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creating a setting for investment
Economic landscapes



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Economic landscapes

“It is possible to facilitate economic development through green structure and to make places as settings for investment.”

Gideon Amos, Director Town & Country Planning Association (UK)

“Le cadre de vie est une composante essentielle du bien-être de chacun et un puissant facteur de développement socioéconomique.”

Gouvernement wallon, Contrat d’Avenir pour la Wallonie

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A SETTING FOR INVESTMENT AT CASTROP RAUXEL IN GERMANY

I. Foreword

“Our challenge is to ensure that both our natural and built assets make the greatest possible contribution to the regional, national and international economy in a sustainable way.”

Regional and national strategies have for some time recognised a link between high quality environments and successful prosperous regional economies. The robust evidence-base to support this connection has however not been strong. Our challenge is to ensure that both our natural and built assets make the greatest possible contribution to the regional, national and international economy in a sustainable way. Decision making is increasingly influenced by climate change, efficient use of resources, the drive to increase quality of life and to gain a better understanding of the economic, social and environmental functions of Green Infrastructure. Sustainability presents major opportunities but it demands consideration in all our areas of activity and influence.

Developing projects that bring about new business and economic opportunities that recognise and utilise high quality landscapes to deliver benefits for people, business and the environment are therefore ever more important.

‘creating a setting for investment’ does just that. For the first time we have in our hands a body of evidence that substantiates what academics and some strategists have recognised – that vital interconnectedness of our economy, our communities and enhanced landscapes.

For the first time we have a body of information from which we can learn and a comprehensive study on how to manage and improve the quality of our landscape to maximise an area’s economic viability. By doing so, we will also look after our precious environmental resources and improve quality of life for local communities.

Whether as a policy maker, regeneration professional, practitioner, planner or investor, we need to look closely and respond to findings of this important project.

Tom Riordan – Chief Executive, Yorkshire Forward

2. Making it happen; pathways for policy makers and practitioners

CSI recommends the following series of pathways and actions to maximise regional and local area landscape quality, and to reap the wider benefits of such improvements in terms of increased competitiveness and enhanced economic progress. The pathways, and who in particular should be travelling them, are developed more fully in the main text of this document.

- To maximise the competitiveness of cities and regions, agencies at every level should develop and deliver regional or area-based strategies for landscape quality enhancement.
- Regional strategies incorporating landscape enhancements should be linked to a marketing strategy aimed at projecting the image of a new landscape and improved quality of life.
- Regional and sub-regional strategies and action plans should tackle detractors and seek to reinforce attractors to economic investment, particularly along transport corridors and at key gateways to economic centres.
- Local landscape improvements should be implemented within the strategic area-wide approach to reinforce the marketable regional image. To maximise the positive economic impact of landscape treatments priority should be given to access roads and entrances where high landscape quality will create a good first impression.
- To maximise occupancy levels developers should invest in higher quality landscape development of sites and their immediate settings.
- Site masterplans that enable a strategic approach to the creation of a site identity, including high quality landscape, and which address ongoing maintenance should be prepared ahead of development.
- Planners should work with developers to agree flexible design guidelines to ensure that new developments contribute to the local area and regional image and maximise economic competitiveness. The planning application process should promote these guidelines, and raise developer’s aspirations for landscape quality; where appropriate by attaching conditions to planning permissions.
- Development schemes that contribute to an overall enhancement of landscape quality in the wider area, particularly through the incorporation of significant well-designed tree planting and development of brownfield sites, should be encouraged.
- Agencies should work together to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to address maintenance and security needs on both new and existing developments.
- Property developers should consider enhanced investment in site landscape quality to maximise the immediate opportunity for improving rental incomes and longer term opportunity to increase land value.
- Developers should work with planners and communities to establish an impetus for environmental improvements beyond the site level and into the local area and the wider region. This might include financial contributions where the market is such that improvements may result in enhanced capital values.
- Public sector investment is needed to improve landscape quality in and around economic development sites – competitiveness benefits arise for the city or region, but are not necessarily experienced directly or immediately by individual developers.
- To contribute to successful, high quality schemes that improve local quality of life, the input of local communities should be recognised as valuable; they should be involved throughout the development of a scheme from the earliest opportunity.

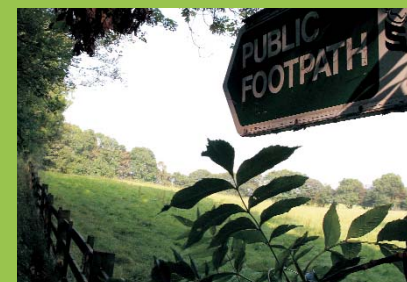


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3. creating a setting for investment

3.1 Why this project matters: the need for action

Five years on from the launch of the creating a setting for investment project, consciousness of the relationship between the environment and the economy has never been more relevant. Taking a holistic approach – integrating economic, environmental and community measures – is high on everyone's agenda, from business leaders and politicians to the general public. This has been made especially clear by the Gothenberg Strategy for sustainable economic, social and environmental development and the impact of the recently re-launched Lisbon Strategy with its aim to make Europe “the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment by 2010”.

