

Notes from Meeting

Landscape Assessment Report Stakeholder Meeting

8 March 2005
Project: P167113
Ref: MinutesMtg_030205.doc/PWK/klf

Date/Time : 8th March 2005

Location : Burnby Hall, Pocklington

Participants : Simon Navas – ERYC – Project Manager
Stephen Hunt – ERYC – Forward Planning
Jan Falkingham – Golder Associates – Landscape Architect
Alex Stappard – Golder Associates
Harriet Burrows – Carl Bro – Project Manager
William Cooper – Doncaster Met. Borough Council
Margaret Cockbill – CPRE
Stephen Robinson – CPRE
Tony Atkin – Environment Agency
Andrea Macmillan – NYCC
Chris Marshall – Countryside Agency
Graham Ramsden – British Waterways
Rachael Pye – British Waterways
Keith Miller – English Heritage
Graeme Steven – ERYC – Forward Planning
Stephen Devey – ERYC – Conservation, Landscape and Archeology
Michael Newton – ERYC - Conservation, Landscape and Archeology
John Crook – ERYC – Development Control

Action

1.0 Introductions

All of the above introduced themselves and their interest in the scheme.

2.0 Introduction to ERYC Landscape Character Assessment Project

Stephen Hunt gave a presentation introducing the project. A copy of the presentation is available upon request.

3.0 What is Landscape Character Assessment and how is it used?

Jan Falkingham gave a presentation on the above. A copy of the presentation is available upon request.

4.0 ERYC Landscape Character Assessment Programme

Stephen Hunt and Jan Falkingham presented the programme for the Landscape Character Assessment. The assessment is to be completed by the 31st August 2005.

TIMESCALE ACTIVITY

OUTPUT

March 2005

Workshop
Stakeholders informed

Feb – June 2005

Desk study
Draft character areas

Mar – July 2005

Field survey
Verify draft character area

June 2004

Article in East Riding News
People informed and given opportunity to comment

July 2005

Making judgments
Guidance and recommendations

31st August 2005

Landscape Character Assessment Report

5.0 Discussion Session around the following questions:

What are the important characteristics of the East Riding landscape?

Hedgerows are a key landscape feature in the East Riding. In 1997 the Hedgerow Regulations were introduced requiring those who wished to remove a hedgerow to apply for permission to do so. The regulations contain a set of criteria for determining whether or not a hedgerow is important based on ecology, landscape and historic significance. Few hedgerows are deemed important under the regulations. Important hedgerows are protected from removal by the regulations. Half of the hedgerows removed since 1997 have been replaced. ERYC has a list of hedgerows that have been identified as important as a result of applications made for their removal. This list may be forwarded to Golders.

There is currently approximately one planning application per month to remove a hedge. One of the aims of Environmental Stewardship is to promote hedgerow growth and management.

Some of the hedgerows in the district have been carved out of ancient woodlands.

The East Riding has the second lowest percentage of woodland cover in the country. There has been a large amount of tree planting in recent years, particularly around the Beverley – Hull fringe. Generally sparse tree cover throughout the East Riding. The Council are happy to promote tree planting on any land, either private or Council owned. The Landscape Character Assessment could help to target areas appropriate for tree planting. There are historic reasons for the lack of woodland – linked to the development of agriculture.

Hull and East Yorkshire Woodland Initiative (HEYwoods) was launched on 2nd April 2004. The initiative, led by the National Urban Forestry Initiative, aims to increase the area of trees and woodland and associated greenspace in Hull and the East Riding.

East Yorkshire has an extensive coastline and 2 nationally designated heritage **Golden** coasts (Flamborough and Spurn). The contribution of the varied coastline to the landscape is key.

The impact of landed estates is important with such estates caring for large amounts of trees, hedges and foxes coverts etc. These estates have impacted on the development of land use and farming in the area. Historic parkland design and an historic atlas of East Yorkshire should be referred to.

Settlement is scattered throughout the area. Pre-enclosure field boundaries tend to be apparent close to villages. Settlement pattern varies across the area as does vernacular style. Important to consider when assessing landscape character.

Common land around Beverley including the Westwood, Swinemoor and Figham. Commons elsewhere in the East Riding were lost during the Enclosures Acts of the 18th and 19th century. E.g. High Wolds. These areas are intensively farmed.

Unique Drainage systems in the East Riding. – High land system and lowland system. The high land system includes the River Hull catchment and the Yorkshire Wolds. The River Hull is an embanked system. The Lowland system includes the Beverley and Barmston Drain and the Holderness Drain and lots of smaller ones pumped into the Humber. Included in the drainage systems are important historical structures (mainly 19th century) such as brick siphons. The Environment Agency has information regarding this and is happy for Goldeners to contact them. (Richard Jennings is the contact for Biodiversity in the EA)

The Local Drainage Boards would also have a lot of information. There are approximately a dozen of them in the East Riding and they need to be informed and consulted through the Landscape Character Assessment. The Aire and Calder Navigation resulted in changes to the landscape in the 18th century around the Goole area. Water and drainage in this area has had considerable influence over the centuries.

Driffield has the most northerly chalk stream in England.

The steep sided dry dales of the Yorkshire Wolds are less intensively farmed

and tend to be grassland managed for livestock with areas of scrub. These areas provide variation from the intensively cultivated rolling agricultural land of the Wolds.

Tranquility in the area is important, there is a noise mapping survey being undertaken shortly. CPRE have undertaken a similar survey for lighting. Lighting in the countryside is a big issue that affects character.

