



## **Historic Environment Action Plan South-West Wight Coastal Zone**

**Isle of Wight County Archaeology  
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## HEAP for South-West Wight Coastal Zone

### INTRODUCTION

This HEAP Area has been defined on the basis of geology, topography land use and settlement patterns which differentiate it from other HEAP areas.

Essential characteristics of the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* include the long coastline and cliffs containing fossils and archaeological material, the pattern of historic lanes, tracks and boundaries, field patterns showing evidence of *open-field* enclosure, valley-floor land, historic villages, hamlets and dispersed farmsteads, and vernacular architecture. The Military Road provides a scenic and historically significant route along the coast.

The settlements of Mottistone, Hulverstone, Brighstone and Shorwell straddle the boundary between this Area and the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge*. Historically these settlements exploited both Areas. For the sake of convenience these settlements are described in the HEAP Area document for the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* even where they fall partially within this Area. However, they are also referred to in this HEAP document where appropriate.

This document considers the most significant features of the historic landscape, the most important forces for change, and the key management issues. Actions particularly relevant to this Area are identified from those listed in the Isle of Wight HEAP Aims, Objectives and Actions.

### ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

#### **Location, Geology and Topography**

- Occupies strip of land between *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* and coast.
- Coastline within this Area stretches from Compton to Shepherd's Chine and comprises soft, eroding cliffs with areas of landslip.
  - Shippard's Chine, Brook Chine, Chilton Chine, Grange Chine, Marsh Chine, Barnes Chine, Cowleaze Chine and Shepherd's Chine cut down through the cliffs to the beach (see entry on *chines* in HEAP Glossary).
- Fairly flat area with maximum altitude c.60m OD at interface with *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge*, sloping gently southward to coast.
- Wealden Group deposits (representing the oldest phases of the Island's geological history) occupy most of this area and are surrounded by a narrow band of Atherfield Clay.
  - Small extent of Ferruginous Sands in northeast corner of Area.
- An ancient river valley running close to the coast between Grange Chine and Shippards, now occupied by small streams, was formerly occupied by a westward flowing tributary of the Western Yar but became severed from the Yar as a result of coastal erosion
  - A stream flows in a north-westerly direction within the ancient river valley from Sudmoor to Brook Green before reaching the sea at Brook Chine.
  - The river valley contains superficial Gravel Terraces, Valley Brick Earth deposits and Alluvium deposits and these appear in the cliff face between Grange Chine and Shippard's Chine.
- Other watercourses in Area flow in a westerly or south-westerly direction from the higher ground to chines at coastal edge.
  - The most significant of these is the Shorwell Stream which flows from Shorwell village past Wolverton Manor, Yafford and Brighstone before reaching the sea at Grange Chine.
  - Another stream rises near Sutton Farm and flows into Marsh Chine.
- Generally, this Area contains Grade 3 agricultural land but Grade 4 land occurs on damp low-lying land within the ancient river valley.

## Defining Attributes and Principal HEAP Types

- Enclosed by the higher ground of the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* to the north and therefore has a less exposed feel than the *Atherfield Coastal Plain* to the south east.  
However, there is no protection from the prevailing south-west winds blowing in from the sea and trees are bent by prevailing winds.
- This HEAP Area has a smaller percentage of field patterns containing fields of *large* size (over 12 hectares) than the *Atherfield Coastal Plain*.
  - Less than 32% of field patterns (by area) are classified as *large* compared with over 67% in the *Atherfield Coastal Plain*.The difference in field size is one of the factors that led to the definition of the *South West Wight Coastal Zone* and the *Atherfield Coastal Plain* as separate HEAP Areas, another factor being the lack of trees, hedges and woodland within the *Atherfield coastal Plain* compared with the *South West Wight Coastal Zone*
- Within the *South West Wight Coastal Zone* there is a general progression from field patterns that are mainly of *small-medium* size (3-6 hectares) at western end of Area to field patterns mainly of *medium* (6-12 hectares) and *large* size at the eastern end.
- Woodland, trees and hedges also vary within Area.
  - In much of the western part of Area, around Brook and Mottistone, fields have mainly hedged boundaries and trees are present on some boundaries. There are also small plantations and patches of *secondary woodland*.
  - East of Mottistone there is no woodland except on valley-floor near Grange Chine and in the damp valley-floor land beside Shorwell Stream.
  - Fewer hedges to east of Brighstone and virtual absence of hedgerow trees.
- English Elm trees and hedges used to be a feature of historic settlements in this now generally open area as English Elm is very salt tolerant
  - Dutch Elm Disease has now removed mature Elm trees from the landscape.
  - It would be instructive to plot the extant distribution of elm hedges, both within this Area and more generally throughout the Island..
- Valley floor pasture between Brook Green and Chilton Chine (on line of ancient river valley) and beside Shorwell Stream.
- A string of villages, hamlets and farms occur along the Shorwell-Brook road, at the interface with the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge Area*, falling partly within that Area and partly within the *South West Wight Coastal Zone*.
  - The historical evolution and built environment of these settlements has been described in the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge Area* HEAP document.
- The small village of Brook lies between the road and the coast.
  - *Dispersed* farmsteads and the hamlet of Yafford are sited between the Shorwell-Brook road and the coast.
- Some features of the 19<sup>th</sup> century park at Brook survive although the parkland is now in residential or agricultural use.
- Main vehicle routes are the B3399 (which runs from Brook to Shorwell within this Area and defines the northern edge of the Area) and the Military Road (A3055) that runs parallel to the coast.
  - In the western part of this Area Rights of Way run southward from the settlements at the base of the sandstone ridge towards the coast.
  - From Mottistone to Shorwell minor roads and Rights of Way run both from north to south and from west to east.
  - The long distance coastal footpath runs along the top of the cliffs within this Area and a short length of the Shepherd's Trail also falls within the Area.
- Eroding cliffs and beaches are important for fossils, including dinosaur remains and for archaeology.
- Eroding coastal slope is habitat of rare Glanville Fritillary butterfly.

