsted and the rest of the Harbour. The 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation of the Deeps was not the only reclamation project to affect Thorney Channel Head. On the 1st edition OS map (surveyed 1869-1875), two other areas of reclamation defences can be seen: one to the south, running from Pilsey Island to the Bosham Peninsula (dating from 1882), and

the second to the north, between Prinsted Point and the mainland. The remains of both projects can still be seen in the channel muds.

### **Historic Features**

- Visible remains of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation of sections of the channels for agricultural land, particularly at Prinsted and from Cobnor Point to Pilsey Island;
- Muds to the side of Thorney Island contain pieces of WWII discarded military equipment and the footings of non-extant military defences;
- A single main channel cuts through the muds, the Thorney Channel, with rythes linking it to the land. Historically this channel joined with the Emsworth Channel along the now enclosed channel known as the Great Deep.

### **Ecological Features**

- Large area of mudflats and saltmarsh of Nutbourne Marshes which is very important for wading birds and wildfowl such as curlew, redshank, dunlin, shelduck, teal and brent geese.

### **Views**

- Long views towards the South Downs and south to the Harbour pool;
- Views across the channel towards the historic settlements of Chidham and West Thorney;
- Visual intrusion of military hangars and masts on Thorney Island.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise and erosion could lead to the loss of existing saltmarsh.
- Any possible oil spillages that could affect water quality.
- Potential pressure for new marinas or extension of existing areas.
- Visual intrusion of military hangars and masts on Thorney Island.

### **Condition**

4.4.27 Overall condition is good. The open water, mudflats and saltmarsh are a cohesive visual unit showing good survival of characteristic features. However, there are some visually detracting features around the edges such as the sea defences of Thorney Island and the Chidham Peninsula.

## **Sensitivity**

4.4.28 The sensitivity to development/change is high.

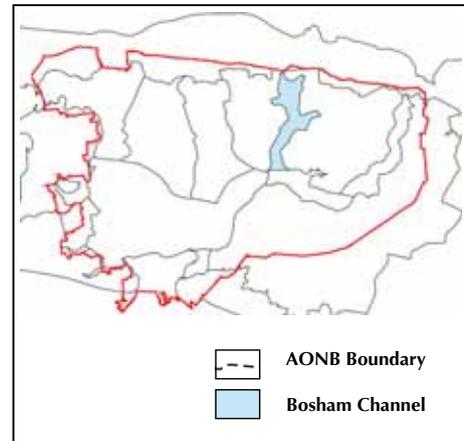
## **Landscape Strategy**

4.4.29 The appropriate strategy is conservation.

## **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the largely undisturbed, tranquil and remote character of the area;
- Conserve the habitats that support waders and wildfowl;
- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on additional moorings;
- Uphold Conservancy planning and management guidance regarding additional intertidal structures and, where any replacement structures are allowed, consider the use of timber;
- Consider the impacts of any development on the adjacent peninsulas avoiding visual intrusion, damage to undisturbed character and sense of remoteness.

## D1 BOSHAM CHANNEL



### *Key Characteristics*

- **Narrow inlet with a series of small coves at its head;**
- **Mudflats at low tide, with fringing saltmarsh;**
- **Small timber and concrete jetties, piers and landing stages concentrated around Cobnor, Bosham and Chidham;**
- **Modern yachts are moored in lines along the central channel;**
- **Remains of sunken boats in the mudflats;**
- **Distinctive views from the water of the historic village of Bosham and its picturesque church;**
- **Long views to the South Downs;**
- **Undisturbed character at the Channel Head.**



## **D1 Bosham Channel**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Narrow inlet with a series of small coves at its head;
- Mudflats at low tide, with fringing saltmarsh;
- Small timber and concrete jetties, piers and landing stages concentrated around Cobnor, Bosham and Chidham;
- Modern yachts are moored in lines along the central channel;
- Remains of sunken boats in the mudflats;
- Distinctive views from the water of the historic village of Bosham and its picturesque church;
- Long views to the South Downs;
- Undisturbed character at the Channel Head.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.30 Bosham Channel is a narrow inlet which opens out a little to the north, ending in a series of small 'coves'. At low tide it is dominated by mudflats and patches of fringing saltmarsh. The southern end of the channel has a 'wooded' shoreline, but much of it has a more open character bounded by arable farmland on the adjacent peninsula. Moored boats and sailing activity are concentrated south of Bosham whereas the channel head has a mostly undisturbed character. The historic quayside of Bosham provides classic views of picturesque waterside development.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.31 The Bosham Channel was an important medieval communication route: in 1346 Bosham, along with Dell Quay and Chidham, was named as a place where wine could be landed, and most notably, the Bayeux Tapestry shows Harold praying at Bosham Church before setting sail for France, indicating that he sailed from Bosham, down the Bosham Channel. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century an early attempt at land reclamation between Chidham and Bosham was made. The County Series Ordnance Survey (OS) map of the area, surveyed between 1805 and 1810, shows the completed project, with Bosham Channel ending at sea defences at Bosham, and a windmill located inland, presumably to pump out the remaining water. In 1822, the over 450m long defences, which were over 4m high, were breached by a storm and the reclamation was abandoned.

### **Historic Features**

- Visible remains of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation of sections of the channels for agricultural land, particularly between Bosham and Chidham;
- Historic hards and causeways;
- Remains of oyster beds in the coves at edge of channel.

### **Ecological Features**

- Mudflats and fringing saltmarsh. Those at the head of the channel are important as undisturbed areas for waders and wildfowl. The east coast has narrow discontinuous strips of middle and upper saltmarsh. The west coast between Colmer Creek and East Chidham has more extensive mixed middle saltmarsh.

### **Views**

- Long views along the channel;
- Views from the southern end of the channel towards Bosham Village.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise may lead to erosion of existing saltmarsh habitats;
- Potential pressure for additional moorings;
- Erosion of character from use of poor-quality concrete and brick materials on the sea defences on the adjacent peninsulas;
- Nutrient rich runoff from arable farmland may affect water quality;
- Adverse visual impact of harbourside housing development on the adjacent peninsulas – loss of trees and hedgerows, increasing bulk/scale of development and introduction of urban features at the water's edge.

### **Condition**

4.4.32 Landscape condition is good. There is a high level of survival of characteristic habitats. The small areas of modern harbourside development on the adjacent peninsulas do not disrupt the visual unity of the channel overall, but are locally visually intrusive.

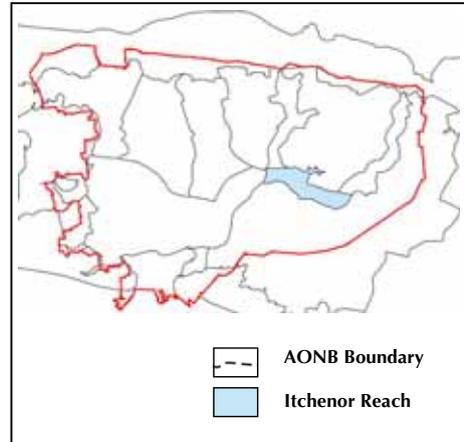
## Sensitivity

- 4.4.33 The sensitivity of the landscape to development and change is high. The area is particularly sensitive to any new development on the adjacent coastal edges that would lead to the loss of wooded margins, or erosion of undisturbed character or intrude on views.

## Planning and Land Management Guidelines

- Conserve the mostly undisturbed, undeveloped character;
- Conserve the natural habitats that support the waders and wildfowl;
- Conserve wooded margins of the adjacent peninsulas;
- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on additional moorings;
- Uphold the Conservancy planning and land management guidance on additional intertidal structures and, where replacement structures are allowed, consider the use of timber;
- Consider the visual impact of new development on the adjacent peninsulas.

## D2 ITCHENOR REACH



### *Key Characteristics*

- **Narrow inlet with a shoreline of wooded appearance;**
- **Mudflats and saltmarsh at low tide;**
- **Many small timber and concrete jetties;**
- **High density of moored yachts;**
- **Historic settlement of Itchenor and modern harbourside houses are prominent in views.**



## **D2 Itchenor Reach**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Narrow inlet with a shoreline of wooded appearance;
- Mudflats and saltmarsh at low tide;
- Many small timber and concrete jetties;
- High density of moored yachts;
- Historic settlement of Itchenor, and modern harbourside houses are prominent in views.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.34 Itchenor Reach is a narrow inlet with a shoreline of largely wooded appearance. This is punctuated by the historic quayside of Itchenor, and in places by modern harbourside development. At low tide it is mainly mudflat and saltmarsh. A large area of saltmarsh occurs at the entrance to Furzeffield Creek. Many small jetties and piers project into the area. It has a particularly high concentration of moored yachts and sailing activity, giving a busy bustling character.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.35 The Itchenor Reach is notable for its role as a historic transport route connecting with the Fishbourne Channel and with the Harbour mouth. The Bosham peninsula was historically linked with West Itchenor by a crossing across the Itchenor Channel. This crossing can be seen on the 1805-1810 County Series OS map and remains may survive in the channel muds.

### **Ecological Features**

- Fringing saltmarsh – mostly small patches but with a larger area near the entrance to Furzeffield Creek, and east of Chaldock Point;
- Mudflats.

### **Views**

- Views to the quayside and historical settlement of West Itchenor;
- Long views up and down the channel from the various jetties;
- Views are of numerous sailing boats/yachts within the channel.

## **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise could lead to erosion of existing saltmarsh habitats;
- Any increase in the number of moored yachts that would intrude on views;
- Any potential new harbourside development on the adjacent peninsula that leads to the loss of wooded shorelines and introduces suburban styles and materials;

## **Condition**

4.4.36 Landscape condition is moderate. This is a busy part of Chichester Harbour, with a large number of small vessels moored through the channel. The activity and some of the modern development of the adjacent peninsulas intrudes on the tranquillity of views associated with parts of the wider LCT.

## **Sensitivity**

4.4.37 The sensitivity of the landscape to development/change is high.

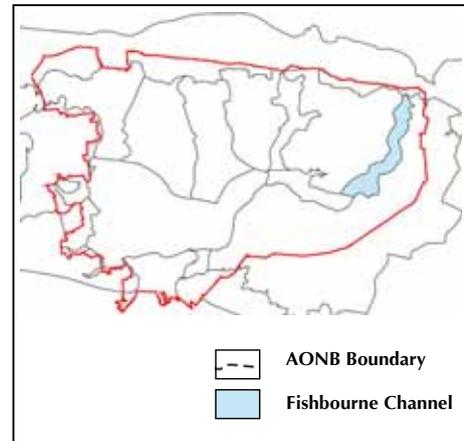
## **Landscape Strategy**

4.4.38 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

## **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the natural habitats;
- Conserve natural undefended shoreline;
- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on additional moorings;
- Uphold the Conservancy planning and land management guidance on additional intertidal structures, and where replacement structures are allowed, consider the use of timber;
- Consider the visual impact of new development on the adjacent peninsulas.

## D3 FISHBOURNE CHANNEL



### *Key Characteristics*

- Long narrow inlet;
- Winding channel;
- Mud and shingle exposed at low tide. Underlying chalk and red and orange clays of the Reading Beds are occasionally revealed<sup>8</sup>;
- Patches of fringing saltmarsh;
- Largely undeveloped shoreline with a wooded appearance;
- Old wooden boats at Dell Quay are a distinctive feature;
- Undeveloped and mostly tranquil character.



## D3 Fishbourne Channel

### Key Characteristics

- Long narrow inlet;
- Winding channel;
- Mudflats exposed at low tide. Underlying chalk and red and orange clays of the Reading Beds<sup>11</sup> are occasionally revealed;
- Patches of fringing saltmarsh;
- Largely undeveloped shoreline with a wooded appearance;
- Old wooden boats at Dell Quay are a distinctive feature;
- Undeveloped and mostly tranquil character.

### Overall Character

4.4.39 The Fishbourne Channel has a narrow winding character with a wooded appearance south of Dell Quay. The woodlands of Old Park, Salterns and hedgerow trees extend along the shoreline. As a result of the woodlands it is the most sheltered of the inlets. North of Dell Quay it becomes more open in character. At low tide mudflats are dominant with narrow fringes of saltmarsh on the shoreline. Apart from at Dell Quay, there are few moorings within the LCA. Chichester and Birdham Pool Marinas are located within the inlet on the southern edge of the Fishbourne Channel, within the adjacent LCA (I1). These contain generally larger sailing vessels, and modern buildings that are often conspicuous in views from the channel. However, overall Fishbourne Channel has a largely undeveloped and tranquil character.

### Landscape History

4.4.40 The Fishbourne Channel was an important historic route. It connected the Roman site of Fishbourne and later the medieval Dell Quay with the Harbour Mouth, and as such would have been a busy route for trading vessels. Between 1353, when Chichester became a Staple Port empowered to deal with the export of wool, and until the opening of the Chichester Canal in 1823, Dell Quay on the Fishbourne Channel was the chief landing place for Chichester. Indeed, in 1670, Dell Quay was officially made the sole 'port of entry' for Chichester Harbour. Though the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chichester Canal, accessed through Salterns Lock, reduced the status of Dell Quay, cargoes continued to land there until the Second World War.

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<sup>11</sup> Refer to paragraphs 2.2.2 – 2.2.14 on geology of the study area

### **Historic Features**

- Wharf buildings at Dell Quay;
- Historic settlements along the channel edge with hards, causeways and other historic remains extending from them into the channel muds;
- Remains of sunken boats in the muds.

### **Ecological Features**

- Mudflats;
- Fringing saltmarsh. The saltmarsh on the west coast, east of Old Park Farm is one of the largest middle and upper saltmarshes in the Harbour not disrupted by a sea wall.

### **Views**

- Long views up and down the channel with the wooded shoreline dominant;
- Important long views from the water towards Chichester Cathedral north of Dell Quay.

### **Buildings and Settlement**

4.4.41 Old timber wharf buildings on the quay at Dell Quay which project into the water.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise;
- Potential major development outside the AONB on the southwest or western side of Chichester with possible run-off impact on water quality and possible impacts on views;
- Any development on the adjacent peninsula edges which could lead to the loss of wooded shoreline;
- Localised visual intrusion from harbourside housing on adjacent Manhood Peninsula due to the bulk and scale of development, use of reflective glazing and introduction of suburban styles and materials;
- New moorings could damage undeveloped character;
- Potential expansion of Chichester Marina and Birdham Pool Marina.

### **Condition**

4.4.42 Condition is overall good. There is good survival of characteristic habitats and there is strong visual unity to the area. However, locally water quality is poor at the outlet from Apuldram

Sewage Treatment Works, and some harbourside housing near the shoreline at Dell Quay is a visually detracting feature.

### **Sensitivity**

- 4.4.43 The landscape has a high sensitivity to change. It is particularly sensitive to any new development that would result in loss of the wooded character of the adjacent peninsulas and which would be visually intrusive close to the shoreline.

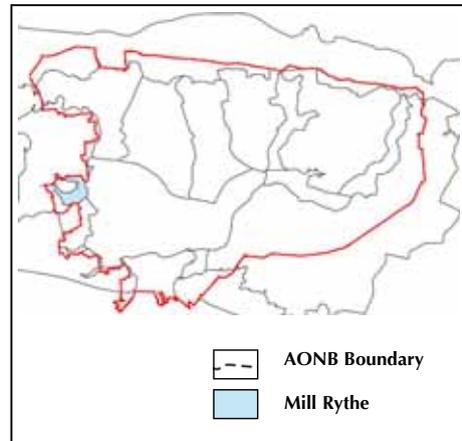
### **Landscape Strategy**

- 4.4.44 The appropriate strategy is conservation.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve existing areas of saltmarsh;
- Conserve sections of natural undefended shoreline;
- Conserve the undeveloped and mostly tranquil character of the area;
- Conserve the undisturbed character of the head of the channel;
- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on additional moorings;
- Uphold the Conservancy's policy, unless there are exceptional circumstances, to refuse any new intertidal structure, and where a replacement structure is permitted, to favour a like-for-like replacement and to consider the use of timber;
- Consider the potential visual impacts of any new development on adjacent peninsulas and within the marinas;
- Avoid adverse visual impacts and loss of wooded shoreline.

## E1 MILL RYTHER



### *Key Characteristics*

- Small-scale, minor inlet split in two arms by the small headland of Verner Common;
- At low tide characterised by mudflats, saltmarsh and small, narrow winding channels;
- Undeveloped shoreline apart from local concentrations of landing stages, jetties and pontoons associated with harbourside houses and boatyards;
- Harbourside trees and copses create a partly enclosed character.