High quality environments have an important role to play in building competitive cities and regions and in contributing to quality of life for both communities and workers. Site based economic investment decisions are shaped by a variety of factors including transport infrastructure, access to skilled labour, proximity to markets and supply chains. However these decisions are also influenced by perceptions of the area or regional ‘image’ as an attractive, prosperous setting for living, working and therefore investing in.

There is widespread recognition of the growing importance of the knowledge-based economy in Western Europe. In many countries, regions characterised by the decline of traditional industries (such as coal mining and steel making), and their legacy of unattractive, low quality environments and derelict and degraded brownfield land, are seeking to attract new forms of development and to compete in this vital ‘knowledge’ marketplace. Places that offer a high

quality of life; including the quality of the environment for both living and working, have a competitive advantage when seeking to attract the highly qualified and increasingly mobile and discerning employees who are needed in knowledge based enterprises. In areas where there is a surplus of commercial properties, cities, regions and private land developers need to break new ground in seeking to enhance their sites and the wider ‘setting’ to attract investment. All those engaged in the process of regeneration and business development in these industrial areas, need to play their part in addressing the link between economy and the environment. The relationships are, however, far from straightforward and this complexity needs to be understood in order for action and change to be achieved.

Until now no substantive work has been undertaken to assess how the environment in general, and landscape quality in particular is weighed alongside other investment factors.

Strategic planning documents sometimes make the link between economic development, environmental quality and quality of life but little evidence exists to actually prove this link. Several major reports over the last few years have highlighted the benefits of high environmental quality within the economic context, but none specifically examine the impact of the quality of the landscape on investment and development processes. There is also a lack of understanding and evidence about how landscape quality influences investor choice and the benefits it brings in helping to make areas more attractive for economic growth. Without such work it is difficult to embed strategies for creating settings for investment into policy and practice. Using Interreg IIB European funding, the **creating a setting for investment (CSI)** project aimed to demonstrate the links between landscape quality and economic investment decisions and so address this lack of evidence.

Environmental quality and landscape quality

These are connected but distinct concepts; *environmental quality* is primarily concerned with physical aspects such as air quality, production of greenhouse gases, access to sustainable transport; waste management, water quality and biodiversity. *Landscape quality* is a holistic concept, a complex sum of environmental, social and economic factors to be considered at site, setting, local and regional scales; each having some bearing on quality of life and investors choices. CSI identified six influential factors on landscape quality as research ‘themes’; physical environment, image and identity, access and linkages, economic aspects, social aspects, management. This enabled research into individual components, ratings/comparisons of quality and targeting of improvement actions.

CSI learns from the efforts made by regions suffering from post-industrial decline in Germany, Belgium and the UK as they work to progress economic development by creating a positive image through high quality landscapes, which can in turn promote a higher quality of life. Fundamentally, the project helps to realise sustainable, balanced development and reconcile the often-perceived contradictory objectives of building economic prosperity and protecting environmental assets.

3.2 Lessons for the future

This document presents the key lessons learnt from the creating a setting for investment project. Evidence gathered from both research and on-the-ground demonstration sites, has led to important conclusions that will be of particular relevance to development agencies and regional policy makers, environment agencies and others involved in planning and implementing landscape enhancement programmes. Those conclusions will also be useful to private sector land owners and developers, project managers, estate surveyors and fund managers, local planning authorities, and local, regional and national politicians.

A brief description of the research approach and key findings has been included along with case study examples. Together, these illustrate the ‘Pathways to investment using landscape quality as an economic asset’; a series of strategies and processes identified as best practice in creating settings for investment. These ‘pathways’ show how to successfully marry economic development with landscape quality improvements, help target resources to the best effect, achieve value for money and ensure return on investment in environmental regeneration.



1- THIS IS A PICTURE OF SOMETHING. THIS IS A PICTURE OF SOMETHING. THIS IS A PICTURE OF SOMETHING.

2- THIS IS A PICTURE OF SOMETHING.

3.3 About the CSI project

creating a setting for investment has, over a 5 year period, explored the links between the landscape quality, the location decisions of investors and occupiers and the value of land at commercial property development locations. The Interreg IIB North West Europe programme provided the main funding for the €10m project; Yorkshire Forward (the Regional Development Agency for Yorkshire & the Humber), the UK department for Communities and Local Government, the Walloon Region of Belgium, Montan-Grundstücksgesellschaft mbh (MGG) and Institut für Landes-und Stadtentwicklungsforschung (ILS) have all provided match funding. The project involved partners in the UK, Germany and Belgium.

Groundbreaking research is at the heart of the project. This includes work on land values, investment decisions and community engagement, with an emphasis on building and sharing knowledge and evidence about the role landscape quality plays in securing economic investment.

A suite of **demonstration sites** illustrates more sustainable approaches to regeneration, through on-the-ground improvements to landscape quality. These create attractive places for business and investment.

The project **raises awareness and understanding and seeks to influence decision makers** over the role that the environment plays in promoting more sustainable regeneration, and particularly the impact of landscape quality on investment location decisions and in delivering sustainable communities.

3.4 The international dimension

Although North West Europe is one of the world's strongest economic regions, by tackling the significant areas of brownfield land and other poor quality local environments, opportunities for attracting further investment will be created. CSI tackles a range of issues that are felt across national boundaries, including; unequal competition between major metropolitan areas, pressure on urban fringes as a result of urban sprawl, and lack of understanding of the benefits that landscape quality can bring in relation to economic development and how this can help lead to more sustainable development.

