

Landscape Character Assessment and the National Landscape Strategy (NLS)

**Irish Landscape Institute
South East Branch Inaugural Lecture**

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Introduction – Three Parts

- 1. *Landscape and Irish Planning?*** - What is meant by Landscape – ELC Definition – *P&D (Amendment) Act 2010?*
- 2. *Existing Draft Guidelines (2000)*** – Impact – LCA Evaluation 2006 and 2009 Update, Draft SEA OREDP 2011
- 3. *NLS – Opportunities?***- National Policy needed, build on LCA CPD Training Course, Heritage Council Proposals – Dec 2010 and Nov 2011.

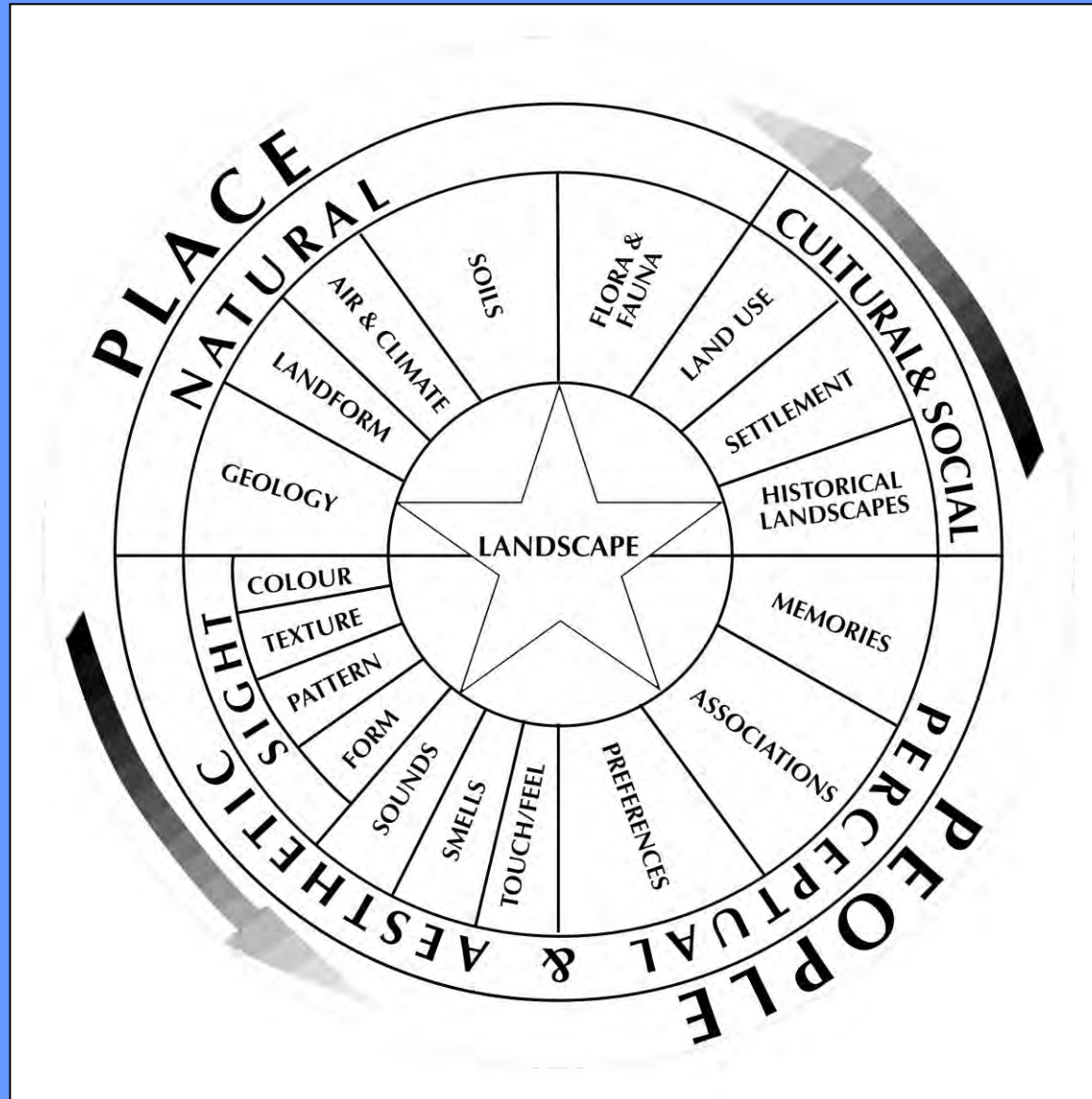


1. Landscape and Irish Planning?

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



'Landscape Wheel'



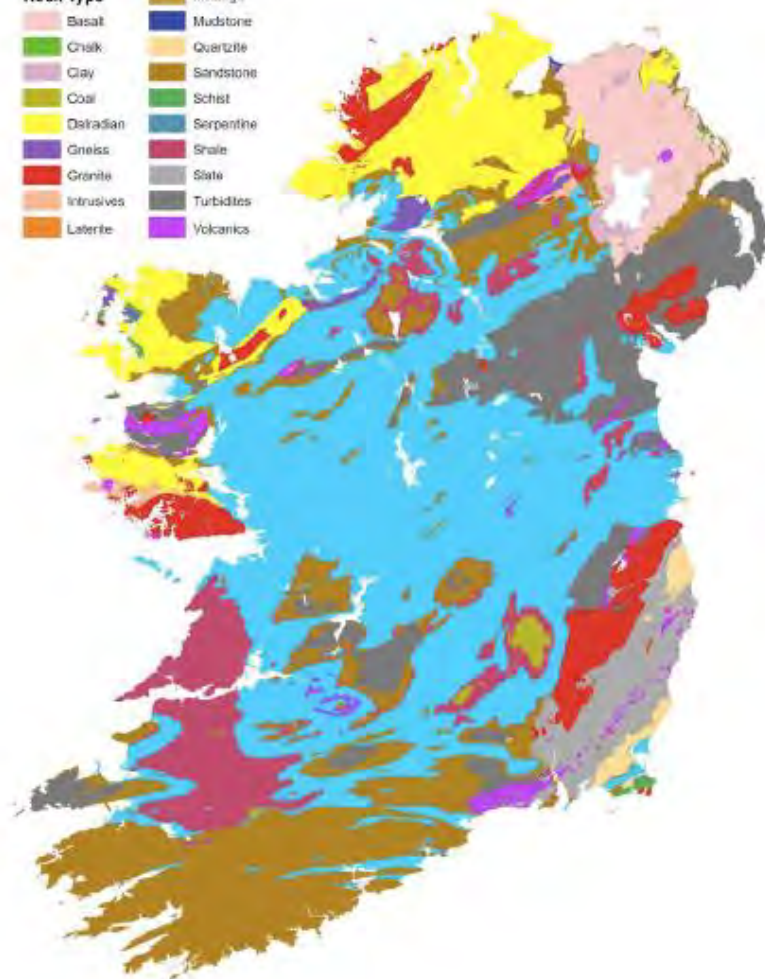
(Source: Professor Carys Swanwick, External Evaluator of Heritage Council and Partners' Multi-disciplinary LCA CPD Course (2009-2011).



Quick look at the geology of Ireland

Legend

Solid Geology	
Basalt	Limestone
Chalk	Melange
Clay	Mudstone
Coal	Quartzite
Dalradian	Sandstone
Gneiss	Schist
Granite	Serpentine
Intrusives	Shale
Laterite	Slate
	Turbidites
	Volcanics



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.”

