



# LOOKING AFTER THE LANDSCAPE

Rhodri Thomas

Team Manager - Natural Environment & Rural Economy

Rob Meetham & Garrie Tiedeman

Landscape Architects



## Introduction

- Natural beauty
- Special qualities
- International context
- Examples of the work we do

## What is landscape?

- Landscape Strategy
- What makes the special qualities of a landscape area
- Natural Zone
- Landscape change
- The tools we use

## STATUTORY PURPOSES

### ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995-

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public



## NERC ACT 2006-

- **Wildlife and cultural heritage may be taken into account in assessing natural beauty for National Park designations**
- **Agricultural land, woodland or other areas where the vegetation or landform are partly the product of human intervention are not precluded from being of natural beauty**



# FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO NATURAL BEAUTY

- Landscape quality
- Scenic quality
- Relative wildness
- Relative tranquillity
- Natural heritage features
- Cultural heritage

Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England. Natural England, 2011

# Special Qualities

- Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology



- Distinctive habitats and species



- Undeveloped places of tranquillity within easy reach of millions



- Characteristic settlements



- Historic landscapes

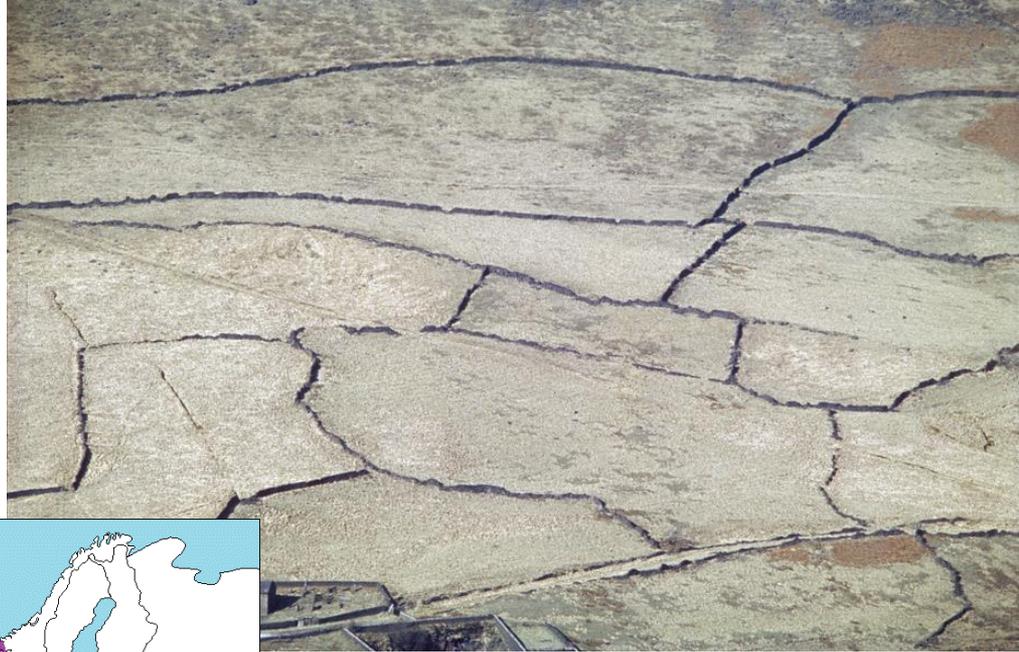
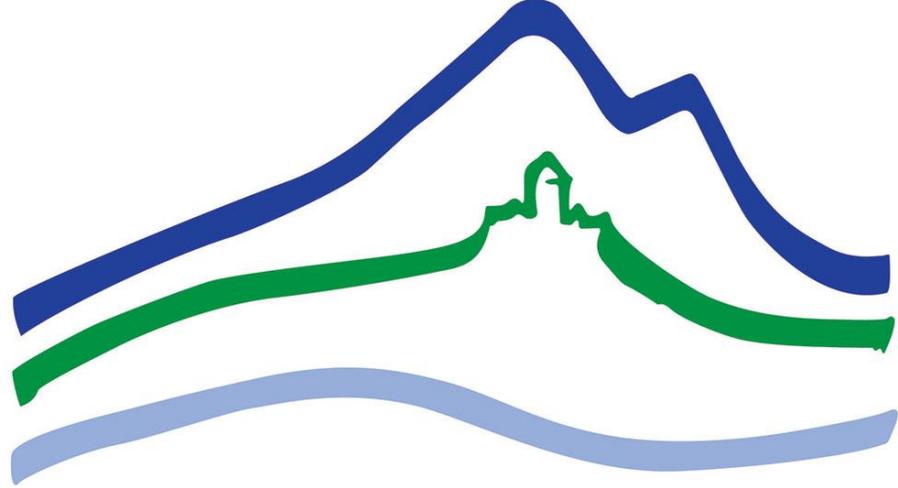


