



The National Trust
for Scotland

LANDSCAPE POLICY

September 2005



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The conservation charity that protects and promotes Scotland's
natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations to enjoy

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Approved by NTS Council 23 September 2005

Scotland's Landscapes

Scotland's heritage of natural and cultural landscapes is renowned throughout the world. Our landscapes enhance our quality of life and our well-being; they give us inspiration, refreshment and enjoyment. They contain the record of the achievements of those people who went before us, and form a key part of our national, regional and local identity. They are one of the main reasons why people visit Scotland, and so form the essential basis of our country's key tourism industry, and they provide the attractive settings which encourage inward investment. They are therefore of fundamental importance to Scotland's environment, society and economy.

Yet Scotland's landscapes are under constant threat from climate change, mismanagement, neglect, intensification of agriculture and forestry, poor design and damaging developments. Examples of such inappropriate developments include badly-sited wind farms, pylon lines or fish farms, sprawling housing development, major roads and landfill sites. Scotland's landscapes need and deserve better protection and management, and are in urgent need of a champion. This policy therefore sets out the National Trust for Scotland's commitment to promote the conservation, enjoyment and stewardship of Scotland's landscapes.

What Is Landscape?

Landscape is about the relationship between people and place. It is an expression we use to define our experience and perception of the combination of topography, water, vegetation cover and the cultural environment. Understanding and appreciating landscape often involves exploring values such as historical, aesthetic and spiritual associations as well as physical attributes and processes. We have adopted the accepted international definition of 'landscape' in the Council of Europe's *European Landscape Convention* (ELC): 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.

Our Purposes and Roles

Our statutory purposes are set out at Appendix 1. This policy contributes to explaining how we implement those parts of our purposes which refer to *promoting the permanent preservation ... of lands ... of historic or national interest or natural beauty ... and as regards lands for the preservation ... of their natural aspect and features and animal and plant life*.

We have two distinct but interconnected roles in relation to Scotland's landscapes, those of:

- Advocating the protection and conservation of landscapes throughout Scotland
- Leading by example, by managing the landscapes in our own care for conservation, access, enjoyment and education

Our perspective on landscape conservation is unique in Scotland for two reasons:

- Our statutory purposes embrace the full range of natural and cultural landscapes
- Our advocacy role is supported by direct practical experience of landscape management on the ground

The Landscapes in our Care

We look after major tracts of our most spectacular, wild and remote landscapes and coastlines, including Torridon, Goatfell, Mar Lodge Estate, Canna and Fair Isle. We also care for several iconic landscapes, such as Ben Lomond, Glencoe and the Glenfinnan Monument. We manage many fine designed landscapes, often complementary works of art to the mansion houses whose settings they provide, which contribute a distinctive character to many lowland and coastal landscapes. We also look after many landscapes with strong cultural associations, including Culloden, Staffa and Killiecrankie. Our involvement means that all these places are there for everyone to enjoy; they provide opportunities for people to experience spectacular landscapes of natural, historic and cultural richness.

Our Vision

The current statement of our Vision reads as follows: *Scotland's rich and diverse heritage is truly inspiring. By championing this heritage, and through excellent stewardship, the Trust will create exciting opportunities to benefit everyone.* Scotland's landscapes are a key part of its rich, diverse and inspiring heritage. This policy sets out how we intend to create benefits for everyone by championing Scotland's landscapes and by demonstrating high standards in managing the landscapes in our own care. It therefore supports our overall Vision.

Our Principles and Policies

This policy derives its strategic direction primarily from our *Conservation Principles*, but partly also from our *Access, Enjoyment and Education Principles* and our *Acquisition Policy*. It also has links to a number of our other policies, including *Environmental Policy*, *Evaluation of Heritage Significance*, *Farmland Management*, *Renewable Energy Developments*, *Telecommunications Masts* and *Wild Land*. All of these principles and policies are available on request or from our website¹.

