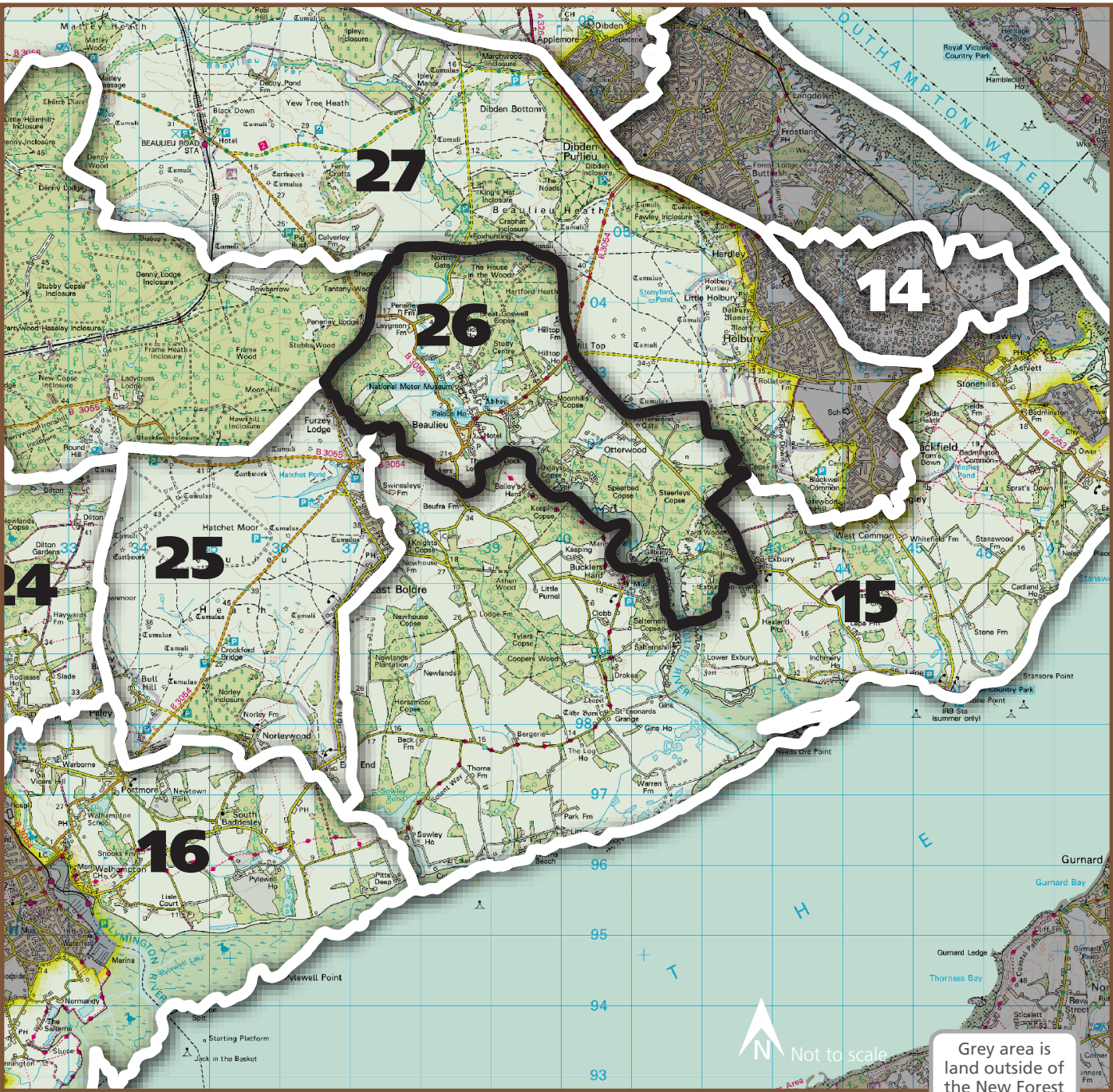




Industry at Fawley visible on the eastern skyline

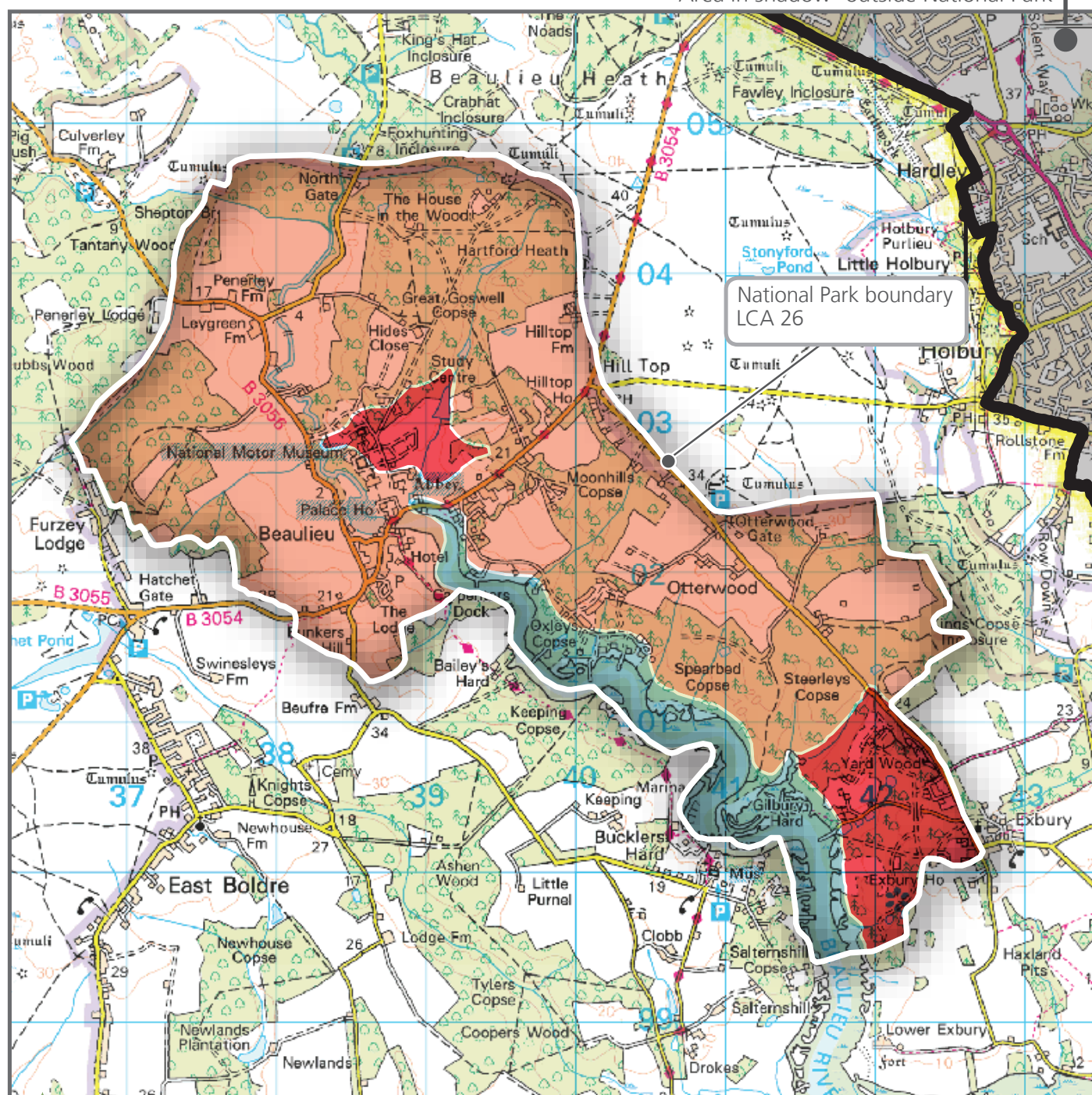
LCA 26: BEAULIEU RIVER

Location of LCA in the National Park



Component landscape types within LCA 26

Area in shadow- outside National Park



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

- 1. Coastal Fringe
- 13. Enclosed Farmland and Woodland
- 21. Historic Parkland

A. LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

Key landscape characteristics

- Large scale undulating estate landscape encompassing the lower reaches of the Beaulieu River with outstanding wetland flora.
- A well wooded river valley with pockets of enclosed farmland, including some former heathland, and extensive areas of ancient woodland and timber plantations within the New Forest perambulation boundary.
- Minor roads wind their way up the valley, along leafy lanes and through tunnels in the trees.
- Survival of Open Forest grazing on the foreshore.
- Estate influence evident around Beaulieu and Exbury with brick boundary walls, large houses and brick estate cottages or lodges
- The wooded valley creates a setting for Beaulieu, the focus of the valley, with its attractive Mill Pond, Palace House and Abbey ruins.
- Linear settlement along Kings Copse Road faces onto Blackwell Common.
- Strong commoning communities
- Restricted views due to enclosure and extensive woodland cover.

Component landscape types

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

1. Coastal Fringe
13. Enclosed Farmland and Woodland
21. Historic Parkland

Key positive landscape attributes

