

4. ASSESSMENT OF OUTSTANDING SIGNIFICANCE: KEY THEMES

4.1 A strong theme in the discussion of outstanding significance, and in the evaluations by ICOMOS, is that the outstanding qualities of the Lake District derive from a combination of attributes that together make it an exceptional landscape and place. This was implicit in the 1987 joint statement by ICOMOS and IUCN:

'Les deux organisations pensent que c'est la conjugaison des qualités du site au titre de ces critères, plutôt que l'un quelconque d'entre eux qui pourrait leur permettre de recommander l'inscription du site...' (*The two organisations think that it is the conjugation of the qualities of the site in respect of these criteria [cultural and natural], rather than one or other of them which would allow them to be recommended for inscription..*). (See **Appendix VIII** for full recommendation).

4.2 More recent reassessment of the Lake District by the ICOMOS-UK Landscape Committee offers a similar conclusion in more specific terms:

The Lake District's essential significance is the result of a creative interaction between the products of a small-scale, tightly constrained and conservative society responding to a particular environment, and the power of influential outsiders who, through writings, paintings and actions, introduced the spiritual benefits of landscape to the world and then went on to formulate ways of harnessing resources for the protection of what had been discovered, so that future generations could continue to gain benefit from this special place. (See **Appendix VII** for a summary report of this assessment).

4.3 Many of the organisations consulted expressed similar opinions:

- *It would be misleading to single any one aspect out. The special quality is the combined qualities of all attributes.*
- *An elemental landscape, an agriculturally harmonious landscape and an ornamental landscape.*
- *It is the complexity of the significances: the physical landscape and its interrelationship with human landscape and the way they work together in each valley and fell.*
- *A seamless web of managed and natural factors interacting: many elements of the natural and semi-natural landscape are not outstanding in their own right but it is the links with other layers of the history of landscape and its traditional management that make it so significant.*
- *A unique socio-economic phenomenon working within an equally unique physical form.*
- *A complex history of land management and interrelated settlement and landscape together with rich associations with the rise of landscape and conservation consciousness.*
- *A combination of landscape quality and cultural association.*
- *Each valley has its own individuality; a reflection of rich and varied histories. It is this diversity in a relatively small area which is the essence of the attraction of the Lake District as a whole.*

FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT OF OUTSTANDING SIGNIFICANCE

4.4 Accepting that the Lake District's outstanding significance is multi-faceted, it is still essential to identify the particular attributes that contribute to, and together make up, its universal value. In discussion most respondents were able, by drawing on their local and specialist knowledge, to select one or more particular aspects of the Lake District which in their view are of outstanding significance and potentially of universal value. In the survey of perceptions there were also clear indications of the relative importance of certain aspects of the cultural landscape, in particular its scenic qualities and its human history and traditions (see Section 3). These views have been grouped together, as shown below, to form four key themes as a framework for the detailed assessment of universal value.

4.5 Scenic and natural qualities

- *the scale - a compressed scale of almost Gothic intensity and the presence of the human scale of intervention within this*
- *richly varied scenery and natural beauty*
- *world class scenery and environmental qualities*
- *scale and diversity of geology in such a restricted area*
- *its biodiversity and range of habitats in a small area: the European designations reflect the scale of international importance*
- *the Lakes as a sustainable environmental, social and economic resource*
- *exceptional range of geo- and bio-chemistry, highly sensitive and a barometer for global environmental change*

4.6 Accessibility and openness of landscape

- *Commons: valued for their visual 'openness' and the history of communal land management and use as unenclosed grazing land*
- *Uplands are valued highly for their physical openness and largely unimpeded access.*
- *Access: a place that is cared for in the interests of public accessibility, has a tradition of welcome and allows freedom to explore.*

4.7 Time depth and continuity:

- *Continuity of traditional farming practice and communities*
- *History of land management and its interaction with natural features, especially the management of water*
- *Longevity of the tradition of managing land and exploitation of its natural resources is outstanding as expressed in the distinctive pattern of valley enclosure from the 12th century*
- *Farming regime based on year-round grazing on uplands managed in common with indigenous breeds among which the Herdwick is outstanding*
- *History of tenure, family tradition and grazing, and the continuity of its management as a live tradition*
- *Archaeology and history of communities and their use of the land and its resources over the last 12000 years*

4.8 Cultural associations:

Growth of landscape appreciation and thinking about nature and culture

- *History of the picturesque and appreciating landscape*
- *Associations with the Romantic movement and many literary figures and their work*
- *Connection with the Romantic Movement and the Lake District as inspiration and home to an important group of writers and thinkers*
- *A place where the pleasure of landscape was discovered, as an educated and civilised preoccupation, later for its sanitive and meditative qualities.*

Ideas about conservation and environmentalism

- *Active and continuing tradition of conservation*
- *A leader in new ideas about sustainable development*
- *Innovative work in sustainable tourism and visitor pay back schemes, model of best practice internationally*
- *Potential to develop as leading edge thinker for a model of consensual working for the world community*
- *Living connection between people and places and the continuity of people caring for their special landscape and its future.*

- 4.9 These four themes provide the framework for the assessment of significance. The tables assembled below present the research and information that underpins these key themes. They outline the cultural and natural aspects that together make up the strands of each significance. The assessment of significance, on a regional/national/ international scale, is based on published studies, expert opinion and national /international designation. Sources consulted and references cited in the tables can be found in **Appendix III**. The assessment of vulnerability (low, medium or high) and the summary of vulnerable aspects are drawn from the analysis in Section 2.

Ring Garth at Kirk Howe



Cultural Landscape Significance in the Lake District: KEY THEME 1: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES

This theme is concerned with the outstanding qualities of the Lake District's natural environment and scenery. Though heavily influenced by the pattern of human intervention over the last six millennia, its enduring scenic beauty is the dominant element in perceptions of the area's significance.

