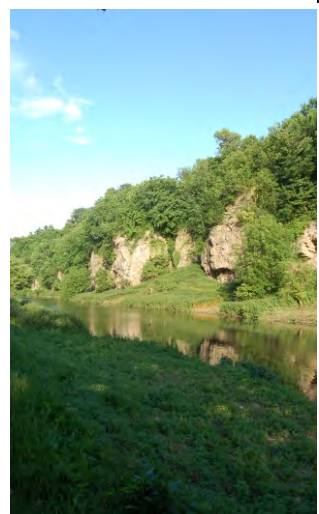


The Landscape Character of Derbyshire



“The English countryside is an exceptional creation - a corner of the world that is immensely old, full of surprises, lovingly and sometimes miraculously well maintained, and nearly always pleasing to look at. It is one of the busiest, most picked over, most meticulously groomed, most conspicuously used, most sumptuously and relentlessly improved landscapes on the planet.”

Bill Bryson, Author.
The Sunday Telegraph, 1 October 2000

The Landscape Character of Derbyshire

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The Landscape Character of Derbyshire

FOREWORD



Derbyshire's beautiful and varied landscapes make our county a place of which we are truly proud. It shapes our economy, our communities and makes us the people that we are.

This 10th anniversary update brings together a huge amount of work about the landscape character of Derbyshire. It provides an invaluable resource for planners, environmentalists and teachers. It brings together information about how the landscapes were formed and how human activity has transformed them.

Most significantly, this work identifies the degree to which landscapes are at risk. This will enable us all in the future to avoid damaging sensitive landscapes and to take steps to restore those which have suffered in the past.

We must put this document to work, to allow the Derbyshire economy to flourish whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing the landscapes that we hold so dear.

Anne Western

Councillor Anne Western,
Leader of Derbyshire County Council



The Landscape Character of Derbyshire

INTRODUCTION

Derbyshire sits at the heart of England with a diverse range of landscapes from the upland moors of the Peak District to the expansive floodplain of the Trent Valley. It occupies a unique position encompassing England's upland-lowland divide between the north and south, and the dairy-arable transition from west to east. The quality of Derbyshire's landscape is recognised, in part, by the designation of the Peak District National Park but this document identifies and recognises the intrinsic qualities of all landscape and focuses on the landscape of Derbyshire outside the National Park designation.



There are many elements that define landscape character but these can essentially be divided into the physical and natural processes such as geology, landform and soils, and the human processes affecting settlement, enclosure patterns and land cover.

Landscape characterisation as a concept is value free and does not label areas as attractive or unattractive, high or low quality. All areas have recurring features that contribute to or detract from the overall qualities of an area and this assessment is an objective exercise to identify these features and understand their development.

Background to the Review

This is the fourth edition of 'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire' document but is the first comprehensive review since it was first published in December 2003. Since its publication, much has happened with respect to the consideration of landscape issues as part of the planning process. This 10 year review of the document has allowed Derbyshire County Council (DCC) to re-evaluate data collected as part of the original landscape character assessment, to take stock of changes to the planning and regulatory system, and to reflect on how the work has helped to inform and guide landscape change in the intervening period.

As part of the review of the 'Landscape Character of Derbyshire', a questionnaire was circulated to selected employees within DCC's former Environmental Services Department (now Economy, Transport and Environment).

The key findings of this survey can be summarised as follows:

Overall, it was felt that no changes were required to the format and layout of the document as most people found the document easy to use. However, there was a need to:

- update the document;
- improve the layout of plans in the document;
- explain the link to Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs);
- outline how to use the document when designing a scheme;
- include examples of good practice using case studies;
- improve the functionality of electronic maps ;
- improve the interactive web based document;
- raise awareness of how to use the document amongst DCC employees and external organisations.

These findings have underpinned the review.

The review has identified a number of minor errors or inaccuracies with respect to the original landscape character assessment. This has led to minor changes to urban areas to reflect recent expansion, boundary tweaks between some landscape character types and minor amendments to the text to better reflect the character of the landscape.

European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a significant European Community treaty that sets out the first comprehensive strategic agreement for the consideration of landscape matters within all relevant decision making nations across the community. In 2006, the UK Government signed and ratified the ELC and it came into effect in March 2007.

Whilst it is not a Directive (and does not therefore constitute law) the UK Government has ratified the Convention, and as such it is a key consideration in future landscape planning and management. As a consequence, it has the potential to significantly influence the UK's spatial planning systems and land management activities at all levels, as well as cultural, social and economic policy areas.