- Inspiring spaces for escape

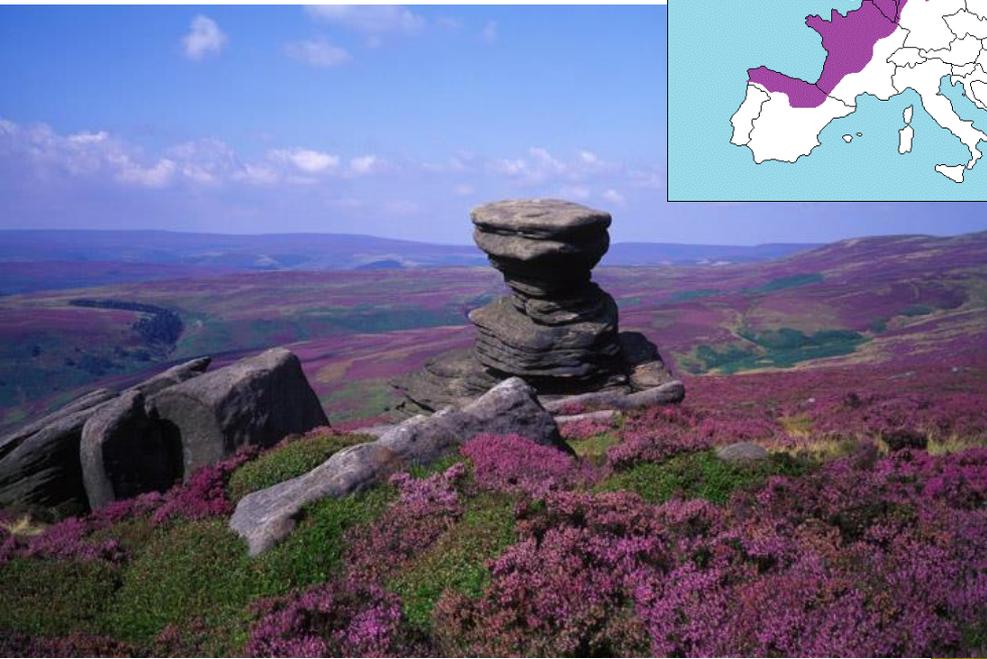
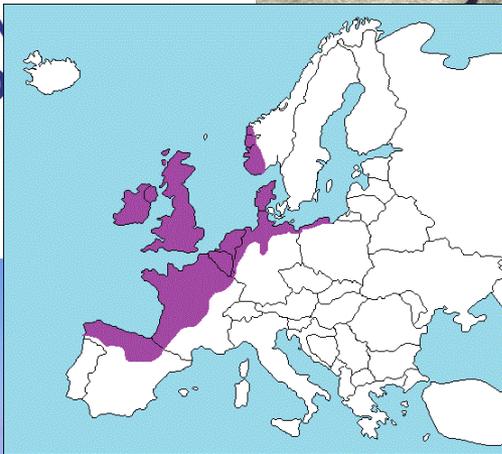


- Historic features





EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION  
CONVENTION EUROPÉENNE D  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE/CONSEIL D



# OUR WORK- PLANNING







PROJECT WORK

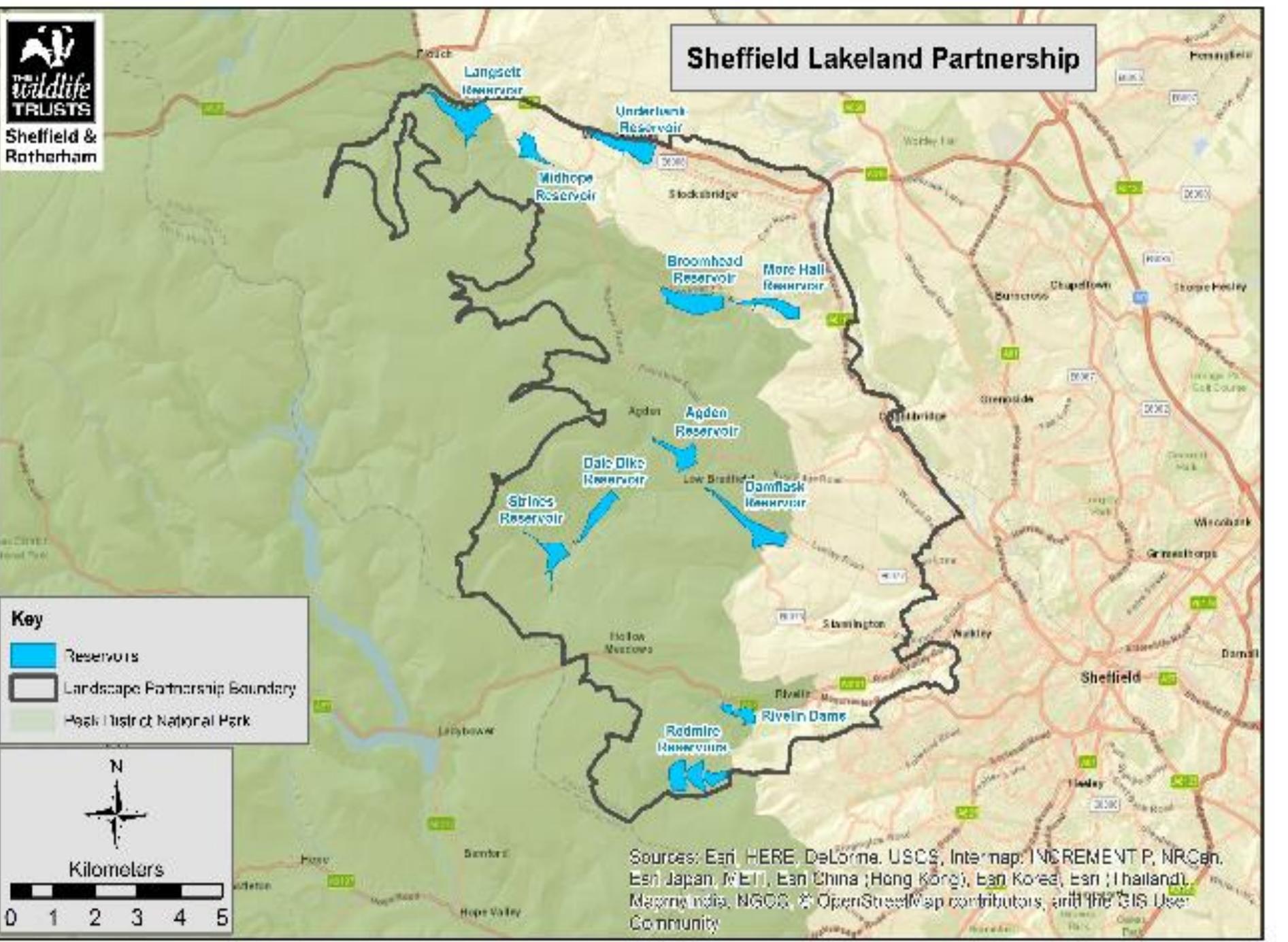


# PROJECTS - UNDERGROUNDING





# Sheffield Lakeland Partnership



**Key**

- Reservoirs
- Landscape Partnership Boundary
- Peak District National Park

N

Kilometers

0 1 2 3 4 5

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, Swire, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), Mapbox India, NGIS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# POLICY

**PEAK DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

## Landscape Strategy

and European Landscape Convention  
Action Plan



[www.peakdistrict.gov.uk](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk)