A semi-natural landscape - of rugged mountains and deep-sided valleys, lakes and rivers, streams and waterfalls, woodland and pasture, estuary and coastal lowland - perceived to be of outstanding natural and scenic beauty. The Lake District has been consciously valued for these qualities and altered to accentuate them since the mid- 18th century and continues to evoke a variety of responses. Important qualities are the compactness of the geographical region and the intensity of contrasts in topography, scenery, and scale, between intimate valley landscape and exposed, rugged uplands. It is also notable for the unusual diversity of geology and habitats within such a restricted area. Its mild and wet climate, changeable weather and varied aspect contribute contrasts of atmosphere and visibility.

Wastwater and Great Gable



Significance: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES	Source	Significance	Vulnerability:
Geology		Regional / National	Low
<p>The core is a geologically complex dome around an ancient centre of volcanic activity. Older rocks of the Ordovician and Silurian (Skiddaw slates, Borrowdale Volcanic series and Silurian slates and shales) form the main mountain massif, surrounded by a fringe of younger rocks of the Carboniferous to the north and south and, around the edge of the area, New Red Sandstone to the north, west and east. The key elements of high scientific importance are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upland exposures of deformed and fossil- rich lower Palaeozoic rock sequences • Exposures of igneous rocks (lavas and granites such as the Borrowdale Volcanics Group) • Mineral deposits within mines and on adjacent spoil heaps • Glacial erosion and depositional landforms and scenery • Limestone features including limestone pavement <p>This importance is reflected in the fact that 48 of the 132 (36%) Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the Lake District National Park are notified partly or wholly for geological or geomorphological reasons. An outstanding aspect is the fossil evidence from Seathwaite for the earliest known land-based life. The varied mineralogy is reflected in the unusual range of extractive industries (see 'Time Depth: Working with natural resources'). The diversity of the geology is reflected in the number of RIGS, the highest number /km2 in the UK, with over 300 in the National Park.</p> <p>The drainage and valleys form a radial pattern centred on High Raise, each physically isolated from the next and most with one or more lakes. The contrasting geology and aspect of the radiating valleys gives each a distinct character. Similarly the mountain peaks contrast between the rugged and precipitous volcanic rocks of the central fells and the more rounded contours of the slates.</p>	<p>LDNP 1986; 1999; King et al. 1996; English Nature 1997; CoCo 1998; National Trust 1999; Pickering 2002.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Some exposures of rocks vulnerable to unauthorised fossil and mineral collecting (a permit system is in place).</p> <p>Exposures are also vulnerable to erosion by climbers and walkers, vegetation overgrowth, and quarrying operations.</p>	

Significance: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Glaciated landform		National	Low
<p>The landform is shaped by glacial action to create a unique profile characterised in the volcanic area by sharp abrupt peaks such as Scafell Pike (at 978m asl the highest mountain in England) and deep U-shaped valleys with steep sides such as Great Langdale. Most valleys contain one or more lakes formed by glacial moraine dams; tarns, corries, hanging valleys, waterfalls, drumlins, glacial debris and roches moutonnées are other characteristic features. The effect of glacial action has been an accentuation of the contrast between deepened valley bottoms and exposed uplands which contributes to the sense of enclosure and human scale in one and rugged wildness and remoteness in the other.</p>	<p>LDNP 1986; 1999; CoCo 1998; National Trust 1999; Pickering 2002.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects: Acceleration of sedimentation (see Lakes below) and gradual infilling process in valleys and lakes.</p>	
Scale		Regional	Low
<p>The central upland area has an island-like quality with coastal plain, sea and estuaries on three sides, its limits clearly visible from the peaks. Within the relatively small area of the National Park (2500km²) the walker or traveller passes relatively quickly between greatly contrasting types of landscape and topography and even the most remote peaks are intervisible with human settlement. Wordsworth in 1810 was thus able to describe the prospect of the whole of the Lake District for readers of his 'Guide to the Lakes', standing 'in imagination, upon some given point; let it be the top of either of the mountains, Great Gavel or Scawfell' and seeing 'stretched at our feet a number of valleys, not fewer than eight, diverging from the point, on which we are supposed to stand, like spokes from the nave of a wheel'.</p>	<p>Wordsworth 1835; LDNP 1986; 1999; CoCo 1998; National Trust 1999; Pickering 2002.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects: None</p>	

Significance: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Lakes, rivers and their catchments		National / International	High
<p>The Lakes of the Lake District are some of the most treasured and best-researched freshwater environments in the UK and the most highly vulnerable aspects of the landscape. Windermere is the longest lake in England, Wastwater the deepest. Among the dozens of standing water bodies there is an exceptional range of bio- and geo-chemistry and biodiversity and important associated lakeside swamp and fen communities. This is reflected in the large number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and the Esthwaite Ramsar site. The lakes are a unique databank for monitoring climate and environmental change and offer exceptional research and educational potential. In visual terms the lakes bring enormous variety and special spatial qualities to the scenery. The reflective surface of the waters accentuates the height, steepness and dark contrast of enclosing fells. Around the larger lake margins the landscape is open with a parkland character in places, forming a foreground to views of the water. Around Windermere, Coniston and in other areas much of this land formed part of the country estates of incoming residents (wealthy industrialists and landowners) with gardens and ornamental woodland planted for 18th century and 19th-century villas. The climate of the area has exceptionally high rainfall, the highest in England over the high fells (4500mm /an typical) which contributes to the abundant water bodies, fast flowing streams and rivers of the lakes' catchment areas.</p>	<p>CoCo 1998; Environment Agency 2001; Pickering 2002.</p> <p>See also references for Biodiversity below</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Water quality (nutrients/ pH, phosphates & oxygen levels, pollutants).</p> <p>Levels of erosion & accumulation of erosion products ultimately leading to infilling (in some cases now 20x natural rates) and other adverse effects on biota.</p> <p>Rare post glacial fish communities (e.g. arctic char, schelly, and vendace, rarest freshwater fish in UK and only found in Lake District) and other priority species.</p> <p>Biodiversity (affected by e.g. eutrophication, acidification, air pollution, water abstraction, introduced fish and alien plant species; water traffic impacts on e.g. reed beds, bird populations, otters; recreational impacts on lake and riversides)</p>	
<p>Rivers: The Lake District includes parts or all of four River SSSI and cSACs which are variously important for: their plant communities; several species of fish (including salmon, bullhead, river, brook and sea lampreys); otter; Atlantic white-clawed crayfish; freshwater pearl mussel.</p>		<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Overgrazing of bankside vegetation leading to erosion of river banks, increasing sediment load to the rivers, increasing nutrient levels and reducing habitat for species such as otter.</p>	

