

Glossary

This glossary has been prepared specifically for this edition of the GLVIA and defines the meanings given to these terms as used in the context of this guidance.

Access land Land where the public have access either by legal right or by informal agreement.

Baseline studies Work done to determine and describe the environmental conditions against which any future changes can be measured or predicted and assessed.

Characterisation The process of identifying areas of similar landscape character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.

Characteristics Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character.

Compensation Measures devised to offset or compensate for residual adverse effects which cannot be prevented/avoided or further reduced.

Competent authority The authority which determines the application for consent, permission, licence or other authorisation to proceed with a proposal. It is the authority that must consider the environmental information before granting any kind of authorisation.

Consultation bodies Any body specified in the relevant EIA Regulations which the competent authority must consult in respect of an EIA, and which also has a duty to provide a scoping opinion and information.

Designated landscape Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.

Development Any proposal that results in a change to the landscape and/or visual environment.

Direct effect An effect that is directly attributable to the proposed development.

'Do nothing' situation Continued change or evolution in the landscape in the absence of the proposed development.

Ecosystem services The benefits provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (www.unep.org/maweb/en/index.aspx) grouped ecosystem services into four broad categories:

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1. supporting services, such as nutrient cycling, oxygen production and soil formation – these underpin the provision of the other ‘service’ categories;
2. provisioning services, such as food, fibre, fuel and water;
3. regulating services, such as climate regulation, water purification and flood protection;
4. cultural services, such as education, recreation, and aesthetic value.

Elements Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings.

Enhancement Proposals that seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) The process of gathering environmental information; describing a development; identifying and describing the likely significant environmental effects of the project; defining ways of preventing/avoiding, reducing, or offsetting or compensating for any adverse effects; consulting the general public and specific bodies with responsibilities for the environment; and presenting the results to the competent authority to inform the decision on whether the project should proceed.

Environmental Statement A statement that includes the information that is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development and which the applicant can, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment, reasonably be required to compile, but that includes at least the information referred to in the EIA Regulations.

Feature Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church towers or wooded skylines OR a particular aspect of the project proposal.

Geographical Information System (GIS) A system that captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data linked to location. It links spatial information to a digital database.

Green Infrastructure (GI) Networks of green spaces and watercourses and water bodies that connect rural areas, villages, towns and cities.

Heritage The historic environment and especially valued assets and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA) Historic characterisation is the identification and interpretation of the historic dimension of the present-day landscape or townscape within a given area. HLC is the term used in England and Wales, HLA is the term used in Scotland.

Indirect effects Effects that result indirectly from the proposed project as a consequence of the direct effects, often occurring away from the site, or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance or in time from the source of the effects.

Iterative design process The process by which project design is amended and improved by successive stages of refinement which respond to growing understanding of environmental issues.

Key characteristics Those combinations of elements which are particularly important

to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.

Land cover The surface cover of the land, usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it. Related to but not the same as land use.

Land use What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.

Landform The shape and form of the land surface which has resulted from combinations of geology, geomorphology, slope, elevation and physical processes.

Landscape An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

Landscape character A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.

Landscape Character Types (LCTs) These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.

Landscape classification A process of sorting the landscape into different types using selected criteria but without attaching relative values to different sorts of landscape.

Landscape effects Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.

Landscape quality (condition) A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.

Landscape receptors Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.

Landscape strategy The overall vision and objectives for what the landscape should be like in the future, and what is thought to be desirable for a particular landscape type or area as a whole, usually expressed in formally adopted plans and programmes or related documents.

Landscape value The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.

Magnitude (of effect) A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.

Parameters A limit or boundary which defines the scope of a particular process or activity.

Perception Combines the sensory (that we receive through our senses) with the cognitive (our knowledge and understanding gained from many sources and experiences).

Photomontage A visualisation which superimposes an image of a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs.

Receptors See Landscape receptors and Visual receptors.

Scoping The process of identifying the issues to be addressed by an EIA. It is a method of ensuring that an EIA focuses on the important issues and avoids those that are considered to be less significant.

Seascape Landscapes with views of the coast or seas, and coasts and adjacent marine environments with cultural, historical and archaeological links with each other.

Sensitivity A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.

Significance A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.

Stakeholders The whole constituency of individuals and groups who have an interest in a subject or place.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) The process of considering the environmental effects of certain public plans, programmes or strategies at a strategic level.

Susceptibility The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.

Time depth Historical layering – the idea of landscape as a ‘palimpsest’, a much written-over manuscript.

Townscape The character and composition of the built environment including the buildings and the relationships between them, the different types of urban open space, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open spaces.

Tranquillity A state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape.

Visual amenity The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.

Visual effects Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

Visual receptors Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal.

Visualisation A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV; sometimes Zone of Visual Influence) A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. (Paragraph 1.16) Scottish Executive Development Department (1999), for example, notes in the glossary definitions of 'impacts' and 'effects' that 'In this PAN, except where the context indicates otherwise, the words impact and effect have been used interchangeably.'

Chapter 3

1. (Paragraph 3.45) See for example Swanwick, Bingham and Parfitt (2003) and references therein; also Planning Aid (2010).

Chapter 4

1. (Paragraph 4.2) In England this is summarised in an approach that has become known as the 'Rochdale Envelope'. See Planning Inspectorate (2012).
2. (Paragraph 4.41) For further detail see IEMA (2011b), Box 6.5B.

Chapter 5

1. (Paragraph 5.4) See Swanwick and Land Use Consultants (2002). In Wales, landscape information is available in the LANDMAP system, developed by the Countryside Council for Wales, which systematically records and evaluates the landscape in five layers or aspects in a GIS, which in turn can be combined to produce Landscape Character Assessments. This can be found online at <http://www.ccw.gov.uk/landmap>. Natural England have published *An Approach to Seascape Character Assessment (NECR105)* which is available online at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/2729852>
2. (Paragraph 5.21) At the time of writing, no National Parks have been designated in Northern Ireland, although legislation has been introduced enabling their establishment in the future.

Chapter 6

1. (Paragraph 6.5) See for example GLA (2010).
2. (Paragraph 6.23) See for example the technical appendices in horner + maclellan and Envision (2006).

Chapter 7

1. (Paragraph 7.6) See for example the discussion on cumulative effects assessment in IEMA (2011b), Section 6.
2. (Paragraph 7.11) See European Commission (2012).
3. (Paragraph 7.12) Further guidance on defining the geographic and temporal scope of cumulative impact assessments can be found in Hyder (1999).

Chapter 8

1. (Paragraph 8.15) Refer to the Met Office website for visibility definitions: <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/guide/key.html>

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