**PEAK DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

A Partnership for Progress

A Summary of the Peak District National Park  
Management Plan 2012-2017



You can find the full Management Plan at: [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/nmp](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/nmp)

**PEAK DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

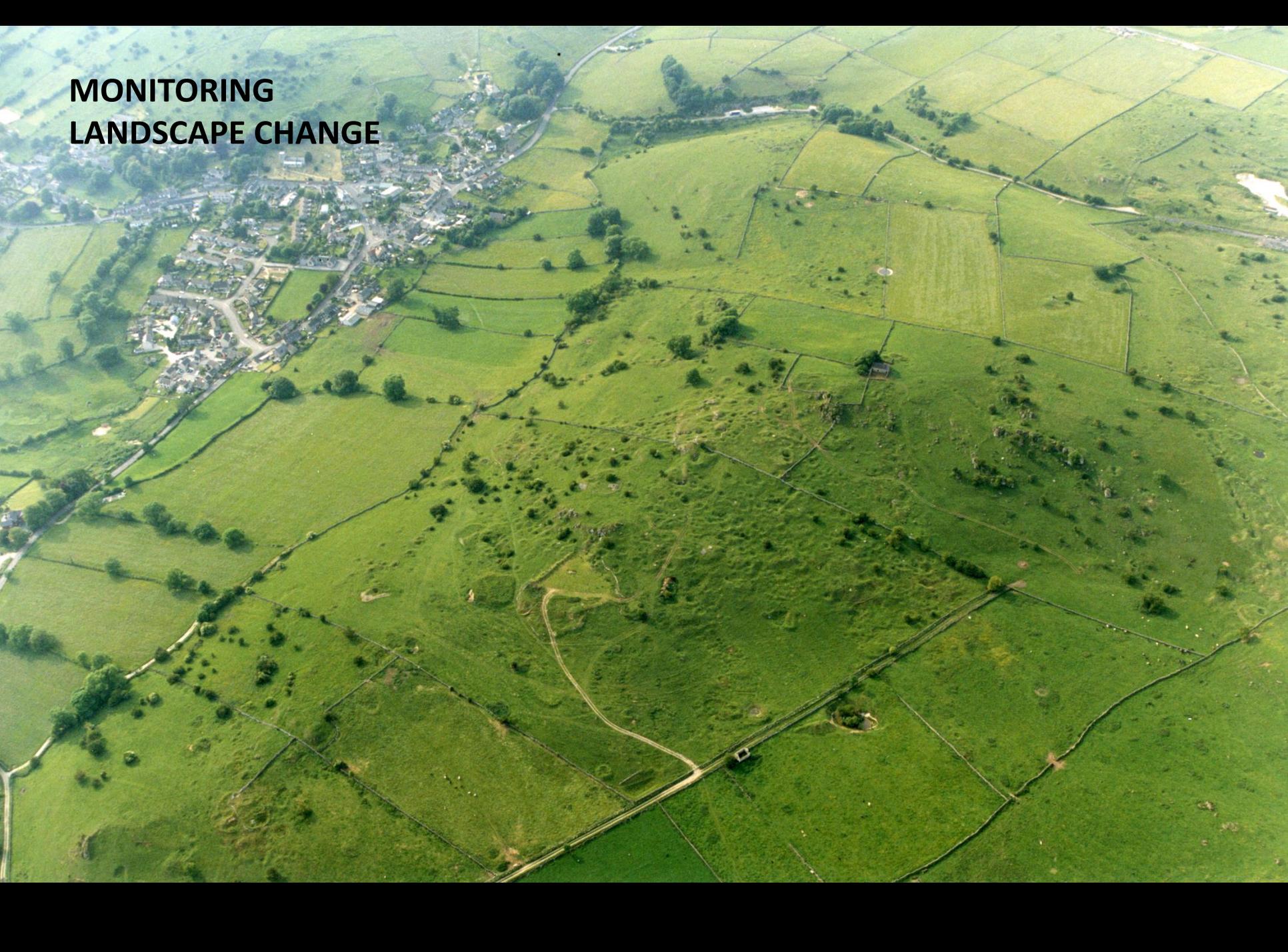
## Peak District National Park Local Development Framework



Core Strategy Development Plan Document - Adopted October 2011



**MONITORING  
LANDSCAPE CHANGE**





## What is ‘Landscape’?

We all know intuitively what landscape is, but how do you actually define it?

**“an area perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” ELC**

## But what does that mean?

The use of the word ‘perception’ in this definition of landscape is interesting – there are subjective elements (aesthetics) to our experience and appreciation of landscape.

What we see / experience as landscape is a ‘snapshot in time’ – the landscape is dynamic, shaped over thousands of years by the interaction of natural processes and human activities and it will continue to change and evolve in the future.



## Cultural perceptions: Constable's The Hay Wain

This painting has helped shape the national imagination of landscape – defines an idealised rural 'idyll' – but did this idyll ever exist?



Then....



....and now



**Time and landscape evolution:** What is considered an 'eyesore' now.....



.....could be tomorrows cultural heritage 'gem'?



**Time and landscape evolution:** What is considered a scar on the landscape now.....



.....could be tomorrows scenic beauty spot?



## **How does an understanding of landscape - and the processes of landscape change - inform the work of the PDNPA?**

### **What is our aim in terms of Landscape?**

Collectively, we are responsible for considering how the Peak District landscape should be safeguarded and enhanced, through plans and policies, and ensuring that developers are responsible for putting these into practice by our robust decision making.