Significance: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Biodiversity		Regional / National/ International	Medium to High
<p>Exceptional biodiversity on a national scale with a very wide range of habitats represented in a compact area. The Lake District is notable for its freshwater habitats (see above), for its upland semi-natural Atlantic oak woodlands with moss and liverwort communities, wet woodlands and limestone woodlands (see below), the range of montane (above the tree-line) and sub-montane heaths and grasslands, species-rich hay meadows and its range of mires and swamps. The area includes an exceptional range of important species including many that are nationally rare and nationally scarce, including examples from groups as diverse as mammals, birds, amphibians, fish, bees, beetles, butterflies and moths, crustaceans, flies, molluscs, mosses and liverworts, lichens, ferns and flowering plants. The national and international importance of this diversity is recognised in the 132 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the Lake District National Park covering over 50,000 hectares; 45 of these are included within 18 candidate Special Areas of Conservation; and the LDNP also includes 9 National Nature Reserves.</p> <p>See Appendix IX: The UK Biodiversity Plan and the Lake District</p>	<p>Kelly and Perry 1990; UK Biodiversity Group 1995, 1998 et seq; LDNP 1986, 1999; English Nature 1997; Halliday 1997; CoCo 1998; National Trust 1999; Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership 2001</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Raised, valley and basin mires; Species -rich hay meadows; Limestone pavement and grassland; Moss/lichen heath on fells; Upland heaths and grasslands; Scree and rock habitats; Springs and flushes; Upland ledge communities; Purple moor-grass and rush pastures; Juniper and other shrub communities; Arctic alpine communities.</p> <p>Rare species nationally include: red squirrel, natterjack toad, arctic-alpine plants, slender green feather moss, high brown fritillary, netted carpet moth.</p> <p>These are vulnerable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock management (mostly overgrazing but also more locally under grazing as well as inappropriate seasonality of grazing or stock type) • Intensification of management regimes through the use of artificial fertilisers and pesticides as well as land drainage. • Eutrophication • Burning • Aerial Pollution • Climate change • Recreational pressure. 	

Significance: SCENIC AND NATURAL QUALITIES	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Woodlands		Regional / National	Low to medium
<p>Woodland is a distinctive element in the Lake District landscape. The range of woodland types include nationally and internationally important examples of Atlantic oak woodland, wet woodlands and limestone woodlands and support species such as high brown and pearl-bordered fritillary, red squirrel, netted carpet moth and a number of important bryophytes and lichens.</p> <p>The abundant woodland that characterises the lowland landscape and valley sides, both in scattered and more dense covers, is due to a complex history of agricultural management, industrial exploitation, ornamental planting and forestry.</p> <p>Traditional woodland management in the landscape included pollarding of trees for fodder, coppicing for charcoal-making, woodland for shelter, domestic and agricultural use around farms and villages. From the 18th century planting, often with exotic and introduced species, created new woodland vistas as part of the 'picturesque' landscaping of lakesides and the estates of country houses and villas, such as Tarn Hows, particularly around Windermere, Coniston and Derwentwater. Forestry for timber production has been a significant feature in the 20th century with large scale planting of conifers at Grizedale, Whinlatter and Ennerdale, and around Thirlmere.</p>	<p>LDNP 1986, 1999; Adamson 1989; CoCo 1998; National Trust 1999; Bowden 2000; Forestry Commission 2002.</p> <p>See also references for Biodiversity above.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Semi-natural woodland; pollarded and coppiced woodland and their communities. Decline in traditional woodland management has had a marked effect on the high brown and pearl-bordered fritillaries which have greatly declined in the last 50 years.</p> <p>Pollarding and coppicing skills and practice.</p> <p>Grazing by farm stock and, locally, deer leading to poor regeneration, poor woodland structure and a reduced diversity of plants in the field layer.</p> <p>Ageing ornamental and designed woodland landscapes of 18th-20th century.</p> <p>Charcoal pitsteads and other archaeological features of woodland management history.</p>	

Cultural Landscape Significance in the Lake District: KEY THEME 2: ACCESSIBILITY AND OPENNESS

The sense of freedom and release associated by people with the Lake District's upland landscape is an important and valued quality. This theme is concerned with several aspects of that significance which combine to make it outstanding - the landscape's physical accessibility, rights of access, communal use, the unimpeded visual experience of the high fells, and the history of popular access for visitors to the Lake District.

The open upland landscape of the high fells, highly valued in contemporary life, contrasts with the more wooded and enclosed seclusion of the valleys and lakesides. This open aspect is the result of a long history of woodland clearance, initiated in the Neolithic period and of land management for grazing under customary tenurial rights and a hill-farming tradition that have their origins in the Viking and early medieval period. The topography, climate and land quality encouraged co-operative arrangements for communal and shared land management. The continuing use of uplands by hill farmers for communal sheep grazing has perpetuated a largely unenclosed terrain across which there is access both *de facto* and *de jure* and a web of rights of way based on medieval droeways and packhorse routes between valleys. Walkers and climbers enjoy access to most of the fells either by custom and tolerance or by right using this ancient network of routes linking valley settlements with the fells. This accessible elevated landscape overlooking the lakes and valley settlements conveys a sense of freedom associated with spiritual release and physical challenge.

