

CHAPTER 17. DISCUSSION

Meaning, Significance, Lessons and Directions

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Characterising the Lake District Landscape

The European Landscape Convention states that landscape as a term “means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. The Lake District is clearly an area that under this definition can be identified geographically as distinctive. The Cumbrian HLC demonstrates that whilst landscape types are shared with areas outside of the Lake District, the combination of types is distinctive to the Lake District. In addition, its historic character areas identified from the combination of historic landscape types are largely contained within the Lake District. This distinctiveness has been recognised and the values attributed to it are generally accepted and articulated through its designation as a National Park. In addition there are current efforts focused on gaining World Heritage Site inscription for the Park, in which aspects of its landscape are attributed with ‘outstanding universal values’.¹

The values popularly attributed to the Lake District landscape relate largely, but not exclusively, to physically identifiable characteristics, both natural and man-made. Its underlying geomorphology, formed by a combination of tectonics, ice and water, is overlain by features formed from a combination of cultural and natural influences. It is this unique combination that has resulted in a particular value – of potential international significance – being given to the landscape. The European Landscape Convention’s definition of landscape,

“reflects the idea that landscapes evolve through time, as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings. It also underlines that a landscape forms a whole, whose natural and cultural components are taken together, not separately”.

Under the Convention landscape protection is defined as actions taken “to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity”. The Lake District is one of the United Kingdom’s most protected landscapes through its designation as a National Park. It is, nevertheless, an evolving landscape and the purpose of HLC is both to identify and define its historical characteristics and significance and to measure and assist in modelling the processes of change. HLC depicts the broader man-made aspects of the landscape – what is generally referred to as the cultural landscape.

The Cumbrian HLC clearly reveals that the Lake District’s landscape has evolved with considerable and rapid alteration from the mid eighteenth century through to designation as a National Park in 1953. It has always experienced change and will continue to do so. Even if it was desirable to preserve the Park in aspic, as some of its critics claim is the aim of conservationists, it would not be possible. Forces beyond the control of any authority will ensure that change will be continuous, though almost certainly chronologically and geographically uneven. Economic, social and climatic forces will ensure that the landscape of the Lake District will continue to alter in response to unplanned and unpredictable or at least unforeseen developments.

¹ Blandford 2006

Whilst designation highlights landscape conservation as a desirable goal within the Lake District, change cannot be stopped it can only be managed. Within the European Landscape Convention landscape management is defined as taking action, “*from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes*”.² One of the primary purposes of HLC is to provide a baseline against which to develop informed landscape management responses.³

As well as providing a review of a dynamic landscape, over the course of the past 250 years, an HLC undertaken in the early twenty-first century inevitably provides a contemporary point in time statement. The characteristics ascribed to areas in 2006-7 will not equate fully with those that may be noted in 2100. Indeed the historic character areas themselves as a consequence will be subject to redefinition. As a baseline, however, an HLC provides a starting point against which to measure and assess the impact and pace of change and thus to evaluate the relative success of landscape management responses.

HLC and Landscape Character Assessment

Clearly the principal purpose of HLC is to assist in landscape management decision making. As such it is important to assess its compatibility and outcomes with other landscape character assessments, as was done when defining the Lake District's historic landscape character areas.⁴ One of the reasons for developing HLC was to provide an historical dimension to landscape character assessment (LCA). This was developed by the Countryside

Commission⁵ and was created to help inform landscape change. In parallel with the development of an historic environment response to LCA, natural environment specialists developed the use of biogeographic zones known as Natural Areas. Though using different criteria these were developed through a similar approach to LCA and HLC and as with HLC sought to address the deficiencies of a pre-existing largely site-specific approach.⁶ The adoption of similar approaches to mapping biodiversity, land cover and the historic environment provides the possibility for combining datasets and comparing them.

