

1 Area and Geography

Indicator	Latest Data
Total area (land area to mean high water)	27.6 square kilometres or 10.6 square miles or 2,761 ha (2019)
Length of coastline	39 km or 24 miles (2020)

Geographical Area

Covering over 27.6 square kilometres (10.6 square miles or 2,761 hectares)¹, Gosport Borough is the twelfth smallest district in England and the smallest in Hampshire. The Borough sits on a peninsula adjacent to Fareham Borough and is surrounded on three sides by the Solent and Portsmouth Harbour, with 39 kilometres (24 miles) of coastline.

The geographical area of the borough is shown in Figure 1.1. The built-up areas of Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent are in brown, open areas are shown in green and large areas of MOD ownership are shown in light grey. The Borough is predominantly urban in character, with over 80% ‘built-on’². There are two main settlements, Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent, which are separated by the Alver Valley. The Borough is densely populated with almost 33 people per hectare, nine times the England average at 3.7.



Figure 1.1: Plan of Gosport Borough

¹ Source: ONS Standard Area Measurements (SAM) 2019. Total extent includes land area to mean high water.

² Made up of 61% discontinuous urban fabric and 20% industrial or commercial units. Source and land cover breakdown available from: A Land Cover Atlas of the UK: <https://doi.org/10.15131/shef.data.5219956>

Land Reclamation

As this map of 20th century land reclamation shows there have been significant changes to Gosport's land area due to its location next to the sea and Portsmouth Harbour. Gosport's position on a peninsula means that land for development is in limited supply and land reclamation has enabled marine businesses to expand.