The Trust has been involved in protecting and promoting Scotland's landscapes throughout its existence, both by acquiring and managing places of special landscape significance and by engaging with and influencing national and local landscape debates. This policy therefore applies to all of the landscapes of Scotland, not only to the places in the Trust's care. It applies to the whole range of natural, semi-natural and cultural landscapes, to both rural and urban landscapes, and to 'seascapes', ie views of the sea and of the land from the sea.

Overall Aim

The overall aim of this policy is to promote and conserve landscapes that:

- Encompass Scotland's distinctive, local and diverse natural landforms, habitats and biodiversity
- Celebrate Scotland's rich and varied cultural heritage
- Reflect the achievements of its people and the aesthetic appreciation of its scenery
- Include places of tranquillity, wildness, drama and beauty
- Improve our quality of life and sense of well-being

¹ www.nts.org.uk/web/site/home/conservation/policy/trustpolicies/Trustpolicies_home.asp?NavId=2059&

General Principles

We have adopted the six general principles recently proposed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)² for use in guiding and managing landscape change:

- Landscapes evolve but change should be guided – we recognise that landscapes change but we seek to guide it in the right direction
- Landscape change should be positive in effect – some degraded landscapes should be improved, while some valued landscapes require restoration
- All landscapes deserve care – the commonplace as well as the special
- Some landscapes warrant special safeguard – some are widely recognised as particularly sensitive to change or of particular value, and so merit special treatment
- Quality should be the goal – our valued landscapes must be taken into account by all activities which affect them, so that high standards of design and management become the norm
- Landscapes are a shared responsibility – our work will be more effective if we co-operate with all other interests to promote landscape protection and enhancement

The ELC sets out a series of general and specific measures which are to be undertaken by states which sign it. The rest of this document consists of six policy statements (shown in bold type), each supported by relevant background information and rationale. As the ELC provides a coherent and sensible framework for addressing landscape issues, we adopt the same headings here:

- Awareness-raising
- Training and education
- Identification and assessment
- Landscape quality objectives
- Implementation

Summary of Policy Statements

- **We will champion the cause of improving, restoring and protecting Scotland's landscapes**
- **We will explain and enthuse about the landscapes in our care and beyond, through our interpretation, education and training programmes**
- **We will consider the full range of landscape values when assessing and evaluating landscapes and when considering landscape change, by seeking a broad cross-section of opinions, particularly regarding intangible values**
- **We will make practical use of relevant theoretical tools in landscape evaluation and management**
- **We will manage the landscapes in our care to consistently high standards and will promote this work widely**
- **We will assess and evaluate landscape in relation to property management and acquisition, supported by local knowledge and professional landscape advice**

² *Scotland's Future Landscapes?*, Scottish Natural Heritage, 2003 www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/strategy/advisingothers/LandDiscPaper.pdf

Awareness-Raising

The Landscape Debate

We will champion the cause of protecting, improving and restoring Scotland's landscapes

Our unique responsibility for the full range of both natural and cultural landscapes gives us a clear role to champion the cause of landscape throughout Scotland. Ever since our foundation in the 1930s we have sought to influence landscape change through advocacy as well as through acquisition and management, because landscapes cannot be protected through acquisition alone. We are committed to promoting the way in which landscape adds value to people's quality of life and well-being, to raising landscape issues, including climate change, constantly up the political agenda, and to taking part in debates over the vision for what future landscapes should be like. We will do this by:

- Public campaigning, either in partnership with other non-government organisations (NGOs) or by ourselves
- Parliamentary advocacy, including briefings to Parliamentarians and responses to legislation, inquiries and petitions
- Influencing national policy by lobbying opinion-formers, including national and local politicians and officials
- Working with local authorities, seeking to influence landscape issues where appropriate through planning decisions and by discussion
- Adding weight to our campaigning and advocacy role through demonstrating proactive management of the landscapes in our own care
- Responding to government and agency consultation documents

The specific policy and legislative objectives we need to promote inevitably vary over time, as some are accepted and some rejected. Some examples of our recent involvement in landscape debates are given at Appendix 2. The landscape advocacy work we are currently undertaking is set out in our current Landscape Action Plan, which is regularly updated and available on request.