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mill pond and tidal river which provide a landscape setting to Beaulieu. ■ Ancient field systems around settlements, including small regular fields around Beaulieu. ■ Mixed pastoral and arable farmland bounded by thick hedgerows and frequent hedgerow oaks. ■ Ancient semi-natural woodland and wood pasture which conveys a feeling of being 'in the forest'. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wetland habitats alongside the river including grazing marsh, mudflats and saltmarsh. ■ Historic landscaped gardens and important brick buildings and other features at Beaulieu Palace, Abbey and Exbury House. ■ Quiet roads winding their way through leafy lanes and tunnels in the trees. ■ Areas of former heathland now given over to plantations, such as at Hartford Heath. |
|--|---|

Relevant designations relating to positive landscape attributes

Key landscape features	Relevant designations
Mill pond and tidal river which provide a landscape setting to Beaulieu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part of the North Solent SSSI, SAC, SPA and NNR and the Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar site. ■ Within Beaulieu Conservation Area
Ancient field systems around settlements, including small regular fields around Beaulieu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conservation Areas at Beaulieu and Exbury
Mixed pastoral and arable farmland bounded by thick hedgerows and frequent hedgerow oaks.	N/A
Ancient semi-natural woodland and wood pasture which conveys a feeling of being 'in the forest'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Spearbed Copse is within the North Solent SSSI and NNR ■ Most of the woodlands are SINC's
Wetland habitats alongside the river including grazing marsh, mudflats and saltmarsh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part of the North Solent SSSI, SAC, SPA and NNR and the Solent & Southampton Water Ramsar site.