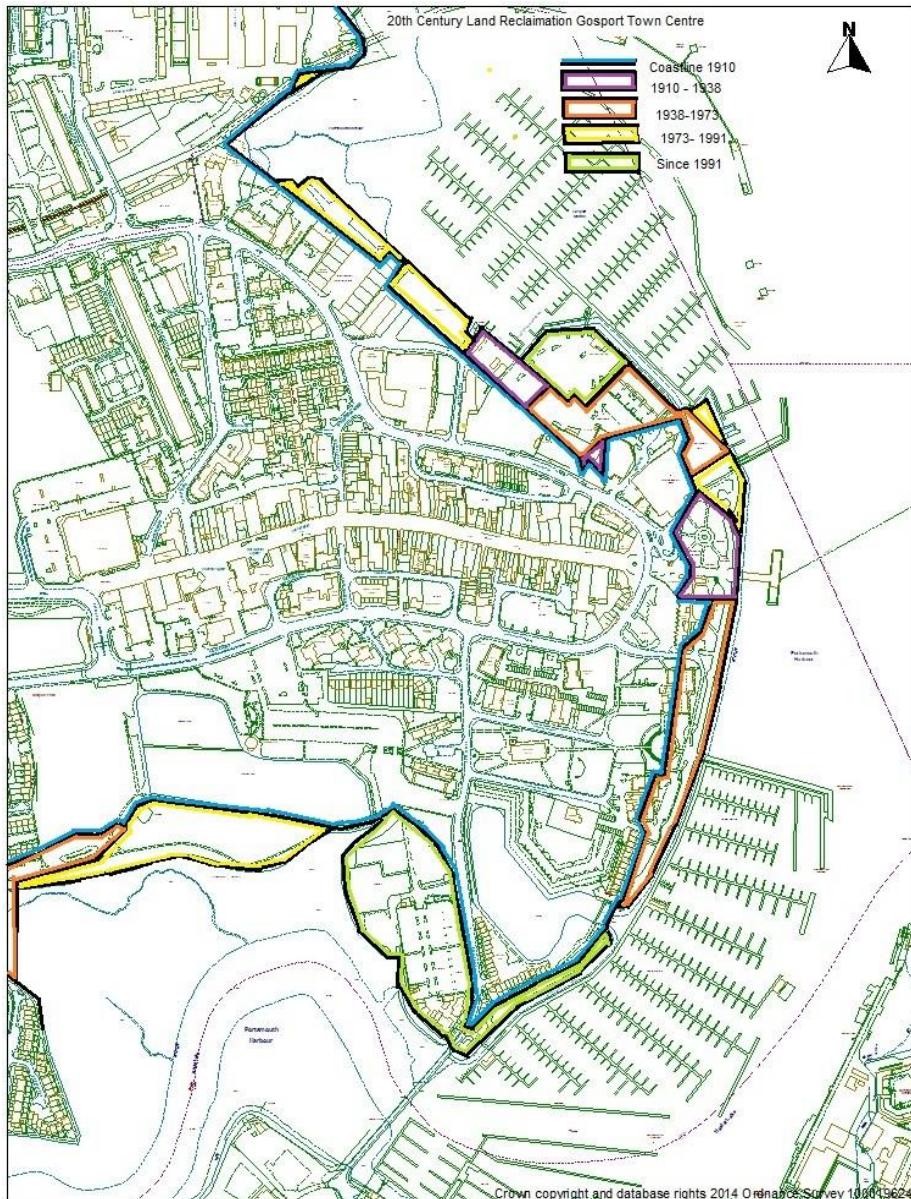


Figure 1.2: 20th Century Land Reclamation

Urban Growth

The built-up area of Gosport Borough grew from the Town of Gosport, the villages of Stoke, Bury, Elson, Grange and Brockhurst and several farms in the 18th century through rapid military expansion in the 19th and early 20th