

L A N D S C A P E W I T H / O U T
C O N S T R A I N T S
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Introduction

England's landscape is an integral part of our national identity. It forms the basis of our judgment of scenic aesthetic beauty, and is the product of thousands of years of changes in processes, and should not in any way be considered a natural landscape.

Is our landscape, and the processes that have developed within, now restricted by our need to preserve and protect the most iconic feature of these islands? Does this restriction reduce the social, economic and environmental value of the landscape? Are government policies, such as the current complex and expensive planning system, seen as a way of impeding and blocking development, and agricultural subsidies, a system that costs the taxpayer millions, that leads our farmers into a trap of working to gain these subsidies exacerbating this problem?

What would happen if this situation and attitude were to change?

Why is our Landscape the way it is?

“England is ... The stream, the tradition, the living continuity, of public opinion, public conduct, public intercourse and behaviour of English people towards one another and towards the hills and valleys, the waving trees and fair sunshine of this land.” Stuart. G (1916)

“England, the better part of the best island in the whole world... A paradise of pleasure and the garden of god.” Chamberlayne. E. (1671)

“England is the country, and the country is England” Baldwin. S (1926)

All the above quotes refer in some way to the English landscape; to define what England is, indicating its importance to the nation over a long period of time. This has become ingrained in our psyche that our national identity comes from our perceptions of our landscape, and how we behave and respect it. This topic is worthy of extensive study on its own, but for our purposes as a precursor to the main issue it will be described briefly.

Formation

The English landscape has changed dramatically over the last 2000 years, and there is some evidence now that dramatic landscape change, for anthropocentric needs has been taking place on our islands constantly since Mesolithic times 7000 to 8000 years ago Hoskins W, G (1955). The major changes to our landscape came with the further development of agriculture. As agricultural methods change, and the requirements of the land change, man alters the land for that need. This process has been going on in England since the dawn of agriculture, and the settled way of life it brings. At times these changes were accelerated, for instance during the Roman occupation of Britain with the creation of new road systems, farming technologies and engineering. One of the most significant aspects of the change in the English landscape was the development of enclosures associated with farming. The physical act of man creating enclosed fields has been carried out since the dawn of agriculture, and this has continued to develop along with agricultural practices. From the small irregular enclosures associated with pre Roman England, to the Celtic field systems defined by their almost square appearance, to the open field system and on to the Parliamentary enclosures acts of the 18th century. Hoskins believed that the acts really only affected a belt across from the Dorset coast to the East Riding of Yorkshire. Where the act affects were the strongest, Hoskins states that “One sees on such maps the new landscape being planned, and can see how completely it was drawn afresh, regardless of almost anything that has gone before.” Hoskins W.G (1955). Advances in farming were to do with the selection of higher yield varieties of crops, the breeding of cattle, improved techniques for example crop rotation, and more advanced equipment. This meant that by the 1700s, farming had been changed from a very near subsistence occupation, to a near industrial process allowing farmers to use more of their land and also begin to reclaim some land previously considered too wet or otherwise unsuitable, thus the land began to change more rapidly. Therefore the enclosure acts accelerated the change in our landscape and led to the way we still perceive it. As larger, richer land owners consolidated and enclosed lands, they frequently displaced smaller farmers and allotment owners. (Country Lovers, 2011). This resulted in creating a large number of landless people. The landless people usually migrated to cities to find work, thus creating a

feeling of loss and lack of identity amongst these people. As can be seen, the successive agricultural practices of man have developed the English landscape and have removed any trace of the natural. However, the myth that the English landscape is natural still persists, why is this?