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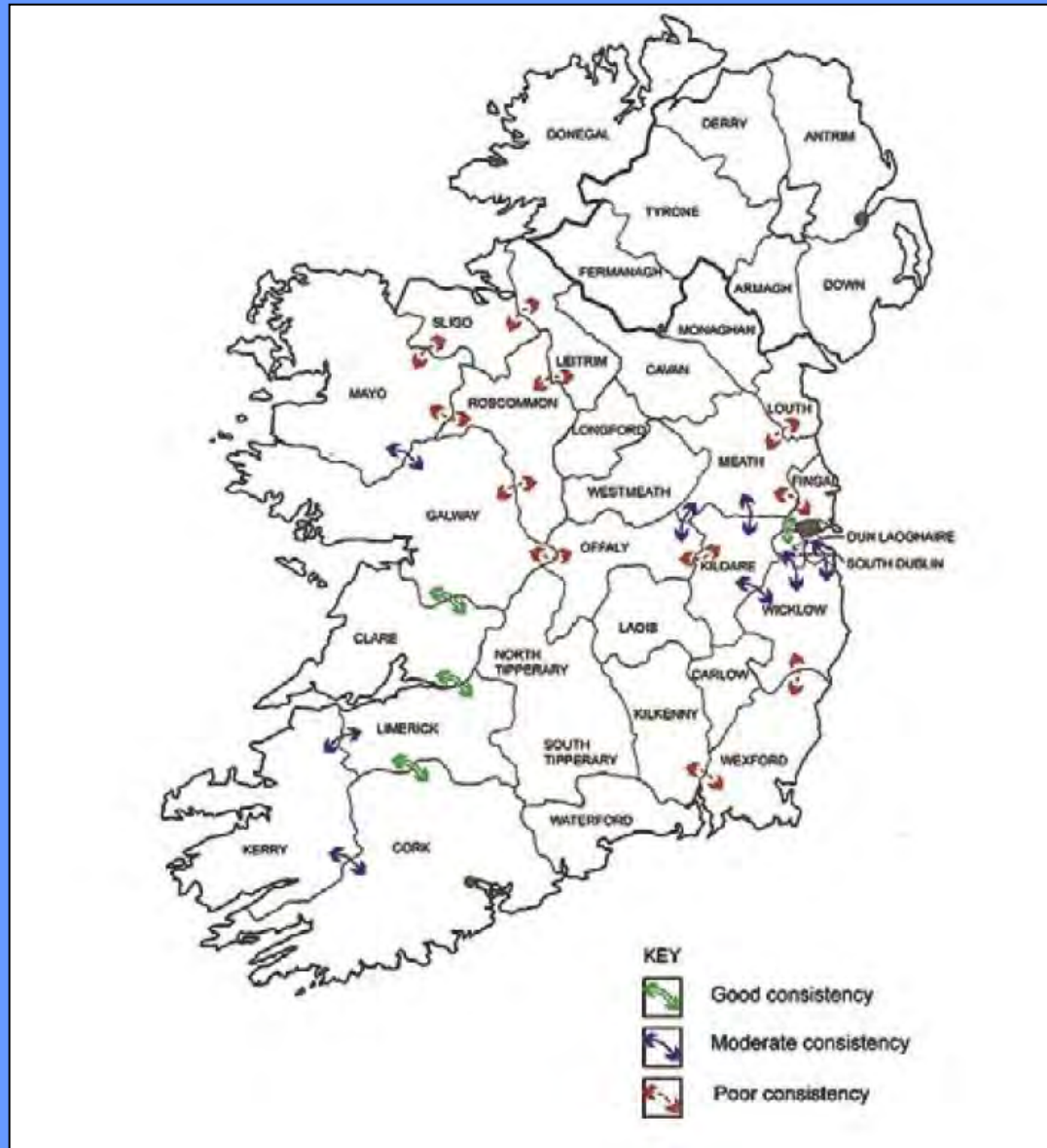