centuries to the largely urban peninsula it is today. Lee-on-the-Solent grew rapidly from the village of Lee and the farms at Cherque and Court Barn through the 20th Century into the seaside town it is today.

Key
Phases of Development

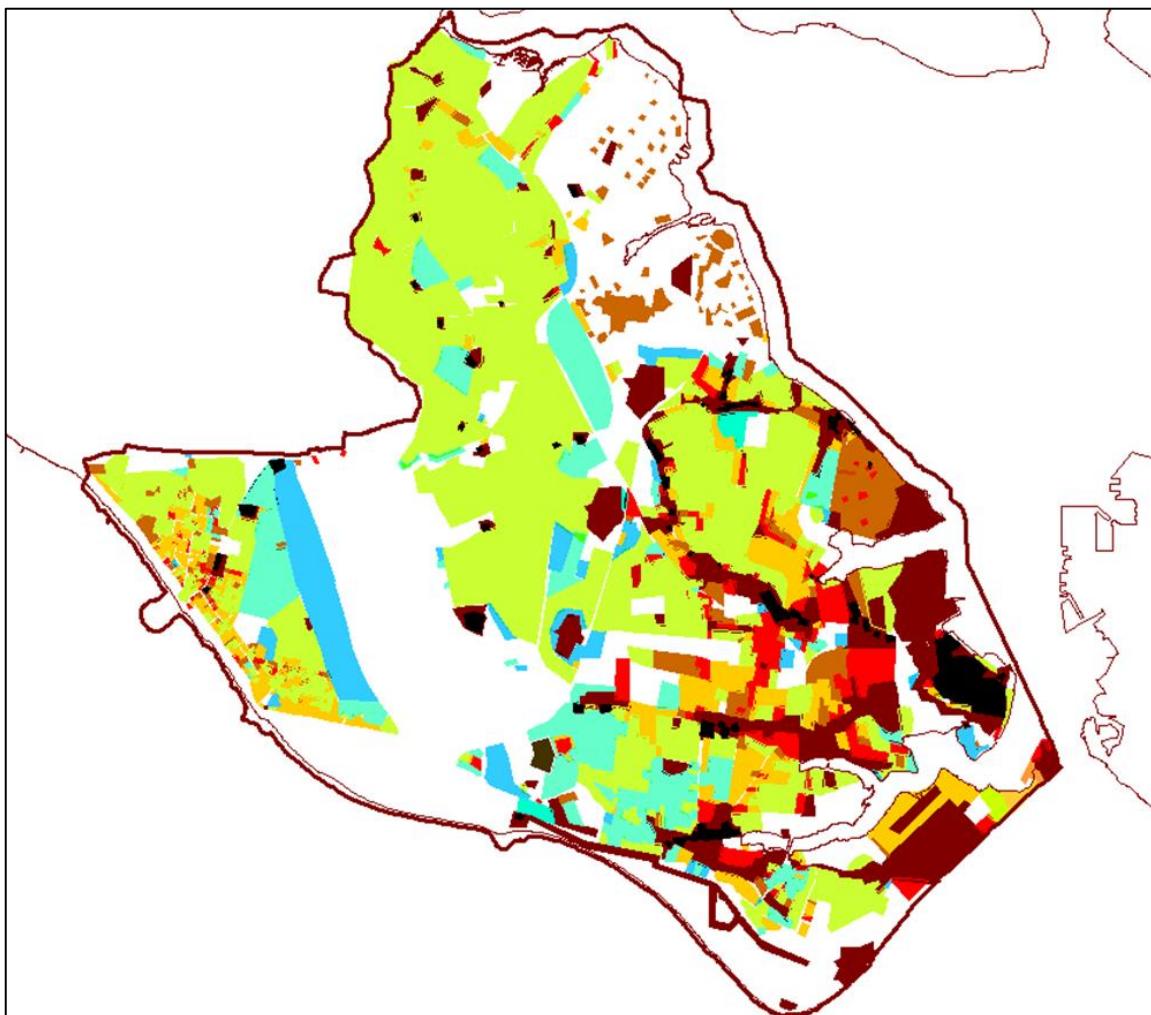
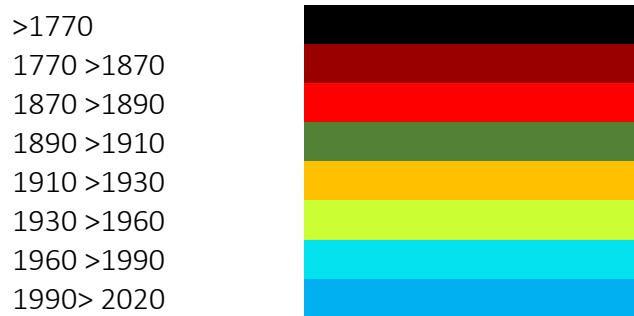


