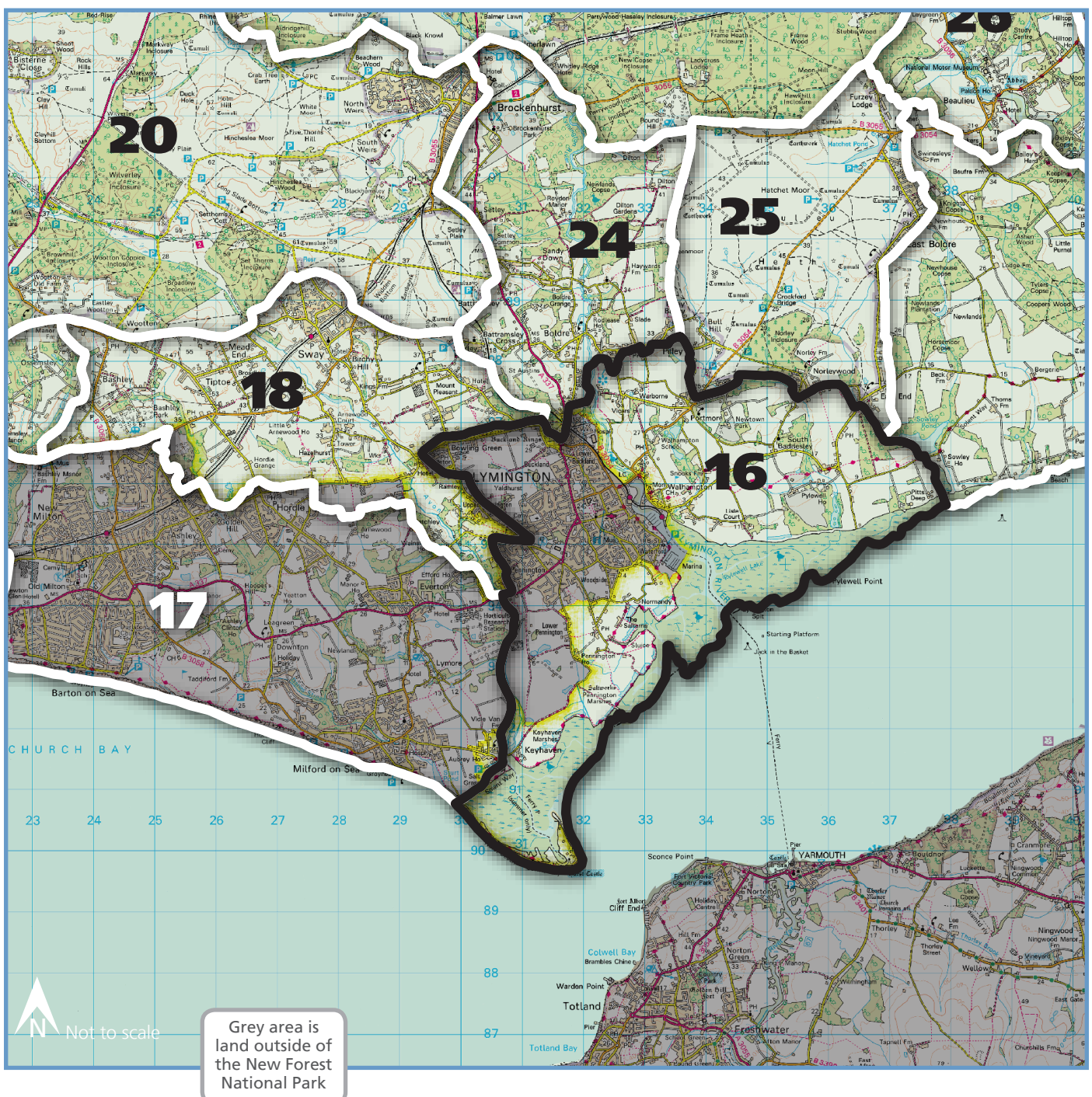




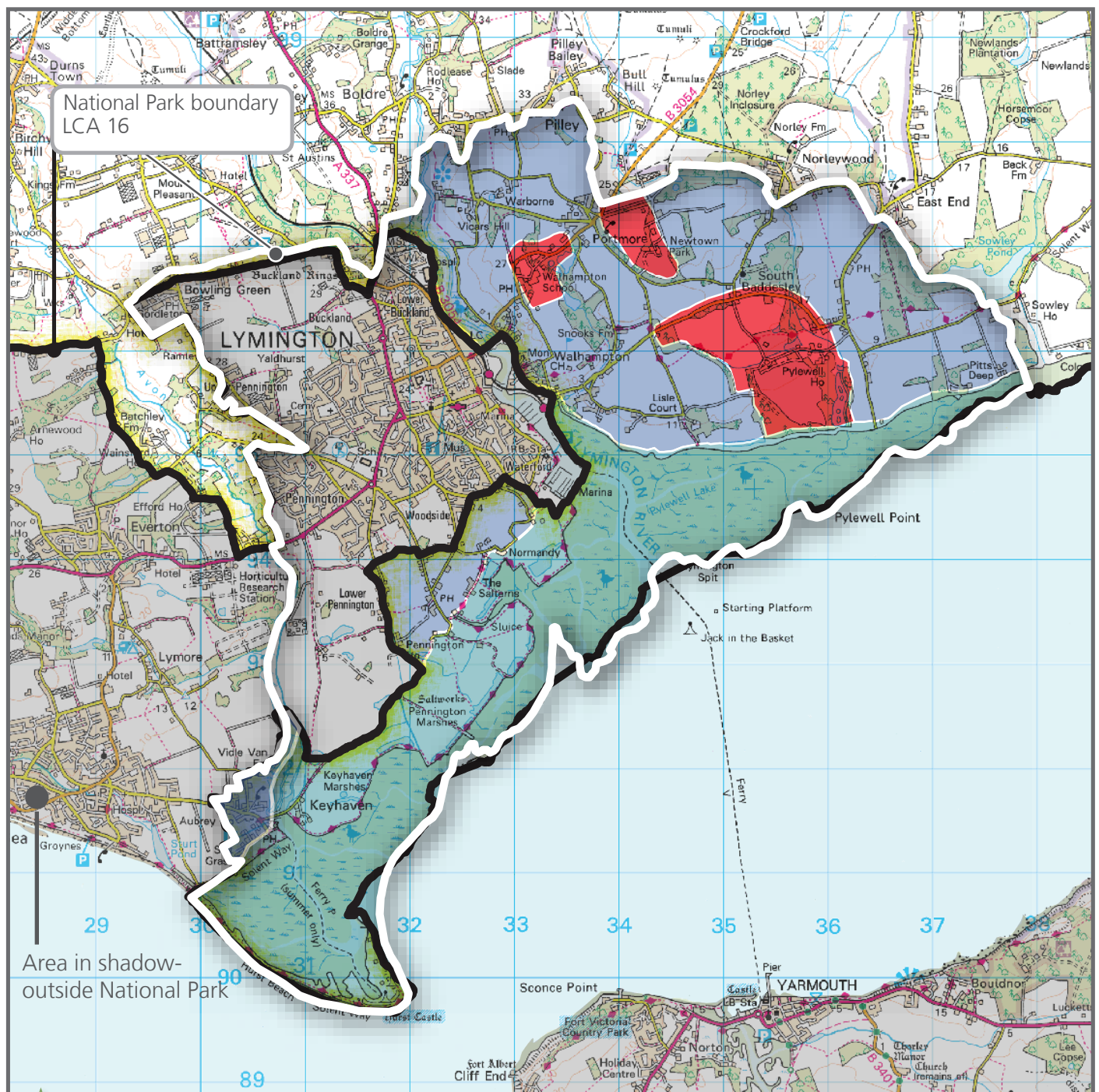
View across the Pennington Marshes

LCA 16: LYMINGTON AND PENNINGTON COASTAL PLAIN

Location of LCA in the National Park



Component landscape types within LCA 16



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The New Forest National Park boundary excludes the town of Lymington.

The settlement of Lymington and its marina fall outside the National Park boundary.

A. LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

Key landscape characteristics

- Gently undulating coastal plain at the mouth of the Lymington River.
- Coastal grazing marshes, shingle spits and saline lagoons, which are habitats of national and international importance, characterise the waterfront.
- Enclosed, well managed agricultural landscape of medium to large regular fields divided by ditch and bank hedge boundaries with hedgerow oaks and gaps reinforced by post and wire.
- 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 farm buildings with ornate red brick barns.
- Large estates with country houses estate cottages and gate houses, some now used as hotels or schools.
- Lymington forms a central focus with marinas and boat yards along the Lymington Estuary.
- Hurst Castle and lighthouse are coastal landmarks at the end of Hurst Spit.