The partners work within a cross section of regions suffering from comparable post-industrial decline. Throughout its implementation CSI has benefited from participation of all the partners. In the UK, the South Yorkshire Forest Partnership, one of England's Community Forests led the project. The South Yorkshire Forest Partnership works within Sheffield City Council and brings together public, private and community organisations to realise regeneration using green infrastructure improvements.

With their significant international reputations and as centres of expertise in research, the University of Sheffield in the UK, the University of Liège in Belgium and ILS in Germany have made very significant strides in developing a body of knowledge and evidence related to creating a setting for investment. SPI+ (Services Promotion Initiatives en Province de Liège), the development agency in the Liège region in Belgium, and MGG, a landowner of former industrial sites, investor and service provider in Germany, have each brought expertise in economic and industrial development.

Each of the partners also brings with them a network of sub-partners and contacts that have been invaluable in providing professional support and input for the development and implementation of the project.



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1-4: COMPUTER GENERATED VISUALISATIONS SHOWING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF LANDSCAPE QUALITY WERE EXTENSIVELY USED IN CSI RESEARCH

4. Summary of research actions

The CSI project used the research actions listed below to investigate which aspects of landscape quality have the most influence on these decisions, which actors, or business activities would be most influenced, and at which planning scale it has most impact. The challenge lay in isolating the impact of landscape quality amongst the multitude of variables affecting investment decisions. This necessitated a research focus on business park locations and businesses involved in knowledge based activities. Computer generated visualisations enabled assessment of alternate landscape quality scenarios.

- **Land values** – internet based surveys of professional land valuers to quantify the impact of 'greening' on the value of out-of-town brownfield sites designated for business park development.
- **Retrospective cost benefit analysis** – work to identify the impact of landscape quality in and around former brownfield sites previously improved as part of the 'Working in the Park' regeneration concept in the Ruhr region.
- **Impact of landscape quality on location decisions** – quantitative and qualitative information to increase knowledge of how and which aspects of landscape quality affect investor, developer and occupier location choices.
- **Influence of regional landscape quality on investor decisions** – study of how environmental conditions have affected the regional image and influenced occupier decisions in the Ruhr 'Working in the Park' areas.
- **Community perceptions and involvement** – interviews with local communities in Belgium to gain understanding of how they perceive the effect of landscape quality (on commercial sites) on their quality of life and to explore best practices for meaningful community involvement throughout the process of site development.
- **Case studies** – these studies, which include some of the CSI demonstration sites, were undertaken to identify the role landscape quality plays in positive economic and social development.

The commercial property market

The institutional structure of any property market – in terms of the actors and their roles – will affect its behaviour, including its response to policy initiatives. There are significant differences between the Belgian, German and UK markets. For example in the UK, most industrial development is privately driven, while in Wallonia most industrial estates are developed by public agencies. In North Rhine-Westphalia and the Ruhr there is a high level of public sector activity in the industrial property market. Commercial areas on former agricultural land are developed mainly by municipalities although the private sector is also active in brownfield development, with large land owners (such as subsidiaries of coal and steel companies) and private companies buying, developing and selling/renting plots for specific uses.

In general investors and developers expect to influence landscape treatments **within the sites**. Where another party, such as a public authority, has already influenced the landscape treatment this may be perceived as a benefit or a disadvantage – depending on the nature of the treatment and whether or not it restricts the investor's planned use of the site. **The wider setting of sites** and the character and quality of the **local area** (or the region or sub region) within which occupiers and employees may live and travel, cannot usually be influenced by an individual site investor but can be influenced by the public sector through appropriate regional strategies.



CAPTION TO SAY WHAT THIS IS???????????

Scale

Landscape quality may operate and have impact at the following scales:

- **Region or sub-region**, the wider region being broadly considered as a location for investment;
- **Local area**, within which the investment and development would take place and within which most occupiers and their employees would live and work;
- **Setting**, the area immediately surrounding and visible from any site being considered for investment and development;
- **Site**, the area that the investor, developer or occupier will have either direct control over or some form of stake in.

Actors

5 key groups of actors were identified within the commercial property development market. An actor may perform more than one role for example an owner-occupier or owner-developer.

- **Landowners** – control the amount of land available for development at any given time.
- **Developers** – develop the site or plot within a site and either retain the development as an investment or sell it on to an investor.
- **Investors** – purchase development schemes from developers in order to generate returns on their investment. These returns are generated through renting the property to occupiers.
- **Occupiers** – need property for their daily business activities and through capital growth if the business park increases in value.
- **Property valuers** – influence the process by advising the actors on land values, rents and investment yields based on the demand and supply balance in the property market.



5. Pathways to investment using landscape quality as an economic asset



5.1 The 'Landscape Quality Effect': promoting a regional identity

CSI found that the perception of a strong regional image is a highly influential factor in the complex location decision-making processes of knowledge-based industries. Whilst landscape improvements carried out in isolation around one or two brownfield development sites will not significantly impact on the economic growth of the region or property markets, where improvements have been carried out systematically as part of a regional strategy – as in the Ruhr area of Germany – an economic sea change has taken place.

