



Scottish Branch of the UK Chartered Institute for Landscape Architects

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SHEP on Battlefields
Historic Scotland
Room 2.9
Longmore House
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Edinburgh
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Response to consultation on Historic Battlefields

The **Landscape Institute (Scotland)** is part of the **Chartered Institute** in the UK for Landscape Architects, incorporating designers, managers and scientists, concerned with enhancing and conserving the environment. **The Landscape Institute** promotes the highest standards in the practice of landscape planning, design, management and research, representing members in private practice, at all levels of government and government agencies and in academic institutions and commercial organisations. With this remit, we are committed to assisting the Scottish Government along with other stakeholders in securing “the sustainable use and management of the historic environment”. The LIS lends overall support to the intention of this consultation and appreciates the requirement of “meeting the needs of today without compromising the opportunity for future generations to understand, appreciate and benefit from the historic environment”.

The Landscape Institute (Scotland), through its members, has an important contribution to make towards this battlefield consultation and future delivery and we welcome the opportunity to respond to the consultation. The LIS would hope that it will be included in the process of drawing up any subsequent documents related to historic battlefield policies.

Please Note: Please ignore our previous consultation response which was sent out in error and is dated 10 July. This should be considered as superseded by this consultation dated 11 July 2008.

Question 1 – Yes, a policy for the protection and sustainable management of historic battlefields is necessary. The emphasis on sustainability should be proportional however to the value and importance of the battlefield and the desirability to preserve it. Some battlefields



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contain surviving upstanding features (ruined castles for example and ramparts), they may have important memorial and remembrance purpose and mark the 'site' that changed the course of history in a dramatic way. Others however may relate to minor 'skirmishes', have no upstanding features, or particular historical importance and whilst they should always be respect for the dead, the battles are not in living memory and may have passed into local folk lore so that the exact site and sequence of events is unknown. All existing battlefields will have been compromised to some greater or lesser extent by subsequent history / land-use (some of which may be more important than the battlefield) and will range from open agricultural fields with no markers of reference to the battles to sites compromised by tourist interest, to sites that have been overwhelmed by modern development to the point that they no longer exist at the surface. A grading system similar to the Historic Gardens and Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes is recommended.

In considering the preservation and management of a battlefield site, wider expertise (landscape and ecological for example) needs to be taken into account to ensure the correct level of priority is given to a site and its management. A battlefield site may be important, but its current value and importance to wildlife, landscape, or a greater economic and social wellbeing of the local community may be an over-riding factor.

The grading could account for things such as:

- Historical importance and relevance
- Community importance and context in terms of local folk lore (is the site known and valued by the local community? Does the site have memorial importance or relate to events within living memory?)
- Relationship to other historical features and the historic landscape character (is this site part of a layer of history where there are many competing or complementary historical / archaeological records, listed buildings and so on).
- Landscape importance – does the battlefield have a strong influence on the landscape character today – are there upstanding features or physical landscape features that can be seen and appreciated by people (or is the site a crop mark?)
- Condition of site and state of preservation.
- Number of 'finds'.
- Is the site already a tourist destination and is this treatment appropriate?
- There may be other considerations

Other related / supporting comments as follows:

Assuming a battlefield site has been identified as valuable and desirable to preserve, the area of direct physical importance needs to be defined. Where relevant, some battlefields may have a context of wider landscape / visual setting with visible landscape features such as nearby hills, marsh, or woodland, beyond the battlefield having an important connection to the events, this also should be defined and their reasons for its relevance or importance noted. Some sites, perhaps in remote areas will have a wider, more general landscape setting that has no relevance to the battlefield, but relates to the wider landscape character (landscape character area) and includes perceptual characteristics which would strongly influence the perceptions of people visiting the battlefield sites and their appreciation and interpretation of them today. For example some sites may be set within a lonely, bleak, tranquil, quite, or peaceful landscape character area, evoking perceptions in the visitor that may have nothing to do with the original landscape or atmosphere of the battlefield and the historical events themselves. Conversely other sites may be set within landscapes that might feel inappropriate (busy, developed, noisy, chaotic, but perhaps have more in common with the atmosphere and interpretation of the

original battle). Whilst the present day landscape setting may be complementary to the battlefield site, care should be taken to safeguard against ‘pastiche’ or ‘emotive’ and non-factual interpretations of the past. The purpose of identifying, defining, evaluating and managing battlefields (conserving, enhancing and / or recording and / or allowing modern needs to prevail over the indefinite preservation of a site) should have nothing to do with the creation of ‘picnic opportunities’ of landscape designation (preserving areas of higher landscape quality or value) and has to focus on the desirability to preserve and sustainably manage these historical sites.

