

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE:

Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale

Present throughout Lowland Mosaic landscape locations in Hampshire. Largest concentration by area in South Hampshire.



SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

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| Basingstoke: | Primary Associations: Mixed Farmland and Woodland and Mixed Farmland and Woodland Small Scale, Forest on Heath. Secondary Associations: Small Scale Pasture and Woodland Heath Associated, Parkland, Open Farmland and Woodland |
| East Hampshire | Included as part of Mixed Farmland and Woodland (but matches character area boundary split in type) |
| Eastleigh | Primary Associations: Enclosed woodland and farmland, , Wooded Hills, Small fields and nurseries. Secondary: Woodland Farmland and Parkland, Undulating farmland |
| Fareham | Farmland and Woodland |
| Gosport | n/a |
| Hart | Primary Associations: Mixed Farmland Woodland Large Scale, Secondary Associations: Mixed Farmland Woodland Small Scale, Parkland or Estate Farmland. |
| Havant | Lowland Settled Wooded Farmland, Pasture and Woodland Heath Associated, |
| New Forest | Woods and pasture, Forest Farmlands and part of River valley |
| Rushmoor | n/a |
| Test Valley | Primary Associations: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Medium Scale Secondary Associations: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Small Scale |
| Winchester | Primary Associations: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Enclosed, Pasture Woodland Heath Associated. Secondary Associations: Mixed Farmland Woodland, Parkland, River Valley Floor. |

SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES IN NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENTS

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| Dorset | |
| West Berkshire | Royal Forest (some similarities) |
| West Sussex | |
| Wiltshire | |

KEY IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND BOUNDARY DEFINITIONS

- Undulating predominantly clay soils with sandy gravely outcrops
- Clay soils low lying - seasonally wet and not particularly good agricultural grade.
- High biomass and moderately high heathland creation opportunity
- Associated with small chalk fed streams.
- Large Ancient woodlands, blocky shaped woodland and thick hedgerows
- Proportion of grazing land slightly more than arable but less permanent pasture than most other Lowland Mosaic Types.
- Low built up percentage compared with other Lowland Mosaic Types
- Significant association with common land and open access
- Surprising sense of remoteness as often close to large centres of population.
- Rich in wildlife designations and BAP priority habitats particularly Ancient semi natural woodlands, hedgerows, neutral and acid grassland, heath associated habitats, freshwater associated and wet woodland.
- High proportion of assarting
- Numerous cultural associations from the medieval period and Royal hunting forests, including deer parks and lodges and woodpasture. Little intensive exploitation pre Saxon period and less intensively post disafforestation than most lowland mosaic types..
- Few settlements and development.
- Particular association with Common Edge settlement type.
- Low density dispersed settlement pattern where this type occurs in North and South Hampshire and South of New Forest National Park.

PHYSICAL

GEOLOGY, LANDFORM, ELEVATION:

Bedrock and Superficial Geology: Strong correlation with presence of Bracklesham beds and London Clay in South Hampshire, and Bagshot Beds and London Clays in the north, Headon and Osbourne beds south of the New Forest. The Lambeth Group and London Clays are associated with the lowland landscape around the southern areas of the R. Test. The Gault clay underlies this type in East Hampshire. They are all within the *Palaeogene period* and predominantly clay or clay and sands. Very little presence of head or outwash gravels apart from locally elevated areas.

Landform and Elevation: Locally low lying, gently undulating, the higher ground reflects where sand and gravel outcrops in the landscape. There is always higher land surrounding these LCTs.

SOILS TYPES:

Extensively heavy clay soils, seasonally waterlogged and poorly drained. Sandier gravelly outcrops but not as extensive as Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated.

Typical soil type pattern:

Predominantly type: 711h and g (Drift over clay, seasonally waterlogged) often more than 75%
Other types present: 572j (Loam over clay), 581c (Plateau and river terrace drift) and 841b (River terrace gravel)

FUNCTIONS:

Hydrological function: Associated with minor groundwater vulnerability zones. Occasionally overlay source protection of low category type

Food and Biomass: Low agricultural grade; often grade 4/5 or other in south Hampshire, but not exclusively. In the north grade 3 or other. Nearly always poorer agricultural grade than in surrounding LCTs.

Biodiversity potential: Large Ancient Woodland concentration (above 2ha) – high reversion potential of replanted ASNW opportunity.

LANDCOVER AND LAND USE PATTERN:

Above average woodland cover percentage compared with other Lowland Mosaic types, second only to Woodland Plantation and Heath type. The landcover is distinguishable from other Lowland Mosaic type by the unusually high proportion of ASNW and replanted ASNW over 2ha. Arable and grazing land mix, with a high proportion of the latter where it occurs over heavy clays. Larger field size pattern than other Lowland Mosaic types. Thick treed hedges and copses and assart woods form field boundaries. Typically, few settlements, within these LCTs compared with other Lowland Mosaic types. Low levels of sand and gravel mineral extraction. Some historical associations with clay extraction.

HYDROLOGY:

Often associated with the presence of small streams, in shallow valleys, and wetter soils with poor drainage both laterally and vertically. Tend to correspond geographically with the lower parts of the hydrological basin. Streams generally chalk fed apart from south of the New Forest.

