

Appendix 7.J

Assessment methodology: assessing the effects on nationally and internationally designated landscapes and their setting

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Through consultation with consultees, and in particular the Lake District National Park Authority, Natural England, Friends of the Lake District, and the National Trust assessment methodology is being developed to assess the effects of the proposed development on the setting of nationally and internationally designated landscapes which include National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Heritage Coasts and World Heritage Sites (WHS). In particular, consultees have provided the following guidance which has been considered:
- The setting and L&V effects on the LDNP setting should be dealt with using discursive narrative instead of matrices and plans.
 - The extent of the setting was noted as a ‘fluid’ concept based on the nature of the development and its visibility.
 - The peripheral landscape areas of distinctive quality identified near to and crossing the LDNP boundary should be overlaid with a composite project wide ZTV to assist in identifying character areas important to the setting of the LDNP.
 - Further consideration should be given to methodology being developed by National Grid and similar research and assessment undertaken by the National Trust.
- 1.1.2 There are two elements of the Hadrian’s Wall WHS site within the defined 22km study area. These are Ravenglass Fort and Bath House at Ravenglass Parton Roman Fort to the north of Whitehaven. Both of these are also scheduled monuments and in each case the WHS boundary is limited to the scheduled monument boundary with no buffer zone. The setting of these parts of the WHS is therefore considered to be defined by the settings of the scheduled monuments and will be included where required in the historic environment assessment.
- 1.1.3 Whilst there are no other WHSs or ANOB’s within the defined 22km study area the Lake District National Park (LDNP) is a candidate WHS. It has been agreed with consultees that an assessment of the landscape and cultural heritage effects pertaining to the candidate WHS will be the subject of a separate chapter in the Environmental Statement. The draft methodology set out in this appendix may contribute to the assessment of landscape effects on the setting of the candidate WHS as well as the assessment of landscape effects on the setting of the LDNP.
- 1.1.4 This draft methodology could therefore be applied to two nationally designated landscapes comprising the LDNP and the St Bees Heritage Coast.

1.2 The Purpose of the Assessment

- 1.2.1 The purpose of the landscape assessment in relation to nationally designated landscapes (the LDNP and the St Bees Head Heritage Coast) and their setting is described as follows.

Special Qualities of the Lake District National Park

- 1.2.2 The LDNP Authority's statutory purposes are set out in the Environment Act 1995 as follows:
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park; and
 - To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
- 1.2.3 The special qualities of the LDNP include amongst other things, the 'landscape and views' which define what makes this area special and has led to its designation as a National Park.
- 1.2.4 *The Partnership's Plan* (Reference Error! Reference source not found.. LDNPA) lists 13 special qualities of the LDNP of which three have been identified as likely to potentially be affected as follows:
- The High Fells;
 - A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities; and
 - Opportunities for quiet enjoyment.
- 1.2.5 These selected special qualities are described further in Chapter 7, Table 7.7, although they mostly relate to aesthetic and perceptual qualities of tranquillity and wildness.
- 1.2.6 The Nomination Document for the Lake District WHS proposes an Outstanding Universal Value for the Lake District based on connected themes of a landscape quality with distinctive agro-pastoral traditions which has inspired artistic and literary movements.
- 1.2.7 In assessing the potential effects on the LDNP, the assessment will need to consider the extent to which the proposed development would affect the statutory purposes and special qualities of the national park and its setting.

St Bees Head Heritage Coast

- 1.2.8 Heritage Coasts are 'defined' rather than designated and were established to:
- conserve, protect and enhance:
 - the natural beauty of the coastline
 - their terrestrial, coastal and marine flora and fauna
 - their heritage features
 - encourage and help the public to enjoy, understand and appreciate these areas;
 - maintain and improve the health of inshore waters affecting heritage coasts and their beaches through appropriate environmental management measures; and

- take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing and the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coasts.
- 1.2.9 Paragraph 114 of NPPF (Reference 8, DCLG) makes reference to Heritage Coasts as set out in Section 7.3 of Chapter 7.
- 1.2.10 St Bees Head Heritage Coast is protected under Policy ENV2 of the *Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028* (Reference Error! Reference source not found.. CBC), which seeks to “...protect the intrinsic qualities of the St Bees Head Heritage Coast in terms of development proposals within or affecting views from the designation”.