## **E1 Mill Rythe**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Small scale minor inlet split in two arms by the small headland of Verner Common;
- At low tide characterised by mudflats, saltmarsh and small, narrow winding channels;
- Undeveloped shoreline apart from local concentrations of landing stages, jetties and pontoons associated with harbourside houses and boatyards;
- Harbourside trees and copses create a partly enclosed character.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.45 Mill Rythe has a wide opening to the main Harbour pool, but rapidly narrows and becomes more enclosed and sheltered in character as it splits into two separate arms. At low tide it comprises mudflats and saltmarsh carved by tiny narrow channels. Trees, copses and hedgerows merge together in places to give the impression of a partly wooded shoreline and provide a setting for a scatter of harbourside houses, and Mill Rythe Holiday Village on the coastal edge. Boatyards and industrial sheds on Hayling Island at Hayling Yacht Company are prominent in some open views across the area. Despite this, it retains a largely undeveloped character.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.46 As a small inlet, the historic character of Mill Rythe has been heavily influenced by the land that surrounds it. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the marshes to the south, and the unenclosed commons at Verner and Gutner would have given this area a very undeveloped feel. In addition to this historic influence from the land, Mill Rythe also possesses a significant landscape history, being the site of 19<sup>th</sup> century (possibly earlier) oyster beds.

4.4.47 Mill Rythe takes its name from the Hayling Island Tide Mill that used to be located at the southwest corner of the creek. It fell into disuse during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Remains of the Mill building possibly survive at the edge of the quay, and at low water it is possible to see a considerable part of the embankment that once dammed the tide pond.

### **Historic Features**

- Historic remains of the post-medieval Hayling Island tide Mill;
- Oysterbed remains surviving in the coastal muds.

## **Ecological Features**

- Fringing mixed saltmarsh to the north and east of Verner Common;
- Mudflats.

## **Views**

- Long views to Longmere Point and Pilsey Island across the Harbour pool.

## **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise;
- Potential redevelopment/expansion of caravan and camping / holiday village sites on the adjacent Hayling Island;
- Potential development of additional jetties/pontoons;
- Localised visual intrusion from sea defences constructed of rubble and reinforced concrete;
- Visual intrusion from industrial/boatyard sheds at Hayling Yacht Company.

## **Condition**

- 4.4.48 Condition is generally moderate due to the influence of adjacent land uses particularly upon the character of the channel heads.

## **Sensitivity**

- 4.4.49 The sensitivity of the landscape to development and change is high due to its open, largely undeveloped character. It is particularly sensitive to further development on the adjacent coastal edge.

## **Landscape Strategy**

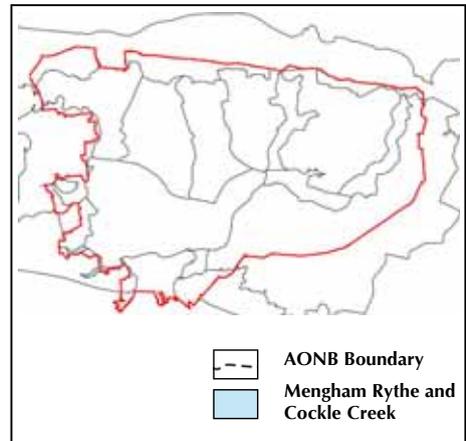
- 4.4.50 The appropriate strategy is conserve and enhance.

## **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve saltmarsh and mudflat habitats;
- Conserve the undeveloped character of the pool;
- Restrict future development of adjacent land uses that would harm the tranquil visual character of the inlet;

- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on additional moorings;
- Uphold the Conservancy's policy, unless there are exceptional circumstances, to refuse any new intertidal structure, and where a replacement structure is permitted, to favour a like-for-like replacement and to consider the use of timber;
- Consider the visual impact of any new development on the adjacent peninsulas, especially large scale, bulky development;
- Conserve remaining sections of natural undefended shoreline;
- Seek improvements to the visual appearance of existing sea defences where poor quality materials have been previously used.

## E2 MENGHAM RYTHER AND COCKLE CREEK



### *Key Characteristics*

- Small-scale, minor inlets, mostly mudflat with small patches of saltmarsh at low tide;
- Yachts are moored near the junction with the Harbour basin;
- Enclosed character;
- The wooded character of Mengham Rythe contrasts with the more urban character of Cockle Creek.



## **E2 Mengham Rythe and Cockle Creek**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Small scale, minor inlets, mostly mudflat with small patches of saltmarsh at low tide;
- Yachts are moored near the junction with the Harbour basin;
- Enclosed character;
- The wooded character of Mengham Rythe contrasts with the more urban character of Cockle Creek.

### **Overall Character**

- 4.4.51 These small inlets have an enclosed character compared with the open character of the Harbour basin. They comprise mostly mudflat at low tide with small patches of saltmarsh. Numerous bungalows and static/temporary caravan development on the adjacent coastal edges of Cockle Creek introduce an urban character, although occasionally softened by trees. Mengham Rythe has a more wooded character established by woodland on the north side and boundary trees to the south, giving it a more intimate secluded character.

### **Landscape History**

- 4.4.52 The County Series OS map (1805-1810) shows the area surrounding both creeks as essentially rural, with the only small settlement of Mengham at the head of the Rythe, and few dwellings elsewhere. Small salterns were located on the coastal edge utilising water from the inlet damming it into feeding ponds. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, oyster beds replaced salterns as the local industry, with the salterns falling into disuse in the 1870s and being converted to oyster beds by the 2nd edition OS map (1895-8). However, the 1st edition OS map shows only a single strip of oyster beds. Between 1895-8 and 1907-10, the area surrounding the Mengham Rythe and Eastoke Inlet experienced a dramatic increase in development, affecting the previously rural nature of the creeks. This process gained further momentum during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Historic Features**

- North Salterns Feeding Pond;
- Remains of oyster beds in the muds.

## **Ecological Features**

- Mudflats with small patches of saltmarsh. There is no data available on ecological interest.

## **Views**

- Confined views to the heads of the inlets.

## **Key Issues**

- Any additional yacht moorings;
- Any possible redevelopment or new development on the adjacent coastal edge;
- Intrusive character of many of the existing sea defences;
- Potential for erosion of mudflat and saltmarsh by motorised craft;
- Visual clutter of boundary walls, fences, sheds and other residential paraphernalia in rear gardens at the water's edge.

## **Condition**

- 4.4.53 Landscape condition overall is moderate. Intrusive sea defences and development around Cockle Creek particularly detracts from the visual character of the area.

## **Sensitivity**

- 4.4.54 The area has a high sensitivity to change. It is particularly sensitive to additional yacht moorings, and any redevelopment or new development on the adjacent coastal edge.

## **Landscape Strategy**

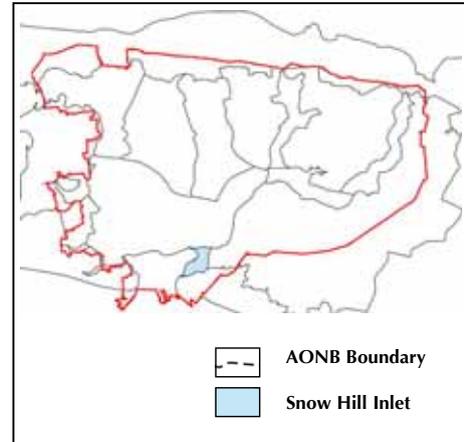
- 4.4.55 The appropriate strategy is conserve and enhance.

## **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the mudflat and saltmarsh;
- Encourage and promote recreation management to prevent damage to habitats from motorised craft;
- Uphold the Conservancy moratorium on provision of additional moorings;

- Uphold the Conservancy's policy, unless there are exceptional circumstances, to refuse any new intertidal structure, and where a replacement structure is permitted, to favour a like-for-like replacement and to consider the use of timber;
- Consider the visual impact of any new development on the adjacent coastal edge;
- Conserve the remaining sections of natural shoreline;
- Seek improvements to the visual appearance of existing sea defences;
- Encourage householders to remove visual clutter of walls, fences and sheds at the water's edge and establish native trees and shrub planting.

## E3 SNOW HILL INLET



### *Key Characteristics*

- Small inlet or bay bounded by East Head Spit and the West Wittering coastal strip;
- Dominated by mudflat and lower saltmarsh at low tide;
- Open, undisturbed character.



## **E3 Snow Hill Inlet**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Small inlet or bay bounded by East Head spit and the West Wittering coastal strip;
- Dominated by mudflat and lower saltmarsh at low tide;
- Open undisturbed character.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.56 This small inlet is bounded by the dunes and saltmarsh of East Head spit and the low exposed peninsula coastline at West Wittering. It comprises open water and mudflats, dependent on the state of the tide, as well as saltmarsh. It is slightly more sheltered than the adjoining Harbour basin and mouth. However, in contrast to the other narrow and minor inlets of the Harbour, it is much more open with low growing scrub and a lack of trees along its eastern shoreline, and with dunes and saltmarsh of East Head spit on its west side. In summer it is a favoured mooring spot for yachts.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.57 The formation of Snow Hill Inlet is the direct result of the dynamic movement of the East Head spit which defines its western boundary.

### **Historic Features**

- Remains of old defences.

### **Ecological Features**

- At low tide mudflat and lower glasswort saltmarsh is exposed.

### **Views**

- Long views north to Pilsay and Thorney Island;
- Close views of East Head.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise;

- Risk of oil pollution in the event of any spillages in the Chichester Harbour Central Basin.

### **Condition**

4.4.58 The condition overall is good with few detracting features apart from a short section of concrete sea wall defences.

### **Sensitivity**

4.4.59 The area has a high sensitivity to change, which would damage its undisturbed character and natural qualities.

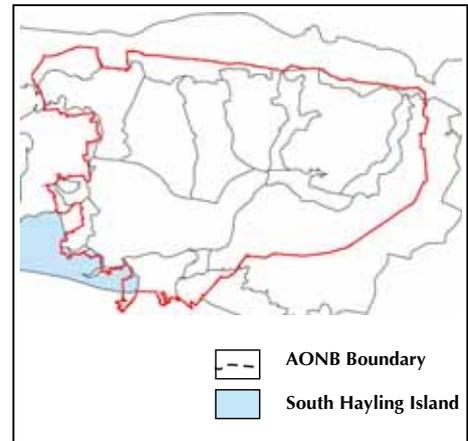
### **Landscape Strategy**

4.4.60 The most appropriate overall strategy is conservation.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve existing saltmarsh habitat;
- Conserve the undisturbed character of the area;
- Seek improvements to the visual appearance of the existing sea defences.

# F1 SOUTH HAYLING ISLAND



## *Key Characteristics*

- Extensive coastal urban development, including holiday villages;
- Exposed southern sea coast;
- Pockets of urban fringe farmland and playing fields;
- Small pockets of rough grazing marsh, scrub, copses and dune heath;
- Mix of bungalows, caravans, marinas and boatyards, particularly around Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe.



## **F1 South Hayling Island**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Extensive coastal urban development, including holiday villages;
- Exposed southern sea coast;
- Pockets of urban fringe farmland and playing fields;
- Small pockets of rough grazing marsh, scrub, copses and dune heath;
- Mix of bungalows, caravans, marinas and boatyards, particularly around Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.61 South Hayling is low lying and very flat. It is dominated by coastal urban development fringed by small pockets of mixed coastal farmland, dune heath, coastal grassland, scrub/woodland and small hedgerow bound paddocks within the AONB just behind the sea wall. The mixed coastal farmland retains an enclosed intimate character due to the presence of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands. The urban edge to these areas is variable; sometimes it is harsh and abrupt, sometimes softened by mature trees in rear gardens. A few areas of modern detached houses, cramped bungalows and dense caravan park developments occur within the AONB around Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe. Otherwise, South Hayling includes extensive areas of undistinguished modern coastal suburban development. Public views of the Harbour are largely restricted to the coastal path.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.62 Whilst the South Hayling character area has an essentially urban character, prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century this was a predominately agricultural landscape with rich fertile soils. The Scheduled Monument of Tournerbury Hillfort in the adjacent LCA (G1) indicates how important this area was during the Iron Age. During the Early Medieval and Medieval periods, South Hayling appears to have been a well-settled agricultural area of scattered small settlements with associated small-scale industries. Indeed, analysis of the Domesday Book implies that the entire Hayling Island was the most densely settled area of the Harbour at that time. These themes of dispersed settlement; agriculture and fishing including oyster dredging, and small-scale industry such as salt and brick making, continued through the medieval and early post-medieval period. However, the whole island's landscape history appears to have undergone a dramatic change in both its focus and its pace during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the advent of the island's railway in 1867 the island began to undergo rapid and dramatic change. The essentially rural South Hayling shown on the County Series OS map (1805-1810) had by the

second edition OS (1895-8) begun to be developed with new housing. Between 1895-1910 an enormous amount of development took place at the south of the island, the growth continuing through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Ecological Features (within the AONB)**

- Small areas of coastal grazing marsh and mudflats;
- Eastoke Point comprises mainly dune heath and grassland. The Calluna and lichen dominated dune heath is a very rare habitat in southern England and includes the locally rare pale heath and heath violets. There are also interesting saltmarsh and brackish grassland floras in the low-lying parts of the land.

#### **Views**

- Panoramic views out to sea and towards the Isle of Wight from Eastoke Point;
- Panoramic views of the central Harbour basin and Harbour mouth from the coastal footpath;
- Glimpsed views of Mengham Rythe and Cockle Creek.

#### **Settlement Character (within the AONB)**

4.4.63 The coastal edges around Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe are fringed by bungalows or detached houses in larger plots. The northern edge also includes holiday village caravan park development and holiday village development.

#### **Key Issues**

- Possible pressure for redevelopment of holiday village sites.
- Potential removal of mature trees in rear gardens and on holiday village site on the edges of Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe.
- Introduction of suburban walls, fences and sheds.
- Intrusion of backland uses such as plant storage, garaging, stabling and boat storage into small hedged paddocks.

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<sup>12</sup> Using the most up-to-date aerial imagery available (2015, Google Earth), it has been identified that approximately 130 houses have been constructed within this LCA, on a former green field site north of Goldring Close and south of Hawthorne Grove (outside of the AONB boundary) since the previous character assessment (2005)

### **Condition (within the AONB)**

- 4.4.64 Overall condition is moderate. Distinctive habitats survive. However, there are some urban fringe activities and some harsh urban edges which erode character in parts.

### **Sensitivity (within the AONB)**

- 4.4.65 The landscape has a moderate to high sensitivity to development and change. The most sensitive parts are the edges to the minor inlets of Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe.

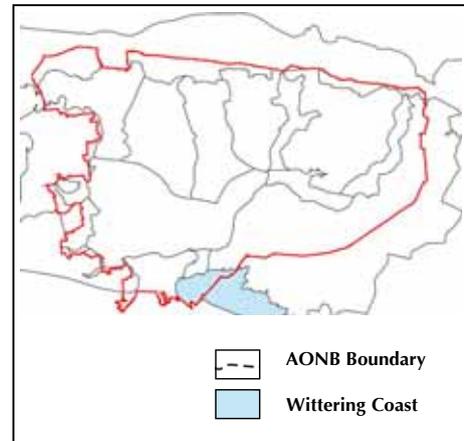
### **Landscape Strategy**

- 4.4.66 The appropriate strategy is conserve and enhance.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines (within the AONB)**

- Conserve and manage the dune heath behind Eastoke Point;
- Conserve and manage the small pockets of rough grazing marsh;
- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the edges to Mengham Rythe inlet, seeking retention of mature trees in rear gardens and at the head of the Rythe;
- Seek the retention of mature trees in rear gardens and in the caravan park adjacent to Cockle Creek. Avoid the introduction of suburban walls, fences and sheds;
- Conserve small hedged paddocks avoiding the intrusion of 'backland' uses such as plant storage, garaging, stabling and boat storage;
- Ensure any future redevelopment around Cockle Creek and Mengham Rythe responds to landscape setting and the intimate/enclosed character of the inlets, in terms of scale, form, design and materials;
- Secure landscape enhancements including additional tree and hedgerow planting to the holiday village/caravan park boundaries with Cockle Creek.

## F2 WITTERING COAST



### *Key Characteristics*

- Exposed shingle and sand beaches divided by timber groynes;
- Open coastal grassland, marsh and large arable fields behind the sea wall drained by ditches and rythes;
- Straight lanes and tracks bounded by grass verges;
- Absence of trees, except around the settlement edges;
- Linear, coastal development of detached houses and bungalows south of West Wittering, and suburban style private estate development at Roman Landing and Snow Hill;
- Large village of West Wittering, enclosing old historic core of flint and brick cottages;
- Car borne summer holiday traffic and busy car parks diminish tranquillity;
- Exposed character.