This is not to say that battlefields will not occur within wider areas of different landscape character and areas that may also be designated for their landscape value quality or for other reasons such as nature conservation. In considering the preservation and management of a battlefield site, wider expertise (landscape and ecological for example) needs to be taken into account to ensure the correct level of priority is given to a site and its management. A battlefield site may be important, but its current value and importance to wildlife, landscape, or a greater economic and social wellbeing of the local community may be an over-riding factor.

It is considered that an Inventory of Historic Battlefield Sites should be produced, perhaps similar to the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

It is strongly suggested that landscape architects should be involved in the scoping and collation of the Inventory. This is especially important because place/landscape often has played a significant role in the battle itself and that the setting is vital to the understanding of the battle. Landscape skills are needed to interpret this and advise on related issues such as historic landscape characterisation, landscape setting and value, and appropriate landscape management.

Importantly the reasons for the designation, the importance, and value of the site, and the site management objectives should all be set out clearly in the inventory so that current and future land-use management and development can be assessed in terms of its potential impact of the battlefield and appropriate and informed planning decisions made. As well as a historical resource, the wealth of battlefields within Scotland should also offer related economic and community value, and their appropriate management could contribute to improved landscape quality, nature conservation value, cultural, tourist and visitor interest, and in some cases allow for the creation of new tourist destinations or museums providing this is considered appropriate.

Question 2 - Yes the scope is fair, although the definition “Land over which a battle was fought” may need to be expanded upon in some circumstances to include the areas of ground where camps were set up before the battle and where post battle actions took place. The number of combatants may prove a sticking point for some locally significant skirmishes. As explained above the battlefield may also have a relevant landscape setting and there may be other related issues. Of course the battles were fought for a range of complex and political reasons, and not merely the actual land, the agricultural value of which would have been severely damaged in the fight. A more useful definition might be as follows:

- Physical Area of Battlefield – this would be the area where, as far as the archaeologists and historians can be certain, the battle was fought. It may include related memorials, monuments, ramparts, pre-battle camps, and other related features where reasonable. This should be defined by a coloured solid line boundary or similar on a suitable scale plan.

- Related Physical Areas – this may include related skirmishes and marching routes, and we note that advice that some battles spanned across a wide area of landscape which cover several kilometres. (Incidentally battles along the Scottish / English Border as opposed to ‘cattle raids’ are of national importance, but on perhaps a collective basis and might justify group site identification at a lower level of protection individually?)
- Landscape Setting or Context of Battlefield – this might include a line of sight to strategic points within the wider landscape that were relevant to the battle or ‘the general’s vantage point’ on a nearby hill. These should be defined by a coloured dotted line or similar on a plan. Wider ‘emotive’ interpretations of landscape setting (unless that can be proved as historically relevant) or areas that cannot be defined should be avoided.
- As stated above, each defined battlefield should be clearly marked on a map, its physical area and where relevant its setting should be mapped and the plan should be accompanied with a citation within an inventory similar to the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

Will there be provision for Local Authorities to utilise these definitions and identified areas in the development plan process?

Question 3 – no further response – we have already commented on the wider landscape and visual value of battlefields and how we would advise this be treated.

Question 4 – Yes. A national strategy and standard for identifying and recording these sites is required. It is suggested that a Statutory Inventory might have more weight, but are there any negative implications? We cannot comment on the definition of ‘nationally important sites’ (this is not our subject area) but would expect lesser sites of perhaps national / regional importance to be noted as the definition of ‘national importance’ may be subjective. It is noted that the Inventory for Gardens and Designed Landscapes includes sites that are not of equal ‘national’ important and the criteria for which they are valued (work of art, horticultural importance and so on are graded in terms of ‘out-standing’ for example and not national or local importance). It may be difficult to define ‘national’ importance in practice and we would advise adoption of a comprehensive and transparent evaluation process that will clearly allow sites of deemed national important and other sites, which do not pass the test to be identified. We respect consideration that this interpretation may change over time and that some sites may be added or withdrawn from the inventory, but for reasons that can be clearly understood.

Question 5 – Yes we would support the creation of an Inventory. Having the areas identified on the Local Plans is vital to ensure that they are properly considered prior to any development application. Some battlefield sites along the boundary between Scotland and England should be documented within the Inventory to include the whole site and some consultation with English neighbouring authorities is likely to be required.

