

**Policy Unit 5C16 Calshot Spit to Inchmery**

**Summary description of Policy Unit**

There are relatively small numbers of individual residential properties and heritage sites of national importance within the largely naturally confined tidal floodplain. The tidal floodplain is restricted within Stanswood Bay and at Inchmery due to the low soft cliffs and topography, but extends inland at Stansore Point, through the Country Park, at Stanswood Valley and at the Darkwater Valley. Leeward of the shoreline and behind existing defences in low lying areas, the frontage is characterised by inter-tidal habitats, saline lagoons and coastal grazing marshes of International, European and national nature conservation importance that support the adjacent and nearby SPA/Ramsar sites; those at Inchmery and within the Darkwater Valley provide a high tide roost site. There are also a couple of National Nature Reserves in Stanswood Bay. The privately owned foreshore and surrounding hinterland, which includes agricultural grade 2, 3 and 5 land in the low-lying valleys, is within the New Forest National Park. The majority of the frontage is cliffed and contains soft cliffs of national geological importance. Despite relatively low rates of cliff and beach erosion the majority of the frontage has privately owned and maintained defences. The regionally important Country Park and its defences are managed and maintained by County Council (which leases the land from private estate); this park provides key site for coastal access within the West Solent. There are cross-Solent submarine infrastructure supplying the Isle of Wight situated immediately landward of the Country Park’s car park. Heritage assets include Luttrell’s Tower, registered Parks and Gardens, listed buildings, monuments, and maritime features.

<b>Final policy options</b>	SMP1 Ref LYM13, 12, 11, 10, 9 Hold the Line
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<b>Epoch 1 From Present Day (up to 2025)</b>	<b>Epoch 2 Medium Term (2025 to 2055)</b>	<b>Epoch 3 Long Term (2055 to 2105)</b>
<b>No Active Intervention</b>	<b>No Active Intervention</b>	<b>No Active Intervention</b>

**Summary of rationale behind final policy options**

Although the majority of the privately owned and largely undeveloped shoreline between Calshot and Inchmery has historically been defended by the majority of the landowners, the policy intention is to allow the undefended and unmanaged shoreline to continue to naturally evolve, which will also continue to provide landscape and amenity benefits within the National Park Area. Coastal change on this frontage will continue to allow the County Council-managed Lepe Country Park to provide an important amenity and recreation area with access to the coast, which is limited within the Western Solent. Increased rates of shoreline erosion on the eastern cliffed shore of the Beaulieu River and within Stanswood Bay will provide a source of mixed sand and shingle to the foreshore. An increase in sediment transport rates may result in wider and higher beach levels and reduce the breach potential to barrier beaches and resulting vulnerability of inundation low-lying land, such as Stansore Point and Stanswood Valley.

The existing regulated tidal exchange at Darkwater Stream will continue to allow the managed transition from freshwater to more saline conditions for environmental enhancement within the site.

Existing privately owned defences may be maintained through permissive development rights of private landowners; the rights of private owners to maintain their defences remain regardless of the SMP policy. Property level flood defences may be appropriate where flood risk will increase in the longer-term.

Rates of erosion and sediment transport within this sector of the West Solent are likely to increase under rising sea levels, particularly in response to potential evolution of Beaulieu River mouth. This may provide increased beach material to stabilise the foreshore and protect the environmentally important areas vulnerable to coastal flooding at Stansore Point and Stanswood Valley. Coastal monitoring will be key to the successful management of this frontage.

Adaptation studies are being considered to determine the medium to long-term options for Lepe Country Park and its facilities. It is likely that a change in defence management in the longer-term may be required.

In terms of mitigation for habitat losses, there are potential sites in the vicinity of Stansore Point and Stanswood Valley that are topographically suitable for creation of inter-tidal habitats, although these sites would require further detailed economic and environmental studies to determine feasibility and could only proceed subject to landowner's consent following further consultations. The landowner for these sites has stated their intention to continue to maintain their defences.

Opportunities for habitat mitigation and compensation have been detailed within the Appropriate Assessment of the final policies.

