

Managing Gardens and Designed Landscapes

What are Designed Landscapes?

Designed landscapes were generally constructed from the 18th century onwards. Such landscapes were designed to a unified plan to incorporate a variety of man-made features such as tree-lined avenues, parkland, paths, follies & plantations. They may well include natural features and earlier archaeological monuments as part of the original design. They have all evolved as plants have grown and ownership and fashions have changed.

What are Inventory sites?

The most important sites have been recorded on a national Inventory produced by SNH and Historic Scotland listing the key Gardens & Designed Landscapes. Management advice is now the responsibility of Historic Scotland.

Not all designed landscapes are listed in the Inventory and there are relict remains of several thousand designed landscapes across the country. They form a key element of our valued rural countryside.



Designed landscapes form some of Scotland's most picturesque countryside.



Designed landscapes are dominated by vistas from the main house, though these will have changed over time.

How do I find out if I have a Garden or Designed Landscape?

Sites listed on the Inventory can be identified online at www.pastmap.org.uk, on the [Historic Scotland website](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk) and [SEWeb](http://www.seweb.org.uk).

Paper copies of the Inventories are held in most public libraries, local council planning and SEARS Area offices. Other gardens & designed landscapes may also be recorded by Historic Scotland or by your Local Authority archaeology service.

Contact these organisations if you want further information.

How should I manage a Designed Landscape?

Appropriate management must balance conservation of existing habitats and plantings with the desire to restore character to the landscape by deliberate plantings. Selective removal of existing vegetation and timely repairs may enhance archaeological sites, buildings, follies, statuary, paths, water features, avenues and vistas. All will benefit from the use of a management plan, where a consistent vision is followed over time to maintain and develop key features of an individual designed landscape.

Much of Scotland's archaeological heritage lies in rural areas. This sheet is one of a series giving advice on some of the ways these important remains can be protected during normal rural land management.

GOOD PRACTICE

- Check www.pastmap.org.uk, [SEWeb](#) or your local reference library to see if your farm lies within a Garden or Designed Landscape identified in the HS Inventory. You may also have features from a Designed Landscape not currently included on the Inventory.
- Identify all surviving features of the Designed Landscape as part of a whole-farm management plan. You may need professional help to identify these.
- Protect all features of recognised designed landscapes. It is good farming and environmental practice to protect all surviving Garden & Designed Landscape features.
- Protection should include the maintenance of linear features such as parkland fencing and preventing the blockage of watercourses, paths and avenues as well as preserving individual features such as gate piers, trees or archaeological sites.
- Inform contractors and staff working on your land of the location of known Designed Landscape features and make sure they respect these from damage.
- Check the [Rural Payments](#) website for grant eligibility for woodland and habitat enhancement work under the SRDP 2015-2020. SNH and Historic Scotland. May also have access to specific funds. Your farm audit should identify areas in need of restoration or repair. Contact your local SNH Area office or local environmental adviser in the first instance.

For further information - see

1997 SNH Review No.82

[Designed landscapes in Scotland: notes on their planting and management](#)

See also details on the [Historic Scotland website](#) and the Forestry Commission Scotland guidance [Conserving and managing trees and woodlands in Scotland's Designed Landscapes](#)



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Within these landscapes, it is important to retain and enhance features reflecting the original plan such as



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Designed landscapes are significant areas for natural heritage as here with wood pasture and 'heritage' trees

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