Flat vistas over long distances are important across the area particularly in the Vale of York.

Impact of pylons and power stations (outside the district) on views from within the East Riding e.g. views from the edge of the Wolds south and southwest – Drax, Eggbrough and Ferrybridge power stations.

Seascape – important views from land to sea.

There are key manmade features that act as landmarks in the area such as local churches (for example, Beverley Minster, Howden Minster, Patrington Church, etc)

The Lower Derwent Valley is a distinctive area where there is some traditional land use practice. Settlement character along the Derwent Valley has cultural significance. The Boothferry Borough Local Plan looked at the relationship of settlement with the River Derwent. E.g. Bubwith and Wressle Castle.

CPRE carried out a survey of what people missed in the East Riding District, hedges and meadows were flagged up.

The LCA is seen to be a useful tool for people who assess agri-environmental schemes.

Wolds generally featureless but very strong characteristics. E.g. openness, long views, deep dales, enclosure field pattern. Scattered features, such as churches, farmsteads, etc are important landmarks. Some may be considered detractors e.g. silos and masts.

What are the main detractors which exist?

Pylons, roads, masts, concrete bridges and wind turbines were all seen as being a detractor to the area. However, vertical elements have a place as visual punctuation in the landscape and contributing to sense of place.

Large-scale agricultural buildings can impact on the landscape. Isolated, scattered compact farmsteads are characteristic of the East Riding but new isolated buildings and the expansion of farmsteads can be detractors.

Features such as 'sweeping' motorways, railways and canals with long sweeping lines could be seen as being good in the right place or as a detractor.

Flood defenses can be a detractor in the landscape but have become characteristic in some areas of the East Riding.

Cumulative impacts of structures such as bridges and small-scale development that is not characteristic gradually erodes distinctiveness and changes character.

Residential development that does not respect vernacular.

Large-scale industrial development in the open countryside and on the urban edge can impact on landscape.

Use of disused airfields in the area for development. These airfields are often in rural locations and the impact of development on them could be detrimental to landscape character.

What are the main issues and pressures affecting landscape character?

Coastal erosion – the east coast of the district is one of the fastest eroding coast lines in Europe which has consequences of pressure to move buildings and caravans back from the coastline.

The number of caravan sites in the region is seen to affect the landscape character, particularly along the coast where there are large-scale developments.

The requirement for residential development in the area is a pressure that will impact on landscape character and there are issues surrounding the design of residential development. The national use of standard house types is destroying the local distinctiveness of some settlements in Holderness and throughout the East Riding. (Design guides are seen as one possible way of helping to solve this problem).

Renewable energy targets for the East Riding have resulted in pressure for wind farm development in the district. Also possible effect on seascape where offshore wind farm development may occur. The East Riding has a target of 40.7MW of power being produced by renewable energy onshore by 2010 and an indicative target of 148.2MW by 2021.

Flood risk on low-lying ground seen to be a pressure that affects development and therefore landscape character. A large part of the East Riding is at risk from flooding.

Flood defenses impact on landscape character.

Farm diversification schemes that involve changes in land use and built development e.g. fishing lakes, recreation sites with cabins and caravans and barn conversions changes landscape character.

There is agricultural development throughout the district but often the authority is unable to exert control on some of these permitted developments.

The quality of the 'urban fringe' and its use is an issue. Pressure of development results in merging of settlement particularly on the edge of Hull.

What would be your ideal for the East Riding Landscape in 10-20 years time?

Where development is seen as enhancement or where development is permitted to proceed on the basis of provision measures such as wetland habitats.

More tree planting throughout the region to increase the percentage of tree cover across the East Riding. This needs to be sensitive to landscape character.

CPRE and others would like to see Local Landscape designations maintained to recognise the high quality landscape in the district. In particular the Yorkshire Wolds which in the past is an area that has been considered for an AONB designation.

Development of Flood defenses to be used as an enhancement e.g. ecological flood defenses/ natural flood defenses (see EA examples). Salt marsh re-creation in some places along the Humber Estuary.
Retain water features in the landscape and avoid culverting watercourses.

Other Issues

CPRE would like more Landscape Character Assessments and want to work with authorities to develop a sound approach.

'Leapfrogging' by developers – filling in spaces adjoining greenbelts where developments generate premium prices due to proximity to greenbelt land.

Port towns may increase in size as the employment potential is explored. The Humber Trade Zone Initiative (Yorkshire Forward) has been conceived to optimize the current and potential assets of the area around the Humber Estuary.

Mitigation measures can detract rather than the development e.g. unsightly bunds with trees 'hiding' developments.

The character assessment will be used by the authority in making planning decisions but may also be used by other organisations such as DEFRA, when making decisions about agri-environment Schemes and the Countryside Agency developing policy.

Neighboring authorities need to be consulted and the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment needs to refer to Assessments that have taken place in these authorities and tie in with them as appropriate.

The CPRE raised the question regarding the need for an SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment). Stephen Hunt confirmed that it would not be required as the LCA would not be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

The exercise was seen as being successful and a further meeting was proposed to take place within the next 3-4 months to update stakeholders on the progress being made, get feed back on draft character areas and to

discuss judgments to be made that would lead to identifying/verifying areas of high quality landscape and a strategy for managing landscape change as a result of development pressures.

In the meantime, comments will also be sought from local organizations throughout the East Riding.