- Holiday centres lie close to the coast at Brighstone and Shepherd's Chine and there is a campsite at Grange Chine.
- A former Holiday Centre at Chilton Chine is now occupied by Isle of Wight Pearl, a retail outlet patronised particularly by coach parties of tourists.
- National Trust coastal car parks situated at Brook Chine and Shippards Chine.

### Principal Historical Processes

- *Mesolithic* flintwork, prehistoric hearths, *Bronze Age* burial urn and other remains in cliff edge from Shippards Chine to Grange Chine provide evidence for early settlement along course of ancient river valley.
- A peaty deposit in the cliff face close to Brook chine and Shippard's Chine (known as the 'Nut Bed') contains the remains of plants and trees dating from around 5000 BC, in the *Mesolithic*
  - These remains provide evidence for a damp woodland environment dominated by alder and oak, far removed from the windswept agricultural landscape of today (Isle of Wight AONB Project 1998, 9).
- Evidence for later prehistoric activity includes site of Middle *Bronze Age* Cemetery at Barnes High, ditch with *Iron Age* pottery at Shippard's Chine, site of *Iron Age/Romano-British* huts at Sudmoor and large *Iron Age* coin hoard.
- Main estate centres of Anglo-Saxon times in the West Wight were sited on the northern edge of the chalk but many of the settlements of this Area have Anglo-Saxon place-names. Most present-day settlements within this Area are likely to be of Anglo-Saxon or medieval origin.
  - The Anglo-Saxon estate of Calbourne included land within this Area (Margham 2005, 91-98).
- Manors lying wholly or partly within this Area are recorded in Domesday Book at Compton, Brook, Chilton, Mottistone, Brighstone, Shate, Yafford, Wolverton and Shorwell.
  - The manor of Waytes Court in Brighstone is first mentioned in 1321 when it was held by Henry le Wayte
- Parishes of Brook, Mottistone, Brighstone, and Shorwell (all partly within this HEAP Area) were created in later Anglo-Saxon or medieval times by the sub-division of larger parish units.
  - A small part of the medieval Shalfleet Parish also lay within this HEAP Area.
- Quarr Abbey (situated in the *Northern Lowlands*) was granted land out of Compton Manor in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Hockey 1970, 68).
  - This land became a *grange* (outlying farm) of the abbey, providing pasture for sheep and cows.
  - The grange lay to the south-east of Compton Farm, slightly to west of the modern property of 'Compton Grange' (Hockey 1991, Map 6).
- Land at Shate was given to Quarr Abbey by Baldwin de Redvers at its foundation.
  - The land within the abbey's *grange* lay to the south of Shate Farm between Chilton Chine and Grange Chine (Hockey 1991, Map 5).
  - The present 'Grange Farm' is probably on the site of the medieval grange buildings.
- Shate Mill in Brighstone is recorded in Domesday Book.
  - The Domesday place-name of Yafford may mean a dam-weir or sluice (Kokeritz 1940, 224-5) whilst the mill itself is first mentioned in 1227 (Mills 1996, 112).
  - Existing buildings at Brighstone Mill and Yafford Mill are post-medieval.
- A Survey of the Manors of Swainston and Brighstone in 1630 contains valuable information about buildings and land use in this Area (Jones 1991, Jones 2003).
- Open fields accounted for a significant amount of medieval land use within this Area and the process of private enclosure continued throughout the post-medieval period.