Component landscape types

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

1. Coastal Fringe
2. Coastal Plain Estates – small parliamentary enclosures
21. Historic Parkland

Key positive landscape attributes

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong, regular field patterns dating from the parliamentary period. ■ Wooded river valleys, coastal pine plantations and blocks of ancient woodland. ■ Hedgerows and oak trees linking areas of woodland. ■ Dispersed hamlets and clustered red brick farm buildings with ornate detailing, linked by quiet rural lanes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attractive coastal settlement at Keyhaven. ■ Country houses and estate buildings set within historic designed landscapes. ■ Saltmarshes and mudflats of historic and nature conservation importance – including the preserved remains of salterns and the castle located on Hurst Spit. ■ Long views along the coast and to the Isle of Wight, including The Needles. Inland, it is an enclosed landscape due to high tree and woodland cover. |
|--|---|

Relevant designations relating to positive landscape attributes

Key landscape features	Relevant designations
Strong, regular field patterns dating from the parliamentary period.	N/A
Wooded river valleys, coastal pine plantations and blocks of ancient woodland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Many of the woodlands are SINCs. ■ The Lymington river is designated as SSSI, SPA and Ramsar.
Hedgerows and oak trees linking areas of woodland.	N/A
Dispersed hamlets and clustered red brick farm buildings with ornate detailing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Most of the area to the east of the River Lymington is within the Forest South East Conservation Area. ■ There are a significant number of Listed Buildings within the LCA.
Attractive coastal settlement at Keyhaven.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part of the Keyhaven Conservation Area lies within the LCA.
Country houses and estate buildings set within historic designed landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pylewell Park is on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. ■ Some of the buildings on the Pylewell Park estate are listed.
Saltmarshes and mudflats of historic and nature conservation importance – including the preserved remains of salterns and the castle located on Hurst Spit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Most of the coastline is designated as SPA, Ramsar and SSSI. ■ Hurst Castle is a SM.

B. LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Current condition

Landscape structure: The landscape seen today is strongly associated with land improvements made from the 17th century onwards. A mosaic of regular and small wavy fields links with blocks of ancient woodland and designed parkland estates is a legacy of this period. This structure is weakened within parts of the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type due to field enlargement and boundary loss in the drive for agricultural intensification. The amalgamation of fields and subsequent division into paddocks has altered the traditional land use. Some locations of intensive horticultural production also break up the traditional pastoral character that defines most of the area. Areas of Historic Parkland are intact and readable in the landscape. Across the landscape, ancient woodlands and coastal pine woods make up the mosaic – the structure of these can be affected in parts by conifer planting. However, the landscape largely retains its historic and coastal sense of place, with peaceful hamlets, red brick country houses and estate buildings linked by quiet rural lanes lined by hedgerows and framed by an open coastline with views to the Isle of Wight.

Landscape elements: The key elements of this landscape are largely intact with internationally important coastal marshes within the Coastal Fringe landscape type backed by a pattern of agricultural fields bounded by thick hedgerows; red brick buildings standing out in unity throughout the area; and frequent hedgerow oaks and semi-natural woodlands linking together with coastal pine woods to produce a well-wooded character. Issues impacting on the current condition of these elements relate to land management techniques, intensity and changes in land use. Some hedgerows within the Coastal Plain Estates have been lost and replaced by unsympathetic fencing. Remaining sections can be gappy and outgrown in places, resulting in fragmented wildlife links to the area's ancient woodlands, some of which have decreased in biodiversity value in parts due to the planting of conifers. Fields can be intensively farmed through activities including arable cultivation, horticulture and large-scale equestrian enterprises. The increasing threat of coastal retreat is a key issue which is already leading to an incremental loss of internationally important marshes.

