

# Lymington Conservation Area



The conservation area covers the medieval centre of this historic Solent town and contains over 270 listed structures, ranging from the Parish Church of St Thomas through dwellings of every size to walls, iron railings and lamps. The core of the town is characterised by the wide straight High Street running east-west from the Quay up the hill to the church where it joins St Thomas's Street. The views out of the town are impressive. On both sides of the street the frontages were divided into long narrow tenements known as "burgage plots" which although diminished are still a distinctive feature of the area. A wealth of earlier building history is hidden beneath Georgian facades. Behind the High Street plots a network of lanes and footpaths is bounded by high brick walls including the unusual serpentine or "crinkle-crankle" style.

The first recorded mention of the town is in the Domesday Book as "Lentune" - a name of Celtic and Saxon origins which suggests an earlier settlement. The "New Borough" - based on the High Street - was one of the earliest planned settlements of the post-Conquest period, created by Charter some time between 1184 and 1216. Like many ports it was a centre for piracy and smuggling with hideouts in many of the 45 inns in the town. Lymington was a major centre for the salt industry until the end of the 18th century when it was overtaken by competition from Cheshire rock salt. Over the centuries there have been six Town Halls, two of which occupied sites in the middle of the High Street roadway. The market was first mentioned in a charter of the 1250s and still continues on Saturdays bringing crowds of visitors. Today Lymington is a ferry port for the Isle of Wight and is a popular tourist centre as well as a mecca for yachtsmen.

These are some of the things that make Lymington special - they need to be looked after:

- **History**

The historic, unchanged street pattern dating to the 13th century.

The layout of long, narrow medieval burgage plots and lanes - Madeira Walk and The Tins.

- **Buildings**

The scale and proportions of Georgian buildings and their lesser rear outbuildings aligned along the burgage plots including the walls which separate them.

The humble scale of the terraces, listed eg Stanford Row and Southampton Road, and unlisted eg Emsworth Road.

The typical Lymington brick is a strong simple stock brick with a plum coloured element in it, although in the main streets there are more painted brick or stucco elevations.

Mathematical tiles often get confused with yellow bricks eg 32 St Thomas's Street.

The wide range of decorative detail in the shopping streets. Three-sided canted bay windows, sometimes rising through two or three storeys are an especially common feature.

- **Archaeology**

The built archaeology - the remains of medieval timber-framed buildings hidden behind later brick facades like the jettied timber-framed structure at 26 High Street.

- **Landscape/Townscape**

Network of narrow alleys and courtyards.

Rural feel to lanes south of High Street with crinkle-crankle walls.

Traditional surfacing materials eg Quay Hill setts, stone paths in the churchyard.

The rhythm and harmony created by buildings of different ages, heights, styles, colours and materials, alongside each other but with a consistent scale.

Some grander 18th century townhouses have marvellous rear gardens within their original walled enclosures eg Chawton House, Bellevue House.

- **Setting**

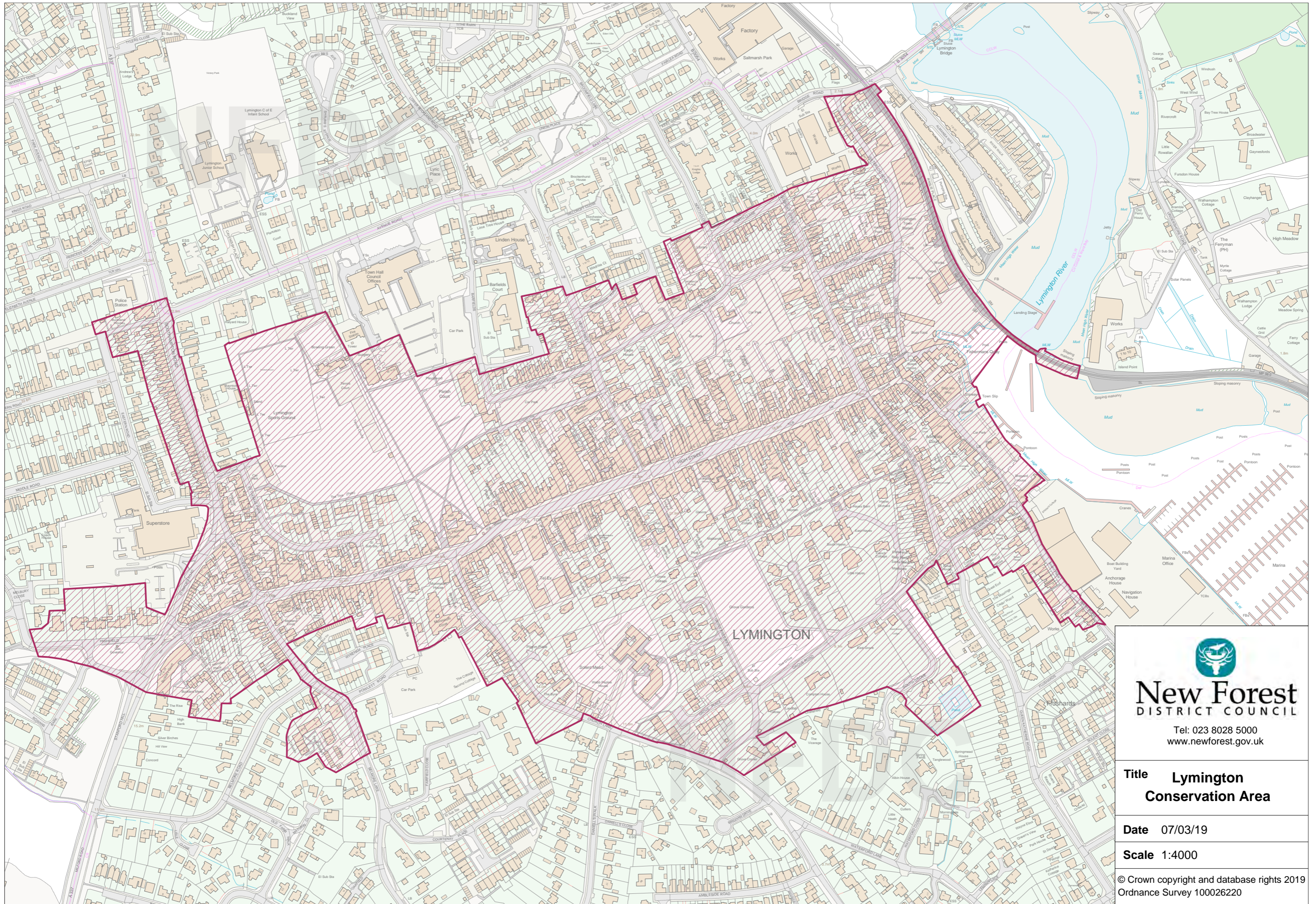
Skyline view of buildings seen from Walhampton as the Borough climbs the hill is critical.

Views of Walhampton, the Solent and the Isle of Wight from the High Street.

- **Potential for enhancement**

Site at junction of Belmore Lane and St Thomas's Street is one obvious opportunity.

The Quay is an important asset to the town which would benefit from environmental improvements to visitor facilities such as the parking area, surface treatment and seating.



**New Forest**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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