## **F2 Wittering Coast**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Exposed shingle and sand beaches divided by timber groynes;
- Open coastal grassland, marsh and large arable fields behind the sea wall drained by ditches and rythes;
- Straight lanes and tracks bounded by grass verges;
- Absence of trees, except around the settlement edges;
- Linear, coastal development of detached houses and bungalows south of West Wittering, and suburban style private estate development at Roman Landing and Snow Hill;
- Large village of West Wittering, enclosing old historic core of flint and brick cottages;
- Car borne summer holiday traffic and busy car parks diminish tranquillity;
- Exposed character.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.67 The Wittering Coast Character Area is an exposed, narrow coastal strip of shingle and sand beaches open grassland, marsh and large arable fields crossed by estate roads/tracks leading to the beach with pockets of suburban style development. Fields are divided by low hedges or post and wire fencing and there are very few trees. The linear development of the West Wittering estate behind the sea wall includes detached houses and bungalows which are prominent in views, as is the large beach car park. The historic village of West Wittering, much expanded by 20<sup>th</sup> century development has significant areas of scrub and trees around its edges, so it is often not visible in the wider landscape.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.68 Some Neolithic and Roman finds have been found within the area. West Wittering first enters history in 683 when the land formed part of the Diocese of Selsey. After the inundation of Selsey, West Wittering passed to the Bishops of Chichester, who built a 12<sup>th</sup> century Manor House at Cakeham and used it as a favoured residence. The town of West Wittering, with its 12<sup>th</sup> century church, developed as an agriculturally-based settlement through the medieval period, and then trebled in population size during the mid-seventeenth to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The origins of West Wittering's reputation as a seaside tourist attraction began in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rest of the coastal strip has its origins in isolated farmsteads and 19<sup>th</sup> century reclaimed marshes. The coastline in this area has undergone significant change during the historic period, with documented instances of inundation and the permanent loss of land. This process of erosion and inundation by storms has continued through the intervening

centuries until it was arrested by the late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century construction of groynes and other sea defences.

#### **Historic Features (within the AONB)**

- Historic buildings in the village core, such as the 12<sup>th</sup> century West Wittering church;
- Beach huts;
- Timber groynes on the beaches.

#### **Ecological Features (within the AONB)**

- Tidal lagoons and coastal grazing marsh at Snow Hill Marsh. It includes marshy saltmarsh, acid grassland and rushy pasture.

#### **Views (from within the AONB)**

- Views to West Wittering Church and Cakeham Tower which are local landmarks;
- Panoramic views out to sea from the beach;
- Views to East Head and the Harbour mouth.

#### **Settlement Character (within the AONB)**

- The small historic core of West Wittering comprises rows of small brick, flint or painted brick cottages on a curving lane leading to the low squat church. Some of the cottages also include timber boarding and slate cladding. There are few modern infill detached houses. Some of the cottages face a small village green. To the north of the historic core there is a small area of 20<sup>th</sup> century terraces and detached houses. The southern edge of West Wittering is screened by an extensive area of coastal scrub. The northern boundary is marked by a few hedgerows or broken lines of hedgerow trees;
- The private estates of Roman Landing and Snow Hill comprise large detached houses in generous plots. They have a well treed character.

#### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise which could lead to loss of low-lying coastal grazing marsh;
- The poor visual appearance of West Wittering Beach car park and associated traffic queues;
- Any possible new development on the edge of West Wittering which could lead to loss of/erosion of open character.

### **Condition (within the AONB)**

- 4.4.69 Condition is moderate. The West Wittering Beach car park and coastal development outside the AONB disrupt visual unity. However, there is some good survival of characteristic coastal habitats.

### **Sensitivity (within the AONB)**

- 4.4.70 The landscape has a high sensitivity to change due to its openness and high visibility. It is particularly sensitive to any large-scale built development that could lead to the loss of open character and intrude on views.

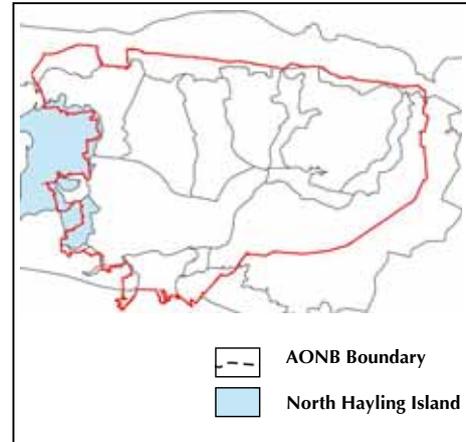
### **Landscape Strategy**

- 4.4.71 The appropriate strategy is to conserve and manage.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines (within AONB)**

- Conserve historic beach huts;
- Improve the landscape of West Wittering Car Park. Seek to minimise the visual intrusion of parked cars;
- Conserve and manage low lying grazing marsh;
- Seek the removal of intrusive furniture, signs and litter bins near the beach;
- Conserve the existing scrub and tree cover on the edge of West Wittering;
- Ensure any new development does not result in adverse impact on open character and characteristic views.

# G1 NORTH HAYLING ISLAND



## *Key Characteristics*

- Large, harbourside island of arable and pasture farmland. Both large- and small-scale field patterns;
- Small, hedged paddocks associated with settlements, and a network of copses, small woodlands and tree belts give a strong sense of enclosure;
- Distinctive fringe of low lying and unimproved coastal grazing marsh which attracts waders and wildfowl;
- Panoramic views of the Harbour and Thorney Island from the coastal path;
- Historic, linear settlement pattern of cottages and farm buildings in North Hayling;
- Mostly undeveloped character to the coastal edge.



## **G1 North Hayling Island**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Large harbourside island of arable and pasture farmland. Both large- and small-scale field patterns;
- Small, hedged paddocks associated with settlements, and a network of copses, small woodlands and treebelts give a strong sense of enclosure;
- Distinctive fringe of low lying and unimproved coastal grazing marsh which attracts waders and wildfowl;
- Panoramic views of the Harbour and Thorney Island from the coastal path;
- Historic, linear settlement pattern of cottages and farm buildings in North Hayling;
- Mostly undeveloped character to the coastal edge.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.72 This character area is a large harbourside island underlain by brickearth drift deposits. It includes arable farmland with large rectilinear fields and smaller hedged pastures and horse paddocks. There is a distinctive fringe within the AONB of low-lying coastal grazing marsh which attracts waders and wildfowl and is located behind the sea wall along the coastal edge. The coastal path allows panoramic views of the rest of the Harbour. However, from behind the sea wall there are very few views of the water. A few modern harbourside houses and boatyards are scattered along the coastal edge and there is a large marina at Northney. Otherwise, the AONB within this LCA has a mostly undeveloped, undisturbed character.

### **Landscape History**

4.4.73 The key themes in the landscape history of LCA are dispersed settlement, agriculture, small-scale local industry and fishing. In late prehistory North Hayling was also the site of an Iron Age ritual centre later appropriated as a site for a temple by the Romans. Within the southern part of the LCA, on the edge of the adjacent LCA (F1) is the most impressive prehistoric archaeological site in the entire Harbour, the Scheduled Monument of Tournerbury Hillfort. This hillfort encloses an area of nearly 4 hectares, and still possesses an impressive bank and ditch. Its presence in this area indicates how important this area was during the Iron Age. There is also evidence of Saxon activity within the LCA. Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century (when several of the settlements first entered history), if not earlier, settlement in the character area has been dispersed, with small groups of dwellings clustering along the roads. The historic cores of these settlements survive lending a distinct character to this area, particularly on the more secluded east side of the island. The 1st edition OS map shows an intricate pattern of fields

associated with these settlements, with some possible surviving medieval strip fields running north-south between Stoke and Tye to the south, and North Hayling to the north. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the intricacy of this pattern has been lost through field boundary removal, though the expanded arable fields do still conserve some of the earlier north-south field boundaries at their edges. A second theme in the development of the fields in this character area has been the practice of assarting, whereby fields are cut into woodland and unenclosed common. The coastal grasslands that remain today are survivors of this process. Whilst South Hayling became increasingly urbanised during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, North Hayling was not subject to such intense development, though the historic settlements have expanded in size during this time.

### **Ecological Features (within AONB)**

- Extensive coastal grazing marsh and arable farmland that provides feeding grounds for brent geese;
- Northney Farm has coastal grazing marsh in good condition, owing to long-standing and well-managed cattle grazing. There are wet saltmarsh patches;
- Small copses and thick hedgerows;
- Tournerbury Wood is a broadleaf oak plantation, and the Tournerbury Plantations have mixed conifer and broadleaf species;
- Chalk-based vegetation at North Common.

### **Views (within AONB)**

- Panoramic views from the coastal path of the Harbour basin;
- Views from the coastal path across the Emsworth Channel to Thorney Island.

### **Settlement Character (within AONB)**

- 20<sup>th</sup> century low density holiday village with permanent and temporary caravan parking on south side of Mill Rythe.
- Large industrial sheds and breakers yard at Hayling Yacht Company;
- Detached, modern harbourside houses on north side of Mill Rythe, at Gutner Farm and north of Northney;
- Large hotel and marina at North Common.

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise which could lead to the loss of coastal grazing marsh;
- Decline in management of grazing marsh due to loss of livestock;

- Potential pressure for marina development and above ground berthing facilities along the coastal edge;
- Pressure for additional extensions to existing harbourside housing development.

#### **Condition (within AONB)**

4.4.74 Overall condition is moderate. There is good survival of characteristic landscape features. However, visual intrusion from harbourside housing development and marinas erodes character in some parts.

#### **Sensitivity (within AONB)**

4.4.75 Landscape sensitivity is moderate to high. The coastal grazing marshes and the coastal edge are particularly sensitive to change.

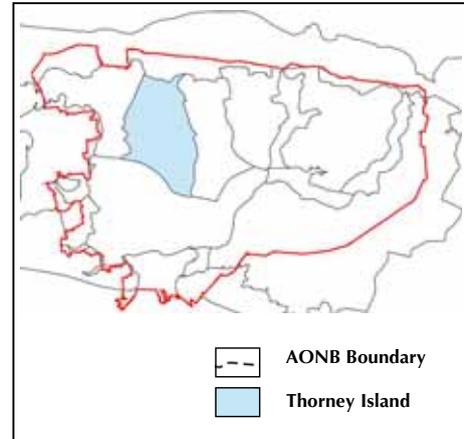
#### **Landscape Strategy**

4.4.76 The appropriate strategy is to conserve and enhance.

#### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines (within the AONB)**

- Conserve and manage coastal grazing marsh;
- Conserve the mostly undeveloped character to the coastal edge;
- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the southern edge to Mengham Rythe inlet, seeking retention of mature trees in rear gardens and long-term management of Tournerbury Wood;
- Ensure any new, or extensions to, existing harbourside housing development avoids the loss of trees and hedges, and the introduction of suburban styles and materials and responds to its landscape setting in its scale, form and design, materials and colours;
- Ensure any marina development does not result in the loss of coastal grazing marsh and responds to its landscape setting in terms of its scale, form, design and materials;
- Secure improvements to the visual appearance of the landscape around Hayling Yacht Company, including hedgerow, hedgerow tree and copse planting.

## G2 THORNEY ISLAND



### *Key Characteristics*

- Low lying land below sea level in the north, gently sloping landform in the south;
- A predominantly open grassland peninsula with few field boundaries;
- Patches of woodland and scrub, with a concentration of harbourside trees near West Thorney;
- Significant areas of low lying and open coastal grazing land, the results of major historic reclamation;
- Strong military influence on character, including Officers Mess buildings, large hangars and service accommodation together with remains of pillboxes and gun emplacements;
- Panoramic views from the coastal path of adjacent channels, of other peninsulas and of the Harbour mouth;
- Sense of remoteness and wildness around harbour edges.



## G2 Thorney Island

### Key Characteristics

- Low lying land below sea level in the north, gently sloping landform in the south;
- A predominantly open grassland peninsula with few field boundaries;
- Patches of woodland and scrub, with a concentration of harbourside trees near West Thorney;
- Significant areas of low lying and open coastal grazing land, the results of major historic reclamation;
- Strong military influence on character, including Officers Mess buildings, large hangars and service accommodation together with remains of pillboxes and gun emplacements;
- Panoramic views from the coastal path of adjacent channels, of other peninsulas and of the Harbour mouth;
- Sense of remoteness and wildness around harbour edges.

### Overall Character

4.4.77 The Thorney Island peninsula is surrounded by sea to the east, south and west. The southern half of the peninsula was originally an island and consists of a low 5m high plateau which includes historic settlement of West Thorney, located on the east of the peninsula. This raised land to the south is joined to the mainland to the north by flat open coastal grazing land, known as the Deeps, which were reclaimed from the sea in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The distinctive curving channels of the Little and Great Deep cutting through this area are fringed by marsh and reedbeds. Much of the rest of the peninsula is also covered in grassland and has a mostly open character with few internal boundaries. However, there are some large patches of scrub and woodland, and a few arable and pasture fields occur on the west side of the peninsula. The coastal grazing land to the north is exposed, open and flat and is cut by the large channel of the Great Deep. The channel marks the edge of the military land, and it is also reinforced by high chain link fencing. The airfield is non-operational, and the area is now occupied by the Royal Artillery. Whilst the peninsula contains highly visible remains of its WWII RAF history, including pillboxes, gun emplacements and anti-tank walls, the modern military landscape is more residential in character, with suburban-style housing and leisure facilities such as the sailing club. The 12<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Nicholas is a local feature, hidden in the trees at the harbourside, and acts as a reminder of the peninsula's earlier history.

4.4.78 The sea wall north of the peninsula consists of raised north embankments and broken concrete walls, which decrease in height with the rise in land height to the south. In some places areas of boggy grassland punctuated with ponds and slacks have developed behind the embankment,

creating rich habitats for birds. There is little development along the coastal edge, with the exception of the settlement of West Thorney, on the east of Thorney Island. The sailing club buildings and suburban housing are visible at the coastal edge of the village. The area is generally tranquil, particularly when upwind of the mainland. When downwind of the mainland the noise of vehicles on the roads travels across the flat Deeps, disturbing the peace of the area. Military activity on the island can be noisy but generally occurs in a few discrete bursts, such as the sudden appearance of large tanks or Chinook helicopters. Within the Thorney Island Character Area one distinctive sub character area can be recognised.

### Landscape History

- 4.4.79 Thorney Island is known both locally and nationally as a military base, famous for the role it played in the RAF's Coastal Command during WWII. The commandeering of the peninsula by the military in the 1935 was a pivotal point in the area's landscape history and was accompanied by the destruction of the domestic buildings at West Thorney, and the creation of an airfield out of the village's arable fields. Many of the historic features now contained within this area relate to the WWII and later defence of the Island. The RAF built a classic early WWII military landscape on the island. The airfield was officially closed in 1976 before being taken over by the Royal Artillery in 1982. In the intervening period the island was briefly used for two years as a centre for Vietnamese refugees.
- 4.4.80 Some hints of the peninsula's earlier history do survive, most notably in the coastal grazing of the Deeps, reclaimed from the sea in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Previous to this reclamation, Thorney Island was truly an island, accessible only by a causeway along the line of the current central road. This causeway was only fully exposed at spring low tide, and the rest of the year was otherwise "*half-leg deep at low water*"<sup>13</sup>. Thorney Island has been the focus of sporadic settlement since at least the Neolithic period. The settlement on the hill at West Thorney appears in the Domesday Book, which describes a settled farmed landscape with a church that predates the surviving church of St Nicholas. The lower lying levels of the island landscape were subject to sea level changes throughout the medieval period, with sea incursions being noted between 1291 and 1340. It has been suggested that the Island's population shrank during the medieval and later medieval period from its Domesday Book high, and by 1801 there were only 10 inhabited houses on the Island. The Island was enclosed in 1811, though most of the straight field boundaries laid out during this enclosure were later swept away by the military. Some small enclosure fields do still survive to the west of the Island.