The historic dimension to the process of landscape change is often overlooked and management decisions are usually based on aesthetic or natural environment principles rather than an understanding of the historical development of the landscape. This is in part because the existing dataset on the historic environment is site- rather than landscape-based, and therefore incompatible with LCA. HLC is able to provide an historic dimension which if applied appropriately can improve the LCA process. Wherever appropriate, the case studies made use of LCA in order to link the two disciplines together.

A Lake District LCA is currently being produced for the LDNPA and its partners, in which use of the HLC should enable a better reflection of historic character. The summary paragraphs of ‘Management Issues and Forces for Change’ within each historic landscape type, for example, could be added to the relevant LCA’s Landscape Guidelines. Enhancing LCAs through HLC allows the impact of landscape change on historic character to be modelled and quantified. HLC can also be used to enhance or upgrade the limited historic environment data which is included within the Natural England’s JCAs. Such an approach would allow more

² Council of Europe, European Landscape Convention

³ Clark *et al* 2004, 20

⁴ See Chapter 12

⁵ later the Countryside Agency and now part of Natural England

⁶ Cooke 1999, 125-9

sensitive targeting of responses to the historic environment within stewardship schemes.

Perceptions, limitations and enhancements of the HLC approach

The most frequent criticisms of the HLC approach are that it lacks academic rigour and depth and is mechanistic.⁷ At a sub-regional level, however, HLC is intended to be a relatively rapid overview, providing robust but broad-brush conclusions. Its seeming lack of academic rigour in relation to historical analyses is an inevitable consequence of such an approach. Its supposed mechanistic nature is related to the attempts to ensure that the analyses are clear in process and scientifically repeatable. This defence of HLC is itself open to critique, however, as so much of the data is subjective rather than objective, and as with other social sciences its appropriateness for scientific treatment can be questioned.⁸ Linked to the criticism that HLC lacks in-depth historical analysis, are criticisms that it is too simplistic and lacking in detail and differentiation when the county data is applied at an estate or parish level. This criticism, though frequent, is both misguided and misunderstands the intentions behind sub-regionally based HLCs. As with LCA, HLC needs to be applied at different scales in order to be useful. The sub-regionally based scale is intended to provide assistance to land-management decision making at a strategic level. It is not appropriate as anything other than an initial guide for estate-based land management.

Where sub-regional HLCs are used at an individual landholding, estate or parish level, it immediately becomes clear that the data is smoothed and thus becomes inaccurate. Local detail is lost, and sometimes this can be highly significant for local character. The case studies carried out as part of this project

have highlighted that further more detailed research is required before using HLC as the basis of management regimes for smaller-scale landscapes. Even so, HLC can be the trigger to further research and a more beneficial land management regime.

Even at a sub-regional, strategic level, the provision of raw data to landscape managers and local planning authorities is problematic. The GIS data are difficult to query and the nature of the data are often not appreciated as being subjective. To use the raw data requires an understanding of the reasoning behind the definition of landscape types before meaningful queries can be made. To address this, simplified, easy to use, web-based HLCs could be provided, which are adapted to the particular requirements of land managers and planners. This has the benefit of providing an easily accessed, publicly available resource.

There are some limitations within the Lake District National Park HLC which can be addressed at a sub-regional scale. Although field and boundary shape are recorded in the HLC, there is no data on boundary composition, a significant contributor to local landscape character and vulnerable to rapid change. Without further research, it is not possible to define boundaries as fences, stone walls or hedgerows. Neither is the nature of their condition recorded. At present, the HLC does provide information on the extent of boundary removal since the 1860s when the 1st edition OS maps were published, but it does not provide detail of change in boundary type. The inclusion of boundary composition data need not be onerous. A rapid examination of digital air photography, and possibly Landsat data, would provide a simple classification of today's boundaries into hedgerows, walls or fences. Comparison with 1st edition OS 25 inches to one mile scale mapping should allow change in composition between then and now to be calculated. Mapped at a sub-regional level, and compared to other datasets such as agricultural land

⁷ Rippon 2004

⁸ Gaddis 2002, 60-2, 91-2



Plate 122: Dry-stone walls and planned enclosures with improved pastures at Crook (© Egerton Lea Consultancy Ltd)

classification and elevation, this data would contribute to both the understanding and recognition of the nature of local landscape character. At a more local scale, this can be further enhanced by field observation using standard techniques of hedgerow analysis and wall recording.⁹

There are some issues regarding the identification and definition of woodland types. Using the definition of ancient woodland adopted by the national nature conservation bodies can be confusing. It is clear from the case studies that some modern plantation woodlands are replacements for woodland areas of ancient origin, whilst some designated ancient woodlands are areas of regenerated or replanted eighteenth century plantations.