### **What are the tools (and policies?) available to help us to achieve this?**

**Key policy document: Decisions should be guided & informed by the Landscape Strategy**

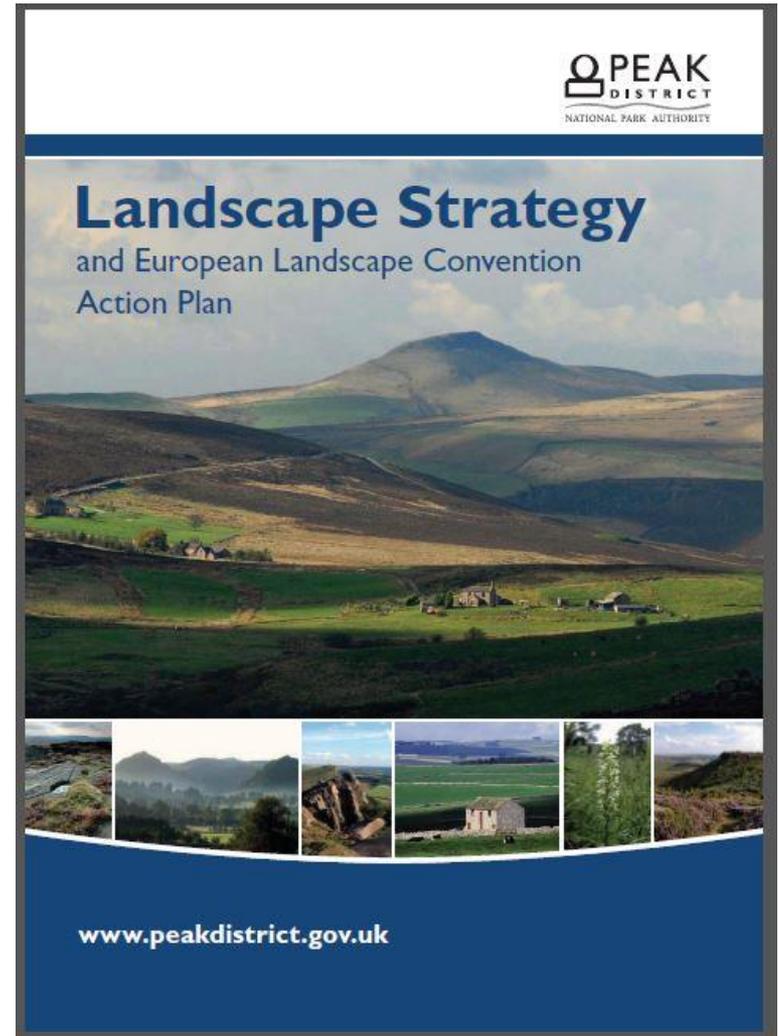
*As the forward to the Landscape Strategy says, we need to “maintain the key characteristics which create a sense of place in each distinct landscape while accommodating changes arising from social, economic and environmental necessity”*

## What is the Landscape Strategy?

This is a key strategic document – launched in 2009 (and due for review in 2019)

It includes:

- a Landscape Character Assessment which defines the key qualities and characteristics of each distinct landscape;
- landscape guidelines to protect, manage and plan the distinctive landscapes that make up the Peak District; and
- an Action Plan which sets out how the strategy will be delivered across the Park



## **What is the Peak District landscape?**

The Peak District National Park consists of many individual landscapes, each valued for their particular characteristics.

## **What is landscape character?**

a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, or characteristics, in the landscape that make one landscape different from another.

Character can include aesthetic factors (e.g. scale, enclosure) and perceptual factors (e.g. tranquility, wildness).

## **Landscape Character Assessment**

- A tool for identifying the features and aspects that give a locality its character
- Serves as a spatial framework for decision making that respects local distinctiveness







**There are two scales (and level of detail) in the Landscape strategy:**

**Landscape Character Area** – Dark Peak, White Peak, etc.

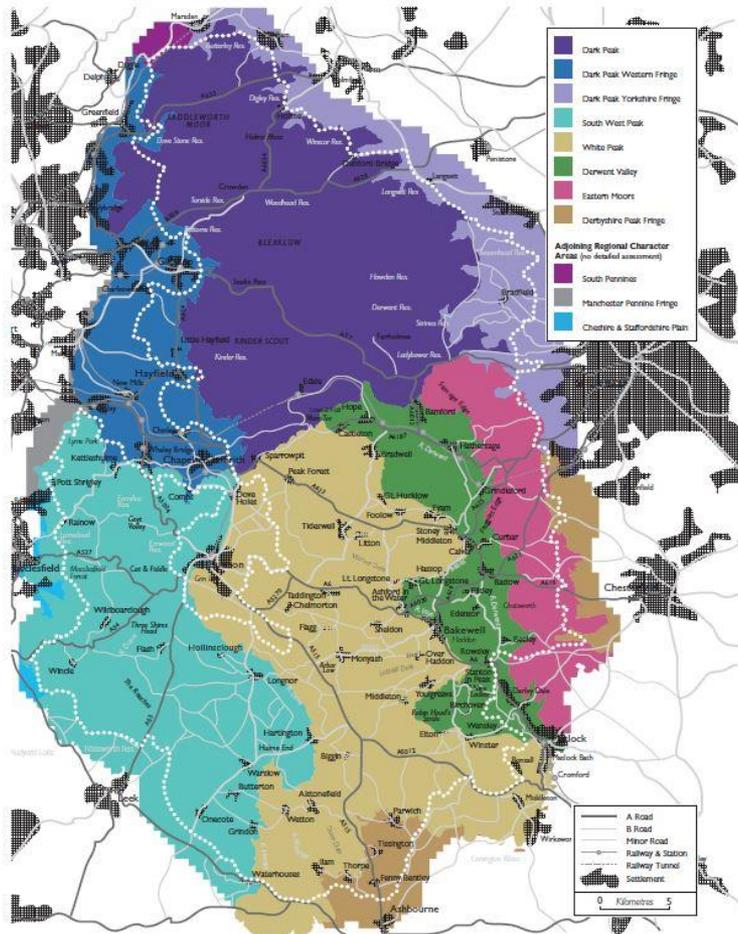
**Landscape Character Types** – Open Moors, Slopes & Valleys with Woodland

But a more detailed scale can also be carried out with respect to application sites:

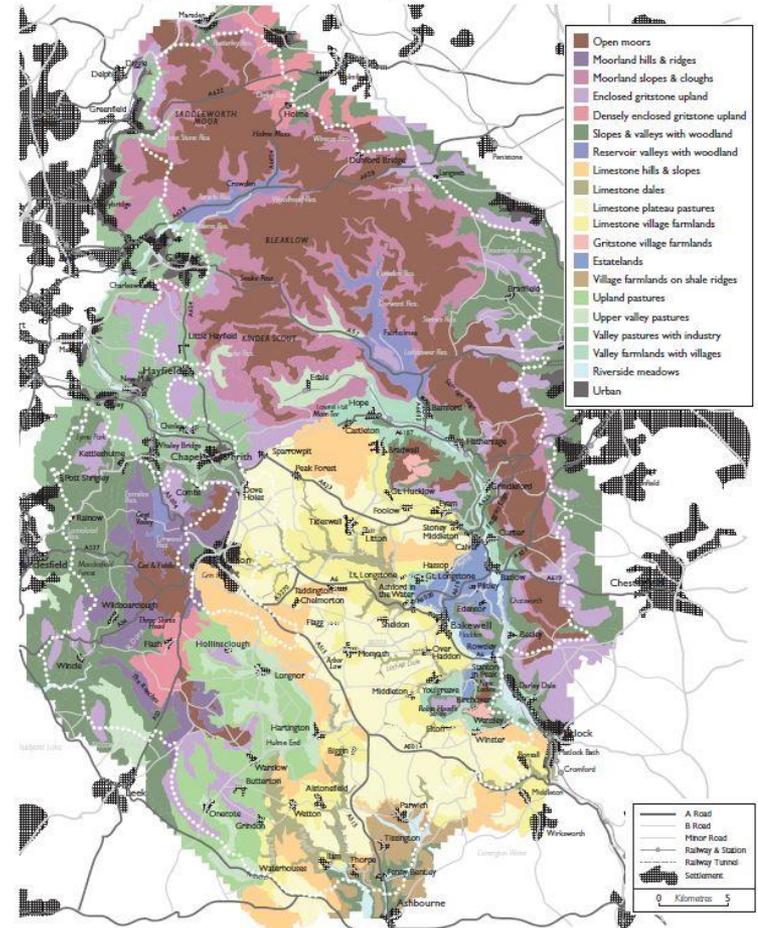
A **Local level** appraisal – the area in which the application site is located.



## Landscape Character Areas



## Landscape Character Types



# Landscape guidelines

## Dark Peak Yorkshire Fringe

Enclosed Gritstone Uplands	Densely Endosed Gritstone Uplands	Slopes and Valleys with Woodland
----------------------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------

### Protect

Protect and maintain historic dry stone walls	●	●	◐
---	---	---	---

### Manage

Manage and enhance woodlands			●
Manage and enhance plantation woodlands	○		◐
Manage and enhance the diversity of agricultural grasslands	●	●	◐
Manage the built environment to enhance landscape character	○	○	○
Manage historic mineral landscapes	○		
Manage the network of tracks and footpaths to maximise opportunities to enjoy the landscape	◐	◐	◐
Manage the network of minor roads to maintain character and local access	◐	◐	◐
Manage and enhance dough woodlands			◐
Manage and enhance areas of heath/moor	◐	○	

### Plan

Create new native broadleaved woodland			●
Create clough woodlands			◐
Create, extend and link areas of heath/moor	◐	○	
Develop small-scale renewable energy for local needs			◐
Develop appropriate landscapes from mineral workings	○		

- This is a priority throughout the landscape character type
- ◐ This is a priority in some parts of the landscape character type, often associated with particular conditions/features
- This is not a priority but may be considered in some locations
- This will generally be inappropriate in this landscape character type

### Protect

Protect the strongly nucleated settlement pattern of villages and scattered farms

The character of the White Peak is typified by the historic pattern and distinctive vernacular style of its small limestone villages. In order to maintain the integrity of the historic fabric, character and setting of settlements and buildings, new development and conversions should respond positively to the historical settlement pattern, density, local materials and building traditions. Traditional buildings are an important feature and their renovation and maintenance should be encouraged. Locating new agricultural buildings can also impact on landscape character and opportunities should be taken to guide site selection.

### Protect and maintain the historic field pattern

Field pattern is a prominent feature in the Limestone Village Farmlands and Plateau Pastures, reflecting the historic character of these landscapes. It is important that these field patterns are protected, particularly in the Limestone Village Farmlands where the enclosure reflects the earlier, Medieval, open field system. Where the field pattern has become fragmented through the removal of field boundaries it is important to avoid further loss and to look for opportunities to restore primary boundaries along highways, footpaths and farm and parish boundaries.

### Manage

Manage and enhance surviving areas of natural landscapes

Extensive areas of semi-natural grassland and more localised patches of heath are landscape features of the Limestone Dales and Limestone Hills & Slopes. These areas support diverse plant and animal communities and they should be conserved as a priority. Lack of grazing has resulted in some areas reverting to scrub and woodland. There is a need to identify areas that are a priority for scrub clearance and others where retention of scrub or woodland regeneration will be more appropriate and will provide habitat diversity. Appropriate grazing and scrub control should be carried out as a priority to maintain a mosaic of diverse landscapes whilst respecting cultural heritage.

### Enhance the diversity of agricultural grassland

Many of the enclosed grasslands in the Limestone Village Farmlands and Plateau Pastures have been improved and reseeded with a consequent loss of species and visual diversity. There is a need to manage these pastures in a more sustainable way that restores or conserves species diversity whilst supporting productive agriculture. Opportunities to extend and enhance the management of unimproved pastures should also be sought, particularly in the Limestone Village Farmlands.

### Plan

Create areas of limestone grassland and heath

Since the 1940s the trend in agriculture has been towards more intensive farming methods. This trend has been especially marked on the poorer land of the Limestone Hills & Slopes. To a lesser extent this has also occurred in the Limestone Dales, where patches of formerly rough land have been converted to improved pasture. This has resulted in a gradual decline in the diversity of the region, including the loss of many cultural heritage features. There are opportunities to create extensive areas of unenclosed limestone grassland and heath, and to extend and link existing patches, particularly within the Limestone Hills & Slopes, by natural regeneration and creation. In places, there may be localised opportunities to create grassland or heathland habitats above dale brows in the Limestone Village Farmlands and Plateau Pastures areas. Expansion should not occur where this would adversely impact on cultural heritage features and historic landscapes.