- At Brighstone surviving open fields recorded in the 1630 Survey had been enclosed by the time of the OS 1793 map but the new, hedged boundaries often followed the boundaries of former open fields or divisions within the open fields. Even today, despite amalgamation and reorganisation, existing field boundaries, roads and tracks around Brighstone still reflect the pre-enclosure landscape.
  - In Mottistone Parish a map of 1815 shows the existence of numerous small strip-like fields but by the time of the tithe map (1838) amalgamation of these strips into larger fields had started (Currie 1999, 24). Former *open-field* patterns are not so recognisable in the present landscape around Mottistone as in the Brighstone area, perhaps because enclosure took place at a later date and altered the earlier pattern more radically.
  - At Hulverstone a small open field known as South Field was still farmed in strips as late as 1839-40 although subject to coastal erosion by that time. Linear banks recorded close to the cliff in 1998 may be dividing baulks or ridge and furrow (Currie 1999, 15; 29; 127).
- The boundary between this HEAP Area and that of the adjacent *South Wight Sandstone and Gravel* Area to the east has been drawn partially on the basis of different field patterns shown within the two Areas on the 1793 map.
  - In 1793 much of the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* was characterised by small semi-regular dog-legged field patterns indicating the former existence of enclosed *open-field*.
  - The field patterns shown to the east of the boundary, within the *South Wight Sandstone and Gravel* Area, were larger and irregular with straight boundaries, suggesting post-medieval enclosure of rough open grazing land, some of which may have been heathland.
  - The two Areas still have differing field patterns although these have been much modified since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Although open fields occupied much of the landscape in medieval times other types of medieval land use can be inferred from the OS 1793 map
  - The valley of the Shorwell Stream from Shorwell village to Grange Chine is shaded green on the 1793 map, indicating pasture or meadow land. At that time it was divided into fairly small fields but in medieval times the various manors may have had held *common meadows* within the valley.
  - In the ancient river valley between Shippards Chine and Grange Chine an area of low-lying damp pasture known as Sudmoor is shown on the OS 1793 map.
  - Brook Green lay within this area and survived as a common pasture until enclosure by private agreement in 1835 but may have been used as common meadow in the Middle Ages (Currie 1999, 15).
  - Elsewhere within this Area the OS 1793 map suggests the presence of small greens attached to minor settlements (see below).
- On low-lying ground near watercourses there were *withy beds* that provided coppiced willow for baskets and lobster pots. Although first recorded on 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century maps there could have been withy beds in this Area at a much earlier date.
- From later Anglo-Saxon times the main settlements in this part of the Island became established on the spring line at the boundary between the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* and the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone*.
  - These settlements of Shorwell, Limerstone, Brighstone, Mottistone and Hulverstone are described in the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* HEAP Document.
- In Shorwell Parish outlying settlement within this HEAP Area included the medieval moated site at Wolverton.
  - The moat may have enclosed the medieval manor house but a magnetometer survey found traces of a stone building only in one corner.
  - The present Wolverton Manor House was built in the reign of Elizabeth I by John Dingley, Deputy Governor of the Isle of Wight, and completed by his grandson.

- At Brighstone the OS 1793 map shows some significant buildings to the south of the church within the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone*.
  - These buildings included Berry Barn Farm, Brighstone Mill and Shate Farm (all recorded in the 1630 Survey of Swainston and Brighstone manors) and Waytes Court, a small manor house of 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century date.
  - All these buildings lay close to branches of the stream which flowed south into Grange Chine.
  - The outlying properties on the south side of Brighstone were connected to the rest of the village by Broad Lane, Mill Lane and Galley Lane. Grange Road led from Shate Farm to Grange Farm near the coast.
- Medieval settlement elsewhere within the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* was of a more scattered nature.
  - The OS 1793 map shows smaller *nucleated* clusters or *dispersed settlements*, sometimes associated with the small irregular greens that seem to be a feature of this area (e.g. Hoxall, Fernfield Green, Brook Green, Marsh Green and Chilton Green).
  - Brook is shown on the 1793 map as a straggling settlement, with the church and Brook House isolated to the north of a cluster of buildings on the west side of the road leading down to Brook Chine. Other cottages are shown dotted around Brook Green to the south-east of the roadside settlement.
  - Brook House was rebuilt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the site of the earlier manor house and possessed a small park and walled garden at that time.
  - Yafford, as shown on the 1793 map, comprised a cluster of six dwellings midway between Yafford Mill and Yafford House.
  - *Dispersed settlements* shown on the 1793 map include single farms and also clusters of less than five buildings, for instance at Sutton, Marsh Green and Chilton Green.
- The pattern of roads and tracks shown on the OS 1793 map differs in the western and eastern parts of this Area.
  - Between Brook and Brighstone roads and tracks run northward from the coastal fringe. Historically, these routes connected the arable fields with the main settlements of this Area and probably also functioned as drove roads, connecting the fields and settlements with the common grazing of the *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge Area*. (Currie 1999, 22). In medieval times these routes would have allowed stock to be moved down to the open fields after the harvest in order to manure the fields.
  - Other routes linked minor settlements e.g. Hoxall Lane and Chilton Lane.
  - From Brighstone to Shorwell roads and tracks ran both north-south and east-west. These routes linked farmsteads and hamlets and connected these settlements with the open fields and with pasture or meadow land. They appear to have evolved with the open fields, as field boundaries are aligned on lanes and tracks (e.g. Wicken Hill Lane) and several rights of way have dog-legs suggesting that they formerly ran between strips.
- The distinction between minor roads and Rights of Way in this Area is a modern one, reflecting which roads were upgraded and maintained by the Rural District Council from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
  - In 1793 some routes that are now Rights of Way appear to have been of equal status with routes that are now minor motor roads.
  - This Area has a greater number of named minor roads and Rights of Way than all other HEAP Areas except the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge*.
- Some *settlement desertion* occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for instance at Brook Green, Fernfield Green and Hawkes Hill Green (Hoxall Green). These were areas of common grazing with associated cottages recorded in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but now gone (two cottages survive at Hoxall out of six shown on tithe map).
  - Abandonment or clearance of cottages at Brook Green may have been associated with the enclosure of the green in 1835 as part of the rationalisation of archaic landholdings on the Mottistone estate in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Currie 1999, 24 & 28).