Again with woodland, there is an issue of scale. Smaller, but nevertheless, visually, historically and botanically significant woodlands such as gill or clough woods, are sometimes excluded from the mapping process. These woodlands, or former areas of such woodland, are especially important as areas of future change. They are the

focus of rewilding and reversion initiatives in areas where upland farming is in retreat. As part of any longer term enhancement of the data, particular care should be taken to ensure that woodland gills, both present day and historic, should be included, so that they can be readily identified for pro-active management.

There is one further challenge with sub-regional HLCs which is particularly relevant to the Lake District National Park. At a sub-regional level, HLC should be used to ensure that landscape policies reflect the need to respect local distinctiveness, and historic patterns and attributes of the landscape. The key difficulty inherent in the HLC approach, however, is that in seeking to map the attributes of the landscape it not only greatly simplifies, out of necessity, but it also quantifies the landscape as groups of physical features. Yet, it is generally acknowledged that the cultural landscape is a perception not a concrete reality and it is mutable through time, across cultures and between individuals and interest groups who may lay claim to all or part of a landscape.

"If we want to discover the meaning of landscapes for people it is best to think of them not as collections of material objects, but as social and

⁹ Barnes and Williamson 2006; Hooper 1970; National Trust 1992

cultural constructions of the people who use them".¹⁰

This view of landscape is especially relevant to the Lake District, for which there are many often competing perceptions of the nature of its landscape dependent on the social standpoint of the perceiver. It is a landscape which has many cultural associations with important artistic and literary figures. The current initiative to gain World Heritage Site inscription for the Lake District is based on those cultural associations of the landscape. These are not particularly well articulated through the HLC approach, and future enhancements should engage with these intangible aspects of the landscape. This is especially necessary if value judgements are placed upon the landscape. Whilst historical researchers and the HLC approach in general tend to reject the attribution of significance to areas of landscape, value judgements of various types will, of necessity, be applied to them by policy makers.¹¹ Visitors, inhabitants and those working in the landscape will also apply value judgements based on varying criteria.

HLC and the Lake District National Park

Within the Lake District National Park, landscape policies have always been stronger than elsewhere in Cumbria, reflecting the perceived special qualities of the Lake District's landscape. These policies do seek to protect the character of the landscape, but the availability of HLC should allow that character to be better defined. Where development proposals are permitted, HLC data can be used to help prescribe mitigation which will strengthen the character of the landscape and offset changes brought about through development.

Currently, there are significant pressures upon the agricultural landscape of the Lake District. The removal of

maintenance of river channels by the Environment Agency, for example, might lead to a degradation in the quality of valley bottom pasture. This, in turn, may reduce the viability of valley bottom farmland. If farming ceases to be viable in these areas, then the grazing of the associated fells will also cease. Climate change will also have a significant impact on farming in the Lake District during the next century. HLC enables possible scenarios to be modelled, providing the potential to manage and mitigate the landscape implications of agricultural change.