The Lake District has an exceptional history as a place that welcomes the tourist, explorer and visitor. It exemplifies the early history of cultural tourism in Europe; the growth of popular access to the countryside with road and railway communications and the development of outdoor leisure pursuits and sports from the mid-late 19th century. That tradition is perpetuated strongly in the contemporary scene.

Grasmere from Loughrigg



Significance: ACCESSIBILITY & OPENNESS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Access		National	Low
<p>An exceptionally extensive network of footpaths and rights of way connects uplands, valley sides and lakeside walks, established both formally and informally through two centuries and more of exploration and recreation in this landscape. One of the earliest Footpath Associations was founded in Keswick (1856), followed by the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society (1865) and the Kendal and District Footpaths Preservation Society (1885).</p> <p>The Youth Hostel Association network was established 1930. By 1932 there were 20 in Lake District and the first 'demonstration' hostel at Grasmere. The Lake District today has the largest concentration of youth hostels in the world.</p> <p>An unusually large proportion of the Lake District National Park is managed by bodies that own land and promote public access and use of the countryside for enjoyment and education (National Trust owns 25% of land in the National Park, the Park Authority 4%; United Utilities 7% and Forest Enterprises 6%). The Thirlmere and Haweswater Commons and Urban Commons have inalienable rights of access, elsewhere access is perpetuated through custom and traditional tolerance by the Lake District's farmers and land managers of use of the fells by walkers and climbers.</p> <p>Under the <i>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</i> statutory rights of access will be considerably extended under new Codes of Practice which will regularise situations where hitherto access is by custom or tolerance.</p>	<p>Coburn 1950; Berry and Beard 1980; LDNP 1989; LDNP 1999</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Some access may need to be limited for conservation reasons to protect habitats or arrest erosion and during periodic operations.</p> <p>Pressure to introduce fencing on unenclosed commons as an alternative to shepherding and traditional management of heafs.</p>	

Significance: ACCESSIBILITY & OPENNESS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Open aspect		Regional	Medium - High
<p>The use of uplands for hill farming for over a millennium and exploitation of woodland for agriculture and for industrial use has created an open aspect to upper valley sides and fells, contrasting with more wooded lakesides in places. Although tree cover began to recede from the neolithic period, today's upland landscape is significantly more 'open', i.e. less woodland and scrub, than is indicated by palaeo-environmental research for prehistoric periods and historical evidence for later periods</p>	<p>Clare 1988; UK Biodiversity Action Group 1995, 1998 et seq; Winchester 1987, 2000;</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Hill farming regimes play a large part in the sustainable management of vegetation cover.</p> <p>There may be a tension with the potential for new native woodland and juniper shrubs on lower slopes and up gills to enhance biodiversity in the uplands and to protect the land from further soil erosion and the open aspect.</p>	
Commons		National / International	High
<p>Communal management of extensive upland areas for grazing with hefted flocks, largely without enclosure, has maintained the open aspect of the upland landscape. This is one of the largest remaining areas of such communal land management in Western Europe and unique for its year-round grazing regime, local sheep breeds and fell ponies. The remoteness of the area up to the 19th century and absence of centrally managed estates gave rise to a degree of independent, local regulation among tenant farmers perpetuated in today's commoners associations. (see below Theme 3: The farming landscape.)</p>	<p>Winchester 1987, 1988, 2000 Humphries, 2000, 2001;</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>'Open' unfenced commons; Commoner's associations;</p> <p>Shepherding and traditional management of heafs;</p> <p>Ageing farming population; small farm sizes;</p> <p>Herdwicks and other local sheep breeds; population of fell ponies</p>	
Landscape for pleasure		National / International	Low
<p>The area is characterised by a long and continuing tradition of tours and visiting to enjoy the landscape. Well-documented destination for 'picturesque' tourism by 1780s; fell-walking starts to become part of this from 1790s, prior to which valley and lakeside experience predominate in accounts. Exceptionally early appreciation of upland landscapes for leisure and exploration promoted through popular Lakeland writers (see below).</p>	<p>Nicholson 1955; Woof & Bicknell 1982, 1983 Murdoch 1984;</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>An appreciation of the way that contemporary landscape viewing is rooted in this tradition.</p>	