Question 6 – Yes we agree with the proposed purpose and content of the inventory and have commented earlier on this.

Question 7 – Yes we would agree in principle with the proposals to define and evaluate each site, but would advise this may in practice require some further research to form an exact methodology. We would also refer to our previous comments on defining ‘landscape setting’ or ‘landscape context’

Question 8 - We would concur with the proposal of identifying a core area and would refer to our early suggestion for a two or three tier definition of the site, the main physical area perhaps being the most immediate and important. Even though a battlefield site may have been entirely developed, the record of the battlefield could still be traceable in the historic landscape character of the area and location and pattern of development occurring subsequent to the battlefield may directly relate to the event and subsequent ‘clean-up’ of the battle. We would advise that to ignore national events (even though the site can only be ‘traced’ in the subsequent landscape development of the area, or even if this has been insensitivity unrelated to the past) could potentially waste an opportunity to recognise the occurrence of national event that perhaps survives in the memories and culture of an area indirectly. In this sense ‘history’ of national importance may have little more than a memorial stone (perhaps even modern) to commemorate the event? Given the event was of national importance perhaps a point reference (with no site or setting) can be identified in the inventory. The result being that whilst no site needs to be protected or managed it is at least acknowledged. Future development, public interest, cultural and artistic expression can all take some inspiration and respect from the event that can help architects, urban designers, landscape architects and planners (who will refer to the inventory for inspiration as well as development control) to provide for future development and places that have ‘richness’ and integrity.

Question 9 – we would welcome provision to be made for the sustainable management of battlefield sites and would advise that some clear objectives need to be set for each site with a timescale. The proposed management needs to be realistic and ‘all encompassing’ in that it will take account of other interests (referred to earlier such as ecological interests). Some sites may need only simple management whilst others may be more complex and in terms of landscape management we would advise it will be virtually impossible to treat all areas of a site as the same. We therefore welcome the acknowledgement that policy should be flexible and allow for the different management and treatment of broad / overall and specific areas. Further the definition of overall areas and specific areas within the battlefield site may help to influence planning decisions (no doubt these will have a different and document character, value and importance) and would offer some guidance for the local planning authority when looking into potential developments. **We would also suggest that consideration be given to an Interpretation Plan for each battlefield to assist / educate the public, this could form part of the management plan.**

Question 10 – Yes, guidance for managing the battlefield is recommended and this should be produced as a separate, supporting document to the Inventory (or and Appendix) as consultees and other interested stakeholders will want to comment on the proposed management and this will of course be subject to change. (A landowner for example should be able to get hold of a copy of the guidance without having to acquire the whole inventory). In terms of who should produce this we would advise that landscape architects have the specific skills for advising on landscape management and sensitivity and creatively considering the wider importance of the site which may be ecological, landscape, land-use / agricultural and historic. We note that

Scottish Natural Heritage have successfully produced a number of management and assessment guides relating to a diverse range of topics. We would recommend a joint project between SNH and HS to produce such a document with the assistance as necessary of external consultants and experts including landscape architects. We would also advise that the guidance be subject to professional consultation.

Question 11 – Yes – we agree with the general principles set out under roles, responsibilities and implementation. The central compilation as with the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes by Historic Scotland is our preference and will deliver consistency. It will be important for a clear methodology to be developed and set out and the resulting inventory and or methodology should be subject to a process of consultation to ensure all sites have been correctly considered. We would recommend that a panel of experts and or consultants be involved in the production of the inventory. We would strongly advise that landscape architects be involved in the definition of the sites, interpretation of landscape context and value, and the recommended landscape management of these sites.

Funding provision and grants for the management of battlefields is not specifically referred to in the consultation document. Identified management objectives and any resultant management plans should be evaluated in terms of their need and where appropriate funding to support at least necessary management should be provided. It may be that this can be achieved from existing sources, although battlefields may not be specifically mentioned in the funding documents.

We would advise that in some cases, a site may be very complex and its definition, evaluation, and proposed management development may be so complex as to require a separate report and / or Environmental Impact Assessment. This may be particularly relevant for management plans that may recommend the development of visitor facilities and interpretation schemes for example.

We would recommend, as is indicated by the consultation, that the interpretation, evaluation and management of the sites must not be over 'conservationist' and must encompass wider concepts of land management, quality of design and creativity, sustainability and be achievable and realistic.

If you wish to discuss the LIS submission or require further information on this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

On behalf of the Landscape Institute (Scotland)

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Rylott

Chairperson

On behalf of the Landscape Institute (Scotland)