Landscape Character Assessment and the National Landscape Strategy (NLS)

Irish Landscape Institute
South East Branch Inaugural Lecture
20th June 2012

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Introduction – Three Parts

1. Landscape and Irish Planning? - What is meant by Landscape – ELC Definition – P&D (Amendment) Act 2010?


1. Landscape and Irish Planning?

- Ireland signed and ratified the ELC on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} March 2002 – entry into force – 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2004
- European Landscape \textit{Convention} Definition:
  - “Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose \underline{character} is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;
  - \underline{Includes Rural AND Urban} – \underline{ALL} landscapes.
‘Landscape Wheel’

(Source: Professor Carys Swanwick, External Evaluator of Heritage Council and Partners’ Multi-disciplinary LCA CPD Course (2009-2011).)
Quick look at the geology of Ireland

Ireland has an unparalleled diversity of geology in a relatively small area.

This rich geological heritage is reflected in the variety of landscapes across the region.
P&D Act (Amendment) Act 2010?

- ELC Definition of ‘Landscape’ is included for the first time in Section 4(c) (page 9);
- Section 7(b)(ii)(p) – Planning Authority Core Strategies (34 No.) amends S10:
  - landscape, in accordance with relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes and developed having regard to the European Landscape Convention done at Florence on 20 October 2000.”

(Pg 13)
P&D Act (Amendment) Act 2010?

• Section 14(b)(ii) – Regional Planning Authority (8 No. – 7 RPGs due to GDA) amends S23:

“landscape, in accordance with relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes and developed having regard to the European Landscape Convention done at Florence on 20 October 2000.”

(pg 29)

- Draft National Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2000 (S28 of the P&D Act 2000, amended by S20 P&D 2010);
- Draft Guidelines are Pre-ELC – e.g. only deal with rural, do not enable public participation, do not include HLC
- Synergies from multi-disciplinary approach??
- What has been the Impact??
Impact - Heritage Council LCA 2006

(Source: Heritage Council and Julie Martin, 2006.)
Impact - Heritage Council LCA Update 2009

Missing:

Donegal

Laois

Sth Tipp
(Uplands only)

Waterford
(Wind Energy only)

(Source: Heritage Council and Ruth Minogue and Associates, 2009.)
Draft SEA for Off-Shore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP 2011)

- SEA Volume 4 Appendix A, Seascape Assessment (60 pages) – Planning Officer spent two weeks on the review;
- SEA requires ‘comprehensive and reliable’ information and data, i.e. a reliable baseline;
- SEA OREDP Consultants – “confidence levels in the LCAs, as provided for in the relevant CDPs, is ‘Very Low’” – 16 LCAs reviewed;
- 2 LCAs scored ‘High’ for Seascape – Clare & Leitrim – both funded by the Heritage Council;
- Conversely – 87.5% scored Medium or below;
- No consideration of Value – Capacity – Cumulative Impact.
3. NLS – Opportunities?

• All-island Statement on Landscape/Seascape?
• National ‘Landscape Policy’ Needed – Research based – efficient structures, systems and processes - join up with NI – monitoring and evaluation?
• Ireland is a “relationship-based society” (Source: OECD, 2006) – Networks?
• Build on existing all-island initiatives e.g. Multi-disciplinary LCA CPD Training Course – 2009-2011 – HC & 10 Partners?
• Heritage Council Proposals– 2010 & 2011?
Case Study: LCA CPD Training

- **Business Case** – 68% of Consultants, Planners and Heritage Officers had no training in LCA (HC 2006);
- Designed by Planning Officer in partnership with 10 Professional Institutes – ILI’s role – Deirdre Black and Dr. Karen Foley;
- Delivered 6 times over 3 years - May and September – 2009-2011
- 200 people from all backgrounds completed the course – excellent feedback from attendees
- Attendees came from Ireland, UK and Australia.
Heritage Council Proposals 2010

1. Establish a Landscape Observatory of Ireland (LOI)—National role—e.g. National Landscape Character Map;
2. Introduce a Landscape Ireland Act—enable public participation—not just about planning!;
3. Landscape Proof existing and proposed legislation, policies and programmes;
4. Promote a vibrant research and learning culture on landscape; and
5. Increase public participation, accessibility and the use of local knowledge in landscape management.
Heritage Council Proposals 2011

1. **NLS – A Visionary, Ambitious and Inspiring Opportunity for All!**
2. **Endorsement of the ELC’s definition of Landscape;**
3. **Need for a new type of national legislation – Landscape Ireland Act;**
4. **Need for effective Public Participation;**
5. **Annual State of the Irish Landscape Report needed;**
6. **Consideration of All Landscapes – Urban, Peri-urban and Seascapes;**
7. **LCA needs exploration – it’s only a ‘Tool’ – not the panacea;**
8. **Sense of Place, Identity and Sense of Belonging – a new multi-culturalist landscape;**
9. **What happens after the NLS Issues Paper (2011)?**
Summary

1. **Landscape and Irish Planning** - What is meant by Landscape – ELC Definition – P&D (Amendment) Act 2010?


3. **NLS – Opportunities**?

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Group Discussion?