Landscape quality is a primary influence on peoples' perceptions of particular regions; development schemes designed to enhance regional image and identity – including the industrial heritage – and associated quality of life, can effectively attract and keep the skilled employees, who are vital to knowledge-based and indeed other industries. A programme of work to achieve comprehensive physical improvements should be a core part of a strategy.

To maximise the competitiveness of cities and regions, regional governments, development agencies, local authorities and development organisations, private landowners and developers should deliver strategies for regional or area-based landscape enhancement.

“Given the choice (people) will opt to live and work in congenial surrounding, and the same applies to businesses. They will shun poor environments, preferring instead to invest... in areas with a high quality of life – the markets in action”

Welsh development agency

Such strategies should seek to enhance regional image and identity and provide high-quality places for living and working through targeted actions that will maximise both wider regional and local economic and social benefits. In parts of Europe where land for development is abundant, brownfield regeneration is not always prioritised; in these regions approaches to managing land supply that will favour brownfield development should be considered.

Regional strategies incorporating landscape quality improvements should be linked to a marketing strategy aimed at projecting the image of an improved landscape and improved quality of life.

The positive image projected by high quality landscape treatments also plays a major role in increasing business confidence. Business occupiers identify certain specific attractors and detractors that most influence their perception of an area and which are relevant at the site, setting,

local area and regional level. Factors such as the cared-for appearance, the quality and quantity of tree planting and whether the landscape is easy to access, with facilities and amenities, act as attractors in occupiers' decision-making. Uncared-for landscapes and derelict land as 'detractors' on occupiers' perceptions. They are also influenced by what can be seen from major transport routes and by representations of the region in the media.

Regional and sub regional strategies and action plans should seek to reinforce those features that act as attractors in economic investment and seek to remove or screen detractors, particularly along transport corridors and views from key gateways and economic centres.



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Case study: Working in the park

The IBA Emscherpark initiated the 'Working in the Park' concept as part of the Emscher Landscape Park plan to change the quality of life and work in the Ruhr. The regeneration of 500 hectares of brownfield sites into 22 high quality business parks played an important role in upgrading the region – both economically and ecologically:

- Reclamation of brownfield land would minimise use of agricultural land for industrial sites.
- High quality settings would meet the demands of employees.
- Lack of public open spaces in surrounding urban areas would be addressed, as often more than 50% of the sites were restored to green end use.
- Reuse of listed buildings and preservation of industrial heritage would enhance regional identity and the attractiveness of the sites.

The implementation of high quality landscape on the sites – including open space, water elements and environmental waste management – served to promote and enhance the economic competitiveness of the region creating the necessary conditions for interregional and international private investment and new jobs. When surveyed, 90% of businesses located on the sites confirmed that the area's image had significantly improved, and that the high landscape quality had had a positive effect on perceptions of the Ruhr elsewhere in Germany with ongoing benefits for business.





ATTRACTIVE ACCESS POINTS HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT. COPYRIGHT – MGG

5.2 Local area initiatives: first impressions count

At the local scale, landscape quality influences an occupier's perception of an area as a suitable location for their business; an area with higher landscape quality is perceived as more affluent, safer and more welcoming to staff and visitors. However certain elements are consistently ranked above others. First impressions count – accordingly the most significant impact will come through ensuring high quality landscape treatments at entrances and along access road as these help the occupier achieve a positive business image.

Vehicle access is a locator priority and the landscape quality of elements in the local area associated with this are ranked highest. The quality of local amenities is also rated as important in providing for both staff and business needs. Elements further away from the site such as public open space are recognised as contributing to the overall quality and image of the area and should be considered within the scope of an area wide strategy in order to improve the community perception of a development, reduce the 'nimby' reaction and facilitate progression of the development.

Local authorities should co-ordinate the implementation of individual landscape quality improvements and new developments within a strategic area-wide approach that will create a unique, coherent, marketable identity – which also contributes to the vision for a new regional image. To maximise the positive impact of landscape treatments on occupiers, staff and visitors, priority should be given to access roads and entrances where high landscape quality will create a good first impression.

Economic developments need to be socially integrated; where communities do not value a development, it is likely to be subject to vandalism and will have low commercial success. Developers and local authorities should consider ways of engaging the local community to ensure the long term success of a scheme.



“The sense of place is what drives investors’ attitudes... if a space is made good for investors it will be good for the people of the city”

Professor Anne Power, London School of Economics



Case study: Manvers regeneration scheme, Rotherham

The 700 acre Manvers regeneration site sits in the Dearne Valley, adjacent to the wetland habitat creation at RSPB Old Moor, and developments carried out by Yorkshire Forward and neighbouring local authorities, which have, together transformed a vast area of dereliction into a thriving economic and residential zone.

The former heavy industrial area of Manvers, comprising mine workings, tip, colliery buildings and railway sidings has been reclaimed over a period of 20 years by Rotherham MBC to provide 400 acres of industrial and commercial facilities and 300 acres of recreation and amenity areas.

The scheme aimed to replace the 8,000 jobs lost due to the colliery closures, and create a high quality landscape as a setting for regeneration and development.

New infrastructure was developed to increase road and service capacity. Integral to this was the high quality landscape work along the road corridors. Four 'industrial zones' were designed and the sites marketed and sold by Rotherham Investment Development Office. A public amenity area comprising a lake and golf course was also created, winning the Civic Trust Landscape award in 2000

Private sector investment in the scheme to date has been estimated at over £350,000,000, and approximately 9,000 jobs have been created. Completion of the new waterfront development is likely to create a further 1,000 to 1,500 jobs.