2. Existing Guidelines (2000)

- *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??**



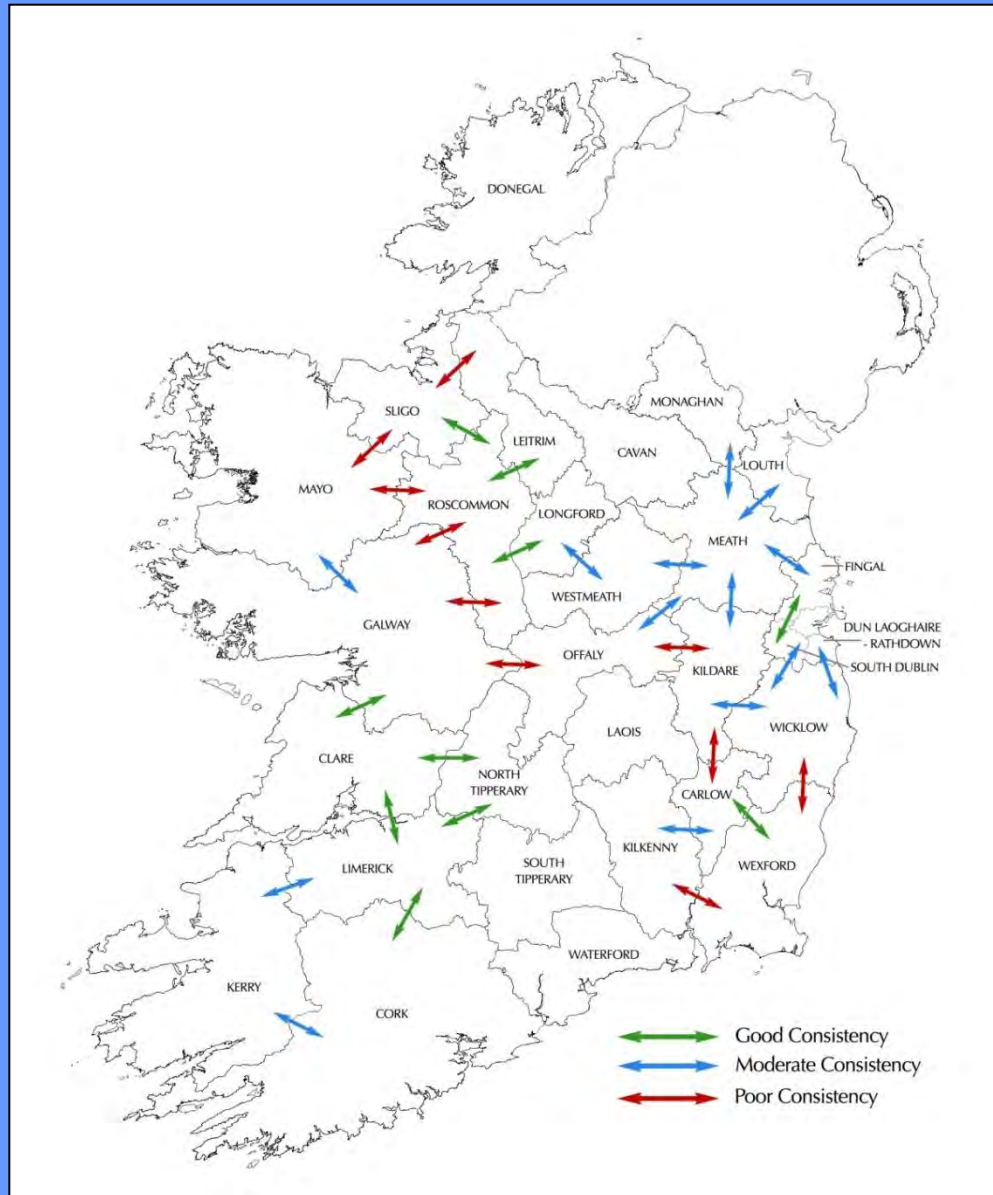
Impact - Heritage Council LCA 2006



(Source: Heritage Council and Julie Martin, 2006.)