We will prioritise our involvement in landscape casework in the following order:

- Proposals which threaten the landscapes of our own properties or of those over which we hold restrictive agreements (usually referred to as 'Conservation Agreements'), based on the significance of the place and the degree of threat
- Nationally significant landscapes at risk
- Areas of degraded landscape requiring restoration or enhancement

Partnership

Landscape issues usually transcend land ownership boundaries and frequently touch on the interests of many different groups of people. We normally therefore seek to carry out our landscape advocacy work in partnership with others, as this is often more effective. The key partners for our landscape advocacy work include: local communities; other NGOs, including those represented on our governing Council and through umbrella bodies Scottish Environment LINK and the Built Environment Forum Scotland; government agencies; local and national politicians; and where appropriate international contacts.

Training And Education

We will explain and enthuse about the landscapes in our care and beyond, through our interpretation, education and training programmes

We use a variety of interpretive methods and media at Trust properties to enable people to understand the place they are visiting and to reveal the significance of it as part of Scotland's heritage. This often includes explaining the complex processes which have led to the landscapes people experience today, in the belief that increased understanding adds to visitors' enjoyment of these places. In order to capture interest and commitment from the widest possible range of people, we provide a variety of learning opportunities aimed at all ages and abilities. These frequently address landscape issues, for example through the environmental education programmes and guided walks run by our Ranger Services, or through publicising townscape improvements associated with our Little Houses Improvement Scheme.

We are widely involved in training provision for the skills required for landscape management, for example in gardening or mountain path repair.

Identification And Assessment

Values and Benefits

We will consider the full range of landscape values when assessing and evaluating landscapes and when considering landscape change, by seeking a broad cross-section of opinions, particularly regarding intangible values

We believe that Scotland's landscapes add greatly to people's quality of life and well-being. This can be seen in the wide range of values people attribute to a landscape, in other words those qualities in a landscape to which they respond and which give it meaning and significance in their lives. In our involvement with Scotland's landscapes, including assessing and managing those for which we are responsible, we will consider the following range of environmental, social and economic values which we consider significant, accepting that there are significant areas of overlap between the various headings:

Environmental Values

Scenic quality – some landscapes are appreciated for their outstanding visual attractiveness, for example due to the drama of their scenery, the harmony of their composition or the sheer scope of their vista

Naturalness and biodiversity – landform and land cover are valued for their own sake, for scientific study and as the setting for a range of habitats and species, which in many cases largely mould the landscape, for example woodlands

Tranquillity and wildness – some landscapes bring peace and tranquillity to people in today's hectic and pressured world, including freedom from noise and light pollution; qualities of wildness can be found in many parts of the countryside, particularly in the relatively few large areas of remote wild land

Social Values

Cultural record – physical evidence and cultural associations in the landscape chart the nation's history and are valued all the more profoundly as they reflect the cultural evolution of both the landscape and ourselves. Archaeological remains and traces of past land use convey a sense of historic depth, while monuments, designed landscapes, land use patterns and built evidence of more recent times may have added value as features and characteristics within our contemporary view

Cultural association – a landscape may be valued because of its association with an event, a person, a song or an artwork, which can invoke a particular response and inform the understanding of the place from a specific viewpoint. Examples of these more intangible values³ include battle sites, iconic views, places associated with tradition, folklore, ritual, songs, writing, visual or other art forms and the setting of symbolic buildings or monuments

Human achievement – human intervention is often integral to the landscape we experience today, for example managed farmland or designed landscapes. However, particular efforts can strike us as overwhelming in their monumental scale or their sense of challenge. These values include engineering achievement, such as the Forth Bridges or the Glenfinnan viaduct, and the more reflective, such as the past inhabitation of remote islands such as St Kilda or the climbing of challenging mountain peaks

