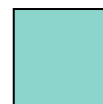


LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE: Coastal Reclaim and Grazing Marsh



Found in adjacent to more sheltered stretches of coastline, harbours estuaries and in the lee of headlands.

SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

Basingstoke:	n/a
East Hampshire	n/a
Eastleigh	n/a
Fareham	Not defined
Gosport	Not defined
Hart	n/a
Havant	Harbour basin and Broad Inlets (both include channels and intertidal mud flats)
New Forest	n/a
Rushmoor	n/a
Test Valley	n/a
Winchester	n/a

SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES IN NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENTS

Dorset	n/a
West Berkshire	n/a
West Sussex	Not defined
Wiltshire	n/a
Chichester Harbour	Harbour basin and Broad Inlet (both include channels and intertidal mud flats)

KEY IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND BOUNDARY DEFINITIONS

- Flat low lying often behind shoreline embankment.
- Grazing management with hardy cattle species – often for specific biodiversity objectives.
- Historical origins often associated with reclamation increasing available grazing land on the coast and Salterns through embankments.
- Modern more intensive uses include marinas, golf courses and landfill – the latter now stopped.
- Often provides valuable accessible natural green space close to settlement – via historic embankments and sea walls.
- Dominated by coastal grazing marsh, but also important for saline lagoons and unimproved grassland often with international habitat designation.
- Lack of built form development and proximity to the water – provide highly tranquil environments – the air often being filled with calls from wildfowl.
- Sometimes subject to storm surges and tidal flooding.

PHYSICAL

GEOLOGY, LANDFORM, ELEVATION:

Bedrock and Superficial Geology: Predominantly Tertiary sands and clay formations, upper reaches formed of Nodular Middle and Upper chalk with flint overlain by tidal flat deposits.

The superficial tidal deposit geology of shingle is found at the top of the harbour beaches grading quickly down to extensive silty mud flats. In the lower reaches of the harbour, more sandy deposits are common. Reclamation deposits vary, and may include waste and fill with various quality of capping and containment.

Landform and Elevation: Extends from man made embankments landward usually at or just above high tide level. Generally flat.. Includes low lying coastal reclaim areas predominantly less than 5m A.O.D. Can include coastal spits – formed into estuary mouth and also saline lagoons such as at Hook.

SOILS TYPES:

Typical soil type pattern: n/a

FUNCTIONS:

Hydrological function: High to very high water table, series of man made drainage ditches. Embankments provide protection from wave action and coastal inundation. In various states of repair and long term objectives vary from ‘hold the line’ to ‘managed retreat’.

Food and Biomass:

LANDCOVER AND LAND USE PATTERN:

Varied from coastal grazing marsh, and areas with nature conservation as principle management objective. Golf courses, marina development. Often examples are rough grassland with unintensive cattle grazing influenced by biodiversity objectives especially.

HYDROLOGY:

Series of steep sided drainage ditches which were / are controlled by tidal sluices. High water table subject to occasional tidal storm breaches.

EXPERIENTIAL**ACCESS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES:**

Often have a history of common grazing land such as Farlington marshes. Often access along sea defence embankments, Solent Way follows stretches like this. No lanes or roads.

TRANQUILLITY:

Varied depending on level of development and context of the character area in which this type exists – from rural coastal grazing marsh on the New Forest Coast to marina development such as Hythe. The proximity to water and frequent association with natural habitats makes this often a highly tranquil landscape.

BIODIVERSITY

The Coastal Reclaim and Grazing Marsh landscape character type is an intertidal landscape. It comprises land that has been drained or reclaimed from the sea by human activity, and coastal grazing marsh habitats which tend to exist as part of the transition of marine to terrestrial habitats.

Coastal grazing marsh dominates within the Coastal Reclaim and Grazing Marsh landscape character type. Coastal grazing marsh habitat comprises low lying grassland, enclosed from the sea by an embankment and drained by ditch networks containing fresh and brackish waters.

These marshes tend not to have been improved for agriculture (through the use of fertilisers) and the consequence is an unusual mixture of grassland and saltmarsh species including nationally rare plants such as sea clover, divided sedge and saltmarsh grasses. The fluctuating water chemistry in the ditches supports specialist species, including a number of water beetle which are virtually confined to this human made habitat. Coastal grazing marsh also provides an important habitat to breeding waders and other bird species.

Small habitat patches are often associated with coastal grazing marshes, including saline lagoons, ponds and unimproved grasslands. In places, there is a strong association with scrub which may illustrate a habitat in transition from grassland to more enclosed habitats.

Reclaimed land is not always managed as coastal grazing marsh, in places other land uses exist. When this is the case, habitats tend to vary from saltmarsh with amenity grasslands, improved grassland, small amounts of arable land, broadleaved woodland and swamp vegetation occurring.

A number of BOAs exist within this landscape character type:

- The New Forest Coast BOA identifies opportunities for coastal grazing marsh, coastal saltmarsh and purple moor grass and rush pastures habitat creation and enhancement;
- The Solent BOA identifies opportunities for coastal grazing marsh and coastal saltmarsh habitat creation and enhancement;
- The Hamble Catchment BOA identifies opportunities for wet woodland, lowland meadow, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and purple moor grass and rush pastures creation and enhancement;
- Chichester/ Langstone Harbours and Hayling Island BOA identifies opportunities for coastal grazing marsh, purple moor grass and rush pastures, coastal saltmarsh habitat

creation and enhancement;

- Portsmouth Harbour BOA identifies opportunities for coastal grazing marsh, coastal saltmarsh and purple moor grass and rush pastures habitat creation and enhancement.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT (*leave to Historic. Specialist*)

ARCHAEOLOGY

Generally speaking, land that has been reclaimed from salt-marsh, would therefore have been salt marsh during history. It is likely that these areas were grazed from the Neolithic or Bronze age onwards and in Langstone harbour there is some evidence to suggest that some forms of processing took place in this coastal zone (perhaps slaughter and salting the meat). There is evidence for salt working on the Hampshire coast and this Type is particularly associated with this important historic industrial activity. More recent archaeology will include the embankments and the drainage systems. Around Lymington there is extensive evidence of post medieval, industrial scale salterns and one of the largest areas on the south coast.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE/SEASCAPE CHARACTER

Areas of former salterns and coastal grazing marsh often with commoning rights and remain largely as unenclosed landscapes.

HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Settlement types by form: Marinas sometimes with development, such as Hythe and Port Solent.

Building materials and type;

Very few – embankments can be made of very variable material from chalk to concrete to clinker and ballast from vessels and modern inert fill.

VISIBILITY

Prominency: Most visible from the water more occasionally from estuary valley sides (which are often wooded) and high spots inland such as Portsdown Hill.

Enclosure: Open from the seaward side but landward often backed by woodland or development. Often open landscapes with few shrubs and trees and flat topography.

Public perceptions: Often accessible and sometimes provide valuable 'green' space close to settlement particularly in the context of the Solent conurbation – perceived as natural space..