

Countryside Character and Planning

COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER AND THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK - RICHARD LONGMAN, DETR

The purpose of this presentation is to set the scene, to pose some of the questions which this workshop may wish to probe, and to look ahead to possible future directions for national planning policy for the countryside.

Current Government planning policies for the countryside are contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 7. It bears many of the hallmarks of the then Secretary of State, John Gummer - the emphasis on good design and quality of development, the appreciation that sustainable development meant more than a trade-off between economic competitiveness and environmental protection, but rather involved pursuing socially and economically desirable outcomes which also benefited the environment. In that respect, PPG7 has proved fairly closely attuned to the sustainable development agenda of the incoming Labour Administration, and has been broadly endorsed by the present Government.

Various initiatives form the backdrop to consideration of planning policies for the countryside, and for today's workshop, including:

- the Modernising Planning initiative;
- Regional agenda, the creation of the Regional Development Agencies and the reform of the regional planning process;
- the Comprehensive Spending Review;
- the new Sustainable Development Strategy, and other strategies published or in preparation (eg Forestry, Biodiversity, Soils, Tourism);
- Local Government reform (best value, local participation, community planning, etc);
- the 'big issues' - housing and household growth, integrated transport;
- Performance and Innovation Unit study on Rural Economies;
- the 'urban renaissance', Urban Task Force report and forthcoming Urban and Rural White Papers.

PPG7 endorses the potential value of the countryside character approach. But consultation on the draft showed that the approach was considered insufficiently mature to provide a robust alternative to local designations. What about progress since PPG7 was published? What other techniques and methods are emerging which provide a means of reflecting, through development plan policies, the value to society of a piece of land?

Richard Longman has been head of the countryside planning branch in the Planning Policies Division at the DETR since February 1997. He leads a team responsible for planning policies for the countryside, Green Belts, sport and recreation, leisure and tourism, nature conservation and sustainable development.

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ROLE OF CHARACTER ASSESSMENT IN PLANNING: FINDINGS OF RECENT RESEARCH IN SCOTLAND - DAVID TYLDESLEY, DAVID TYLDESLEY & ASSOCIATES

The project was commissioned by SNH in January 1999 and completed by DTA in March 1999. It was intended to review the content of development plans and help to provide links between these and LCAs in advance of the wider (Countryside Agency and SNH) review of LCA methods. The project involved:-

- Review and Assessment of Existing Development Plans
- Telephone and Face to Face Interviews
- Report of Findings in Draft Report
- Preparation of Guidance
- Submission of Guidance in Form of Final Report

Key findings included a wide variety of reactions to LCA in planning and a very patchy picture in terms of how planning authorities are using LCAs. The picture, and timing of development plans, and the integration of LCAs, has been disrupted by local government re-organisation which coincided with the SNH national programme.

There is a high level of awareness and respect for the SNH LCA programme, in which all planning authorities had played a part, it is a valued resource. It has brought landscape issues to the forefront of local authority thinking, but more work still needs to be done, especially in ensuring that local authorities can use the LCAs in practical ways and with confidence.

The main benefits of LCA were seen to be in development plans and some aspects of development control. Planners find even the descriptive parts very useful, the guidelines often less so, but this may be related to their lack of experience and understanding.

The LCA approach is strongly endorsed in the new NPPG14 on the Natural Heritage (Scottish Office January 1999).

LCAs have been or are being applied effectively:-

- At a general level, in overall environmental protection and conservation policies where local plans have taken on board a character approach, eg Gordon (Aberdeenshire) and Midlothian Plans.
 - At the stage of developing the locational strategy of a Structure or Local Plan, eg Clackmannanshire and Stirling Joint Structure Plan, Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Argyll and Bute's Structure and Upper Tier Local Plans.
 - At detailed settlement capacity study level, eg Skye and Lochalsh, St. Andrews, Stirling and Clackmannanshire, and Mid Argyll.
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- In the development of thematic strategies such as renewable energy and minerals (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Fife, Scottish Borders Councils).
- At detailed development control level, most LCAs in varying degrees.

Work on using LCAs in the review of designations is rare and embryonic in Scotland.

It is difficult to find out how LCAs were incorporated into development plans. Often planners said “it just happened”. The key appears to be the presence and proactive support of landscape people (anyone with an interest in landscape issues) and a recognition that landscape is important and the character approach is the best way forward. Personal contact appears to be critical, but we are generally pushing at an open door. Project recommended a short guide followed by personal contact would be the best way to link the LCA and Development Plan processes. The same may well apply to Development Control. Training is critical and CPD for planners is a good opportunity.

Acknowledgement

The research project reported here was commissioned entirely by Scottish Natural Heritage.

David Tyldesley is a Chartered Town Planner, a qualified Landscape Architect and a Member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. He established the practice of David Tyldesley & Associates in 1983 after 17 years in local government planning landscape and environmental work. He has worked on a range of Landscape Character Assessments, particularly in the SNH National Programme, helped to establish the SNH National LCA database and has since worked with SNH and several local authorities on a number of innovative landscape planning projects.

Role of Character Assessment in Strategic Planning

HAMPSHIRE: COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER AND STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY - LINDA TARTAGLIA-KERSHAW, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Hampshire County Landscape Assessment was completed in 1993. Since then the County has worked in partnership with the eleven district authorities in Hampshire to produce district landscape assessments which follow a consistent approach in methodology, boundary delineation and nomenclature within the unifying framework of the county assessment and the national assessment: “The Character of England”

The first stage was to set up a working party of representative County and District local planning and landscape officers. The aims were to:

- agree how to apply landscape assessment to inform the planning process;
- and how to interpret the Countryside Commission Guidelines C.C.P. 423, 1993 in a consistent way, particularly understanding and defining the difference between landscape types and landscape character areas and their practical application in the assessment process.

The second stage was to co-ordinate consistent, county-wide, landscape assessment at district level. In order to achieve such a comprehensive approach the County Council offered:

- 50% grant aid, whether it was undertaken in-house or by consultants;
- direction in the production of the brief and appointment of consultants, sometimes managing the consultants on behalf of the district authority;
- landscape expertise and knowledge of the character assessment approach, steering and advising on the methodology;
- providing a consistent overview as assessments ran in parallel;
- and bringing “added value” as methodologies for townscape and landscape assessments evolved to respond to the specific needs of different districts.