Local, regional and national identity – Landscapes with a distinctive local character contribute to a sense of place experienced by those who live and work in them, and those who visit; the distinctive landscape characters of Scotland's main regions inspire people's attachment to them; Scotland's landscapes are part of its national cultural identity, with some viewed as national icons considered to portray a particular sense of Scottishness'

Aesthetics – the appreciation of beauty of the landscape can extend from visual attractiveness of the whole scene to the appreciation of individual features and qualities, such as autumn colour or a solitary tree. Aesthetics can also extend to appreciation of the landscape through other senses, including sound and touch: a waterfall, waves or a soft, warm breeze can all influence the way we perceive our surroundings, and is usually discussed as an attribute of the landscape

Cultural context – some values reflect a broader cultural and social inheritance. These can be historic influences, such as the appreciation of dramatic landscapes and the 'sublime', which goes back to the eighteenth century, or reflect more current concerns such as global warming and organic land management. These values reflect broad shifts in society's priorities, and can influence the value which people place on particular landscapes and how they are managed

Recreational opportunity – many landscapes provide important opportunities to enjoy informal recreation, for spiritual refreshment and for lifelong learning

Commonplace – landscape value should not only be attached to the rare or endangered, but also in many cases to the common everyday experience of local landscape by local people

Economic Values

Tourism – Scotland's largest industry is greatly dependent on the quality of its landscapes, which are an essential ingredient of tourism marketing

Environmental economics – techniques which allow more general monetary values to be put on landscape

Productivity – the land is valued, particularly by those who work on it, for its role in providing employment, food, water and raw materials

Investment – our landscapes add greatly to our quality of life, so they attract people and industry to come to and invest in Scotland, and encourage the retention of skills and resources within Scotland

³ *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, UNESCO, 2003
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001325/132540e.pdf>

Landscape Tools

We will make practical use of relevant theoretical tools in landscape evaluation and management

When evaluating landscape significance, whether of the places in our own care or beyond, and when developing management objectives and actions to protect and enhance that significance, we will use relevant tools to inform the subjective judgments involved. At least five such tools are available: designations, Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA), historic landscape surveys and computer-generated modelling.

Many Trust properties are covered by some form of landscape designation, including World Heritage Site, National Park, National Scenic Area or Conservation Area, or are included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes; a list of these is given at Appendix 3. In addition to managing these properties in part for their landscape value, we are regularly involved in preparing overall management plans or strategies for these designated areas.

LCA provides a common framework for understanding and analysing the landscape. In partnership with others SNH has mapped the landscape character of the whole of Scotland, identifying a number of distinct landscape types (areas of consistent and recognisable landscape character) and the key forces for change within these⁴. This provides a largely objective description of Scotland's rich and varied landscape, and enables the effect of actions upon the landscape to be better assessed, thus identifying future management requirements. LCA can be applied at a general level to national strategic approaches, or at a more detailed level to address broad locational questions, down to specific siting guidance. Allied techniques, such as landscape capacity studies, have been developed to explore the ability of different landscapes to accommodate development of particular types.

The HLA Project is an analysis of past and present land use being carried out jointly by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Historic Scotland (HS)⁵. It is designed to explore the possibilities of creating, through geographical information systems, a depiction of broad patterns of historic land use in Scotland, and to examine the potential of this type of survey and record. The HLA project is creating a digital map of the historic landscape of Scotland, through which it is possible to view land use by category, type, period or relict period.

Historic landscape surveys can be used to investigate the historical development of a particular landscape; this may involve research into archaeological, land use or designed landscape elements. Such surveys aim to develop an understanding of the significance of a particular landscape, in order to inform and guide change in that landscape.

Increasingly sophisticated computer-based modelling techniques are constantly being developed to support landscape interpretation and analysis. These can help, for example, landscape professionals, land managers, policy-makers or the general public more easily to visualise the effects of landscape change.

