

GUIDANCE ON DESIGNATING LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS



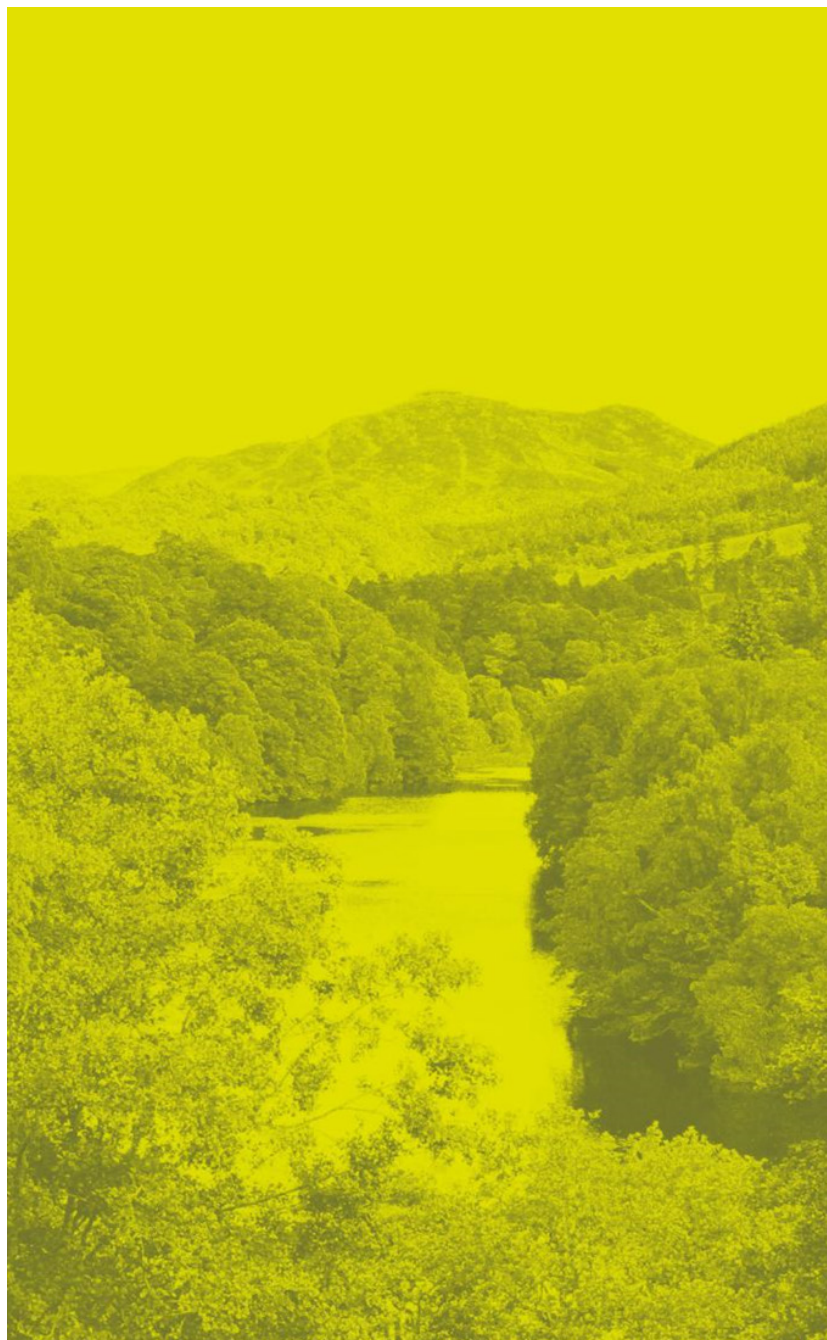
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NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland
October 2020

Note

This guidance will be kept under review and revised in response to feedback on its content and use. Please send any enquiries or comments to landscape@nature.scot.

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ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE

LOCAL LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS – FIFTEEN 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. The original guidance referred to these as ‘Special Landscape Areas’ but to reflect [Scottish Planning Policy 2014](#) the name ‘Local Landscape Area’ is now recommended.

The 2006 guidance has been widely used as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process in designating local landscapes. It remains relevant today as part of a wider, ‘all landscapes’ approach to managing landscape change.

Fifteen years on, NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) have refreshed the guidance. As well as a general updating of the policy context, the new guidance draws on the experience of the various local landscape designation reviews that have been undertaken. With the need for more community involvement in landscape issues, the guidance also looks at ways that non-professionals can contribute more.

Our natural and cultural heritage contribute hugely 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, in place-making, and in sustaining a greener, healthier Scotland rich in history.

Local landscape designations are a valuable tool in the development plan toolbox. They reflect the values that communities attach to their local places and the huge social, economic and environmental assets they provide. Designation informs their care and management, and contributes 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 is intended primarily for local authorities to use in taking forward their own designation process. Other stakeholders, including developers, landowners and managers, community organisations, and environmental and heritage groups, will find this guidance helpful in developing an understanding of Local Landscape Areas (LLAs).

1.2 Designation of an area serves three main objectives:

- **Accolade**

Designation recognises that a specific area has special importance. Celebrating these values raises awareness and understanding amongst communities and wider stakeholders.

- **Policy**

The designation process provides a useful opportunity to engage communities in identifying policy priorities and objectives. Landscapes will evolve, and this change is managed better if the values of a landscape are well understood. Designation highlights the landscape values that are important to communities.

- **Management**

Designation of areas that are specifically valued provides a useful means to concentrate effort and prioritise resources for positive action and management.

This guidance explains the purpose of the Local Landscape Area (LLA) designation and will assist local authorities when reviewing and designating them. The focus is on two key roles for 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 and identification of, locally valued landscapes

1.3 [The European Landscape Convention](#) (ELC) promotes the protection, management and planning of all landscapes, regardless of character or condition. The local landscape designations remain a relevant tool today as part of this approach, giving the opportunity to improve their effectiveness and better harness their wider benefits.

Through this guidance, NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) aim to strengthen and share understanding and support for LLAs among local authorities, the public and other key stakeholders, and promote:

- greater consistency in the selection and application of LLAs by local authorities
- better understanding of the relationships LLAs have with other heritage and landscape designations (see Table 1 in [Annex 1](#))
- greater recognition and integration of the historic environment components of landscape
- 'Local Landscape Areas' as the standard name for this designation

- 1.4 The policy basis for local landscape designations is set out in [Scottish Planning Policy](#) (SPP) at paragraph 197. LLAs are one of a range of considerations for local authorities when they deal with planning applications.
- 1.5 This guidance outlines the process for designating new LLAs and refreshing existing designations. Designations may need revision due to, for example:
 - new development
 - subsequent other local designations
 - new reasons or emphasis for designation – such as the historic environment, natural heritage or health and well-being
 - the need for a clearer statement of the qualities and values of the LLA that provide the basis for their designation
- 1.6 This guidance has been informed by a review of Scottish local landscape designation practice since guidance was first published in 2006, and a Sharing Good Practice event. A working group has steered its preparation, involving staff from NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland, planning authorities, Archaeology Scotland, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (Scotland), and the National Trust for Scotland.
- 1.7 The rest of this introduction discusses the context within which local landscapes are designated. [Section 2](#) presents the process of identifying or reviewing LLAs, and [Section 3](#) considers LLA policy in Development Plans. Key messages are highlighted in the shaded columns throughout this guidance. [Annex 1](#) lists designated and valued landscapes and sites. [Annex 2](#) provides a reminder of the current national policy context. [Annex 3](#) has examples of selection criteria used in one study. [Annex 4](#) provides some examples of local development plan policies for LLA, and how LLA relate to other some other policy areas. [Annex 5](#) gives examples of Statements of Importance. The glossary is in [Annex 6](#). A series of case Studies illustrating current practice can be found on [NatureScot's](#) and [HES's](#) websites. The case studies are helpful examples but they may illustrate only some aspects of good practice.