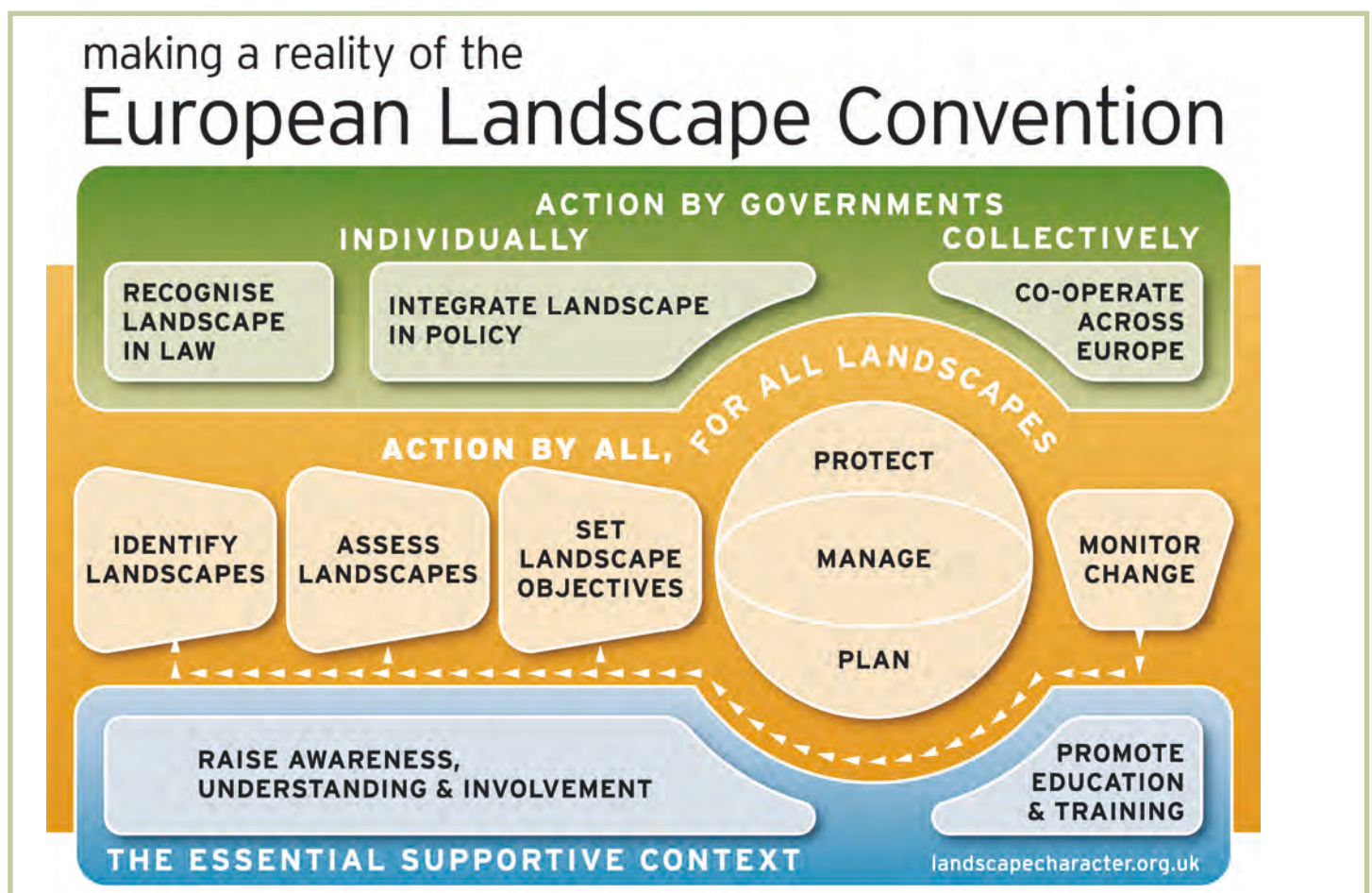
The ELC covers **all landscapes**, not only those valued for their scenic qualities but also those 'ordinary' landscapes that form the context for everyday life. It recognises that landscapes have important cultural, ecological, environmental and social roles and that they can provide beneficial contexts for economic activity. Landscapes are seen to contribute to **human well-being** and are recognised as being important influences upon **quality of life**, particularly in urban areas where landscape is often degraded.

The ELC defines landscape as:

'Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.'