Landscape change

Key Issues and trends

- Fragmented hedgerows and loss of hedgerow oaks – weakening the area's strong field pattern and diluting visual and ecological links to blocks of woodland (in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type).
- Replacement of hedgerows with unsympathetic fencing in places. A lack of active hedgerow management has led to overgrown sections in some locations (in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type).
- Changes in land use moving away from traditional agricultural land uses and weakening the strong field patterns of the coastal plain (in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type).
- Some replanting of the area's semi-natural woodlands by conifers, affecting their structure and biodiversity value. Loss of roadside oaks in some locations (in the Coastal Plain Estates and Historic Parkland landscape types).
- Changing pests and diseases leading to decline or death of certain tree species.
- Pressure for urban, recreational and industrial development, particularly around the edges of Lymington. The marina and ferry port at Lymington, although outside the National Park, are prominent on the seascape.
- Some small areas of modern development, such as at Walhampton on the shores of the Lymington River, are unsympathetic to local vernacular styles and settlement patterns (in the Coastal Plain Estates landscape type).
- The increased threat of rising sea levels, with engineered flood defences impacting upon the scenic coastal landscape. The future loss of valued coastal habitats and historic salterns, including the potential future breaching of Hurst Spit and coastal retreat, is a growing concern.

C. LANDSCAPE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (LQOS) / STRATEGY

Vision

A varied landscape with diverse coastal and wetland habitats of coastal pine plantations, mudflats and saltmarshes. It also includes the preserved remains of salterns backed by a strong mosaic of agricultural fields and parkland. A well managed hedgerow network links to blocks of well managed woodlands and crossed by wooded river valleys and quiet rural lanes. A healthy stock of hedgerow and roadside oaks provide visual reminders of the close proximity of the wider New Forest. A landscape with attractive coastal settlements, peaceful hamlets, clustered red brick farm buildings with ornate detailing and country houses with estate cottages and gate houses, which display strong vernacular styles and materials are a lasting legacy of the landscape's cultural development. Long views are enjoyed along the coast and to the Isle of Wight, with Hurst Castle remaining a renowned landmark feature on the end of Hurst Spit. Natural engineering used for coastal defences has low environmental impact.

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 16)

Future landscape management guidelines

Field patterns and boundary features

1. Protect and strengthen the landscape's strong pattern of parliamentary fields bounded by a well-managed hedgerow network with a healthy and frequent stock of hedgerow trees.

Agricultural land use

2. Protect and manage the mixed agricultural use of the landscape, maintaining fields of traditional pastoral grazing.

Forestry and woodlands

3. 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.
4. Protect important roadside oak trees and plant new specimens where these have been lost.

5. Plan towards a gradual restructuring of areas of conifer planting with broadleaf species with the aim of restoring the characteristic form and structure of the area's semi-natural woodlands.

Development and settlement edge

6. Protect the landscape's dispersed settlement pattern and the character and integrity of Keyhaven Conservation Area.
7. Refer to the Forest South East Conservation Area Appraisal 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 quiet character of the landscape's rural roads, including ensuring that signage and street lighting is kept to a minimum and road engineering works seek to enhance the character of the rural road network.

Historic landscapes and features

9. Protect and manage the designed landscape at Pylewell Park, for example through livestock grazing and traditional woodland and hedgerow management.

Coast

10. Refer to the North East Solent Shoreline Management Plan to ensure measures are in place to plan for future rising sea levels and coastal retreat – including managed realignment and habitat re-creation in the long term to ensure the conservation of internationally important coastal habitats.

Tranquillity and views

11. Protect and enhance the relationship between land and sea, including the protection of key views to the Isle of Wight and Hurst Castle.

Summary table LCA 16 showing landscape issues and guidelines by Landscape Type

Landscape type	Summary of issue	Management guidelines (number)
Coastal Plain Estates	Fragmented hedgerows and loss of hedgerow oaks.	1
	Replacement of hedgerows with other boundary types e.g. fencing.	1
	Agricultural intensification in amalgamated fields.	2
	Changes in landuse have impacted on agricultural land uses and weakened the strong field patterns.	2
	Conifer planting in semi-natural woodlands.	3,5
	Loss of roadside oaks.	4
	Some areas of modern development – particularly on fringes of Lymington.	6,8
Coastal fringe	Increasing threat of climate change – flood defence works and increasing loss of natural habitats and coastal features.	10
Historic Parkland	Conifer planting in semi-natural woodlands.	3,5
	Loss of roadside oaks.	4
	Development pressure (National Park-wide issue).	6,7,8,9,11

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LCA 16: LYMINGTON AND PENNINGTON COASTAL PLAIN

View across the Pennington Marshes



Large-scale fields near Walhampton