Historic landscaped gardens and important brick buildings and other features at Beaulieu Palace, Abbey and Exbury House.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conservation Areas at Beaulieu and Exbury ■ Several Scheduled Monuments ■ Listed Buildings, including Grade 1 and Grade II*.
Quiet roads winding their way through leafy lanes and tunnels in the trees.	
Areas of former heathland now given over to plantations, such as at Hartford Heath.	

B. LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Current condition

Landscape structure: The structure of this historic landscape is largely intact, with the intimate relationship between the river and the surrounding woodlands, parklands and farmland being maintained. The historic settlements, particularly Beaulieu and the fringes of Exbury, retain their form and landscape setting with little change affecting their character taking place over recent years. A key issue, is visitor car parking, which in the peak season can have a significant detracting impact on the rural and historic character of the Historic Parkland landscape type. The Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type is largely intact, although some localised areas of field enlargement has eroded the ancient and small-scale field pattern in places.

Landscape elements: The condition of individual elements within the character area is mainly good; with dense woodland displaying a varied age structure and species diversity; important historic buildings within the Historic Parkland landscape type are well maintained and conserved. The tidal Beaulieu River is framed by important wetlands whilst hedgerows and roadsides displaying frequent oak tree specimens providing links back to the wider Forest area. Some areas of agricultural land within the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type have been altered with changes in land use and new fence boundaries.

