

While the term "Solent River" technically refers to a now-extinct Pleistocene waterway, modern "strategic appraisals" for the Solent region focus on the **Solent Strait** and its connecting river catchments (such as the Itchen, Hamble, and Test). These appraisals address three primary pillars: economic prosperity, coastal defense, and environmental restoration. [1]

1. Economic Strategy: Solent 2050

The [Solent Growth and Prosperity Strategy \(SGPS\)](#) is the leading roadmap for the sub-region, developed by local authorities in Portsmouth, Southampton, and the Isle of Wight. [1, 2]

- **Vision:** To become Europe's most exciting maritime region by 2050, pioneering clean-growth technology.
- **The Solent Freeport:** A core strategic initiative designed to attract investment and drive productivity through tax relief and simplified customs, focusing on "clean growth".
- **Priority Sectors:** Advanced manufacturing, clean energy, creative industries, and life sciences. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

2. Coastal & Flood Risk Management

The **North Solent Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)** provides the strategic framework for managing 100 years of coastal erosion and flooding risks. [1, 2]

- **Strategy Types:** Includes "Hold the Line" (maintaining existing defenses) and "Managed Realignment" (allowing the shoreline to move naturally).
- **Key Projects:** Ongoing studies include the *Western Solent Coastal Defence Strategy* and specific river-based strategies for the *Itchen* and *Hamble*.
- **River Management:** Soft engineering approaches, such as planting vegetation to absorb floodwater, are prioritized over artificial structures where possible to improve sustainability. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

3. Environmental & Water Appraisal

The Solent's natural state is currently classified as "unfavourable" due to excess nutrient pollution. [1]

- **Nutrient Neutrality:** New developments must prove they will not increase nutrient levels (nitrates/phosphates) in the Solent and Itchen River to prevent damaging algal mats.
- **Nature-Based Solutions:** Strategies like the [Bird Aware Solent](#) use mitigation measures and "rangers" to reduce human disturbance on wintering birds.
- **Water Supply:** Southern Water's strategic plan includes building sewage effluent recycling plants (e.g., at Sandown) to ensure future water security. [1, 2, 3]

Strategic Transport & Infrastructure

The [Solent and Sussex Coast Strategic Programme Outline Case](#) (2023) appraises transport corridors to better connect the New Forest through to East Sussex. It focuses on enhancing rail and road links to support the region's role as a global export gateway. [1, 2, 3]

Are you interested in a specific **location** along the Solent (like Southampton or Portsmouth) or a particular **sector** like maritime transport or environmental conservation?

AI responses may include mistakes. [Learn more](#)