1.3 Definitions of Setting

- 1.3.1 There is no specific official definition of the term ‘landscape setting’ or ‘setting’ although there have been varied attempts to define it. In conducting a review of definitions used by various organisations connected to nationally and internationally designated landscape in England, the definitions invariably fall into two categories defined as follows:
- Complimentary Setting:
 - Landscape outwith the designation boundary that is complimentary to the Special Qualities or Outstanding Universal Value by which the designation is itself appreciated and valued.
 - Development Defined Setting
 - The second approach defines the ‘setting’ in relation to development, outside the designation boundary which could affect the Special Qualities or Outstanding Universal Value of the designation.
- 1.3.2 These definitions have been explored and described further.

Complimentary Setting

- 1.3.3 The term ‘setting’ and ‘landscape setting’ used colloquially usually implies a landscape, environs, or surroundings which are complimentary to the object of the setting. Terms might be used to such as the ‘jewel in the crown’ or the ‘pleasant rural setting of a village’ or a ‘stately home set within a designed park and garden’ and is more easily applicable to features within the historic environment. However, this concept is supported by World Heritage Convention, which although it does not specifically define the concept of ‘setting’, it is taken to mean “*the surroundings in which a World Heritage Site is experienced and the pattern of landscape and views that contribute to its OUV*” (UNESCO, Mission Report Giant’s Causeway and Causeway Coast 2013).
- 1.3.4 Critics might consider that an ‘area’ *per se* cannot have a complimentary ‘setting’ as the landscape itself is already the setting for features and activities within it. Paragraph 2.3.3 of the LDNP Partnership’s Plan: *The Management Plan For The English Lake District 2015–2020* however, advises that:

- 1.3.5 *“the ‘setting’ of UK National Parks is formally recognised as capable of being a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It is also a requirement in legislation that all relevant authorities and public bodies (such as District Councils and utilities companies) take National Park purposes into account when they make decisions that might affect the National Park or its setting.”*
- 1.3.6 The setting of heritage assets (including WHSs) is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as *“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”*.
- 1.3.7 Considering this concept more strategically and on a grand scale we have assumed that the LDNP and in particular the High Fells have a complimentary setting of diverse and distinctive landscapes located both within and outside the boundary of the LDNP. The landscape character of these areas is mapped and classified by the LDNP Authority as Areas of Distinctive Character, some of which extend slightly beyond the boundary. Other landscape beyond the designated boundaries mapped and classified via the *Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit* (Reference **Error! Reference source not found..** CCC). However, these documents do not consider the relationship of these landscapes to the nationally designated landscapes. The Landscape Institute (GLVIA 3) advises in respect of nationally designated landscapes as follows:
- 1.3.8 *“If the area affected by the proposal is on the margin of or adjacent to such a designated area, thought may be given to the extent to which it demonstrates the characteristics and qualities that led to the designation of the area. Boundaries are very important in defining the extent of designated areas, but they often follow convenient physical features and as a result there may be land outside the boundary that meets the designation criteria and land inside that does not.”*
- 1.3.9 It should also be noted that a landscape setting whilst in this case assumed to be complimentary, can also be uncomplimentary or degraded, explaining why that area is not included in the designation. It should be noted that the existence of the Sellafield Site is recognised as a detracting feature set within an area of unremarkable or degraded landscape character in a number of the landscape character type assessments reported in the *Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit* (Reference **Error! Reference source not found..** CCC).
- 1.3.10 Further questions for the assessment in defining any ‘complimentary setting’ of nationally designated landscapes include the following:
- Are there areas of contiguous and or complimentary landscape character and quality that extend beyond the designation boundary and do these contribute to the special qualities?

- Do the Special Qualities or Outstanding Universal Values refer directly to a complimentary setting beyond the designation boundary?
- Are there any specific key viewpoints for valued views or vistas within the LDNP or nearby, within the defined 20km study area that would be affected?
- Can these areas of landscape character and / or valued views be mapped or defined?
- Do these areas of lines of sight / vistas fall within the ZTV for the proposed development, indicating a potential landscape or visual effect?

1.3.11 In respect of the St Bees Head Heritage Coast Policy ENV2 (Reference Error! Reference source not found.. CBC) refers to “*development proposals within or affecting views from the designation*” and this too implies the existence of either a complimentary setting or at least views to areas outwith the Heritage Coast. Whilst it may assumed that these views would be seaward or coastal, rather than inland this is a further aspect that the assessment will need to clarify, define and assess.