- In the late 1850s the Brook Estate was bought by Charles Seely, a wealthy incomer whose wealth derived from the Nottinghamshire coalfields.
  - Existing grounds around the 18<sup>th</sup> century Brook House were developed by the Seelys and parkland was laid out on the other side of the road from the house.
  - The Seely estate appears to have been responsible for planting some of the *secondary woodland* in the Brook-Mottistone area which is first shown on the OS 25" map of 1898 e.g. Hulverstone Plantation, Toll Bar Plantation and Hendy's Plantation.
  - These plantations may have been connected with the preservation of game or with hunting.
  - The Mottistone estate, comprising land between Mottistone Down and the coast, was purchased by the Seelys in 1861 and came into National Trust care in 1965.
- 19<sup>th</sup> century railway lines did not extend into this area.
- The Military Road (mostly on the line of the A3055) was laid out in 1860s, extending from Freshwater to Chale, in order to link the *Palmerston forts* between Yarmouth and Freshwater with the back of the Wight, allowing defence of *chines* and beaches against possible invasion.
  - A brick viaduct was built to carry the road over Grange Chine.
  - In 1920s the road was upgraded from an unmetalled track and partially rerouted between Compton Chine and Shippard's Chine as a job creation scheme.
- In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Coastguard Service was developed and a coastguard station with cottages for the coastguards had been built to the west of Brook by 1898 (shown on the OS 25" map of that date).
- Lifeboat stations at Brook and Brighstone (Grange Chine) were opened in 1860. The station at Brighstone closed in 1915 and Brook closed in 1937.
- First purpose-built holiday camp in the country was built at Brighstone from 1930 and still survives.
  - Atherfield Bay Holiday Camp existed by 1938 when it is mentioned in a holiday guide to the Isle of Wight.
  - The building now occupied by 'Isle of Wight Pearl' was built as a private residence for Lord Amherst in the 1930s but was soon converted to a holiday camp before becoming a specialist retail outlet and tourist facility in the 1980s.
- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War concrete defences were installed at Grange Chine to prevent a possible enemy landing. A *pill box* built near Chilton Chine on the Military Road survives to the present day.
- The National Trust acquired Compton Bay in 1961 and the Mottistone Manor Estate in 1965.
- New Road at Brighstone was laid out in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, connecting the village to the Military Road via the existing Grange Road.
  - In the later 20<sup>th</sup> century estate houses were built on the north-east side of Galley Lane, changing the character of this area.
- Settlement at Shorwell within this HEAP Area lies to the south of the *historic settlement core* and is mainly of 20<sup>th</sup> century date.
- Some later 20<sup>th</sup> century development has taken place at Yafford.

### **Archaeology and Built Environment (details in HER)**

- *Mesolithic* worked flint, prehistoric hearths and Bronze Age burial urns found in cliff face.
- *Mesolithic* plant remains of the 'Nut Bed' around Shippard's chine and Brooke Chine.
  - This peaty deposit was named the 'Nut Bed' because local people thought that the remains of trees recovered from the peat were evidence of the biblical flood. Nuts recovered from the peat were named 'Noah's nuts'.
- A supposed prehistoric burial mound has been recorded from Sudmoor.
  - A *Bronze Age* wooden hurdle found at Churchill's Chine has been radio carbon dated to 2,000 B.C.