1: BROOKFIELDS PARK AT MANVERS IN 2005 – COPYRIGHT RMBM

2: BROOKFIELDS PARK IN 2007 ON COMPLETION OF CSI FUNDED LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS – COPYRIGHT RMBM



TREE PLANTING IS A SIMPLE BUT POWERFUL LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT



5.3 Action at the site level

CSI found that occupiers use landscape quality to differentiate between sites and that high landscape quality can give one site the advantage over comparable alternatives where other location factors such as land prices, parking, transport links, proximity to markets and skilled workers are equal. In the UK, Belgium and Germany, occupiers consistently prefer to locate to a site that is in a high quality setting rather than one in a low quality setting. This is particularly true of knowledge based industries.

To maximise occupancy developers should invest more in higher quality landscape development of sites and their immediate settings in order to create an appropriate quality of image for the types of businesses they wish to attract.

Developers should work with designers to prepare a masterplan that enables a strategic approach to the creation of a site identity, including high quality landscape, and addresses ongoing maintenance, reflecting and contributing to any local area initiatives and regional strategy. This applies to the refurbishment of existing commercial sites as well as new developments.

Landscape quality at site level must firstly meet minimal functional requirements (car parking and vehicle access) and must also project the right business image. Occupiers link an attractive setting with customers' and employees' perceptions of the success of their companies. Unkept areas around a site may lead to higher levels of vacancies, or a lower turn-around in occupation; where occupancy levels are very low, the lack of informal supervision by occupiers can encourage vandalism and undesirable behaviour.

Occupiers generally see the quality and quantity of planting (particularly appropriate use of trees) as one of the principle factors contributing to a positive image and the increase of confidence. There is a gap between the occupiers' [relatively low] expectations of landscape quality and that of designers, planners or policy makers. However, when given information about the landscape possibilities, occupiers show preferences for design approaches that go beyond the 'standard'.

Developers believe that improving the external environment can make a site more desirable to potential tenants, increase the attractiveness of a site and potentially generate more demand so that it might be let more quickly. However, their approach to landscape design is conservative; in order to move beyond a 'standard' approach they require leadership and guidance from local and regional authorities.

Planners should work with developers to agree flexible design guidelines to ensure that new developments contribute to the local area and regional image and maximize economic competitiveness. The planning application process should promote these guidelines, and raise developers aspirations for landscape quality; where appropriate by attaching conditions to planning permissions.

Two attributes are especially important in creating high-quality environments for successful business development: significant amounts of appropriate and well-designed planting, particularly trees, and proper provision for good standards of long-term maintenance. Both should be positively addressed in planning and designing new schemes.

Schemes that contribute to an overall enhancement of landscape quality, particularly through development of brownfield sites and incorporation of significant well-designed tree planting, should be particularly encouraged. Elected representatives should support planners in seeking to raise quality aspirations even in areas where job creation is the priority.

Landscape treatments should not be standardised; each should have its own character responding to the needs of the site, its context and the local communities.

Appropriate high quality design on prominent parts of the site (access points) may have cost implications for developers but cost saving low maintenance design can be considered for the less prominent parts. Where local communities will directly benefit from landscape quality measures opportunities for public funding should be investigated. Landscape designers should use their expertise and share knowledge of best practice/case studies such as those from the CSI project to encourage developers to aim for higher standards and for environmentally sustainable designs.



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1-3: COMPUTER GENERATED VISUALISATIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF LANDSCAPE TREATMENT USED IN CSI RESEARCH TO INVESTIGATE ACTOR PREFERENCES

4: LANGTHWAITE GRANGE IN 2005 - COPYRIGHT FIRST WAKEFIELD

5: HOW THE SITE LOOKS NOW - COPYRIGHT FIRST WAKEFIELD



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Case study: Langthwaite Grange, Wakefield, W. Yorkshire, UK

Langthwaite Grange is a 57 hectare industrial estate in Wakefield. The site and local communities were badly affected by economic crisis during the 1980's which led to disjointed development, instability, increasing crime and environmental problems. Businesses were leaving and new investment was deterred by crime and the negative image. Ad hoc attempts at regenerating the estate left businesses hostile and cynical.

In 2005 *first*, the development agency for Wakefield proposed the vision for 'a vibrant, environmentally attractive, crime free industrial estate providing jobs for local people and strengthening the local supply chain'.

To facilitate this, a business plan was developed, resulting in securing of over £1.2 million funding for site improvements (including £90,000 committed by resident businesses). Public meetings were held and a business association (LGBA) established to secure the long term engagement of businesses

in the estate's future. A project manager was employed to facilitate communication between businesses and contractors. In addition, fly-tipping was cleared and a programme of planting and greening instigated. Crime prevention measures were implemented and improvements made to pedestrian and vehicular access routes, site boundaries and signage concentrated at the site entrance and main access routes.

Landscape quality improvements have helped transform the estate's image creating a safer, more cared for environment which has increased the quality of life for occupiers, their workforce and the local community alike. New and existing investors have demonstrated hugely increased confidence in the location as a result, with 16 new businesses moving in, bringing over £12m investment and creating 200 new jobs. Crime has fallen by 70% in 12 months and 68% of the occupying businesses became fee paying members of LGBA



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“A diverse and attractive environment contributes to quality of life, and helps make the region an attractive place to live and invest.”

