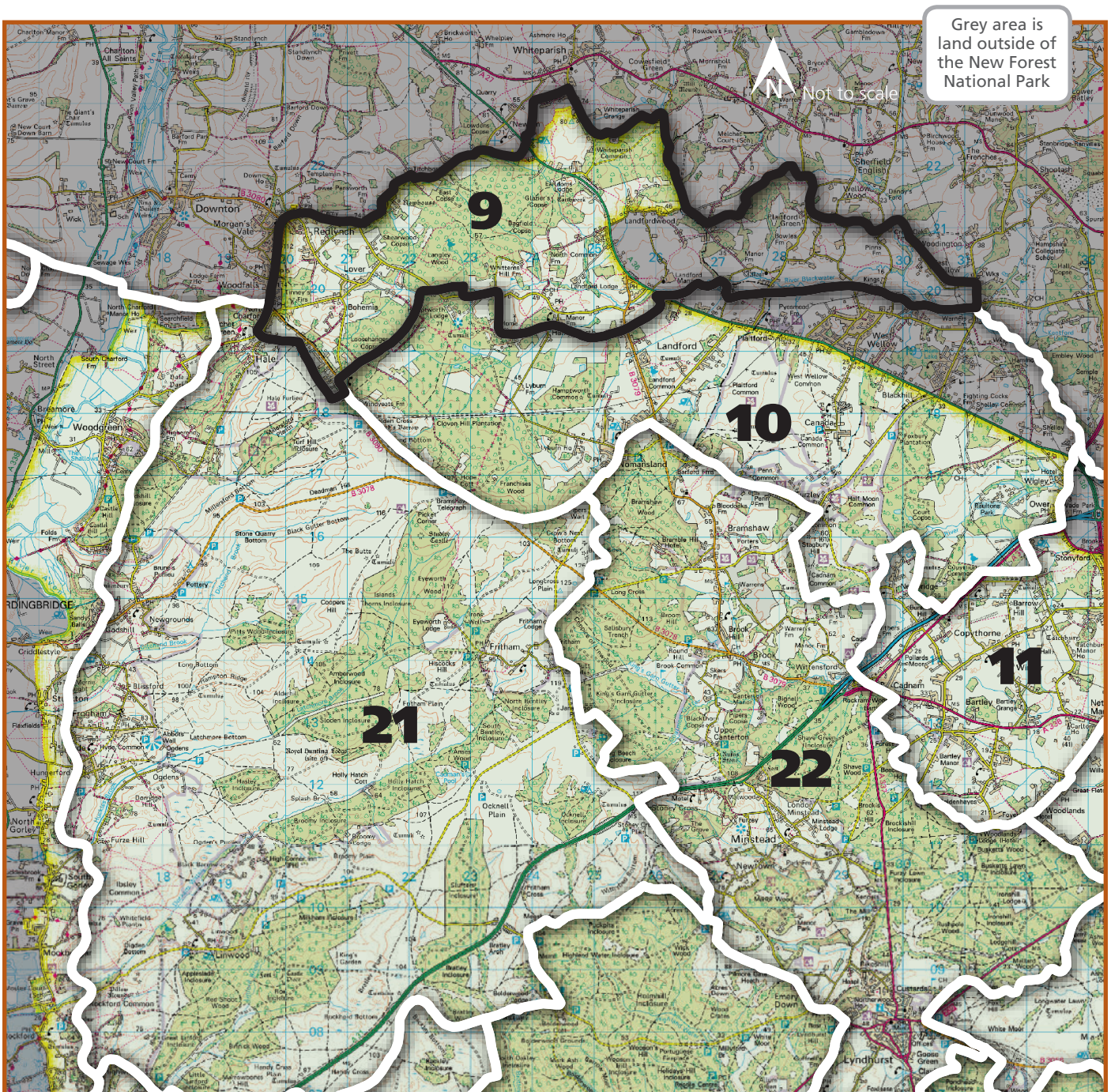




Conifer planting on Whiteparish Common

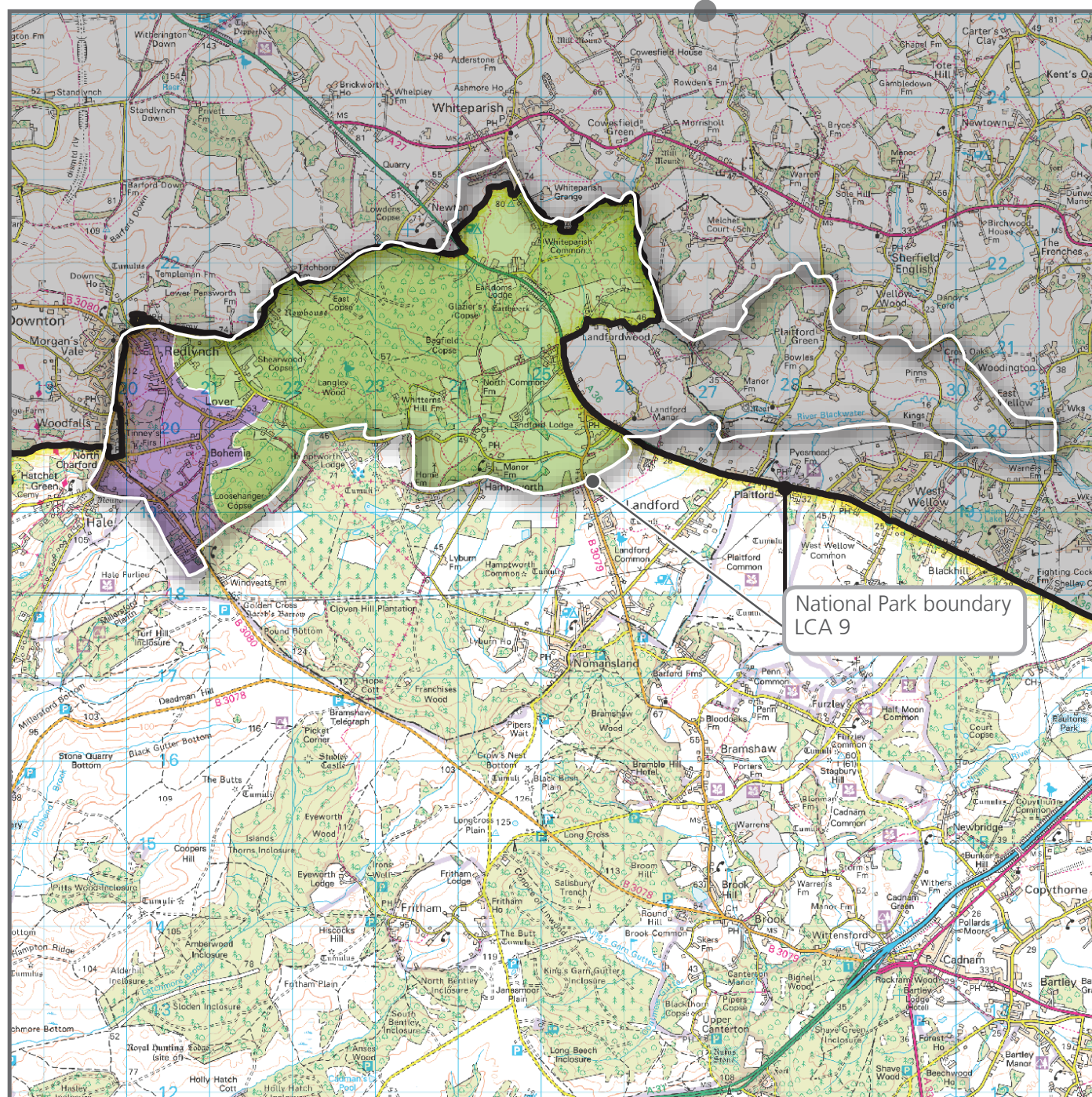
LCA 9: LANDFORD FOREST FARMLANDS

Location of LCA in the National Park



Component landscape types within LCA 9

Area in shadow- outside National Park



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Not to scale

- 6. Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings
- 7. Ancient Forest Farmlands

The area to the east of the A36 falls outside of the New Forest National Park boundary (with the exception of Whiteparish Common).

A. LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

Key landscape characteristics

- An enclosed and settled area of mixed farmland and woodland to the north of the River Blackwater.
- Extensive ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland with some active coppice and remnant wood pasture commons such as Whiteparish Common.
- Shaded leafy lanes, sometimes sunken, wind their way through wooded areas.
- Scattered farmsteads and occasional roadside cottages of brick, timber and thatch.
- A well defined irregular pattern of woodland and farmland and a medieval deer park at Loosehanger Park.
- Important ecological habitats, particularly the ancient woodlands.
- Views are short, most usually to the next field boundary or woodland edge.