Aerial view of north coast of Iona [Central, South and West Mull] © P&A MacDonald/NatureScot

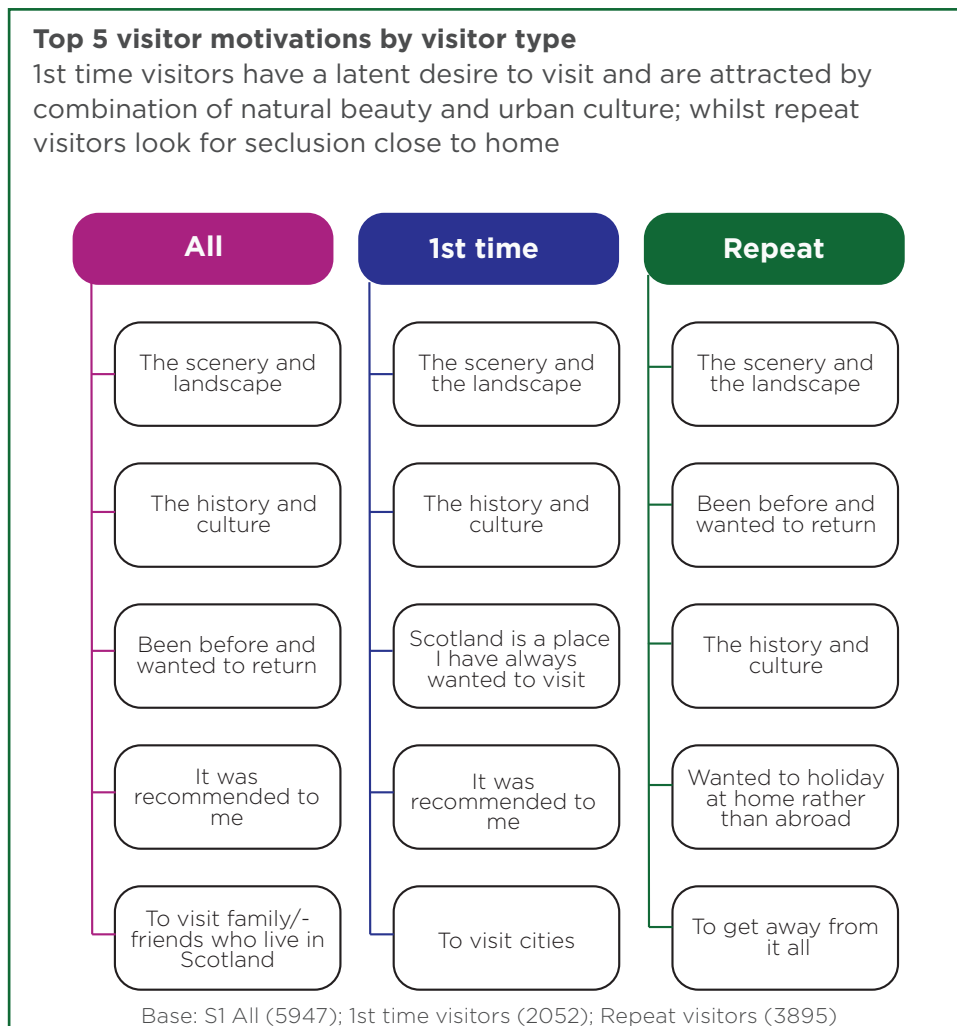
LANDSCAPE AS AN ASSET

- 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 ([Figure 1](#)).
- 1.9 Many of our landscapes are renowned internationally and nationally. Their natural and cultural components are deeply intertwined. [Our Place in Time](#), the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014) recognises landscape's value at a local and community level. The distinct identity and setting provided by our landscapes and the association between people and place is of particular importance.
- 1.10 NatureScot and HES have produced [People, Place and Landscape](#), a joint Landscape Position Statement and Action Plan which sets out their vision and approach for managing change in Scotland's landscapes in more detail. It emphasises the close relationship between natural and cultural components of landscape.
- 1.11 The Scottish Government's national outcomes and policy highlight the social, economic and environmental benefits deriving from high-quality places. It is important to facilitate positive change, and to maintain and enhance distinctive landscapes. [Scottish Planning Policy](#) (SPP) identifies local landscape designation as one of the tools to achieve positive change when they are afforded an appropriate level of protection, and subject to their purpose and reason for identification being clearly explained. [The National Planning Framework](#) (NPF3) undertakes to 'respect, enhance and make responsible use of our natural and cultural assets'.
- 1.12 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 and to secure enhancement through development reflecting both natural and cultural aspects. There are also opportunities to increase public enjoyment and understanding. These often link in with land and countryside management. This might include development of the core paths network or the establishment of Regional and Country Parks.
- 1.13 Local authorities play a vital role in managing change in these landscapes, maintaining their distinctive cultural and natural character. Joint working with neighbouring authorities is important to achieve this, especially in light of the need to prepare Regional Spatial Strategies under the [Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#). Landscape contributes to many local authority objectives including:
- health improvement and education
 - urban regeneration and rural development
 - community planning and social inclusion
- LLAs can also be used to promote recreational opportunities, particularly where this would benefit the local community.
- 1.14 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 the natural and historic environment. Investing resources in Scotland's landscapes brings many and varied benefits to society as set out in the Action Plan that accompanies the [People, Place and Landscape](#) joint statement.

FIGURE 1: Economic benefits of Scotland's Landscapes – some examples

Visiting Scotland

Tourism is vital to Scotland's economy. In 2018, total overnight and day visitor expenditure was around £10.5 billion. Employment in tourism-related industries is some 8% of the Scottish workforce. Surveys consistently confirm that our outstanding scenery and landscape (50% of visits) and distinctive history and culture (33% of visits) are major reasons to visit ([Scotland Visitor Survey 2015-16](#)).



Monuments as well as mountains

The historic environment, a major facet of Scotland's tourism industry, 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 cities. 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 for tourism ([Anholt-GfK Roper Nations Brand Index 2018](#)).

Local products from local places

Traditional products – such as [the £5.5 billion whisky trade](#) (2019) – identify with Scotland's landscapes as a critical feature in their marketing, aiming to build and sustain strong links with tradition, and identify 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 setting and inspiration.

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- 1.15 Many local authorities have adopted an ‘all landscapes’ approach in their efforts to guide landscape change. This approach recognises that all places deserve attention, whatever their attributes. LLAs can be part of this approach and are in keeping with the ELC’s approach which includes protection as well as management and planning.
- 1.16 Designations do not mean other places are unimportant or not valued, but they can highlight particular aspects to be safeguarded and help focus resources. Designation is a long established and well-regarded means of protecting landscapes, and the process of identifying and designating landscapes is often part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) cycle.
- 1.17 Management of LLAs will be through LDP policies and implementation. Authorities should consider the function and continuing relevance of LLAs when preparing their development plan. The climate emergency and our response to it will increase the scope and speed of landscape change. This may require more frequent reviews of designations and other landscape management approaches.
- 1.18 Landscape designation reflects the values that society attaches to specific landscapes. Identifying and understanding these values involves both community engagement and expert 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.
- 1.19 LLAs complement other designations and similar approaches ([Annex 1](#)), especially Scotland’s two National Parks and 40 National Scenic Areas (NSAs). The National Park designation reflects natural and cultural heritage values, and NSAs focus on scenic values. In contrast, LLAs may be based on a wider set of values. Although LLAs are not considered nationally important, all of these designations are highly valued locally and prized by their communities. There is a parallel process and similar hierarchy of designations and valued areas for biodiversity and geodiversity ([Annex 1](#)).
- 1.20 Designation of LLAs can help to secure public enjoyment and increase understanding and interest in their management. [SPP](#) (paragraph 197) indicates that designation is particularly useful 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.
- 1.21 LLA designation can also link to other non-statutory local designations. These might include nature conservation sites. This can contribute to national and local biodiversity objectives, the protection and enhancement of green networks, or facilitating enjoyment and understanding of natural and cultural heritage.

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- 1.22 There are also opportunities to consider the protection and management of the non-designated historic assets such as monuments, field systems, and inter-related groups of assets. Local Place Plans, with their community engagement and involvement, should also be a helpful connection for the local landscape designation process.
- 1.23 The climate emergency, together with ongoing changes in technology and the economics of land-use, is expected to lead to significant changes in the landscape of parts of Scotland. It is important that LLA designation should accord with the principles of [Scotland's Land Use Strategy](#) and engage where relevant with regional land-use forums and partnerships in order to consider the prevailing circumstances for agricultural and forestry.

2. DESIGNATING LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

- 2.1.1. This section sets out a recommended approach to use when establishing or reviewing LLAs, with examples illustrating key points. The seven steps identified ([Figure 2](#)) establish a systematic and transparent process that should be easily understood, and allow identified areas to be clearly justified or set aside.
- 2.1.2. Local authorities are best placed to tailor this approach to reflect the resources available and local circumstances, always ensuring the process is rigorous, clear and consistent. Consideration should be given to the advantages and disadvantages of undertaking a review in parallel with the Local Development Plan process, or progressing it separately when capacity may be greater.
- 2.1.3. When reviewing existing local landscape areas, it may not be necessary to carry out as comprehensive a review as when designating new areas. In such cases some of the steps described in the following sections may not need to be fully undertaken. For example, criteria used in previous assessment may still be relevant. In both scenarios, community involvement should be considered key to the process.
- 2.1.4. Many LLAs are recognised primarily for their cultural and/or historic assets, or for scenic value or natural features such as their geology or landform. The combination of natural, cultural and historic is often important too. LLAs will be more effective where there is an understanding and appreciation of the significance of a landscape. Reviewing information sources on the various aspects of landscape, including other types of designation, will help inform this understanding.

KEY PARTNERS

- 2.1.5 NatureScot and HES can contribute to the local landscape designation process. Both organisations 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.
- 2.1.6 NatureScot and HES can 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. Engagement in the designation process will be key in monitoring the effectiveness of this guidance and maintaining an understanding of LLAs in practice.