Around the time of the enclosure acts, artists such as J.M.W Turner and J. Constable, and writers such as the Bronte sisters and notable poets such as Wordsworth became popular within the Romantic Movement. Turner and Constable were eminently concerned with the depiction of the English landscape. Constable painted landscape images based on the agricultural landscape near his family's farm in Suffolk, when Constable himself was based in London. It is this removal from the rural aspect that Constable viewed as the national story. People; particularly in the mobile middle class, and poorer displaced people migrating from rural areas to urban areas for work, found that the paintings of Constable evoked emotions for the rural life, "looking back at the country, icons of home." Helsinger E. K. (1997) It is in this way that the idea and images of nostalgia for an ideal rural landscape become present in homes across the country. Turner's paintings show a change in the painter's attitude towards the English landscape. Helsinger E. K (1997) states that Turner's pre-1815 paintings show the importance of agriculture to England, (England was at that time involved in the Napoleonic wars). Later images from 1820 to 1830 show more of a conflict between the old and new where Helsinger E. K (1997) describes the clash of the new industries and the existing agricultural practices. In this way the reaction to change within the landscape can be highlighted, as Turner felt uneasy with the changes as did Hoskins.



Image 1 Leeds 1816. J, W, M, Turner
W, M, Turner

Image 2 Newcastle -on-Tyne 1823. J,

These images painted 7 years apart show Helsinger's ideas. The Leeds image uses brighter colours even for the industry in the background, whereas the Newcastle-on-Tyne image shows the city painted in much darker colours.

Change can evoke both positive and negative emotions within people. Orians (1986) states that those smaller changes within the landscape, can produce favourable emotions, whereas large change is more likely to produce negative reactions. For example the scale of changes undergone in both the 1800's and later 1900's due to the progression of technology, and the reactions which resulted from it. Turner's images of the English landscape also reached a wider audience in the middle classes when they were published in books. These books provided their owners with a selected piece of the English rural Landscape as Helsinger E. K.

(1997) states “this might have been construed as a gesture toward inclusion within the ranks of the landowners.” These books were often used as a substitute for, or reminder of travels, as tourism had gained in popularity in the 18th century. This sense of ownership of imagery and prose began to change the public perception of land and its ownership. The repeated publication of images of private land began to cultivate the idea of public land. Indeed Wordsworth described the Lake District as “a sort of national property” Wordsworth W. (1810), the main point from this, was that these images and books were being published for the masses, not just the landed gentry. This continued with the publication of popular literature, which again popularised the romantic view of the English landscape. In particular Emily Bronte’s book *Wuthering Heights*, portrays the landscape as an ever changing feature, strongly relating to perceptions of a windswept wild northern England, when in fact this area is heavily managed and not at all wild. The engagement between artists and the English landscape came at a culturally important time. At this time Britain as a whole was undergoing the effects of the industrial revolution, causing massive changes socially and economically, causing major internal migration from the rural to the urban. The end of the Napoleonic wars shaped Britain as a global superpower leading to the peak of the British Empire, which encouraged the spread of the British culture and peoples around the globe. This in turn may have fostered the need for a strong national identity to belong to. Also at this time the enclosure acts had begun to change the landscape and caused much displacement of rural families. All these effects led to the English landscape becoming a commodity (especially in emotional imagery) that could be transported anywhere in the empire, or could be viewed in an inner city and convey a lost link back to the rural landscape the onlooker had left behind.

Discussion

Why and how has this culturally important engagement with the landscape been preserved throughout the centuries? Firstly, could the landscape be considered a link back to the heyday of Britain and its Empire, a reminder of what has gone before and what is now? Possibly the almost nationalistic attitude toward our own landscape has lasted through other forms throughout the 20th century. Crucially people still feel the need to link themselves to a strong rural identity, especially as the migration from rural to urban still continues today.