There is a continuing need for us to work together with other interested parties to develop improved methodologies for the identification, assessment and evaluation of landscapes.

⁴ www.snh.org.uk/ww/sharinggoodpractice/CCI/cci/guidance/Main/Content.htm

⁵ jura.rcahms.gov.uk/HLA/start.jsp

Landscape Quality Objectives

Managing our Landscape Properties

We will manage the landscapes in our care to consistently high standards and will promote this work widely

The effectiveness of our external role in championing the cause of Scotland's landscapes depends substantially on our ability to demonstrate consistently good internal practice in the long-term stewardship of the landscapes in our own care. Delivering this requires staff with appropriate knowledge, skills and expertise and the provision of adequate resources. Two key aspects of this requirement are property management planning and property acquisition.

We have consciously managed places for landscape objectives from our earliest days, for example according to the Unna Principles (1937), which have now been restated, updated and reinterpreted in our *Wild Land Policy*⁶. We set up some of the first Ranger Services in Scotland, carrying out pioneering work in landscape management, interpretation and environmental education. We employ a community ranger for the Dumfries and Galloway National Scenic Areas, to increase awareness of the social and economic importance of the scenic qualities of the landscape, primarily through positive community involvement. We are the acknowledged leaders in Scotland in upland path repair, for example at Ben Lomond, spending over £2 million on this to date (2005) with at least a similar amount still to be spent. We are carrying out major habitat restoration on a landscape scale at Ben Lawers, and pioneering work in wild land restoration, for example through track removal at Mar Lodge Estate. We provide exciting volunteering opportunities in the landscape through our Outdoor Action programme, including NTS Conservation Volunteers and Thistle Camps.

We bring together historic record and contemporary recreational use in managing designed landscapes, for example at Culzean in Ayrshire, and we promote good design which integrates historic fabric with sustainably sourced materials, for example in the Glencoe Visitor Centre opened in 2002. We are planning a targeted incentive scheme to conserve traditional crofting landscapes at Drumbuie and Duirinish on the Balmacara Estate. A key characteristic of all this work is that our approach to landscape conservation is holistic and integrated, always recognising that almost all Scottish landscape has cultural components such as archaeology, crofting or designed landscapes as well as natural ones.

The Trust holds restrictive agreements (usually referred to as 'Conservation Agreements') over several significant landscapes in addition to those which it actually owns. We also aspire to influence the management of these places positively, along the lines set out in this policy.

We will assess and evaluate landscape in relation to property management and acquisition, supported by local knowledge and professional landscape advice

The suite of documents which make up the Property Statements for each Trust property provides a summary of the guidelines for the management of that property, explaining how we apply our principles and corporate aims at the property concerned. Landscape is one of the values considered when drafting a Statement of Significance and is one of the categories in the Key Features Table. This table identifies the key features of the property in each category, briefly says why the feature is important and gives an evaluation of the importance of each key feature in context. We are also increasingly seeking to include landscape-related objectives in the Statements of Intent. When preparing Property Statements we look beyond the property itself towards its wider landscape setting where this might contribute part of the significance.

⁶ www.nts.org.uk/web/FILES/wild_land_policy_2002.pdf

Acquiring Landscapes

Our *Evaluation of Heritage Significance* methodology⁷ includes landscape, in its various forms, amongst the categories of heritage significance which we identify and evaluate at an early stage in assessing the possible acquisition of a new property. This not only applies to properties whose landscape qualities are central to their significance, but also highlights the importance of considering the landscape setting of properties whose principal significance may lie elsewhere.

We will ensure that the necessary resources to enable landscape restoration and management will be built in to the financial elements of acquisition assessments for relevant properties.

We will seek both local knowledge and professional landscape advice in relation to these management and acquisition processes where relevant; there are various possible sources of such advice, including staff, members of our governance, SNH, HS or landscape consultants, which should be used flexibly according to the circumstances.