### **Policy changes through Public Consultation**

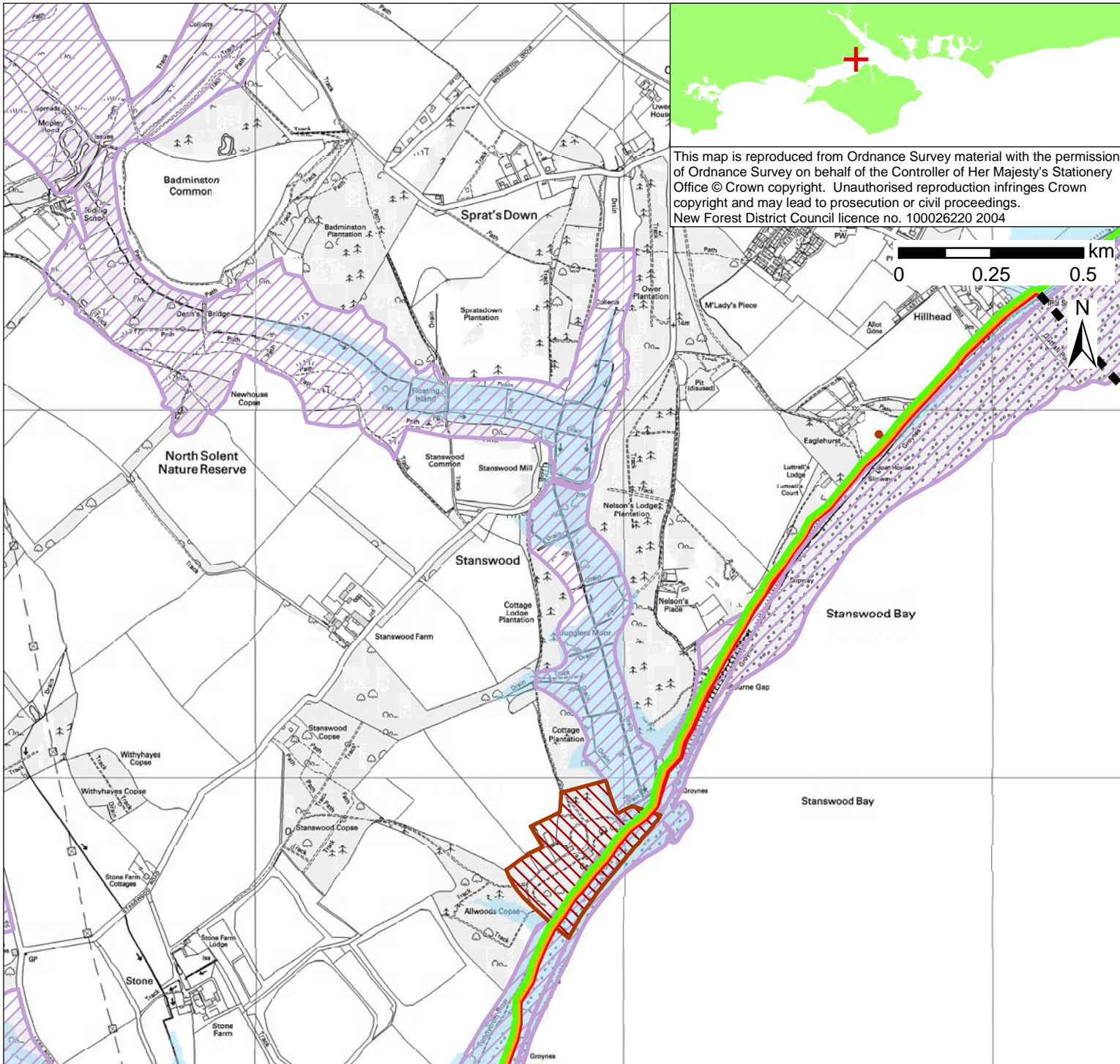
None. Private landowners were concerned that an SMP policy of No Active Intervention would preclude them from continuing or obtaining planning permission to maintain their defences, which is not the intention of the policy. An Information Note for landowners, planners and developers on privately owned coastal defences and coastal planning issues has been produced.

### **Funding**

No defence works identified. Alternative sources of public funding may be available to Local Authority or County Council for adaptive management of the Country Park's recreational amenities, and the Highways Agency for maintenance of Lepe Road. As is currently the case, no public funding would be available for continued maintenance of defences by private owners.