“Landlords come and go, but farming goes on” Hoskins. W.G (1955). Hoskins states here farming is always needed, and as previously mentioned this is a continuously changing process. As new systems come in, the landscape has been adapted to suit. Why then does Hoskins himself go on to say “Especially since the year 1914, every single change in the English landscape has either uglified or destroyed its meaning or both... It is a distasteful subject but it must be faced for a few moments.” This statement is indicative of the attitude of its author, one who detests the changes that have occurred since 1914. Hoskins revels in the changes of the pre 20th century and looks on them with a reverence as part of a larger product, layers of change added to make a whole, a palimpsest. But when he describes the changes in the 20th century when fields are again increased in size, Hoskins describes “business-men farmers” in poor light. His next statement is almost hypocritical as he describes the loss of the “Immemorial landscape of the English countryside” thus flying in the face of the 2000 years of major layers of change that he has previously written about, there can be no one memory to relate back to. Considering the fact that Hoskins’ memory can only be traced back to the cultural

understanding he has gained by personal experience, is he not himself a product of understanding our landscape based on 18th century romantic notions. This it seems is not an uncommon opinion as we have become a nation of preservationists. National Trust, English Heritage and so on signify the importance of preserving our cultural heritage. It appears that Hoskins and others seem to want to halt the next stage of development of the English landscape.

As Penrose S states in his introduction to the English Heritage book, "Images of Change", there are numerous iconic aspects to the English landscape. He goes on to list mainly features in the landscape, such as Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall, rather than the landscape character as a whole, which I believe is the more important, for it is this whole that we imagine when we hear or think of England's green and pleasant land. Penrose then goes on to state that the English Heritage's pamphlet "Change and Creation" rejects the common lament, that Hoskins. W. G agrees with; that all current and recent change in the landscape is only loss. This implies that the common perception of our landscape is one of an unchanging, pristine place, that the landscape of the long past is somehow better than the landscapes of the future. It is this attitude of total preservation that must be addressed.

Perhaps sculptor Anthony Gormly sums up the issues surrounding our own attitudes to change in his forward to the English Heritage book "Images of Change", "Ours is the most densely populated land in Europe and our land is made not found. And perhaps the least populated parts - those that are most venerable to cultural projection and resist the signs of change - are the ones with which we most fervently identify. It is important that we are participants in the evolution of our chosen dwelling place and recognise the change, rather than simply being inheritors of the fact and fiction of a place of birth" Penrose, S. Gormly, A (2007).

Importance of Transience

As discussed the English landscape has undergone a massive amount of change over centuries. This change has been accelerated at certain times and has remained slow at others; all in response to several driving forces. These forces are –

- Social
- Environmental
- Economic

These major forces can then be subdivided into several other categories, for example culture, leisure, and agriculture. These forces allow or reject change within our landscape. The importance of transience is to allow one system to change or be discarded in favour of a better system, this is important with regard to all of these forces.

The first question would be - do we need change in the UK, and more specifically in England? This question needs to be split into its component driving forces.

On an economic level, England received over €2,000,000,000 in farming subsidies in 2009 alone. (Farmsubsidy 2011). This would indicate that there is need to rethink the farming subsidies on an EU level, and perhaps even a global one, as we will see later, the UK as a whole is reliant on global foodstuffs. The cost involved in producing food for the UK is increasing due to a number of factors on both a national and global scale. A paper produced in 2007 by DEFRA cited several reasons why the UK food supply may be in danger, the reasons include -

- A rise in agricultural commodity prices
- A rise in oil prices
- Changing climate

As the UK imports a third of its food, the UK's food security remains vulnerable to any fluctuations in the global market and has a responsibility to develop methods and systems to increase food production both nationally and globally, either through research methods, or direct monetary assistance. Even though our own farmers fail to produce food without the need for massive monetary assistance from the European Union (EU), the present environment secretary Caroline Spelman has recently called for a fundamentally different Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This would help address the new global food challenges posed by global warming and food security issues BBC (2011). The culmination of the policy would be the removal of farming subsidies, although the European Union does not accept that the removal of subsidies will be possible in the foreseeable future.

In a carbon conscious era how can we still rely on international food imports for our produce? 76% of our apples come from overseas, (Blythman, J. 2007), 66% of our tomatoes are imported (BTGA 2011), and the UK is also New Zealand's biggest customer for New Zealand Lamb, some 11,000 plus miles.

