

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment Consultation Statement



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

January 2009

North Norfolk District Council |



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document supports the draft Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that has been published for public consultation from 19 January to 2 March 2009.
- 1.2 This Consultation statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 17 (1) (b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, in which the Local Planning Authority is required to prepare a statement setting out:
 - the names of any persons whom the Authority consulted in connection with the preparation of the SPD;
 - how those persons were consulted;
 - a summary of the main issues raised in those consultations, and;
 - how those issues have been addressed in the SPD.
- 1.3 This statement is a record of the consultation undertaken during the production stage of the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment SPD, prior to formal public consultation.
- 1.4 Table 4.5 of the North Norfolk Statement of Community Involvement identifies how the Council will involve the community in the production of SPD's, and the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has been produced in accordance with this document.

Preparation of the Landscape Character Assessment

- 1.5 The Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared by North Norfolk District Council to aid implementation of Core Strategy policies, such as EN2 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Settlement Character. The initial study was carried out by Council officers and has involved significant cross-boundary working with neighbouring authorities who have also prepared Landscape Character Assessments for their areas.
- 1.6 A working group representing those with an interest in landscape issues was then established to gain feedback on the draft LCA prior to publishing it for public consultation. The following sections discuss the consultation involved in the stages of production.

2 Who was Consulted?

- 2.1 During preparation of the Landscape Character Assessment significant cross-boundary working with neighbouring authorities was held to try and ensure a consistent approach to the methodology of preparing assessments, the landscape terminology that is used and the characterisation of landscapes that straddle council borders.



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2.2 A steering group of officers from the following authorities and bodies was established and met regularly during LCA preparation:

- Norfolk Coast AONB Partnership
- Natural England
- Norfolk Wildlife Trust
- Norfolk County Council
- North Norfolk District Council
- The Broads Authority
- Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Council
- Broadland District Council

2.3 Once the LCA had been drafted, a selection of individuals representing groups with an interest in landscape character assessment were identified from the Council's LDF consultation database. These individuals were invited to be members of an external reference group which was set up as a vehicle to stimulate debate and gather views and opinions on the draft Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) that had been produced by North Norfolk District Council Officers.

Chair:	Polly Wake, Senior Planning Officer, North Norfolk District Council.
Members:	Judith Cantell, Senior Landscape Architect, Norfolk County Council
	Jenny Gladstone, Norfolk Geological Society
	Ken Hamilton, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology
	John Hiskett, Norfolk Wildlife Trust
	Reg Land, Norfolk Wildlife Trust
	Allan Moss, Allan Moss Associates (on behalf of Norfolk Homes - Developer)
	Ian Shepherd, Campaign to Protect Rural England (Norfolk)
	Cllr. Henry Cordeaux, North Norfolk District Council
	John Williams, Development Control Manager (East), North Norfolk District Council
	Phil Godwin, Conservation Design & Landscape Manager, North Norfolk District Council
	Christopher Smith, Natural England
	Lesley Marsden, Broads Authority
	Sarah Slade, Planning Policy, Great Yarmouth Borough Council
	Gilbert Addison, Breckland District Council
	John Walchester, Planning Policy, Broadland District Council
	Gemma Cousins, Conservation Officer, King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council
Sarah Tudhope, Planning Policy, North Norfolk District Council	
Kerys Witton, Landscape Officer, North Norfolk District Council	
Tim Venes, Norfolk Coast Partnership	
John Jones, Landscape Officer, Norfolk County Council	

LCA Stakeholder Working Group



3 How Were They Consulted?

- 3.1 Members of the group were sent a draft copy of the document for consideration prior to a meeting which took place in October 2008. The meeting was attended by eleven members of the group.
- 3.2 The purpose of the working group meeting was to discuss and gather feedback on the draft LCA and seek views on how to make the document as user-friendly as possible.
- 3.3 External reference group members were also invited to submit more detailed written comments if they wished.

4 Summary of Issues Raised and How These Were Addressed

- 4.1 The main recommendations of the working group meeting were that;
 - In general the document was comprehensive and workable but some refinements were required.
 - The terms (such as character, quality, value and capacity) used in the document need to be consistent with the definitions in the Countryside Agency Guidance. ¹
 - The use of SWOT analysis is confusing and should be amended to demonstrate that it is actually an analysis of key characteristics.
 - Instead of attempting to evaluate the condition and sensitivity of each characteristic in each landscape Type it might be more appropriate to remove the 'condition' and 'sensitivity' columns from the table and put these in a separate descriptive section following the table.
 - Terms such as 'high, medium, low' etc need to be clarified.
 - The document needs to be as simple as possible, would it be possible to shorten it.
 - Needs fuller reference to geology and historic landscape issues.
 - Introduction could indicate that some of the improvements mentioned in the document may be aspirational.
 - Needs to make clear that the document is not site specific but instead provides a context.
 - The LCA does not negate the need for visual impact assessment for some sites.
 - The document should include some guidance on mitigation.
 - Delete bullet point that links heathland restoration proposals to proposals for woodland creation as it may result in the prevention of any proposals for heathland restoration.
 - Delete 'strength of character' from sub-headings.
 - The AONB Partnership may revise the AONB LCA and therefore it will be necessary to ensure that consistency between the documents is maintained.