Figure 1.3: Phases of development in Gosport Borough

Ministry of Defence Ownership in Gosport

The MOD has historically been a major landowner in Gosport Borough. Over several years MOD land has been sold with much of it being reused to provide housing and employment development.

In 2006, the MoD disposed of the 153 hectare HMS Daedalus site in Lee-on-the-Solent. The site has undergone significant regeneration focussed around creating significant new job opportunities and high quality housing. In November 2016, the Government announced plans to dispose of HMS Sultan by 2026. More recently, the MoD announced an ‘updated disposal date following detailed work to assess the optimum laydown required to support operational capability’. The MOD updated intention for disposal is now ‘no earlier than 2029’. The Borough Council strongly considers that HMS Sultan should be retained as a major MoD training facility. If the site is disposed of the Council’s preferred option for the long term future of Sultan is to retain and enhance employment opportunities on the site. In 2016, the Government also announced the release of Blockhouse by 2020. A detailed review of Blockhouse to inform a conservation led masterplan is currently being undertaken. To achieve the best advantage for future economic regeneration on the site the Borough Council is working closely with Historic England and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

Figure 1.4 and Figure 1.5 show how MOD land ownership has changed over successive decades.

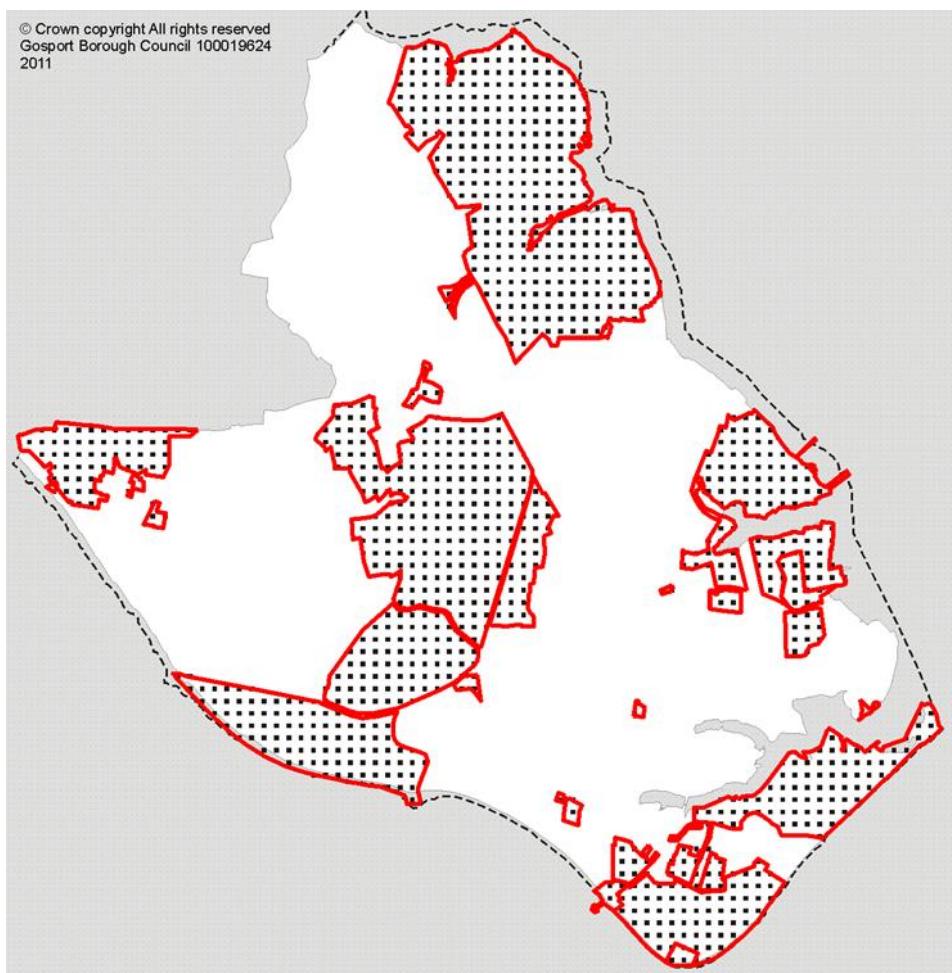


Figure 1.4: MoD ownership in 1968

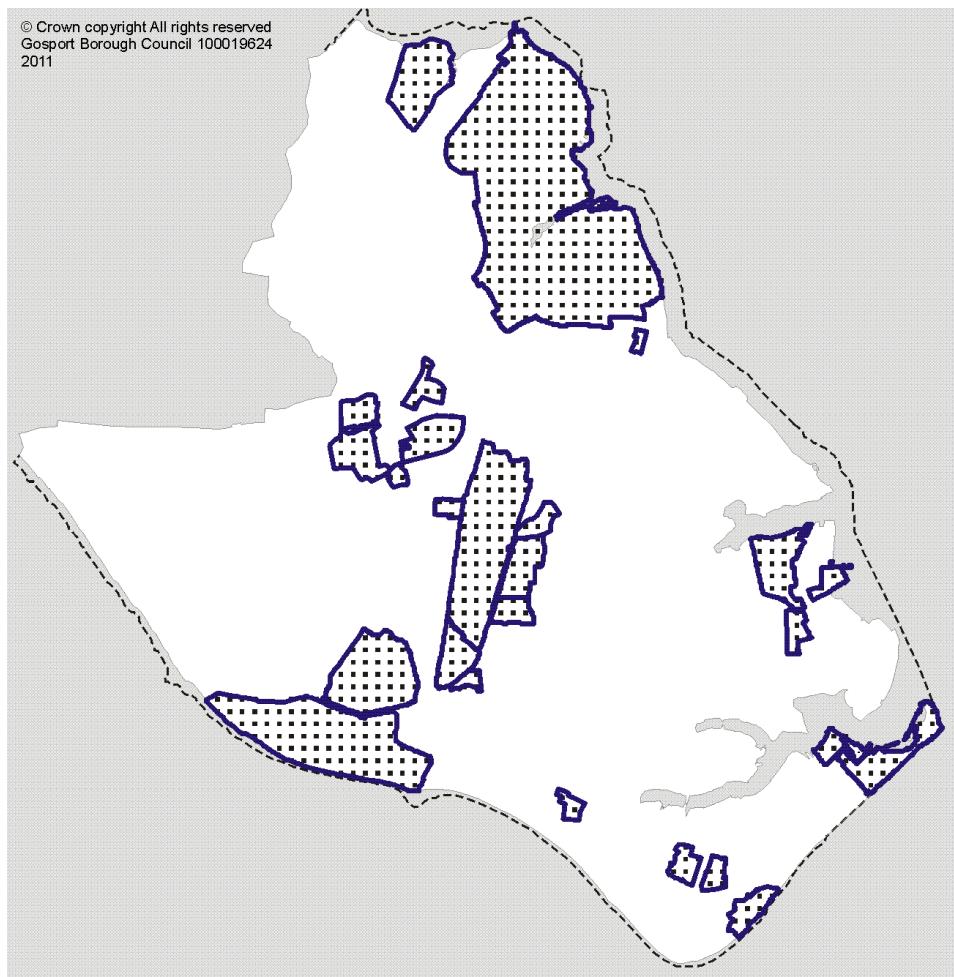


Figure 1.5: MoD ownership in 2011