Development Defined Setting

1.3.12 The use of a ‘Development Defined Setting’ appears to be supported by the LDNP Partnership’s Plan in paragraph 2.3.3. as follows:

1.3.13 “*The setting is most simply described as areas of land or sea either in close proximity or immediately adjacent to the Lake District’s boundary, or in any event within zones of visual influence, where inappropriate development in these locations could adversely affect the Special Qualities or Outstanding Universal Value.*”

1.3.14 The LDNP Partnership’s Plan continues to explain this concept as follows:

1.3.15 “*This means that planning applications for development outside of the National Park boundary may be refused consent by the relevant local planning authority because of the impact it would have upon areas within the National Park boundary. An example of this may be a wind farm proposal or electricity pylons that may have a zone of visual influence many kilometres beyond the location of the development itself.*”

1.3.16 In the case of a ‘development defined setting’ the physical area of the setting is variable according to the type and location of the development in question. For example, a very tall object outside and possibly some distance from the designation boundary may appear visible beyond a key ridgeline and thus affect the setting (in this case the horizon or skyline) when viewed from within the designated area and thus affect some of the Special Qualities of the designation. In comparison a shorter development may not be visible beyond a key ridgeline and it’s location within a landscape beyond the boundary may be unrelated to the designation and thus outside the ‘development defined setting’ of the designation.

1.4 Baseline Description

- 1.4.1 In order to conduct an assessment, the ‘complimentary setting’ and the ‘development defined setting’ of nationally designated landscapes must be defined and the following approaches are proposed. These will be conducted and discussed with relevant stakeholders during 2016 and reported in the ES in 2017

Landscape Character

- 1.4.2 The assessment will identify areas of landscape character which are close to and contiguous with nationally designated boundaries and overlapped by ZTVs of the proposed development to determine areas that may lie within the complimentary setting. Each area will be considered in terms of its relevance, contribution and relationship to the designation and its special qualities.

Key Views and Vistas

- 1.4.3 The assessment will map the locations of any key views, vistas and walking routes overlapped by ZTVs of the proposed development within areas of adjacent landscape character or otherwise nearby, which may define the complimentary setting.

Valued Perceptual Characteristics

- 1.4.4 The assessment will map areas outside the nationally designated areas where similar levels of tranquillity and ‘wildness’ occur in comparison to areas within the designations.

1.5 Assessment of Effects on Setting

- 1.5.1 Once the ‘complimentary setting’ and the ‘development defined setting’ of nationally designated landscapes has been defined, the assessment will consider the following effects:
- The effects of development on receptors which form part of the ‘complimentary setting’ close to but outside the boundaries of nationally designated landscapes; and
 - The effects on receptors resulting from the ‘development defined setting’ of nationally designated landscapes.
- 1.5.2 The assessment will follow the GLVIA 3 approach in determining the landscape effect on receptors within the setting of designated landscapes by considering their sensitivity and the magnitude of the effect.
- 1.5.3 In this respect the sensitivity of the identified landscape character, key views and vistas and valued perceptual characteristics will be considered in terms of their sensitivity and importance to the national designation with which they are associated. This process will be assisted by viewpoint analysis.

- 1.5.4 In considering the effects on perceptual characteristics of tranquillity and wildness it is proposed to consider undertaking a Wild Land Assessment as applied to landscapes where perceptions of wildness are recorded as a key characteristic in Scotland (*Assessing the Impacts on Wild Land, Interim Guidance Note*, SNH, February 2007).
- 1.5.5 A key question for this assessment will be given that the existing Sellafield Site could be described as inter-visible with LDNP and therefore within its 'development defined setting' how should this be assessed? This development forms part of the baseline landscape, but it has had an effect on the character and views out from the LDNP in that direction, but does it contribute towards the special qualities of the designation? If it is not part of the special qualities, what value should be placed on the views towards Sellafield and the coast in terms of landscape setting in respect of the LDNP?
- 1.5.6 Would the proposed Moorside Project lead to a negative, neutral or positive effect as follows:
- an intensification of the effects of the existing Sellafield Site on the setting of the LDNP;
 - a neutral effect on the landscape character and views, which would remain similar in terms of their content, value and quality; or
 - through the use of architectural and landscape design and management could the nature of these effect be positive, introducing a new feature set within a designed landscape?

Cumulative Assessment

- 1.5.7 The assessment would apply to the whole project effects of the Moorside Project and a further cumulative assessment would be undertaken to assess wider effects in combination with other proposed developments as set out in Chapter 7, paragraphs 7.7.27 - 35.

1.6 Additional Mitigation

- 1.6.1 To conclude the assessment consideration may have to be given to specific additional mitigation, beyond that which can be embedded into the proposed development such as architectural and landscape design.