EXPERIENTIAL**ACCESS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES (Resource and users):**

Strongest correlation is with commons, and wooded ones in particular and accessible woodlands. Not particularly dense PRow network, but bridleways and footpaths present. Often located close to large centres of population, therefore demand for access is high.

Generally minor road network and predominantly less dense network than other Lowland Mosaic LCTs.

TRANQUILLITY:

Often with lower settlement density, so inherently more tranquil than other more settled Lowland Mosaic types.

BIODIVERSITY

The Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale landscape character type is a wooded agricultural landscape comprising improved grassland and arable land with woodland, unimproved grassland and occasional heath associated habitats.

Thick and wooded hedgerows frequently define field boundaries: the hedgerow network is generally dense, although in places it does remain more open. Improved grassland tends to dominate over arable land within the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale landscape character type.

There is a significant resource of unimproved grassland in this landscape. Unimproved grassland is an increasingly scarce habitat due to pressures for productive land, within this landscape, here it is most likely associated with grazing or hay meadows and provides an important resource of bio diverse grasslands. Unimproved grasslands play a vital role in supporting farmland associated species, particularly in areas with intensively improved grasslands and arable land. Most unimproved grassland is neutral, with some acid grasslands and some marshy grassland, often associated with ponds or other aquatic habitats.

Woodland varies; there is a significant amount of ancient and semi-natural woodland. Other woodland includes mixed woodlands, mixed and coniferous plantations, new tree growth and some parkland/ trees scattered over grassland which can represent areas where timber cropping and livestock grazing are undertaken concurrently: these parkland habitats are often species rich. There is some active coppice with standards in this landscape. Hazel coppice with oak and ash standards is a widespread habitat in Hampshire relating from the historical production of wattle sheep hurdling. Hazel coppice woodlands can support rich flora and butterfly populations if the coppice is active and regularly cut.

There are occasional patches of heathland habitats within the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale landscape character type, including both wet and dry heaths. Dry heath supports heather and bristle bent grass and usually exist on higher, better drained ground. Wet heath exists when drainage becomes impeded; species on wet heath include purple moor grass and cross leaved heath. Ponds also exist in this landscape and can often support important and rich wetland marginal flora. Ponds can be an important resource to dragonfly fauna.

Two BOAs exist within this landscape character type:

- The Hamble Catchment BOA identifies opportunities for wet woodland, lowland meadow, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and purple moor grass and rush pasture habitat creation and enhancement.
- Tytherley Woods BOA identifies opportunities for lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland and lowland meadow habitat creation and enhancement.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

ARCHAEOLOGY

There is generally light evidence of exploitation during the Mesolithic, but with more significant distributions east of Alton where this zone is adjacent to the heath, and in the Forest of Bere. The pattern is similar for the Neolithic. In the Bronze Age, there is little evidence and no suggestion that this is a farmed or settled landscape, and there are few Bronze Age burial mounds. Similarly, in Iron Age there is little evidence of settlement, although there is some on the fringes of the Calleva area. In the Roman period there are some Villa sites in these areas

suggesting that exploitation, such as for woodland, hunting and quasi industrial activity such as pottery or tile production (and this type's associations with heavy clays) made them less marginal. There is a close correlation between lowland mosaic landscapes and pottery/tile production which may well reflect the availability of clay and fuel. In the medieval period assart landscapes, moats and deer parks, speak eloquently of the release of forest land to farming at this late stage in the evolution of the landscape.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This is a landscape that has been less intensively used and has evolved from woodland and common. There is a strong association with royal forests, often where disafforestation has been relatively late or they are in core areas of former Forest and very marginal for farming. The incremental release of woodland has resulted in a landscape with a higher proportion of assart and informal enclosure patterns. There are some areas of more formal enclosure where late enclosure of open common has occurred (e.g. 2f). Also as a consequence of this less intensive landscape use there is a relative abundance of historic parks and gardens, some deriving from deer parks associated with the forest origins of the landscape type. The landscape has generally been subject to more piecemeal enclosure and less intensive exploitation than other landscape types. There are often areas of former common land associated with this landscape type

HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Settlement types by form: Few medium to large settlements. Very high dispersion density in North Hampshire and South of New Forest but extremely low dispersion density in South Hampshire (Mid 19th - C Roberts and Wrathmell mapping). No Market towns, correlation with instance of Common Edge type but not as prevalent as within Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated. Some association with Irregular Row type in the north associated with streams. Moderate density of farmsteads compared with other Lowland Mosaic LCTs but still greater than downland landscapes. Most prevalent type 19th century. Significant numbers of medieval origin farms.

Building materials and type; Very varied and inconsistent styles. Predominantly red brick and clay tiles (flintwork not typical). New build interspersed with old along road network.

VISIBILITY

Prominency: Low lying with high proportion of woodland cover makes this LCT of low visibility from within the type. However being lower than much of the surrounding land, the adjoining fringes are often very visible from external vantage points.

Enclosure: Views and horizon distances shortened by presence of woodland and thick hedgerows.

Public perceptions: Often situated in close proximity to large settlements, and often closest countryside where it is possible to feel visually detached from built up areas – particularly where this LCT occurs north of the Solent and south of the Blackwater conurbations.