The fundamental aim of the ELC is to promote the **protection, management and planning** of all landscapes and, in doing so, achieve the aims of maintaining and improving landscape quality and local distinctiveness. The ELC promotes landscape as providing a spatial framework for decision making across a variety of sectors and activities.

The Derbyshire landscape character assessment fully embraces the principles of the ELC and provides the context for spatial planning and landscape policy in Derbyshire.



Countryscape (2008) based on a concept by Michael Dower and Adrian Phillips.

National Character Areas and Ecosystem Services

The Countryside Character Initiative, led by the former Countryside Agency (now Natural England), mapped England into 159 separate, distinctive character areas on a national scale. These National Character Areas (NCAs) share similar landscape characteristics within a very broad landscape context. There are 10 NCAs, which wholly or in part cover Derbyshire.

Since the original publication, other concepts have developed to further emphasise the need for an integrated approach to environmental planning and management. These are enshrined in the Natural Environment White Paper (2011) and are now firmly embedded in the recent review of Natural England's NCAs (formerly known as Joint Character Areas) and emerging profiles.

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx>

The review of the NCAs again reinforces the role of landscape character as a framework for the consideration of other environmental factors such as biodiversity, geodiversity and the historic environment as part of an Ecosystem Services approach. The approach is not a new concept but does establish the key services that the natural environment provides for the economy, our social well-being and as part of a healthy environment. These services are categorised under the following headings:

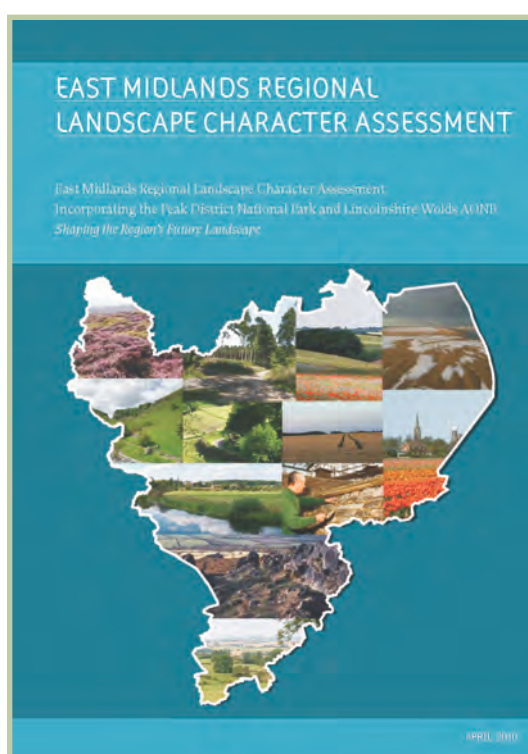
- **Provisioning Services** - food, water, minerals, energy, etc.
- **Regulating Services** - carbon sequestration, water purification, crop pollination, decomposition, etc.
- **Cultural Services** - recreation, intellectual and spiritual inspiration, etc.

This approach allows for the consideration of the complex inter-relationship between these various factors to ensure that the landscape, as a component of the natural environment, continues to deliver these essential services and multiple public benefits. This publication fully accords with the national landscape characterisation work with the Derbyshire Landscape Character Types 'nesting' within the broader NCAs.

East Midlands Landscape Character Assessment

The East Midlands Landscape Character Assessment represents a new tier in the landscape character assessment hierarchy for England. It is designed to add a regional layer to the National Characterisation Project and provide a strategic context and framework for more detailed landscape character assessments at the county and district scales.

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_midlands/ourwork/characterassessment.aspx



The Aims of Landscape Characterisation in Derbyshire

The 10 NCAs within Derbyshire have been sub-divided into 39 Landscape Character Types (LCTs). LCTs are broad tracts of landscape that have a unity of character. Some of the types, like Riverside Meadows, are generic, having a similarity of character across a number of NCAs. A written description has been produced for each LCT. This sets out the key features that define its character, followed by more detailed descriptions of the elements which combine to create landscape character.

Planting and Management Guidelines for both trees and woodland have been included at the end of each LCT description. These have been developed to give stakeholders an overview of tree and woodland character by LCT with some guidance relating to new planting proposals. The species lists have been produced utilising Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's 'Habitat Creation Guide'. In order to apply some clarity and consistency to the size of new woodlands throughout Derbyshire, existing and proposed woodland is classified in the following size range:

- Small - 0 to 10 hectares
- Medium - 10 to 25 hectares
- Large - 25 to 50 hectares
- Very Large - >50 hectares

It should be appreciated that LCTs operate at a broad, strategic scale where areas like parkland are features that help to define landscape character. Some LCTs can change in character quite distinctly whilst in others the differences are more subtle. Boundaries have been drawn between LCTs as a single clear line often following a distinct feature like a field boundary or a road. In reality, the change between one LCT and another is not always clear-cut. Sometimes the transition between types is difficult to define in a line but it is hoped that the descriptions identify the essence of those differences, and the boundaries are seen as the changeover point where the characteristics of one type outweigh those of another.