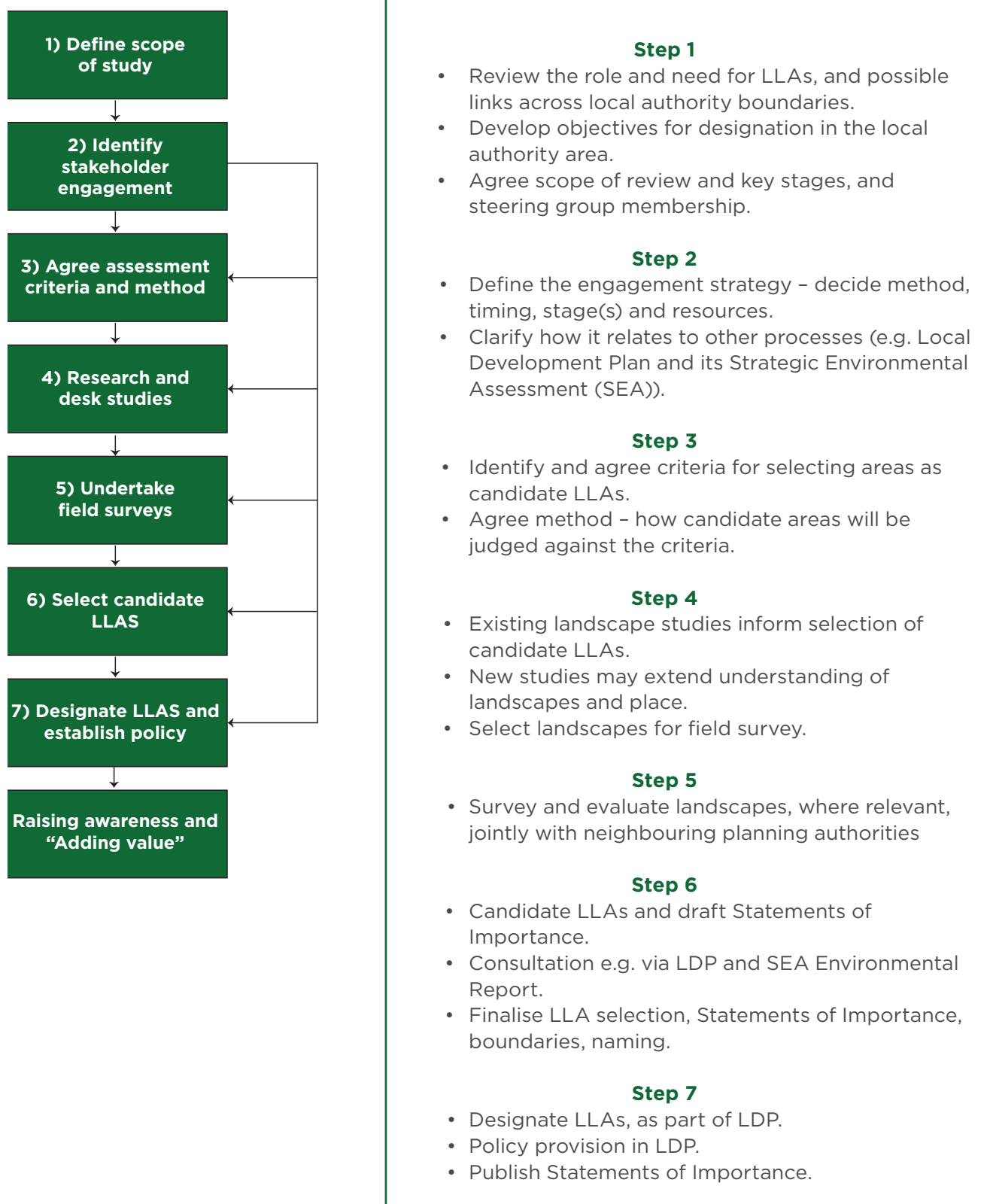
- 2.1.7 In general, NatureScot would expect to play a greater role where local landscape designations cross local authority boundaries, where they are identified in future Regional Spatial Strategies, or where larger rural authorities are concerned. NatureScot are also likely to take a particular interest in the relationship of LLAs with NSAs, National Parks and other natural heritage designations.
- 2.1.8. HES and local authority archaeology services can assist with ensuring the historic environment is appropriately identified and incorporated. This can include identifying nationally important designated and undesignated assets and their contribution to landscape, assessing of historic environment information, and providing detailed information on Historic Land Use Assessment (HLA).
- 2.1.9. Land-owning bodies including public, private, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) will have a valuable role to play when a local landscape designation is proposed for places they manage or have an interest in.
- 2.1.10. [Figure 2](#) outlines the stages of the designation process and related tasks. It is an iterative process – the dotted green arrows indicate this. In addition, appropriate consultation is essential, and is likely to occur in several of the stages.

Establish the aims of the review.

The following questions may help to do this:

- 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?
- Is it to ensure that historic and cultural aspects are adequately captured and recognised?

FIGURE 2: Local Landscape Areas designation – key steps



Step 1 – Scope of study



Loch Morar, Lochaber [Moidart, Morar and Glen Shiel] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot

- 2.2.1 A project team is needed to set up the review and agree resourcing and internal processes to follow. This should encompass a range of specialisms and may consist of two to four people. Ideally this should include at least one landscape architect and another environmental or archaeological/cultural heritage professional. We also recommend a Steering Group is convened, to include a wider range of expertise and external contacts.
- 2.2.2 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 or conservation officers, archaeology staff and environmental specialists – may be able to lend relevant experience to a steering group to oversee the process.
- 2.2.3 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, the designation (reflecting the purpose set out in [SPP](#))?
 - Is the study limited to reviewing existing local landscape areas, or should it review all landscapes across the council area?
 - Are landscapes likely to be considered whose character and/or value extends into adjacent authorities' areas?
 - What will be the key stages in the appraisal of local landscapes including community engagement and timelines?
 - How will the review fit with the development plan process, and/or regional level planning and community-led Local Place Plans?

2.2.4 Local authorities should develop objectives and an approach to designation to suit their particular circumstances. 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 extent of National Parks and National Scenic Areas within the local authority area
- the degree of overlap between the LLAs and other designations, including:
 - regional and country parks
 - gardens and designed landscapes
 - green belts and green networks
 - historic battlefields
 - scheduled monuments
 - listed buildings
 - conservation areas
 - local nature conservation sites and similar designations

2.2.5 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.

2.2.6 The fit with local authority-wide landscape policies may also be important in determining coverage of LLAs. For example, if a significant number of these policies are essentially protective in nature, a large number of LLA designations may not be required. An important factor to consider is the range and extent of other designations and approaches which may be as or more effective than designation in delivering the desired objectives. Any review of LLAs should therefore be seen as part of a wider action for landscape by local authorities.

2.2.7 Where a local authority boundary forms part of an 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 where a landscape which crosses administrative boundaries is of shared local or regional landscape importance.

2.2.8 [Figures 3](#) and [4](#) provide examples of the scope of two local landscape designation reviews. The processes outlined informed reviews of LLAs that were subsequently included in the adopted LDP. The Midlothian appraisal focussed on the suite of existing areas designated, the Perth and Kinross review considered all landscapes (not just the existing Areas of Great Landscape Value identified in the 1990s).

FIGURE 3: Midlothian Local Development Plan 2017
[Special landscape areas supplementary guidance](#) (Appendix 2)

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 [...]

1.9 The evaluation method involved the following key tasks:

- 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.
- Assessment of landscape character areas lying within each broad study area undertaken from key viewpoints using evaluation criteria adapted from the SNH/HES guidance.
- 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

FIGURE 4: Perth & Kinross Local Landscape Designation Review (2014)
[Supplementary Guidance - Landscape \(Methodology\)](#) LUC and STAR Development Group

1.5 The project brief defines the overall purpose of the project as being:

- 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:

- the purpose of local landscape designations, including the original purposes of the previous AGLVs, and the aim for new designations in relation to development pressures [were clarified];
- the importance of achieving greater consistency across the whole Council area was highlighted;
- specific issues included the importance of historical landscapes, the Highland Boundary Fault, green corridors, and the relationship between LLAs and NSAs, highlighting that there are areas where NSAs may be vulnerable to changes outside their boundaries; and
- a 'review panel' approach to consultation was agreed ... supported by a Facebook page and online survey.

