DRAFT - Guidance on Local Landscape Areas
This draft revised guidance on Local Landscape Areas will be revised in light of comments received during the consultation. Account will also be taken of any implications arising from the Scottish Government’s white paper consultation on the review of planning.
Foreword

Local landscape designations – ten years on

Historic Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage jointly developed and published guidance to help local authorities refresh their approach to local landscape designations in 2006.

That guidance has been widely used as part of the local development plan process in designating local landscapes. It remains relevant today as part of a wider, ‘all landscapes’ approach to managing landscape change.

10 years on, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) have now refreshed this guidance. This reflects the outcome of various local landscape designation reviews that have been undertaken, and the ways in which they have been applied. The original guidance referred to these as Special Landscape Area, but to reflect Scottish Planning Policy the name Local Landscape Area is now advocated.

Our natural and cultural heritage contribute to our nation’s well-being. Today it is ever more important to recognise how special local landscapes can be to people. They are relevant to current initiatives in planning and designing green networks, and in sustaining a greener, healthier Scotland.

Scotland’s first Historic Environment Strategy, Our Place in Time, was published in 2014. The strategy specifically highlights the importance of ‘place’ to people’s lives – where we live, work and enjoy ourselves.

Local landscape designations are a valuable tool in the development plan toolbox, reflecting the values that communities attach to their local place and the huge social, economic and environment asset they provide. Designation informs their care and management, and contribute to our environmental stewardship for the future. This guidance aims to help achieve this.
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1. Introduction

Purpose and contents

1.1 This guidance explains the role of the Local Landscape Area (LLA) designation. It will assist local authorities when reviewing and applying them. This focuses on two key roles of LLAs:

- **Managing landscape change** – by taking account of the full range of natural and cultural values attached to landscapes
- **Engaging communities** – by providing the focus for people’s involvement in, and appreciation of, locally valued landscapes

1.2 The guidance is intended primarily for local authorities to use in taking forward their own designation process. Other stakeholders, like developers, landowners and managers, community organisations, environmental and heritage groups, may find this guidance helpful in developing an understanding of LLAs.

1.3 Designation of an area serves three main purposes:

- **Accolade**
  Designation recognises that a specific area has special importance. Celebrating these values raises awareness amongst communities and stakeholders.

- **Policy**
  The designation process provides a useful opportunity to engage communities in identifying policy priorities and objectives. Landscapes continually evolve. This change is managed better if the values of a landscape are better understood. Designation helps to highlight landscape values that are important to communities, and inform this process.

- **Management**
  Identification of specific geographic areas provides a useful means to concentrate effort and direct resources for management.

1.4 A local landscape designation remains a relevant approach today. There is now the opportunity to make LLAs more effective, and create wider benefits. Through this guidance, SNH and HES aim to strengthen and share understanding and support for LLAs among local authorities, the public and other key stakeholders. This guidance therefore:

- promotes greater consistency in the selection and application of LLAs by local authorities
• aims to improve understanding of the relationship between LLAs and other existing heritage and landscape designations
• promotes ‘Local Landscape Areas’ as the standard name (and is the term used in this guidance).

1.5 This guidance has been informed by a review of Scottish local landscape designation practice since guidance was first published in 2006. A working group has steered its preparation, involving staff drawn from Scottish Natural Heritage; Historic Environment Scotland; local authorities that have reviewed, or are in the process of reviewing their local landscape designation; Archaeology Scotland; Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (Scotland); and the National Trust for Scotland.

1.6 Many LLAs are recognised primarily for their cultural/historic assets, or for natural features (for instance, their geology or landform). This approach focuses on individual sites or features. LLAs can be more effective where there is also an understanding and appreciation of the significance of a landscape.

1.7 Following this Introduction, Section 2 provides an overview of practice in designating local landscapes, and Section 3 considers LLA policy in Development Plans. Annex 1 shows the National policy context of local landscape designations. Case Studies are used to illustrate current practice that can inform and help to develop a sound approach, and can be found in Annex 2. Key messages are included in the shaded columns throughout this guidance.

**Landscape as an asset**

1.8 Scotland’s landscapes are a major asset, contributing to our national and regional identities. They enhance the quality of many people’s lives and provide attractive settings, which promote social and economic development (see Figure 1).

1.9 Our coasts, mountains, moorlands and forests are renowned internationally and nationally. *Our Place in Time* (2014) also identifies this value at a local and community level. This distinct identity of our landscapes and the association between people and place is of particular value.

1.10 Scottish Government policy highlights the social, economic and environmental benefits deriving from high-quality places. It is important to facilitate positive change, and maintain and enhance distinctive landscapes. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) identifies local landscape designation as one of the tools to achieve positive change, subject to their purpose and reason for identification being clearly explained, and when they are afforded an appropriate level of protection.
Visiting Scotland: Tourism is vital to Scotland’s economy. In 2015, total overnight and day visitor expenditure was around £8.9 billion. Employment in tourism-related industries is some 7.7% of the Scottish workforce. Surveys consistently confirm that our outstanding scenery and landscape (49% of visits), distinctive history and culture (32% of visits), and the outstanding natural environment are major reasons to visit (Scotland Visitor Survey 2015).

Monuments as well as mountains: The historic environment, a major facet of Scotland’s tourism, is also a prime destination – walking in a landscape, appreciating historic buildings, monuments and archaeological sites is part of our overall enjoyment of landscapes, towns and cityscapes. Almost a third (29%) of recorded visits are to historic attractions. Scotland has a strong, international reputation for tourism and heritage and is placed 12th out of 50 countries for historic buildings and monuments; and 13th for tourism (Nations Brand Index, 2012).

Local products from local places: Traditional products – such as the £3.95 billion whisky trade (2014) – identify with Scotland’s landscapes as a critical feature in their marketing, aiming to build and sustain strong links with tradition, and identity with a specific place. Advertising often uses the unspoilt character of Scotland’s landscape as a backdrop; many features and films draw on landscapes as both a setting and inspiration.

1.11 Local authorities play a vital role in managing change in these landscapes, maintaining their distinctive cultural and natural character. Landscape contributes to many local authority objectives for health improvement and education, for urban
regeneration and rural development, and for community planning and social inclusion.

1.12 An understanding and awareness of the landscape features and special qualities that make specific places distinctive is vital in giving communities a ‘sense of place’. This is recognised in greenspace initiatives, promotion of recreation and responsible access, and conservation of biodiversity and the historic environment. Investing in Scotland’s landscapes brings many and varied benefits.

1.13 Many local authorities have adopted an ‘all landscapes’ approach in their efforts to guide landscape change. This recognises that all places deserve attention, whatever their attributes. Local Landscape Areas are part of this approach. Designation is long established and a well-regarded means of protecting landscapes, and the process of identifying and designating landscapes is part of the Local Development Plan cycle. Authorities should consider the function and continuing relevance of LLAs when preparing their development plan.

1.14 Landscape designation reflects the values that society attaches to a specific landscape. Understanding these involves community engagement and judgement. It is important that any assumptions are set out and justified. Some of the different ways that local authorities have approached this are presented in this guidance. Local authorities have an important role to play in developing consensus on the direction, nature and extent of landscape change, and in facilitating an integrated and collective approach to landscape planning and management, across their area.

1.15 LLAs complement other designations, especially Scotland’s 40 National Scenic Areas (NSAs). The designation of NSAs focuses on scenic value. By contrast, LLAs may be based on a wider set of values. Although LLAs are not considered nationally important, both designations are highly valued locally, and prized by their communities.

1.16 Local landscape designations have long been a part of the planning system. Efforts have focussed on applying siting and design principles to designated areas to encourage positive landscape management, or to secure enhancement through development.

1.17 There are other opportunities to benefit public enjoyment and understanding. These often link in with land and countryside management, for example development of the core paths network, or the establishment of Regional and Country Parks.

1.18 Designation of LLAs can help to secure public enjoyment and increase understanding and interest in their management. Designation is particularly useful to:

- safeguard important landscapes and landscape features which are particularly valued and may have limited capacity for change;
• promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of the landscapes of a local authority area;

• promote some of the most important places for recreation and tourism within a local authority area;

• contribute to wider policies for guiding urban expansion, by specifically identifying and safeguarding areas of landscape importance within or close to existing settlements.
2. Designating Local Landscape Areas

This section broadly sets out the approach to use when establishing or reviewing LLAs. The overall steps in the process (see Figure 2) are set out in seven steps below, with links to case studies illustrating key points. Local authorities should review their LLAs as part of the Local Development Plan process. The aim should be a systematic and transparent process that justifies the areas identified.

Local authorities will be best placed to develop an informed and robust approach that reflects the resources available and local circumstances. The process should be guided by general principles to ensure that the process is rigorous, clear and consistent, so that the selection process can be understood.

Step 1 - Scope of study

2.1.1 A project team of two to four people should undertake the review. This should include at least one qualified landscape architect and another environmental or archaeological/cultural heritage professional.