The use and management of our landscape provides environmental benefits to both biocentric and anthropocentric elements. Cleaner air means longer life expectancy and reduced morbidity which assists in the reduction of costs for the National Health Service (NHS). This is the same for the provision of accessible public green space, by encouraging outdoor activity and reducing the sedentary population by 1 % the NHS in the UK, could save £1.44 billion, which equates to £2350 for every man woman and child. On a social and cultural level the rejection of transience within the landscape begins to limit iconic elements in our everyday lives, by not allowing any new changes to be made, no further iconic elements can develop as described in English Heritage's book "Images of Change".

As can be seen all the driving forces link together, whether this is through environmental factors providing an economic saving by improving health, or the socio/cultural factors helping to provide the environmental spaces, so a new scenario of change could affect multiple areas.

The point of the above was to highlight the need for change, and relate that need to the idea that change is a new evolution of the English landscape, and as such continues Hoskins idea of palimpsest. The change being driven by the new challenges faced, thus adding a new meaning to the landscape and not as Hoskins fears, destroying all meaning.

Constraining policies

This section will look at the government policies that have inadvertently restricted the ability of the landscape and its people, to innovate and react to change these policies, include the planning system and agricultural subsidies.

The obvious place to start would be the planning system as a whole, which is a subject that could be studied in significant detail, but here will be highlighted as a potential issue. The planning process is a complex system. In a recent article in the Financial Times (2011), Pickles E and Osborne G the current Secretary of State and Chancellor respectively claimed that Whitehall had issued some 3250 pages of guidance over the last 5 years however it is likely that this process will become even more complex in the future. In addition to this, planning is a massively expensive process, the example which the article cites is; planning permission in London's West end costs twice as much as Paris and 10 times more than in Brussels, thus the planning system as a whole becomes an economic and bureaucratic constraint to change. Thus resulting in it becoming the domain of specialists, and inaccessible and incomprehensible to most people, therefore leaving communities confused about how decisions are made and creating animosity, according to Pickles, E and Osborne G.

The current planning system originates from the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. The act formed a basic system of development control, plans and enforcement. It did this by making all developments subject to planning permission. The act also instigated the creation of development plans for the whole of the country. These plans helped to inform which areas were to be developed or preserved. Most of this system is still largely used today, and the elements shown below still form the back bone of planning policy:-

- Primary Legislation – The basic framework for the system
- National planning policy - Sets the basic goals for planning.
- Development plans - These are the main documents for guiding development control decisions, and for setting out future development issues.
- Development control - The system of issuing permits for development and taking action against developments that are not authorised.

At national policy level, the standards of planning guidance in England were the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), which were prepared by the Government after public consultation and used by Local Authorities to inform their planning decisions. These were replaced in 2004 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act by Planning Policy Statements (PPS). To confuse matters, some PPG's are still in use, some 9 out of 21 planning policies are still PPG's.

Planning policies set out guidance on a large range of topics for example :-

- PPG 2 Greenbelts - Greenbelts prevent un-restricted urban sprawl, and attempt to promote sustainable urban development by re-use of brownfield sites.
- PPS 5 Planning for the historical environment

- PPS 9 Biodiversity and geological conservation - This policy covers Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation
- PPG 20 Coastal planning
- PPG 24 Planning and Noise.

Regional level planning took the form of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), which were introduced in 2004 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. These were abolished under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, so there is now no regional level of planning, which demonstrates the origins of the current Government's ideas to simplify the planning system.

Local level planning comes from each Local Authority's own Local Plan or Unitary Development Plan, though again these were to be replaced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 by Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The problem was that the LDF's were based on PPS, PPG's and RSS's but when the RSS's were abolished most LDF's were removed to be re-worked, therefore a significant number of Local Authorities are still using their Local Plans.

It should also be noted that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have their own different planning systems.