Within the Lake District National Park the retention and enhancement of much of the existing character will be important to sustain those merits that make the landscape worthy of designation as a national park and potentially as a World Heritage Site. The Cumbria HLC has revealed the historical character of the Lake District National Park to be distinct from most of the remainder of the county. Whilst landscape types are shared with other upland areas, such as the Pennines, the distinctive combination of types as exhibited through character areas, is unique to the Lake District. Value judgements have been placed on this distinctive landscape through designation. This can be considered a crude form of value judgement, however, being an absolute attribution, rather than a relative assessment of mutable qualities. Designation as a national park, like designation of a scheduled monument, ring-fences an area and artificially compartmentalises the landscape. The historic landscape has no such boundaries, and in order to apply value judgements it is best to evaluate it against a set of attributes or qualities.¹²

Landscape and value judgements

Throughout the Cumbria HLC landscape qualities were evaluated, in order to help to identify specific landscape character. These were based on earlier attempts to

¹⁰ Evans *et al* 2001, 53

¹¹ Newman 1998

¹² Fairclough 1999b, 10-14

approach historic landscape via attributes, such as historical process, time-depth, complexity and diversity.¹³ For the purposes of this HLC, five qualities, were defined, all of which can be used independently or in combination to make value judgements about historic landscapes. The five qualities chosen were readability, complexity, typicality, process and sensitivity. This is not a definitive list, other qualities could have been defined and may be more useful for other purposes.

Readability

The landscape can be read and its readability can be defined as the ease with which its palimpsest of development can be understood and appreciated. An example of a readable landscape is an area characterised by linear nucleated settlements and long strip like fields with reversed-S shaped boundaries. Such a landscape is the result of post medieval processes including the building of durable multi-roomed houses, and specialist agricultural buildings and the enclosure of open field strips with permanent hedges and walls. These processes effectively fossilise a medieval landscape layout of commonfield strips and planned settlements. This type of landscape occurs in the North-Eastern Lowlands and North-Western Lowlands character areas. The North-Eastern Lowlands is especially high in levels of readability, in contrast the Lakeland valleys can be surprisingly difficult to read. This was shown in the Great Langdale case study, where the development of the enclosed landscape was difficult to decipher.

HLC is based on reading the landscape but as it is largely reliant on maps so it is limited by the constraints of cartography in representing landscape. Whilst the use of aerial photography mitigates this issue, a landscape can only be read properly on the ground, in the field.

Complexity

Complexity can relate to time-depth or the multiplicity of historically contemporary interacting processes that can be read within a landscape. A complex landscape is likely to be archaeologically rich and vulnerable to large-scale developmental change. Some of the Lake District's valleys have a high degree of complexity, with their settlement and field patterns exhibiting millennia of development. Additionally, a variety of environmental, economic and social forces reacted with and against each other to effect the evolution of such landscapes.

HLC can define the existence of complex landscapes but at a sub-regional level it is limited in its ability to interpret them. HLC does not identify relict archaeological landscapes, because it is based on relatively modern mapping. GIS, however, allows HLC to be enhanced through the addition of historic environment record data and field survey data of relict landscapes. This enhancement allows the complexity of the landscape to be better appreciated, as issues of development through time can be articulated.

Typicality

Whilst there is much to be prized in a rare survival, rarity needs to be qualified. A landscape that is locally unusual and historically exceptional may be considered important because it is extraordinary, but it lacks significance for the wider interpretation of a locality. A landscape that is a rare survival of a once much more common landscape form has more significance for understanding the wider landscape of a locality. Landscapes that are rare survivals of the once typical, or are excellent examples of the still common, have much value as contributors to the understanding and appreciation of landscape development at a sub-regional scale. The most typical landscape type over the 300m contour is unenclosed land, which characterises the fells. Outside this area, the most common landscape type in the Lake

¹³ Fairclough 1999b, 14

District National Park is planned enclosure, which is indicative of the impact which nineteenth century planned enclosure had. Around some of the park's edges and within its valleys, discrete ancient farms predominate. Changes to any of these character types within their areas of dominance would have a marked effect on the overall landscape character of the Lake District National Park.

HLC is especially useful for defining typicality with regard to contemporary frequency. It can also depict change in typicality through time, dependent on the amount of time-depth built in to the HLC.

Process

Some landscapes are especially redolent of the processes that formed them, this is particularly true of some of the Lake District's mining landscapes. In such landscapes it is important to ensure that the individual components and their interrelationships are retained. The loss of components reduces the ease with which the processes can be understood. Such landscapes are often more easily interpreted in the field than others.