Step 2 – Stakeholder engagement

- 2.3.1. Engagement with communities, groups and other partners is a key ingredient in establishing support for local landscapes. The strategy for this should be established early in the designation assessment process and agreed with the steering group as it is likely to influence the time required and timing of the project stages. Stakeholder engagement can take place right up until [Step 6](#) and it may be necessary to consult more than once during the process.
- 2.3.2. 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 support for the LLAs identified.
- 2.3.3. Involving stakeholders meaningfully, at the right stages in the process, will not only inform the work but build wider understanding of LLAs. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to notify landowners or those living in or adjacent to a proposed designated area, but ensuring appropriate levels of consultation is good practice. An advantage of linking the LLA with the LDP process is that full public consultation is included.
- 2.3.4 The need for Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) should be considered at this stage. SEA is a process which considers the environmental effects of plans, programmes and strategies as part of their preparation and implementation. Where LLA are being identified or reviewed as part of the LDP process, SEA is normally carried out for the whole plan. Where LLA are being identified or reviewed by the planning authority in as part of a separate process, the need for SEA should be considered as part of the process of clarifying how the project relates to other processes at step 2.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 2.3.5 [The European Landscape Convention](#) recognises that landscape interests can be delivered best by building wide support. This requires meaningful involvement, making people aware of landscape issues, and enabling public participation. It is important to determine the extent, nature and timing of community involvement in the process at the outset (recognising that it is likely to occur at more than one point in the process), and reflecting the advice set out in [PAN 3/2010 Community Engagement](#). This should be clear in the study brief.

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

Explore with communities issues such as:

- What are your favourite landscapes – and why?
- What areas would you like to see enhanced – and how?

Explore with communities, key partners and stakeholders:

- What is the local landscape character and what do you value about it?
- Is there a need to designate this area?
- What are the designation criteria?
- What will designation achieve and is it relevant?

- 2.3.6 The knowledge of wider communities 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 technical assessments.
- 2.3.7 There are distinct benefits in seeking community input and providing for LLA consultation as part of the development plan programme. Related topic areas considered during the development plan process may also inform and add to the knowledge base of the local landscape assessment. These might include green networks and health and well-being. There are established methods for this, for example the [Place Standard](#) and [SP=EED tools](#).
- 2.3.8 It is important to clarify the purpose of designating local landscapes, and emphasise that identifying the values that communities place on their landscapes is part of a collaborative process. Asking people for suggestions for local landscapes and their opinions on criteria in the initial stages is useful and can help set the parameters of subsequent work.



View of Crovie, Aberdeenshire [North Aberdeenshire Coast] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot)

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

- 2.3.9 Relevant stakeholders should be identified early in the process – including Steering Group membership. In addition to expertise in landscape and historical aspects, other topics may be appropriate depending on the area under review, such as considering climate change impacts. Neighbouring local authorities, particularly where candidate LLAs lie on or near authority boundaries, should also be included.
- 2.3.10 Public 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

Step 3 – Assessment criteria and method

- 2.4.1 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 an explanation of why they are important.
- 2.4.2 Selection criteria are essential. These must be fit for purpose, developed by agreement with interested stakeholders where possible, and applied consistently. The criteria relate to the special qualities of a landscape.
- 2.4.3 Many of these qualities are interrelated: for example, landscapes valued for recreation will often have strong scenic appeal and/or natural or cultural qualities. While responses to landscape are individual and personal, designation requires the qualities identified in a landscape to be widely recognised and valued.
- 2.4.4 In LLAs, these qualities are likely to include a wider range of values than purely scenic. At the local authority level, landscapes are often valued because of the contribution they can make to a sense of place and local identity. Table 1 sets out the criteria commonly used. This is not a fixed list as the criteria need to be appropriate to each designation process. Not all the criteria need to be met in every case: a landscape might be deemed so valued under one criterion that it merits designation on that basis alone. In any event, it is important that the final criteria list is agreed and approved by the whole steering group.

TABLE 1: Range of Evaluation Criteria

Landscape Criterion	Definition	Description
Scenic	Landscape that appeals primarily to the visual senses, and is appreciated for its beauty.	Landscapes with strong visual, sensory and perceptual impacts and experiential appeal. May contain a pleasing combination of features, visual contrasts or dramatic elements.
Cultural	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interests / associations / significance, offering a time-depth to people's experience.	Landscapes rich in archaeology or built heritage, or consciously designed (e.g. parks and gardens), or largely be the product of human interaction. May include the scene of historic events (such as battles), have literary or artistic connections, or other cultural associations and local history.
Natural	Landscape of strong natural or semi-natural character, with clear evidence of ecological, geological or geomorphological interest.	Landscapes with extensive semi-natural habitat, distinctive topography or geology, a general lack of permanent human presence and a perception of wildness.
Recreation and Enjoyment	Landscape recognised as offering opportunities for recreation and amenity, where experience of landscape is important.	Landscapes valued for recreation. May contain viewpoints, landmarks and renowned vistas; paths and trails including core paths, rights of way, long distance trails, national cycle routes; and scenic routes.
Local Distinctiveness and Sense of Place	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity	Landscape features or combination of features which are identified as being characteristic of a particular place. Landscapes that are distinctive with a strong 'sense of place'.
Health and Wellbeing	A landscape which makes particular contribution to both the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of a local community and/or visitors.	Landscape facilities and features which are well-used and valued by local communities and visitors.
Important Spatial Function	Landscape that performs a clearly identifiable and valued spatial role.	Can include, for example, settlement 'gateways', where the sense of arrival is gained, or separation between developments.

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- 2.4.5 The list in this table builds on previous local landscape designations guidance. Other lists have evolved for different purposes, such as that in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (2013) (pp 82-85) and the proposed Landscape Institute technical note on valued landscapes, which is currently in development. Other criteria could also be selected, according to local circumstances.
- 2.4.6 The fundamental aim is to identify and analyse what the qualities are that, individually or when combined, make the area special in terms of its landscape and scenery. Identifying these qualities requires a combination of studies from relevant disciplines, informed by professional judgement. It should also be tested by public opinion.
- 2.4.7 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 characteristics 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 the nature of their landscapes and what is valued in the area.
- 2.4.8 In the past, both quantitative (applying numbers) and more qualitative (using description) approaches have been used as part of the assessment methodology. The current preference is for a qualitative approach as reliance on numbers can be misleading. Assessing the level to which a landscape meets a criterion can be effective in clearly explaining and justifying the designation of a landscape.
- 2.4.9 Ranking should be applied based on a qualitative description. This is where the relative value of each landscape unit is assessed in a systematic, criteria-based manner, and can be given values such as 'high', 'medium' or 'low'. Such an evaluation can help comparison between landscape units and identifies those ranked highly which are then considered as candidates for designation. Examples of a qualitative approach are provided in the case studies.
- 2.4.10 It is important to clearly describe the factors considered, to relate them to each of the assessment criteria, and to set out the judgements used to identify and select landscapes for designation. Public comment can inform this, and also help to encourage wider engagement with and support for LLAs. Moray Council's review looked across the whole council area, using the criteria in [Figure 5](#) to identify candidate LLAs. The Highland Council's review was of their existing LLAs ([Figure 6](#)).

FIGURE 5 – Moray Council

[LLA review 2018](#)

Criteria	Factors considered in the assessment
Rarity / Typicality	<p>Whether this is a rare or unique landscape or has some rare features when compared with other landscapes within Moray. Does this landscape have a distinct ‘sense of place’?</p> <p>How commonplace is this landscape within Moray? If many similar landscapes are present, is this one a particularly good example?</p> <p>Does the landscape have a strong identity?</p>
Scenic Qualities	<p>The degree of diversity of landform, vegetation cover and settlement.</p> <p>Does the landscape form/include an iconic or landmark feature?</p> <p>Does the juxtaposition and contrast of this landscape character area with adjacent landscapes make an important contribution to wider scenic quality?</p> <p>Consideration of the setting the landscape may provide to key archaeological/historic features or settlements.</p> <p>The integrity of the landscape in terms of its composition, for example does it comprise a few high-quality features with the rest of the landscape being less diverse? Does the landscape have a sense of cohesion with each of its parts strongly contributing to the whole?</p> <p>Consideration of experiential qualities such as the ‘sense of place’ and aesthetic qualities (such as colour, texture, contrast, change).</p> <p>The quality of views, including consideration of whether there are focal points, revelatory or panoramic views to and from the landscape or whether views are more contained and intimate.</p>
Enjoyment	<p>Recreational use including the presence of core footpaths, cycle ways, tourist and visitor destinations. As access rights have considerably increased recreational opportunities within most landscapes, a judgement has been made on the likely intensity of use with the presence of a strong network of core paths, National Cycle Routes (NCR), Long Distance Paths, promoted activities such as water sports, and presence of known popular hills or coasts and the degree of promotion of recreational pursuits, tending to increase the score.</p>
Cultural qualities	<p>Historic site-specific information including listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and the presence of Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes principally inform this assessment.</p>
Naturalness	<p>The presence of international and national designations such as SPAs, SACs, RAMSAR and SSSI sites, Local Biodiversity Sites (LBS) and ancient/semi-natural and long-established woodlands inform this assessment together with judgements made on more perceptual qualities such as the relative modification of the landscape and the degree of seclusion or remoteness experienced. SNH’s Wildness Mapping has also been reviewed as part of this assessment.</p>

FIGURE 6: The Highland Council
[Assessment of Highland SLA](#) (2011 and as updated)

[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

Step 4 – Research and desk study

2.5.1 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. It is also during this stage that those areas requiring field survey will be identified. Where possible, rough candidate areas should be outlined by the end of this stage to help focus the field survey work.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



View from Kinnoull Hill, near Perth [Sidlaw Hills] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot/2020VISION

2.5.2 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.