As can be seen the planning system is quite complex, above is a seriously abridged version of the main points, in addition to these there are a number of Special Forms of Control to do with heritage and conservation. These are:

- Tree Preservation Orders
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas
- Parks/Gardens of Special Historic Interest
- Listed Landscapes.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are becoming more commonly required for larger scale developments. The process of an EIA is that information is gathered by the developer and other significant parties regarding the anticipated environmental effects of a development.

Another important part of the current planning system appropriate to Landscape Architects is the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). These are used to help inform local planning decisions and Local Development Frameworks, and are created on a wide range of scales from local to national. These encourage preference to be given to development within the stated character, which is another way we objectify the landscape as it is currently in order to preserve its character for the future.

The current government however is addressing the planning system as a matter of urgency, it is hoped that this change will reduce the planning system document from 1000 pages to 100 pages and make the language used more understandable.

Dame Fiona Reynolds states in a recent article in the Telegraph that “Over the last 60 years the planning system has helped guide good development to the right places. A bad reform of the system will lead to bad development” (Evans, M 2011) This seems odd, as was stated earlier the planning system can create animosity within communities leading to a system that attempts to block development, and any development can be considered good or bad depending on your point of view. Whereas, the proposed reforms will give a “presumption in favour of sustainable development” (Pickles.E 2011). This quote implies that a development that is sustainable will be granted permission unless proved otherwise, this is where a large number of objections to the reform come from, as people read this as planning permission being automatically granted to applications provided they meet the ‘sustainable’ criteria. The sustainable criteria are however split in to three sections:-

- Planning for People, meaning the development would be socially sustainable.
- Planning for Places, meaning an environmentally sustainable development.
- Planning for Prosperity, meaning an economically sustainable development.

The worry is that the planning for prosperity could almost always take preference over the other criteria, as there will be always one party that makes money in a development. This leads to the opposition claiming that the reform will enable the destruction of the countryside. Doubtless this debate will roll on for a long time, even after the consultation period has ended, as it stirs the feelings of identity discussed previously..

Other Constraints

This section will look at the real life case study of a country that removed farming subsidies to strengthen their own agricultural industry. Obviously the strengthening of the agricultural industry was the main aim of the proposals, but as we will see, what is interesting, is what happened to the landscape as a result. This scenario would also mirror the current Minister for Environment Food and Rural affairs, sentiments about reforming the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy.

New Zealand has always had a strong agricultural export industry to the UK. This is because New Zealand was officially included in the British Empire in 1840, and therefore gained preferential trading rights with the UK. Since then New Zealand has provided large amounts of agricultural products to the UK. Even as late as 1964, 61% of New Zealand’s meat exports, 94% of butter and 87% of the cheese produced were sent to the UK. In the 1970’s problems arose in New Zealand when Britain joined the European Union, which meant that New Zealand no longer had the right to preferential trading on its exports to the UK.

To coincide with this situation, the New Zealand government of the time introduced numerous policies to help stimulate an increase in agricultural production. These policies took the form of subsidies to increase fertiliser use and increase herd sizes. These policies obviously clashed with the current reductions in UK exports, but were designed to increase income for farmers during the harder times. However this actually led to an oversupply of commodities, for example lamb, leading to a reduction in the price received by the farmer.

The government responded to this situation and the subsequent increase in inflation with aid packages designed to help farmers through these tougher times, involving new training, further subsidies and other

handouts. This next set of subsidies began to trap farmers into certain markets as farmers began producing crops in order to obtain money. This is currently happening in the UK as farmers turn to crops which attract subsidies. The distortion of market trends and manipulation of prices according to Caroline Spelman is one of the main reasons for the proposed reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (BBC 2011) as discussed previously. Subsequently, the farmers in New Zealand lobbied to reform the subsidies, not the full removal that was eventually implemented, but a series of measures to control inflation and encourage agricultural diversity. This led to a wider study on farming subsidies and their eventual removal in 1984.