Impact - Heritage Council LCA Update 2009



Missing:

Donegal

Laois

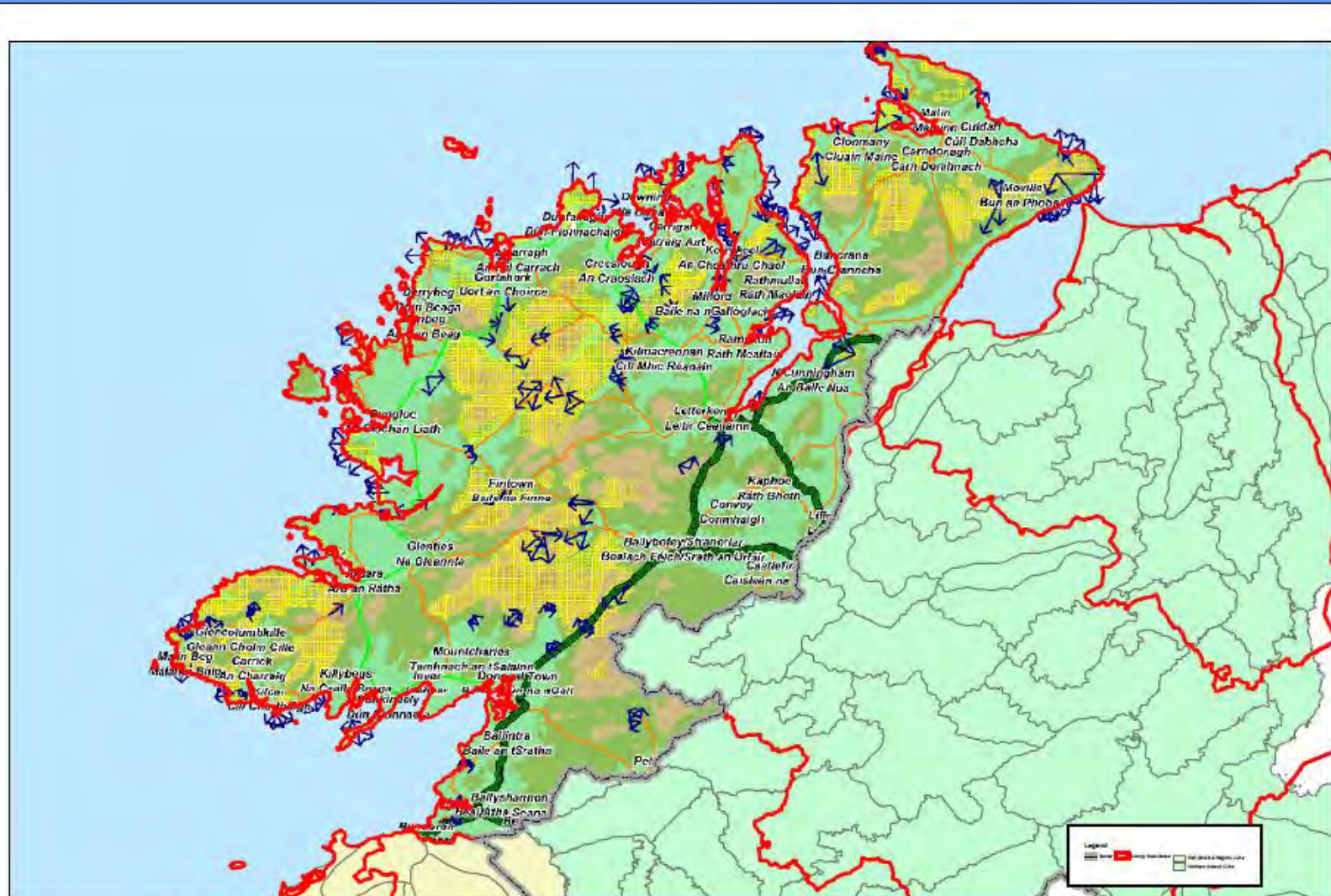
***Sth Tipp
(Uplands only)***

***Waterford
(Wind Energy only)***

(Source: Heritage Council and Ruth Minogue and Associates, 2009.)



Draft Donegal County Development Plan 2012-2018, (August 2011) – NI & Leitrim LCAs



Draft SEA for Off-Shore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPA 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 OREDPA 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?*
2. ***Existing Draft Guidelines (2000)*** – *Impact?*
3. ***NLS – Opportunities?***

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Group Discussion?