2.5.3 Landscape Character Assessment:

- provides a fuller understanding of the distribution and characteristics of landscapes
- can be used as a basis to inform judgements on the particular merits of landscapes being considered for designation
- informs the development of planning and management guidelines required to guide future development and land-use change

2.5.4 Detailed information on the LCA process is set out in [NatureScot's LCA webpages](#), which host the NatureScot 2019 national coverage of LCA. The descriptions in the latest Scottish LCA are more integrated with cultural and historic aspects than the earlier reports, and this should be helpful when considering local landscape designations. The Landscape Character Types may not be detailed enough to inform an LLA designation process, so it may be necessary for the local authority to carry out a more detailed LCA at Landscape Character Area level, nesting with the NatureScot Landscape Character Types.

2.5.5 Where areas being considered for designation lie on the coast, the study may need to consider intertidal areas and the neighbouring waters off the coast. It may be necessary to refer to [Coastal Character Assessments](#) (CCAs) where they exist, or guidance on how to undertake CCA.

2.5.6 Often, the extent of an 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 landscapes for designation. Table 2 below summarises the differences between the processes of characterisation and designation.

TABLE 2
Landscape characterisation and landscape designation

	Characterisation	Designation
Purpose	Describes all Landscape Character Types in the local authority area.	Identifies special landscapes in the local authority area.
Scope	Provides a basis for distinguishing different Landscape Character Types and identifying sensitivity.	Identifies more discrete areas of landscape considered to be of higher merit and which may comprise a combination of Landscape Character Types.
Approach	Based on assessment of defined landscape features.	Based on an assessment of agreed landscape selection criteria.
Outcomes	Informs the development of landscape policies and guidelines for all Landscape Character Types.	Informs development of specific landscape policies geared towards enhanced protection and management of particular areas.
Treatment of boundaries	Boundaries are based on landscape character and are more transitional in nature.	More precisely drawn boundaries are defined by a range of criteria, including landscape character, and topographic features.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT



Mousa broch, Mousa, Shetland [No Ness and Mousa] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot

2.5.7 Human activity has shaped nearly all of our landscapes for millennia. We can see human influence in vegetation, field boundary patterns, and settlement. The impact of past land-use and traditional built features, along with artistic, cultural, historic and scientific associations can be significant attributes of landscape. Most of the historic buildings and features in our landscapes are not designated.

2.5.8 These cultural elements of our landscapes link people with place over time and instil a sense of place and identity. Our appreciation and experience of a place is strengthened by an understanding of these cultural and historical connections. This is particularly important as aspects of heritage within a landscape may not be very obvious – this can risk it being under-valued. To capture these factors it is important to have a multi-disciplinary team leading the process of designating LLA.

[Figure 7](#) contains examples of how some of these associations are made in literature.

Historic and cultural criteria

How has past human activity shaped the natural environment and wider landscape?

Which historic, or cultural landscapes are typical of the local authority area?

Which historic, or cultural landscapes are rare, unusual or unique?

Which historic, or cultural landscapes are exemplars of their type?

Which landscape types retain extensive archaeological / historic fabric?

2.5.9 The following sources can provide knowledge and understanding of the historic environment:

- [Historic Landuse Assessment \(HLA\)](#)
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.
- [Canmore](#)
Contains information and collections on archaeological sites, buildings, industry and maritime heritage across Scotland. Compiled and managed by Historic Environment Scotland it contains records generated by HES and from a wide range of other organisations, communities and individuals who help to enhance this national resource. It also includes [the Scottish Countryside Commission Survey of Traditional Buildings](#).
- [Scran](#)
An online learning service of the charity Historic Environment Scotland. It contains over 400,000 images and media from museums, galleries, and archives. It aims to advance public education by enabling access to Scotland's culture, heritage and related material.
- **Historic Environment Records**
Records held by local authorities giving 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**
This includes community input (for example, oral history and tradition), archival and specialist information (for example School of Scottish Studies).
- **Cultural and artistic associations**
Including the 'creative associations' of the [NatureScot Landscapes of Scotland](#) (2011 – 12) text and the Cultural Influences sections of the NatureScot 2019 LCA Background Chapters (due to be available from NatureScot website from early 2021).

FIGURE 7: Scottish Borders Council LLA Review – 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.

[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'.

[Newhall, A Study of Country Life in the Shadow of Edinburgh](#),
D M Young, 1998

2.5.10 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 planned policy woodlands, shelterbelts, plantations, estate boundaries and sometimes estate villages (as an example, see [Scottish Borders' Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes](#)).

OTHER LANDSCAPE INFORMATION AND STUDIES

2.5.11 There may be other information sources which can help with evaluations, such as [Wild Land Area descriptions](#), Historic Environment Records or local authority landscape sensitivity studies. [National Scenic Area Special Qualities Reports](#) may also be useful where they cover nearby areas.

Landscape preference studies have found that people prefer:

- spaces with a view or outlook, and that these should be partially framed or enclosed
- natural views to those of built environments, with large natural wonders such as mountains, oceans, lakes or large expanses of sky
- water views, which are perceived as calming
- places to have a degree of sense of mystery, uncertainty or novelty, implying discoverability and the need to explore

Representativeness and relative Merit

In the context of the local authority area the following questions are relevant:

- 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 when compared to others in the local authority?

Step 5 - Field survey



Loch Etive, Inverawe, Argyll [North Argyll] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot

- 2.6.1 Detailed field survey should test the initial desk-based assessment by gathering further information on each landscape's special characteristics. This can enable analysis and comparison between the different landscapes. Details can be recorded using a variety of tools: field sheets, diagrams, sketches, photographs and annotated maps.
- 2.6.2 Reviewing 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 (in NSAs).
- 2.6.3 The aim is to arrive at a robust analysis of the key visible and physical characteristics, using information gathered by the background desk study. Visual analysis examines how these characteristics relate to one another to form the scenic or visual environment.
- 2.6.4 An initial test-run of the proposed criteria and assessment work in practice will probably be beneficial. This will consider how aspects such as evidence of past human activity, recreation, cultural associations or well-being will be assessed. One or two draft LLA locations should be sufficient to check this.

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- 2.6.5 Analysis should involve visiting a number of locations within a landscape, arrived at through a combination of desk study and fieldwork. Examples include:
- 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

Where the purpose of the work is to review existing designated landscapes, it may be necessary to survey areas beyond their boundaries.

- 2.6.6 It is necessary to analyse how the landscapes of the potential LLA contribute to the relevant criteria. This analysis often includes a consideration of how elements combine, link or contrast to form special qualities or contribute to sense of place. These are likely to include naturalness, evidence for past human activity, built heritage features, strong cultural character or associations, the presence of contrast, complexity, openness, ruggedness, mystery, and/or presence of a water body.
- 2.6.7 Fieldwork is an essential part of any review, which can reveal that landscape character units show significant local variation in landscape quality. For example, some highly ranked landscapes may contain areas considered less valuable, although overall there are high-scoring features. Elsewhere, some low-scoring landscapes may still contain valuable features. Judgements will need to be made and justified: fieldwork notes including photographs are often essential for this.
- 2.6.8 Many assessments also include an appraisal of any significant opportunities for landscape enhancement or management. If required, this needs to be considered during the field survey.
- 2.6.9 At this stage it may be useful to consider whether community-led research could contribute to the process. The Scottish Government website identifies some [simple methodologies](#) for enabling communities to do this including the Making Places initiative and the Place Standard.
- 2.6.10 It may be helpful for future reviews to retain interesting or important field survey material, such as notes, photographs or annotated maps, in an accessible format. Copies of this documentation could be deposited in the local authority Historic Environment Record.

Step 6 – Candidate Local Landscape Areas



Howe of the Mearns, Aberdeenshire [view towards Braes of the Mearns] © Lorne Gill/NatureScot

SELECTION OF CANDIDATE LLAS

- 2.7.1 The landscapes considered of value will reflect the distinct character and history of their area. The associations between people and place are often best known and understood in a local context.
- 2.7.2 Local landscapes are especially valued where they contribute to a strong 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.
- 2.7.3 The Scottish Borders Council review ([Figure 7](#)) undertook an initial evaluation which was used as a sift exercise to inform site work. A more detailed evaluation was then carried out to look at where there were variations in landscape quality; it also examined important interrelationships between different landscape types. Any cross-boundary issues should have been considered with neighbouring authorities by this point. 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.