Landscape change

Key issues and trends

- Loss of the traditional small-scale farmed landscape and historic land uses of the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type.
- Intensification of agriculture is eroding the ancient small-scale field pattern and is at odds with traditional land management practices (in the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type).
- Hedgerow boundary loss with replacement by fencing (in the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type).
- Past loss of heathland to conifer plantations in the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape type.
- Changing pests and diseases leading to decline or death of certain tree species.
- Future threat of rising sea levels increasing the vulnerability of the designed historic landscape and valued wetland habitats through changes to the tidal river levels of the Beaulieu River (in the Coastal Fringe, Historic Parkland and Enclosed Farmland and Woodland landscape types).
- Views of Fawley oil refinery, power station and urban development at Holbury from the eastern edge of the LCA, impacting on historic landscape character and perceptions of tranquillity (in the Enclosed Farmland and Woodland and Historic Parkland landscape types).

C. LANDSCAPE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (LQOS) / STRATEGY

Vision

Ancient mixed agricultural fields are enclosed by lush, well managed hedgerows with frequent oak trees, linking to large areas of well managed ancient woodland and grazed wood pasture. The landscape is crossed by winding, minor lanes fringed by diverse woodland and frequent oak trees, giving a strong New Forest feel. The Beaulieu River winds through diverse wetland habitats including grazing marsh and mudflats, and is surrounded by woodlands and pockets of farmland. The settlement of Beaulieu strongly displays its red brick built form, set in the historic surroundings of the Palace, Abbey mill pond and parkland.

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 26)

Future landscape management guidelines

Field patterns and boundary features

1. Protect ancient field patterns around settlements, bounded by a strong and well-managed hedgerow network, protecting traditional land uses and reinforcing the historic origins of the landscape.
2. Manage and strengthen the network of hedgerows and estate walls, maintaining a healthy stock of hedgerow oaks.

Forestry and woodlands

3. Protect and manage the landscape's semi-natural ancient woodlands and to maintain a diverse age structure and species range.

Biodiversity

4. Plan for the long-term, gradual restoration of heathland from conifer plantations, including on Hartford Heath, in line with New Forest SAC plan.
5. Protect the traditions of grazing by commoners to manage the remaining areas of wood pasture and heathland.
6. Manage the characteristic wetland habitats along the Beaulieu River, including livestock grazing at appropriate levels.

Historic landscapes and features

7. Protect and sensitively manage the historic features and buildings associated with Beaulieu Palace, Abbey and Exbury House.

Development and settlement edge

8. Protect the character and scale of the landscape's historic settlements, resisting their expansion and ensuring any new development is sympathetic to local building styles and materials (particularly brick buildings with an estate influence around Beaulieu and Exbury).
9. Protect the quiet and winding character of the landscape's rural roads, fringed by woodland and frequent roadside oaks – including minimising levels of signage and ensuring road engineering requirements are undertaken sympathetically.
10. Refer to the Beaulieu and Exbury Conservation Area Appraisals 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.

Coast

11. Plan for future rises in sea level and manage impacts on the Beaulieu River and historic mill pond. Refer to the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan for further information on the future implications of sea level rise.

Tranquillity and views

12. Protect the landscape's levels of tranquillity, including the use of woodland planting and succession to screen detracting views to industry at Fawley and urban development at Holbury.

Summary table LCA 26 showing landscape issues and guidelines by Landscape Type

Landscape type	Summary of issue	Management guidelines (number)
Enclosed farmland and woodland	Subdivision of fields.	1
	Intensification of farming.	1
	Hedgerow boundary loss and replacement by fencing/tape.	2
	Past loss of heathland to conifer plantations.	4
	Future threat of sea level rise increasing the vulnerability of the setting of Beaulieu.	11
	Views to industry at Fawley.	12
Historic Parkland	Off-road parking facilities and road improvements.	7,9
	Future threat of sea level rise increasing the vulnerability of the designed landscape.	11
	Views to industry at Fawley.	12
Coastal Fringe	Future threat of rising sea levels on wetland habitats along the tidal river.	11
ALL – LANDSCAPE-WIDE ISSUES	Development pressure (National Park-wide issue).	8,9,10

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LCA 26: BEAULIEU RIVER

The mill pond, Beaulieu



Industry at Fawley visible on the eastern skyline

