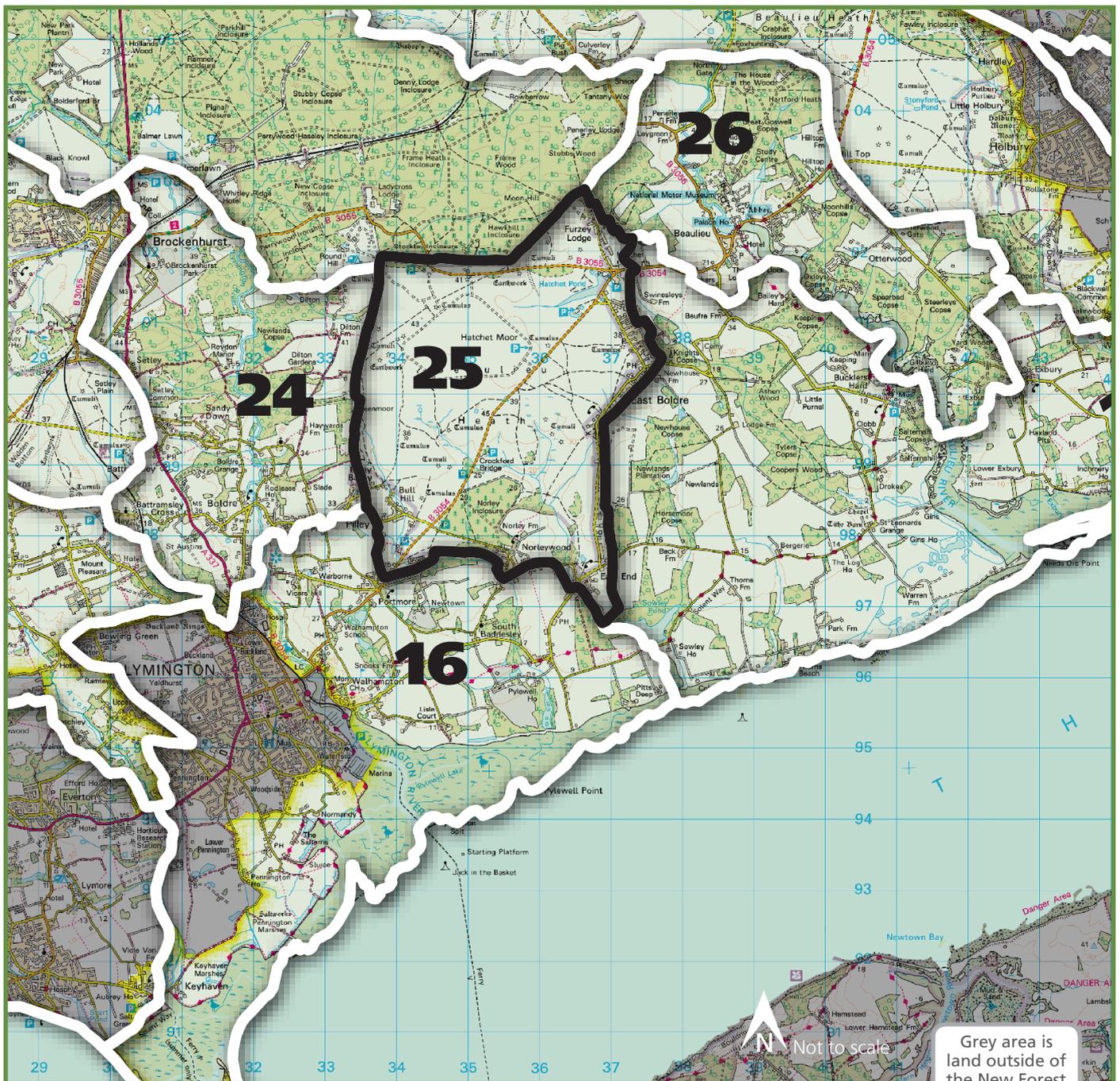




Traditional Forest settlement, Norleywood

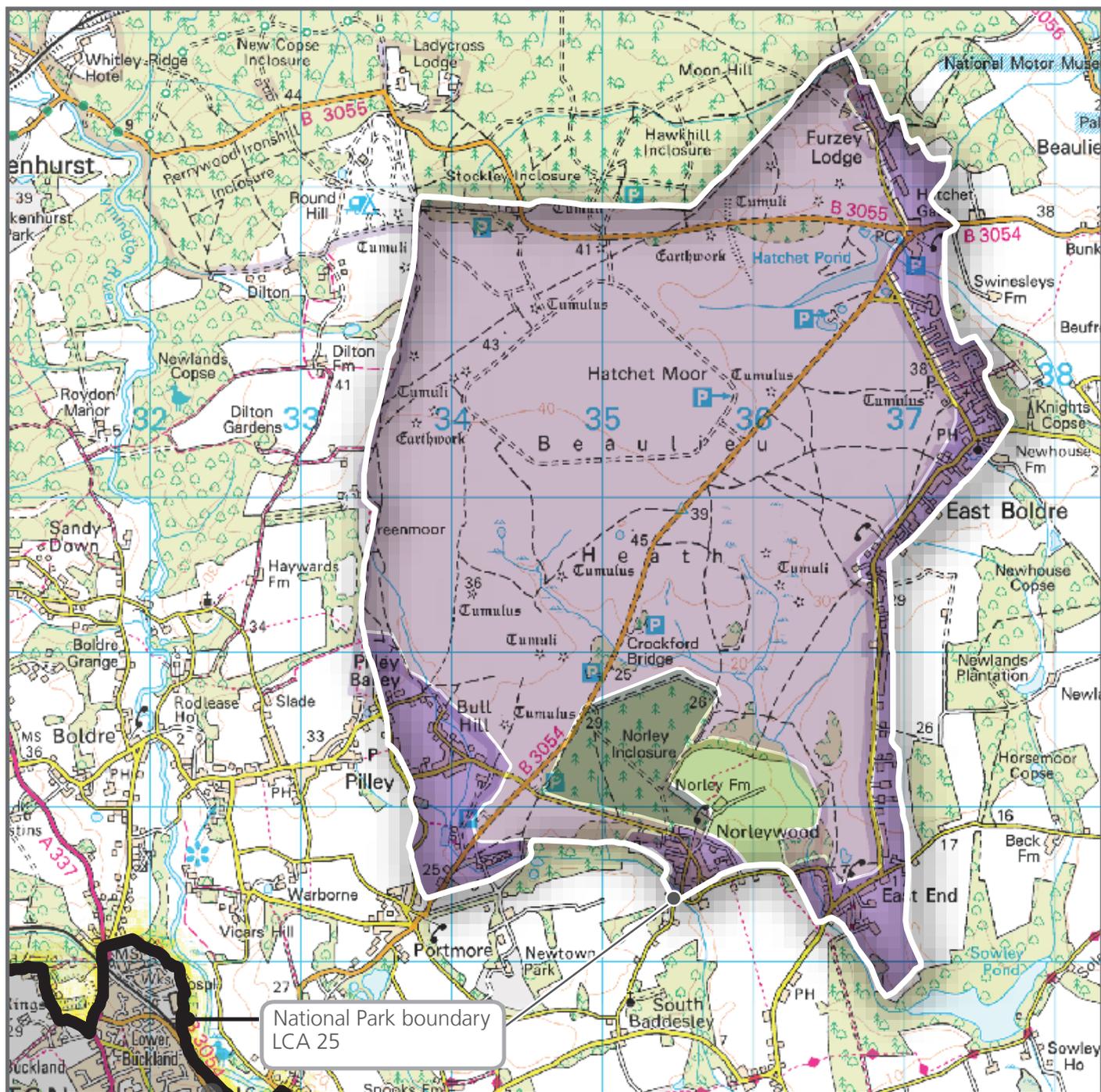
LCA 25: BEAULIEU HEATH

Location of LCA in the National Park



Grey area is land outside of the New Forest National Park

Component landscape types within LCA 25



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Not to scale

Area in shadow- outside National Park

- 6. Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings
- 7. Ancient Forest Farmlands
- 19. Timber Inclosures/Plantations
- 20. Heathland

All of this LCA falls within the New Forest National Park.

A. LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

Key landscape characteristics

- Gently domed area of open Calluna heathland in the south of the district on an underlying geology of Reading Beds overlain by plateau gravels.
- Open expanse of heather and gorse scrub with a mixed plantation at Norley Inclosure
- Isolated clumps of wind-blown pines are features of the landscape.
- Open bodies of water and boggy hollows, most notably Hatchet Pond, provide drinking holes for grazing animals.
- Settlement forms an almost continuous strip of development around the edge of the heath with individual houses facing onto it.
- Traditional dwellings are low beamed whitewashed thatched cottages or two storey red brick cottages with slate roofs.
- Views to the Isle of Wight and Fawley Refinery chimneys.

Component landscape types

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

6. Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings
7. Ancient Forest Farmlands
19. Timber Inclosures/Plantations
20. Heathland

Key positive landscape attributes

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expanse of lowland heath grazed by ponies with isolated clumps of windblown pines. ■ Valley bogs containing a rich diversity of species and pockets of ancient woodland. ■ Open bodies of water, including Hatchet Pond, are features within the heath. ■ Wooded edges forming a backdrop to views across the open heath, including some pre-1800 assarted oak woodlands and wood pasture around Norleywood. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prominent early 19th century conifer plantation at Norley Inclosure, standing out in the open heath. ■ Pattern of mixed farmland, including areas of enclosed heath within irregular fields framing the eastern edge of Norley Inclosure. ■ Linear settlement with dwellings, including traditional thatch and red brick cottages facing the heath. ■ Views across the open landscape towards the Isle of Wight. |
|---|---|

Relevant designations relating to positive landscape attributes

| Key landscape features | Relevant designations |
|---|--|
| Expanse of lowland heath grazed by ponies with isolated clumps of windblown pines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. |
| Valley bogs containing a rich diversity of species and pockets of ancient woodland. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. |
| Open bodies of water, including Hatchet Pond, are features within the heath. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. |
| Wooded edges forming a backdrop to views across the open heath, including some pre- 1800 assarted oak woodlands and wood pasture around Norleywood. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. ■ Norley Copse is a SSSI. ■ Woodland and wood pasture on the edge of Norleywood is a SINC. |
| Prominent early 19th century conifer plantation at Norley Inclosure, standing out in the open heath. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within the New Forest SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. |
| Pattern of mixed farmland, including areas of enclosed heath within irregular fields framing the eastern edge of Norley Inclosure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part lies within the Norley Copse & Meadow SSSI. |
| Linear settlement with dwellings including traditional thatch and red brick cottages facing the heath. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All settlement falls within the Forest South East Conservation Area. ■ 4 Grade II Listed Buildings within Norleywood. |
| Views across the open landscape towards the Isle of Wight. | |

B. LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Current condition

Landscape structure: The structure of this open heathland landscape is largely intact, with the open expanse of Beaulieu Heath framed by wayside settlements, pockets of ancient and assarted woodlands and farmland including some ancient Purlieus fields. The prominent early 19th century plantation at Norley Inclosure has a significant visual impact within the open heathland, with conifers dominating the historic oak plantation which existed on this site. The open heathland is severed by the busy B3054, which also has a significant impact on the integrity of the Heathland landscape type. The area of Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type surrounding the settlement of Norleywood has suffered from the impacts of agricultural intensification and changes of use, leading to a dilution in ancient field patterns. The Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type is intact at the traditional settlement of Norleywood. However, infill development, housing creep along the road bounding the east of the heathland, and associated encroachments onto the open heath, including a football pitch at East Boldre, has eroded the traditional relationship between the heathland and its wayside settlements.

Landscape elements: The open heathland is well grazed by commoners' livestock, particularly ponies, but is suffering from scrub encroachment in places (particularly gorse and some secondary woodland). Norley Inclosure is showing evidence of secondary woodland succession, including birch and willow scrub, although ageing conifers still dominate the plantation. Field boundaries within the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type have declined in condition – with few hedgerow trees, some overgrown sections, and replacement fences. The traditional pastoral and heathy character of farmland within this landscape type has largely been replaced by improved grassland and areas of arable cultivation. The traditional built vernacular of thatch and brick cottages remains at the nucleated village of Norleywood within the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type, although this is diluted at East Boldre with areas of car parking, inappropriate signage and uncharacteristic modern development encroaching onto the edge of the heathland.