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<sup>13</sup> As per description of Thorney Island by Sir R Steele and Sir J Vanburgh in The Gentleman's Magazine, Volume 81, 1797

## Historic Features

- The Parish Church of St Nicholas built of flint rubble with dressings of ashlar and roofed with tile;
- The 1811 Parliamentary Enclosure fields to the west of the Island. These are the sole survivors of the comprehensive enclosure of the island permitted in 1811, and which divided almost the entirety of the Island into regular square fields;
- The Deeps which were reclaimed in 1870 and which have never been ploughed;
- The line of the main road which follows the line of the old Wadeway that connected Thorney Island to the mainland before the Deeps were reclaimed;
- Parkland trees from the two areas of parkland shown on the 1st edition OS map may survive within the MOD area;
- Military architecture including the 1938 Officers' Mess, still the largest building in Chichester Harbour;
- Second World War military defences which include machine gun emplacements, hexagonal pillboxes and anti-tank walls;
- The disused airfield which includes landing lights across the Deeps and concrete runways.

## Ecological Features

- Eames Farm and the Great Deep is an extensive area of unimproved grazing marsh and is botanically rich. It includes upper saltmarsh, wet grassland, herb rich pasture and reed swamp. The wet grasslands support breeding redshank and lapwing, the reedbed birds such as reed and sedge warbler, Cetti's warbler, reed bunting and bearded tit. This area has probably the richest invertebrate fauna in the AONB;
- Lagoons set behind the sea defence embankments;
- Thorney Island is regarded as particularly important for birds of open countryside including linnet, grey partridge, meadow pipit, yellowhammer etc. There are also areas of high botanical interest containing nationally rare species;
- Scrub woodland and mature trees.

## Views

- Long views from the coastal path across Thorney Channel to Nutbourne and Chidham;
- Long views from the coastal path across Emsworth Channel to Emsworth, Langstone and Hayling Island;
- Long views to West Itchenor and West Wittering;
- Panoramic views across the Harbour pool to the Harbour mouth.

## Settlement Character

4.4.81 The Officers' Mess at West Thorney is an imposing building in the classic early 20<sup>th</sup> century military style. This is still the largest building within Chichester Harbour. Along with St Nicholas church these buildings form the historic core of the West Thorney settlement area, which mainly consists of 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban-style housing. The Thorney settlement complex to the east includes buildings set out in a fan shaped layout which is typical of early 20<sup>th</sup> century military camps. The centre of the Island also contains large imposing military hangar buildings partly screened by trees. In addition, there are several leisure facilities including the sailing club to the east of the island at West Thorney.

## Key Issues

- Sea level rise;
- Large hangars and other buildings adjoining the runways which erode undeveloped character;
- Tower blocks and gasometer in Havant are intrusive in views to the northwest;
- Any potential new development/training facilities within the military base;
- Long term future of the military base and any possible major redevelopment;
- Any possible changes to military security procedures necessitating erection of more fencing.

## Condition

4.4.82 Landscape condition is moderate. There is good survival of characteristic features and habitats. However, visual unity is disrupted by large intrusive buildings.

## Sensitivity

4.4.83 The sensitivity of the landscape to development/change is moderate to high, reflecting its visibility in the Harbour landscapes and its landscape qualities. The coastal edge and the area of the Deeps are most sensitive to development and change.

## Landscape Strategy

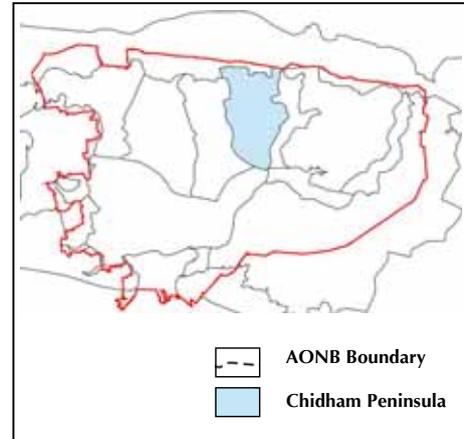
4.4.84 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

## Planning and Land Management Guidelines

- Conserve the undeveloped remote character of the peninsula edge;

- Conserve the distinctive historic character of the area, including Second World War military defences;
- Conserve and manage scrub, small woodlands, coastal grassland and reedbeds;
- Seek the removal of intrusive buildings such as hangars where possible;
- Establish new woodland and scrub for screening intrusive hangars;
- Ensure any new military buildings and infrastructure, or any other redevelopment is of an appropriate scale, form, design and materials and colours that respond to landscape setting;
- Seek the return of much of the land to agricultural use in the event of withdrawal of military use;
- Take opportunities for managed realignment of sea defences on low lying land, creating new areas of coastal habitat. Avoid significant adverse impacts on existing important habitats such as coastal grazing marsh behind the sea wall.

## G3 CHIDHAM PENINSULA



### *Key Characteristics*

- Narrow peninsula, edged by the Thorney and Bosham Channels;
- Gently sloping landform;
- Rich agricultural land with large arable fields. Low hedgerows, poplar shelterbelts and lines of wind sculpted oak and pine trees form field boundaries.
- An open landscape reminiscent of the 18<sup>th</sup> century pre-Parliamentary enclosure landscape;
- Orchards and market gardening;
- Small woodlands, parkland trees and a higher density of hedgerows around the village of West Chidham and Cobnor House, create localised enclosure;
- Old sunken lanes encircle the village and run northwards;
- Scattered farm ponds;
- Attractive flint and brick manor houses, farm buildings and cottages;
- Wide views from the coastal path of the adjacent channels and nearby peninsulas;
- Occasional views of the water or of yacht mast tips only from within the peninsula;
- Strongly rural and tranquil character.



### **G3 Chidham Peninsula**

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Narrow peninsula, edged by the Thorney and Bosham Channels;
- Gently sloping landform;
- Rich agricultural land with large arable fields. Low hedgerows, poplar shelterbelts and lines of wind sculpted oak and pine trees form field boundaries;
- An open landscape reminiscent of the 18<sup>th</sup> century pre-Parliamentary enclosure landscape;
- Orchards and market gardening;
- Small woodlands, parkland trees and a higher density of hedgerows around the village of West Chidham and Cobnor House, create localised enclosure;
- Old sunken lanes encircle the village and run northwards;
- Scattered farm ponds;
- Attractive flint and brick manor houses, farm buildings and cottages;
- Wide views from the coastal path of the adjacent channels and nearby peninsulas;
- Occasional views of the water or of yacht mast tips only from within the peninsula;
- Strongly rural and tranquil character.

#### **Overall Character**

4.4.85 This long narrow peninsula is flat to very gently sloping and is underlain by a layer of brick earth deposits over chalk. This gives rise to rich agricultural land. The field pattern is strongly rectilinear and field boundaries are marked by low growing wind sculpted oak and pine trees, or occasionally by treebelts. There are small pockets of coppice woodland in the south. The edges to the channels are defined by low earth bank sea defences, except southwest of Cobnor Point where slightly higher ground creates low cliffs which are covered in scrub vegetation. A rock sea wall defines the south and east of Cobnor Point, including two breach points with footbridge over. Panoramic and long views across the rest of the Harbour are possible from the coastal path. From within the peninsula there are occasional views of the water or of the tips of masts only. Overall the area has a strongly rural, undeveloped and tranquil character with only a few small settlements and an absence of major roads. The area around West Chidham has smaller hedgerow bound fields used for pasture and market gardening. Narrow sunken lanes encircle the area and there is a mix of historic and modern development associated with its dispersed settlement.

## Landscape History

- 4.4.86 The landscape history of the Chidham peninsula is dominated by the theme of agriculture. Chidham is apparently blessed with *'one of the finest lightest soils in the country'* (Reger 1996, 75), that is brickearth topsoil over chalk, and this fact has been exploited throughout the peninsula's history. The chance discovery in one of the peninsula's hedgerows of the prolific Chidham Wheat in the 1790s (which was once famous enough to appear in one of Charles Darwin's essays<sup>14</sup>) perhaps underlines this theme further. The fertile peninsula appears to have been the location of human activity since at least the Neolithic period, with several flint working sites found along the shoreline particularly clustered around the area of Chidham Point. Late Iron Age and Roman saltworkings have also been identified here. Chidham did not receive an entry in the Domesday Book as it was part of the larger estate of Bosham Chapelry, owned by the Bishop of Exeter.
- 4.4.87 A map of 1778, surveyed by Yeakell and Gardner (refer to **Figure 4**), shows the island divided into graded fields: smaller fields near the settlement in the centre of the peninsula, and larger fields further away from the village. Though the peninsula was not formally enclosed until 1812 and 1821, the fields shown on the Yeakell and Gardner map (1778) indicate that informal enclosure by agreement had already taken place in the peninsula. The south of the peninsula, now occupied by Cobnor House and the Cobnor Activities Centre, was coppice woodland in 1778; small fields had been cut into this coppice by c.1805-10 and during the 1812/1821 enclosures these were further expanded and straightened into the formal fields found there today. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the patchwork of small regular fields created by the 1812 and 1821 enclosures have been thinned out and stripped down; in the process creating a landscape strangely reminiscent of the 18<sup>th</sup> century pre-Parliamentary Enclosure fields.
- 4.4.88 More recently, managed realignment schemes have been carried out on the west coast of the peninsula and at Cobnor Point.<sup>15</sup> This has involved moving the former sea defence on the west coast of the peninsula inland, to allow flooding to occur between the old and new lines of defence. This controls the shape of the Harbour's shoreline. The new defence parallel to the coastline has been largely formed along the line of drainage ditches and field boundaries. Some realignment of field boundaries has taken place. At Cobnor Point, inland ponds and channels have been established by breaching the existing rock seawall and have enhanced the wildlife habitat at this location.

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<sup>14</sup> Darwin 1883, pg248

<sup>15</sup> Note, this has taken place since the 2005 LCA was produced

## Historic Features

- Sunken lanes leading into and encircling the village. These lanes are sunken through erosion, caused by heavy use as transport and drove routes over centuries. Some are lined by hedges;
- The north-south orientation of the roads and fields which may derive from the medieval and late medieval division of the peninsula into the tithings of “Weston, Middleton and Easton” (VCH, 188), and which may themselves have origins in earlier land and road layouts;
- The east-west lanes such as Marsh Lane marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, which used to lead to the rich resources of the marshes, now reclaimed, and to creeks leading to the main channels, which are now silted;
- Historic buildings in the village, including St Mary’s Church, the Manor House, Middleton House, and Chidmere House;
- The fields by Cobnor House which still retain shaws, or strips of wood between them, which are themselves the remains of the two coppices (Great Coppice and Cobnor Coppice) which stood in this area prior to enclosure;
- The western sea defences which were probably first put in place after 1778<sup>16</sup> and before 1790s/1800, when the 1st Ordnance Survey 1 maps were surveyed.

## Ecological Features

- Cobnor Coppice: a plantation, with some native coppice;
- Farm ponds and the semi-ornamental Chidmere Pond;
- Patches of coastal grassland and wetland along the coastal edge, such as Cobnor Point Marsh.

## Views

- Views across Bosham Channel to Bosham Village and the Bosham Peninsula;
- Long views from the western coastal edge to West Thorney;
- Panoramic views from Cobnor Point of the Harbour pool, and of the Manhood Peninsula around West Itchenor.

## Settlement Character

4.4.89 The historic core of the small village of West Chidham comprises scattered groupings of brick and flint cottages fronting narrow lanes with some larger historic manor houses and farmhouses set back, generally in large plots. It is almost entirely hidden in the wider landscape by mature

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<sup>16</sup> Yeakell and Gardner survey, as shown in Figure 4

pine, poplar, beech, and horse chestnut trees. Harbour Way is a small development of 20<sup>th</sup> century harbourside suburban style detached houses. Elsewhere on the peninsula there are a small number of isolated historic farms and barns.

### **Key Issues**

- Intensive arable farming which has led to the past loss of hedgerow trees;
- Any additional harbourside development and new large-scale farm buildings and glasshouses leading to visual intrusion and erosion of rural, tranquil character;
- Sea level rise.

### **Condition**

4.4.90 Landscape condition is overall moderate. Visual and ecological condition has been eroded in parts by intensive arable farming. Habitat areas are beginning to be improved through coastal realignment schemes.

### **Sensitivity**

4.4.91 The sensitivity of the landscape to development/change is high reflecting its high visibility and many landscape qualities. It is particularly sensitive to visually intrusive built development.

### **Landscape Strategy**

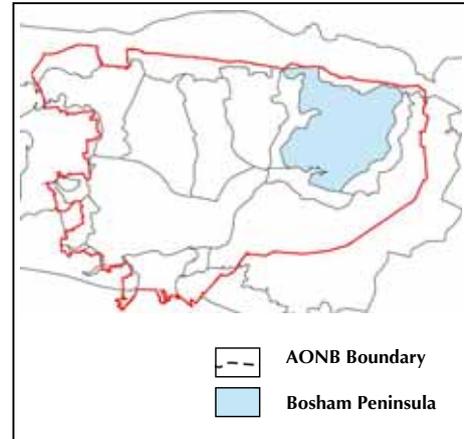
4.4.92 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve the open, rural and tranquil character of the area;
- Conserve the distinctive historic character of the area;
- Conserve characteristic views;
- Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows;
- Conserve and manage existing small coppice woodland and treebelts around Cobnor Point;
- Conserve the landscape setting of West Chidham;
- Establish new small woodlands ensuring they are related to existing field patterns;
- Establish new hedgerows/hedgerow trees following existing field patterns;
- Conserve and manage farm ponds;
- Conserve the character of the sunken lanes;

- Ensure careful siting, form, design and materials of any new farm buildings/glasshouses. Relate to existing farm building groupings and provide additional hedgerow/hedgerow tree and copse planting for integration as appropriate;
- Ensure any new development in West Chidham Village responds to historic settlement pattern, locally distinctive building styles and materials and landscape setting in terms of its siting, scale, form, design, materials and colours.
- Appropriate management of the realigned sea defences and resulting areas of coastal habitats. Avoid significant adverse impacts on existing important habitats;
- Ensure any new harbourside development avoids the loss of trees and hedges, the introduction of suburban styles and materials, and is of an appropriate scale, form, design and colour that respond to landscape setting.

## G4 BOSHAM PENINSULA



### *Key Characteristics*

- Wide, flat to gently sloping peninsula bounded by Bosham, Itchenor and Fishbourne Channels;
- Mostly large, arable fields divided by lines of hedgerow oaks, low hedgerows and occasional shelterbelts;
- Concentration of nurseries, market gardening and glasshouses east of Bosham.
- Complex, irregular and regular field patterns, the result of enclosure in several stages;
- Concentration of woodland around Bosham Hoe, including ancient woodland of Old Park Wood, with its distinctive low growing and gnarled oaks at the water's edge;
- Remnant parkscapes and historic farmhouses;
- 20<sup>th</sup> century harbourside houses, set in large garden plots, including some detached properties of a suburban character;
- Picturesque village of Bosham. Flint and brick cottages and houses cluster around the harbourside with the church tower, a well known local landmark rising above;
- Distinctive long views to the South Downs and to Chichester Cathedral;
- Mostly tranquil, rural character.



## **G4 Bosham Peninsula**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Wide, flat to gently sloping peninsula, bounded by Bosham, Itchenor and Fishbourne Channels;
- Mostly large, arable fields divided by lines of hedgerow oaks, low hedgerows and occasional shelterbelts. Concentration of nurseries, market gardening and glasshouses east of Bosham;
- Complex irregular and regular field patterns, the result of enclosure in several stages;
- Concentration of woodland around Bosham Hoe, including ancient woodland of Old Park Wood, with its distinctive low growing and gnarled oaks at the water's edge;
- Remnant parkscapes and historic farmhouses;
- 20<sup>th</sup> century harbourside houses, set in large garden plots, including some detached properties of a suburban character;
- Picturesque village of Bosham. Flint and brick cottages and houses cluster around the harbourside with the church tower, a well-known local landmark rising above;
- Distinctive long views to the South Downs and to Chichester Cathedral;
- Mostly tranquil, rural character.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.93 This broad peninsula has a flat to gently sloping landform underlain by brickearth deposits over chalk and Reading Beds. It has a narrow fringe of low-lying land with an extensive area in the centre at approximately 5m in height. Most of the area comprises large arable fields divided by lines of hedgerow oaks, low hedgerows, grassland banks and occasional shelterbelts. This farmland has a mix of regular and irregular field patterns. Scattered ponds and a few isolated copses are features in the landscape. It is mainly open in character, although in the southwest Old Park Wood and a network of smaller copses create a great sense of enclosure and form a wooded backdrop to the arable fields. A network of winding, mostly slightly sunken lanes traverse the peninsula. Views of the water are mainly restricted to the coastal edge and the sea defences, with very few such views from within the area. Away from the A27 trunk road in the north, most of the area has a tranquil, rural character. The settlement pattern comprises the large nucleated village of Bosham, scattered farmhouses and the Bosham Hoe estate of 20<sup>th</sup> century detached houses.