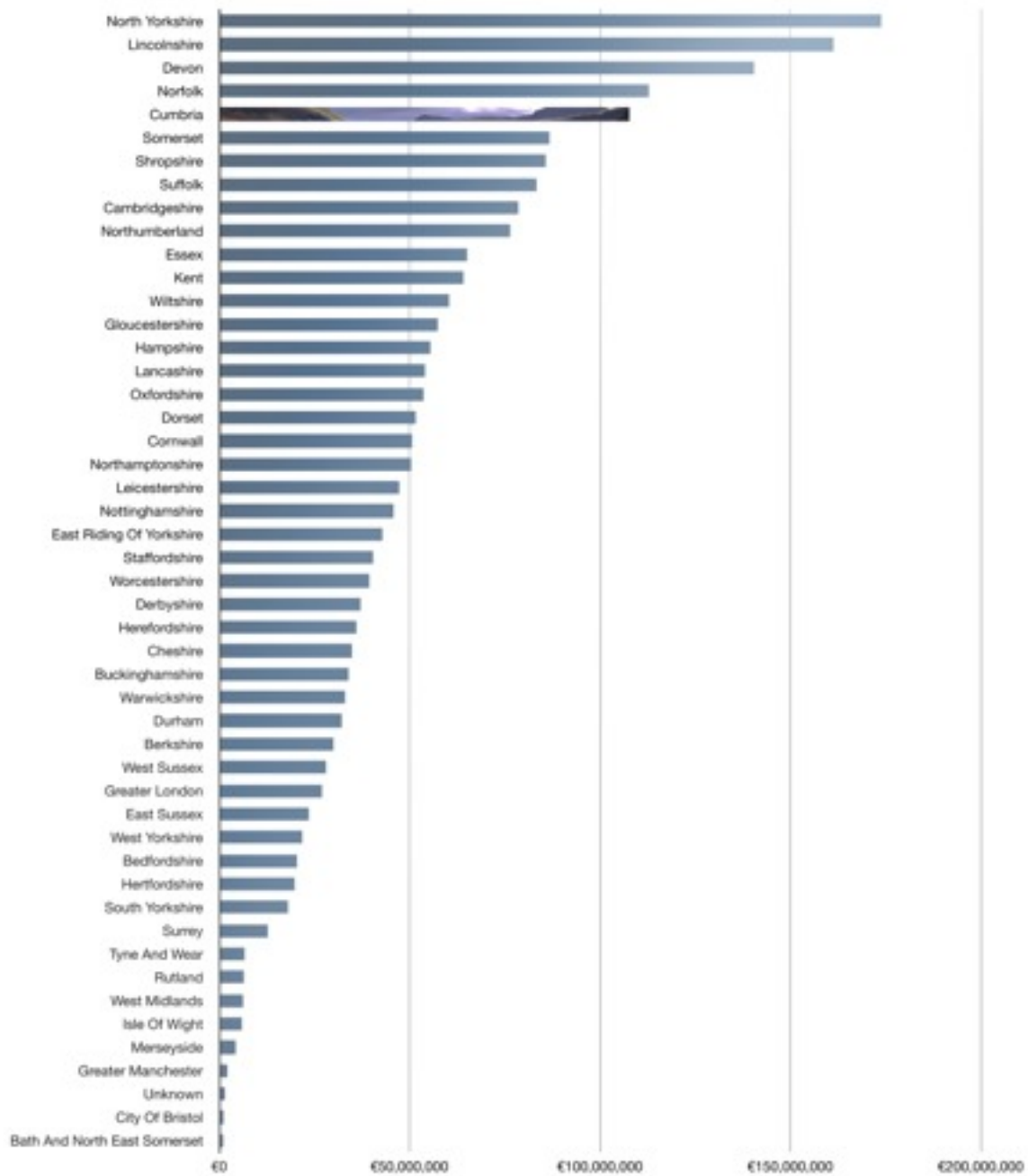
The removal of the subsidies did affect farmers and land use as a whole. According to Sayre, L (2003) 1% or 800 farmers were forced to leave the land. The most affected group were sheep farmers; the group who received the most subsidies. Secondary industries were also affected, for example feed producers, agricultural suppliers and transport, but this was regarded as a result of those industries' inefficiency. In terms of land, the number of farms has remained steady but the amount of land used has fallen due to the consolidation of farms. This surplus land has been turned over to forestry or allowed to revert to native conditions. According to Lattimore R. (2004) farmers diversified where they could leading to the development of rural tourism. Diversification was not limited to tourism alone. The wine industry grew as a result of the reforms, and other enterprises were deer farming, dairying, goats and the production of Kiwi fruits. This demonstrated the ability of the agricultural industry to adapt to changing situations and effectively utilise the land available. Possibly the most exciting thing to come from the reform was the innovation produced.

