

**“The Historic Landscape in the Planning Process: Characterisation Techniques and Applications” – Presentation Summary**

**The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:**

- “An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”
- rural and urban
- natural and man-made
- physical and cultural
- old and new
- land, inland water and marine areas
- all areas: outstanding, everyday, degraded

**Characterisation is an area-based understanding of how places and landscapes have evolved and is:**

- Map based, identifying character types and areas
- Comprehensive rather than selective, looking at the quality of everywhere
- Applicable at every scale
- Flexible and adaptable for each situation
- Can provide multiple viewpoints and perspectives
- Integrates with other assessments (e.g. visual, ecological etc)
- Objective and holistic, but can be used to identify significance and sensitivity
- Helpful for decision-making and the evidence base in planning cases
- Helpful for identifying opportunities for change and enhancement

**Historic Environment Characterisation Techniques include:**

- Landscape Character Assessments
- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Extensive Urban Surveys
- Historic Area Assessments
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals
- Masterplanning and Regeneration Exercises
- Sensitivity Assessments
- Environmental Impact Assessments

**Characterisation Applications:**

- Regional and Sub-Regional Policy
- Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)
- Large-Scale Strategic Planning and Regeneration
- Major Infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure
- Landscape Management
- Conservation Area Management
- Development Control Decision-Making
- Community Engagement

**Case Studies:**

- East of England Regional Landscape Framework: [www.landscape.org.uk](http://www.landscape.org.uk)
- South Beds Environmental Sensitivity Assessment: [www.shapeyourfuture.org.uk](http://www.shapeyourfuture.org.uk)
- Lincolnshire Townscape Assessment: [www.lincoln.gov.uk](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk)

**Further Information:**

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation)

Conservation Bulletin No. 47 [www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.10485](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.10485)

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge, Territory Planner, English Heritage, 24 Brooklands Avenue,  
Cambridge, CB2 8BU

[tom.gilbert-wooldridge@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:tom.gilbert-wooldridge@english-heritage.org.uk)