Yorkshire and the Humber, Regional Economic Strategy



Best practice, some examples from CSI

The innovative maintenance strategies implemented at CSI investment sites provide a template for replication or further pilots in other regions and countries.

The German sites at Gneisenau and Ewald demonstrate how developers, local authorities and owner-occupiers can take a partnership approach to successfully resolve landscape quality maintenance implications; in this case it was agreed that the developers MGG would implement agreed, low maintenance landscape measures across the sites, ownership – and maintenance obligation – of the public landscaped areas of the sites would then transfer to the municipalities. Landscape measures on individually owned plots will be maintained by the plot owners.

In the UK, ownership of three of the larger community woodlands sites has been handed over to the Land Restoration Trust (LRT) after restoration by the regional development agency. LRT was created by a partnership comprising English Partnerships, Groundwork, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency and maintains sites in perpetuity on payment of a dowry, helping to deliver a better quality of life by providing land for public amenity in line with government policy objectives.

The smaller UK sites such as Wincobank and Parkwood Springs, are being maintained by the Local Authority in partnership with local communities through steering groups and local ‘friends’ groups, whilst maintenance of the Stocksbridge Project landscape measures has been taken on by a community organisation the Steel Valley Project, with funding from the landowner Corus.

SPI+, developers of CSI’s Belgian sites, successfully negotiated an agreement that occupiers of the Trooz site would each maintain the measures that have been implemented on their plots, while the site at Ans will be converted into divided co-ownership. The open spaces will constitute the common parts of the co-ownership and the maintenance of those spaces will be paid for jointly.

5.4 Getting the maintenance right

A low level of site maintenance and the presence of degraded or derelict areas nearby create a negative image and lower confidence – significant detractors to potential occupiers. CSI research and demonstration sites show that landscape improvements can help break negative cycles of neglect, poor landscape quality and anti-social behaviour where these have been allowed to develop. Landscape quality improvements appear to be particularly effective in this regard when coupled with a comprehensive programme of security improvements, stewardship and the engagement of local businesses and communities. Provision for good standards of long-term maintenance requires new thinking about mechanisms for achieving this and lessons need to be learnt from the experience of others.

Actors should work together to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to address maintenance and security needs. Any existing developments suffering from poor maintenance and security problems should be targeted with collaborative initiatives designed to provide visible improvements in the quality of the environment. New commercial development schemes should be required to put measures in place to ensure a good standard of maintenance and management in the long-term.

There are a number of different mechanisms by which this might be achieved including, for example: conditions attached to planning permissions; inclusion of a management charge in lease or tenancy agreements for occupiers; and establishment of collaborative management partnerships between sites occupiers.

Developers and occupiers should give careful consideration to who will carry out maintenance work to an acceptable standard, especially if this requires innovative management (for example of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems or natural vegetation areas).

There are private companies who specialise in maintenance for commercial and industrial properties, as well as examples of both voluntary and private sector organisations establishing specialist companies to undertake such work in other sectors. Lessons might be drawn from UK examples such as: the Green Belt Company, who take over management of housing landscapes after development; and Green Estate Ltd in Sheffield, which was set up by Sheffield Wildlife Trust and Manor & Castle Development Trust to turn the neglected open spaces of a deprived housing estate into useful places into spaces that maximise social, environmental and economic benefits for the neighbourhood. Similar approaches could apply to commercial developments.



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1: THIS IMAGE COULD DO WITH A CAPTION

2: THIS IMAGE COULD DO WITH A CAPTION

3: THIS IMAGE COULD DO WITH A CAPTION

5.5 Maximising commercial opportunities

The landscape quality of both the immediate and wider setting of a business park may increase the rents occupiers are willing to pay. Some occupiers value landscape quality more highly than others and state that they are prepared to pay a higher than average rent for premises located in an area of high landscape quality. Others, although they would not pay more for higher quality, definitely expect to pay less for premises in a low quality setting. Occupiers also believe that higher landscape quality has a positive affect on employees, improving staff contentment with knock on effects for productivity. Higher landscape quality can help to make sites and premises easier to sell or let and help retain occupiers.

The impact of such landscape quality improvements on rental values could enhance the capital value of a development site over the long term. Where the potential increase in capital value is greater than the cost of the landscape improvement then it is clearly worth the developer investing in improvements. Most improvements to the immediate setting and the wider area are usually out of the developer's direct control, although contributions to costs may be both possible and worthwhile. In areas of low demand and excess supply, the cost of improving brownfield land to higher landscape quality may exceed the measurable benefits, but for the wider economy and local communities the cost of doing nothing is greater still. This effect, of constraining capital values in the lower quality settings, suggests that it may be in the developer's best interest to either locate in an area which already has the attributes of high landscape quality (though land may cost more) or to promote and establish landscape quality of an area, even if public agencies have to take the lead in achieving this.

These interrelationships are complex and the impact of landscape quality on land values reflects this. Although land valuers *expected* that enhanced landscape quality of brownfield development sites for business parks would increase land values, the quantitative research did not show such an increase in their actual valuations. This suggests either that the formal valuation process does not allow proper account to be taken of the impact of such enhancements or that the impact is too small in relation to the other factors that are considered to make a significant difference to assessed land values. There are, as explained earlier, undoubtedly wider regional economic benefits that are derived from the increased confidence and improved perceptions of former industrial regions which flow from improvements in landscape quality.