## Landscape History

- 4.4.94 The Bosham peninsula possesses a unique and intricate history that has, on occasion, earned it a place in national history. A series of Mesolithic, Neolithic and early Bronze Age tools, tool making debris and some occupation sites have been found along the coastline and picked up from ploughed fields within the peninsula. Similarly, various Iron Age and Roman finds have been made. After the Romans left the area, the Bosham peninsula continued to be occupied, eventually becoming a favoured residence of high-ranking Saxons. Prior to the Norman Conquest, the Manor of Bosham was extensive, including not only the peninsula itself, but also parishes such as West Thorney, Chidham and Funtington. The western portion of the estate was attached to the church and the remainder was obtained by Earl Godwin, the father of Harold. In this way Bosham entered European history as the place from where Harold set sail in 1064 at the start of the dispute for the throne that led to the Battle of Hastings.
- 4.4.95 As befits the status of the peninsula, there was a medieval park which would have been an area of unfarmed land set aside for hunting and for timber and would probably have included deer. The park would probably have been surrounded by a park pale (an earth bank, ditch and high fence). In 1233 the land was 'disemparked', and whilst the exact history of this process is not known, it may be that the land was then, or later, enclosed into agricultural fields, resulting in the complex pattern of small, irregular, intricately entwined fields running through the centre of the peninsula, which are visible on the Yeakell and Gardner 1774 map of the peninsula, and which are surviving, though much enlarged on the 1st edition OS map. These fields are, therefore, important survivors of early field enclosure by agreement, as well as being the site of a medieval park. Much of the woodland was broken apart by assarts (fields cut into woodland) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and probably earlier, and was thus much reduced in size. Other areas of assarts at the peninsula include those cut into the coastal grasslands and marshes.
- 4.4.96 Bosham was an important medieval port in Chichester Harbour and in 1348 was listed as one of three places licensed to land wine within the Harbour. Cargoes continued to land at Bosham throughout the medieval and early post medieval period. It is locally said that the raised harbourside walkway, the 'Trippet', was built from the stone used as ballast by ships from all over England and Europe. In addition, fishing was an important activity for the Bosham residents, including winter dredging for oysters in managed oyster beds. Other local industries included brick making, and possibly salt making. Boat making was also an important industry, and during the Second World War, Mulberry Harbours for the D-Day landings were constructed at Bosham.
- 4.4.97 Settlement was concentrated in the historic cores of Bosham throughout the medieval and post-medieval period. After the enclosure and assarting of the peninsula's open fields, wastes,

commons, medieval park and other lands, which took place over many centuries, scattered farmsteads divided the agricultural land between them. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century one of these, Southwood Farm, laid a large area of its agricultural lands out to parkland. Clumped stands of trees still survive from this landscape layout. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the intricacy of the peninsula's field layout, created by this mix of field enclosure processes and ages, has been eroded, with hedges and field boundaries being removed and rationalised to create larger, more regular fields.

### **Historic Features**

- Sunken lanes with drainage ditches along the roadside;
- Historic buildings and quayside, including the church at Bosham and the Manor House;
- Remains of 19<sup>th</sup> century parkland to the southeast of Bosham village, and the intricate field pattern of the enclosed pre-13<sup>th</sup> century parkland in the centre of the peninsula;
- Ancient woodland surviving at Old Park Wood, which was possibly part of the medieval park.

### **Ecological Features**

- Old Park Wood – ancient pedunculated and sessile oak woodland with hazel coppice. Old gnarled lichen covered oaks come down to a natural shoreline. Includes much Butchers Broom. Old Park Wood includes a heronry;
- Oak copse and woods west of Old Park include both relict ancient woodland and more recent plantations;
- Lighter's Field at Bosham Hoe is a valuable unimproved hay meadow including green winged orchid, adder's tongue and water dropwort;
- Scattered farm ponds;
- Arable field headlands important for farmland birds.

### **Views**

- Important long views from lanes and tracks on the west side of the peninsula to Chichester Cathedral with the spire and nave visible;
- Long views north in which the South Downs form the backdrop;
- Long views across farmland to Bosham Church;
- Views of the adjacent channels are mainly restricted to the coastal path/sea defences;
- Classic views of Bosham quayside and Church from the south side of School Rythe.

## Settlement Character

- 4.4.98 The small historic core of Bosham is concentrated around the quayside, and Bosham Lane approaching from the north. It contains a picturesque cluster of fisherman's cottages constructed of brick, flint and timber boarding, with a few larger Georgian houses and the historic tide mill. Quay Meadow forms an attractive setting to the Church. The rest of the village comprises mainly small 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban estates of terraced and detached houses and bungalows. Mature trees within the settlement and around the edges contribute to landscape setting, although parts of the northern and eastern edges are not well screened.
- 4.4.99 Bosham Hoe is a private 20<sup>th</sup> century estate of mainly large detached houses set in detached plots along straight roads. Development is concentrated around Furzefield Creek and Itchenor Reach. Many mature trees, small blocks of woodland and Lighter's Field contribute to the landscape setting.
- 4.4.100 Scattered historic farmsteads and cottages along lanes and tracks occur elsewhere on the peninsula.

## Key Issues

- Sea level rise;
- Past loss of hedgerows from intensive arable farming;
- Overgrown ponds;
- Potential pressure for large new glasshouses/farm buildings;
- Loss of traditional boatyards and pressure for redevelopment for large detached houses;
- Unsympathetic extensions to existing properties, with large areas of reflective glazing;
- Traffic in Bosham village associated with tourism.

## Condition

- 4.4.101 Landscape condition is moderate. There is strong survival of historic features. However, ecological and visual condition has been eroded by intensive arable farming.

## Sensitivity

- 4.4.102 The sensitivity of the landscape to development/change is high due to largely open, rural and tranquil character of the area. The coastal edge is particularly sensitive to any new development that erodes rural character and affects the landscape setting of the harbourside.

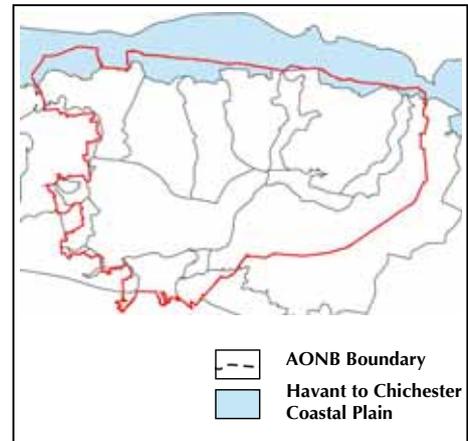
## Landscape Strategy

4.4.103 The appropriate strategy is conserve and enhance.

### Planning and Land Management Guidelines

- Conserve the open, rural and tranquil character of the area;
- Conserve characteristic long views to Chichester Cathedral and to the South Downs;
- Conserve the distinctive historic character of the area, including historic buildings, old irregular field patterns and sunken lanes;
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands and coppices;
- Conserve and enhance the landscape of the settlement edges;
- Establish additional small woodlands related to existing field patterns;
- Conserve and manage farm ponds;
- Conserve existing grassland headlands and encourage provision of additional areas;
- Restore hedgerows and hedgerow trees, except where this would result in loss of characteristic views;
- Encourage sympathetic management of gardens and private estate amenity land to ensure a natural edge is maintained to the channels;
- Take opportunities for managed realignment of the sea defences on low lying land, creating new areas of coastal habitats. Avoid significant adverse impacts on existing habitats. Ensure sympathetic form, design and materials of any new sea defences;
- Ensure any new farm building/glasshouses are of an appropriate scale, form, design, materials and colours which respond to landscape setting;
- Ensure any new development in the centre of Bosham village responds to historic settlement pattern of locally distinctive building styles and materials and landscape setting in terms of its siting, scale, form, design and colours;
- Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Bosham and Bosham Hoe;
- Ensure any new harbourside development avoids the loss of trees and hedges and the introduction of suburban styles and materials, and is of an appropriate scale, form, design and colour that responds to landscape setting;
- Establish effective traffic and parking management strategies in the historic centre of Bosham.

# H1 HAVANT TO CHICHESTER COASTAL PLAIN



## *Key Characteristics*

- Flat, coastal plain on brickearths, sands and gravels;
- Open, arable farmland, with strong rectilinear field patterns. Small hedged paddocks associated with the villages;
- Pockets of orchards, enclosed coastal grazing marsh and small copses are distinctive features around Nutbourne, Prinsted, Fishbourne and Langstone;
- Linear historic settlements follow, or are located in close proximity to the Roman Road line of the A259;
- Dense, urban development of Havant, Chichester, Emsworth and Southbourne;
- Occasional views from south of the A259 to the Harbour.



## **H1 Havant to Chichester Coastal Plain**

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- Linear historic settlements follow, or are in close proximity to the Roman Road line of the A259;
- Urban development of Havant, Chichester, Emsworth and Southbourne;
- Occasional views from south of the A259 to the Harbour.

### **Overall Character**

4.4.104 This large, mixed character area of flat coastal plain extends between Chichester and Havant. It comprises medium to large scale arable fields, interspersed with pockets of pasture and small hedged paddocks, and includes the large urban areas of Chichester and Havant. Between these there is also a variety of small and large linear villages with an urban character in parts. Havant beyond its historic core, comprises extensive modern development including large housing estates with a narrow gap of open arable farmland separating it from Emsworth. Around Langstone and Warblington, and to the west of Emsworth, there is a mix of medium-scale hedged arable farmland and parkland with small areas of coastal grazing marsh behind the sea wall. Warblington Tower is a prominent local landmark.

4.4.105 Parkland and hedgerow trees, together with a small copse west of Conigar Point, contribute to the impression of a wooded shoreline as viewed from the south, but open elevated views to the water are also possible. The town of Emsworth is characterised by a dense historic urban core, Victorian houses on well treed avenues and mixed modern housing and industrial development. Between Emsworth and Southbourne there is a narrow gap of medium-scale arable farmland and small hedged paddocks. Southbourne comprises mostly undistinguished 20<sup>th</sup> century development with some Victorian villas and terraces along the main A259 road. Prinsted and Nutbourne are distinctive historic villages bounded by small hedged pastures, orchards and coastal grazing much behind the sea wall. Linear, mostly modern development extends between Hambrook and Broadbridge with large-scale open arable farmland to the north. The historic village of Fishbourne spreads along the A259 with large modern estates to the north, but with small meadows surrounded by hedgerows to the south, adjoining the Fishbourne Channel. Further to the west, the City of Chichester comprises large modern

estates, industrial areas and retail parks within the study area, but with a very distinctive historic core and Chichester Cathedral provides a landmark for miles around.

- 4.4.106 Overall, despite the extent of urban development and intensive arable farmland within the character area, localised areas such as around Warblington and Nutbourne within the AONB retain a more undisturbed and intimate character.

### **Landscape History**

- 4.4.107 The key defining landscape feature of this area is the Roman road that extends from Chichester to the east, across the entirety of the character area in an almost straight line to the west. This has subsequently become the key feature around which the landscape has been organised, with historic settlements and smaller farmsteads dispersed along its length, and field systems using it as a key boundary. The historic settlement cores tend to be located between the Roman road and the Harbour edge, utilising both the transport corridor and the marine resources of the Harbour, along with the area's rich agricultural soils. Chichester, on the coastal plain, was the regional centre during the Roman period. The Roman port for Chichester was apparently located at Fishbourne, where a large villa and other associated buildings, recently excavated, survive as archaeological deposits. Commercially Chichester appears to have declined before the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and not until the late Saxon period, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, was the town again an urban centre. After the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Chichester flourished as a regional centre and as a Port (with its official landing place at Dell Quay), and during the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been a powerful urbanising force on the area that surrounds it.
- 4.4.108 In the medieval and early post-medieval period, the area was predominantly agricultural with some small-scale industry such as brick making and milling, and with fishing. Except for the deserted medieval village of Warblington, with its surviving church and the remains of the manor house, the medieval settlements of the coastal plain have survived through to the present day, though they are now greatly expanded. With the cumulative enclosures of the medieval open fields and the commons and the associated mechanisation of farming, agriculture ceased to be the main employer in the area during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The parishes each enclosed their own fields and commons at different times, probably dating from the late medieval to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This has created a patchwork of fields in this character area, consisting of groups of fields set on different orientations from their neighbours, and interlocking at their edges. Each of these field systems respected the line of the Roman road and used it as a boundary. Since that date many of the fields at the settlement edges have been built upon, whilst large areas of fields have been rationalised and expanded for the purposes of modern arable farming. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the 19<sup>th</sup> century decline of agriculture as a major employer in the character area was completed, with the villages and small towns along

the A259 becoming dormitory towns for Chichester, Havant and for Portsmouth further afield. This process was greatly aided by the coming of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which encouraged the development of small settlements near its new stations. The historic cores of the dispersed villages and small towns are now surrounded by modern development.

#### **Historic Features (within AONB)**

- Historic buildings, including historic settlement cores, the remains of coastal tide mills and watermills with their surviving ponds;
- The deserted medieval village of Warblington, with the remains of its manor house and the surviving church;
- Historic parkland of Wade Court.

#### **Ecological Features (within AONB)**

- Coastal grazing marsh around Langstone, Prinsted and Nutbourne;
- Fishbourne Meadows have a transition from coastal grassland to base rich fen meadows. The fen meadow includes southern marsh orchid and marsh arrow grass;
- Warblington Meadow has a rich fen meadow, various grazing marsh communities and a reedbed;
- Millponds e.g. at Fishbourne, Emsworth with a rich invertebrate life;
- Langstone Millpond has a wide range of swamp and aquatic plants;
- Watercourses (Fishbourne, Bosham, Nutbourne, Emsworth, Langstone important for water voles).

#### **Views (within AONB)**

- Glimpsed views of the Bosham Inlet from A259;
- Long views from the coastal path along the Emsworth and Thorney Channels to the Harbour Pool.

#### **Settlement Character (within AONB)**

4.4.109 Langstone historic core comprises rows of simple two-storey brick and tile cottages and historic commercial buildings along the High Street and quayside, with the distinctive landmark of Langstone Towers and the Old Tide Mill. It has a well treed setting.

4.4.110 Emsworth historic core has a medieval street layout with long narrow tenement plots. Most of the buildings are Georgian, predominantly of brick and tile with some stucco. The area retains

a small-scale intimate character and charm, the narrow frontages of the plots giving the buildings a strong vertical emphasis. Buildings are frequently linked or closely spaced giving the impression of a continuous street frontage. The open water of the mill pond is a significant space, although some poor-quality development has occurred around it. The town has a very strong relationship with its waterfront with the buildings between South Street and the eastern end of King Street, being constructed virtually up to the western edge. This creates a very striking boundary between the open Harbour and the built environment.

- 4.4.111 Prinsted comprises simple brick and tile cottages along narrow curving lanes both in continuous frontages and more widely spaced. Flint walls are distinctive and there are many mature trees, both within and around the settlement.
- 4.4.112 Nutbourne contains a scatter of Georgian and Victorian cottages with some modern infill along lanes, on the A259 and has a mostly well treed landscape setting.
- 4.4.113 The historic village of Fishbourne principally follows the A259 road. A smaller grouping of historic brick cottages and farmhouses is separated from a larger eastern group of brick cottages, Georgian houses and Victorian villas, following a curving High Street. Here the historic core extends down a lane to a distinctive mill pond which is faced by more modern bungalow development. There is also poor-quality flat development on the edge of Fishbourne Meadows.<sup>17</sup>

### **Key Issues**

- Sea level rise;
- Past loss of hedgerows;
- Potential pressure for urban extensions on the edge of Havant, Chichester and Southbourne;
- Infill development in extensions to villages;
- Spread of horse grazing around Emsworth, east of Prinsted and on the edge of Southbourne;
- Intrusive modern development and urban fringe activities around Emsworth marina.

### ***Condition (within AONB)***

- 4.4.114 Landscape condition is moderate. There is mixed survival of characteristic features. Some areas of arable farmland have lost hedgerows and there is urban edge/urban fringe intrusion in parts which erodes character.

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<sup>17</sup> Using the most up-to-date aerial imagery available (2015, Google Earth), it has been identified that approximately 45 houses have been constructed on a former greenfield site on the north edge of Fishbourne and another small development (exact number of houses unclear as the development was under construction at the date of the available aerial imagery) has taken place on a former green field site to the northeast of Fishbourne (outside of the AONB boundary) since the previous character assessment (2005)

### **Sensitivity (within AONB)**

4.4.115 The sensitivity of the landscape is moderate to high. Open grazing marsh and slightly elevated open arable farmland near the Harbour edge are particularly sensitive to change.

