



Irish Landscape Institute Seminar on:

Tools for strategic decision making and the management of the Landscape Developments in Landscape Character Assessment.

Outline of Seminar

With the publication of the National Landscape Strategy (NLS)¹ in July 2015, Ireland has a valuable opportunity to enhance and expand the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)^{2,3}, –as a useful guide to strategic land-use decision-making in Ireland. We are presented with an opportunity to ensure that the new methodologies and standards are useful to planners, infrastructure developers, landscape and urban managers and those involved in heritage or tourism.

In Ireland, LCA – using a range of approaches - has informed county level development policy for strategic rural land use (renewable energy particularly), in development management, and to an extent in community led village design statements. But with no national guidelines on methodology or use of LCA, this potentially useful decision-making tool has had limited further impact or usefulness in the planning system and outside of planning.

Northern Ireland is about to launch an updated LCA which requires a response along the border counties and there are many examples across Europe of LCA being used effectively, with countries evolving methodologies to suit their particular needs^{4,5}. Their progress and experience can be used as a spur and support for the next stage of LCA in Ireland, now set in motion by the publication of the NLS.

So as not to repeat the mistakes of the past, this time, we need to be clear about what LCA should mean in Ireland, what will it be useful for, and how should we do it....

To this end – we will be discussing the following over the course of the seminar:

1. What is Landscape Character Assessment for?

- To satisfy our obligations under the European Landscape Convention?
- To align with processes evolved by other countries?
- To inform planning policy on large scale rural land use questions, e.g. renewable energy, electricity distribution, agricultural intensification (or the reverse – re-wilding), landscape and biodiversity conservation (i.e. rural green infrastructure), forestry, recreation and tourism, housing?
- To provide a framework for community involvement in landscape decisions, and encourage appreciation and ownership of landscape including landscape change?
- To inform village, urban planning and site/development area masterplanning;
- To provide a baseline to inform landscape-based studies such as landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIA), the identification of views and scenic routes for protection, etc.?
- To provide a framework for collection of cultural landscape associations – visual art, legend, literature, song, etc.?
- Other?

¹ <http://www.ahg.gov.ie/en/Heritage/NationalLandscapeStrategyforIreland/N%20Landscape%20Strategy%20english%20Web.pdf>

² http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Archaeology/LandscapeCharacterAssessment_Rpt.pdf

³ http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Landscape/LCA_Update_Report_10.11.09.pdf

⁴ http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/nirlca_introduction.pdf

⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf

2. **How should it be done - by what methodology and leading to what output – Does Ireland need to evolve a methodology to suit our own circumstances or can we utilise existing methodologies?**
3. **At what scale/s should it be done and in what order - national, then regional, county, local? Or local and national in parallel, both informing county and regional LCA?**
4. **Who should lead/coordinate?** The NLS speaks of ‘co-operation between a range of partners’ but who will take responsibility for driving the process, collating and distributing the data and outputs, ensuring consistency, and who will fund the process?
5. **What are the next steps and the overall timeframe?**

The Irish Landscape Institute (ILI) is hosting a one day seminar to discuss these topics. The seminar will be held on Thursday 26th November 2015 at the Beresford Hotel, Dublin 1 (across the road from Busáras). The programme for the day is as follows:

Seminar Programme

9.00 – 9.30	Registration and coffee		30 mins
9.30 – 9.50	Tony Williams and Richard Butler, ILI	Introduction -	20 mins
9.50 – 10.20	DAHG Representative	The National Landscape Strategy – Fundamentals and implementation	30 mins
10.20 – 10.50	Christine Tudor, Natural England	LCA methodology – latest developments in the UK	30 mins
10.50 – 11.10	Coffee break		20 mins
11.10 – 11.40	Mansil Miller, Northern Ireland Environment Agency	LCA applied in Northern Ireland	30 mins
11.40 – 12.20	Ciaran Tracey & Brian McCarthy, Irish Planning Institute	LCA and the planning system	30 mins
12.20 – 12.40	Alison Harvey, the Heritage Council	Public participation in LCA	20 mins
12.40 – 14.00	Lunch break (lunch is not provided at the venue but numerous cafes and restaurants are available nearby)		1hr 10 mins
14.00 – 16.00	Workshop/s facilitated by Deirdre Black, ILI and Alison Harvey, Heritage Council	Seminar participants will be given the opportunity to collectively prioritise the topics to be explored in more detail within smaller self-managing groups. Following round table discussions, these groups will report back to the room their conclusions, conundrums and next steps needed. Workshop outcomes will feed into the next stages of National Landscape Strategy implementation.	2 hrs mins Includes 15 min break
16.00 – 16.30	Summary and discussion	Summary and Discussion	30 mins

Seminar Audience

The seminar will be of interest to all involved in the development of our landscape but of particular interest to landscape architects and planners in public and private practice, to staff of Government Departments, agencies and organisations with a land management brief, and NGOs, landscape campaigners and anyone else interested in the management of one of Ireland's greatest assets.

Date and Venue

The seminar will be held at the Beresford Hotel, Dublin 1, on Thursday 26th November, Registration and coffee from 9.00 am with the seminar starting at 9.30 am.

Coffee will be served mid-morning and mid-afternoon, but please note lunch will not be provided at the venue. There are numerous cafes and restaurants in the vicinity.

Seminar Reservations

Online reservation via the ILLI website at <http://www.irishlandscapeinstitute.com/events/lca-seminar-2015/>

Or download registration form at <http://www.irishlandscapeinstitute.com/events/lca-seminar-2015/>