### **Further Studies (identified in Action Plan)**

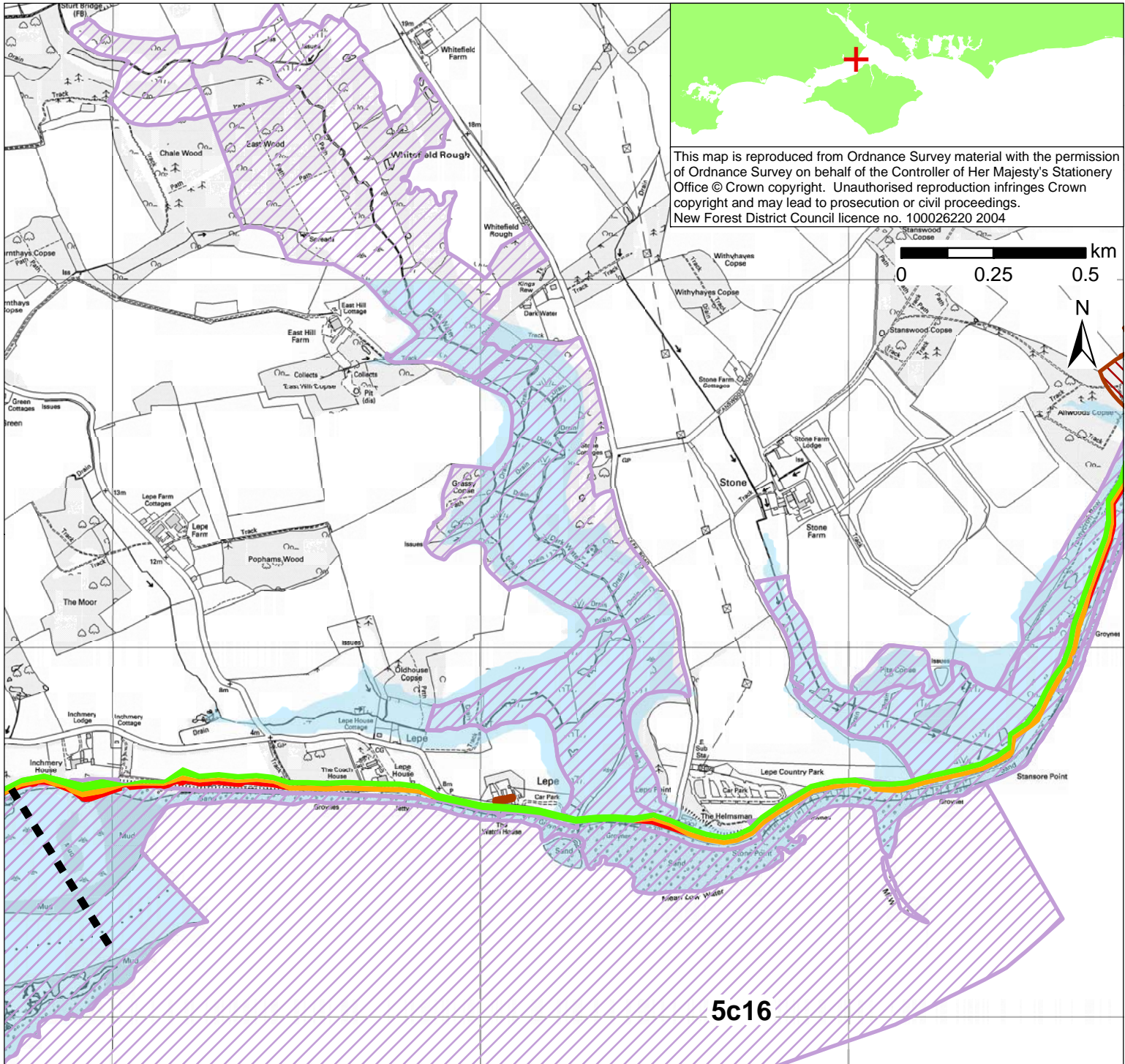
Conclusion of the Western Solent Coastal Defence Strategy  
Solent-wide network of high tide roost site study



**POLICY**

From Present Day (up to 2025):	Medium-Term (2025 to 2055):	Long-Term (2055 to 2105):
No Active Intervention	No Active Intervention	No Active Intervention

- Indicative erosion zone up to 2025
- Indicative erosion zone up to 2055
- Indicative erosion zone up to 2105
- Policy Unit Boundary
- International / National Designations
- Important Heritage Sites
- 2115 Indicative Floodplain (1 in 200 year) provided from PUSH



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