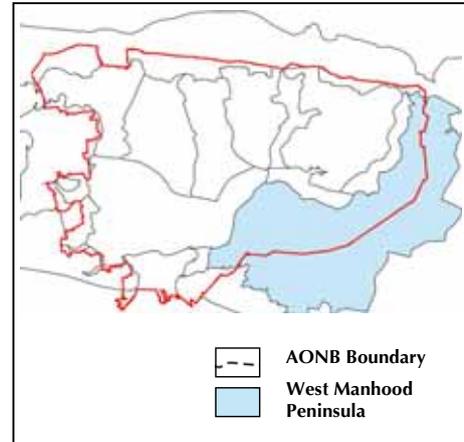
### **Landscape Strategy (within AONB)**

4.4.116 The appropriate strategy is enhancement and restoration.

### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines (within the AONB)**

- Conserve and manage existing hedgerows;
- Conserve characteristic views of the water;
- Restore hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Conserve the landscape setting of the historic villages;
- Take opportunities for managed realignment of the sea defences on low lying land, creating new areas of coastal habitat. Avoid significant adverse impacts on existing habitats and ensure sympathetic form, design and materials of any new sea defences;
- Promote better management of horse grazed areas around Prinsted, Emsworth and Southbourne;
- Secure landscape improvements, including hedgerow, hedgerow trees and copse planting to the land around Emsworth Marina, and to the A259 corridor between Bosham and Fishbourne;
- Ensure any new small-scale development in or on the edges of the historic villages of the area is of an appropriate scale, form, design, materials that responds to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting, and locally distinctive building styles and materials.

# 11 WEST MANHOOD PENINSULA



## *Key Characteristics*

- Broadly flat land overlying brickearths, intersected by small streams or rythes;
- Predominantly open arable farmland with medium- to large-scale field patterns;
- Small-scale hedged paddocks, concentrated around the villages, have an intimate character;
- Parkland estate landscape at Itchenor and Westlands enclosed by tree belts and copses;
- A wide range of habitats including unimproved coastal grassland, small ancient woodlands, marshes along the River Lavant, and Birdham Millpond contribute to character;
- Historic north-south road and settlement pattern;
- Dispersed modern roadside development along the A286;
- Distinctive clusters of flint and brick cottages at Itchenor, Birdham and Dell Quay;
- Wide views of the Harbour from coastal path in the southwest and views across farmland to Chichester Cathedral in the north;
- Birdham Pool and Chichester Marina are major recreational centres;
- Overall the area retains a largely rural, undeveloped character.



## 11 West Manhood Peninsula

### Key Characteristics

- Broadly flat land overlying brickearths, intersected by small streams or rythes;
- Predominantly open arable farmland with medium to large scale field patterns;
- Small scale hedged paddocks, concentrated around the villages, have an intimate character;
- Parkland estate landscape at Itchenor and Westlands enclosed by treebelts and copses;
- A wide range of habitats including unimproved coastal grassland, small ancient woodlands, marshes along the River Lavant, and Birdham Millpond contribute to character;
- Historic north-south road and settlement pattern;
- Dispersed modern roadside development along the A286;
- Distinctive clusters of flint and brick cottages at Itchenor, Birdham and Dell Quay;
- Wide views of the Harbour from coastal path in the southwest and views across farmland to Chichester Cathedral in the north;
- Birdham Pool and Chichester Marina are major recreational centres;
- Overall the area retains a largely rural, undeveloped character.

### Overall Character

4.4.117 This large character area comprises mainly open arable farmland with medium to large scale field patterns and pockets of small hedged pastures and paddocks around the villages. The arable fields are divided by low hedgerows or by lines of windblown oaks. There is generally very little woodland, giving most of the area an open character. However, there are several small woodlands, copses and treebelts along the coastal edge which contribute to the impression of a wooded shoreline. Within the AONB there are occasional framed views of the water and yachts. There are also important views to Chichester Cathedral in the north of the area around Apuldram. The arable farmland around Dell Quay and New Barn has a wooded coastal edge and the historic quayside at Dell Quay has attractive framed views over the water. South of here the linear settlement of Birdham is surrounded by small hedged fields and paddocks. At West Itchenor and Shipton Green there is also a linear settlement pattern with mixed historic and modern development ending in the distinctive historic quayside of West Itchenor. From here southwards to West Wittering long to medium-scale arable farmland with occasional woodlands and treebelts are concentrated along the coastal edge. To the east is an extensive area of glasshouses and medium to large scale arable land outside the AONB. Some views towards the AONB are possible from here but there are limited views of the water.

## Landscape History

- 4.4.118 The Manhood Peninsula has developed as an essentially rural landscape, interspersed with several discrete historic settlements. Of these settlements, most have become the focus for 20<sup>th</sup> century development, whilst some, namely Apuldram, East Itchenor, Wardour and Old Selsey, have dwindled or entirely disappeared. Within the AONB the historic settlements are generally located along the side of the Harbour, set a mile or so inland of the water's edge. The exception to this rule is the area of West Itchenor known in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as Itchenor Gate, where historic settlement is located right at the Harbour's edge. Outside of the AONB area, the pattern of settlement in place by 1805-1810 (County Series OS) is one of predominately ribbon roadside development, which became further pronounced during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to the historic buildings at Apuldram, the main surviving historic settlements within the AONB are West Itchenor and Birdham.
- 4.4.119 The historic field structure in this area is quite complicated. The pattern shown on the 1st edition OS map indicates that several processes of field construction had been active in the area. Most prominent are the irregular assarts cut into woodland around West Itchenor and Shipton Green which are probably pre-19<sup>th</sup> century. In the area around Birdham village, small-scale enclosure of the medieval open fields appears to have been undertaken by informal agreement, rather than by later formal Parliamentary Enclosure. Later Parliamentary Enclosure of open fields tended to result in wholesale reorganisation of the landscape, and this is the process that appears to have taken place north of West Wittering, where the medieval open field shapes are preserved, but where the strips have been ignored and the area divided into more rectangular and square fields. The large sinuous fields of Apuldram parish were already in place on the 1st edition OS, and whilst their history is currently uncertain, their shape may suggest that these are early informal enclosures, perhaps linked with the desertion of the village. At least some of these Apuldram fields are assarts into woodland. This patchwork of historic field systems has been significantly altered by the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.4.120 In addition to the agricultural landscape of fields and rural villages, this character area has also played an important role in the development of Chichester Harbour's maritime trade, as the location of both Dell Quay and later the Chichester Canal. Dell Quay was the chief point of entry for the Port of Chichester from 1353, until the opening of the Chichester Canal in 1823. The Chichester Canal was part of a much larger, but ultimately unsuccessful project to link Portsmouth with the River Arun. Opened in 1823; by 1855 only the section of the canal between Salterns Lock and the Chichester Canal Basin was still in use. Whilst the canal experienced initial success, it was limited by the fact that only barges could use it and it ceased to be in use by the 1920s. During the Second World War, this area played an important role for the war effort, through building and maintaining craft at Birdham Pool and at Itchenor and

providing a very basic 300 acre airfield at Apuldram. In addition, the Chichester Canal was utilised as a defensive feature against invasion, being reinforced with anti-tank features such as walls, ditches and pillboxes to provide a stop line for the Southern Command. Remains of this stop line can still be seen along the canal. Since the Second World War the area has become a focus for recreational activity, with inshore moorings provided at the Chichester Yacht Basin, which utilised an abandoned area of salterns, and Birdham Pool, previously the millpond for Birdham Mill.

#### **Historic Features (within AONB)**

- The 19<sup>th</sup> century Chichester Canal with Salterns Lock;
- Second World War defences;
- Birdham Pool marina, occupying the site of the Birdham Mill Pond;
- Dell Quay, with its quayside, warehouses and dwellings;
- Historic parks and gardens, including Itchenor Park and the Grade II listed Rymans at Apuldram;
- Historic buildings, both in the settlements, such as West Itchenor, and as scattered historic farm buildings, such as the Elizabethan Redlands Farm with its moat;
- The pattern of the fields radiating out from historic settlements, such as at Birdham.

#### **Ecological Features (within AONB)**

- West Itchenor Marsh is derelict grazing marsh reverting to saltmarsh, with a small area of reedbed;
- Birdham Pool is a good example of a brackish coastal lagoon surrounded by scrub;
- The Chichester Yacht Basin Marsh includes unimproved grazing marsh and a pool of fringed reedbeds. It is important for wintering wildfowl and waders;
- The western length of the Chichester Canal includes reedbeds and marginal swamps;
- Salterns Copse is a native ancient coppice wood directly adjoining the intertidal zone, a rare habitat. It includes mixed hazel, birch, ash and oak coppice with oak standards. It has rich ancient woodland flora, and high invertebrate - bird interest;
- The Coastal Tree Belt below Dell Quay comprises belts of oak with a diverse flora which includes wood sage, betony, bluebell, spurge laurel and butcher's-broom;
- The River Lavant Marsh includes grazed marshy grassland and a reedbed;
- Watercourses in the area are important for water voles.

#### **Views (within AONB)**

- Panoramic views from the coastal path of the Harbour Pool;

- Framed views of the Itchenor Reach, Fishbourne Channel;
- Long views of Chichester Cathedral from west of Apuldram.

#### Settlement Character (within AONB)

- 4.4.121 West Itchenor and Shipton Green are mainly dispersed linear settlements of cottages and modern detached houses in large plots which straddle a long and winding lane. Shipton Green has a distinctive linear green. West Itchenor, nearer the quayside, has continuous frontages of historic two-storey brick and tile cottages and a distinctive group of historic commercial waterside buildings on the quayside. The village is surrounded by treebelts, small meadows and copses, together with groups of mature trees providing a distinctive landscape setting. Further to the west there is a small coastal estate of large detached houses in a well treed setting.<sup>18</sup>
- 4.4.122 Birdham has a very small historic core centred around the church and a small green, comprising a few brick and tile cottages. The rest of the settlement comprises undistinguished modern terrace/detached house development, together with small commercial buildings along the A259.
- 4.4.123 Westlands is a small coastal estate of large detached houses in well treed plots. Suburban features detract from the quality of the development at the waterside.

#### Key Issues

- Sea level rise;
- Past loss of hedgerows;
- Potential pressure for large new farm buildings and glasshouses, both within and outside the AONB;
- Expansion of horse grazing, together with other small-scale incremental changes;
- Visual intrusion from existing harbourside housing development;
- Potential pressure for additional harbourside housing development;
- Potential strategic development southwest of Chichester outside the AONB designated area.

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<sup>18</sup> Using the most up-to-date aerial imagery available (2015, Google Earth), it has been identified that three small-scale housing developments have taken place within this LCA as follows: approximately 20 houses have been constructed on a former greenfield site adjacent to Main Road, Birdham (within the AONB); approximately 15 houses on a former greenfield site on the northern edge of West Wittering (within the AONB); and another small development (exact number of houses unclear as the development was under construction at the date of the available aerial imagery) has taken place on a former greenfield site on the northern edge of the settlement off Church Road (outside of the AONB boundary) since the previous character assessment (2005)

#### **Condition (within AONB)**

4.4.124 Overall condition of the area is moderate. The loss of hedgerows from parts of the arable farmland has eroded visual and ecological character in parts.

#### **Sensitivity (within AONB)**

4.4.125 The sensitivity of the area is moderate to high. The coastal edge is particularly sensitive to any built development which would result in the loss of eroded shoreline and intrude on characteristic views.

#### **Landscape Strategy (within AONB)**

4.4.126 The appropriate strategy is conservation and enhancement.

#### **Planning and Land Management Guidelines (within AONB)**

- Conserve the rural, undeveloped character of the area;
- Conserve and manage hedgerows, copses and small woodlands;
- Conserve distinctive historic field patterns;
- Conserve characteristic views of Chichester Cathedral and of the water;
- Restore hedgerows and hedgerow trees, except where this would result in loss of views of the Harbour;
- Take opportunities for managed realignment of sea defences creating areas of new coastal habitat on low lying land. Avoid significant impact on existing important habitats and ensure sympathetic form, design and materials of new sea defences;
- Seek improvements to the visual appearances of the landscape/property boundaries around the Walnut Tree Caravan Park and in the Itchenor Gate/Shipton Green area along the A286;
- Promote better management of horse grazed areas around Itchenor Gate/Shipton Green and Birdham;
- Ensure any small-scale development in the historic core of villages responds to historic settlement pattern and locally distinctive styles and materials;
- Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the villages and small estates;
- Ensure any new harbourside development does not result in significant loss of trees and hedges, avoids the introduction of suburban styles and materials and is of an appropriate scale, form, design, materials and colour that responds to landscape setting;
- Consider possible visual impacts of any large-scale glasshouses and shed development outside the AONB.

## **4.5 Harbourside Housing Development & Sea Defence Landscape Guidelines**

4.5.1 In addition to the landscape planning and land management guidelines specific to each character area, set out above, generic guidelines which address landscape issues in respect of harbourside housing development and sea defences are set out below. These should be read in conjunction with the policies and guidelines within the: Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan; Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Supplementary Planning Document (Chichester District Council / Havant Borough Council); and the Sustainable Shorelines: General Guidance document (Chichester Harbour Conservancy / Royal Haskoning DHV).

### **Harbourside Housing Development**

- Conserve existing woodland and mature trees;
- Ensure new buildings or extensions to existing properties do not extend across the full width of the plot, maintaining the spacious character of existing plots;
- Avoid large unbroken glazed areas that would cause reflectiveness;
- Break-up the form and mass of buildings/extensions by sympathetic elevational treatment. Ensure extensions do not dominate the original building;
- Avoid the use of very bright, grey or white colours on elevations and roofs. Consider the use of restrained dark matt colours to blend with the surrounding landscape;
- Consider the use of locally distinctive materials such as brick, tile and weatherboarding;
- Seek to minimise the impact of lighting through use of cut-off lanterns and high-pressure sodium lights which cast light downward rather than standard lighting which can result in a diffuse orange glow;
- Ensure outdoor storage and parking areas are not visually prominent;
- Avoid the use of walls, fences and gates, conifer planting and other suburban features close to the waterside;
- Use native trees and shrub planting appropriate to the waterside setting to integrate the development into the surrounding landscape.

### **Sea Defence Guidelines**

- Seek to maintain existing areas of natural unspoilt shoreline of shingle beaches, low sandy cliffs and woodland;
- Introduce managed realignment schemes instead of hard sea defences including construction inland of new earth embankments with the minimum of reinforcement, and the creation of mudflat and saltmarsh habitat as part of the flood zone;

- Ensure any new sea defences do not dominate the coastal landscape or overpower other elements of their landscape setting due to their size and scale;
- Minimise the impact of new sea defences on characteristic views, wherever possible not obstructing views of the sea from the land;
- The profile of sea defences should normally align with that of the adjoining coastal form at each end;
- Consider the use of low and narrow shingle banks. Any imported stone should complement natural colours on the foreshore;
- Avoid where possible the use of rock and concrete block revetments and, if necessary, they should complement natural colours on the foreshore and not protrude above the level of any adjacent banks.

## 5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Special Qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB

5.1.1 Informed by the updated findings of the study, the characteristics of the special qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB as defined in the AONB Management Plan are summarised below:

**Unique Blend of Land and Sea – especially the combination of expanses of open waters, narrow inlets and intimate creeks**

5.1.2 The outstanding quality of the AONB is due in a large part to its unique blend of land and sea, especially the combination of large-scale open water areas and intimate creeks. The margin between land and water is frequently wooded (or appears so) and attractive historic waterside settlements add interest to parts of the shore. The landscape is dynamic and naturally adapts to changes, resulting in a variety of important habitats and features that define the estuarine environment. Distinctive tidal channels lead to a maze of inlets and rythes that cross the mudflats and link with the shoreline. Old mills are remnants of historic maritime trade within the coastal villages.

**The frequently wooded shoreline**

5.1.3 The landscape of the AONB is predominantly agricultural in character. Fragments of the former oak forest remain to the east and north of the Harbour. Much of the forest has been lost within the AONB. Old, gnarled oak trees come down to the shoreline in places. Along with other species, these contribute to locally wooded shorelines. Despite some losses, the hedgerows and hedgerow trees remain evident across the AONB and contribute to the unspoilt, rural character. Where they define fields in proximity to the water, they also contribute to the wooded appearance of parts of the shoreline.

