



Boundary replacement with fencing

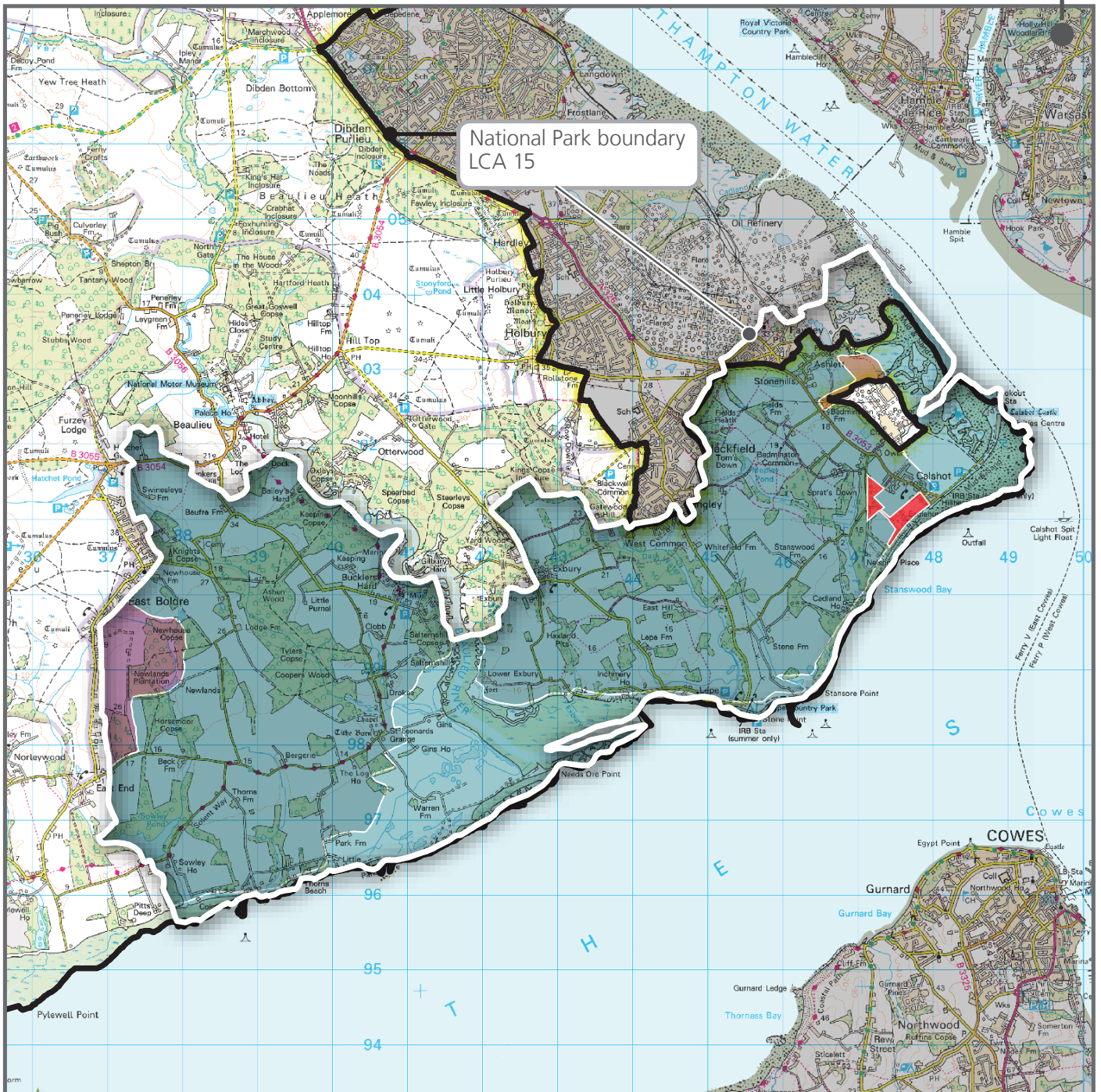
LCA 15: NORTH WEST SOLENT ESTATES

Location of LCA in the National Park








Component landscape types within LCA 15

Area in shadow- outside National Park



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 Not to scale

-  1. Coastal Fringe
-  3. Coastal Plain Estates – large informal enclosures
-  5. Heath Associated Estates
-  21. Historic Parkland

All of this LCA falls within the New Forest National Park, apart from a small area containing Fawley Power Station.

A. LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

Key landscape characteristics

- Gently undulating coastal plain with a heath character.
- Drained by minor tributaries within marshy valleys into the Solent where narrow beaches characterise the waterfront.
- Enclosed, well managed agricultural landscape of large regular Parliamentary fields divided by ditch and bank hedge boundaries with gaps reinforced by post and wire.
- Hedgerow oaks are a feature.
- Large arable fields close to the coast from which there are views over the Solent to the Isle of Wight.
- Clusters of attractive red brick farmhouses.
- Weatherboarding is a feature on agricultural buildings.
- Traditional houses characterised by buff bricks from local clay pits.
- Large estates with country houses, estate cottages and gate houses, such as Cadland House, Lower Exbury House and Sowley House.
- Coastal grazing marshes, shingle spits and saline lagoons are habitats of national and international importance.
- Calshot Castle, Calshot Activities Centre and Fawley power station are landmarks at the mouth of Southampton Water.
- Survival of Open Forest grazing on the foreshore.
- Certain locations acknowledged as being some of the most tranquil parts of the National Park.

Component landscape types

The main landscape types found within this LCA, in the New Forest National Park, are:

1. Coastal Fringe
3. Coastal Plain Estates – Large Informal Enclosures
5. Heath Associated Estates
21. Historic Parkland

Key positive landscape attributes

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong mosaic of mixed agricultural fields of parliamentary enclosure, with small areas of irregular assorted fields in places. ■ Frequent hedgerow and roadside oaks. ■ Blocks of ancient woodland and coastal pine woods, linked by important hedgerow networks. ■ Coastal habitats including grazing marshes, shingle spits and saline lagoons. Narrow beaches and low sandy cliffs at Lepe. ■ Wayside commons, wide verges and ancient wood pasture grazed by free-roaming commoners' livestock. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marshy valleys containing valued wetland habitats draining to the Solent. ■ Designed landscapes with estate buildings. ■ Traditional local vernacular of buff bricks. ■ Weatherboarding on agricultural buildings. ■ Small villages and scattered farms linked by winding rural lanes. ■ Prominent landmark of Calshot Castle at the mouth of Southampton Water. ■ Views from the coast over the Solent to the Isle of Wight. ■ Tranquil nature of much of the area. |
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Relevant designations relating to positive landscape attributes

Key landscape features	Relevant designations
Strong mosaic of mixed agricultural fields of parliamentary enclosure, with small areas of irregular assarted fields in places.	N/A
Frequent hedgerow and roadside oaks.	N/A
Blocks of ancient woodland and coastal pine woods, linked by important hedgerow networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Many of the ancient woodlands are SINCs.
Coastal habitats including grazing marshes, shingle spits and saline lagoons. Narrow beaches and low sandy cliffs at Lepe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Large sections of the coast are designated as Ramsar, SSSI, NNR, SPA and SAC.
Wayside commons, wide verges and ancient wood pasture grazed by free-roaming commoners' livestock.	N/A
Marshy valleys containing valued wetland habitats draining to the Solent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Many valley areas are within the North Solent SSSI and NNR. ■ Sowley Pond and its surrounds are designated as SSSI, Ramsar, SAC and SPA.
Designed landscapes with estate buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exbury House and Cadland House Gardens are listed on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.
Small villages and scattered farms linked by winding rural lanes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exbury and Buckler's Hard Conservation Areas lie within the LCA. ■ Ashlett Creek Conservation Area falls partly within the LCA.
Traditional local vernacular of buff bricks; weatherboarding on agricultural buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exbury and Buckler's Hard Conservation Areas lie within the LCA. ■ Ashlett Creek Conservation Area falls partly within the LCA. ■ There are a number of Listed Buildings in the LCA.
Prominent landmark of Calshot Castle at the mouth of Southampton Water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calshot Castle is a Grade 1 Listed Building.
Views from the coast over the Solent to the Isle of Wight.	N/A

B. LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Current condition

Landscape structure: The traditional origins of this landscape have been transformed over the centuries through large-scale parliamentary reorganisation – the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type is characterised by large, intensively farmed arable fields, although late medieval wavy fields remain in places. Today, hedgerow loss through intensification, and the introduction of conifer species into the area’s ancient woodlands, have further diluted the ancient structure of the landscape – although the presence of strong, hedged field patterns in places, along with pre-1810 blocks of woodland, residual areas of common land, traditional buff brick settlements, parkland estates and historic salterns acting as reminders of the landscape’s historic development and links to the New Forest. The area’s intimate river valleys and large expanses of coastal habitats within the Coastal Fringe landscape type, contribute to this landscape’s sense of place. Characteristic long views are disrupted in the east by the dominance of the chimney at Fawley power station, outside the National Park, on the immediate horizon. Electricity pylons linked to this industry also break up the structure of the landscape in places.

Landscape elements: The overall condition of the positive features that characterise this coastal landscape is good – with quiet, unmarked lanes lined by frequent oak trees linking settlements and buildings displaying strong local vernacular styles. Ancient woodlands link to roadside oaks, although these woodlands are suffering from a lack of traditional management in parts, along with planting of conifer species impacting on their biodiversity value. Although this is a landscape that has long been associated with mixed farming, intensive arable cultivation and pig farming has led to a further amalgamation of fields, and remaining hedgerows are often gappy, unmanaged or replaced by post-and-wire fencing. A large Solar Array has been constructed representing a new use for the land for a 25 year period. Sand and gravel extraction at Badminton Farm is also a major feature in the landscape. Engineered flood defences along the Coastal Fringe have impacted on landscape quality, whilst recreational pressure along the coast, with associated demand for increased signage and other facilities such as car parks, has an impact on levels of tranquillity.

Landscape change

Key issues and trends

- Hedgerows are unmanaged and gappy or have been lost or replaced by post and wire fencing weakening the landscape’s field patterns and visual/ecological links to the New Forest.
- Continued predominance of arable production and other intensive land uses, contrast with the pastoral or rough grazing character of the wider National Park.
- Past replacement of deciduous woodland with conifer plantations; introduce ‘hard’ edges to ancient woodland blocks (in the Coastal Plain Estates and Heath Associated Estates landscape types).
- Changing pests and diseases leading to decline or death of certain tree species.
- Spread of exotic species such as rhododendron into the areas ancient semi-natural woodlands, resulting in a change in character and decrease in their biodiversity value (in the Coastal Plain Estates and Heath Associated Estates landscape types).
- Recreational pressures – including high levels of visitor traffic in the summer months impacting on tranquillity (e.g. at Buckler’s Hard in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type) and leading to the presence of over-engineered facilities (e.g. tarmac roads and car parking with heavy signage at Calshot, car parking at Lepe Country Park in the Coastal Fringe landscape type).
- Close proximity of industry, such as Fawley Power Station, detracting from the otherwise peaceful and tranquil feel of the landscape. Electricity pylons intrude into the landscape in parts (in the Coastal Plain Estates and Coastal Fringe landscape types).
- Pressure for urban and industrial development, particularly where land abuts the National Park boundary (in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type).
- The increased threat of rising sea levels, with engineered flood defences impacting upon the scenic coastal landscape and future potential loss of coastal habitats and features through coastal squeeze (affecting the Coastal Fringe landscape type).