Significance: ACCESSIBILITY & OPENNESS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Early cultural tourism		National / International	Low
<p>The 'English Alps': as an alternative to the continental grand tour the Lakes were accessible to those for whom travel to the Alps was prevented by the French revolution, Napoleonic and other wars in Europe and increasingly popular as it became more accessible to middle class visitors from 1830s with turnpike improvements and steamers. Pre-eminently an 'English' destination and appealing to educated English taste but attracting international tourists from an early date. It is documented by an exceptional literature of guides and travel books (see below Theme 4: Cultural Associations)</p>	<p>Nicholson 1955; Marshall & Walton 1981; Bicknell & Woof 1983; Murdoch 1984, Bicknell 1990.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects: Appreciation by modern visitors of the long history of visiting and enjoying the Lake District and the way this has contributed to the accessibility and special qualities of the place today.</p>	
Popular resorts and transport		National	Low
<p>The reception of Lake District landscapes by urban populations begins with the railway to Windermere in 1847; Furness Abbey was the first heritage attraction in the UK, possibly in Europe, with its own railway station, 1847. The Windermere Iron Steamboat Company was established in 1848; in 1866/9 Furness Railway Company opened a new train / steamer interchange at Lakeside. First Windermere, then Ambleside and lastly Keswick, grew substantially as resorts through the 19th century. The pattern of growth has been threefold: in residents (commuters, summer residents and the semi-retired); in long-stay visitors, and in excursionists.</p>	<p>Marshall & Walton 1981; Bicknell & Woof 1983; Joy 1990;</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects: Early hotel and resort buildings. Investment in quality design of new visitor facilities and maintenance of public realm infrastructure. Tourism represents a significant economic sector with some vulnerability to fluctuations in visiting. Growth may be limited by the social and environmental capacities of places to absorb the impacts of tourism.</p>	
Rock climbing		National / International	Low
<p>Rock climbing established in UK in 1880s, pre-eminently in Lake District, pioneered by Haskett Smith, Owen Glynn Jones and others, with outstanding early photography by the Abraham brothers. Climbing as a sport begins broadly at same period as climbing in the Swiss Alps (Mont Blanc ascent 1878). Fell and Rock Climbing Club of English Lake District established 1906. Against this early historical background, this area remains a prime destination in England for professional and amateur climbers.</p>	<p>Murdoch 1984; LDNP 1986; Milner 1986.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects: Limitations on activity may be necessary to protect habitats such as ledge and rock communities, species such as rare plants and birds such as raven and peregrine.</p>	

Cultural Landscape Significance in the Lake District: KEY THEME 3: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY IN THE LANDSCAPE

The Lake District landscape provides an exceptional illustration of time depth, with evidence of the first human presence at the end of the last glaciation 12,000 years ago. The evidence of continuous use by rural communities cultivating the land extends over more than 5000 years represented in physical remains and the human-formed character of the landscape. Outstanding survivals from the prehistoric period are the concentration of Neolithic axe production sites and a significant number of upland ceremonial sites. Above all, however, the Lake District is a landscape of farmers. Prehistoric field systems and cairnfields form the earliest layer of a farmed landscape that is a palimpsest of clearance, enclosure and improvement which has ebbed and flowed between valley and fell. The features visible in today's landscape are for the most part a product of the rural economy and farming practice over the last 900 years in a pattern that has remained remarkably unchanged. 'The Lakeland landscape [is endowed] with something of a timeless quality, in that physical constraints have determined that the basic patterns of land-use have remained broadly stable over the centuries' (Winchester 1988, 77). The national importance of its well preserved archaeological sites and historic monuments is reflected in a high number of scheduled ancient monuments (265).

The geographical isolation of the area, its distance from the seats of the principal landowners, the economic marginality of the uplands and proximity to the disputed frontier with Scotland have been factors in the Lake District's distinctive land management history. Compared with other parts of England tenant farmers had greater freedoms, more security and there was relatively little intervention by landlords. This together with the inaccessibility of the central fells, relatively poor land and a cool, wet climate, meant that it developed apart, retaining a distinctive culture (dialect, vernacular style, farming practices) and independent spirit, within individual valleys as well as the region as a whole. This self-reliance and modest prosperity drew strength from collective practices for sharing the landscape's limited natural resources and communal grazing practices that formed an inherently sustainable land management.

This theme is divided for presentation purposes into the 'farming landscape', 'communities and settlers' and 'working natural resources'. Earlier (prehistoric and Roman period) and later (earlier medieval to post medieval periods) aspects of farming and communities are grouped separately.

Yew Tree Farm, Coniston



Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
The early farming landscape		National	Low - Medium
<p>The earliest evidence of human presence in the Lake District occurs at the end of the last glaciation and mesolithic populations were exploiting the coastal plains of West Cumbria from c. 8000BC. Use of the land for farming stretches back over more than five millennia in the Lake District, evidenced for early periods largely in the pollen record. The earliest visible remains lie on unimproved upland landscapes above the coastal plain, mainly in the south and west, with earthworks of extensive cairnfields and small enclosures of the late Bronze Age / early Iron Age. In valley situations there is archaeological evidence for an equal or greater intensity of prehistoric occupation.</p> <p>From the more open and hospitable coastal plain and lowlands of the area, native farmers gradually penetrated up the valleys and into the high fells. The intervention of Roman military presence and the economic impetus of supply for the military zone may have intensified deforestation. By 400-600AD pollen studies show extensive woodland clearance and cereal cultivation extending to altitudes higher than at any time since.</p>	Fell 1972; Vincent 1985; LDNP 1986; Clare 1988; Shotter 1988.	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Earthworks and drystone features vulnerable to erosion and inappropriate land management.</p> <p>Archaeological sites vulnerable to development.</p>	
Early communities and settlers		Regional / National	Medium / Low
<p>The landscape of late neolithic and bronze age farming communities is characterised by ceremonial sites: stone circles, cairns and ritual landscapes. Many of these are sites at unusually high altitudes, in a landscape already cleared of woodland in which these special places are thought to have been focal points for seasonal festivals. The outstanding example is the large stone circle at Castlerigg still a focus for international visitors. Typical settlements surviving as earthworks on unimproved upland have clusters of yards and small enclosures, linked by droveways to cairnfields. Larger enclosures of the later prehistoric period, assumed to be for seasonal gathering as well as defence, occupy impressive sites overlooking cairnfields and lowland landscapes.</p>	Burl 1976; Vincent 1985; LDNP 1986; Clare 1988.	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Exposed sites and earthworks vulnerable to erosion and inappropriate land management.</p>	

Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Early communities and settlers (continued)		National / International	Low
<p>As part of a permanently occupied military zone, the Lake District exemplifies the impact and achievement of Rome at the limits of its empire on the north-west seaboard operating in largely inhospitable terrain. The military occupation is evidenced in an arc of forts - from Ravenglass through to Hardknott and Ambleside to Brougham, connected to a further zone of forts to the north of the central fells. These are linked by a network of military transport roads driven in places across the mountainous terrain, e.g. High Street crossing the High Fells at an altitude of 800m, and striking landscape features. The forts, fortlets and towers along the West Cumbrian coast, below Bowness on Solway down to Ravenglass in the Lake District National Park, form part of the Hadrians Wall World Heritage Site.</p>	<p>LNDP 1986, Shotter 1988, 1993; Austen & Young 2002</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Excavated and exposed sites vulnerable to erosion and inappropriate land management.</p> <p>Archaeological sites are also generally vulnerable to development pressures.</p>	

Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
The later farming landscape		National / International	Medium/ High
<p>Evidence of post Roman settlements of native British peoples and of the Norse Viking period is scant in the visible landscape but the latter has richly endowed farming practice and tradition, and the language of the land (in place- and personal names and dialect). The territorial framework of multiple estates evolved through the Norse settlement and possibly earlier Celtic lordship shaped the pattern of medieval land management.</p> <p>It is principally the management of land for farming over the last 900 years that has formed the detailed pattern that both overlies and respects the natural landscape. The pattern of inbye, intake, outgang and fell is typical of many valleys, often with 12th/13th century ring garth defining the cultivated infield at the valley head still discernible. The striking visual contrast is between the irregular patchwork of small green fields in the enclosed valley bottoms and the rougher, brown and purple fellside pasture, in some places enclosed by walls, elsewhere open up to the exposed, rocky fell tops.</p> <p>Relict landscapes of the medieval period such as those at Blindcrake and Hartsop provide remarkable survivals of early valley enclosure arrangements for mixed arable and pastoral agriculture. The abbeys of Furness and Fountains owned extensive estates, managed in some valleys for large scale sheep and cattle farming. On the high fells, evidence of summer transhumance for cattle in shielings or scales is still ubiquitous. The traditions of mixed hill farming in which cattle and arable farming continued to be a consistent element were perpetuated through to the inter-War period. Drainage works and management of woodland for fodder were also important elements in the seasonal cycle.</p> <p>The farming economy is now dominated by sheep farming. The breeds that thrive in the Lake District (Herdwick, Rough Fell, Swaledale) are significant, and the Herdwick especially for its presumed indigenous character (ascribed by some to Scandinavian origins), adaptation to the local environment and ability to over-winter on the fells.</p>	<p>Denyer 1991; Maxwell 1993, 2002; Wood 1998; NT 1999; Winchester 1985, 1988, 2000; Lund 2000, 2001</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Some historic enclosure and land use patterns.</p> <p>Field walls (wall heads, hogg holes, etc), hedged enclosures; earthwork boundaries, droveways, pollards.</p> <p>Sheepfolds, hogg houses, sheepwashes, salving houses, shearing stones, shieling huts / scales, field barns, pinfolds and other vernacular structures (see below).</p> <p>Herdwick and other distinctive local sheep breeds; fell ponies.</p> <p>Related shepherding and seasonal practices, such as heafs, raking, communal gathers, lug and smit marks, sheep scoring.</p>	

Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Later communities and settlers		Regional / National	Medium
<p>The visible legacy of settled communities from the early medieval periods is displayed in religious monuments, notably Anglian and Viking period sculpture, and from the later medieval period in ecclesiastical buildings. The impressive ruins of Furness Abbey lie on the edge of the National Park, and those of Shap Abbey on the opposite side of the massif.</p> <p>A ring of medieval market towns surrounds the rural valleys and uplands (Penrith, Kendal, Ulverston, Cockermouth). Sizeable villages such as Hawkshead and Grasmere are grouped compactly around their medieval parish churches. Elsewhere the valley communities are spread between isolated farmhouses and small hamlets strung along the valley sides, served by characteristically isolated valley churches, such as those at Wasdale Head, Martindale and Newlands.</p> <p>Vernacular building: The character of the Lake District's vernacular buildings reflects the diversity of local building materials and, in its simple forms and construction, the subsistence nature of farming in the central fells and the region's remoteness, until the 18th century, from polite architectural influence.</p> <p>The flourish of the 'age of the statesman' (1550-1750) is displayed in substantial farmhouses reflecting the prosperity of the successful yeoman farmers of the 17th and later centuries. As well as typical building plans, details such as chimneys, windows, walling and gating all reflect distinct local practices and give the region an instantly recognisable visual character. A variety of distinctive farm-building types include hogg houses, peat houses, bank and other barn types providing underhousing for cattle. The visual harmony of these buildings in colour, texture and form with their landscape and setting is an outstanding feature.</p>	<p>Denyer 1991; Rollinson 1981; Brunskill 1974, 1985, 1988, 2002; Winchester 1988, 2000.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Historic farm and agricultural buildings, now redundant.</p> <p>Isolated churches, vulnerable to theft and vandalism, maintained by small congregations</p> <p>The distinctive vernacular style of individual valleys.</p> <p>External and internal detailing of traditional buildings.</p> <p>Supplies of matching building and roofing material for repair and renewal.</p> <p>Craft skills for building and roofing, timber repairs</p>	

Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Later communities and settlers (continued)			
<p>The use of local stone and building materials, including lime-washed finishes in some valleys, provides favourable habitats for colonisation by ferns, mosses and liverworts promoted by the abundant rainfall.</p> <p>The impact of 18th and 19th century incomers and the contribution of their lakeside villas, gardens and designed landscapes is discussed below in Cultural Associations.</p>			
Working with natural resources		National / International	Medium / High
<p>The Lake District arguably displays one of the longest continuous traditions of working its rocks and minerals and this has made a strong visual contribution to the landscape. Its history of industrial enterprise, complementing the farming economy in the exploitation of natural resources of stone, minerals, water and woodland, continues today in forestry, quarrying and the water industry.</p> <p>The Neolithic axe production sites of Great Langdale are the earliest evidence of the beginning of exploitation of the region's geological wealth. An impressive concentration of Neolithic quarrying and stone axe production, with over 600 sites identified, exploiting the volcanic tuff of Langdale Pikes and Scafell Pike. Langdale products have a wide distribution across Britain and this is one of the most extensive and productive prehistoric manufacture sites of its type identified in the world.</p>	LDNP 1986; Clare 1988; Bradley & Edmonds 1993.	Vulnerable aspects:	Exposed working sites vulnerable to natural erosion, climbing and footpath erosion and overgrazing; and to degradation by collectors