Making it Happen

This Policy will primarily be implemented by means of a regularly-updated Landscape Action Plan, the current version of which is available on request. Current landscape policy objectives are also set out in various other plans and strategies, such as the Corporate Plan Annual Implementation Plan, Regional or Divisional Plans, Property Statements, and strategies and plans for relevant disciplines or departments, including the External Communications Strategy, the Policy and Advocacy Action Plan and the Policy and Planning Department Plan.

Further Information

For further information please contact:

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⁷ www.nts.org.uk/web/FILES/Heritage_Significance.doc

Extract from The National Trust for Scotland Order Confirmation Act 1935

The National Trust for Scotland shall be established for the purposes of promoting the permanent preservation for the benefit of the nation of lands and buildings in Scotland of historic or national interest or natural beauty and also of articles and objects of historic or national interest and as regards lands for the preservation (so far as practicable) of their natural aspect and features and animal and plant life and as regards buildings for the preservation (so far as practicable) of their architectural or historic features and contents so far as of national or historic interest

Recent Examples of our Involvement in Landscape Debates

- National Parks – pressing for the initial legislation followed by involvement in the designation orders
- National Scenic Areas – lobbying for action by the Scottish Executive in response to the Review
- Natural Heritage Designations – responding to the Review
- Local Landscape Designations – commenting on the Review
- Historic Land-use Assessment – contributing to the development of this valuable tool
- Skye Bridge – advocating improvements to design and landscape impact
- Central Edinburgh Traffic Management – promoting quality streetscape
- Cairngorm Funicular – outright opposition and promotion of alternatives
- Kirkcaldy Harbour – criticising proposals for housing development
- Western Isles Transmission Line – opposing plans for new pylon lines through relatively unspoilt wild land

Landscape Designations over NTS Properties

World Heritage Site

Charlotte Square	St Kilda
Gladstone's Land	

National Park

Ben Lomond	Lynedoch
Bucinch and Ceardach	Mar Lodge Estate
Cunninghame Graham Memorial	

National Scenic Areas

Ben Lawers	The Hermitage
Ben Lomond	Inverewe Garden
Brodick Castle, Garden and Country Park	Killiecrankie
Bucinch and Ceardach	Kintail and Morvich
Burg	Linn of Tummel
Canna	Mar Lodge Estate
Craigower	Murray Isles
Dunkeld	Rockcliffe
Fair Isle	Shieldaig Island
Glencoe and Dalness	Staffa
Glenfinnan Monument	St Kilda
Goatfell	Tighnabruaich Viewpoint

Torridon
Venniehill

West Affric

Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Brodick Castle, Garden and Country Park
Brodie Castle
Castle Fraser, Garden and Estate
Craigievar Castle
Crathes Castle, Garden and Estate
Culzean Castle and Country Park
Drum Castle, Garden and Estate
Dunkeld
Falkland Palace and Garden
Fyvie Castle
Haddo House

The Hermitage
Hill of Tarvit Mansionhouse
House of Dun
House of the Binns
Inverewe Garden
Kellie Castle and Garden
Leith Hall, Garden and Estate
Newhailes
Pitmedden Garden
Threave



The National Trust
for Scotland

The conservation charity which protects and promotes Scotland's natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations to enjoy

We are Scotland's largest voluntary conservation charity; we believe that the natural and cultural heritage of Scotland is one of our nation's greatest assets and that we have a duty to pass on this inheritance to benefit future generations. We aim to achieve this in three ways:

- by directly owning or managing some of Scotland's most important heritage places
- by engaging with all sections of society to make our heritage more socially inclusive
- by campaigning on behalf of the whole of Scotland's heritage

We are supported in this by our 277,000 members and a team of 2,500 dedicated volunteers. Our 129 properties include 76,000 hectares of Scotland's finest countryside and wild landscapes as well as castles, country houses and gardens. Each year we welcome around 3 million visitors to these very special places, and well over 100,000 young people benefit from specially arranged educational visits.