### **The flatness of the landform, unusual among AONBs, accentuates the significance of sea and tide and of distant landmarks across land and water**

- 5.1.4 A characteristic of the AONB is its distinctive unspoilt views, which can be attributed in part to the general flatness of the landscape. This topography is unusual among AONBs, which are more commonly located in higher undulating countryside. The low-lying flat landform accentuates the significance of the sea and tide and means that tall spires and towers are important features, seen as distant landmarks across the land and water, against the distant backdrop of the South Downs. These are often seen in panoramic views over the water, mudflats and saltmarshes towards adjacent Harbour islands and peninsulas. There are long views towards Chichester Cathedral and the South Downs, framed views of the inlets and the yachts moored along them and attractive views of historic waterside development, notably at Bosham, West Itchenor, Emsworth, Langstone and Dell Quay.

### **The open water of the central area of the Harbour**

- 5.1.5 The open water of the main Harbour pool is a microcosm of the open sea beyond the Harbour mouth, reflecting the clouds and sky, and the wind and rain. The movement of the tide means that this is a landscape that changes rhythmically every day, which in turn exposes bare mudflat and saltmarsh to view, creating a wide, open remote wilderness. This is where the maze of intricate channels and rythes combine, providing a dramatic change at low tide. Panoramic, open views are characteristic of this part of the Harbour. At high tide, the sea reaches into the land, creating areas of sheltered, open water that support diverse flora and fauna.

### **The overall sense of wilderness within the seascape**

- 5.1.6 The sense of wilderness is associated primarily with the open water, dunes and natural wooded shorelines that fringe the waters around the Harbour. Much of this wilderness quality can be attributed to the naturalness of the landscape and actions of the weather upon the estuary that create a dynamic interface between the land and sea. The weather's influence on the sense of solitude and tranquillity of the seascape is documented in the writings of 20<sup>th</sup> century sailors and these descriptions continue to be applicable particularly within the Harbour basin.

### **The particularly strong historic environment and heritage assets**

- 5.1.7 Chichester Harbour AONB has a unique historic landscape moulded by the dynamic interactions of humans, land and sea over hundreds and thousands of years. Whilst the most dramatic coastline changes took place in the long distant past, leaving the legacy of the flooded

river valleys that are now the channels of the Harbour, the most rapid pace of change on the land has occurred during the last three millennia. Much of what is seen in the present landscape is the result of this historic and prehistoric inheritance. The visible remains of this landscape change are extensive and varied including Iron Age hillforts, prehistoric saltworking sites, tide mills, boatyards, oyster beds, remains of early medieval parks and Second World War defensive remains. The features and landscapes from past military, trade, maritime, fishing, agricultural, industrial, settlement, and more recently, recreational activity, have therefore created a special landscape that contains within its bounds the memories, remains and echoes of many generations past.

### **The picturesque harbourside settlements**

- 5.1.8 Harbourside settlement has grown from historical land and water uses including trading, fishing and shipbuilding. The historic parts of these villages are located on or in proximity to the harbourside. In the flat landscape, churches and old mills are important features on the shoreline, particularly noting St Nicholas and Holy Trinity in the harbourside villages of West Thorney and Bosham. Whilst more recent development has taken place inland, these settlements have retained their relationship with the water, with jetties, pontoons and slipways common features along the inlets. The settlements are generally dispersed along the waters' edge and separated by wind-sculpted oaks, scrub, agricultural fields and hedgerows.

### **The wealth of flora and fauna, notably the vast flocks of wading birds add to the richness and diversity of the landscape**

- 5.1.9 The status of the area as a Ramsar wetland, a Special Protection Area, a Special Area of Conservation and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, reflects its importance as a habitat for wildfowl, giving it national, European and indeed international ecological significance. The Harbour includes significant areas of semi-natural habitats that make a vital contribution to the diverse landscape character. The main habitats within the Harbour are mudflats, saltmarsh, sand dunes, shingle, woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, fen meadow, coastal grazing, marsh and reedbeds. These are home to vast flocks of wildfowl. The range of coastal, woodland and grassland habitats contribute to the richness and diversity of the landscape and seascape and resultant wildlife populations.

### **The unspoilt character and unobtrusive beauty**

- 5.1.10 Today the undeveloped character of the Harbour is almost unique on the south coast, where other tidal river mouths are either much smaller or developed as ports and industrial centres. It is a dynamic landscape that has been sculpted by natural processes and diversity of human activity over time. This has resulted in high quality habitats that contribute to the natural beauty and landscape of the AONB. A similar area to Chichester Harbour AONB is the section of the South Hampshire AONB between Lymington and Hurst Spit, but this does not have quite the same feeling of flat openness and is open coast rather than enclosed Harbour.

### **The very special sense of peace and tranquillity, largely engendered by the gentle way the AONB is used and closeness to nature that is experienced**

There are many parts of the AONB, which are relatively tranquil and peaceful compared with other areas of the south coast. The Harbour is an important landscape that provides a natural setting for water-based recreation that forms part of the distinctive views and instils a sense of tranquillity and well-being within the AONB. The peninsulas and open water within the AONB that are the most tranquil. They maintain a sense of naturalness and benefit from least intrusion from disruptive activity, noise and light pollution.

## **5.2 Measures to Conserve and Enhance the Special Qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB**

- 5.2.1 The 'character approach' to planning and land management advocated by Natural England, is about understanding, evaluating, and protecting local distinctiveness, in other words, the special sense of identity and place created by patterns of land use that have developed over time. The Harbour Conservancy can use this Landscape Character Assessment as a key tool to conserve and enhance the special character and qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB and therefore its significance. The key measures are set out below:

### **AONB Management Plan**

- 5.2.2 The status of AONBs has been enhanced through measures introduced in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, which gives greater support for their planning and management. These measures include a new duty 'of regard' on public bodies to take account of the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONB landscapes when carrying out their statutory functions. The Act requires management plans to be produced, published and regularly reviewed by local authorities. By identifying the character of the AONB, and its

main pressures and sensitivities, the landscape character assessment can provide an important baseline for management planning.

5.2.3 The Chichester Harbour AONB landscape faces several critical forces for change both in the short and the long term. The key challenge for the future will therefore be to manage and guide this change in a way that reinforces the landscape character and special qualities of the AONB.

5.2.4 The guidelines provided by the landscape character assessment should contribute to a strong integrated management framework for the Harbour landscape in future AONB Management Plans, which can be taken forward by Chichester Harbour Conservancy and constituent local authorities, as well as key interest and user groups. They could be used to inform the Conservancy's own programme of land management by:

- Assisting in the identification of sites for enhancement measures;
- Contributing to current and future site management plans; and
- Supporting funding bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund and other external funding distributors.

#### **Local Plan/Local Development Framework Character and Design Policies**

5.2.5 The Landscape Character Assessment can be used by Local Planning Authorities to underpin existing landscape character and quality policies. The adoption of the assessment as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) would be critical to this.

5.2.6 As well as guiding local planning policy, the character assessment could also be used for the preparation, where appropriate, of area-based documents such as Area Action Plans (AAP), for areas where significant conservation initiatives are planned.

#### **Development Control**

5.2.7 The Landscape Character Assessment can be used by development control officers in assessing the landscape character implications of any new development. The impact of proposals on the key characteristics of the landscape character areas can be used as an important test of their acceptability, and they can ensure the landscape planning and management guidelines are applied.

## **Village Design Statements, Neighbourhood and Parish Plans**

- 5.2.8 This Landscape Character Assessment could also provide a useful framework within which further Village Design Statements (VDS) or Neighbourhood and Parish Plans can be prepared.
- 5.2.9 VDS are a key mechanism for helping communities to determine how best their villages might develop or change, for example by encouraging local people to state what high-quality development means in the context of their village, its needs, and its surrounding countryside. To be suitable for approval and adoption as SPG to the Local Plan, a VDS needs to clearly set out the criteria against which development proposals will be tested to ensure that new development fits its surroundings and is in keeping with local character.
- 5.2.10 The AONB Landscape Character Assessment information and guidelines could be used by local communities preparing VDS to:
- Help describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside, including the landscape setting of the village, the shape of the settlement and the nature of the buildings themselves;
  - Inform local design principles based on local character;
- 5.2.11 The information and guidelines provided by the Landscape Character Assessment could also be used by local communities and Parish and Town Councils to help them prepare Neighbourhood or Parish Plans.
- 5.2.12 Neighbourhood Plans detail development priorities for individual communities and should support the delivery of strategic policies within local plans. They enable the community to have their say on the type of development within the Neighbourhood Plan area, to shape the area in which they live and work. Unlike Parish Plans, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the development plan alongside the Local Plan strategic policies.
- 5.2.13 Parish Plans are broader and cover more than just planning issues to reflect the views of a community. Parish Plans are an important new community led planning tool that seeks to enable local people to identify the economic, social and environmental issues that affect their local quality of life; and to identify actions needed to improve them.
- 5.2.14 Neighbourhood and Parish Plans can add value to the planning process by providing detailed information on local character and design, and through setting out locally-specific criteria against which to assess the character implications of planning applications.

## Raising Awareness

5.2.15 Opportunities for raising awareness of AONB landscape character and special quality through advocacy and education include:

- Publishing the landscape character assessment on the websites of the Conservancy and local authorities;
- Walks and talks highlighting key landscape characteristics and special qualities;
- Provision of publicity/leaflets in schools; and
- Encouraging school visits to the area.

## Monitoring Change

5.2.16 **Table 1** sets out proposed indicators for monitoring landscape change within the AONB. The indicators reflect the recommendations for future monitoring in the *State of the AONB Report 2018*.

Table 1 - Suggested AONB Indicators for Monitoring Change

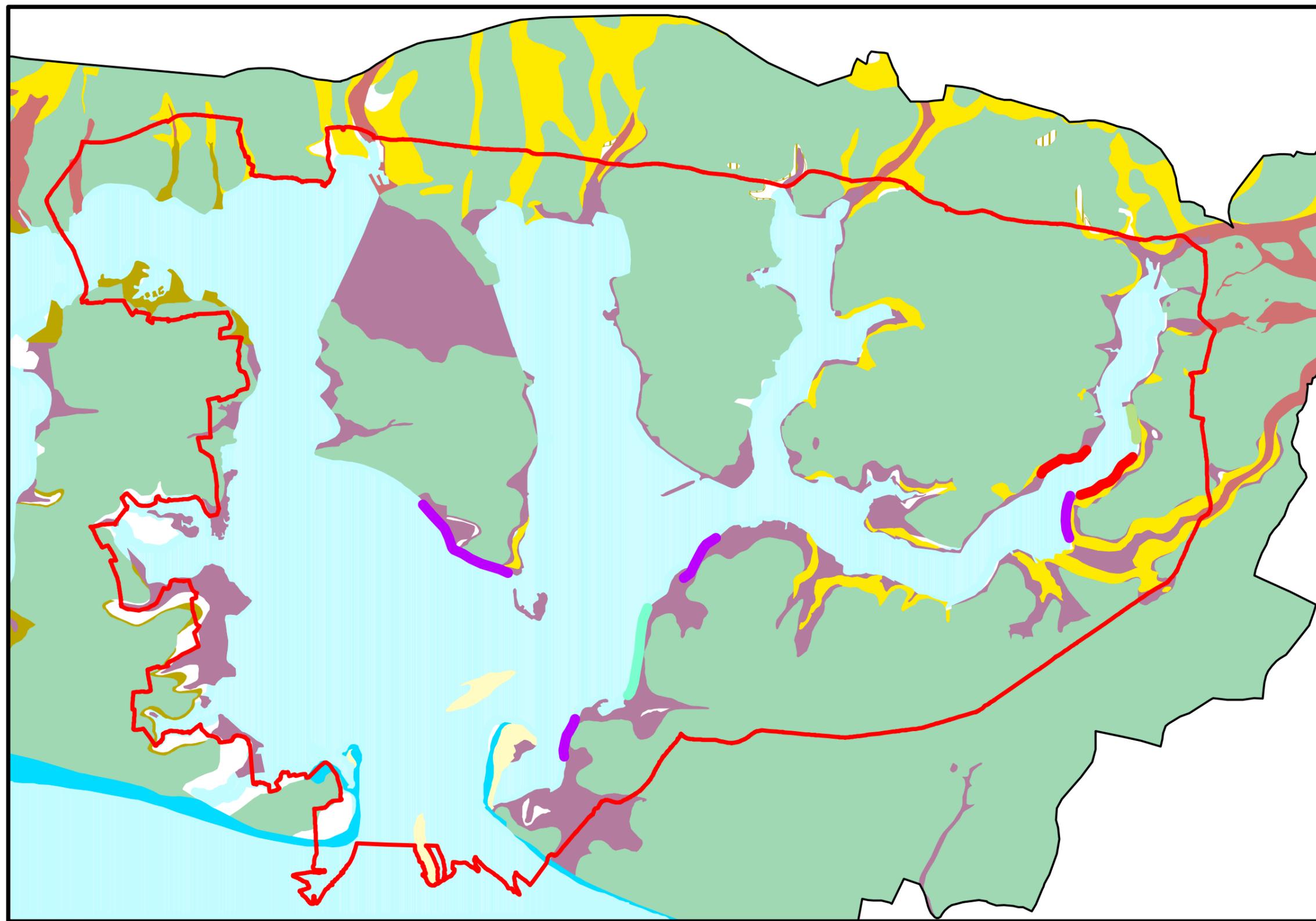
Themes	Possible Indicators	Data Source
<b>Landscape Features</b>		
• Hedgerows/Hedgerow Trees	Length of hedgerows/number of hedgerow trees - length in active management.	AONB/Natural England
• Wooded Shoreline	Length of woodland/hedgerow trees adjacent to the shoreline.	AONB
• Natural, undefended shoreline	Length of shoreline with no sea defences.	AONB
<b>Land Use/Development</b>		
• Positive Land Management Schemes	Percentage of land managed under agri-environment schemes and in Woodland Grant Schemes.	Natural England/DEFRA/AONB
• Rural land uses	Number of consents/applications for conversion from rural to other uses.	AONB/LPAs
• Incremental development	Number of consents/applications resulting in incremental development.	AONB/LPAs
• Horse grazing	Extent of paddock areas.	AONB
<b>Scenic/Landscape Character</b>	Changes in key views of water and landmark features.	Photographic Fixed Point Monitoring and Drone Footage
<b>Remoteness/Tranquillity</b>	Percentage of AONB disturbed by constant traffic noise.	CPRE
	Disturbance levels to wildfowl.	AONB
	Visitor numbers.	AONB
<b>Biodiversity</b>		
• Key Habitats	Extent of key habitats managed favourably, e.g. settlements, coastal grazing marsh, ancient woodland etc.	AONB/Natural England
• Waders and Wildfowl	Numbers and distribution.	AONB
• Farmland Birds	Numbers and distribution.	AONB
<b>Agriculture</b>		
• Farm Size	Average farm size.	DEFRA
• Amount of grazing stock.	Livestock statistics.	DEFRA
<b>Historic Environment</b>		
• Historic Landscapes	Extent of change in historic landscapes.	Photographic Fixed Point Monitoring and Drone Footage
• Archaeological Features	Number of Scheduled Monument Management Plans	County/Historic England

**APPENDIX 1**  
**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## FIGURES



**Key**

-  Study Area Boundary
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Simplified Drift Geology**
-  Alluvial Deposits
-  Marine Alluvium
-  Brickearth
-  Clay-with-Flints
-  Head
-  Peat
-  River Terrace Sands and Gravels
-  Storm Beach Deposits
-  Raised Beach Deposits
-  Beach Deposits
-  Blown Sand
-  No Data
-  Sea
- Geological outcrops (Cordiner, 1997 & Bone 1985)**
-  Chalk
-  London Clay
-  "Bognor Rock"
-  Reading Beds