Timing of assessments had to be flexible to respond to the programmes for review of each local plan, and for those less enthusiastic districts to be persuaded to participate.

The benefits were to the district authorities in the provision of financial and landscape resources; and by participating in a structured, consistent, co-ordinated approach, they had the security of knowing that they would not be the “weak link” when challenged by developers at appeals and inquiries.

The County Council on the other hand achieved its objectives in developing a better understanding of local landscape character and issues in the county at a finer grain of detail than it would otherwise be able to do; and a consistent approach to landscape planning in Hampshire.

The review of the County Structure Plan has taken place over the last two years. It is anticipated that it will be adopted in December this year. The timing is such that the landscape character approach has been integrated into the policy formulation process and also has a specific landscape policy to ensure that development proposals and land use allocations respect the special characters and qualities of the landscape and the features that contribute to this. We no longer have local landscape designations.

Following the County Structure Plan Review Examination In Public, the Panel in their report commended the County Council's change from another layer of designation and towards the landscape character approach. However there was a concern in examining how this might be applied at a Local Plan level, that unless the emphasis was placed more heavily on distinction as having relative importance, rather than a virtue inherent in each and every tract of open country, it could be seen to be a recipe for enthusiastic conservation beyond safeguarding the countryside for its own sake.

Another concern raised was that there should be consistency of approach to landscape character policies in Local Plans, using similar wording, and the importance was stressed of the need for co-ordination of the approach by the County Council.

The County Structure Plan landscape policy E6, as it is called, requires planning policies to be identified in local plans to maintain landscape character, and goes on to identify in more detail the need to respect and enhance scenic quality, sense of remoteness, historic landscapes, and sense of place, including local character of buildings and the settings to settlements.

To support this the County Council has already:

- produced a county-wide historic landscape assessment and will be encouraging and co-ordinating the historic assessment to be integrated into the reviews of district landscape assessments; and
- worked in partnership with local Trusts and Winchester City Council in the review of its local plan, to develop a methodology for a seamless townscape and landscape assessment for Winchester City and its setting. The assessment has also informed the "Future of Winchester Study" which is an Environmental Capital Pilot scheme.

The next stages in the integration and application of the character approach in the planning process in Hampshire will be

- to set up a working party of County and District planning and landscape officers to achieve a consistent approach to policy wording in the emerging District Local Plans;
 - for the County to co-ordinate a review of the county and district assessments, in order to respond to developments in the methodology of
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the character approach and the specific criteria set out in the County Structure Plan landscape policy E6; and

- for the revised assessments to inform each Local Plan review process and policy formulation; and ultimately to be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Landscape character assessment has formed an integral part of the process of the review of the County Structure Plan. It has set down safeguards for local distinctiveness and respect for the diversity of landscape character in Hampshire. Fundamental to the formation of the policy guidance it has also been used to recognise those characteristics which are important to Hampshire's landscape and set out broad criteria to be considered in the decision making process.

It has already been used in practice in strategic land use planning and housing distribution. The County Council undertook an exercise to identify areas for allocation of major development. This included consideration of the landscape characteristics and the features which went to make up each character area.

A checklist was produced to set out the criteria for testing the impact development would have on each landscape character area. This set out the impact of development divided into five categories, from severe to minimal, and what enhancement measures would be required as a result. A report was produced summarising the essential characteristics of each landscape character area and the impact development would have on:

- landscape character and features;
- visual impact;
- impact on the wider landscape and adjacent character areas.

Information in the report was then fed into the overall planning and transportation matrix which included all the other factors taken into consideration in strategic land use allocation. This process was both systematic and transparent and formed one of the many background papers to the review of the Structure Plan.

The landscape character approach is already beginning to inform the planning process indirectly. Following analysis of the detailed district landscape assessments, it is already becoming evident in a county-wide context, which landscape types are scarce or fragile, and where areas of ruralness can be identified. This will help to inform not only planning policy and development control decisions, but also where land management and enhancement measures can be prioritised. The County Council is at present producing a Hampshire landscape strategy, based on the landscape assessment. This will address and influence land management issues. The landscape character approach has already become fundamental to both the strategic planning policy and land management strategy in Hampshire.

Linda Tartaglia-Kershaw is head of the Landscape Planning Group at Hampshire County Council. She was responsible for the Hampshire County landscape assessment, produced in 1993, and subsequently for directing and co-ordinating the production of eleven district landscape assessments within the County assessment framework, working in partnership with the District Authorities in Hampshire. The primary purpose was to develop a better understanding of the local landscape character, diversity, and sensitivity; and achieve a consistency of approach in landscape assessment to inform policy making and planning decisions. In effect, set up a framework to provide a context for sustainable development.

DURHAM: THE INFLUENCE OF CHARACTER ON POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS - GED LAWSON, DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

Landscape character assessment can be carried out at a variety of scales from broad strategic studies at a regional or national level to detailed local studies, the purpose of the study and the character of the landscape informing the level at which the process of characterisation takes place.

It is critical to the utility of any assessment that the scale at which it is undertaken, and the methodology used, are suited to its purposes. Detail can get in the way of a strategic understanding of landscape which might be needed at a regional or county level. The broad generalisations of a strategic study are often of little use to site specific decision making at a local level.

The link between the scale at which character is assessed and the scale at which policies are being developed isn't always a simple one. Broad scale characterisation often fails to bring the necessary spatial dimension to development policies and plans even at a strategic level. Issues like condition and strength of character for example often need to be investigated at a small scale in order to build up a strategic picture of landscape quality.

Most local authorities whether at county or district level will need multi-purpose landscape assessments which give them a full understanding of the range of scales at which landscape character can be usefully described and understood. This hierarchical approach often emerges naturally from the process of landscape assessment and is a feature of a detailed county-wide assessment currently being carried out by Durham County Council. Its development has been informed by the experience of a number of landscape assessments carried out in recent years and attempts to use these to inform planning policies.

The *North Pennines AONB* landscape assessment carried out by Land Use Consultants for the Countryside Commission is a 'medium scale' study. While it underpins the AONB designation, and is occasionally referred to in development control situations, it isn't otherwise reflected in planning policies at county or district level. The very detailed study of the *Pennine Dales ESA's* carried out by MAFF is seen principally as a land management tool which again has not influenced policy making. The assessment carried out for the *Great North Forest* led to the production of landscape strategies for local management zones which have been acknowledged by District Wide Local Plans as supplementary guidance.