- A Middle *Bronze Age* urn cemetery has been recorded from the cliff edge at Barnes High where cremated remains were buried inside pottery urns.
- A ditch with *Iron Age* pottery has been recorded from Shippard's Chine and *Iron Age/Romano-British* hut sites from Sudmoor.
  - A Late Iron Age coin hoard comprising 967 base silver staters was found in 2005 within Brighstone Parish and in this HEAP Area
- *Romano-British* pottery and roof tiles recorded in cliff face at Grange Chine.
- Medieval moat at Wolverton Manor.
- The local Ferruginous Sandstone was used for the high-status 16<sup>th</sup> century Wolverton Manor House with details in lighter stone.
  - The more modest 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century manor house of Waytes Court employs a variety of building stone under a thatched roof.
- Brook House is a Georgian building altered in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - Yafford House is an early 18<sup>th</sup> century building of dressed stone.
- Farmhouses and cottages are built of local Greensand, including the reddish-brown Ferruginous Sandstone.
- Brighstone Mill and the mill house, of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date, survive but have been converted to private dwellings.
- Yafford Mill and the mill house are of 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The site operated as a tourist attraction for many years but has now closed.
- The late 19<sup>th</sup> century coastguard cottages at Brook survive and are inhabited as private dwellings.
- Brook lifeboat station survives as a roofless stone shell.
- The 19<sup>th</sup> century brick-built bridge at Grange Chine still carries the Military Road over the chine.

#### **Relationships with other HEAP Areas**

- This Area merges into the *Atherfield Coastal Plain* Area to the south-east and shares some characteristics with it, the two Areas being distinguished from each other by the larger size of present-day fields and the lack of hedgerows and trees within the *Atherfield Coastal Plain*.
- Roads and tracks connect the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* with the *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge* and with the settlements on the boundary between the two Areas.
  - In medieval and post-medieval times various manors and their tenants held land in both Areas, utilising this Area mainly for arable agriculture and the *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge* mainly for stock grazing.
  - It is not clear how the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* related to the *South Wight Sandstone and Gravel* Area historically.
  - Much of the land within the *South Wight Sandstone and Gravel* Area appears to have been heathland or other rough open grazing land in the medieval period, although it had been largely enclosed by 1793.
  - The pattern of historic lanes and tracks shown on the OS 1793 map does not suggest that there was much movement of livestock between the two Areas.
  - Kingston Parish, within the *South Wight Sandstone and Gravel* Area, was taken out of Shorwell Parish in medieval times and therefore at one time had a link with the western edge of the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* which lay in Shorwell Parish.

#### **Time-Depth**

- Great geological time-depth is visible in the exposed cliff-face.
- Lack of prehistoric earthworks, in contrast with the *West Wight Chalk Downland and the West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* Areas to the north.
  - However, there are prehistoric archaeological sites and finds, buried or exposed in cliff face.

- The boundaries of the Anglo-Saxon estate of Calbourne are probably the earliest surviving features in the landscape.
  - These boundaries are described in a charter, allegedly of AD 826.
  - Margham (2005, 92-93) has argued convincingly that the estate boundaries within this Area follow the medieval parish boundaries although there are alternative interpretations.
  - Following Margham's interpretation, the western boundary of the Calbourne Estate equated with the medieval Mottistone/Brighstone parish boundary. From the B3399 at the edge of this Area the boundary ran along Pitt Place Lane (Byway BS 104), past Chilton Farm and down Chilton Chine to the sea.
  - The eastern boundary of the Calbourne Estate equated with the medieval Brighstone/Shorwell parish boundary which has survived as the civil parish boundary. From the B3399 at the edge of this Area the boundary follows a field boundary to Yafford Mill and continues along hedged field boundaries (with a short gap where a field boundary has been removed) as far as Thoncross Lane. Here the boundary turns east and then south into Chilton Lane which it follows almost to the end before veering east and running down to the cliff edge near Shepherd's Chine.
- Other medieval parish boundaries also survive in the modern landscape.
  - Within this Area the boundary between Freshwater Parish and Brook Parish ran along the western side of Grange Withy Bed. It then followed a watercourse that has been straightened in modern times (and is now represented by a ditched field boundary) before reaching the sea at Shippard's Chine.
  - The boundary between Brook Parish and Shalfleet Parish enters this Area at the B3399 close to the Sun Inn and runs south along Right of Way BS 47 as far as the junction with BS 106. After this point, the boundary becomes more difficult to trace in the modern landscape.
  - The boundary between Shalfleet Parish and Mottistone Parish enters this Area at the B3399 beside Toll Bar Cottage and runs south along Right of Way BS97, past Toll Bar Plantation and Hendy's Plantation to the end of Fernfield Lane, after which it cannot be traced in the modern landscape.
- The framework of the modern landscape within this Area relates closely to settlement and farming patterns that probably emerged in late Anglo-Saxon times, were firmly established in the medieval period and were modified in the post-medieval period. This framework includes the following elements:
  - The pattern of *nucleated settlements* along the boundary with the *West Wight Downland Edge & Sandstone Ridge* and the more *dispersed settlement* pattern further to the south
  - The pattern of roads and Rights of Way
  - The patterns of former open fields, particularly in the Brighstone area, partly preserved by ancient roads and by field boundaries of post-medieval date modified by later amalgamation and reorganisation.
- Valley-floor at Sudmoor retains traditional land use as pasture and some small secondary woods preserve the sites of withy beds but use of water power from Shorwell Stream by local mills has ceased.
- The medieval manor house at Wolverton may have lain within the moated site.
- Wolverton Manor House, of 16<sup>th</sup> century date is probably the earliest surviving building within this Area.
  - Waytes Court is 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century.
  - Brook House and Yafford House are 18<sup>th</sup> century.
  - Farmsteads and cottages are of 17<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century date.
  - Yafford Mill and Brighstone Mill date from the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century respectively.
- The influence of 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century landowners can also be seen in the former parkland at Brook.