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

Key positive landscape attributes

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Large areas of ancient semi-natural woodlands, coppice and wood pasture. ■ 19th century broadleaved and coniferous plantations enhancing the landscape's heavily wooded character. ■ Predominantly pastoral farmland within a small-scale pattern of ancient enclosure surrounded by thick hedgerows and oaks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Winding leafy lanes linking areas of woodland, settlement and individual farmsteads. ■ Former deer park at Loosehanger Park and the fort at Castle Copse Camp. ■ Low density roadside dwellings and farmsteads of red brick, timber and thatch – loosely clustered and scattered. ■ Strong sense of enclosure with views generally limited due to tree cover. Dark lines of forestry form features on the horizon (LCA 10). |
|--|--|

Relevant designations relating to positive landscape attributes

Key landscape features	Relevant designations
Large areas of ancient semi-natural woodlands, coppice and wood pasture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Langley Wood and Homan's Copse is designated as a SSSI and National Nature Reserve (NNR). It also falls within the New Forest SAC. ■ Most of Whiteparish Common is SSSI and part of the New Forest SAC. ■ A large proportion of Loosehanger Copse is SSSI and within the New Forest SAC. ■ Woodland near Lover is within the New Forest SSSI.
19th century broadleaved and coniferous plantations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Langley Wood and Homan's Copse is designated as a SSSI and NNR. It also falls within the New Forest SAC ■ Most of Whiteparish Common is SSSI and part of the New Forest SAC. ■ A large proportion of Loosehanger Copse is SSSI and within the New Forest SAC. ■ Woodland near Lover is within the New Forest SSSI.
Predominantly pastoral farmland within a small-scale pattern of ancient enclosure surrounded by thick hedgerows and oaks.	N/A
Winding leafy lanes linking areas of woodland, settlement and individual farmsteads.	N/A
Former deer park at Loosehanger Park and the fort at Castle Copse Camp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Castle Copse Camp is a SM.
Low density roadside dwellings and farmsteads of red brick, timber and thatch – loosely clustered and scattered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are a number of Listed Buildings in the LCA.
Strong sense of enclosure with views limited to the occasional open areas of wood pasture and remnant heath.	N/A

B. LANDSCAPE EVALUATION

Current condition

Landscape structure: The structure of the landscape is largely intact and retains the traditional relationship between ancient, small-scale farmland, woodlands and wood pasture. The structure is, however, affected in places by agricultural intensification leading to dilution of ancient field patterns and traditional pastoral land use (particularly in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type). The presence of coniferous plantations within and on the edge of semi-natural woodlands and former commons in the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type has also contributed towards an erosion of historic land uses. The weakening of historic sense of place has been further witnessed in parts by the spread of modern development along the landscape's quiet rural lanes and the location of a golf course within wood pasture at Hamptworth.

Landscape elements: This landscape is defined by the historic relationship between its hedgerows, woodlands, wood pasture, farmland and dispersed settlement. These elements are still present within today's landscape, although changes in management intensity and techniques have impacted on their condition. Hedgerows have been lost in some locations, particularly in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type, and replaced by post-and-wire fencing, whilst in other parts they are intensively flailed with an absence of oak tree specimens. Ancient woodlands and coppice have fallen out of management with a spread of rhododendron and birch threatening their biodiversity value. In addition, the past planting of conifer plantations has seen a loss of former areas of ancient woodland and wood pasture, as well as commons such as Whiteparish within the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type. Modern buildings, including bungalows displaying a range of different materials, have weakened the unity and character of the local vernacular.