As can be seen in this case study, New Zealand's political situation was somewhat different to the UK, as we have not suffered the removal of preferential trade agreements. However, the results of the subsidy reforms could be comparable as the farming industries are quite similar.

The New Zealand scenario is relevant because the New Zealand agricultural industry has been compared to the Scottish agricultural industry based on products and population size; all except the population size of Scotland's agricultural industry are comparable to the English agricultural industry.

The SAC Scottish Agricultural College, (2008) Factsheet compares the Scottish, Irish, Danish and New Zealand agricultural industries. Both the Danish and New Zealand industries are praised as being extremely competitive, the former since the agricultural reforms in 1984, this compared to this the UK's is described as modest. The farm structures in New Zealand are also praised for their efficiency mainly based on their ability to react to changing markets and their size.

The following graph shows the farming subsidies received by English regions in 2009.



Graph 1 Agricultural Subsidies by Region. Created using information from Farmsubsidy.org

The graph shows the extent of funding each area received in just one year (Farmsubsidy.org 2011) state that England received € 23,659,375,051 in the last ten years.

So what could we expect in England if subsidies were removed and the landscape was allowed to change using the proposed Planning reforms?

The next section of this dissertation will discuss the above statement and look at potential scenarios proposed by the MA study and how the authorisation of change in the landscape will allow the removal of these subsidies, resulting in innovation, the advancement of the agricultural industry and the strengthening of the economic situation.

Scenarios of Change

What could be expected if farming subsidies were removed and the planning system was reformed? In this way the removal of the farming subsidies would act as a catalyst for change as it has done in the past, and this change would be allowed by the reforms to the planning system proposed by the Government. By looking at the New Zealand precedent we can extrapolate three scenarios for England:-

Sink

This is the most pessimistic scenario (In anthropocentric, economic thought), in which a high percentage of farms would close. Resulting in large areas of land reverting to the natural state, thus allowing a large amount of ephemeral change but losing a large number of agricultural jobs within the area, could this job loss be softened by the introduction of more tourist features? Like the New Zealand precedent. This depends mostly on the area and it being an already established tourist attraction.