2.1.2 It is important to consider how diverse disciplines can be built into the study. Different specialists may be required depending upon the specific area and its landscapes. Some practitioners – Heritage Officers, archaeology staff and environmental specialists – may be able to lend relevant experience to a steering group to oversee the process.

2.1.3 At the outset, a clear study brief is vital to clarify the purpose of the work and its scope. It will be helpful to consider the following questions:

- What is the role of, and need for, designation?
- Is the study limited to reviewing existing local landscape designations, or should it review all landscapes across the council area?
- Are landscapes likely to be considered whose character extends into adjacent authorities?
- What will be the key stages in the appraisal of local landscape and seeking community engagement?
- How will the review fit with the development plan process?

Establish the aims of the review:

Is it an accolade, to identify and celebrate fine landscapes of high value to local people and/or visitors?

Is it to identify landscapes which may require particular policy measures to protect them?

Is it to ensure that boundaries of existing designations reflect the values they aim to protect?
Figure 2: Local Landscape Areas designation – key steps

1) Define scope of study

- Review the role and need for LLAs
- Develop objectives for designation in local authority area
- Identify and agree scope of review and key stages of local landscape assessment

2) Identify stakeholder engagement

- Consultation can apply at different stages, and should relate to the local development plan process.
- Decide method, timing and resource implications.

3) Agree assessment criteria and method

- Develop criteria for selecting areas as candidate LLAs.
- Identify and agree criteria

4) Research and desk studies

- Existing landscape studies inform selection of candidate LLAs
- New studies may extend understanding of landscapes and place
- Select landscapes for field survey

5) Undertake field survey

- Survey and evaluate landscapes
- Draft Statements of Importance

6) Select candidate LLAs

- Selection of candidate LLAs
- Consultation
- Finalise LLA selection, Statement of Importance, boundaries

7) Designate LLAs and establish policy

- Designate LLAs, as part of LDP
- Policy provision in LDP / Supplementary Guidance

Post designation

- Promote and raise awareness of LLAs widely within communities, and specifically amongst decision makers, including elected members
- Identify measures to enhance LLAs and ensure their relevance within land management initiatives
2.1.4 The local landscape designation review brief for the Midlothian Local Development Plan sets out the key considerations to be covered when the appraisal is limited to the suite of existing areas designated (see figure 3).

2.1.5 The following example from Perth & Kinross (figure 4) sets out the purpose of a review, which started from an examination of all landscapes, not just the existing Areas of Great Landscape Value (identified in the 1990s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3: Midlothian Local Development Plan Main Issues Report: Technical Note – Landscape (2013)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.8... The criteria has been simplified and tailored to fit with the principal aim of the study, which is to focus on undertaking a review of existing AGLV designated landscapes rather than a comparative assessment of all landscapes across Midlothian....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 The evaluation method involved the following key tasks:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identification of broad study areas within the existing AGLV and detailed description of landscape character areas found within each of these, principally informed by review of the Lothians landscape assessment (1998), the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in Midlothian (2007) and verified in the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assessment of landscape character areas lying within each broad study area undertaken from key viewpoints using evaluation criteria adapted from the SNH/HS guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evaluation of each broad study area considering the contribution of individual landscape character areas to the designated area and identifying any less valuable areas within the AGLV or areas beyond the boundaries of the AGLV which merit inclusion in a future designated area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2 - Stakeholder engagement

Communities

2.2.1 The European Landscape Convention recognises that landscape interests need to be delivered through wide support. This requires meaningful involvement, making people aware of landscape issues, and encouraging public participation. It is important to determine the extent, nature and timing of community involvement in the process at the outset, reflecting the advice set out in PAN 3/2010 Community Engagement. This should be reflected in the study brief. There are distinct benefits to seeking community input and allowing for consultation related to LLAs within the development plan programme.

2.2.2 The wider community’s knowledge will add to the information about candidate areas, and potentially identify new areas for consideration. NGOs and community organisations may also have a contribution to make in terms of their particular experience or landscape expertise. This can all help to inform the technical assessment that is undertaken.

Figure 4: Perth & Kinross Local Landscape Designation Review (2014)

1.5…the overall purpose of the project…:

- To identify Perth & Kinross landscapes which have a particular value and merit special attention as designated local landscapes.
- To inform a Perth & Kinross wide ‘all-landscapes’ approach and future landscape objectives.
- To inform the preparation of the Development Plan.
- To inform future design guidelines, development briefs, master plans and developers’ concept statements.
- To support Perth & Kinross council’s wide ranging objectives, in terms of the key themes of the Perth & Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement, including the Biodiversity Action Plan and Core Path Plan.

In addition, key objectives agreed with the Steering Group were:

- Achieving greater consistency in coverage of local landscape designations, and justification of boundaries across the whole Council area;
- Use of a clear, systematic, transparent approach for proposing new Local Landscape Areas (LLAs);
- Broad involvement of interested stakeholders, including members of the public, use of online survey…(and a) focused invited Review Panel to inform and test the emerging conclusions;
- Recognising the importance of particular features including historical landscapes, the Highland Boundary Fault and green corridors; and
- Understanding the relationship between local landscape designations and National Scenic Areas (NSAs), highlighting that there are areas where NSAs may be vulnerable to changes outside their boundaries.

(Perth & Kinross Local Landscape Review, Land Use Consultants and STAR Development Group (2014))
2.2.3 Other topic areas considered during the development plan process may inform and add to the knowledge base of the local landscape assessment.

2.2.4 It is important to clarify the purpose of designating local landscapes and emphasise that the values that communities place on their landscapes is part of a collaborative process. Asking people to suggest local landscapes and for their opinions on criteria in the initial stages is useful and can help set the parameters of subsequent work.

2.2.5 Community consultation at a later stage, alongside the technical evaluation, will allow people the opportunity to contribute their views and knowledge. This can also help to:

- inform decisions on the character and special qualities (including associations), of the landscapes which people agree to be particularly important;
- identify the specific places which possess these attributes;
- ensure the technical evaluation is comprehensive and clear.

2.2.6 Where the review process is systematic and transparent, people are more likely to appreciate and understand the reasoning behind designation. This should lead to sound policy, an appreciation of the relevance of specific management approaches, and greater community support for the LLAs identified.

2.2.7 Involving stakeholders meaningfully, at the right stages in the process, will inform the work and build wider understanding of it. It is important to integrate consultation both within the wider community engagement of the development plan, and in internal discussion across the local authority. The case study ‘Fife Local Landscape Review’ is a good example of using stakeholder involvement in a local landscape designation review (see Annex 2).

Key partners

2.2.8 SNH and HES can contribute to the local landscape designation process. We can advise on the scope and brief for a designation project, the process to be applied, and any research or technical studies on special qualities.

2.2.9 We can also offer a national or regional perspective in evaluating whether a landscape is highly representative of, and distinctive to, an area or region, and whether it contributes to a wider regional identity. Through our engagement we will monitor effectiveness of this guidance and maintain an understanding of LLDS in practice.

2.2.10 In general, SNH would expect to play a greater role where local landscape designations cross local authority boundaries, where they

Identifying key stakeholders, including local communities and the wider public is critical to success.

Explore with communities

“What are your favourite landscapes – and why?”

Explore with communities, key partners and stakeholders:

What are the designation criteria?
Is there a need to designate this area?
What will designation achieve and is it relevant?
What is the local landscape character and what are its qualities?
are identified in the Strategic Development Plan for city regions, or where larger rural authorities are concerned. We will also take a particular interest in the relationship of LLAs with NSAs and other natural heritage designations.

2.2.11 HES can assist with assessment of historic environment information, and provide detailed information on Historic Land Use Assessment. Land-owning bodies such as Forest Enterprise, Scottish Water and the Central Scotland Green Network Trust may have a valuable role to play when a local landscape designation is proposed for areas they manage or have an interest in.

Step 3 - Assessment criteria and method

2.3.1 Designating a landscape indicates that it is of particular merit or value. A clear statement of these values is a vital part of the designation. This should include the criteria used in the assessment process, and a statement of why they are important.