These assessments share in common the fact that they were carried out by agencies other than local authorities for their own purposes. Their limited influence on planning policies is partly a product of their respective methodologies but largely arises from the fact that they cross administrative boundaries and don't give comprehensive district or county wide coverage.

The *County Durham Landscape Assessment (CDLA)* was a strategic study similar in scale to *Countryside Character* but also identifying sub-regional landscapes at the level below its regional character areas. This was originally referred to in the County Structure Plan Review (CSPR) but has now been replaced in that role by *Countryside Character*. The broad scale nature of both of these studies has precluded their use as anything other than supplementary guidance and

neither have substantially influenced the CSPR which still essentially retains a traditional 'ALV' approach to landscape conservation - augmented by a generic policy on the conservation of local landscape character. Neither study brings a spatial dimension to issues like variations in landscape quality, or sensitivity to/capacity for development which development plans need to address.

The CDLA has been used in targeting agri-environmental initiatives like Countryside Stewardship and was used in a landscape capacity study for wind energy development. This formed part of *Renewable Energy in County Durham*, an ETSU sponsored study from which CSPR policies on wind energy were developed and which is referred to as supplementary guidance. The sub-regional landscapes identified in the study were found to be the most useful level at which to undertake the capacity study which identifies areas of search based on wind resources and levels of constraint. The coarser grained regional character areas failed to pick up variations in character which had consequences for this process, but so equally did finer grained local character areas.

The *Exposed Coalfield Study* (ECS) was undertaken as character based landscape capacity study to identify areas of search for opencast mining. It covered an area of some 70,000 hectares identifying several thousand *landcover units* which were amalgamated into larger *landcover tracts* and assessed in terms of their sensitivity to surface mining. This study may be used to inform the development of preferred areas/areas of search for opencast mining, or be assimilated into a county-wide landscape strategy forming supplementary guidance to underpin criteria-based policies.

The scale at which this assessment was carried out was found to be well-suited to its task, and much more so than a previous study which had assessed quality and sensitivity at the scale of sub-regional character areas (coalfield valleys). This had failed to pick up variations in character and quality at a scale which could be used to significantly influence policies for coal. The ECS was notable in the extent to which it identified variations in quality which reflected some existing AGLV designations, but being carried out at the level of landcover failed to identify variations in character affected by visual influences like the intrusiveness or otherwise of built development, roads and transmission lines.

What these studies have shown in Durham is that the character of the landscape needs to be understood at many different levels if it is to inform the development of policies or provide useful supplementary guidance at either a strategic or local level. A pilot project nearing completion on the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment is indicating that to contribute to the Structure Plan or Local Plans it is necessary to know both that a particular local landscape is of the type *Wooded Vale-side* and that it is part of an *Escarpment Vale*, which in turn is part of a *Dissected Scarp*, which form part of a larger *Escarpment* which forms part of a *Limestone Plateau*. Understanding only one element in the hierarchy, as earlier studies have done, greatly limits the contribution that landscape character assessment can make to the planning process.

Ged Lawson has been employed as a Landscape Architect by Durham County Council for the last ten years. During that time he has been principally

involved in landscape planning both in development control and policy development. He has carried out a number of landscape assessments in the county including a strategic assessment which informed the development of Countryside Character Areas in the region, and a detailed assessment of the county's exposed coalfield. He is currently working on a number of character based projects including the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment Local Landscape Assessment, the Bradbury Carrs Landscape Appraisal and a new County Durham Landscape Assessment.

KENT: COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER OR LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS? - IAN PARKER, KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

This brief presentation touches upon three aspects regarding the discussion around Character studies and landscape designations; how things stand in Kent, the perception of the attitudes from members and the public and finally the arguments around a place for both systems.

Kent has a very rich and varied landscape with nine Landscape Character units at regional level and 84 character units at the more local county level. There could be some further subdivision at District level. About 50% of the county is designated as AONB or SLA.

The characterisation of the county is a more recent practice when compared with the designations. It is not as well embedded in the processes of the County Council as the SLA's.

Over the several years that characterisation studies have been undertaken in Kent the techniques have evolved. Studies were undertaken by a variety of means from consultants, through short term contracts and now by 'in house' specialist staff. This variety of mechanisms has had some enriching advantages but it also gave rise to a loss of ownership and depth of knowledge which comes with long term contact.

In contrast SLAs are well understood, stable and well tested. The principle of designation as an effective means of protection is therefore well embedded in County policy. Characterisation is not as yet embedded in policy but we are seeking to enrich the process through the immanent 4th Review of the Counties structure plan.

When debates are opened about the extent of SLAs there is a strong demand to retain and extend. This attitude would not be prevalent if there was a perception that SLAs did not add value and could be easily substituted by Characterisation.

The outcomes of designation are clear whereas there is a tendency for characterisation studies to be more 'story' than crisp conclusions. 'Gapping up the hedgerows' is an all too frequent guideline in Kent which emerges from a characterisation study. The HOW is often missing and a much more difficult question to answer. This gives rise to a key difference. Characterisation often suggests actions which are out of the direct control of the authority to deliver. Designations in contrast are primarily protecting mechanisms which say, after lengthy consultation, that 'We don't welcome that here'

Designations tend to draw in funding. The AONB's attract considerable support to ensure that the commodity is protected. We need to think carefully about the landscapes needs in general both designated and un-designated. The pointers in PPG7 are therefore welcomed. However, depending on your point of view there are comforting statements within PPG7 for both advocates of designation and advocates of characterisation. Characterisation addresses issues for all landscapes not just those protected by designations. The conclusions reached in characterisation studies can be prioritised under a series of headings such as; those in greatest need to restore, enhance or protect the character, those where the authority is directly responsible i.e. their own land resource and those where funding is available. The simple facts of life

mean that designated issues can rise to the top of the pile because they tend to attract funding more readily. How often is that we get deflected by chasing the funding rather than chasing the need? It should be possible for characterisation to successfully argue the direction of funding to the areas of greatest need. Time will tell if this vision can be achieved and in Kent we still need to do a lot of marketing the merits of characterisation to win over the hearts and minds of our planning and employing colleagues. We are striving to bring about change in a manner where the user of the characterisation studies becomes the promoter of their use rather than the author of the report.