HLC is very useful for identifying landscapes that epitomise particular types of landscape formation processes, though not necessarily at the sub-regional level. Whilst processes such as the eighteenth and nineteenth century enclosure movement are well represented, industrial impacts are under-represented both because of the sub-regional scale, and the lack of detail on modern mapping. To an extent this can be addressed by the use of aerial photography. The lack of relative time-depth can also reduce the reliability of HLC in depiction of historic processes.

Sensitivity

By making value judgements based on readability, complexity, typicality and process it is possible to define the general vulnerability to change of a receptor. This could be an area of landscape, a character area, a landscape type, or even a landscape attribute. The sensitivity to change, however, is dependent on the nature of the force for change. The degree of sensitivity alters in response to the type of change; put simply sensitivity to change is different when considering the impact of windfarms to the impact of



Plate 123: Lowther Park in the early nineteenth century. Even though Lowther Castle is now ruined, the origins and evolution of the surrounding parkland landscape is still obvious

quarrying, or the removal of field boundaries.

HLC can be used as the basis for sensitivity mapping, through modelling the impacts of change and defining the vulnerability to change of various landscape aspects. Predictive modelling can show the likely impacts of allowing lower fell slopes to revert to moorland, for example. It can also highlight long term changes which may be wrought through rewilding programmes. What HLC cannot show are cultural changes, such as the ongoing process of farm amalgamation which lead to an increase in the size of holdings and the conversion of farmhouses and buildings to non-farming occupation.

Benefits of HLC

As has been stated above, the primary purpose of HLC is as a land management tool, and as such it forms an enhancement to standard LCAs. It also has a number of other uses and applications, however.

Improving understanding

If HLC is approached properly with both an understanding of its limitations and its fitness for purpose with regard to scale, it can be a useful research tool. It has been noted, for example, that HLCs in north-west England have acted as a stimulus for the archaeological analysis of the post-medieval rural landscape.¹⁴ Overall, as a research tool HLC is more useful for the questions it helps to pose and frame rather than for any answers it might provide. It is a trigger for focusing further research and as a starting point to more detailed examination.

HLC's sub-regional focus provides a clear and simple picture of countryside character and aspects of change throughout Cumbria. This both enables questions to be posed concerning the reasons for noted patterns, but also provides a tool for the initial testing of theories. For example the noted pattern of fossilised strip fields in Cumbria has a

relationship with settlement pattern and topography. HLC provides a very clear picture of the more intensively exploited areas of the flatter lower lying townships of Cumbria, including the northern fringes of the Lake District National Park.¹⁵ They are dominated historically by nucleated settlement patterns and open fields divided into strips. Today this pattern appears to be focused on the Eden valley but HLC clearly shows it to have been more widespread and to be partially obscured in west Cumbria by later industrial developments and moor and wetland enclosure. HLC also clearly reveals the boundary zones between these type of agrarian and settlement landscapes and the more dispersed settlement landscapes and less open agricultural fieldscapes of much of the Lake District.

Contextualising sites

Within the Cumbrian HLC detailed analysis of the Historic Environment Record to assess the distribution of site types against landscape types was not undertaken. Nevertheless, some general observations regarding site distribution can be made.

The unenclosed uplands are well known as locations of prehistoric monuments, including both burial and field clearance cairns.¹⁶ The relict field systems to which the field clearance cairns relate indicate that enclosures, and possibly cultivation, extended to higher levels in the Bronze Age, than in later periods. The later use of these areas as open common grazing has ensured the survival of earlier monuments. Within the area of planned enclosures, generally at a slightly lower elevation, cairns also survive but they are accompanied by a variety of settlement remains of prehistoric to medieval date. To an extent, survival is again related largely to later pastoral use, but often sites are more denuded and less

¹⁵ This includes the North-Western Lowlands, Caldbeck, Uldale and Ireby Lowlands, and North Eastern Lowlands character areas

¹⁶ Quartermaine 1989

obvious. The Matterdale Archaeological Research Project, however, has demonstrated that there is considerable survival in the planned enclosure areas.¹⁷ The interface between anciently enclosed land and the open moorland and fell is an area of particular potential and for the mapping of the ebb and flow of settlement and field systems.¹⁸ HLC provides an opportunity for more research into the distribution of, and possible correlation between, monument classes and landscape types.