2.3.2 Selection criteria are essential. These must be fit for purpose, developed by agreement with interested stakeholders where possible, and consistently applied. The criteria relate to the special qualities that a landscape has, and its value for any number of individual elements. This may include:

- aesthetic or perceptual aspects
- the type of landscape or place
- scenic value

2.3.3. Many of these qualities are interrelated, for example, landscapes valued for recreation will often have strong scenic appeal, and natural or cultural qualities. Responses to landscape are individual and personal. However, they are normally influenced by culture and society. Designation requires the qualities identified in a landscape to be widely recognised and valued. Table 1 sets out the common criteria used to define these landscape qualities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Qualities</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scenic</strong></td>
<td>Landscape that appeals primarily to the visual senses, appreciated for its natural beauty.</td>
<td>Landscapes with strong visual, sensory and perceptual impacts and experiential appeal. May contain a pleasing combination of features, visual contrasts or dramatic elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Landscape with features of archaeological, historical or cultural interest, offering a time-depth to people’s experience.</td>
<td>Landscapes rich in archaeology, built heritage, literary or artistic connections, consciously designed (parks and gardens), the scene of historic events (such as battles), other cultural associations and local history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Landscape of strong natural or semi-natural character, with wildlife or earth science features.</td>
<td>Landscapes with extensive semi-natural habitat, distinctive topography or geology, a lack of human presence and perceived sense of ‘wildness’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>Landscape recognised for recreation and amenity, which evokes pleasure.</td>
<td>Landscapes valued as tranquil areas and/or for countryside recreation. May contain viewpoints and landmarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarity or uniqueness</td>
<td>The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or a rare landscape character type.</td>
<td>Landscape features or combination of features which are rare or unique within the assessment area as a whole. Landscapes that are distinctive with a strong ‘sense of place’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typicality</td>
<td>A landscape that is a good example of a particular landscape type, and often relatively common within the assessment area.</td>
<td>Landscape features or combination of features that recur throughout the area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Range of Evaluation Criteria
2.3.4 The fundamental aim is to identify and analyse what the characteristics are that individually, or when combined, make the area special in terms of its landscape and scenery. The characteristic does not have to be distinctive or unique; what is important is its overall contribution to making the landscape special. Identifying the special qualities is a combination of relevant discipline studies, informed by professional judgement. It should also be tested by public opinion.

2.3.5 The assessment methodology must identify a way of evaluating the criteria to allow justifiable conclusions on which landscapes are suitable for designation. The appropriate method must identify and describe the special qualities relevant to the study area, which will vary from region to region. Local authorities should tailor the evaluation criteria to suit local circumstances and reflect what is valued in the particular area and nature of their landscapes. Such an approach is illustrated by the case study ‘Edinburgh City Local Landscape Review’, which uses criteria tailored to the city’s context (see Annex 2).

2.3.6 In practice both quantitative (applying numbers or rank) and more qualitative (using description) approaches have been used as part of the assessment methodology. A combined approach can be effective in clearly explaining and justifying the designation of a landscape.

2.3.7 In the quantitative part of an assessment, the relative values of each landscape unit (identified through Landscape Character Assessment) are evaluated numerically in a systematic, criteria-based manner, or given values such as ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’. Such an evaluation allows for comparison between landscape units, and identifies those ranked highly which are then considered as candidates for designation. As an example, the Edinburgh City review of its local landscape designation (Table 2) applied the criteria to each Edinburgh landscape character area, and recorded the resulting scores.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Scoring Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edinburgh distinctiveness</strong></td>
<td>Features which contribute positively to the identity of Edinburgh, reflecting individual features or combinations of landform, land use and land cover. Examples include prominent volcanic hill and policy landscapes.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Landscape includes highly distinctive features or combination of features which are important to Edinburgh’s identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fairly distinctive or representative of Edinburgh and some key characteristics or combination of features which are important to Edinburgh’s identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Landscape has little or no role in relation to Edinburgh’s identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relative merit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scenic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combination of landscape features which contribute to scenic quality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pleasing combination of features which provide a high scenic value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Some features of scenic value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Few features of scenic value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The use and enjoyment of the landscape for recreational activity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good level of access provision/recreational use and high numbers of users and/or visual receptors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Some access provision/recreational use and medium levels of users and receptors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Few recreational users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enjoyment</strong></td>
<td>The influence of cultural heritage features on the landscape. This reflects the presence of built features, landscape planting and field boundaries, or cultural associations with the landscape.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Significant cultural heritage features which dominate the landscape and strongly influence the character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Some cultural heritage importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Limited cultural heritage importance or limited impact on landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Naturalness</strong></td>
<td>Naturalness is assessed in relation to the presence of features which contribute a sense of naturalness, such as water, woodland, limited levels of management and modification. A quarry may be designated a SSSI but it would not score</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strong sense of naturalness with limited human influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Some natural features with some influence from human modification and management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Highly modified or managed landscape with little or no natural features.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.8 In the qualitative stage, it is important to clearly describe the factors considered and set out the judgements used to identify and select landscapes for designation. Public comment can inform this, and help to encourage wider engagement with and support for the LLAs. The Highland Council’s review of their existing LLAs is an example of a qualitative approach (figure 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of Connectivity</th>
<th>Connectivity reflects the relationship between different landscape character areas</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>The landscape has a strong visual or physical relationship with adjacent LCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The landscape has some relationship with adjacent LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The landscape has a limited role in relation to other LCA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of character area (part or all)</th>
<th>Does all of the LCA have similar quality (Yes/No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associated with adjoining character areas</td>
<td>Does the LCA relate to adjoining LCAs (score no if it is physically isolated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.8 In the qualitative stage, it is important to clearly describe the factors considered and set out the judgements used to identify and select landscapes for designation. Public comment can inform this, and help to encourage wider engagement with and support for the LLAs. The Highland Council’s review of their existing LLAs is an example of a qualitative approach (figure 5).

Figure 5: The Highland Council: Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas (2011)

(In) preparing the Highland Structure Plan (2011) an evaluation was carried out to identify... areas which were judged to be at least regionally important when judged against the **following criteria:**

- Combinations of land character types which provide attractive or unusual scenery;
- Land forms and scenery that are unusual or rare in the Highland context;
- Dramatic and striking landscapes and coastlines;
- Characteristic Highland landscapes of rugged mountain cores and indented coastline;
- Dominant mountain massifs; and
- Juxtapositions of mountain and moorland which set each other off to striking visual effect

(assessment of Highland Local Landscape Designations. Horner +Maclennan with Mike Wood for The Highland Council in partnership with SNH, 2011)
Step 4 - Research and desk study

2.4.1 Background studies help in understanding the range of landscapes within an area, and assist in identifying both the relevant criteria and where the criteria will be met. Drawing on relevant specialist studies, and the knowledge and experience of both in-house and external specialists – archaeologists, historic environment specialists, planners and landscape architects - will build up a picture of the special qualities of an area. This should be complemented by the views of key stakeholder groups and local communities.

Landscape character

2.4.2 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) identifies, describes, classifies and maps what is distinctive about our landscapes. This established approach is widely used to inform development plans and land management plans. It provides an excellent starting point to identify an area’s characteristics, and helps in distinguishing what makes one place different from another. Detailed information on the process is set out within Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (2002). Landscape character assessment studies cover all of Scotland.¹

2.4.3 Landscape character studies can:
- provide a fuller understanding of the distribution and characteristics of local landscapes;
- be used as a basis to inform judgements on the particular merits of landscapes being considered for designation;
- inform the development of planning and management guidelines required to guide future development and land-use change.

2.4.4 Often, the extent of a LLA will not directly correlate to landscape character areas identified through LCA. Indeed, many landscapes selected for designation are in places where different landscape character types meet. This arises because visual diversity and contrast are important in forming scenic quality. Landscape character assessments are a useful tool for analysis, but should not be used in isolation to identify and define landscapes for designation.

Cultural heritage and historic environment

¹ The LCAs can be found on SNH’s website. They are currently being reviewed, and are due to be made available via interactive mapping in late 2017.

Landscape character criteria

“Which landscapes or landscape features recur throughout the local authority area?”

“Which landscapes or landscape features are rare, unusual or unique?”

“Which landscapes or landscape features are in a good state of repair…….

……which are not, where designation might secure a valued resource?”
2.4.5 Historic built features along with artistic, cultural, historic and scientific associations can be significant attributes of landscape. They are important in linking people with place, in generating a sense of place and identity to a region. Our appreciation and experience of a place are strengthened by an understanding of these cultural and historical connections.

2.4.6 The following sources can help to provide knowledge and understanding of the historic environment:

- **Historic Landuse Assessment** (HLA) informs us about past and present land-use, providing a ‘time-depth’ in explaining how land-use, significant landscape features and patterns have changed over time.

- **Historic Environment Records** (held by the Local Authorities), give information on known archaeological and historic sites. Some may be of a ‘landscape-scale’, such as Historic Battlefields, Gardens and Designed Landscapes, field-systems and past settlements.

- **Historical research** including community input (for example, oral history and tradition), archival and specialist information, for example School of Scottish Studies.

Figure 6 contains examples of how these associations are made in literature.