The language we often use is an impediment to communicating the message. SLAs are well understood and valued. They have been honed over time and have achieved a general consensus. The mechanisms for evaluating their status have been largely lost over time. Some were not satisfactory in any event but have been tempered by public debate which has provided sound results. In a way, designated areas define the most popular landscapes in Kent. Places when people aspire to live. Places when people like to spend their leisure time. They are places where you can 'hum' the tune of the landscape and can remember the melody a few days later. Like the Green Belt, people cherish and are very protective about their SLAs especially if they are fortunate enough to live or work in them.

Elected Members value the designations and value the local influence they have to recommend and modify SLAs through the structure plan process. Planners like SLAs because they provide quick and consistent interpretation of policy. In contrast Characterisation studies encourage thinking before reacting. As descriptive studies they provide context for decision making rather than the solution itself. Through evolution we have found that characterisation studies can be extended to provide robust analysis which absorbs many of the benefits of the designation and provides a more informed base of policy and decision making.

At this moment in time we have in Kent one tried and tested system and a relatively newly emerging practice which is full of potential. People can be confused about parallel studies such as Environmental Capital despite embracing many of the characterisation principles. Until there is further stability in the evolution of systems it is unlikely that any convincing justification can be put forward in Kent for the replacement of county designations with characterisation. The way forward is therefore a route which maximises the mutual benefits of the two systems. I am convinced of the merits of the characterising approach we have adopted in Kent and that over time it will be as highly regarded as the current SLAs. When this is the case SLAs may begin to wither on the vine but there is no intention to prune them to ground level even if we as professional advisors are confident about the pedigree of the new stock.

Ian Parker is employed by Kent County Council where he is Head of their Landscape & Energy Group within Kent Property Services. The group is a multidisciplinary environmental practice which is made up of three teams; Landscape management, Landscape Planning and Design and Energy Management. There are 21 landscape employees and 4 energy management colleagues. The Group provides the county council with a Landscape advice service which includes the whole breadth of the landscape function from feasibility through to management. The Group also has its proposals and advise regularly tested at Public Inquiry.

In the context of Landscape Character Assessment the Group has recently completed the characterisation of the County and is now embarking on a review to analyse the descriptive units to provide more usable outputs on GIS. This further work is designed to influence policy for both Structure Plans and Local Plans and then subsequently support development control activities. The Group is ideally placed to do this and is working with both the County's planning officers and those within selected District Councils. A recent Survey for Canterbury City Council has expanded to Groups experience in providing advice in a format which meets the local needs and embraces the thinking behind much of the valuable Midland experience.

Role of Character Assessment in Local Planning

ASSESSING DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY: STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE - DAVID TYLDESLEY, DAVID TYLDESLEY & ASSOCIATES

Methods built on earlier work commissioned by the Fife Council and SNH in respect of built development at St. Andrews. Since then methods further developed in capacity evaluations for Argyll and Bute (all developments) and Fife Council (Golf Courses at St. Andrews).

Original LCAs at 1/50,000 scale too general for capacity planning but an essential starting point, used in preliminary “sifting” of areas and settlements suitable for further study. 1/25,000 assessments more useful and little further analysis of classification needed to progress to detailed 1/10,000 scale studies.

Method:

- Delineate, describe and classify area of study
- Identify type and scale of change to be accommodated
- Identify criteria for assessment
- Apply criteria in impartial, rigorous assessment
- Discuss conclusions and present findings in meaningful, understandable and usable way.

Can have development led approach or area led approach but both similar. Settlement landscape capacity assessment works well, produces useful outputs to planners. Wider capacity assessments eg windfarms, sawmills, tourism developments beyond resources in large areas of most Scottish authorities. In Clackmannanshire, settlement landscape capacity study followed by a green belt evaluation of function, justification, boundaries, sustainable landscape management, recreational developments etc. Very strong natural / cultural heritage focus.

Capacity evaluation criteria may include eg, effects on physical and visible components of landscape; effects on landscape attributes such as settlement pattern; effects on landscape experience; effects on specific landscape features (eg Designed Landscapes); visual effects (on views of and from settlements and viewpoints). Need to be clear what you want the assessment / criterion to do. Assessment needs to be repeatable over time and understandable to public, Local Plan Reporters / Inspectors etc.

Methods and criteria getting simpler and more robust. Need to be “planner friendly”. Useful practical work with planners in the field in Argyll and Bute will help to inform methodologies. If a structured approach is adopted no problem with subjectivity, but need to avoid esoteric landscape architect “speak”. Landscape Architects need thorough understanding of pressures for change in the landscape and historic and modern / evolving settlement

patterns. This is very important in Scotland where settlement pattern is still very clear / intact over very large areas. Keep findings straight forward, use matrices, schedules, tables, simple maps and diagrams.

Dilemma of planning authorities wanting adequate detail and prescription but, at the same time, flexibility. Dangers of releasing too much into public domain too soon, especially in Stirling where major new growth /new settlement area was identified, later included as main proposal in the Structure Plan.

Also problem of low budgets, despite need to research, experiment and innovate; planning authorities prepared to risk small amounts of resources but lack confidence to go further until they see the outputs. Landscape Architects need to recognise Planners have many other factors to consider (many of which we would sympathise with, ie sustainable transport and environments) but landscape can be profoundly influential. Every study / project is a step forward, rubbing shoulders and enhancing awareness and utility of landscape character approach. Don't always get perfect but infinitely better than nothing!

Acknowledgement:

This contribution is based on 2 Projects separately commissioned by Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, both jointly with Scottish Natural Heritage, in 1998-99. The Joint Structure Plan published March 1999 (Consultative Draft), incorporates key findings and recommendations of both reports.

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND DESIGN: THE THAMES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY - DONNA CLACK, THAMES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY OFFICER

The initiative for the Thames Landscape Strategy originally sprang from the 1991 exhibition of ideas for the capital's river organised by the Royal Fine Art Commission. As part of the exhibition, landscape architect Kim Wilkie showed how the upstream Thames is linked by a network of historic views and vistas, which give the landscape its structure. These include the incredible (and now protected) 15 km view from Richmond to St. Paul's Cathedral in the city centre, the protected arcadian view from Richmond Hill, as well as other lesser known local views to buildings of significance.