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“The environment acts as an indicator of the strength of the local economy and as such will promote investment”

Pieda/DETR

Developments with high quality landscapes improve the setting for investment as a 'soft' location factor, but especially significant is the immediate, positive impact that the new high quality landscapes can have on the housing market in the surrounding area. Thus instead of a downward spiral of decline there is an upward spiral of improved image and quality of life which profits the entire region.

Property developers should consider enhanced investment in higher landscape quality measures at site level to maximise the immediate opportunity for improving rental incomes and to realise the longer term opportunity to increase land value.

Developers should work with planners and communities to establish an impetus for improvements to landscape quality beyond the site level and into the local area and the wider region. This might include financial contributions where the market is such that improvements may result in enhanced capital values.

Public authorities should recognise that investing public money in landscape quality improvements around economic development sites does not necessarily bring direct or immediate economic benefit to private sector developers, especially in former industrial areas, but that public investment is needed to improve the image and quality of the local area and the region, to improve image and raise confidence.

Case study: Gneisenau, Dortmund

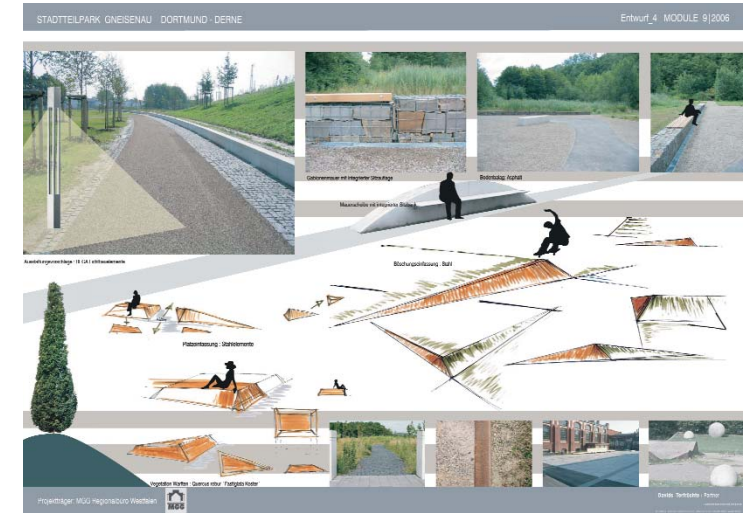
In Dortmund's Derne district, developer and landowner MGG and the city of Dortmund decided to tackle massive post-industrial economic decline and job loss by reviving the district centre and redeveloping the adjacent brownfield site for new commercial uses that would create 350 to 400 new jobs.

The development area comprises a local shopping centre together with service facilities, a 1.6 hectare city 'quarter' park, 5.5 hectares of green infrastructure (connected green spaces) and a proposed site for a DIY centre.

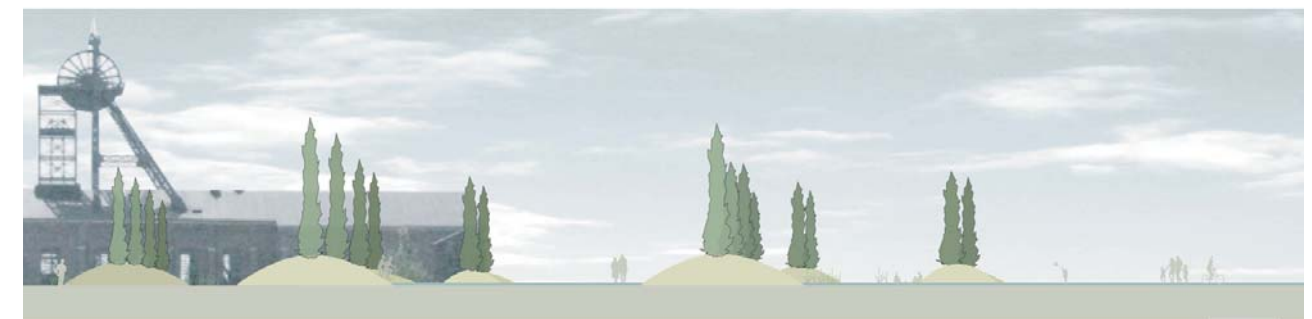
The quarter park is intended to improve the ecological quality of the site and to enhance the urban quarter and its image, with positive effects on the marketing of the site and the local economy.

In economic terms the development at Gneisenau has been a great success – full occupancy of the new shopping centre was secured in a very short time, attracting further new businesses to move into the adjacent main road.

The design of the city quarter park has made the former brownfield site a beautiful, well used public space which has also maintained links to the industrial heritage and local identity through incorporation of some of the previous industrial landscape as heritage features. The public interest is high and quality of life has been improved at all levels with positive results for the local economy.