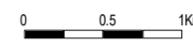
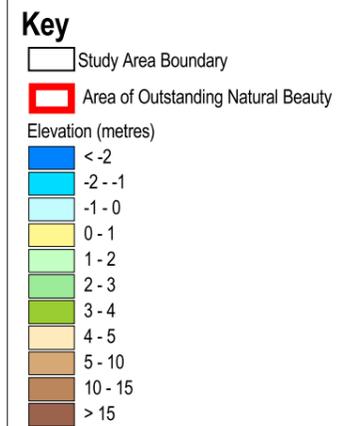
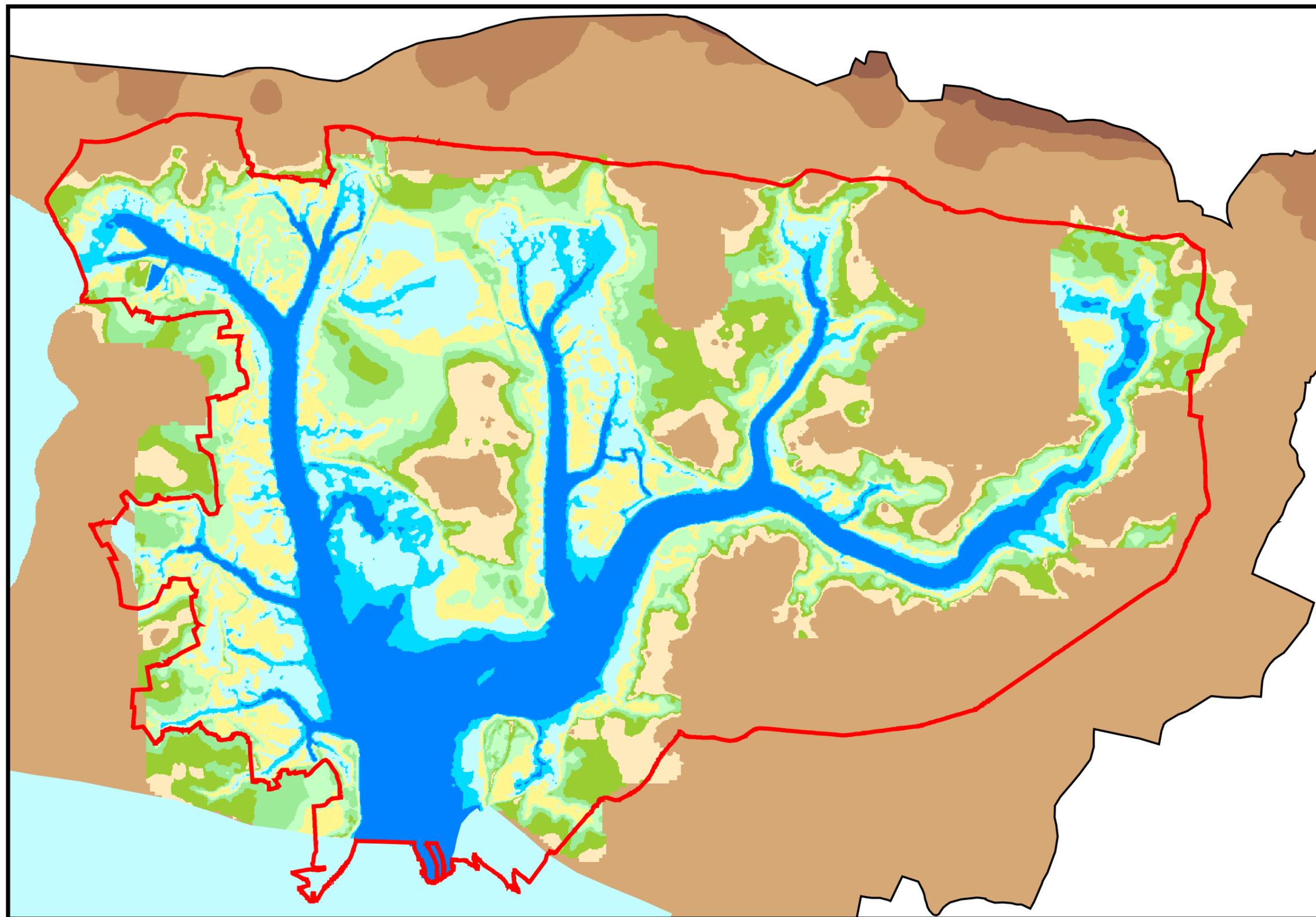
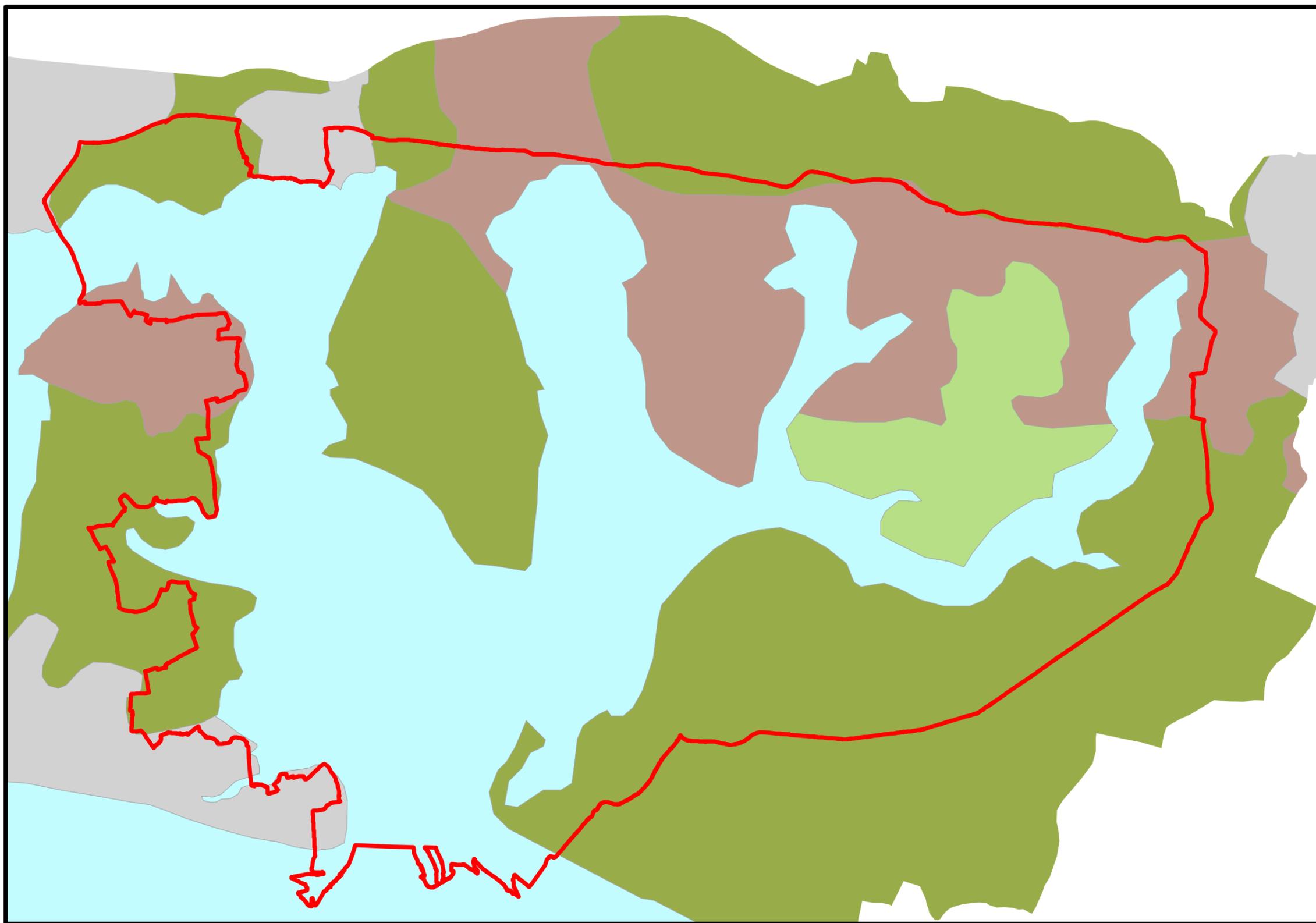
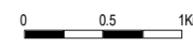


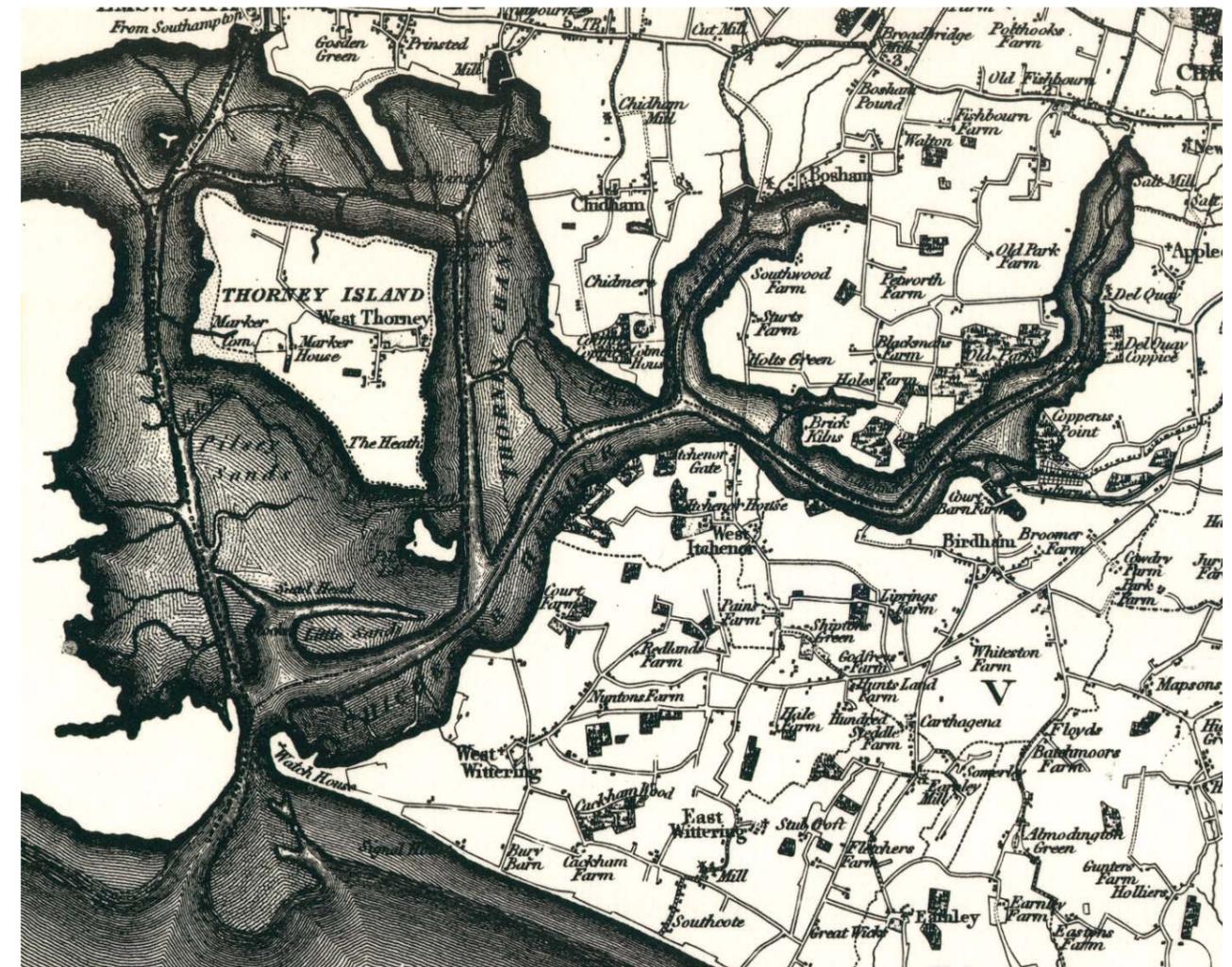
FIGURE 1  
 Simplified Geology





- Key**
-  Study Area Boundary
  -  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Simplified Soil Types**
-  Brown Soil
  -  Alluvial/Argillic Gleys
  -  Stagnogleys
  -  Urban
  -  Water

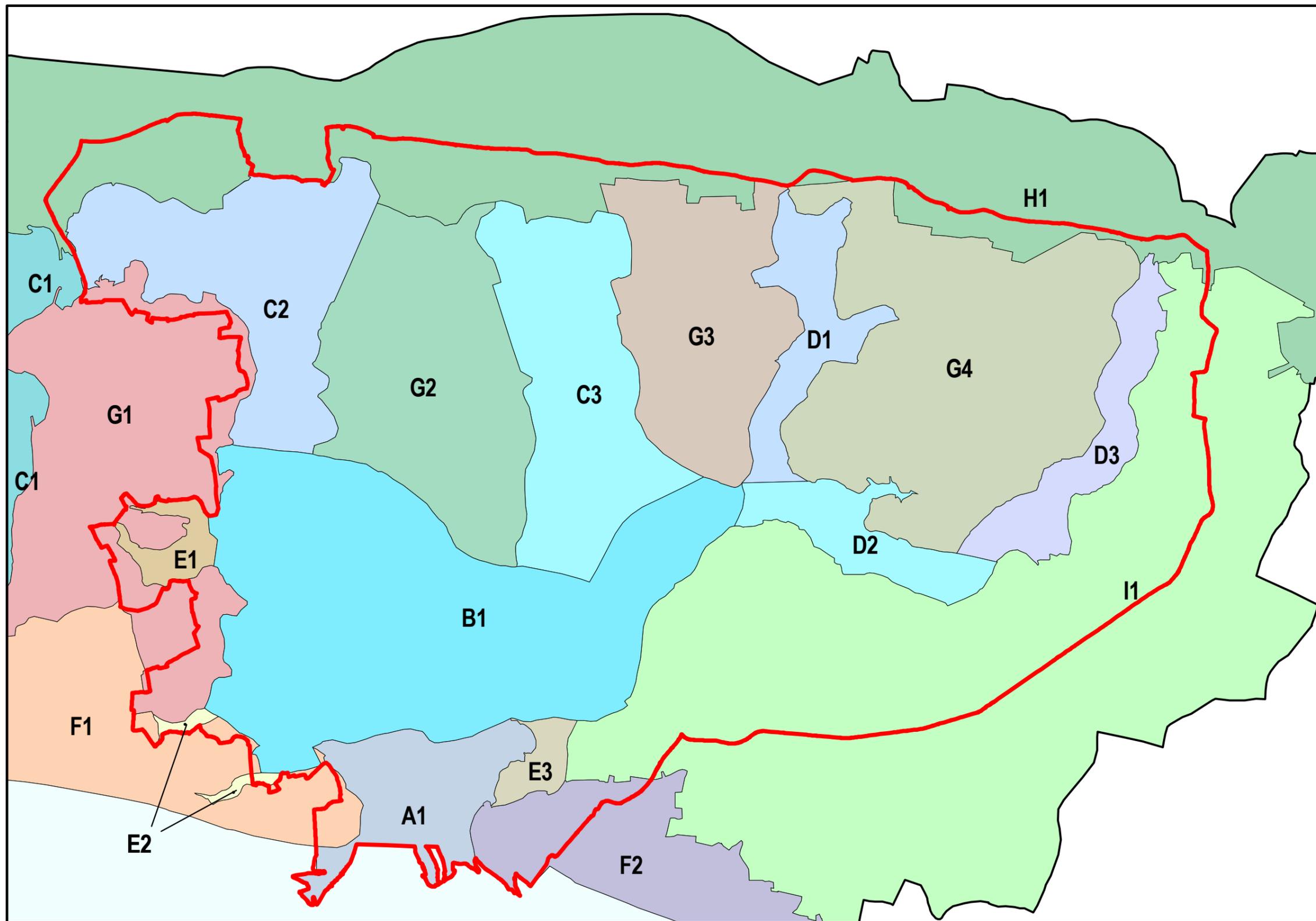




Yeakell and Gardner's 1778 map - shows distinctive earlier field patterns. Note also previous position of East Head.

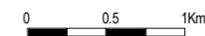
First Series Ordnance Survey c.1813 - Thorney Island is still an island and the northern part of the Bosham Channel has been reclaimed, later lost again to the sea.





**Key**

-  Study Area Boundary
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
-  A - I: Landscape Character Type
-  A1 - I1: Landscape Character Area
- A Harbour Mouth**
-  A1 Chichester Harbour Mouth
- B Harbour Basin**
-  B1 Chichester Harbour Central Basin
- C Broad Inlet**
-  C1 Langstone Harbour Head
-  C2 Emsworth Channel Head
-  C3 Thorney Channel Head
- D Narrow Inlet**
-  D1 Bosham Channel
-  D2 Itchenor Reach
-  D3 Fishbourne Channel
- E Minor Inlets**
-  E1 Mill Rythe
-  E2 Mengham Rythe & Cockle Creek
-  E3 Snow Hill Inlet
- F Coastal Strip**
-  F1 South Hayling Island
-  F2 Wittering Coast
- G Harbour Islands & Peninsulas**
-  G1 North Hayling Island
-  G2 Thorney Island
-  G3 Chidham Peninsula
-  G4 Bosham Peninsula
- H Lower Coastal Plain**
-  H1 Havant to Chichester Coastal Plain
- I Coastal Peninsula**
-  I1 Manhood Peninsula



**FIGURE 5**  
 Landscape Character Types  
 and Landscape Character Areas



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