BOUNDARIES AND NAMING

- 2.7.4 Both desk-based studies and field survey should inform the delineation 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.
- 2.7.5 Features that make suitable and lasting boundaries include natural aspects such as topography, watersheds and rivers; other suitable physical features can be roads and possibly field boundaries. 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. A simple approach would be to use the planning boundary (mean low water springs), which would still allow the qualities that coastal and marine areas contribute to the LLA to be taken into account.
- 2.7.6 Discussion with local land managers may also benefit boundary selection. In some cases it may be advantageous to avoid dividing upland management units.
- 2.7.7 Where boundaries are close to or within settlements and urban areas, there are specific considerations. In some cases, it may be useful to include small areas of lesser merit in the LLA. 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 a designated green belt.
- 2.7.8 It is essential to consult and collaborate between local authorities – particularly where an LLA abuts the boundary of a neighbouring local authority.
- 2.7.9 This guidance does not prescribe a size of individual areas, or overall coverage across the local authority area.
- 2.7.10 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.

STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

2.7.11 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. It should include the reasons for designation and the criteria it met. Table 3 indicates what to include, and some examples of Statements of Importance can be found in the case studies.

TABLE 3 Aspects to be covered by Statement of Importance

Name and location	A locally recognized name and a succinct description of its location and context.
Overview	A clear description of the landscape and why it is designated. This section should celebrate the 'essence' of the area and what makes it special. It should also contain images capturing the special character of the area.
Landscape Description	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. Photographs should be included to illustrate and supplement points made in the text.
Boundary	Describe the boundary; outline why it takes this form. One or more maps should be presented to show the extent of the LLA designation. A broad justification for the designated area is needed.
Future changes/land management	Identify significant opportunities for social and economic development, the scope for landscape enhancement through planning gain, or support for agriculture or forestry.
Sources of information	Provide details and locations of the supporting information and key documents (such as detailed LCAs or sensitivity studies) for future reference.

2.7.12 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 1](#). Photographs can be usefully included to illustrate the important landscape characteristics.

2.7.13 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. This is in addition to appropriate planning policies for the LLA to ensure change is managed sensitively.

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- 2.7.14 Statements should also, where possible, 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 particularly sensitive to change, and how they may be eroded or otherwise adversely affected by development. LLA objectives should, where possible, be integrated with wider policy and funding frameworks at both the local and national level. This may include agriculture, biodiversity, historic environment, recreation and tourism and climate change.
- 2.7.15 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.
- 2.7.16 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.
- 2.7.17 Other designations may be relevant to the active management of all or part of the LLA. This may include regional and country parks, gardens and designed landscapes, local nature reserves, green belts and green networks, historic battlefields, scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas. LLAs complement green networks, in particular in enhancing experience for outdoor recreation, and contributing to a sense of place.

CONSULTATION

- 2.7.18 Public consultation on the proposed LLAs for an appropriate length of time is required. This is in addition to the involvement of stakeholders at earlier stages of the process. A variety of approaches is available, including the local authority website, social media, posters or leaflets at local facilities such as libraries and leisure centres, and meetings or drop-in sessions. Organisations such as Community Councils and local amenity and history groups can be contacted directly for comments.
- 2.7.19 Where the LLA process coincides with preparation of the LDP it should be straightforward as periods of public consultation will be set out and followed. If the LLA work is separate, the same length of time for consultation periods should be used to ensure as much engagement as possible

Step 7 - Designation



Aerial view of Aberlady, East Lothian [Longniddry – North Berwick Coastline] © P&A MacDonald/NatureScot

- 2.8.1 Candidate LLAs are confirmed following appropriate consultation and approval processes. The adopted LDP will contain the policies appropriate for the LLA – see Section 3.
- 2.8.2 An outline of specific development pressures likely to affect the LLAs, and outline design guidelines or management recommendations, can also be useful.
- 2.8.3 It is helpful to make Statements of Importance easily available, as information for communities and stakeholders as well as planning professionals. This is often via the local authority website.

POST DESIGNATION: ACTION FOR LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

- 2.8.4 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](#)). There is also scope to consider Local Place Plans which may have an important role as they give community groups the opportunity to identify land and buildings of particular significance to the area. Community bodies are well-placed to include local cultural and natural heritage in their Place Plan, including potentially significant cultural landscapes.

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- 2.8.5 Two other sets of activity should follow on from designation: raising awareness, and practical action. These can build on the community engagement already undertaken. Both are essential to increase public awareness and benefit from local landscapes.
- 2.8.6 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. This can be targeted through approaching local stakeholders, communities of place, and communities of interest directly. Appropriate signage and leaflets or web pages, for example with walking and cycling routes and information, could be developed. Cultural links and associations can be another way of engaging interest and these can continue to be developed after designation.
- 2.8.7 This should link into the second activity – practical action for landscapes, as identified in the Statement of Importance. 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. An example for a national designation is the work by Dumfries and Galloway Council on [NSA Management Strategies](#) that included community engagement. Design guides and projects that helped restore landscape features, provided resources for landscape interpretation or improved public access could be developed. Ways to gain funding such as through landscape partnerships, for example [Garnock Connections](#), [Inner Forth](#) and [Lomond Hills](#), could be investigated.
- 2.8.8 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 especially by land managers. Consultation and effective engagement are therefore very important parts 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.
- 2.8.9 LLAs may need to be reviewed during subsequent community and development planning cycles. In particular, the effectiveness of the LLA in landscape protection and the management of the area, and any role it may have in promoting wider social and economic objectives of the local authority, should be carefully monitored and examined.

REVIEWING AND AMENDING EXISTING LLA DESIGNATIONS

- 2.8.10 When reviewing or amending an existing suite of LLAs, for example during the review of the LDP, it may be the case that only a simplified designation process needs to be undertaken. A single field survey and public consultation exercise may be sufficient in some circumstances, unless additions to the suite were being considered as a possibility.

3. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY



View across Stirling to Ochil Hills [Western Ochils] © Patricia and Angus MacDonald/NatureScot

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- 3.1. It is essential that planning policies for these designated areas are set out in the relevant Local Development Plan. Often, a single overarching policy that covers all LLAs is sufficient. In other cases, there may be more than one policy where the areas differ significantly in their geographical extent, or where one LLA has a specific character or quality requiring a more specific, tailored planning policy.
 - 3.2. LLAs may overlap other international, national and local designations not specifically aimed at landscape protection. Most of these perform a different function, but where they have a strong landscape dimension LLAs can support their management. A local authority could designate LLA adjacent to the boundary of a National Scenic Area or National Park, in which case it has the potential to contribute to the landscape aims and objectives of the national designation.
 - 3.3. Perth and Kinross Council's Local Landscape Areas ([Supplementary Guidance 2020](#)) are an example of how this type of designation has been achieved. Early discussion with the Park Authority, HES and NatureScot is encouraged in this type of situation.
 - 3.4. The level of protection accorded to LLAs is a matter for each authority to set out through its Development Plan policy. The level of protection should not be as high as that given to international or national designations. Development Plan policies should recognise 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. As set out in [Scottish Planning Policy](#) paragraph 197, 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.Scottish Planning Policy, 2014
 - 3.5. 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.
 - 3.6. [Table A Annex 4](#) gives examples of Local Development Plan policies adopted since SPP was published in 2014. These illustrate how different local authority LLA policies are tailored to individual circumstances, and how they take account of the contribution of natural and cultural heritage to important local landscapes.
 - 3.7. 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 B in Annex 4](#) show how some local authorities relate these areas to one another in their Local Development Plans.

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ANNEX 1 – TABLE OF DESIGNATED AND VALUED LANDSCAPES AND SITES.

Name	Scale/ Level	Description	Purpose
Conservation Area	Local	Conservation areas aim to preserve and enhance areas of special architectural or historic interest. Trees and other features such as designed gardens are all protected.	Conservation areas are used to protect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • important groups of buildings • open spaces • planned towns and villages • street patterns • historic gardens
Country Park	Local	A park in the countryside near major concentrations of population.	To give people convenient opportunities to enjoy the countryside and open-air recreation close to urban areas.
Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs)	National	Sites included in Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes , are of national importance.	<p>The Inventory recognises grounds intentionally laid out for artistic effect which are of national importance. This includes any buildings, land or water that are on, adjacent or contiguous to such grounds.</p> <p>The purpose of the Inventory is to identify sites of national importance and to provide information about them to aid their understanding, protection and sustainable management through the planning system, and in other relevant contexts such as landscape and land-use management.</p>
	Local	Sites included in a Local authority list, referred to as a non-Inventory GDL.	To ensure that the significant elements justifying designation are protected or enhanced.

