

Wootton Creek

Summary Description

Wootton Creek is situated on the north west coast of the Isle of Wight. Modern use of the creek is dominated by the terminal for the Portsmouth ferry. However, extensive archaeological investigations in the area have revealed that human use of the creek spans thousands of years.

Sea Surface

This small tidal creek is used by a number of local craft and is popular with leisure yachts. The main channel is set out by buoys and there are a number of craft moored in the creek.

The dominant maritime activity is the regular ferry service which connects the Island to Portsmouth. The terminal is based on the western side of the creek mouth.

The mill pond is home to a variety of bird species.

Seabed Surface

The area was subject to intensive inter tidal archaeological investigations during the 1990's. This revealed evidence from the Mesolithic period through to modern day, a range of structure on the foreshore included fish traps and shipbuilding evidence. Artefacts believed to have been dropped during unloading of vessels from the Roman period were also encountered.

Further towards the mouth of the creek there are sandbanks which pose a threat to navigation. The shallow inter tidal and sand bank areas are utilised for shell fishing.

There are 10 wrecks charted as being within this area, this includes one dive site= the *Ibis* a fishing vessel sunk in 1984.

Seabed Subsurface

One of the most significant archaeological features of the area are the submerged prehistoric landscape deposits which lie within the creek bed beneath the inter tidal deposits. Peat layers, associated landscapes and human occupation evidence can be located here. These prehistoric landscape deposits are linked the development of the Old Solent river into a fully marine tidal waterway. Such deposits are revealing important evidence of sea level and climate change and the environment used by early human populations.

Coastal

The coastal landscape includes small settlements and creek side buildings which support a range of maritime industries. There is a sailing school at mouth, opposite Fishbourne. Further upstream the creek is surrounded by a more rural and wooded environment.

A tide mill once stood at the head of the creek, the mill dam is the causeway which now carried a road.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of Wootton Creek cannot be understated, the area was subject to intensive inter tidal archaeological investigations during the 1990's. Remains from all periods of human history have been located in this area, this applies to the coastal, inter tidal and marine zones.

References & Links

Gosden, Hila. *A history of Wootton Bridge*. Newport: Burnt House, c2002.

Snow, Victoria. *Wootton Bridge and Whippingham on the Isle of Wight*. Ilfracombe: Stockwell, 1986.

Wootton Bridge Parish Council - <http://www.woottonbridge.com/>

HWTMA: Wootton Quarr - <http://www.hwtma.org.uk/projects/wootton/index.htm>



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Images



HWTMA Photo Number	WQ – B02
Character Area	Wootton Creek
Description	Wootton Quarr – shallow water out to sea
Photographer:	
Date Photographed:	



IoE number:	411110
Character Area:	Wootton Creek
Description:	Wootton Quarr Abbey
Photographer:	Mr A. B. Cooke
Date Photographed:	22 July 2003
Date listed:	18 May 1972
Date of last amendment:	18 May 1972
Grade	II



HWTMA Photo Number	WQ – B12
Character Area	Wootton Creek
Description	Wootton Quarr – view from cave
Photographer:	
Date Photographed:	
Date listed:	