### Create new native broadleaved woodland

There are localised opportunities to extend woodland cover, without affecting cultural heritage and biodiversity features and historic landscapes, within the Limestone Hills & Slopes. There are opportunities to extend woodland by natural regeneration and by planting, although a balance will need to be reached between woodland expansion and the retention of limestone grassland/heath and scrub. In places there may be localised opportunities to extend Limestone Dales woodland over the dale brow into the Limestone Village Farmlands and Plateau Pastures. This should be done where it would not adversely impact on important cultural heritage features and historic landscapes. Increased woodland cover creates areas of shelter and shade and may be useful for mitigating the impacts of climate change.

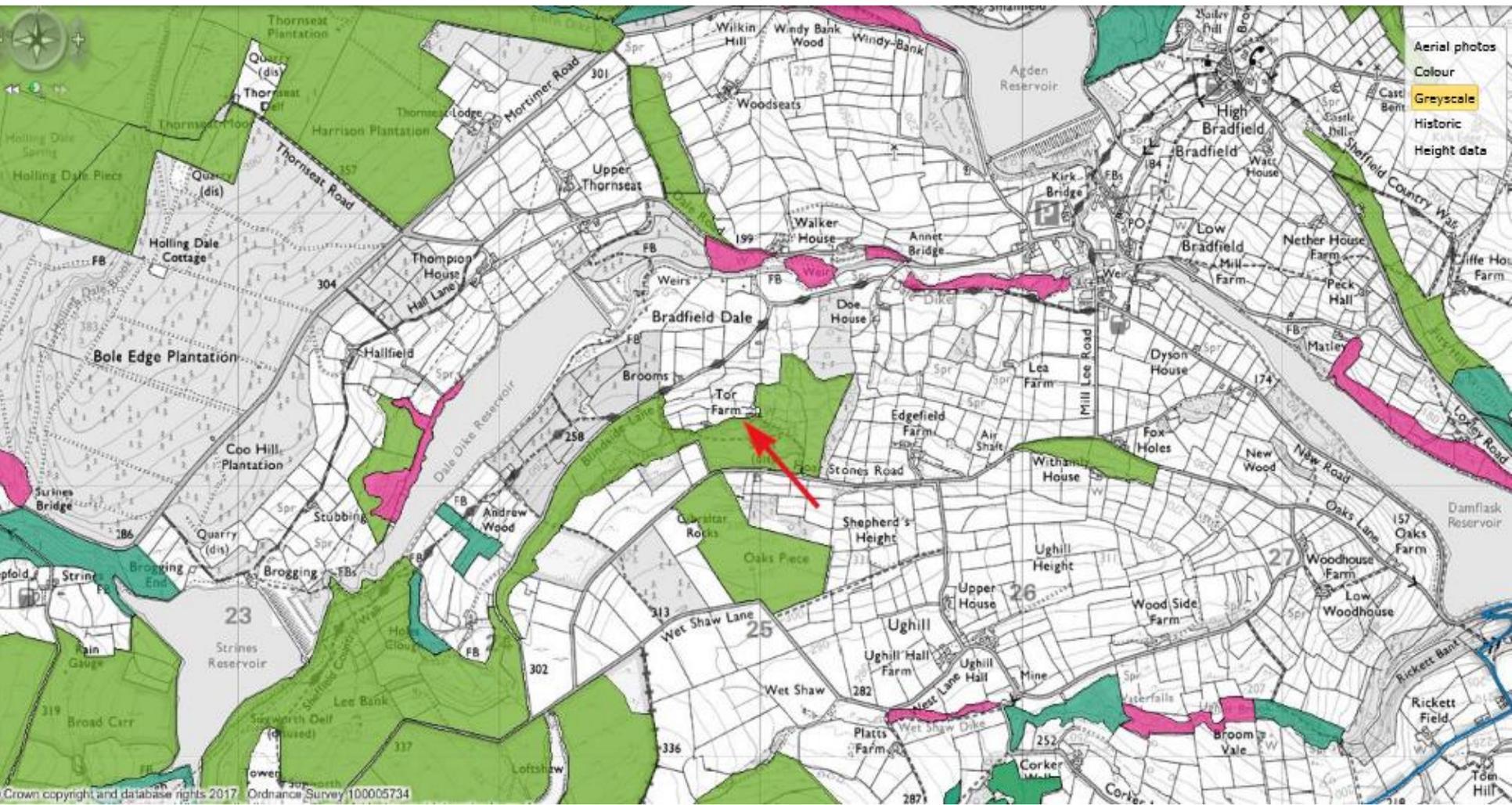
## NATURAL ZONE

**Other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals for development in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.**

The exceptional circumstances in which development is permissible in the Natural Zone are those in which a suitable, more acceptable location cannot be found elsewhere and it is essential:

- In the national interest; or
- For the management of the Natural Zone; or
- For the conservation or enhancement of the National Park's valued characteristics

Development that would serve only to make land management or access easier will not be regarded as essential



- Aerial photos
- Colour
- Greyscale**
- Historic
- Height data





# Issues of Change



- Built form
  - Housing development
  - Farm buildings
  - Inappropriate barn conversions
- Infrastructure
  - transport, tourism, energy, water & telecoms
- Land management
  - potential changes to agri-environment schemes as a result of Brexit: intensification or abandonment?
  - grouse moor management
  - forestry
- Climate change
  - changes to habitats, species and land use?
  - increased risk of floods / drought
  - opportunities: ICM, carbon storage etc?
- Tourism & recreation
  - traffic, parking, illegal access, erosion, litter
- Other
  - tree diseases (Chalara and others)



**Our landscapes will change: but not all landscapes are equally sensitive to change**

### **Landscape Sensitivity / Susceptibility**

Some landscapes are more sensitive to new built form than others: open landscapes mean that new development can be particularly intrusive unless careful attention is paid to siting and design.



## **Our landscapes will change: but how and where?**

We need to **monitor the landscape** to understand how forces for change will be re-shaping our landscape.

This will (1) give information to enable us to potentially manage this change and (2) record evidence that the landscape is retaining its special qualities.

How do we assess how our landscapes are changing?

**Tool: Fixed Point Photography.** Record and monitor visual changes within the landscape. Taking a photograph (from the same point) at intervals over a period of time.

Incorporated into GIS – quantitative records?