The Derbyshire landscape character assessment has been primarily undertaken to underpin landscape planning, policy and decision making within the county and influence landscape considerations adjacent to its boundary. The assessment is intended to guide and promote a number of key planning aims:

Aim 1 - Landscape Character and Diversity

To maintain and enhance the overall quality and diversity of landscape character across the County, the distinctive sense of place and individual identity of each particular area.

Aim 2 - Managing Change

To support and complement planning policies by helping to ensure that new development respects and, where practicable, contributes towards enhancing the local character and sense of place of the landscape.

Aim 3 - Biological Diversity

To support and complement the aims of the Biodiversity Action Plans for Derbyshire, enriching biological diversity throughout the wider countryside and encouraging the sustainable management of Derbyshire's landscapes.

Aim 4 - Monitoring Landscape Change

To utilise landscape character as a spatial framework for evaluating the relative sensitivity of the landscape to change and to develop a process for monitoring change.

Aim 5 - Education

To promote the use of landscape character as an educational tool, raising awareness and helping to foster community engagement in the spatial planning of the landscape.

Landscape Change

'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire' acknowledges that landscape is not static or fixed at one point in time. Landscape is subject to many forces for change that apply pressures on the landscape giving rise to different impacts on landscape character and local distinctiveness. Since the first edition, various forces for change have gained in prominence with respect to their potential long-term effect on the landscape and natural environment. These include:

- **Minerals and Post-extractive Landscapes** - the exploitation of minerals is a key driver for change in some parts of the country and, in particular, Derbyshire. The need to quarry for various mineral resources can lead to large scale impacts on the countryside with significant effects on visual amenity and tranquillity. Large hard rock quarries and sand and gravel sites can lead to scars in the landscape, the impacts of which can be difficult to mitigate. Conversely, the restoration of some mineral sites, particularly opencast coal workings, can provide the opportunity to deliver landscape enhancements through the re-creation of locally distinctive features and habitats.
- **Housing Growth and Green Infrastructure** - the need to increase the supply of new homes to accommodate a growing population is seen as a significant force for change on the landscape, not only through its direct impacts, but also as a result of the increased pressures it places on existing ecosystem services. As part of a sustainable approach to new development, it will be important that all new development is supported by a network of Green Infrastructure that helps to reinforce landscape character and deliver the multiple public benefits required to contribute to our quality of life and social well-being.
- **Agriculture** - is a key factor that defines the character of the English countryside and market forces both globally and locally, allied to the Government's agricultural funding policies are key determinants in driving agricultural change. A spatial approach to land-use planning ensures that the inherent character of the landscape is fully understood so that impacts resulting from land-use change can be minimised.
- **Climate Change** - will have a significant effect on our future landscapes either as a consequence of the direct effects or as part of our adaptive strategies to mitigate the effects. Direct effects could result from increased temperatures or changes to rainfall patterns affecting the distribution of characteristic features and habitats. Adaptive responses could equally affect landscape character through the need to accommodate new low-carbon technologies such as wind turbines or changes to land-use as a consequence of woodland creation and the planting of new bio-fuel crops.
- **Pests and Disease** - recent events have demonstrated how pests and disease can impact on established landscape characteristics. The outbreak of disease such as foot and mouth can lead to permanent changes in farming practice as farmers move from stock rearing to arable production. This could lead to long-term changes in landscape character through the change in land-use but also through the loss of landscape features such as hedgerows, which are removed to facilitate larger fields for agricultural machines. Most recently, the issue of ash die-back as a result of the fungal infection, Chalara, has the potential to markedly change the character of some landscape types within Derbyshire, particularly some of those associated with the White Peak.



A key focus of this document is to ensure that valued and key characteristics that contribute to landscape character and sense of place are maintained and enhanced into the future whilst at the same time accommodating change arising from social, economic and environmental necessity.