The ideas of the exhibition coincided with a growing concern to find a way of addressing the planning needs of an area of such special character as the Thames. Although many issues are covered in the local authorities' Unitary Development Plans, there was no co-ordinated strategy which crossed over the borough boundaries. Within London, the boundaries of all but one riparian authority run along the centre of the river!

Commissioned in 1992 by a partnership comprising key national environmental agencies and the four local borough councils, the Strategy now forms the 100 year plan for the river Thames between Hampton and Kew. This was the first time that the government's agencies had joined forces in such a way.

Throughout the study, there was consultation at national, local government and grass roots level. Landowners and local interest groups were closely involved in the preparation of the Strategy. A series of interviews and major public meetings were held as a forum for discussing and agreeing the proposals.

Role in delivering landscape enhancement

The Strategy was launched in June 1994. Ultimately the responsibility for implementation lies with the local authorities, statutory agencies and landowners, but to facilitate this it was vital that several new mechanisms were in place:

- Adoption of the Thames Landscape Strategy as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the local authorities and gradual incorporation into Unitary Development Plans.
 - Employment of a project Co-ordinator to encourage implementation of the Strategy, raise awareness of river issues and fundraise for individual projects.
 - Continuation of an expanded joint working arrangement
 - Finally, funding for the core running costs of the Strategy was to be allocated initially from the Partners but opportunities for funding from other sources explored.
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Role in raising design standards

The key role of the Strategy has been to provide co-ordination between the various organisations which have interests in the river. These range from statutory, such as the Environment Agency and local authorities to voluntary, for example local societies and rowing clubs. By widening and co-ordinating the consultation process, the interests of a wide a group as possible can be used to inform the deign process and projects can be modified to meet the needs of the maximum number of users.

Since its launch in 1994, the Strategy has been responsible for bringing about over 50 individual projects, for example.

The restoration of the 18th century listed riverside 'Garrick's Temple', in Hampton.

The Strategy was able to bring together a partnership of three other organisations to develop and implement the restoration project. These partners were, the council as landowners, an local environmental group formed of local residents and a charity called the Temple Trust.

Two successful Heritage Lottery bids were made and the required matching funding secured from charitable trusts and donations. The total project cost was just over £130,000.

The Strategy helped to identify areas in the Kew reach which were suitable a traditional type of bank repair work known as willow spiling, and with the help of the Environment Agency, the local British Trust for Conservation Volunteers carried out the work on the tidal Thames last winter. Similar work was carried last spring out as part of a major bank restoration scheme on the non-tidal Thames, opposite the Privy Gardens at Hampton Court Palace.

In summary, the major strength of the Strategy is its ability to facilitate local projects albeit co-ordinated under one strategic banner. It does not try to impose 'standard' solutions, but rather respects the river's differences and looks to the local landscape character and local characters (i.e. those communities using that landscape) to help guide the design process.

Donna Clack is a landscape architect and Member of the Landscape Institute. She has worked in both private practice and on urban regeneration projects in the voluntary sector. She was appointed as Co-ordinator of the Thames Landscape Strategy in 1994.

She is employed by the Thames Landscape Strategy Partnership, comprising four local authorities and five national environmental agencies. Her role is to translate the Strategy into action on the ground, through awareness raising and consultation, fundraising, project development, volunteer effort and the building of partnerships. Already, over 50 of the projects set out in the 100 year Strategy have been achieved. Donna is currently providing advice on the establishment of the next Thames Landscape Strategy for the Kew to Chelsea section of the river.

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT: A DISTRICT COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE - IAN PHILLIPS, HART DISTRICT COUNCIL

“Our English countryside is one of the most heavily man-made habitats in Europe. To make it into a green museum would be to belie its whole history.” Nicholas Ridley

Background to the Landscape Assessment

Hart District is largely a rural authority – largest settlement (Fleet) has pop of 40,000. Many small rural settlements. Located on important communications corridor – on M3, close to M4 in north and A31 in south. On main Waterloo to Southampton rail line. Population largely dormitory with high car ownership and predominantly affluent and articulate. Most employment outside the District.

Many farmers and landowners seeking to diversify into housing, golf courses and almost anything other than farming. Significant pressure for new greenfield development, especially from housebuilders.

Much of the District included within a Special Protection Area, under the EU Birds Directive. A number of SSSIs and numerous locally designated Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINCs). Quarrying of sands and gravels in north with significant coniferous forest cover over heathlands. Open chalk downland in south.

The aims of the commissioning the study were:

- To reflect draft County Structure Plan and Central Government policies
- To recognise the character of the local countryside and ensure any development would be appropriate to its context.

The objectives of the assessment were:

- To record, describe and analyse Hart’s countryside
- To evaluate landscape quality
- To identify broad management guidelines for conservation, restoration or enhancement.

Consultants were selected and commissioned as more efficient, experienced and cost-effective to deliver the project than in-house resources.

Use in Policy Formation

Initial summary report incorporated into Local Plan – established distinct geographical landscape character areas for whole of District – excluding areas within settlement boundaries.

In line with central government policy as expressed in PPG7.

Co-ordinated with Hampshire County Council Structure Plan – disagreement with EIP Panel who, in my view, failed to understand that Landscape

Character Areas are a tool, based upon objective analysis, not a new designation for protection.

Not intended to be a restraint on development in the countryside, more a constraint to be acknowledged by any development proposals. LCAs should reinforce the aspirations of PPG1, which requires the design of new development to respect the context of the site.

Use in Development Control

The Hart Landscape Character Assessment has so far been tested mainly through the Local Plan Public Inquiry. No significant objections were received relating to the Report or the associated policies.

Virtually all corporate or landowner objectors to the plan commissioned landscape consultants to address not only the landscape constraints and opportunities of their proposals, but also to seek to demonstrate how well their proposals complied with the identified characteristics and the management objectives set out in the Assessment.

This provided a high degree of validation for the Report, as did the amount of attention paid to landscape issues, especially when compared to Hart's previous local plan inquiry of 1993, where these were paid scant concern.

The Assessment is primarily of value when dealing with development proposals in the countryside. It is of great assistance as a reference to both planning officers and developers in identifying key landscape issues for any area and measuring how effectively these are addressed by the proposals.