<p>Geological Conservation Review (GCR) of sites</p>	<p>International, National</p>	<p>Register of known nationally and internationally important Earth science (geological and geomorphological) sites in Great Britain. Underpins designation of earth science features in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Some GCR sites remain un-notified. National Park Authorities and some local authorities treat these as candidate SSSIs and afford them the same protection as SSSIs. Some un-notified GCR sites are also Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS), and as such they are afforded levels of protection appropriate to locally important sites (though they are considered to be of national or international importance). The remaining un-notified GCR sites have no statutory protection although they are considered to be of national or international importance.</p>	<p>To identify, and help conserve, those sites of national and international importance in Britain.</p> <p>The GCR is a public record of the features of interest and importance at localities generally already notified or being considered for notification as ‘Sites of Special Scientific Interest’ (SSSIs). The sites selected – GCR sites – form the basis of statutory geological and geomorphological site conservation in Britain</p>
<p>Global Geopark</p>	<p>International</p>	<p>A geographical area with internationally significant geological heritage that has been recognized by the UNESCO as deemed worthy of preservation due to its universal value to humanity, both the present and for future generations.</p>	<p>To develop an active approach to geological heritage and conservation and the development of sustainable economic activities including Geotourism.</p>
<p>Green Belt or other LDP policies to manage countryside around towns</p>	<p>Local</p>	<p>An area of land in which development is strictly controlled so as to manage the boundaries of a town or city over the long-term.</p> <p>Some local authorities use Countryside Around Towns policies to provide similar level of protection to smaller settlements.</p>	<p>To direct planned growth to the most appropriate locations and support regeneration. To protect and enhance the character, landscape setting and identity of settlements. To protect and provide access to open space.</p>

<p>Historic Battlefield</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>Sites listed in Scotland’s Inventory of Historic Battlefields which are of national importance.</p>	<p>A ‘battlefield’ is an area of land over which a battle was fought; or an area of land on which any significant activities relating to a battle occurred (whether or not the battle was fought over that land).</p> <p>The purpose of the Inventory is to provide information about nationally important battlefields, to aid their understanding, protection and sustainable management through the planning system, and in other relevant contexts such as landscape and land use management.</p>
<p>Listed Buildings</p>	<p>Categories of listing (A, B and C) relate to relative importance but are not statutory.</p>	<p>Buildings listed by HES due to their special architectural or historic interest. May include the surrounding curtilage as defined by LAs.</p>	<p>To safeguard the special architectural or historic criteria which the building was listed for, to maintain the character of Scotland’s historic buildings and to prevent unnecessary loss or damage.</p>
<p>Local Landscape Area (LLA)</p>	<p>Local</p>	<p>A landscape valued locally or regionally for its character, special landscape qualities or enjoyment. These have been known in the past as Special Landscape Areas (SLA) and a range of other names.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard and enhance the character and qualities 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.

Local Nature Conservation sites	Local	They are the most important places for nature conservation including geology, geomorphology and soils outside statutorily protected nature reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). They are important as an educational, historical and recreational resource.	To recognise, protect and enhance areas of substantial importance for biodiversity and/or geodiversity.
National Park (NP)	National	They are areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of outstanding national importance because of their natural heritage or the combination of its natural and cultural heritage, • that have a distinctive character and a coherent identity, and • that meet the special needs of the area and are the best means of ensuring that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in relation to the area in a co-ordinated way. 	Four main aims as set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area • Promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area • Promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public • Promote sustainable economic and social development of the areas' communities
National Scenic Area	National	An area which is nationally important for its scenic quality. NSAs are broadly equivalent to the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty found in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.	To identify our finest scenery and to ensure its protection from inappropriate development.

Natura Sites (SAC and SPA)	International	Natura sites are internationally important for threatened habitats and species. They consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Marine SAC and SPA – a type of Marine Protected Area .	Natura sites form a network of protected areas across Europe. SPAs are classified under the Birds Directive to protect birds that are rare or vulnerable in Europe as well as all migratory birds that are regular visitors; SACs are designated under the Habitats Directive for habitats and non-bird species.
Regional Park	Regional	Large areas of attractive countryside close to Scotland's larger towns and cities popular for outdoor recreation.	To enable the coordinated management of recreation and other land uses such as farming and forestry.
Scheduled Monuments	National	Scheduled monuments are designated due to their nationally important cultural significance.	The aim of scheduling is to preserve monuments as far as possible in the form in which they have been passed down to us today. The setting of scheduled monuments is protected through the planning system.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	National	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are those areas of land and water that are considered to best represent our natural heritage in terms of their flora, fauna, geology, geomorphology or a mixture of these natural features.	To protect the noted features of interest of the Site from harm.
Undesignated heritage assets	Local	Undesignated heritage assets are identified on a local authority's Historic Environment Record.	To protect and manage historic and archaeological sites via LDP policies.

<p>Wild Land Areas</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>‘Wild land area’ identifies the most extensive areas of high wildness which is displayed in some of our remoter upland, mountain and coastal areas, and very sensitive to any form of intrusive human activity and have little or no capacity to accept new development. It is not a statutory designation, but wild land areas are considered nationally important in NPF3 and SPP.</p>	<p>NPF3 states that Scotland’s wildest landscapes merit strong protection. Scottish Planning Policy sets out how this should be achieved. This includes wild land areas and how to safeguard them both in development plans and in spatial frameworks for onshore wind farms.</p>
<p>World Heritage Sites</p>	<p>International</p>	<p>World Heritage Sites are cultural and/or natural sites considered to be of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’, and which have been inscribed on the World Heritage List by the World Heritage Committee.</p> <p>These places or buildings are thought to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have special importance for everyone • represent unique, or the most significant or best, examples of the world’s cultural and/or natural heritage 	<p>Protection and management of the site’s Outstanding Universal Value.</p> <p>Outstanding Universal Value is considered to transcend national boundaries and to be of importance for future generations.</p>

ANNEX 2 – LOCAL LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS IN 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 to facilitate their sustainable use.

Specifically, it states at paragraph 15, 21 and 135:

- 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
- NPF3 recognises the contribution made by our cultural heritage to our economy, cultural identity and quality of life. Planning has an important role to play 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

On development planning, paragraph 196 states:

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.

Paragraph 197 goes on to state:

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.

Placemaking

Placemaking is one of two principal policies in SPP. Paragraphs 136, 36 and 37 state:

- 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 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.
- It is clear that places which have enduring appeal and functionality are more likely to be **valued by people and therefore retained for generations to come**.

Planning for Natural Heritage: Planning Advice Note 60

[PAN 60](#) suggests at paragraph 36 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.

Paragraph 39 goes on to state that they can also:

offer opportunities to develop partnership working between local authorities, landowners, voluntary conservation organisations and the local communities.

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.

ANNEX 3 – EXAMPLE OF SELECTION CRITERIA (EAST LoTHIAN 2018)

This table can be found in East Lothian Council's Local Development Plan
[Technical Note 9: Planning for Local Landscape Designation Review](#).

Table A

Criteria	Definition
Typicality	Elements of landscape character which are particularly common within East Lothian as a whole and/or containing landscape features or a combination of features that are typical of the landscape of East Lothian or the wider regional area.
Rarity	Particular aspects of landscape character, landscape type or elements or features in the landscape that are rare or unique within East Lothian or the wider regional area.
Condition	The degree to which individual landscape elements are in a good state of repair.
Scenic and Sensory value	The extent to which the landscape prompts strong visual, sensory and perceptual impacts and experiential appeal or contains a pleasing combination of features, visual contrasts or dramatic elements. Scenic value comprising: naturalness, contrast, complexity, openness, ruggedness, mystery and/or presence of a water body.
Enjoyment and Economy	The importance of the landscape and its accessibility for enjoyment and recreation (availability of access routes, key viewpoints, landmarks and/or other recreational facilities and attractions) and the extent to which perception of the landscape contributes in supporting economic activity.
Views	The extent and importance of the landscape in views from key locations and whether it contains key landmarks or landforms.
Cultural Heritage	The extent to which the landscape is rich in archaeology or built heritage, including designed landscapes, literary, artistic (including music), spiritual or other cultural associations and local history.
Wildness	The extent to which the landscape has perceived qualities of wildness including naturalness, remoteness and lack of artificial elements including the degree of darkness at night (Using SNH wildness mapping as well as light pollution maps ⁹ maps supported by professional judgement and local knowledge to identify the wildest and most natural areas).