Monitoring Landscape Change

As stated, the European Landscape Convention (ELC) is a significant landscape treaty that came into effect in the UK in March 2007. The ELC sets out the general provisions of the treaty as well as particular measures that each signatory nation will undertake to further its aims and intent. Article 5 of the ELC sets out the general measures of the treaty whilst Article 6 establishes specific measures relating to:

- Part A - Awareness-raising
- Part B - Training and education
- Part C - Identification and assessment

Article 6 - Specific Measures

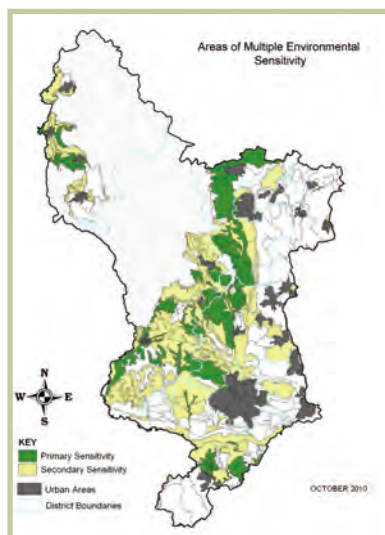
Part C - 1. With the active participation of the interested parties, as stipulated in Article 5.c, and with a view to improving knowledge of its landscapes, each party undertakes:

- i) to **identify its own landscape** throughout its territory;
- ii) to **analyse their characteristics and the forces and pressures transforming them**;
- iii) to **take note of changes**.

'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire' publication through its definition and description of Landscape Character Types assists in the delivery of both the general and specific measures established in the ELC. New sections within the document will further assist in raising awareness of the landscape and issues affecting it; provide a resource for education and training; and provide a framework for further assessments including monitoring landscape change.

DCC has elected to monitor landscape change through various mechanisms including Fixed Point Photography as set out in Part 5 of this document and Technical Support Document 3 available on the DCC website.

Landscape Sensitivity

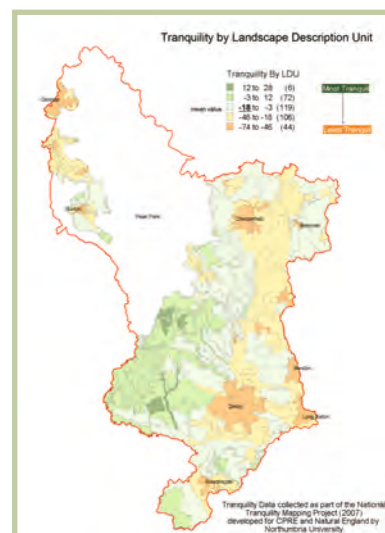


In order to inform the concept of landscape sensitivity, the landscape character assessment has been used as a spatial framework to review other known environmental datasets. This has resulted in a holistic approach to identify 'Areas of Multiple Environmental Sensitivity' (AMES) based on their biodiversity, historic interest and visual unity.

It is intended that these AMES will be used to inform strategic planning considerations. A detailed description of this work with plans is included in Part 4 of the document with a full methodology in Technical Support Document 1: Areas of Multiple Environmental Sensitivity which is available at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/landscape

Tranquillity data produced by the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) has been used in a similar way to provide a tranquillity map of the county outside the Peak District National Park. A detailed description of this work with a

map is included in Part 5 of the document with a full methodology in Technical Support Document 2: Tranquillity which is available at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/landscape. Details relating to CPRE's tranquillity work can be found at www.cpre.org.uk.



Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out the Government's planning policies for England to help achieve sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**.

Sustainable development is defined in the Framework as **"meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"** and recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment.

The framework establishes 12 'Core Planning Principles' (p.5, 17) including:

"always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;"

"take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;"

"contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework;"

'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire' contributes to the aims and objectives of the NPPF by providing the spatial context for establishing landscape policy across the county.

Natural England Landscape Policies

The Derbyshire landscape character assessment responds to Natural England's Framework for Implementation of the ELC, which seeks to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of landscape in England. It is guided by the two broad outcomes of the Implementation Framework, both set within the context of sustainable development:

- ***"strengthening of institutional frameworks*** - promoting a landscape perspective to influence spatial planning, land-use and resource management nationally, regionally and locally";
- ***"creating an inclusive, people centred approach*** - raising awareness with the public and fostering community engagement as well as working with professionals, specialist bodies and politicians";

These broad outcomes establish a landscape perspective for integrated land-use planning and resource management, and this document will be essential to the delivery of these outcomes for Derbyshire.

Local Policy Context

The Derbyshire landscape character assessment underpins a number of policies being developed in the emerging Derby and Derbyshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plans, and District and Borough Local Development Frameworks.