- Fishing and smuggling played a part in the local economy in post-medieval times but have left little trace in the landscape other than the 19<sup>th</sup> century coastguard cottages at Brook, originally constructed to counter the smuggling activity along the back of the Wight.
  - The establishment of the Lifeboat Service in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is an important part of the Island's cultural history commemorated in the surviving shell of the Brook lifeboat house.
- Military influences on the landscape include the 19<sup>th</sup> century Military Road, the Grange Chine Viaduct and the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War pill box near Chilton Chine.
  - Two original sections of the Military Road not followed by the present A3055 are preserved as sections of Right of Way F35 between Shippard's Chine and Compton and to the east of Freshwater Bay
- 19<sup>th</sup> century rationalisation of the agricultural landscape around Mottistone has helped to shape the present landscape, which has also been further modified in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The influence of 20<sup>th</sup> century tourism on the landscape can be seen in the holiday camps of Bighstone Chine and Chilton Chine.
- Late 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development has not modified the character of this HEAP Area as much as in other Areas but has had a noticeable impact on the southern outskirts of Brighstone and Shorwell and at Yafford.

### **Contribution of Historic Landscape to Present Landscape Character**

- The contribution of the historic landscape to present landscape character can be seen in a variety of features:
  - Boundaries of Anglo-Saxon and medieval origin
  - Scattered settlement pattern represented by farmsteads and other historic buildings, often on sites dating back to medieval times or mentioned Domesday Book
  - Existing field patterns around Brighstone preserve elements of the pre-enclosure *open-field* pattern.
  - Traditional small pasture fields in low-lying areas
  - Pattern of roads, lanes and tracks linking medieval settlements, fields and grazing areas is preserved in existing Rights of Way
  - Medieval moated site at Wolverton
  - Farmsteads and cottages dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
  - A small number of 'gentry' houses, including Wolverton Manor House of 16<sup>th</sup> century date and Brook House of 18<sup>th</sup> century date.
  - 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations and 'estate' landscape around Brook.
  - Line of 19<sup>th</sup> century Military Road is followed for the most part by present A3055.
  - Other military features including the 19<sup>th</sup> century bridge carrying the Military Road over Grange Chine and the pill box at Chilton Chine.
  - Remains of lifeboat station and surviving coastguard cottages at Brook.

### **Values, Perceptions and Associations**

- The undeveloped coastline of this Area is a highly valued part of the Island, appreciated both by tourists and residents, who enjoy its unspoilt beaches and cliff walks.
  - Compton Bay is particularly associated with surfing.
  - Out of the tourist season the coastline can feel quite isolated, remote and dramatic, with high waves crashing onto the beach at Compton Bay.
  - In the summer the National Trust car parks and beaches can become very crowded.
- The beaches and cliffs of the Island's south-west coast are of great geological value and are particularly noted for fossilised dinosaur bones and footprints found in the Wealden Beds, the Island's oldest rocks, which were formed between 127 million and 121 million years ago.

- The Island's south-west coast, including both this Area and the *Atherfield Coastal Plain*, is known locally as 'Back of the Wight' and is particularly associated with shipwrecks and smuggling.
  - Fred Mew captured the flavour of this region in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in his appropriately titled and colourful book, 'Back of the Wight' (Mew 1977).
- Commercial fishing is no longer carried out but local fishermen still beach their boats at Chilton Chine and Brook Chine, contributing to the character of the Area.
- The long-distance coastal path runs through this Area along the top of the cliffs and is valued both by serious walkers and by visitors to the beaches.
  - Away from the coastal path the Rights of Way network within this HEAP Area may not be so well known, except to keen walkers.

### Research and Documentation

- Historic Environment Record is basic resource for archaeology, built environment and historic landscape character (includes HLC layer).
- The 1630 Survey of Swainston Manor (*in the Northern Lowlands*) included Brighstone Manor which lay within this Area.
 