It is also of value in dealing with large-scale developments within settlement boundaries as these are inevitably adjacent or close to identified areas of distinct landscape character. The report identifies many of the key characteristics to be taken into account in the siting, layout and design of new developments.

Lessons for other authorities

- Analyse and identify character areas over the whole administrative area (possibly including urban areas if you can) – everywhere has character, for better or worse.
 - Liaise with your neighbours and with relevant strategic authorities to ensure consistency at boundaries – landscape crosses political boundaries.
 - Take a comprehensive approach in:
 - analysing what is there
 - identifying where intervention is required to restore degraded character
 - identifying where any change must be especially sensitive to avoid degrading strong character identity
 - Ensure that your report's findings are adequately and objectively justified
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- Beware of political or pressure group influence – it plays no part in an objective landscape appraisal
- Frame your policies carefully. Landscape character area identification does not mean protection against development – but development may be subject to greater constraints in areas that are identified as sensitive to change.
- Use the study with DC planners, committee members and developers to promote an appreciation of distinctive landscape character (topography: terrain; geology; materials; agricultural, settlement and communications patterns; traditional structures; economic development influences; i.e. provide a local geography lesson.). This may encourage better informed negotiations with developers and distinctive new developments as well as providing more justifiable (and therefore successful) reasons for refusing permissions.

Ian Phillips is Landscape Planning Manager at Hart District Council, based in Fleet, Hampshire. He is a chartered landscape architect and town planner and has worked in both the public and private sectors. He is a member and former Chair of the Landscape Institute's Technical Committee.

He has represented the LI and the Hampshire Local Government Landscape Group in updating government planning guidance on landscape in new developments. He has also helped to initiate a new national standard for specification in landscape design, which is now in use by landscape practices throughout the UK.

He has spent the past year at Hart project managing a major new residential settlement of 1700 houses at Elvetham Heath, Fleet. It is now under construction and aims to set new standards of quality in urban design and landscape provision in the housing sector.

His interests include trees, reconfiguring his computer, blues music, gardening and arguing.

Ian commissioned and managed Hart's landscape character assessment, carried out by Scott Wilson Resource Consultants, which was published in Autumn, 1997.

***COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER: THE COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE -
JOHN GITTINS, CHESHIRE LANDSCAPE TRUST***

"Every village, town or city is not merely a place in space, but a drama in time. All time has gone over all places and every place is centre of the world. If you learn to know your place well, and in so doing learn to love it more, it will help you to understand and appreciate other places, and to sympathise with their problems".

Patrick Geddes

"Landscapes are a physical record of our history and labour, our inventiveness and sense of community. They are also records of the continuing struggle between private ambition and social need". Richard Mabey.

In many ways these two quotations link *Countryside Character Assessment and the Community Perspective*. People value their surroundings, caring passionately about a particular place because they were born there, have come to live there, played there, or because they associate it with their family, friends or lovers. It is valued for what is seen, a joy in itself and as a reminder of events in our lives and history. Ask a Welshman or woman and they would speak of their BRO/FRO, that area/locale they know as home and with which they readily identify. They may then go on to speak of CYNEFIN, a word used to describe the 'landscape with everything in it', a holistic term, which incorporates place, people, nature, culture, customs and traditions. Surely this is what the Countryside Character process seeks to capture.

Cultural and historical associations put special values on particular places, as do links with writers, composers, painters and famous people. The historical development of an area is recorded on the ground for example, by old earthworks, ridge and furrow systems and field boundaries. Such features link us with our past and forebears and can give us a better understanding of our place in the world. *The landscape is indeed a story*. A story in which *Place, People and Nature* intertwine to create a landscape which is a palimpsest, a text upon which each generation has written its own social autobiography, without, being able in most instances to erase the contribution of its predecessors.

From our standpoint at the Cheshire Landscape Trust and the communities with whom we work, Countryside Character is seen as an expression of the way natural and cultural elements of landscape combine to make areas different from each other, giving them a unique '*sense of place*' based on *local distinctiveness*. In Cheshire, as elsewhere, we live in a *cultural landscape*, where common history and everyday nature combine to make it what it is. This is a concept with which individuals and communities can readily identify.

Central to our way of working is the recognition that we are all *stakeholders*. As *individuals*. As members of *communities of place* (geographical communities). As members of *communities of interest*, for example, members of the Landscape Institute, Royal Town Planning Institute or the Women's Institute. All have a part to place, indeed we are all experts. Our approach is to try and weave a seamless tapestry linking feelings and associations for place with the intrinsic qualities of the landscape. So our personal associations link with the factors which make up the basic character of the landscape, that is physical factors such as geology, geomorphology, climate, soil type, vegetation, land use and other human activities such as farming patterns, settlement form and building design.

During the past ten years, a substantial part of our work has been linked to three of the Countryside Commission's pioneering ventures in the field of community participation. We were one of 17 demonstration projects in their Countryside Community Action Programme - which led to the establishment of the highly successful Rural Action for the Environment Programme - in which we developed *Community Landscape Strategies and Action Plans*. Currently we are working with two local authorities and the Countryside Agency helping six communities to prepare their own *Village Design Statements*. And finally we are helping five communities to pilot projects in the joint Countryside Agency/Heritage Lottery Fund *Local Heritage Initiative*. In each of these projects we have been concerned with discussing and agreeing landscape boundaries, using words and images to describe landscape, seeing landscape as an ongoing narrative. The 'we' being people living in communities of place and individuals working in the landscape and planning professions in local authorities, academic institutions and statutory bodies.

Throughout we have sought to link *Product* (tangible outputs) such as Parish Maps, Community Landscape Strategies and Action Plans, 'local' Local Agenda 21's, Village Design Statements and the Local Heritage Initiative Projects, with *Process* (intangible benefits), and in all instances combining this with action beyond the initial phase. This approach links well to the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development - 'A Better Quality of Life' by giving national meaning and recognition to local action.