Landscape change

Key issues and trends

- Hedgerow loss through agricultural intensification. Hedgerow trees are generally mature with few new trees to replace them. Hedgerows are intensively flailed in places, with an absence of hedgerow trees (in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).
- Agricultural intensification and introduction of arable rotation threatens the traditional field patterns and pastoral character of the landscape (in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).
- Loss of ancient woodland and former commons through the planting of conifer plantations (in the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings type and at Whiteparish Common in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).
- Changing pests and diseases leading to decline or death of certain tree species.
- Ancient wood pasture has ceased to function as such in areas around Langley Woods NNR, The Earldoms and Whiteparish/Cowesfield.
- Decline in traditional woodland management leading to weakening of the condition of ancient woodlands and particularly the remaining areas of wood pasture and coppice. Birch regeneration and rhododendron invasion is affecting the nature conservation value of woodlands.
- Pressure for further linear expansion of settlement along the rural roads, often bungalows and other styles of modern development out of keeping with the local vernacular.
- Use of suburban boundary treatments, such as close-board fencing, evergreen shrubs and different styles and materials of brick wall. Combined with frequent overhead cables, these are eroding the historic character of many of the area's settlements.
- Pressure to upgrade roads through additional kerbing, signage and the use of bollards along road verges to accommodate an increase in traffic volume.
- Hamptworth golf course, in the east of the LCA, prominently contrasts in character with the surrounding ancient woodlands and wood pasture (in the Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings landscape type).
- A sand and gravel extraction site, just outside the National Park by Landford Manor, is visible from within the LCA's south-eastern boundary (in the Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape type).

C. LANDSCAPE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (LQOS) / STRATEGY

Vision

A varied forest-edge landscape reflecting its historic origins through a linked mosaic of ancient pasture fields, lush hedgerows with frequent oaks, well-managed, coppiced woodlands, grazed wood pasture and punctuated by red brick settlements with a strong historic sense of place. Winding leafy lanes snake through the area, with the historic deer park at Loosehanger Park and prehistoric fort at Castle Copse remaining strong historic features legible in the landscape. Woodlands contain predominantly broadleaved species, with open glades and wood pasture completing their mosaic. Visual and physical links are strengthened with the nearby Open Forest, along with working links - commoners continue to use this landscape for the grazing of their stock when off the open heathland.

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 9)

Future landscape management guidelines

Field patterns and boundary features

1. Manage hedgerows with a healthy stock of hedgerow trees, maintaining and strengthening the traditional field patterns of the landscape.

Agricultural land use

2. Maintain the continuity of a pastoral landscape by using as grazing for commonable animals.

Forestry and woodlands

3. Manage a gradual restructuring of conifer plantations with broadleaf species with the of restoring predominantly broadleaved semi-natural woodlands and copses, whilst recognising the species balance required for the economic viability of conifer plantations. Protect and, where possible, extend the area of open habitats such as wood pasture and heathland.

4. Manage semi-natural woodlands through coppicing to encourage a varied age structure and reduce the presence of birch and rhododendron.
5. Seek to soften the edges of plantations to help integrate them into the landscape.
6. Manage and maintain grazing levels on areas of wood pasture, further enhancing and rejuvenating the ancient land use through other traditional management techniques such as pollarding, particularly in areas around Langley Woods NNR, The Earldoms and Whiteparish/Cowesfield.

Development and settlement edge

7. Protect the character of the landscape's leafy rural roads, including reducing levels of signage and keeping street lighting to a minimum.
8. Protect and enhance the rural character of settlements through traditional hedgerow planting and the use of locally sourced timber fencing as property boundaries.
9. Protect the landscape from the further expansion of the sand and gravel extraction site outside the National Park (near Landford Manor). Consider additional screening of this site through native woodland planting.

Summary table LCA 9 showing landscape issues and guidelines by Landscape Type

Landscape type	Summary of issue	Management guidelines (number)
Ancient Forest Farmlands	Hedgerow loss, lack of management and removal of hedgerow trees.	1
	Agricultural intensification including conversion of pasture to arable.	2
	Conifer planting within ancient woodlands and on former commons.	3,5
	Decline in woodland management with a spread of birch and rhododendron.	4
	Decline in the condition of wood pasture through a lack of management	6
	Inappropriate property boundaries, including close-board fencing.	8
	Pressure for road upgrades and engineering works.	7
Heath Associated Smallholdings and Dwellings	Decline in woodland management with a spread of birch and rhododendron.	4
	Decline in the condition of wood pasture through a lack of management	6
	Conifer planting within ancient woodlands and on former commons.	3,5
	Inappropriate property boundaries, including close-board fencing.	8
	Visibility of a minerals extraction site (outside the National Park).	9
ALL – LANDSCAPE-WIDE ISSUES	Development pressure (National Park-wide issue)	8

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LCA 9: LANDFORD FOREST FARMLANDS

Close board fencing and overhead cables,
Redlynch



Conifer planting on Whiteparish Common