### Figure 6: Cultural and Historic Landscape Associations

“Henry Cockburn, contemporary and acquaintance of Scott’s, recollected Scott’s influence on his perception of the area’s memorial landscape and sense of place. His words provide a tantalising insight into the dynamic perception of place brought about by Scott’s …treatment of place. Cockburn eloquently describes his experience of the sense of place which, for Scott, the historical Minstrelsy ballads encapsulated. Whether hidden or visible to the naked eye, physical sites bear the marks, visible and invisible, tangible and intangible, of a past and give physical space and artefacts …both the Border landscape and its songs became self-perpetuating sites of memory through which the past could be re-imagined and re- envisaged.” (from Local Explanation: Editing a Sense of Place in Walter Scott’s Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, Lucy Macrae, 2014)

“Newhall picturesque landscape extends along the river North Esk, at the foot of the Pentlands. Places mentioned in Allan Ramsay’s pastoral poem, ‘The Gentle Shepherd’ (1725), can be identified and an 1808 edition has ‘A Map of the Scenery of the Gentle Shepherd from a plan of the year 1770 with several Additions from a later survey 1808’. (see Newhall, A Study of Country Life in the Shadow of Edinburgh, D M Young, 1998, which traces how the poem relates to the landscape).

2.4.7 Other specialist studies may be useful and provide greater understanding of the landscapes of an area or give an overview of a specific landscape type. As an example, this applies where local authorities have undertaken studies of
designed landscapes. Such landscapes often contribute significantly to an area or region’s landscape character. This may include intentionally laid-out policy woodlands, shelterbelts, plantations, estate boundaries and sometimes estate villages (as an example, see Scottish Borders Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes).

Step 5 - Field survey

2.5.1 Detailed field survey should test the initial desk based assessment by gathering further information on the landscapes’ special qualities. This can enable analysis and comparison between the different landscapes. Details can be recorded using a variety of tools
- field sheets
- diagrams
- sketches
- photographs
- annotated maps

2.5.2 Seeing other approaches to recording field surveys may help decide on a suitable format. The method of landscape character survey can help with the general recording principles, while work in defining landscape ‘special qualities’ is useful, even though applied to a national scale of designation (i.e. NSAs).

2.5.3 The aim is to arrive at a robust analysis of the key visible and physical characteristics, using information gathered by the background desk study. Further visual analysis examines how these characteristics relate to one another to form the scenic or visual environment.

2.5.4 Further analysis may involve visiting a number of locations within a landscape:
- acknowledged panoramic viewpoints (as shown on O.S. maps)
- vantage points such as mountain and hill summits, bridges, headlands, and other prominent built or natural features
- viewpoints from roads or paths, including considering how views unfold along a route

2.5.5 It is necessary to analyse the scenic quality as well as how the landscape is experienced. This analysis often includes a consideration of how commonplace features combine, link or contrast to form special qualities. These factors will contribute to a ‘sense of place’.

2.5.6 Many assessments also include an appraisal of any significant opportunities for landscape enhancement or management.
Step 6 - Candidate Local Landscape Areas

2.6.1 The landscapes considered of value will vary from area to area. The distinct character of our landscapes and the associations between people and place are often best known and understood in a local context.

2.6.2 Local landscapes have special value where they contribute to a sense of place and local identity. For example, this may be an estate-village, the setting of a town, or a rural landscape strongly associated with a village. They may be highly representative of, and distinctive to, an area or region, and in turn contribute to a wider regional identity.

2.6.3 A range of different evaluation methods have been used in selecting LLDs. The Perth & Kinross Local Landscape Designation Review (Land Use Consultants and STAR Development Group, 2014) combined quantitative and qualitative evaluations with community engagement (involving an online survey, three rounds of stakeholder engagement and a ‘review panel’).

2.6.4 The Review of Midlothian Areas of Great Landscape Value (Midlothian LDP 2013, Technical Note: Landscape) applied a qualitative methodology. It provides well-reasoned judgements based on thorough fieldwork and professional assessment, and uses matrices to cross-check the judgements made.

2.6.5 Fieldwork is an essential part of any review, which can reveal that landscape character units show significant local variation in landscape quality. Where the assessment has included a quantitative approach, some high-scoring landscapes may contain less valuable areas, although overall there are high-scoring features. Elsewhere, some low scoring landscapes may still contain valuable features, or be important as a relatively unusual landscape in the context of the study.

2.6.6 The Scottish Borders Council review (Figure 7) undertook a quantitative evaluation first. This informed a qualitative evaluation that looked in detail at where there were variations in landscape quality, and examined important interrelationships between different landscape types. Professional judgement is important to the designation process, as fine judgements often have to be made as to whether to include some landscapes as candidate LLAs.

Representativeness and Relative Merit

In the context of the local authority area:

To what extent is the landscape of special importance?  
To what extent does the landscape contribute to the distinctive local or regional identity?  
To what extent does the landscape merit designation compared to others in the local authority area?
### PHASE 1. QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION.

76 Landscape Character Units (LCUs) were evaluated against ranked criteria on landscape character and landscape quality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Character Criteria</th>
<th>Landscape Quality Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representativeness</strong> – extent to which a landscape is ‘typical’ of the Scottish Borders, and contributes to its wider identify and sense of place</td>
<td><strong>Scenic qualities</strong> – pleasing combinations of features, or prompts strong sensory appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rarity</strong> – landscapes or features which are rare or unusual within the Scottish Borders, or which are known to be uncommon elsewhere</td>
<td><strong>Enjoyment</strong> – a recreational resource, including accessibility, opportunities for appreciation of landscape or views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Condition</strong> – state of repair of the landscape i.e. ongoing land management or maintenance of landscape features</td>
<td><strong>Cultural qualities</strong> – landscape is a setting for features of historic value, including buildings, archaeology and designed landscapes; intangible literary or artistic associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intactness</strong> – extent to which there is past landscape change or current change due to development or changing land management</td>
<td><strong>Habitat value</strong> – importance in terms of valued habitat which are present; recognised natural heritage value in the form of designated areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wildness</strong> – the relative remoteness of the landscape, including lack of human features, distance from settlement and ruggedness of terrain</td>
<td><strong>Settlement setting</strong> – allows appreciation of settlement form, including framing of views to and from settlements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | **Views** – extent and importance of views in and out of the landscape, including the relative visibility of the landscape from key routes and locations |
| | **Tourist economy** landscape-related tourist attractions, area’s importance to key tourist centres |

### PHASE 2. QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

A qualitative analysis was undertaken to add detail to the initial evaluation. This examined each of the highest scoring LCUs in turn... to identify land that had done well against the criteria or formed important composite landscapes. This was an important step because the LCUs only reflect landscape type and not landscape quality.

**UP10 Minch Moor:** The eastern half of this LCU has strong links with both the Tweed valley to the north and the Yarrow to the south and the hills are important to the settings of both these rivers. This part of the LCU has been considered for inclusion as an integral part of this composite landscape, which forms a gateway into the Borders valleys.

The western half of this LCU also scored highly and no clear rationale for division was identified. However, while these hills are related to the adjacent valleys, they are more removed from the core ‘gateway’ area around the confluences. The western hills do not form part of a coherent grouping, when considered either with the confluence, the Tweed valley, or the Broadlaw Hills. This area had not therefore been considered further.
Boundaries and naming

2.6.7 Both desk-based studies and field survey should inform the definition of the candidate LLAs. Special qualities rarely have sudden boundaries, so a pragmatic approach is required. It is helpful to consider any clear, permanent feature that delimits the proposed area, and how easy it is to identify on the ground. The visual experience in the landscape may also help define a suitable boundary.

2.6.8 Features that make suitable and lasting boundaries include topography, watersheds and rivers; other suitable physical features are field boundaries and roads. On the coast, boundaries may need to extend into the marine environment. In these instances, it is important to consider how much of the intertidal area and ‘seascape’ is essential to the LLA.

2.6.9 Discussion with local land managers may also benefit boundary selection. In some cases this may be advantageous to avoid dividing upland management units.

2.6.10 Where boundaries are close to, or within, settlements and larger urban areas, there are specific considerations. In some cases, it may be useful to include small areas of lesser merit in the LLA. For example, this may allow better physical boundary definition, or provide for effective, longer-term landscape protection and management. In and around large settlements and urban areas, a LLA may overlap with, or lie within, designated green belt.

2.6.11 There is no national standard naming form for local landscape designations. However, it is helpful if the naming convention reflects Scottish Planning Policy and is consistent within each local authority area. We strongly encourage the use of the term Local Landscape Area [Name of place], or [Name of place] Local Landscape Area.

2.6.12 Where an LLA abuts the boundary of a neighbouring local authority, it is helpful to consult between local authorities (see para 2.7.5).
A Statement of Importance

2.6.13 It is good practice to prepare a *Statement of Importance* for each LLA. This helps to secure understanding and support for the local landscape designation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and location</th>
<th>(a locally recognized name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>A clear and distinct description of the landscape and <em>why</em> it is designated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Description</td>
<td>A description of the landscape character, key qualities, what is valued and why. Include what makes-up the cultural and natural heritage; mention existing development, settlement, recreation and economic activity; highlight any specific features of natural or cultural interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>Describe the boundary; outline why it takes this form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future changes/land management</td>
<td>Identify significant opportunities for social and economic development, the scope for landscape enhancement through planning gain, or support for agriculture or forestry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6.14 An essential component of the Statement is *what makes the landscape special*. Statements should also identify key management issues for the landscape.

