

Eling Conservation Area



Once the centre of a large parish, Eling owes the survival of its rural setting on a hill overlooking Southampton Water to its separation from Totton by Eling Creek with its causeway and centuries old toll bridge. Its status as a conservation area acts as a defence against urban encroachment from Totton and Hounslow. The contrast between the environments within and outside the area could hardly be more stark. The footpaths around the village and Hartley Water, and Goatee Beach on Southampton Water, provide important recreational areas for locals. A long straggling settlement of farms and cottages, interspersed with more imposing buildings, stretches up Eling Hill from the Creek to Cole's Farm. The historic buildings include three which are listed Grade II* - the Tide Mill, St Mary's Church and the Old Rectory - as well as several attractive unlisted buildings. The tidal waters of Eling Creek, which provided a good site for mills for centuries, is today home to the yacht club.

The name Eling has Celtic origins which suggests that this area has been occupied for a very long time. In the 9th century King Aethelwulf, father of Alfred the Great, gave land for a burial ground and a church at Eling Hill, and the Domesday Book, in 1086, mentions two mills and a church here. For hundreds of years Eling was a busy port and in the 18th century there were plans for a canal link to Salisbury but this came to nothing. During the 19th century Totton expanded right to the edge of the Creek, changing the character of the north bank of the creek completely.

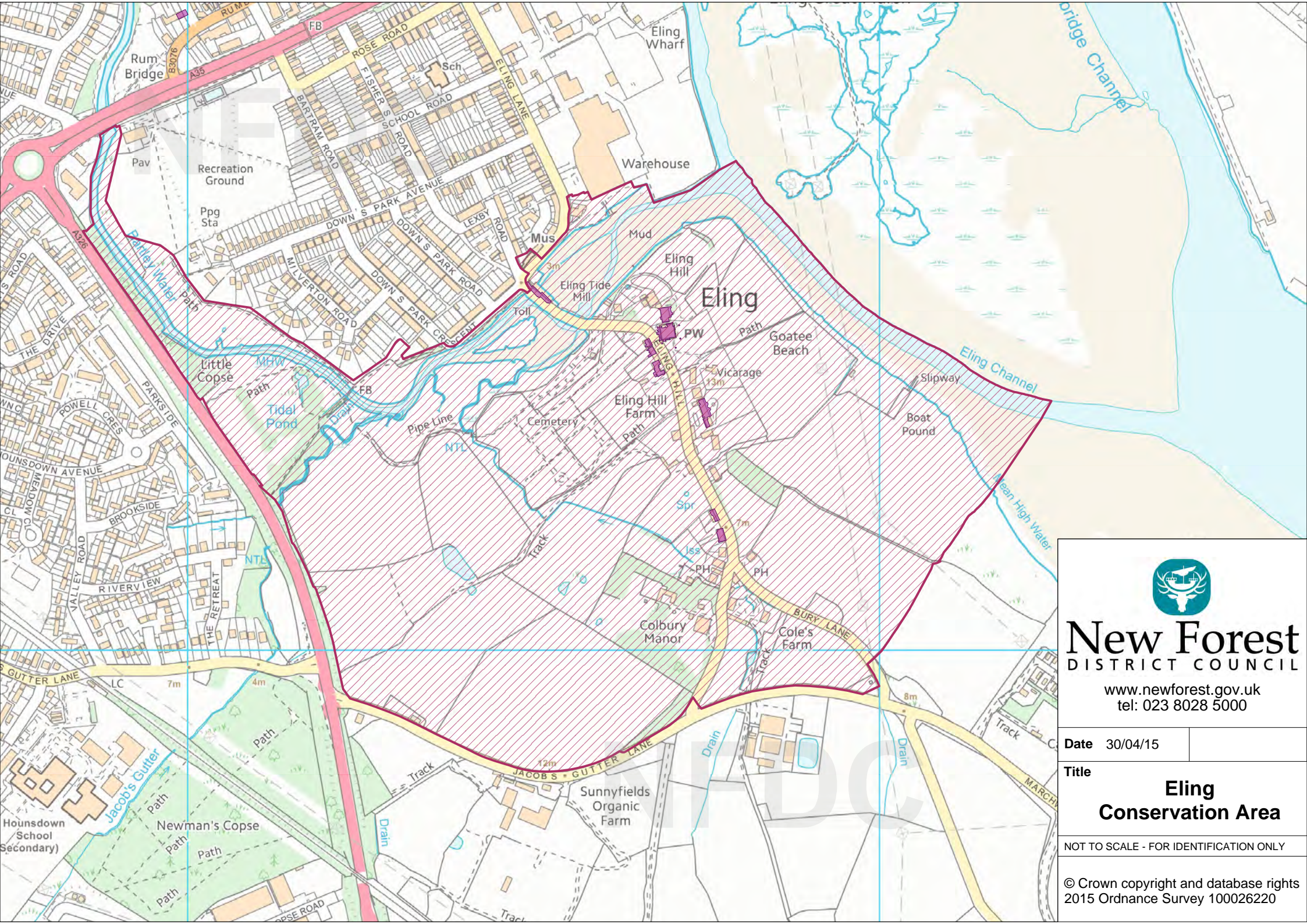
These are key features in the conservation area:

- **Eling Tide Mill** is the only surviving tide mill in the world still regularly producing stoneground flour. Tide mills are usually built on causeways across inlets of tidal estuaries which form both a bridge and a dam. The tide fills the estuary behind the dam and the water is held back by sluice gates until it is released through the mill race to operate the machinery for about five hours each tide. In 1382 William Wykeham granted Eling Tide Mill to his newly founded College in Winchester as part of its endowment. It remained the property of the College until 1975 when it was bought by New Forest District Council and restored by volunteers.
- The first **church** was replaced by a stone building in the 11th century. The ashlar tower dates from Tudor times and is three storeys high with battlements. Although most of the church dates from between the Norman period and the 14th century much of this is hidden by the restoration work of Benjamin Ferrey 1863-5. The churchyard is full of interesting grave stones from the last 300 years, twelve of which are listed.

- **Bartley Water** forms an important open space. This tidal area of salt marsh and reed beds is a wilderness haven for wildlife. Although wooden walkways have been introduced and a cycleway link to Hounslow is planned, low key management allows a natural habitat to flourish alongside.
- **Cole's Farm** is an important survival of the rural landscape. The farmhouse is a fine example of early 19th century architecture with original sash windows with no 'horns' and rubbed brickwork over the ground floor windows. The adjoining contemporary farm buildings grouped around the yard are marked on the tithe map of 1843.
- The **high brick wall to the Old Rectory plot** is a prominent feature of the narrow lane. Set into the wall is a Victorian post box. The wall contrasts with the hedgerows of the rest of the conservation area.
- The view to the north is dominated by the industrial area of Eling Quay. The **Anchor public house and a small area of open space** are included within the conservation area. Future development here should enhance the river frontage and provide additional public access along the waterfront.

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

- **History**
The tide mill and causeway, preserving its feeling of a frontier - almost a 'border crossing'
- **Buildings**
The Old Rectory is partly faced with mathematical tiles
Brickwork, mainly Flemish bond with some header bond
Sash windows which are mainly 16 small panes
Mix of clay tiles and 19th century slate
Timber-framed and brick agricultural buildings at Eling Hill Farm and Cole's Farm
- **Landscape**
The tidal landscape of Bartley Water
The distinct grouping of buildings at intervals along the country lane
The high brick walls and hedges which reinforce the rural feel
The field paths
- **Setting**
View upstream from the causeway, across the reed beds
View north across the Creek to the old area of Eling Quay beside the Anchor
Views across Southampton Water and down Southampton Water towards Marchwood
- **Potential for enhancement**
Although out of the conservation area, the warehousing and container storage have considerable impact on it and every effort should be made when redevelopment takes place to ensure an attractive outlook here.



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Title
Eling Conservation Area

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