Two articles on this survey provide valuable information about 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings and land use (Jones 1991; Jones 2003).
- Archaeological and Historical Landscape Survey of the Mottistone Manor estate carried out for National Trust (Currie 1999).
- Shorwell Parish Landscape Character Assessment (Isle of Wight AONB Partnership 2005).
- A popular booklet on Island Chines provides useful information about this Area (Isle of Wight AONB Project 1998).
- Two popular books on Island shipwrecks include information about this Area (Medland 1986; Phillips 1995)

### Amenity and Education

- The entire coastline of Compton Bay from Compton Chine to Brook Chine is in the care of the National Trust.
  - The beaches are popular with families, surfers and fossil hunters.
- Good public access on foot via coastal footpath and other Rights of Way.
  - Coastal footpath has very fine views.
  - Access to beaches via Rights of Way at Shepherd's Chine, Grange Chine, Chilton Chine, Brook Chine and Shippard's Chine.
- There are few commercial tourist facilities in this Area and the absence of commercial facilities is entirely in keeping with the rural character of the Area.
  - The Dinosaur Farm Museum on the Military Road near Brighstone is a private facility staffed mainly by volunteers which offers visitors an opportunity to study fossils found locally.
  - Isle of Wight Pearl, near Chilton Chine, does not have specific links with local culture or landscape and is visited mainly by coach parties.
- The Military Road offers spectacular views to car and bus passengers
- Bus routes 7 and 11 run at fairly regular intervals even in the winter, allowing the south-west coast to be reached at Brook, travelling from Newport via Freshwater
  - A bus service along the entire length of the Military Road is currently running only in the spring, summer and autumn, twice daily in each direction.
- There are good opportunities to develop educational trails within this Area, exploring evolving patterns of land use and settlement.
  - The Brighstone Village Trail follows Rights of Way within this Area.

### **Features of Particular Significance within this HEAP Area**

- Long stretch of coastline and close physical relationship of whole Area with the coast although fishing is no longer a part of the local economy.
  - The *chines* are an important historic and cultural record in their own right.
  - There are only a few surviving features specifically connected with the use of the sea e.g. the Brook coastguard cottages and the remains of the Brook lifeboat house and these features therefore have a special significance.
- Prehistoric artefacts and *palaeo-environmental* material exposed and eroding from cliff face
- Historic estate and parish boundaries dating from Anglo-Saxon and medieval times.
- Overall landscape retains 'framework' originating in late Anglo-Saxon period and comprising pattern of historic roads and tracks, pattern of historic settlement, field patterns showing evidence for enclosure of open fields and later reorganisation and valley- floor pastures.
- Historic houses, farmsteads and cottages.
- The Military Road and the Grange Chine viaduct.

### **VULNERABILITY**

#### **Rarity and Typicality**

- The word *chine* is found only in Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight although the topographical feature itself (a steep-sided valley through which a stream flows through coastal cliffs to the sea) is more widespread.
- Dinosaur fossils found along the coastline in this Area are rivalled only by finds along Dorset's Jurassic Coast.
- Most of the historic landscape features, archaeological sites and historic buildings within this Area are typical elements in the English lowland landscape but the particular character and mixture of these features in a coastal setting gives the Area a strong local distinctiveness.
- Medieval moats are uncommon on the Isle of Wight, the Wolverton Moat being one of only three recorded in the HER.
- The Military Road is a feature specifically linked to the *Palmerston* defensive system of the 1860s, designed to protect the Solent ports.

#### **Coherence**

- This HEAP Area retains its essential coherence as a historic landscape.

#### **Condition and Fragility**

- Erosion of coastal cliffs is rapid along the unstable clays and sands of the south-west coast.
  - Constant loss of archaeological material from cliff-face.
  - Erosion has led to the recent re-routing of a short section of the Military Road to the east of Shippard's Chine but the entire road will become unviable at some time this century because of deep cracks in the chalk strata to the west.
- Field boundaries are an important component of the historic landscape and their maintenance could be under threat from economic difficulties facing the farming community.
- Most dwellings within historic settlements are well maintained.
  - Redundant farm buildings are at risk from dereliction or inappropriate conversions in most HEAP Areas but the issue may be particularly relevant in this Area.
- The coastal character of this Area is affected to some extent by the large number of summer visitors accessing the beaches by car.

## **CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

### **Forces for Change**

- Erosion of coastal cliffs, leading to loss of habitats and historic landscape features.
- It is likely that the current route of the Military Road between Brook and Freshwater Bay will be threatened or will fail within the next hundred years based on current rates of coastal erosion.
  - It will therefore be necessary to consider how access to property in this area is maintained by the highway authority, how, if required, a through route is provided and what status this has in the highway hierarchy.
- Climate change may lead to changes in semi-natural vegetation and cultivated crops (e.g. growth of biofuels) and this may alter the landscape character of the Area.
  - A number of farm reservoirs have been created in recent years to combat the effect of drier summers and there may be a demand to create more reservoirs in the future. These features may be beneficial to wildlife but in some cases could affect archaeological sites or historic landscape character.
- Decline in viability of dairy farming within this Area could lead to cessation of grazing on valley-floor pastures.
- There may be proposals for residential infilling and some new development on the edges of historic settlements.
  - However, the forthcoming *Island Plan* is likely to restrict development in rural areas, other than that meeting local need for affordable housing.
- Possible new community projects interpreting the historic landscape in this Area could be funded by grant schemes such as the Heritage Lottery Fund or the AONB Sustainable Development Fund.