2.6.15 The Statement should be succinct and accompanied by a map at a scale to make its overall location and boundaries easily identifiable, and cover the aspects listed in Table 3.

2.6.16 Landscapes are not static; they constantly change in response to natural processes and human activities. Therefore, many LLAs need active management approaches to sustain their valued special qualities.

2.6.17 Other designations may be relevant to the active management to all or part of the LLA. This may include Regional and Country Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes, local nature reserves and green belts and green networks.

2.6.18 LLA objectives should, where possible, be integrated with wider policy and funding frameworks at both the local and national level. This may include areas such as agriculture, biodiversity, historic environment and recreation and tourism.
2.6.19 Statements should also set out key management issues. To do this, they should identify key sensitivities to landscape change for each LLA. The focus of this should be on those specific characteristics which may be inherently sensitive to change, and how they may be eroded or otherwise adversely affected by development.

2.6.20 The Statement may include management recommendations – opportunities for enhancement or issues and recommendations that will maintain or improve the area’s special qualities. Developing these management objectives should be an inclusive process involving land managers, communities and other key stakeholders.

2.6.21 The management recommendations should be informed by the detailed process of landscape character assessment and a clear understanding of the social, economic and environmental processes causing change to this landscape. It is important that these statements and the actions they contain are clear and simply stated. They should directly relate to the valued special qualities identified for the LLA.

2.6.22 Often local authorities present the Statements within Supplementary Guidance accompanying the Local Development Plan. The Supplementary Guidance can then present the specific development pressures affecting LLAs, and give outline design guidelines or management recommendations. Some examples of Statements of Importance can be found in Annex 3.

**Step 7 - Designation**

2.7.1 Local authorities should develop an approach to designation to suit their particular circumstances. This guidance does not prescribe a size for individual areas, or overall coverage across the local authority area.

2.7.2 In terms of the coverage of LLAs within a local authority, a number of factors are likely to be important, including:

- the context for designation provided by the ‘all landscapes’ approach developed by the local authority;
- the degree of overlap between the LLAs and other designations (e.g. Regional Parks, Country Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes, local nature reserves and green belts, etc);
- the extent of National Parks and National Scenic Areas within the local authority area; and
- ensuring the LLA designation is not de-valued by being applied too widely.

2.7.3 Local authorities with a high proportion of their area designated nationally as National Park or National Scenic Area should consider the purpose and extent of their LLAs carefully. Equally, all local authorities should explore the relationship between LLAs and other national and local designations.
2.7.4 The fit with local authority-wide landscape policies may also be important in determining coverage of LLAs. This is more likely to be the case if a significant number of these policies are essentially protective in nature.

2.7.5 Where a local authority boundary forms part of a LLA boundary, discussion with the neighbouring authority is necessary to align planning and other policy measures. In some cases, local authorities may agree to designate an area jointly, if it is of shared local or regional landscape importance which crosses their administrative boundary.

**Post designation: Action for Local Landscape Areas**

2.8.1 In general, designation tends to be allied with local development planning, with policies for designated areas set out in the development plan (see Section 3).

2.8.2 Two other sets of activity should follow on from designation, which can build on the community engagement already undertaken. These are essential if public awareness and benefit from local landscapes are to increase.

2.8.3 The first of these is to raise understanding and awareness of the designation. This should focus on appreciation of how the character and qualities of the LLAs relate to placemaking and local distinctiveness.

2.8.4 This should link into the second activity – identifying practical action for landscapes. This could be through improved management targeted at maintaining distinctive character and special qualities, or other measures to enhance people’s enjoyment and add value.

2.8.5 Further action for LLAs is currently relatively undeveloped. LLAs could benefit from greater promotion to raise awareness, so that they are better known and understood. Consultation and effective engagement is therefore a very important part of the designation process. Communities with a better understanding of LLAs are more likely to engage in requirements for considered management and use of resources for them.
3. Development Plan Policy

3.1 Planning policies for designated areas are set out in the development plan. The more detailed rationale and description of individual LLAs may be set out either in Supplementary Guidance and/or a supporting technical report. Often, a single overarching policy that covers all LLAs is sufficient. In other cases, there is more than one policy where the areas differ significantly in their geographical extent, or where one has a specific character or quality requiring a more specific, tailored planning policy.

3.2 LLAs may coincide with other international, national and local designations. Most of these perform a different function, but where they have a strong landscape dimension LLAs can support their management and play a role in protecting their setting. LLAs are unnecessary in a National Scenic Area or National Park, given the measures already in place to protect and manage landscape. However, a local authority may designate an LLA adjacent to the boundary of one of these, in which case it has the potential to contribute to the landscape aims and objectives of the national designation. The case study ‘Perth and Kinross Local Landscape Review’ (Annex 2) illustrates how this type of designation has been achieved. Early discussion with the Park Authority and SNH is encouraged in this type of situation.

3.3 The level of protection accorded to LLAs is a matter for each authority, but the level of protection should not be as high as that given to international or national designations, and should not seek to extend the application of Scottish Planning Policy to areas otherwise not meriting it. Development plan policies should recognize the contribution that appropriate development or land use change can make to the character and special qualities of a designated area. Some types of development or land use may detract from the special qualities, so the purpose of designation should be reflected within any development brief and in development management decisions. LLAs are a non-statutory designation, where the purpose is to:

- “safeguard and enhance the character and quality of a landscape which is important or particularly valued locally or regionally; or
- promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of local landscapes; or
- safeguard and promote important local settings for outdoor recreation and tourism.”
  
  (para 197, Scottish Planning Policy, 2014)

3.4 Development, in terms of its location, scale, design, materials and landscaping, should be of a high standard and enhance the special qualities and character of the LLA. The preparation of design guidance, ancillary to the local development plan, may also pay special attention to design criteria that support the protection and enhancement of the special qualities and character.
3.5 Table 4 gives examples of local development plan policies adopted since SPP was revised in 2014. These illustrate how different local authority policies are tailored to individual circumstances, and how they take account of the contribution of natural and cultural heritage to important local landscapes.

3.6 Local development plan policies for LLAs will also relate to other policy areas. They are a major facet of placemaking, alongside policy on the historic environment and natural heritage. The examples in table 5 show how some local authorities relate these areas to one another in their local development plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Examples of Development Plan Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan 2015</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In <strong>Special Landscape Areas</strong> development will only be supported where the applicant demonstrates… that the special landscape character and scenic interest would not be significantly adversely affected, and that either of the following criteria are met:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The development is an essential requirement of agriculture or horticulture; renewable energy development; appropriate recreation and tourism activities; or forestry which conforms with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The development could not be located in a less sensitive location, and any adverse impacts are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of local importance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Falkirk Local Development Plan 2015** |
| **Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)** identify the most important local landscapes (Denny Hills, LLDmannan Plateau/Avon Valley and South Bo’ness)... in line with the European Landscape Convention, there is a need to recognise the value of all landscapes within the area, and to take account of this in assessing development proposals. An updated landscape character assessment of the area has been prepared providing the basis for Supplementary Guidance SG09 ‘Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations’. |
| The Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character and quality throughout the Council area in accordance with SG09. Priority will be given to safeguarding the distinctive landscape quality of the Special Landscape Areas identified …. |
| Development proposals… likely to have a significant landscape impact must be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment demonstrating that, with appropriate mitigation, a satisfactory landscape fit will be achieved. |