ANNEX 4 – EXAMPLES OF LDP POLICIES

Table A: Examples of Development Plan Policies for LLAs

<p>East Lothian Council Local Development Plan 2018</p>	<p>Policy DC9: Special Landscape Areas</p> <p>Areas are designated as Special Landscape Areas as identified within supplementary planning guidance on Special Landscape Areas. Development within or affecting Special Landscape Areas will only be permitted where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. it accords with the Statement of Importance and does not harm the special character of the area; or 2. the public benefits of the development clearly outweigh any adverse impact and the development is designed, sited and landscaped to minimise such adverse impacts. <p>The Council will refer to the Statement of Importance of the relevant site in assessing planning applications.</p>
<p>Perth and Kinross Council Local Development Plan 2019</p>	<p>Policy 39: Landscape</p> <p>Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) are the local landscape designation. Development should only be permitted where it will not have a significant adverse impact on their special character or qualities, or where these impacts are clearly outweighed by social and economic benefits that are more than of local significance to Perth and Kinross.</p>
<p>Falkirk Local Development Plan 2020</p>	<p>The Green Network Landscape</p> <p>PE18 Landscape</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character and enhance landscape quality throughout the Council area in accordance with Supplementary Guidance SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations'; 2. Development within Local Landscape Areas should be designed to minimise any adverse effects on the landscape character and scenic interest for which the area is designated; and 3. Development proposals which are likely to have significant landscape and visual effects must be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment demonstrating that, with appropriate mitigation, a satisfactory landscape fit will be achieved.

<p>Falkirk Local Development Plan2 2020 (continued)</p>	<p>4.18 The Falkirk area has a varied landscape, whose quality is important to the setting of settlements, and the area’s image and identity. Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) identify the most important local landscapes (Denny Hills, Slamannan Plateau/Avon Valley and South Bo’ness). However, 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’.</p>
<p>Moray Local Development Plan 2020</p>	<p>EP3 Special Landscape Areas and Landscape Character</p> <p>i) Special Landscape Areas (SLA’s)</p> <p>Development proposals within SLA’s will only be permitted where they do not prejudice the special qualities of the designated area set out in the Moray Local Landscape Designation Review, adopt the highest standards of design in accordance with Policy DP1 and other relevant policies, minimises adverse impacts on the landscape and visual qualities the area is important for, and are for one of the following uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In rural areas (outwith defined settlement and rural grouping boundaries); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Where the proposal involves an appropriate extension or change of use to existing buildings, or ii. For uses directly related to distilling, agriculture, forestry and fishing which have a clear locational need and demonstrate that there is no alternative location, or iii. For nationally significant infrastructure developments identified in the National Planning Framework, b. In urban areas (within defined settlement, rural grouping boundaries and LONG designations); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Where proposals conform with the requirements of the settlement statements, Policies PP1, DP1 and DP3 as appropriate and all other policy requirements, and ii. Proposals reflect the traditional settlement character in terms of siting and design. c. The Coastal (Culbin to Burghead, Burghead to Lossiemouth, Lossiemouth to Portgordon, Portgordon to Cullen Coast), Cluny Hill, Spynie, Quarrywood and Pluscarden SLA’s are classed as ‘sensitive’ in terms of Policy DP4 and no new housing in the open countryside will be permitted within these SLA’s.

<p>Moray Local Development Plan 2020 (continued)</p>	<p>Proposals for new housing within other SLA's not specified in the preceding para will be considered against the criteria set out above and the criteria of Policy DP4.</p> <p>d. Where a proposal is covered by both an SLA and CAT or ENV policy/designation, the CAT policy or ENV policy/designation will take precedence.</p> <p>Justification/Notes</p> <p>The aim of this policy is to protect landscapes from inappropriate development. The SLA's are identified on the Proposals Map and supported by special qualities set out in the Moray Local Landscape Designation Review 2018. Moray enjoys a very high quality and diversity of landscapes and proposals which are likely to result in a significant adverse impact on the landscape will not be supported.</p> <p>The policy also aims to ensure that all new development reflects the landscape quality of Moray and developments should be designed in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment for Moray and Nairn 2019 which will be a material consideration. Hill tracks formed in association with rural development can have a significant adverse impact upon the landscape and need to be sensitively designed.</p>
<p>Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016</p>	<p>1.1 The aim of the policy is to ensure that local areas of landscape quality, known as Special Landscape Areas (SLA) are afforded adequate protection against inappropriate development and that potential maintenance and enhancement of the SLA is provided for.</p> <p>Policy EP5: Special Landscape Areas:</p> <p>In assessing proposals for development that may affect Special Landscape Areas, the Council will seek to safeguard landscape quality and will have particular regard to the landscape impact of development, including the visual impact. Proposals that have a significant adverse impact will only be permitted where the landscape impact is clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of national or local importance.</p>

Table B: How Local Landscape Designations Relate to Other Policy Areas

<p>West Lothian Council Local Development Plan 2018</p>	<p>153 The West Lothian local countryside designations ‘Areas of Great Landscape Value’ (AGLV), ‘Areas of Special Landscape Control’ (AoSLC), Areas of Special Agricultural Importance (ASAI) and Countryside Belt have been key planning policy mechanisms across the rural area for several decades. They have helped to maintain the separate identity and landscape setting of settlements, encourage regeneration, manage urban growth and protect important areas of local biodiversity, countryside, woodland and open space by focusing development towards urban areas. These have grown and evolved into a series of multi-function ‘green networks’, protecting the rural hinterland of West Lothian, the landscapes of the Forth Coast, Bathgate Hills and the Pentlands, forming a backdrop to and separating the main communities.</p>
<p>Shetland Local Development Plan 2014</p>	<p>GP3 All Development: Layout and Design Justification [...] 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.</p> <p>HE1 Historic Environment Justification [...] The historic environment includes ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscapes, 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

<p>Stirling Local Development Plan 2018</p>	<p>C. Conservation of Historic and Natural Heritage (Primary Policies 7-9 & Policies 7.1-9.3)</p> <p>Geography, geology and history are so intrinsic to the character of the Stirling area that they effectively define it and are key elements in placemaking. 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.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Along with the extensive historic landscapes that also carry elements of the past, the historic environment adds richness and context to homes, places of work and other activities. No part of Stirling City is more than a 15-minute walk from an asset of national or international significance.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>In addition to the above heritage features which are themselves of great heritage importance, so too is the landscape setting. 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.</p>
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ANNEX 5 – EXAMPLES OF STATEMENTS OF IMPORTANCE

Local authority	Link to Local Landscape Designation
Falkirk	<p>Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations</p> <p>This Supplementary Guidance includes local landscape designations in section 4 (page 76 onwards):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map • Forces for change • Sensitivities • Guidelines <p>Statements of Importance are in Annex 3, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview • Description • Boundary • Special Qualities
Moray	<p>Moray Local Landscape Designation</p> <p>Statements of Importance from p27 onwards. Headings cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and boundaries • Reasons for designation • Description of character and special qualities • Sensitivity to change, and • management recommendations
Perth and Kinross	<p>Landscape Supplementary Guidance 2020</p> <p>Includes Statements of Importance for each of 11 LLAs. They comprise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map, • Description, • Special qualities, • Forces for change, and • Objectives.

ANNEX 6 – GLOSSARY

Word/phrase	Meaning
All-landscapes approach	Protection, management and planning of all landscapes, as promoted by the European Landscape Convention .
Coastal Character Assessment (CCA)	Identifies, describes and maps Scotland’s coasts. Considers characteristics associated specifically with the coast, such as marine influences, the character of the coastal edge and its immediate hinterland. See NatureScot web pages on CCA for more information.
Cultural Significance	Aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance can be embodied in a place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. (Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013)
Green network	A broad term which usually refers to a set of connected areas of green space and habitats such as parks, paths and woodlands within an urban or suburban region which provide a range of social, ecological and economic benefits such as increasing the quality of life within an area, and creating sustainable communities.
Historic Land Use Assessment (HLA)	HLA is an online map giving a Scotland-wide view of land use in modern and past times. It uses simple annotated maps to show how the landscape has changed over time, giving the user a tool to decipher the broad elements of the historic environment.
Landscape Character Area	Discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other areas of the same Landscape Character Type.
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)	The process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCAs identify and explain the combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinct from one another by mapping and describing Landscape Character Types and Areas.
Landscape Character Type	Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use and settlement patterns.

Landscape Sensitivity Study	This technique assesses a landscape's sensitivity to accept a particular type of change or development without significant effects
Landscape Value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.
Local Development Plan (LDP)	Required for each council area across Scotland, an LDP allocates sites, either for new development, such as housing, or sites to be protected. It also includes policies that guide decisions on all planning applications.
Local Landscape Area (LLA)	Name for local landscape designations referred to in SPP. Promoted as the standard term for this designation.
Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)	A non-profit organization that operates independently of any government, typically one whose purpose is to address a social or political issue.
Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)	Provision in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which abolishes Strategic Development Plans. An RSS is to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for strategic development • the outcomes to which strategic development will contribute • priorities for the delivery of strategic development • proposed locations for strategic development.
Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)	Policy statement prepared by the Scottish Government on how nationally important land use planning matters should be addressed across the country.
Special Landscape Area (SLA)	Old name for local landscape designations.
Special [Landscape] Qualities	The characteristics or features that, individually or combined, give rise to a landscape being considered to be of particular value. For example in NSAs the Special Qualities are those which give rise to an area's outstanding scenery.
Supplementary Guidance	Guidance produced for given policy areas and subjects where a specific requirement is highlighted within a Local Development Plan.



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