Significance: TIME DEPTH AND CONTINUITY	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Working with natural resources (continued)		Regional / National	Medium
<p>Medieval mining of copper and lead is recorded but the main impact on the landscape came in the late 16th century with the Company of Mines Royal, prospecting for gold and silver, and the discovery of the Lake District's exceptional mineral wealth. Mineral extraction (iron, copper, barytes, lead, zinc and wolfram), and slate quarrying have been the two large-scale industries leaving characteristic spoil fans and tips, levels and shafts, quarry pits and buildings with a network of inclines, tramways and tracks to transport material to the valley bottom and the coast. Slate quarrying continues at Honister. The graphite ('wad') mines, providing material for the Cumbrian pencil manufacture industry, were based on a scarce and uniquely rich occurrence of the mineral mined from the 16th century in Borrowdale.</p> <p>Allied to ore mining, the iron smelting industry was well established by the 13th century, possibly much earlier. The area has exceptional numbers of early bloomery sites and a long history of coppiced and managed woodland to supply charcoal and timber to the iron and gunpowder industries. The longevity of charcoal-fired smelting from the 12th century is an exceptional feature of the iron industry here. The southern area of the Lake District had the longest surviving charcoal-fuelled furnaces in Britain, working into the 20th century. Its landscape features include charcoal pitsteads, potash kilns, blast furnaces, forges, mills and housing and shelters for workers.</p>	<p>Hanson 1982; Winchester 1987; Riden 1993; Bowden 2000; Cameron 2000.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Exposed old workings vulnerable to erosion and inappropriate land management, mineral collectors.</p> <p>Historic workings that are still actively in use are vulnerable to reprocessing and expansion.</p> <p>Redundant mines, furnaces, works and industrial housing vulnerable to clearance / conversion in inappropriate manner..</p> <p>Woodland bloomeries, charcoal pitsteads and other sites vulnerable to woodland management and growth.</p>	
		Regional	Medium
<p>Craft tradition</p> <p>The region also has a strong rural craft tradition, working with local materials and products in textiles, wood and metal. The arts and crafts revival drew on ideas inspired by John Ruskin's writing and his practical attempts to foster the linen cottage industry in the Lake District. It had a characteristic flowering here in the late 19th century, notably in the Keswick School of Industrial Arts, the work of the Simpsons of Kendal, the Langdale linen industry, the linen and silk spinnery at Bowness. The area continues to support a community of creative artists and craftspeople, working in ceramics, glass, wood and textiles.</p>	<p>Brunton 2000</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Livelihood of local crafts people and creative artists, and the integrity of their work, is threatened by pressures to supply a mass market and competition with products of inferior quality imported from outside the area and retailed as 'Lakeland' products.</p>	

**Cultural Landscape Significance in the Lake District:
KEY THEME 4: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS:
LANDSCAPE APPRECIATION AND CONSERVATION**

The Lake District is known internationally for its associations with the early appreciation of landscape scenery and ideas about visual aesthetics and the picturesque. By the 1780s the area was celebrated for its picturesque beauty and as a resort for the discerning visitor; increasingly it was also a place where the wealthy built villas and retreats and embellished the natural landscape. As the home and inspiration of the poet William Wordsworth and a circle of other Romantic poets - Coleridge, Southey, De Quincey - the Lake District has continued to nurture a tradition of poets, writers, and artists who have responded to the outstanding visual qualities of its scenery and the human aspect of its landscape:

'Look where we will, some human heart has been
Before us with its offering', *Home at Grasmere*.

The Lake District's connection with evolving ideas about conservation and environmentalism from the early 19th century through to the present has had a world-wide significance. It is a place where influential thinkers and writers, such as John Ruskin and the founders of the National Trust have focused their efforts to conserve the countryside and promoted ideas that have come to have currency internationally.

Brantwood, home of John Ruskin, Coniston



Significance: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	Sources	Significance	Vulnerability
The Picturesque		National / International	Low
<p>The Lake District's celebration by painters, tourists, poets and writers flowered at a time when the continent and Alps were closed to British travellers during the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. Prior to this it had been discovered in the mid-18th century by artists and connoisseurs of the 'picturesque' - of landscapes viewed in terms of pictorial composition.</p> <p>William Gilpin was an early populariser of theories about picturesque beauty and promoted his native country in the Lake District in his books widely available in the 1780s, translated into French and German by 1789. Thomas West's 'Guide to the Lakes' (1778) is believed to be the earliest guide to picturesque mountain scenery and highly influential in forming taste for landscape appreciation, together with Thomas Gray's poems and writing on 'this unsuspected paradise' first published in the mid-century. Both advocated the use of the Claude glass for appreciating the formal qualities of landscape and West introduced viewing 'stations' as set positions from which to admire the picturesque scene.</p> <p>The Lake District was quickly a popular subject for amateur and professional artists (including Gainsborough, de Louthenburg, Towne, Constable and Turner). It is documented prolifically from the 1780s onwards in sketches and water colours, guide books, engravings, accounts of tours, published and unpublished, novels and even a comic operetta, <i>The Lakers (1789)</i>, a satire on tourists.</p> <p>These influences were formative in the growth of landscape appreciation and the ways in which landscape is still viewed and valued today from well know viewing points and walks to enjoy a particular 'sight'.</p>	<p>Gilpin 1786; West 1778, 1780; Woof and Bicknell 1982; Bicknell & Woof 1983; Murdoch 1984; Woof 1986; Rollinson 2000;</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Informed landscape sensibility;</p> <p>Awareness of this significant cultural association among modern visitors</p> <p>The viewing stations of West and other 18th century guide writers</p>	