One other landscape type has been shown to have particular categories of archaeological sites associated with it. Surveys of anciently enclosed woodlands, as at Haverthwaite in the south of the Lake District and at Troutbeck, have revealed considerable survival of monuments associated with woodland industries.¹⁹ These include charcoal pitsteads, woodland workers' huts and potash kilns.

Integrating natural and historic environments

For the most part, a management regime designed to conserve a wildlife habitat will normally also benefit the historic environment and vice versa.²⁰ Hedgerows and dry stone walls, for example, provide a wildlife habitat and are key features of ancient and planned field systems. Boundary loss in Cumbria has been immense. By the 1970s the county had lost 25% of the hedgerows that existed in the 1950s.²¹ Whilst the Lake District's designation as a national park has undoubtedly substantially reduced boundary loss, future nature and historic environment conservation will require continued retention and enhancement of boundaries.

Gill woodlands make a significant contribution to landscape character in some parts of the fells, and they also provide an important wildlife habitat. HLC can identify where gill woodlands



Plate 124: Stone cairn on Bleaberry Haws within an area of unenclosed land (© Egerton Lea Consultancy Ltd)

¹⁷ Hoaen and Loney 2003

¹⁸ Hodgson 2007

¹⁹ Bowden 2000, 29-32; Parsons 1997

²⁰ See Thomas and Wells 1999

²¹ Cumbria County Council 1998, 13

have been lost since the 1860s and their restoration will provide both an enhancement to traditional landscape character and biodiversity. HLC can help to inform the location, shape and extent of woodland planting under Woodland Grant Schemes and environmental stewardship. Larger areas of planting, especially, need to be assessed against landscape type. The planting pattern in areas of former parkland may need to be distinctive if that landscape type is to be retained. Large areas of planting need not always be seen as a modern intrusion, but can be part of a long process of change, as seen at Derwentwater. Elsewhere, the issues of rewilding and reversion of agricultural land are of concern to archaeologists and landscape historians, but are for the most part welcome by nature conservationists.²² HLC should be able to provide sufficient information to highlight the potential landscape impacts of such changes.

Other potential conflicts may involve other landscape types. The desire of nature conservationists to see a dynamic dune system, may conflict with the archaeologists' desire to have dune stability in order to protect the remains below. The need to retain the historic character of parkland may conflict with the need to reduce grazing levels and encourage herb rich pastures by ecologists. For the most part these conflicts are easily resolved and HLC can be crucial in offering guidance on potential solutions.

The agri-environment

One of the main opportunities for managing landscapes holistically is through agri-environment schemes. The provision of HLC data to farmers and land managers can assist in their appreciation of the role of the historic environment, as the context for other conservation considerations. Such landscape-wide data has the additional benefits of being more compatible with natural environment datasets such as

information on habitats. This promotes the integration of historic and natural environmental data in ways that allows the development of mutually beneficial management regimes.

Before the advent of HLC, information supplied to land managers was solely based on site-specific data from the Historic Environment Record. Now recommendations need not be confined to particular monuments, but can relate to different landscape types within a landholding, covering field pattern, boundaries, woodlands and monuments. Whilst HLC as a concept is useful for supplying non-site-specific data, the scale of the mapping for a sub-regional HLC is only of limited use at the level of an individual landholding. To compensate for this limitation and to avoid the need for bespoke landholding HLCs when considering Higher Level Stewardship schemes for example, generic management recommendations have been highlighted within this report for specific landscape types. These can be used to inform historic environment responses to Farm Environment Plans and as the basis for any assessment of a landholding's historic environment.