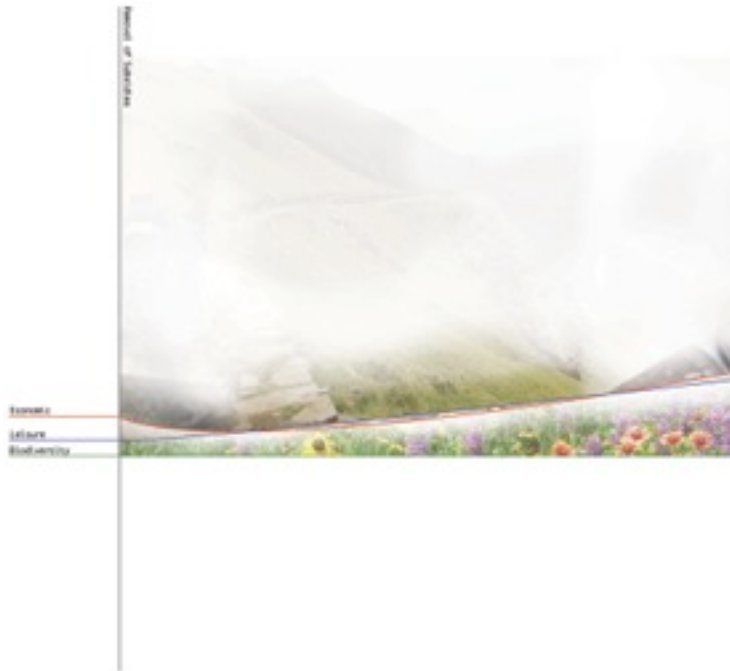


As can be seen in Graph 1 Cumbria is a top recipient of agricultural subsidies, leading to it being heavily affected by loss of subsidies. In the MA project the Shap area was looked at in terms of this set of scenarios. Though the scenario picked was the Swim scenario, allowing the areas economy to diversify using the

resources of the land. This however would not be the political choice, as it would require a large amount of funding to start this process, in reality looking at the New Zealand precedent the Shap area would be massively affected by the removal of farm subsidies, as large proportions of the agriculture in the area is based on sheep farming and there is very little tourism in this overlooked area at the edge of Cumbria. This would lead to the economically viable and environmentally beneficial sink scenario, loss of agriculture in a large area leading to loss of jobs and migration out of the area.

Float

This is the middle ground for anthropocentric and biocentric elements. In this scenario smaller farms will be amalgamated into the larger farms, these larger farms would become more efficient, and would create fringe areas on the edge of them allowing natural processes and development.



The float scenario is one that could take place in Lancashire as graph 1 show it is somewhere in the middle ground for receiving subsidies, allowing the area to react to change, becoming more efficient.

Swim

This is the most optimistic scenario, and the most balanced for both biodiversity and anthropocentric features, note this is not biocentric as this implies no human interaction when in fact there will be significant human interaction. In this scenario there will be some farm losses but the industry will diversify to allow more productive farming on the land for example deer farming, high yield cattle farming and possibly even energy crops.



The swim scenario could most probably take place in areas like Bath and North East Somerset, as these areas receive comparatively little in the way of subsidies. This would allow the economy to adapt quickly if required to develop new markets.

The exiting part of these scenarios is the opportunities that could be created in the different areas. Allowing the identity of the area to flourish as agriculture, environments and social activities develop, each in there each own unique way depending on what is provided by the landscape in that particular area.

Conclusion

This dissertation does not propose any answers, merely a set of scenarios for change; the most reasonable of these being the removal of farming subsidies and reform of the planning system. This scenario is within reach and the idea of the removal of farming subsidies was recently stated by the Secretary of State for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs, and there are major reforms penned in for the planning system, the consultation period for which will conclude in October 2011.

Land, in terms of space and landscape in terms of, cultural social and economic elements, are both resources to use, one finite the other is able to adjust and absorb new layers and as a result change. It is this transcendence from one layer to another that Hoskins celebrates in his book, but then he seems to want to keep landscape as a static feature, allowing no further changes to the process. As we have discussed this is a common lament, new development is seen as a soulless socio-economic requirement, rather than progression of the story. This is not a unique situation, consider the myriad of classic car / motorbike / collectables owners. The reason they collect and restore these things is because they are icons of the owner's favourite time, they have meaning, sometimes just to that owner, sometimes to a larger audience. It is the same for the English landscape. It is iconic of the romantic views of the 1800's and we as a nation want to preserve that notion, even if it is a creation of the previous 8000 years of development.

Ownership, of our landscape is what Anthony Gormly calls for, in the forward to the English Heritage book "Images of Change". There should be acceptance of change and ownership of the future landscapes. It is a positive thing that we have collectively commoditised our landscape; it allows us a strong cultural link, but what is needed is a change in attitude to allow positive changes within the landscape. This attitude will need to be addressed before any reforms can take place. This can be seen by the current opposition to the proposed planning reforms by The National Trust and its 3.5 million members, twenty-two environmental pressure groups and twenty three former presidents of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Better communication of future goals and positions may be the best way to enable the population, to begin to take ownership of the future of our landscape.

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