Significance: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Architecture and picturesque landscaping		Regional/ National / International	Medium
<p>The Lake District was favoured as a place to build villas and country homes as the area became known and admired among wealthy connoisseurs and a new middle class, and as turnpike roads and the railway made it more accessible. Among the most notable early examples were Pocklington's house and follies on an island in Derwentwater (1778) and the circular mansion built on Belle Isle in Windermere (1781). The siting of 'villas' and country houses within planted landscapes of wood and parkland created to be their setting have become an outstanding feature of lakeside scenery: 'the shores of Windermere are probably the most exciting piece of artificial picturesque landscaping in existence' (see also Theme 1. Woodlands).</p> <p>While the Lake District has some good medieval architecture and important groups of vernacular buildings of the 16th and 17th century, its other outstanding architectural significance is for the villa architecture of the picturesque as it evolved in the period between 1780 and 1850. A second flowering of fine houses and gardens in the late 19th- early 20th century and Arts and Crafts period is exemplified in villas by C.F.Voysey and M.H.Baillie Scott on Windermere and the garden designs of Thomas Mawson, whose practice was based in Windermere.</p> <p>The Lake District as a <i>locus classicus</i> for picturesque style was regarded internationally and its literature was important influence on American landscape designers such as Olmsted and Vaux (designers of Central Park, New York).</p>	<p>Jacques 1999; Menuge & Goodall 2002; Pevsner 1969, Robinson 1986,1991; Ruskin 1837-8; Perrian & Robinson 1998.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>18th - century - early 20th - century designed woodland and garden landscapes and their architecture are vulnerable because of lack of awareness of their significance and specific protection.</p>	

Significance: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Poetic and literary associations of the Lake District		National / International	Low - Medium
<p>From 1799, the Lake District became the home of the poet William Wordsworth, a return to the landscape of his youth and creating a cultural focus for his contemporaries. He was joined there by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, visitors included many of the principal authors and thinkers of the era, Thomas de Quincey, Sir Walter Scott, John Keats, John Stuart Mill. The themes of the Romantic age - of liberty and revolution, the discovery of nature, and a fascination with the human mind and creative imagination - were explored in a landscape valued for the intensity of spiritual feeling that its awesome natural scenery engendered, and for its illustration of an harmonious relation of man and nature.</p> <p>Wordsworth's <i>A Guide Through the District of the Lakes</i> was his most popular prose work, highly influential, remaining in print continuously since its anonymous publication in 1810. Based on an intimate knowledge of the landscape and its people, he described it as 'a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy', prefiguring the creation of national parks nearly 150 years later.</p> <p>The Wordsworth Trust, recognised internationally for the excellence of its educational and artistic activities was founded in 1891 <i>for the eternal possession of those who love English poetry the world over</i>.</p> <p>The influence of ideas about the relation of nature and culture, created here, spread internationally. There is a continuing tradition of writers and artists, working in a variety of media but all inspired by the Cumbrian landscape and its people, from Harriet Martineau, Beatrix Potter, Arthur Ransome, and Hugh Walpole, to Norman Nicholson, Alfred Wainwright and Melvyn Bragg.</p>	<p>Bicknell 1984; Bicknell & Woof 1983; Hanson 1992; Wordsworth Trust 2002.</p>	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Continuing creative growth to sustain the Lake District as a living cultural centre.</p>	

Significance: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	Source	Significance	Vulnerability
Ideas and action: conservation and environmentalism		National / International	Low
<p>The Lake District is a place where influential thinkers and writers have focused their efforts to conserve the countryside and promoted ideas that have come to have currency internationally. For the last century and a half, the Lake District has been the site of successive campaigns - both against the adverse impact of development (railways and tourism, reservoir schemes and afforestation) and in favour of public access and the public interest in the countryside. At each stage these debates have advanced the environmental agenda earning the Lake District a reputation as '<i>a forcing house for new ideas about the proper relationship between man, property, morality and the environment</i>' (Marshall & Walton).</p> <p>John Ruskin made his home at Brantwood on Coniston from 1872. His writing on art, landscape and political economy had a wide international reception. He took part actively in campaigns against damaging change in the Lake District but was equally influential in the inspiration that his ideas fired in others. Two international figures include William Morris, who led campaigns for the conservation of Venice, and John Muir, pioneer of the American national parks movement. Ruskin was actively involved with the formation of the Lake District Defence Society and its leading figures, particularly Canon H. D. Rawnsley, whose vision led in turn to the founding of the modern National Trust.</p> <p>The National Trust's pioneering work in holding and caring for 'places of historic interest or natural beauty' has provided a model for similar organisations in Australia, America, India and the Caribbean. It now has three million members and has the largest membership of any conservation organisation in Europe and the second largest in the world.</p> <p>The culmination of this tradition of protection and preservation was the designation of the Lake District National Park in 1951, one of the two first national parks in the UK, with its aims to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Lake District and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.</p>	Symonds 1936; Berry & Beard 1980; Marshall & Walton 1981; Bicknell and Woof 1983; Gaze 1988; Battrick 1987; Dowthwaite 1991; Walton 1995; Gifford 1995.	<p>Vulnerable aspects:</p> <p>Radical ideas about conservation vulnerable to 'fossilisation'.</p> <p>Limited national and international recognition of this formative role.</p>	