| **Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016** |
| **Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)** are afforded adequate protection against inappropriate development and... potential maintenance and enhancement of the local landscape designation is provided for. |
| Decision making will be guided by the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Local Landscape Designations, as informed by the background report, *Scottish Borders Landscape Character Assessment and Guidance on Local Landscape Designations* as produced by Historic Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage. |
| In assessing proposals …that may affect Special Landscape Areas, the Council will seek to safeguard landscape quality and… have particular regard to the landscape impact of the proposed development, including the visual impact. |
**Table 5: How Local Landscape Designations Relate To Other Policy Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West Lothian Main Issues Report 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To determine the continuing appropriateness of current landscape designations... the council has undertaken a ‘Local Landscape Designation Review’ (LLDR). The council intends to use this... to review existing landscape designations and provide further landscape information to assist in the identification of development opportunities which will inform... the LDP... and... opportunities to contribute to the development and extension of landscape components of the West Lothian green network... The output from this review will inform the LDP and future decisions on planning applications and assist in place-making. The LLDR will also support the aim of the council’s <strong>Renewables Strategy to develop data to inform future decisions on renewable technology installations</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A review of local landscape designations within West Lothian will therefore establish an important baseline study <strong>to guide future landscape designation and land usage</strong> across the council area. The Landscape Character Assessment has been linked to the Landscape Designation Review to form a background paper to the LDP and provides further details of the proposed approach to landscape protection in West Lothian. The draft LLDR, once approved, will be taken forward as supplementary guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The council’s ‘Preferred’ approach to landscape designations is to reduce the number of landscape designations in order to reflect the findings of the Local Landscape Designation Review and identify candidate Local Landscape Designations (cLLD). Local Landscape Designations will replace AGLVs and Areas of Special Landscape Control. This approach is in accord with best practice and guidance prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shetland Local Development Plan 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development should be sited to harmonise with the key features of the surrounding area with particular attention being made to massing, form and design details, particularly within sensitive areas such as Conservation Areas, the National Scenic Area, Local Landscape Areas, Historic Landscapes and where the setting of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments may be affected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historic Environment Policy:</strong> ... The historic environment includes ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscape, gardens and designed landscapes and our marine heritage. The context and setting of historic features in the landscape and the patterns of past use are also part of the historic environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The historic environment is a key part of Shetland’s cultural heritage, enhancing regional and local distinctiveness and providing a sense of identity and continuity for communities. It contributes to economic growth, and can act as a catalyst for successful regeneration and community-building. It also contributes to sustainable development through the energy and material invested in older buildings, and their scope for adaptation and re-use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stirling Local Development Plan 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of Historic and Natural Heritage: Geography, geology and history are so intrinsic to the character of the Stirling area that they effectively define it, and are key elements in <strong>placemaking</strong>. Stirling’s unique geographical position in Scotland has marked it as a gateway to the north and has endowed the City with a wealth of built heritage and natural assets. Therefore, policies under this section seek to enable protection, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, landscapes and the historic environment. In addition to the above heritage features which are themselves of great heritage importance, so too is the landscape setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stirling is fortunate in the quality of its landscape resource, with around 60% of the area designated as Local Landscape Designations. This Plan is therefore strong on landscape conservation and seeks to encourage new landscape elements in development proposals, and remediation of neglected features important to landscape character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography and further Information


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Macrae, L. (2014). Local Explanation: Editing a Sense of Place in Walter Scott’s Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border


Scottish Natural Heritage (2002). Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Wales, Countryside Agency


Annex 1 - National Policy

Scottish Planning Policy 2014 presents Scottish Government policy on how nationally important land use planning matters should be addressed. It aims to promote consistency in the application of policy but allow sufficient flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

SPP has four principal aims, one is to ensure natural, resilient places, to help protect and enhance our natural and cultural assets, and facilitate their sustainable use. Specifically, it mentions how

- well-planned places promote well-being, a sense of identity and pride, and greater opportunities for social interaction;
- planning can help make Scotland a uniquely attractive place to work, visit and invest in, support the generation of jobs, income and wider economic benefits; and how
- our cultural heritage contributes to our economy, cultural identity and quality of life. Planning has an important role…in maintaining and enhancing the distinctive and high-quality, irreplaceable historic places which enrich our lives, contribute to our sense of identity and are an important resource for our tourism and leisure industry.

Development Plans

(s.196) International, national and locally designated areas and sites should be identified and afforded the appropriate level of protection in development plans. Reasons for local designation should be clearly explained and their function and continuing relevance considered when preparing plans. Buffer zones should not be established around areas designated for their natural heritage importance. Plans should set out the factors which will be taken into account in development management. The level of protection given to local designations should not be as high as that given to international and national designations.

(s.197) Planning authorities are encouraged to limit non-statutory local designations to areas designated for their local landscape or nature conservation value. The purpose of areas of local landscape value should be to:

- safeguard and enhance the character and quality of a landscape which is important or particularly valued locally or regionally; or
- promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of local landscapes; or
- safeguard and promote important local settings for outdoor recreation and tourism.

…on Placemaking: The historic environment is a key cultural and economic asset, a source of inspiration that should be seen as integral to creating successful places. Placemaking is one of two, principal policies. It is a creative, collaborative process that includes design, development, renewal or regeneration of our urban or rural built environments. This means harnessing the distinct characteristics and strengths of each place to improve the overall quality of life for people. Places which have enduring appeal and functionality are more likely to be valued by people and therefore retained for generations to come.
PAN60 Planning for the Natural Heritage suggests that local designations are ‘of most value where they form part of a wider landscape and habitat framework and contribute to the realisation of Natural Heritage Strategy, LBAP or Local Agenda 21 objectives…to enhance the quality of urban living and help make an area more attractive as a location of economic activity’. They can also ‘offer opportunities to develop partnership working between local authorities, landowners, voluntary conservation organisations and the local communities’ (para 39). It suggests that a single tier of sub-national designations should be sufficient for practical planning purposes, with areas selected because of their importance beyond their ‘immediate locale’. It also recommends the preparation of specific development guidelines to safeguard their landscape character.

(PAN60-Planning for the Natural Heritage, 2002)
Annex 2 - Case studies

CASE Study
Local Landscape Designations

Fife Local Landscape Review: Gathering community views to inform the assessment

A collaborative working approach was taken to comprehensively reassess Fife’s local landscape designation.

Two specific opportunities for community views to inform the review were provided. The first was a short online survey at an early stage, inviting people to nominate their favourite landscapes within Fife and explain why. This was widely publicised on and off-line, and the results considered alongside the initial technical assessment to highlight any issues or areas for further investigation.

The second opportunity was a series of three workshops for community councils, local groups and interested individuals. These sought feedback on initial proposals for candidate Special Landscape Areas, potential boundaries and additional areas for consideration.

Overall there was a good fit between the results of the technical assessment and areas identified as important by the community. There were also a number of areas only identified by either the technical assessment or the community, resulting in their further consideration.

Following the identification of areas a further stage for community comment was provided for through the formal consultation on the Local Development Plan.

The project consultants (LUC, Carol Anderson and the Small Towns and Rural Development Group), Fife Council and SNH were commended for the collaborative approach taken in the 2009 Scottish Awards for Quality.

Key Messages

- Landscapes to be protected by a local landscape designation should be recognised and celebrated by the people experiencing it. The purpose of community engagement is to test this, informing and complementing the technical assessment.
- Although there is likely to be a general correlation between the results of the technical assessment and areas identified as important by the community, be prepared that some areas with high levels of community support may not be identified in the technical assessment, and vice versa.
- Meaningful community engagement requires appropriate resourcing. Providing time for it in the process, and staff with relevant expertise, will improve the consultation process substantially.
CASE Study
Local Landscape Designations

Edinburgh City Local Landscape Review: Tailoring criteria to reflect the landscape context

Edinburgh’s built heritage already benefits from the safeguards afforded by Conservation Area and World Heritage Site (WH5) status, so this study focussed on its peri-urban landscapes and significant open spaces within the city. Not only are these important to the WH5, its setting and views, they are also vital to the city’s scenic quality and green belt resource.

The review re-evaluated Edinburgh’s existing landscape character assessment, and reviewed existing local landscape designations in line with the 2005 SNH/Historic Scotland Guidance.

The criteria examined which landscapes contribute to the core of the historic city, its setting and key views. The list of criteria used in the Edinburgh LCA (typicality, rarity/unicomness, prominence, scenic qualities; enjoyment; culture; naturalism), were expanded to consider the physical and visual continuity between landscape character areas and capture a landscape’s contribution to the historic city’s core, contribution to the setting of Edinburgh, and key views. All landscapes were scored High/Medium/Low according to fit with the criteria.

Key Messages

- Evaluation criteria can be tailored to reflect the specific landscape context.

- Weight criteria according to their importance or value, but consider the role of low-scoring landscapes where they provide the setting and context to adjacent areas of the highest overall merit.

- Where landscapes are associated with the built environment, consider techniques to supplement the Statement of Importance. For example, a visual analysis of key views, and how viewpoints are protected in the landscape may be especially useful.
## Tailor-made designation criteria for Edinburgh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edinburgh-specific qualities</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Scoring Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to historic core</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>An important and iconic feature which contributes to the character of the historic core of Edinburgh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The landscape makes some contribution to the character of the historic core.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The landscape makes a limited contribution to the context and views within the historic core.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to setting of Edinburgh</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The LCA has a strong positive visual relationship with the city and is a key feature in views/approaches to the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The LCA has some visual relationship with the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The LCA has a limited role or is visually detached from the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key views</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very prominent or good views to or from this area or high number of receptors. The LCA is important in key views from the city itself, main transport routes or viewpoints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fairly prominent or quite high numbers of receptors. The LCA plays some role or is important in key views from the city itself, main transport routes or viewpoints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not prominent or low number of receptors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except from Table 2.1: 'Designation criteria' in Review of Local Landscape Local Landscape Designations, The City of Edinburgh Council.
Perth and Kinross Local Landscape Review: Contributing to an adjacent national designation

Rannoch Forest Special Landscape Area is an extensive upland landscape of dramatic mountain summits and ridges. There are numerous streams, and large and small lochs. It is a remote area with a strongly undeveloped character, largely inaccessible, and a high degree of naturalness despite some extensive conifer plantations.