The appropriate policies relating to landscape character can be found on the relevant planning authority's web site.

Amber Valley Borough Council	www.ambervalley.gov.uk
Bolsover District Council	www.bolsover.gov.uk
Chesterfield Borough Council	www.chesterfield.gov.uk
Derbyshire Dales District Council	www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk
Derby City Council	www.derby.gov.uk
Erewash Borough Council	www.erewash.gov.uk
High Peak Borough Council	www.highpeak.gov.uk
North East Derbyshire District Council	www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk
South Derbyshire District Council	www.south-derbys.gov.uk

Derbyshire County Council Service Provision

- **The Council Plan**

The Council Plan establishes five pledges to service delivery across the county:

- A Local Derbyshire
- A Derbyshire that works
- A Healthy Derbyshire
- A Safer Derbyshire
- A Derbyshire that cares

'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire' will help inform the delivery of these pledges by recognising the intrinsic qualities and diversity of the landscapes across Derbyshire, and ensuring that the natural and cultural environment continues to play a vital role in underpinning the economy, as well as sustaining and enriching life. This publication will play a pivotal role in delivering a number of County Council priorities in particular:

- Placing 'Communities at the heart of decision making'
- Contributing to 'A strong economy';
- Sustaining 'Well connected communities';
- Maintaining 'Healthier communities with reduced health inequality'; and
- Providing 'Sustainable and green communities'.

Landscape Designations

• Peak District National Park

A large part of the Dark Peak and White Peak NCAs are located within the Peak District National Park; a national designation to protect our finest landscapes. As a result, the National Park has its own administration that undertakes similar functions to DCC, particularly with respect to strategic planning. For this reason, as previously stated, the Derbyshire landscape character assessment has been undertaken for the area of Derbyshire outside the National Park. However, since the original publication of this document, the National Park Authority has undertaken and produced a landscape character assessment, landscape strategy and action plan. Details can be found on the Peak Park website at: <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk>

Landscape Initiatives

• National Forest

Parts of South Derbyshire are located within the National Forest; a major strategic project to create a new 'forest' landscape across three counties connecting the extensively wooded landscapes of Needwood and Charnwood, both outside the county. In these exceptional circumstances, the strategic objectives of these major national projects may outweigh the local landscape character objectives. The National Forest has prepared a landscape character assessment and the findings of this study broadly conform to the LCTs defined in the Derbyshire landscape character assessment. Details can be found on the National Forest website at: <http://www.nationalforest.org>

• Trent Valley Vision

It has been identified that there is, and will be, increasing pressures for change in the Trent Valley through Derbyshire. The need to identify further mineral sites for sand and gravel extraction and the allocation of land for new housing growth will place further demands on the landscape of the Trent Valley in the short and long-term, and these pressures are going to change and fragment the open agrarian landscape character of the valley in the next 50 years.

Further gravel extraction and housing growth will change the character of the landscape irreversibly. The opportunity therefore exists to shape this change to deliver a new and attractive landscape with enhanced Green Infrastructure where people want to live, which attracts visitors to the area, provides new economic opportunities, and is rich in history and wildlife.

Key to this will be the development of a clear landscape vision and strategy that plans for landscape change over a long period. This approach has now been adopted and is being promoted by the Lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Local Nature Partnership (LDN LNP). The County Council and District/Borough Councils have a duty to cooperate with the LDN LNP and should aim to assist in the development of a landscape vision and strategy to deliver high quality Green Infrastructure across the Trent Valley for existing and new communities. This document recognises and endorses this approach and supports the principle of transforming the character of the Trent Valley over the next 50 years.

Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Projects

• Limestone Journeys 2011-2015

Limestone Journeys is a five-year project focusing on the unique landscape and heritage of the **Southern Magnesian Limestone** area in north-east Derbyshire. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Limestone Journeys partners are working on a range of schemes with communities, landowners and local groups to conserve the landscape, wildlife and rich heritage of the area, and encourage communities to learn about, enjoy and celebrate their local area. www.creswell-crags.org.uk/limestone-journeys.aspx

• DerwentWISE 2013-2018

DerwentWISE is a Heritage Lottery Funded project, which focuses on the landscape and heritage of the Lower Derwent Valley between Matlock Bath in the north and Derby in the south. Located in the **Peak Fringe** and **Lower Derwent** and **White Peak** character areas, the project aims to preserve the landscape, wildlife and rich heritage of the valley through active management and restoration opportunities involving local communities and landowners. www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/derwentwise