Enhancing awareness of local distinctiveness, identity and significance

For the most part, HLC in England and Scotland does not attribute relative importance between areas of landscape.²³ It does, however, allow the identification of local distinctiveness. The use of character areas is particularly relevant in this respect. Local distinctiveness is of value in itself as it defines those elements of a landscape which make it important to those who live in, or visit, that landscape.²⁴ It is crucial to a sense of place or identity. In assisting the recognition of local distinctiveness, HLC begins to move away from a mere quantification of physical attributes, to embrace concepts

²³ Fairclough 1999a, 5; Rippon 2004, 74-5

²⁴ See Allen 1999, 164

of cultural meaning invested in a landscape.

Along with scenic beauty, cultural meaning is one of the main factors in defining a place as 'special'. At a sub-regional level, the special nature of the Lake District is recognised through its designation as a National Park. HLC can assist in identifying the extent of these special qualities. In this way it is being used to help assess the appropriateness of extending designated landscape areas in Cumbria, including possible extensions to the Lake District National Park.²⁵

Future directions

A number of enhancements have been proposed, above, for the HLC, such as its use as a basis for sensitivity mapping. The Cumbria HLC is a sub-regional tool but has the potential to be enhanced at more detailed scales.²⁶ Attempts have already been made to apply HLC approaches at a more local level in the Lake District as in the Naddle Valley.²⁷ There, historic landscape zones were defined as indicators of their palaeo-environmental farming potential, and were based on a combination of archaeological and biological evidence.

HLC data in its raw form is not user-friendly, but if appropriately processed access to the data can be improved so that it can be more easily used in interpretation and education projects. One of the most important messages that HLC can communicate to the general public is that the whole landscape is historic and that it is constantly changing. Because every house and every modern settlement will be set within an historic context, it ensures that the HLC data will be of interest to every resident of the Lake District. In the short term the dissemination of HLC results can be achieved through presentations and

publications using aspects of the HLC data.

If the HLC data is to be dynamic in order to assist in change management, then it needs enhancement through feedback from inhabitants and visitors alike and not just from landscape or heritage professionals. The Dower Report which proposed the creation of National Parks in 1945 said "*they should be for people...of every class and kind. National Parks are not for any privileged or otherwise restricted section of population...*". Throughout this HLC report, recommendations have been made for local community involvement in contributing towards the conservation of landscape types or the creation of additional information to enhance the HLC record. Modern perceptions of the landscape and the meanings attributed to it are an important consideration when defining land management strategies.

The development of cultural meaning within the Lake District HLC would be an important enhancement, and would increase its research potential. HLC in general is perceived as having considerable research potential. Some plotting of data from the Historic Environment Record against landscape types has taken place, however it is possible to take this further. Nationally, HLC has been seen as significant for providing overviews of predominantly post medieval derived landscapes.²⁸ It can be compared with other archaeological-mapped datasets, such as Roberts and Wrathmell's mapped settlement types.²⁹ It can be used for examining perceptions of regionality through time by comparing it with earlier classifications of areas sharing distinctive characteristics, such as was attempted in the late eighteenth century Board of Agriculture reports.³⁰ Regionally, HLC is seen as providing a potential context for defining sub-regional distinctiveness, for exploring the origins and development of settlements

²⁵ Alison Farmer Associates 2005, 18

²⁶ Rippon 2004, 77

²⁷ Clare 1999

²⁸ Newman 2005, 210

²⁹ Roberts and Wrathmell 2000; 2002

³⁰ Newman 2005, 210

and field systems, and for providing a baseline against which post medieval processes, such as industrialisation and the expansion of agriculture, can be examined.³¹

The greatest potential for HLC at a sub-regional level, however, probably lies in

combining mapped physical data with mapped intangibles, such as perceptions and cultural associations. Regionally, its greatest potential lies in providing a regional overview of landscape types, enabling definitions of inter-regional distinctiveness and intra-regional diversity.

³¹ Brennand 2007