Based on experience in Cheshire, we can say with confidence that local people have shown that they can make a significant contribution to the Landscape (Countryside Character) process through the production and implementation of Community Landscape Strategies and Action Plans. From the community Village Design Statement process, the same pattern is emerging, this however, has the added value in that they can become Supplementary Planning Guidance in support of the Local Plan, thereby having a direct influence on policy formulation. This latter example has real meaning for people at the grassroots and could well be used as a precedent for trying to obtain similar status for Community Landscape Strategies, by using the Countryside Design Summary process as a lever. The Local Heritage Initiative Projects are also showing similar positive outcomes. From the perspective of both the geographical community and the facilitators, community based initiatives are satisfying, indeed enjoyable. It also should be recognised that this type of activity can have heavy resource implications in time and finance, and is no panacea.

From the community perspective, local people certainly have a role as contributors to, and participants in the production of Countryside Design Summaries, doing so at the micro level of their parish and linking into adjacent areas under the umbrella of the wider Local Authority led process. What local people can bring to the process was well expressed by Seamus Heaney, in a lecture on 'The Sense of Place' delivered at the Ulster Museum in 1975, when he said, "I think that there are two ways in which a place is known and cherished. One is lived, illiterate and unconscious, the other is learned, literate and conscious". Our experience has demonstrated that local people are well aware of what makes their place what it is. They have brought knowledge and skills to the process, they have learn new skills and added to their existing knowledge, as a result they have developed confidence in themselves and their place and have become empowered to take further action to care for their landscape and community

In the context of today's workshop, and the Countryside Design Summary process, local people living in communities of place, helped and encouraged by members of communities of interest such as the Landscape Institute and the RTPI have demonstrated the capacity to contribute to and sustain the type of action which are at the very heart of the Countryside Character and Planning Process. Participants can certainly identify with the following words of W. G. Hoskins, "I expect a landscape to speak to me and to ask questions, or rather to pose problems and challenges which demand interpretation and explanation". Making the most of the value of community participation and action requires changes in individual and agency attitudes. *We need champions in the landscape and planing professions and in communities of place, men and women who believe and act in ways which engage and enlarge the constituency of participation and empowerment.* Championing also needs to be fortified by the creation of an organisational and support infra structure. *This can be established by action in three areas,*

- **Training** in skills necessary for countryside character assessment and community participation, leading to action,
- **Networks** to exchange information, experience and provide mutual support and
- **Bridges** to make links between different sectors (public, private, voluntary and community) and disciplines, for example, landscape, planning and community development.

Indeed, the Countryside Character Process is truly about partnership and action, for Places, People and Nature.

John Gittins has worked as a teacher, planner, community development worker and countryside manager, in the voluntary, local authority and statutory sectors. He is currently Director of the Cheshire Landscape Trust and consultant to the National Federation of Women's Institutes on Sustainable Development and Agenda 21.

Countryside Character & Planning Workshop - Discussion Sessions

The morning and afternoon sessions were followed by open discussions, chaired by Jeremy Worth (Countryside Agency). Comments were invited from all participants under the following broad themes:

- raising the profile of landscape character assessment
- landscape character assessment vs local landscape designations - a useful dichotomy?
- applying landscape character assessment to urban areas and in development capacity studies
- does landscape character assessment provide sufficient advice on the layout and design of new development?
- to what extent is historic landscape assessment useful to planners and local communities?

Raising the Profile of Landscape Character Assessment

We need to find ways of presenting landscape character assessment as an opportunity rather than a constraint. The DETR is still cautious about the approach and feels there is, as yet, insufficient evidence to support its wider application.

- Need to raise the profile of landscape issues in government departments, as well as local authorities.
 - The use of language is important in getting the message across to decision-makers and in public inquiry situations - this would benefit from consistency across the country, although this is difficult as national policy in relation to character assessment is still unclear. The Joint Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage new guidance on Landscape Character Assessment should help to rectify this.
 - Some see the term 'landscape' as more restrictive than 'countryside'; again, the new guidance may help to define a broader understanding of landscape than simply visual or aesthetic.
 - Landscape conservation is often seen as being at odds with the government's wider policy objectives, such as social exclusion - we need to explain that it is not and to describe the benefits *ie* the contribution landscape quality makes to the economy, to promoting regional identity and to many social objectives.
 - PPGs could be stronger on landscape and urban character issues. There should be scope to draw on the links to wider objectives, such as 'planning for sustainable development'.
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- Need good case study examples of where landscape character assessment has made a difference 'on the ground'.
- The message needs to be conveyed to the Planning Inspectorate too.
- Planners still tend to be too concerned with development control. There needs to be a robust methodology for taking the character approach from description to development capacity (the revised CA/SNH guidance should help in this respect). Graphic communication is often better than words.
- There were calls for DETR to take a stronger lead in raising the profile of landscape character and defining a consistent approach *ie* without clear government endorsement many local members and regional GOs were too cautious in adopting a character-based approach to planning.

Landscape Character Assessment vs Local Landscape Designations

The distinction between landscape character assessment and local landscape designations was often felt to be over-emphasised. Is it a useful dichotomy?

- It is important to look at the landscape holistically - this means being flexible with boundary designations and recognising that they may lead to pressures for development in undesignated, but necessarily suitable, locations.
 - Need to be clear on the distinction between national and local designations. Many local authorities are keen to retain local landscape designations and they also carry a great deal of community support as members of the public readily identify with landscape character.
 - Problem that DETR qualified its support for the character approach during the drafting of PPG7 - this undermined ongoing work on landscape character. Publication of the revised Landscape Character Assessment guidance is due and the time is ripe for the DETR to adopt a more positive approach.
 - There is a risk that nature conservation and historic designations will be retained, while confusion develops over the approach to landscape issues, particularly if local landscape designations are discredited and the character approach is misunderstood.
 - Important to emphasize that the two approaches are compatible - landscape character assessment can lead to more robust, fully justified local landscape designations. Definitions are important: - designation is a mechanism, but landscape character assessment is a tool which can be used to inform and refine the criteria for designations. Landscape character assessment therefore leads to more robust designations.
 - In Scotland the Scottish Office has put the whole issue of local landscape designations on hold, allowing time for planners to see the advantages of landscape character assessment - which is more widely accepted in Scotland.
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- There was some scepticism about whether local landscape designations were meeting their objectives - scope for review to see if they are delivering in accordance with objectives. Ironically, any review will almost certainly involve a character-based approach.
- The Countryside Agency's *Character of England* map will provide a framework for reporting on the state of the countryside. It is generally considered to be too broad-brush for use at a local scale, but gives an excellent context for local authority work. Publication of the revised *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance* will boost the debate and the Agency is also setting up some demonstration areas (the first will be Durham County Council) to show how the national character area framework can be applied from regional to local scale character assessment. This process should provide a basis for building consensus and robust decision-making involving local stakeholders. The new *Countryside Character Network* will also provide opportunities to explore the application of the approach.
- Scale is a key issue - most landscape designations (AONBs AGLVs) are relatively extensive, while those relating to nature conservation are site-based and much smaller in scale.
- There is a risk that local designations could be counter-productive and even damaging - may lead to a policy vacuum in areas without such protection. It is therefore essential that landscape character assessment is developed. It is already proving to be robust at public inquiry.
- Landscape character can be 'good' or 'bad' and it is important to avoid confusing landscape character with landscape quality. If the approach is to be used with confidence at public inquiry it must be matched with a robust method for assessing significance and sensitivity to change, such as Environmental Capital.
- There can be a range of different opinions about the capacity of a landscape to accommodate change. It is important to ensure that the character assessment is objective and to guard against any form of landscape ranking or categorisation.
- It takes time to build consensus and local authorities should not try to rush the process of landscape character assessment *ie* it may easily take more than a year to complete. The landscape assessment report is only the starting point for a longer process, during which the work is honed and developed, allowing everybody to have their say and sign up to a consensus view.