**MONITORING  
LANDSCAPE CHANGE**



## Our landscape will change: as a result of development

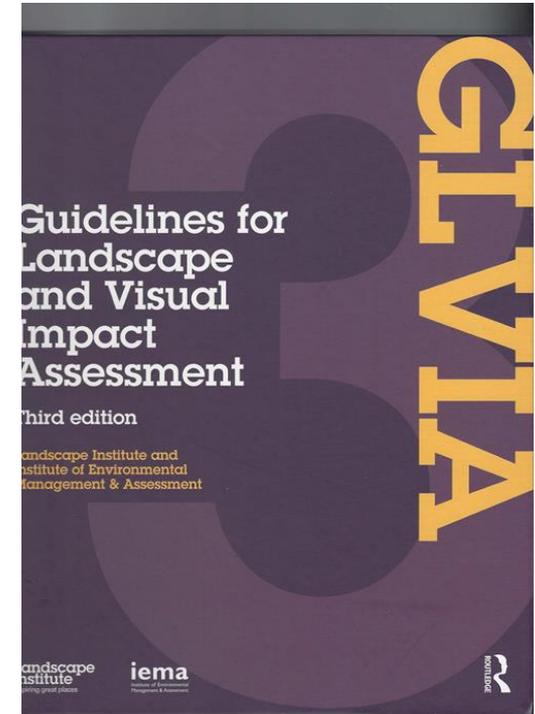
How do we assess likely change from a development proposal?

### Tool: Landscape and Visual Appraisal

- (a) To be prepared and submitted by applicant
- (b) Techniques can be applied by PDNPA Landscape Officer to comment on applications

### Allows us to answer key questions:

- Does the application consider the character of the landscape adequately?
- Does an application result in the loss of key elements of character?
- Does the application have an effect on perceptual or aesthetic qualities?
- Does the application conflict with the Landscape Strategy guidelines?





## **Our landscape will change: how does development affect views?**

As well as having effects on the landscape, development can have effects on views

### **Tool: Viewsheds / ZTVs**

In planning any development, viewpoints from which a development would be seen should be identified.

Promoted viewpoints, settlements, public rights of way, approach roads and high points surrounding the site should be considered by an applicant in order that the potential impact of the building can be judged.



**PEAK  
DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL  
PARK



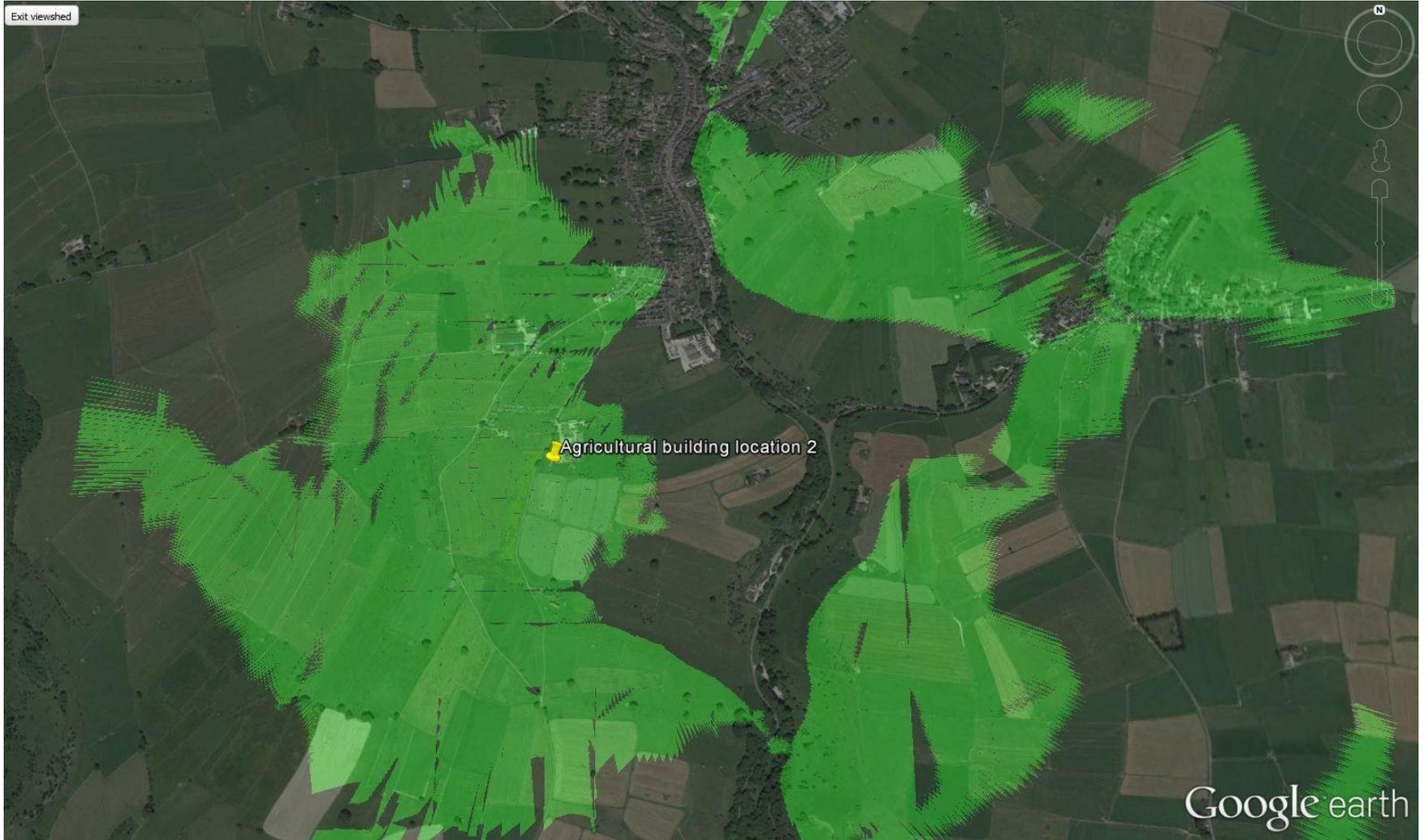
Exit viewshed



Google earth



**PEAK  
DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL  
PARK



Agricultural building location 2

Google earth

## **Specific Issue – New farm buildings in the landscape**

As the principal land-use of the National Park, agriculture has played a very important role in the development of the landscape.