Landscape change

Key issues and trends

- Gorse and secondary woodland encroachment, impacting on the open character of the Heathland landscape type, which makes up the majority of the character area.
- The busy B3054 cutting through Beaulieu Heath, eroding tranquillity.
- Ageing conifers and secondary woodland within the prominent Norley Inclosure are replacing previous oak plantations (in the Timber Inclosures/Plantations landscape type).
- Changing pests and diseases leading to decline or death of certain tree species.
- Erosion of the traditional small-scale farmed landscape and historic land uses of the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type.
- Intensification of agriculture – eroding the ancient small scale field pattern and introducing arable cultivation and improved grassland in contrast with the surrounding heathland (in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).
- Hedgerow boundary loss with replacement by fencing; loss of hedgerow trees and some overgrown boundaries in places (in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).
- Linear development spread and infill at East Boldre within the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type, with encroachments such as car parking and a football pitch impacting on the character of the Heathland landscape type.
- Modern development, including close board fencing, concrete walls and a variety of signage, are out of character with the local vernacular, within the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type.

C. LANDSCAPE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (LQOS) / STRATEGY

Vision

A landscape dominated by grazed open heathland, but also containing groups of wind-sculpted pines, a mosaic of wet and dry heath, valley bogs, ponds, wood pasture and pockets of managed semi-natural woodland. The plantation at Norley Inclosure is actively managed, containing mixed species of a diverse age range. The heathland is framed by woodland which forms a backdrop to long views, although the open heath does allow long-range views to the Isle of Wight. Pockets of ancient irregular pastoral fields and Purlieus are enclosed by a dense network of well-managed hedgerows with frequent hedgerow oaks. Heath edge settlements respect the local vernacular of thatch and red brick cottages and have a close relationship with Beaulieu Heath.

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 24)

Future landscape management guidelines

Field patterns and boundary features

1. Protect the landscape's historic field patterns (including irregular fields of enclosed heath) bounded by well managed hedgerows with frequent hedgerow oaks.
2. Manage fields to prevent overgrazing and maintain an overall pastoral character with some patches of heathland as a link back to the Forest.

Biodiversity

3. Manage Beaulieu Heath through grazing by commoners' stock, in line with the New Forest SAC plan. Manage gorse and secondary woodland to maintain its open character and views to the Isle of Wight. Protect and manage a mosaic of heathland habitats: dry and wet heath, wetlands, open water and small patches of taller vegetation.

Forestry and woodlands

4. Manage Norley Inclosure as a mixed plantation, allowing broadleaf regeneration through conifer removal and thinning to also create areas of grazed wood pasture, wetlands and lawns. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for more detailed information.

5. Protect and manage the semi-natural ancient woodlands (including assarted woodlands) to maintain a diverse age structure and species range.

Development and settlement edge

6. Protect the rural character of the area's linear settlement and its setting adjacent to the heath, ensuring any new development is in keeping with the scale and local vernacular styles of the area (whitewashed cottages with thatch and red brick buildings).
7. Protect the undeveloped character of the open heathland, resisting encroachment from the surrounding settlement, including car parking and recreational facilities.
8. Protect the setting of the historic wooded ditch boundary of 'Beaulieu Rails' along the settlement edges, particularly at East Boldre.
9. 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 of these settlements.

Summary table showing landscape issues and guidelines by Landscape Type

| Landscape type | Summary of issue | Management guidelines (number) |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Heathland | Gorse and secondary woodland encroachment. | 3, 4 |
| Timber Inclosures / Plantations | Ageing conifers and secondary woodland within Norley Inclosure. | 5 |
| Ancient Forest Farmlands | Subdivision of fields. | 2 |
| | Intensification of agriculture. | 2 |
| | Hedgerow and hedgerow tree loss and replacement with fencing/tape. | 1 |
| Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings | Linear development spread and encroachments onto the heath. | 6,8 |
| | Some modern development out-of-keeping with local vernacular styles/materials. | 9 |
| ALL – LANDSCAPE-WIDE ISSUES | The busy B3504 and model aircraft flying eroding local levels of tranquillity. | N/A |

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LCA 25: BEAULIEU HEATH

Pony grazing, Beaulieu Heath



Traditional Forest settlement, Norleywood