1-3: LANDSCAPE DESIGNS FOR THE CITY QUARTER PARK IN GNEISENAU – COPYRIGHT MGG



Perspektive Stadtteilplatz



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION HELPS CREATE SPACES THAT PEOPLE WANT TO USE



1-3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND CELEBRATION EVENTS CONNECT PEOPLE WITH THE LANDSCAPE

4: VISUALISATION USED IN CSI RESEARCH INTO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – COPYRIGHT ULG



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4

Examples of community involvement from CSI

At *Gneisenau* the community was involved in the project planning process from the earliest stages. Project representatives developed a close relationship with the community and encouraged active input in order to avoid negative perceptions of the development process. The municipality, the land owner and the project developer of the shopping centre held several public meetings to present and discuss progress and next steps. As a result there has been much community support for the project and the landscape measures have effectively fulfilled their purpose.

The Sheffield, *Parkwood Springs* project focused on creating a safe and accessible green space in a run down area surrounded by both industry and housing. The improvements would contribute to the regeneration of all elements of the community; A physical program of improvement works at key 'gateways' to the site was complemented by a programme of consultations, workshops and celebrations to demonstrate the benefits of the green space for both the local people and business community. This included a communication programme to raise the profile of Parkwood Springs as a quality green space and a setting for investment, and the creation of 'corporate work days' and competitions to encourage businesses to boost their environmental credentials which facilitated an ongoing culture of 'environmental stewardship'.

At Ans in Belgium, community consultation preceding the creation of a new business park aimed to prepare the local community for change and highlight any challenges relating to this site from the community's point of view. It became apparent that local people particularly valued a balancing pond at the back of the site so the landscape architect used this as a key landscape feature incorporating a timber platform, benches and paths. When work began, residents whose homes backed onto the site expressed concern that they would lose a space that they had previously used for socialising and playing. As maintaining positive relationships with the community was a priority, the development agency responded by creating a green hillock that would both create a barrier between the private gardens and the business park and provide a protected leisure space for the residents.



5.6 Involving local communities

Community involvement in the regeneration process is vital – both in terms of delivering more acceptable and durable developments, and to meet relevant statutory obligations on public participation in planning.

As demonstrated by the 'Working in the Park' concept in the Ruhr, commercial sites with high landscape quality can have a positive affect on nearby house prices. Investing in landscape quality improvements is thus profitable for communities when taken as a whole. However communities close to brownfield sites destined to be developed for commercial purposes are sensitive to the way that this is done and the impact that it may have on them.

The work of CSI provides detailed examples of how to generate workable contributions of ideas and perspectives from communities that can help deliver better quality developments; in particular visual representations of potential scenarios for redevelopment have been found extremely helpful aids to improve the outcomes of community engagement.

Planning authorities and developers must recognise the importance of engaging with local communities close to development areas at the earliest possible opportunity. This is not only to meet statutory requirements but also to contribute to successful and high-quality schemes that contribute to the well-being of communities and neighbourhoods.

Specialist practitioners should be engaged to design and deliver a programme of community consultation throughout the process of the scheme. Maximum use should be made of techniques such as visualisations of proposals to illustrate possible outcomes and engage people in debate. Such consultation should be meaningful and those responsible should ensure that they take community views seriously in finalising proposals. It is important to balance community desires for amenity benefits, for example through open space and access provision, with developer and occupier concerns about image and security. There are many examples from CSI to show that this balance can successfully be achieved. It is also helpful to carry out post project implementation evaluations involving the community. This is a rapid way to highlight and resolve problems and can also be a tool for engaging the community in the ongoing management of the green spaces.





6. Where to go for more detail

The following **technical reports detailing research action methodologies and findings can be found in the research section of the CSI website: www.environment-investment.com**

Impact of landscape quality on **land values:**

- Research action 4.1, Land Values – University of Sheffield
- Research action 4.1, Land Values – University of Liège

Retrospective cost benefit analysis in previously improved regeneration areas.

- Research action 4.2: Costs and Benefits of Landscape Quality in Business Parks on Brownfield Land in the Ruhr Area – ILS

Impact of environmental quality on investor decisions.

- Research action 4.4.1: Preliminary interviews with occupiers in Belgium – University of Liège
- Research action 4.4.1: Preliminary interviews with occupiers in the Ruhr – MGG
- Research action 4.4.1: Preliminary interviews with occupiers in the UK – University of Sheffield
- Research action 4.4.2: Impact of landscape quality on investor decisions – University of Liège
- Research action 4.4.2: Impact of landscape quality on investor decisions – University of Sheffield
- Research action 4.4.3: Perceptions and preferences of office occupiers – University of Sheffield
- Research action 4.4.3: Perceptions and preferences of office occupiers – University of Liège

Influence of regional environment on investor decisions.

- Research action 4.5: Influence of regional landscape on investors decisions – ILS

Community perceptions of benefits of environmental improvements associated with economic development.

- Research action 4.6: Local community involvement – University of Liège

Case studies of good practice in implementing and maintaining landscape quality improvements on development sites can be found in the demonstration sites section of the website:

- Wath Manvers Regeneration Zone, Rotherham (UK)
- Green Park, Reading (UK)
- Langthwaite Grange, Wakefield (UK)
- Gladbeck Brauck, Gladbeck, Ruhr (Ger)
- Gneisenau, Dortmund, Ruhr (Ger)
- Ewald, Herten, Ruhr (Ger)
- Henricot, Court-Saint-Etienne (Be)
- Belle Ile, Liège (Be)
- Perrier-Cheniot, Courcelles (Be)



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