Without the continued stewardship by farmers and landowners key elements of the landscape (characteristic stone walls, hedgerows, limestone grassland and stone buildings etc) could be lost. A thriving agricultural economy must be encouraged and therefore new agricultural development must be considered.

It is vital, however, that any new development should aim to be a positive addition to the landscape, which enhances the distinctiveness and diverse qualities of the Peak District.

Supplementary Planning Guidance  
**Agricultural Developments  
in the Peak District National Park**



and the Benefits of Whole Farm Plans

Adopted July 2003



**Peak District National Park  
Farmsteads Assessment Framework**

2017

Funded by  
Historic England

**LOCUS**  
CONSULTING



**PEAK  
DISTRICT  
NATIONAL  
PARK**

## Design & Siting Principles

**However well a building is designed, if it is poorly sited or located it is likely to have a significant detrimental affect on the landscape.**

### 1. Integration with existing buildings

Buildings should relate to existing buildings rather than stand in isolation – but they should have some degree of separation (to avoid appearing as a ‘solid mass’).

New buildings should be orientated with the main alignment of existing buildings on the farm.

Rooflines – consistent with existing (actual height and perceived height relative to existing buildings as viewed from key advantage points will be also relevant).

### 2. Integration with the surrounding landscape

In flat / plateau / undulating landscapes careful consideration should be taken of the siting of new buildings. In particular, buildings should be located in sheltered positions **below the skyline** where possible.

Similarly buildings on prominent hillsides need careful consideration, as they will be visible from some distance away.

### 3. Design Considerations

If requiring a large building two smaller units may be a more sympathetic to the location and surroundings with an L – shape (to reduce effects of massing).

Roof structure and materials should be considered. A stepped roofline (to create shadow lines) can to help merge the building with its surroundings and reduce its impact.

Construction materials should be chosen carefully to preserve the local character of buildings and to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

Roof materials/paint should be matt - dark colours against existing planting and light colours (blue and light grey) where viewed against the sky.

### 4. Landscape treatment

A new building should contribute to the overall landscape and in most cases the setting of a building can be enhanced by new planting, thus landscaping schemes are encouraged. **New planting should not be used to hide or screen a building that has been badly sited or designed.**

Use the filtering effects of partial tree and shrub planting, rather than solid screens which may itself become intrusive, both in front of and behind buildings – integrate into the landscape, not block views.

## 4. Other issues

It is important to consider not only the building itself, but also the impact of associated features such as driveways, hard-standings, fencing and fuel tanks.

New access tracks can be very damaging to features such as trees and hedges therefore use existing tracks wherever possible

If development is proposed near existing trees, a tree survey (to BS 5837) should be required – very important where trees are key features in the landscape.

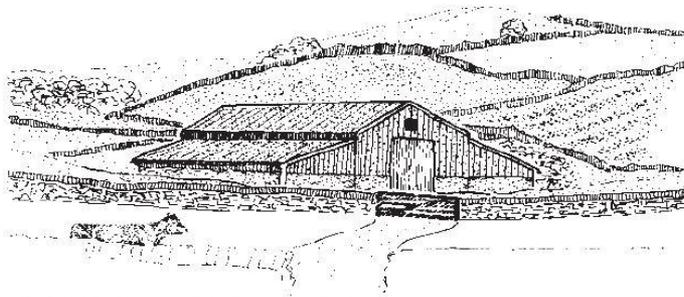
### **Areas of concern are:**

Sites on the skyline.

Sites where a building will dominate the landscape such as in the middle of a flat plateau.

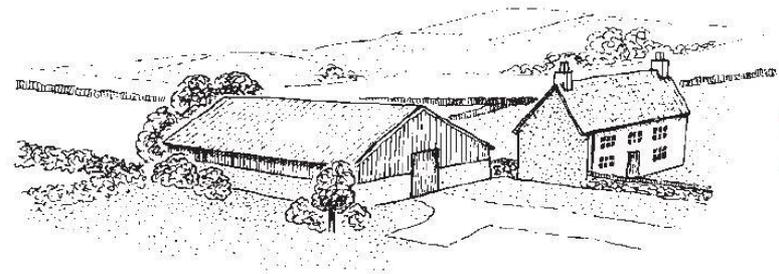
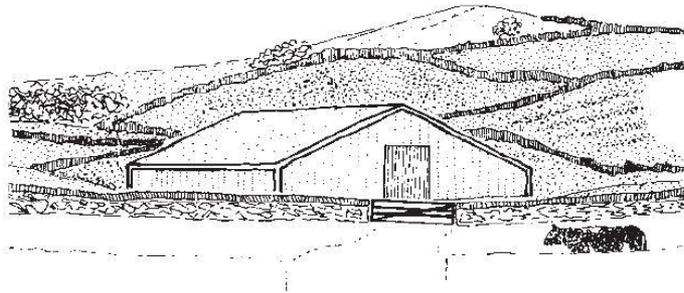
Buildings which would be unduly prominent or particularly visible from a public viewpoint.

Unnecessary removal of key landscape features: hedges, trees and stone boundary enclosure walls.



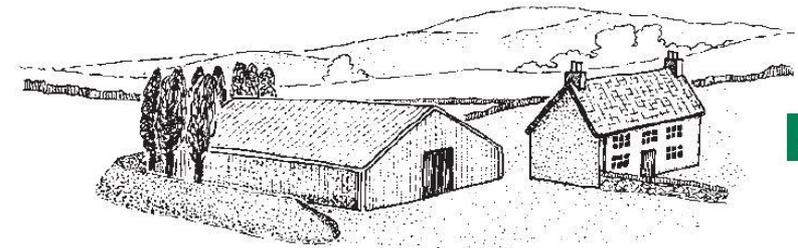
**Figure 2a (above) and Figure 2b (below)**

New farm buildings should be integrated into the surrounding countryside. Regard should be taken of the background when choosing colour of roofing material.



**Figure 4a (above) and Figure 4b (below)**

Sensitive landscaping and natural planting, rather than artificial bunds and non native trees is important.





**PEAK  
DISTRICT**  
NATIONAL  
PARK