C. LANDSCAPE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (LQOS) / STRATEGY

Vision

A scenic and varied coastal landscape backed by intimate woodlands and well-managed mixed agricultural land. A strong pattern of parliamentary and large wavy fields is enclosed by thick hedgerows with frequent oak trees, linking to coastal pine woods and blocks of ancient woodland. These are reminders of the landscape's historic development and links to the New Forest. Historic settlements with characteristic red brick buildings are set within a quiet rural landscape including well-managed parkland estates and wayside commons in the east grazed by free-roaming livestock, linked by quiet tree-lined lanes. The area is fringed by a scenic and diverse coastal landscape linking to important wetlands stretching inland, with long views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. Calshot Castle remains a key landmark feature on the coast at the mouth of Southampton Water. Parts of the area are amongst the most tranquil in the National Park and require careful visitor management to ensure that the sense of remoteness is retained.

Overall Landscape Strategy

The priority in this landscape character area is to **protect** the positive landscape attributes valued within it. This will require active protection.

This should be accompanied by a strategy to **manage** the landscape to improve those attributes that are in poorer condition to improve overall quality.

Management guidelines number
(as per following table LCA 15)

Future landscape management guidelines

Field patterns and boundary features

1. Protect the landscape's strong field patterns (including irregular assarts), bounded by a well managed and intact hedgerow network.
2. Protect important roadside oak trees and plant new specimens to preserve these important landscape features for the future.

Agricultural land use

3. Protect the landscape's traditional pastoral character, particularly that associated with areas of historic field patterns.
4. Protect and encourage the traditional grazing of the area's wayside commons and verges by free-roaming commoners' livestock.

Forestry and woodlands

5. Manage the area's woodlands including the coastal pine woods, ensuring a healthy stock of trees of varying age ranges. Use traditional management techniques such as coppicing where appropriate, removing areas of rhododendron incursion where it is an issue.

6. Plan for a gradual restructuring of conifer plantations with broadleaf species with the aim of restoring the characteristic species found within the area's semi-natural woodlands.

Development and settlement edge

7. Refer to the Conservation Area Appraisals for Exbury, Buckler's Hard and Ashlett Creek for details on historic landscape setting, layout and plan form of the historic settlements, and architectural styles, materials and detailing of buildings within these settlements.
8. Protect the traditional, tranquil character of the area's rural road system including minimising inappropriate road signage and street lighting and ensuring engineering works are sympathetic to the rural character.

Historic landscapes and features

9. Ensure the area's designed landscapes are appropriately managed, for example through livestock grazing and active woodland management.

Coast

10. Refer to the North East Solent Shoreline Management Plan to ensure measures are in place to plan for future rises in sea level and coastal retreat, including managed realignment and habitat re-creation in the long term to ensure the conservation of internationally important coastal habitats.
11. Enhance the relationship between land and sea – including the protection of key views.

Tranquillity and views

12. Protect and enhance existing levels of tranquillity. Consider the strategic planting of woodland to screen views of the industry at Fawley, where this does not impact on the open character of the landscape.

Summary table LCA 15 showing landscape issues and guidelines by Landscape Type

Landscape type	Summary of issue	Management guidelines (number)
Coastal Plain Estates	Field amalgamation diluting historic field patterns.	1
	Unmanaged, gappy hedgerows and replacement with fencing.	1,2
	Intensive arable production.	3
	Conifer planting in semi-natural woodlands.	5
	Verges becoming overgrown if grazing not sustained.	4
	Prominence of industry at Fawley on the skyline.	11,12
	Development pressure, particularly where land is on the edge of the National Park.	7
Coastal Fringe	Intensive arable production.	3
	Prominence of industry at Fawley on the skyline.	11,12
	Engineered flood defences and future threat of coastal squeeze.	10
Heath Associated Estates	Conifer planting in semi-natural woodlands.	6
	Spread of exotic species in ancient woodlands.	5
Historic Parkland	No identified issues.	N/A
ALL – LANDSCAPE-WIDE ISSUES	Development pressure (National Park-wide issue).	8

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LCA 15: NORTH WEST SOLENT ESTATES

Prominent view of Fawley Power Station



Boundaries replaced by fencing