Applying Landscape Character Assessment to Urban Areas and to Development Capacity Studies

- Landscape character assessment has influenced the development strategy for Hampshire, but other factors, such as infrastructure, were also important. This was also the case in Stirling, where the combination of landscape character assessment and transport strategy (provision of a
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passenger railway) provided the rationale for planning a new settlement area.

- Landscape character assessment has also informed decision-making in a recent review of the Winchester City Plan (a pilot study for the environmental capital approach) and this work suggests the importance of fully integrated landscape/townscape character assessment.
- Assessment of urban areas and urban fringes requires a different approach and a finer grain of analysis, including different types of layout, siting and use of materials - it must also tackle the difficult issues of how to create good quality urban fringe landscapes.
- We have been relatively successful in promoting landscape character assessment in the countryside, but what about urban areas, where infill is damaging the character of the remaining green open spaces - we need to be more even-handed in applying the techniques.
- There may be opportunities to use PPG1 (design which respects surroundings) or some of the comments on the public realm in the *Urban Task Force* Report as a hook for applying the process in urban areas, but it was felt that there is still insufficient guidance from government to develop townscape assessment further.

Does Landscape Character Assessment Provide Sufficient Advice on the Layout and Design of New Development?

- Local Plan policies which apply the landscape character approach in development control through the use of the wording 'shall not adversely affect '[local landscape character] does not necessarily exclude innovative design. The character assessment always raises the level of debate on landscape, visual and design issues and helps to prevent a stagnated view of landscape *ie* preservation through halting change.
 - We need to build in opportunities for landscape enhancement and restoration particularly in areas with a degraded character.
 - Good design skills are essential - in local authorities and from developers - but government policy must set the framework and take the lead, particularly as local authorities currently lack the resources and incentive to promote and apply the approach.
 - The approach generally requires developers to initiate higher quality design, but it is essential that the local authority continues to take an overview and retain consistency. It is not the same as environmental impact assessment, where the developer has to pay the full price of the assessment process.
 - In Scotland, the Lowland Crofting Initiative has led to the delivery of significant landscape enhancement while supporting development in rural areas and a capacity evaluation of NE towns (in England) has been included in the draft Regional Planning Guidance for the NE.
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To What Extent Is Historic Landscape Assessment Useful to Planners and Local Communities?

- Local Heritage Initiative Pilots (in Cheshire) are based on the historic landscape. This is often the starting point for involvement by all members of local communities (both long-term residents and newcomers).
- There is a risk of NIMBYISM and a fossilised view of the landscape if community groups react against any form of landscape change.
- Hampshire's Historic Landscape Assessment has been fundamental in deciding priorities for landscape management action. It also provides evidence that members of the public respond well (and often first) to historic aspects of landscape character.

Overview and Response (Richard Longman - DETR)

The plea for stronger central guidance from the Department was recognised but it should be understood that these issues have to be resolved at the local level. The answer is that we need both and that a strong steer from central government is only appropriate if there is a clear sense of direction.

Promoting landscape character assessment would not automatically lead to more resources- the money must come from elsewhere and it may not be forthcoming.

There is a need for champions to push the agenda forward - for landscape character assessment, local participation - and that these may arise more by accident than design. They cannot be prescribed.

Questions and Concerns

- The relatively open-ended policy in Hart DC prompted questions about how specific proposals might be tested. Would this mean an increasing burden on development control or development planning? If so, then what would be the impact on the speed and efficiency of decision-making?

Reaction from participants suggested that they recognised the issue raised but that there was evidence that landscape character assessments do give helpful advice and save time in development control decisions.

- There was recognition that advice from the DETR on good practice would be helpful and felt that the forthcoming new guidance on urban design may have some useful material.
 - Not everybody likes the planning system - it is often criticised and the DETR is therefore particularly sensitive to issues of speed, efficiency and quality. If standards are not met, the whole system of planning controls is threatened. Seeking the perfect approach can sometimes be counter-productive as people are looking to the system to deliver on all fronts.
 - Richard Longman would welcome comments and ideas - letters should be addressed to him at the DETR, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1P.
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Chairman's Summing Up (Jeremy Worth- Countryside Agency)

- Landscape is clearly now a factor in planners' decision-making and is a recognised part of sustainable development. In that sense the argument is won. But there is a need to turn the concepts into tools for implementation and the approach still requires development so that it can be a day-to-day influence, readily incorporated into Local Plans.
 - The discussion has dispelled the idea that there is a stark distinction between landscape character assessment and local landscape designations. The approach is comprehensive and covers a range of interests. It applies to *all* landscapes, not just special areas, and can give effective direction to future landscape change.
 - The issue of public participation was raised - but perhaps not taken far enough. Is this something for the professionals to do?
 - The idea behind landscape assessment is that landscape change should lead to high quality landscapes - the issue of how to feed landscape assessment into large scale urban change remains, but this suggests a strategic approach should dominate.
 - We need to think about resources and explore ways to engage developers so that their investment decisions assist the process.
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