

“The Historic Landscape in the Planning Process: Characterisation Techniques and Applications” – Presentation Summary

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:

- “An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”
- rural and urban
- natural and man-made
- physical and cultural
- old and new
- land, inland water and marine areas
- all areas: outstanding, everyday, degraded

Characterisation is an area-based understanding of how places and landscapes have evolved and is:

- Map based, identifying character types and areas
- Comprehensive rather than selective, looking at the quality of everywhere
- Applicable at every scale
- Flexible and adaptable for each situation
- Can provide multiple viewpoints and perspectives
- Integrates with other assessments (e.g. visual, ecological etc)
- Objective and holistic, but can be used to identify significance and sensitivity
- Helpful for decision-making and the evidence base in planning cases
- Helpful for identifying opportunities for change and enhancement

Historic Environment Characterisation Techniques include:

- Landscape Character Assessments
- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Extensive Urban Surveys
- Historic Area Assessments
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals
- Masterplanning and Regeneration Exercises
- Sensitivity Assessments
- Environmental Impact Assessments

Characterisation Applications:

- Regional and Sub-Regional Policy
- Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)
- Large-Scale Strategic Planning and Regeneration
- Major Infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure
- Landscape Management
- Conservation Area Management
- Development Control Decision-Making
- Community Engagement

Case Studies:

- East of England Regional Landscape Framework: www.landscape.org.uk
- South Beds Environmental Sensitivity Assessment: www.shapeyourfuture.org.uk
- Lincolnshire Townscape Assessment: www.lincoln.gov.uk

Further Information:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation

Conservation Bulletin No. 47 www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.10485

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