¹ LCA Guidance for England and Scotland, April 2002, Countryside Agency



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- The coloured text on the contents page is difficult to read.
 - Inclusion of the chapter headings at the top of each page would make the document more user friendly.
- 4.2** The above comments were considered by Officers and the SPD amended where appropriate. Appendix A of this report lists the main points and how they were actioned.
- 4.3** Several members provided additional comments and these were considered by Officers and the SPD amended where appropriate.



A Notes and Actions from Stakeholder Workshop

Minutes of LCA Workshop - 22 October 2008

Present:

Judith Cantell, NCC

Jenny Gladstone, Norfolk Geological Society

Ken Hamilton, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology

John Hiskett, Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Reg Land, Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Alan Moss, Alan Moss Associates (on behalf of Norfolk Homes)

Ian Shepherd, CPRE Norfolk

John Williams, Polly Wake, Kerys Witton and Sarah Tudhope, NNDC

	Comment	Action
AM	The terms (such as Character, quality, value and capacity) need to match the definitions in the Countryside Agency guidance* on LCAs. Need to be clear what is meant by the different terms	Include the CA definitions in the glossary. Check document throughout to ensure the use of the terms is correct.
AM / All	The SWOT analysis table is confusing as it is not really a SWOT. It is actually an analysis of the key characteristics.	Rename table 'Analysis of key characteristics'
	Rather than attempting to evaluate the condition and sensitivity of each characteristic in each landscape Type could remove the 'condition' and 'sensitivity' columns from the table and put these in a description afterwards.	Noted. Check AONB LCA definitions
	Terms such as 'high, medium, low, fair, moderate, poor' need to be clarified.	Noted.
JW	Needs to be kept simple. Could be edited down?	Proof –read and cut out any unnecessary bits.
JG	Key characteristics aren't in a common order and geology isn't always in there.	Include a brief section in Introduction (could fit after para 1.2.2?), and signpost people to where they can find out more information.
KH	Same applies to historic landscape issues	
JG / KH	These underly the whole landscape – need to be included	Include a brief section in



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	Comment	Action
		<p>Introduction, and signpost people to where they can find out more information.</p> <p>Refer to Historic Landscape Characterisation</p>
JW	The Design guide has some information on geology and historic landscape.	This is fairly basic. JG to suggest some new text.
AM / IS / JW	Introduction could say that some improvements may be aspirations or go beyond the DC remit.	Include text in introduction
	<p>Needs to say that the document isn't site specific – that it just provides a context. Landscape is dynamic and open to interpretation. The LCA can't anticipate every eventuality.</p> <p>Para 1.3.12 is an important para and could be elaborated.</p>	Could include some more text in the Introduction
AM	Doesn't negate the need for individual visual impact assessment for some sites.	Noted
JW	LCA is very restrictive towards wind turbines, which doesn't sit happily with the CS policy which is quite supportive.	CS policy says the most appropriate technology for the site should be used. The LCA can inform that.
General	<p>Need to consider mitigation. The LCA guidance says it should be included.</p> <p>Need to point people to how they find appropriate mitigation – need to find what is important – look at the factors which enhance / erode.</p>	Include something in flowchart about mitigation.
	The 'policy issues' heading in the Areas section could be renamed as 'Issues' as it doesn't directly relate to policy.	Re-name.
	There is some repetitiveness of the positive/negative factors affecting each landscape Type. Could be overcome by a general section on issues affecting the landscape as a whole, then individual sections could focus on what issues are specific to each individual landscape type.	Noted.



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	Comment	Action
KW	The LCA highlights the sensitive aspects of the landscape and its then up to proposals to protect these.	
IS	Could do a summary leaflet with the map and flowchart and a brief description.	Possibly produce upon adoption.
RL	Delete last bullet point under c) on page 32 as it is too sweeping and could prevent any proposal for heathland restoration.	To do
	Evaluation heading: delete 'strength of character' from the sub-headings	To do. Await confirmation of terminology then re-word
	The AONB Partnership may be revising the AONB LCA. Need to ensure any changes they make are consistent with the NN LCA, and vice versa.	Check with Tim Venes and let him know about our changes.
Format:	KH pointed out that the colour coding is not visible to colour-blind people.	Noted, however the map is also text coded.
Format:	The colour headings on the contents page are quite hard to read. A larger coloured box and black headings would be preferable.	Publishing software does not allow this, however the colours could be darker to aid legibility
Format:	Can the chapter headings be repeated at the top of each page in place of 'NN LCA'	Not for the consultation document, but can be amended for the final version.
PW	Thanked everyone for attending and for the comments. Very useful. Any further comments should be sent by Friday 7 Nov.	Assess these comments as they arrive.
	Jenny Gladstone to send some new text and corrections on geology for the Types.	
	Ken Hamilton to suggest some text for historic landscape intro.	
	Some worked examples would be useful as an appendix.	Agreed.

Conclusion: The methodology and main components are sound, however some amendments are required to ensure consistency with Countryside Agency definitions and to aid usability of the document.

- LCA Guidance for England and Scotland, April 2002, the Countryside Agency.