The area bridges the gap between two iconic National Scenic Areas (NSAs) – Ben Nevis & Glen Coe NSA to the west and Loch Rannoch & Glen Lyon NSA to the east, whose boundaries abut the area. It also overlaps with two Wild Land Areas, in the north and in the south.

The special qualities of the area include a strong relationship with the adjacent NSAs, providing for long views to Glen Coe to the west and Schiehallion to the east. Its character reflects that of the NSAs, and also that of the Wild Land Areas that continue to the east and west. Maintaining the wild land quality of the wider area is one objective of this Special Landscape Area.

Key Messages

- A local landscape designation can support the protection and management of an adjoining national designation, and its special qualities.
- Scottish Planning Policy NSA policy applies the same whether the area has been identified as a local landscape designation or not. However, understanding of the relationship of the local landscape designation to the NSA will aid application of the policy.
- The area subject to local landscape designation should itself be of local or regional specific value. In this case Rannoch Forest represents a distinctive and iconic landscape within Perth & Kinross, due to its unique geography and scenic value.
Annex 3: – Examples of Statements of Importance
Annex 3A: Statement of Significance for Loch Brora, Loch Fleet and Glen Loth Special Landscape Areas
09. Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth

REFEER TO MAP 9.

Lying along the east coast of Sutherland, this area stretches from the southern slopes of Strath Ullie in the north to Loch Fleet in the south, including areas of coastal shelf and interior moorland and hills.

Area

210.4km$^2$ (21040ha)

Overview

This is an area of rolling moorland hills, punctuated by a series of southeast orientated glens, straths and lochs, and edged to a narrow strip of farmed coastal shelf running along the shoreline. The character of this area is distinguished by its composition of contrasting landscape features – the contrasting landform, landcover and landscape pattern that emphasise the distinction of each other.

Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- A relatively simple uniform, rolling plateau of interior broad, interwoven rounded hills, clothed by an open mosaic of heather and grass moorland. As this composition is fairly simple, and extends throughout the area, there is a strong consistency of this backdrop to the coast.

- The hill area is breached by major straths and glens which have differing local character derived from the varying combination of native woodland, forest plantation, moorland and water bodies. They provide sheltered access routes through the hills and provide physical and visual connections between the interior and the coastal shelf and North Sea.

- To the east lies a narrow but relatively fertile coastal shelf contains the main road and rail routes in this area, and small farms and settlements at fairly regular intervals. A distinctive field pattern of pasture runs parallel to the coast, marked in places by windswept trees and stone walls.

- The linear coastal shelf, is defined on its interior side by the edge formed by the adjacent hill slopes, the elevation which provide expansive views both along the coastal edge and outwards across the open sea. Interior views are limited by the convex nature of the hill slopes.

- Loch Fleet is the most northerly inlet on the east coast. Where an inlet occurs, defined by its distinctive opposing spits of land, a sheltered, enclosed tidal basin is fringed with shingle shores and pine woods. At low tide, exposed mudflats create a distinctive feature whose character is enlivened by large flocks of wading birds.

- Views are obtained from some areas of wind turbines and overhead electricity lines whose large scale and man-made character can seem to diminish the scale of the interior hills and their wilderness qualities.

- Along the coast and around the inlet, there are a number of historic built features that form prominent focal features and landmarks.
Special Qualities

Historic features

- Skelbo Castle is a dominant feature on the south-side of Loch Fleet, sitting atop a hill commanding excellent views of the loch.

- The Mound is a very prominent and clearly man-made causeway over which the main A9 coastal road passes. Engineered by T Telford in 1814-16 it spans the mouth of Loch Fleet with a bridge at its northern end and offers spectacular coastal views.

- The hills that separate Loch Brora from Glen Loth have a light scattering of mainly late medieval settlement and shielings. Apart from on the most inaccessible hills, head dykes and enclosures can be traced through the landscape with the occasional remains of a settlement located along a river valley in between.

- Glen Loth is rich in the remains of past settlement. Well preserved prehistoric remains proliferate from the flat coastal areas. Heading north the steepness of the glen sides soften the density of prehistoric settlement and later medieval township increases. Interspersed within the remaining prehistoric settlement, souterrains and standing stones still survive.

- Substantial remains of later medieval township occur, centred around Loth Burn in the lower slopes of Beinn Mhealaich, and are still clearly visible and easily identifiable within the landscape.

- Centred around the banks of Loch Brora, monuments include well defined burial cairns, roundhouses and associated field systems, brochs and homesteads. Many of these early sites have been incorporated within the field systems and head dykes of later medieval townships which themselves survive along the Loch.

- Prehistoric settlement and burial cairns are located on the eastern slopes of Cnoc Odhar overlooking Loch Fleet and on the south-facing slopes of Creag an Amalaidh. On the north-side of Loch Fleet on the flat improved plains in between The Mound and Kirktion another extensive prehistoric settlement exists.

An Integrated Combination of Landforms

- The combination and juxtaposition of the rolling moorland hills, linear glens, the coastal shelf and tidal basin creates a diverse yet connected landscape composition which is experienced in sequence when travelling along the A9 and from the railway.

- Many small, often linear, settlements lie to the north west of the A9, strung along the foot-slopes of the interior hills, and these enjoy panoramic views out to sea. In contrast the larger settlements just outside the SLA boundary but visible from within it.

- There is a strong contrasts between the expansive open forms of the moorland hills, the narrow, enclosed and intimate forms of the glens and straths, the linear coastal fringe with its extensive sea views and the intimate wooded enclosure of the Loch Fleet tidal basin.

- The locally dominant ridgeline of Ben Bhraggie overlooking Loch Fleet and lower lying coastland is overlooked by the monument to the Duke of Sutherland which acts as a focal feature within the southern part of the SLA.

Accessible yet Secluded Glens and Lochs

- The interior is largely screened by the edge of the hill landform but occasional views are obtained where glens intersect with the coastal shelf. Readily accessible, these sheltered glens offer a sense of seclusion, tranquillity and intimacy from the busier coastal fringe.
Sensitivity to change

- Additional large scale features could, in combination with the existing wind turbines and overhead electricity line to the west of the SLA, could diminish the perceived scale of the hills and their qualities of wildness and tranquillity.
- Additional features within the moorland hills could appear to compromise the simplicity of the existing land cover and landform shape.
- Additional access tracks within the moorland hills could contrast to its simple cover, by introducing dominant lines and reduce its sense of remoteness.
- Widening of roads within the straths and glens could result in faster travel which could mean that historic features are noticed less. It could also result in a reduction in the sense of seclusion if it results in increased visitor numbers.
- Large-scale offshore development could introduce focal features that could impinge on panoramic sea views.
- Increased forest cover on the exposed and open moorland could mask and fragment its subtle landform pattern and reduce its consistency of character.

Potential for landscape enhancement

- There may be opportunity to promote natural regeneration of native woodlands along the sides of straths and glens.
- There may be potential to restore areas of moorland vegetation and soils which have been disturbed, for example by hill tracks and conifer plantations.
- There may be scope to restructure existing coniferous plantations to include native species and to reduce existing impacts in existing areas where hard, straight edges conflict with the sinuous qualities of the moorland hills.

The impact of existing overhead electricity lines may be mitigated through rerouting or under grounding particularly where these appear incongruous and are dominant in views from the A9.

Other designations/interests

- Loch Fleet National Nature Reserve. This Reserve includes the enclosed intertidal sand and mud flats of the Loch Fleet basin which host an array of over wintering waders and wildfowl whilst the pine wood plantations contain very rare native pinewood ground flora. This site is also a SPA for both the wintering birds and foraging osprey in spring and summer.
- Cambusavie was originally built as an Infectious Diseases Hospital in 1906 and comprised a number of green and white corrugated iron huts, each isolating a different illness. Little now remains but the surviving buildings are now used (in part) as a Bed and Breakfast establishment.
- Following the minor road to Embo on the south-side of Loch Fleet are the remains of the Dornoch Light Railway that linked Dornoch to the Highland Railway at The Mound junction; it opened in 1902 and closed in 1960.
(although not the railway) is still visible along with several of the original crossing-keepers cottages (to man the road/rail crossings), one where the Embo road meets the A9 at Cambusmore and a second on the north-side of the A9 at The Mound/Little Torrible road junction.

- Littleferry was the ferry crossing point across Loch Fleet prior to The Mound and grew up around this function. It includes a fine collection of early 19th century houses, stores, an ice house and boat sheds typical of a small rural settlement based on a limited fishing/ferry economy.

- Two aircraft crash sites are recorded, of which the remains of a Liberator (crashed in 1944) are still to be seen on the eastern slopes of Beinn Mheadail.

- In Glen Loth a pair of prominent standing stones are located on a small hillock to the North of Carrad nan Clach, with the remains of a substantial broch located just to the south.