### **Management Issues.**

- Need for resources to ensure the effective archaeological monitoring of eroding cliffs on a regular basis with due regard to health and safety.
  - Such a monitoring programme would require professional input and resources to deal with artefacts and environmental samples.
  - The issue of archaeological coastal monitoring is not confined to this HEAP Area but is particularly needed along the south-west coast because of the rapid rate of erosion.
- Need to support the maintenance of the farmed landscape and historic field boundaries by appropriate targeting of Higher Level Stewardship and other agricultural support schemes.
- Need to conserve farm buildings and to find sustainable uses for redundant buildings in keeping with their historic character.
- Need to conserve and find new uses for other redundant historic buildings of local significance.
  - The fairly recent demolition of the unlisted former Methodist Chapel at Brook is an example of how the historic character of settlements can be eroded.
- Pressures of people and cars on coast
  - Need to find ways to support tourism and accommodate visitors without pressuring landscape and historic environment resources
- Need to ensure that coastal path stays open and remains safe and that beach access is maintained in an Area that is experiencing rapid coastal erosion.
- Need to ensure that new farm reservoirs do not have negative impacts on archaeological sites or historic landscape character.

### **Conservation Designations**

- All of the HEAP Area is within the AONB.
- The coastline is within the Tennyson *Heritage Coast* and also within the South Wight Maritime SAC.

- The only *Scheduled Monument* within this HEAP Area is the moated site at Wolverton Manor
- Part of the Brighstone *Conservation Area* falls within this HEAP Area
- 53 Listed Buildings including the following:
  - Parish churches of Brighstone and Mottistone and West Court (described under *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge Area*)
  - Brook House, Wolverton Manor, Yafford House and Waytes Court
  - Farm houses and buildings at Casses, Shate, Chilton, Thorncross and Limerstone; Brighstone Mill and Yafford Mill.
- All of the coastline and coastal slope area, including landslips and chines, falls within the Hanover Point to St Catherine's Point SSSI, which provides a complete geological section through the geological strata from the Wealden Group to the Lower Chalk.
- 15 S/NCs are within this HEAP Area, including Sudmoor Dyke, Chilton Chine, Grange Chine, Marsh Chine and Wolverton Marsh.

## **FUTURE MANAGEMENT**

The Isle of Wight HEAP Objectives and Actions are set out in a separate document. These objectives and actions are generic and many of them are relevant to all HEAP Areas. Actions that are most relevant to this HEAP Area are cited below.

- A10** Completion of Coastal HEAP (drawing on existing Coastal Audit and HLC, identifying management objectives and actions) setting out proposals for adequate recording of eroding coastal archaeology and identifying funding sources.
- A11** Seek funding for long term coastal archaeology recording project.
- A12** Complete Field Patterns HEAP.
- A13** Identify field patterns of significance.
- A14** Complete Rural Settlement HEAP.
- A16** Completion of character appraisals for all existing and potential Conservation Areas, using appropriate HLC and HEAP data.
- A20** Complete Valley Floor HEAP.
- A23** Completion of HEAP for Roads, Lanes and Tracks.
- A24** Complete field survey of historic Rights of Way.
- A27** Complete Military HEAP.
- A28** Complete Boundaries HEAP.
- A29** Complete Climate Change HEAP.
- A32** Facilitate the supply of HEAP and HLC information to land managers, farm advisers, farmers and funding bodies.
- A33** Facilitate use of HLC information to assess importance of hedgerows affected by hedgerow removal notices.
- A35** Promote conservation of historic farm buildings.
- A39** Promote the retention of significant historic field patterns.
- A40** Support traditional grazing and other appropriate management of valley floor land.
- A45** Advocate maintenance of historic character of rural roads.
- A48** Promote the conservation of historic buildings and their settings where these contribute significantly to the character of HEAP Areas.
- A51** Support the conservation of historic parks, gardens, cemeteries and public open spaces.
- A55** Encourage inclusion of HEAP information in community based strategies and initiatives.
- A56** Promote green transport initiatives for tourist and leisure visits to HEAP Areas.
- A57** Facilitate pedestrian access to all HEAP Areas and HEAP Types.
- L2** Characterisation study of Isle of Wight farmsteads in relation to HEAP Areas.
- L3** Investigate compilation of a Tourism and Recreation HEAP covering holiday centres, camp sites, golf course and allotments.
- L14** Encourage preparation of booklet on historic lanes and tracks.