

The Landscape Character of Derbyshire

PART FIVE – MONITORING LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Introduction

The Landscape Character of Derbyshire aims to underpin the objectives of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of the landscape. A key component in addressing the success of these aims will be to develop a method to monitor landscape change and help involve people in understanding this change (Articles 5, 6A-D).

Monitoring landscape change is not an easy concept to deliver given the scale of the resource. At the national level, attempts to monitor landscape change have been delivered through initiatives such as Countryside Quality Counts (CQC), which looks at landscape change in the context of National Character Areas. Using various national datasets this review monitors landscape change in the context of four potential outcomes:

- Maintained – stable and consistent with character/vision
- Enhancing – changing and consistent with character/vision
- Neglected – stable but inconsistent with character/vision
- Diverging – changing but inconsistent with character/vision

The CQC project goes on to recommend that landscape change should be monitored on a 5 year cycle.

At the county scale, the CQC approach is clearly too broad and difficult to understand by people outside the relevant professions. In the context of this review, it is proposed to monitor landscape change using fixed point photography on a 5 yearly cycle. As this is a 10 year review, the opportunity already exists to review viewpoints identified in the original document to record the change to the landscape that has taken place as well as identifying new locations where there are known pressures for change that can be monitored into the future.

Method

The fixed point photography has identified a number of viewpoints across the county. As stated, some of these viewpoints are the same as those chosen in the first edition of the document and, as such, allow for the monitoring of landscape change since it was published. Others are new locations often taken from elevated vantage points that allow for broad panoramic views over large areas. These views may reflect a number of landscape character types and are often selected in anticipation of known pressures for change.

Photos used from the original publication were taken during 2003 with the subsequent photos taken in 2011. Where a photograph is taken from the position of one of the original photographs, the two are shown side by side to demonstrate the changes that have taken place in the interim period. Photographs from new locations are shown individually with a description of the current view.

It is proposed that the exercise will be repeated every 5 years to monitor landscape change to provide feedback for the planning process and help inform future training requirements. The fixed point photography view points and descriptions can be seen in Technical Support Document 3 at www.derbyshire.gov.uk.

Monitoring Landscape Change: View Point Locations