- A number of other aircraft are known to have crashed in amongst the hills that separate Glen Loth and Loch Brora, the remains of which can still be found. They include a Barracuda, a Wellington, a Sunderland (the location of the crash marked by a small cairn, constructed in part with some of the wreckage) and a Sea Hawk.

- Included are eight SSSIs. The most relevant to the landscape qualities being Loch Fleet as described above and the Mound Alderwoods (also a SAC) which is impounded by the A9 causeway and comprises alder and willow woodland growing on glacial sediment which has been washed down Strath Fleet. The other SSSIs represent a range of features including important geological outcrops along the rocky foreshore and remnant woodland in the coastal gorges along the coastal shelf and on other slopes and crags which are less accessible to grazing animals.

- Glen Sleddale is one location thought to be where the last wolf in Scotland was killed.

- Jurassic rocks of the coastal fringe produced a range of fossils.

**Landscape Character**

The Landscape Character Types found in this area are described in:


*All Landscape Character Assessments can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk)*
Appendix 3 - Special Landscape Areas (formerly Areas of Great Landscape Value) Statements of Importance and Descriptions

8.3 South Bo’ness Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Overview:
Locally distinctive area of rolling hills comprising of agricultural land, forming a strong backdrop and setting to the settlements of Bo’ness and Linlithgow and providing a physical separation between them. Includes sites and features of historic and recreational importance, undeveloped coastline and minor roads. The area forms a strong contrast to the adjacent industrial complex at Grangemouth and the settlement of Bo’ness. The area has a high recreational value due to its juxtaposition with Bo’ness.

Landscape Description:
- Local Landscape Character Areas: 6(i) Bo’ness Coastal Hills (entire area), 4 (i) Avon Valley (north eastern edge of river corridor).
- Gently rolling coastal hills extending from east of Grangemouth to Blackness, and from immediate south of Bo’ness to border with West Lothian. Rising to 150m above seal level and sloping northwards to Bo’ness and southwards to Linlithgow with minor watercourses to Forth and River Avon. Internally, landform includes small shallow valley on higher ground above Bo’ness.
- Extends to Forth Estuary coast with mudflats at Blackness (SPA and SSSI designation); predominant aspect is to north.
- Steep, wooded, narrow, incised River Avon valley on south western boundary.
- Farmland mostly ley grassland and arable land comprising medium to large scale fields, open or semi-open farmland. Field boundaries comprise a mix of post and wire fences, well maintained hedges with individual trees and tree groups; few dry stone walls.
- Champney, Cauldcoats and Mannerson Holings in eastern part of AGLV have distinct small scale rectilinear field pattern with small holdings dwellings and buildings extending along minor roads.
- Areas of woodland cover at Kinneil, small to medium shelterbelts and broadleaf woodland groups elsewhere; field boundary/roadside broadleaf trees frequent. Coastline east of Muirhouses on wooded escarpment; includes some untypical areas with limited woodland/tree cover.
- Steep wooded escarpment on northern boundary between Grangemouth and Kinneil, providing a distinct boundary; also steep wooded escarpment along northern coastal boundary between Camden and Blackness.
- Roads generally west to east through area on ridges at different elevations, providing extensive views outwards.
- Limited sense of remoteness due to proximity of settlements, but locations on minor roads and paths on higher ground have a strong rural and managed agricultural character with distant views out.
- Rural internal part of area and coastline near Blackness and Avon Valley area contrast strongly with adjacent settlements of Bo’ness, Grangemouth and Linlithgow.
- Extensive panoramic views out from internal minor roads/paths and high points in all directions, across settlements of Bo’ness, Grangemouth and Linlithgow to open countryside beyond; highest point on border at West Lothian Golf Club (170m) provides distinct panoramic views in all directions. Views north across Forth to Ochils are dominant from the highest points and northern slopes; internally, views within the SLA are limited by landform and tree cover.
- In west of area, views to the Grangemouth complex from the high minor road between Nether Kinneil and the A905 are a very dominant feature in the middle ground and form a strong contrast with the more distant views to hills in the west.
- Views of the upper part of the SLA from outside are prominent from the south, where the area forms a backdrop to Linlithgow; the northern slopes of the SLA are also a prominent feature forming a backdrop to Bo’ness when viewed from the Fife coastline on the north side of the Forth. Approaching Bo’ness from the west, the wooded escarpment alongside the A904/A905 is visually prominent, forming the northern boundary of the AGLV; the higher ground is also visible from the eastern end of Falkirk/Grangemouth.
- Area covers approximately 18km².
Appendix 3 - Special Landscape Areas (formerly Areas of Great Landscape Value) Statements of Importance and Descriptions

South Bo’ness Special Landscape Area: Statement of Importance

Other Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage and Recreational Interests:
- Recreational features include: a network of core paths, John Muir Way, National Cycle Network Route 76, part of the Bo’ness and Kinneil Railway, and a golf course.
- Historical and archaeological features, including a section of the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, Roman camps, Blackness Castle and Carriden House.
- Landmark features also include Aimgath Hill at 171m, the tower at House of Binns on Binns Hill (just in West Lothian).
- Adjoins Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Area on Forth coast.
- Local Wildlife Site at Kinneil and east of Carriden.
- Bremains Meadows SSSI (south of Bo’ness) and Avon Gorge SSSI (in west of area).
- Greenbelt to south and west of Bo’ness.

Boundary:
- Contiguous with the River Avon on south west boundary and the Falkirk/West Lothian boundary to the south and east. Eastern boundary is contiguous with the Forth Shore SLA in West Lothian. Northern boundary is marked by the distinct steep wooded escarpment running down to the A904/A905, by the outer western and northern limit of built development of Bo’ness and Muirhouse and by the Forth coast between Carriden and Blackness.

Special Qualities:
- Area of small rolling hills comprising well tended farmland and some woodland blocks / shelterbelts forming an important rural backdrop to Bo’ness and to Linlithgow and providing a strong boundary between these settlements.
- Area forms the landward setting of Bo’ness and uniquely extends to the settlement boundary; incorporates an important stretch of undeveloped coast to north.
- Elevated location near coast enables notable long panoramic views out from high points to the Forth, Ochils and Pentlands and ensures much of the area is visible from the surrounding countryside.
- Includes steep wooded escarpments on northern side and wooded valley and gorge of River Avon to south.
- High recreational usage, framing countryside surrounding Bo’ness.
Annex 3C: Statement of Significance for Special Landscape Area: Tweed Valley

Special Landscape Area 2: Tweed Valley

Location and boundaries:
This area includes the Tweed valley between Peebles and Thornielee. It is bounded to the north and south by ridges which contain the valley. To the west the proposed SLA extends to the boundary of the NSA, while to the east the edge of the Elibank and Traquair Forests forms the boundary between the Tweed Valley and Tweed, Ettrick and Yarrow Confluences proposed SLAs. The proposed SLA excludes the settlements of Peebles, Cardrona, Innerleithen and Walkerburn. The boundaries of this area are based on a combination of ridge-lines, watercourses, tracks, paths, settlement boundaries and forest edges. These have been selected as the most suitable available features, particularly with less ‘defined’ features being used where stronger features such as roads were not available.

Designation statement:
The broad Tweed Valley is typical of the Borders, and is the most familiar of the Borders valleys. Accordingly it has a strong sense of place, with certain views being instantly recognisable. The varied mix of landscape elements is highly representative, with forestry, woodland, open hillsides and pastoral farmland all juxtaposed. Added to this mix is a range of settlement types, with the valley providing the setting to several settlements. The landscape unfolds as the viewer follows the river through the valley, presenting new vistas alternately dominated by forestry, as around Walkerburn, or by the steep rocky slopes above Innerleithen. The contrast between the well-settled valley and the bare heather and grass moors and landmark hills is striking. Well-designed forestry actively contributes to this visual experience in places.

There are numerous opportunities for enjoying this landscape, including the cycle routes at Glentress and elsewhere, golf courses, equestrian centres, and walking routes. The tourist potential of the area is also significant, with Peebles being a key centre, and several attractions including Traquair House. Time depth is evident in estate landscapes and historic buildings. Horsburgh Castle provides a sharp contrast to new development around Cardrona, although landscape works around the new settlement are now maturing, folding this latest addition into the patchwork of the valley.
Forces for change:
- Development pressures at settlement edges, for housing and commercial developments
- Potential pressure for road upgrading
- Changes to forestry management
- Potential for visual impact of development on hills outside the proposed SLA
- Creation of hillside access tracks

Management recommendations:
- Careful management of land use at settlement edges
- Consider landscape and visual impacts of proposed developments in and around settlements, particularly the treatment of their edges
- Seek opportunities to better integrate existing development into the landscape
- Promote the restructuring of forests, and the use of forest design plans for new areas of afforestation
- Consider the effects of development on hilltops, such as masts or wind farms, which may be visible within the valley