Future for National Parks in Scotland

Response from the Landscape Institute

For National Parks Commission, NatureScot

Date 30 November 2022

# Background for members

Scottish Government have committed to the designation of at least one new National Park during the lifetime of the current Scottish Parliament.

It has been nearly 20 years since Scotland’s first two National Parks were created.  Before more are designated, Scottish Ministers will review the role of National Parks, especially their role in addressing the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

Scottish Government launched an online consultation earlier this year to seek views on what Scotland’s National Parks should deliver for the environment, culture and local communities. Building on this initial consultation, NatureScot are working with Scottish Government to provide more detailed advice to Ministers on the role and approach to National Parks, and how nominations for new National Parks could be evaluated.

NatureScot have established a national stakeholder advisory group to bring together a range of organisations and sectors with an interest in this area but are now keen to seek views from a wider range of stakeholders and interested groups and individuals. This consultation seeks views on the role of National Parks and the selection criteria for new areas and will be reported to Ministers and considered in the final advice given to Scottish Government.

At this stage the consultation is not seeking views on specific areas for new National Parks but opportunities for this will follow during the next stages of work. At least one new National Park in Scotland will be designated by Spring 2026.

# Landscape Institute response

The consultation comprises two parts:

1. Scene Setting – An overview of the background to Scotland’s current approach to National Parks and some of the key considerations in establishing new ones.

2. Proposals –These were included in an online survey and were spilt into three sections:

* The role of Scotland’s National Parks
	+ The role of National Parks
	+ Statutory Aims of National Parks
	+ Powers and Functions of National Park Authorities
	+ Diversity in approach
* Criteria for selecting National Parks
	+ Developing a nomination process for National Parks
	+ Criteria for nomination and evaluation
		- Outstanding national importance
		- Size and coherence
		- Need or added-value
		- Degree of support
		- Strategic contribution
* Selection Criteria – other issues

# Summary

* National parks should serve the purpose of leading on nature recovery and a just transition to net zero; however not to the exclusion of other outcomes.
* Natural capital approaches should sit at the heart of national parks, and we support the exploration of opportunities for private investment in natural capital in National Park settings.
* Greater emphasis is needed on the role that National Parks can have on the health and wellbeing of the nation.
* There is a skills gap in many landscape and land management roles and investment is needed to fund training and education as part of just transition
* Embedding placemaking principles and a design led focus will be key in the development of the next national park.
* It will be vital that local communities play a key role in the development and ongoing management of national parks.
* The national statement should highlight the role of landscape as the framework within which the other services and functions of national parks can be delivered.
* All landscapes are important, and we support an approach that considers the future potential of areas, using landscape character assessments and maps to underpin decisions.
* The four aims should be changed to include an explicit mention of nature recovery and net zero.
* There should be a consistent approach to all national park authorities, sharing the same core principles, powers and functions.
* Successful governance and management will depend on the skill of land management professionals and a joined up, design approach with a greater role for national expertise on boards.
* The interconnectivity of national parks with wider areas is key, as part of a broader strategic countryside approach.

# Section One – The role of national parks

**This section examines the role of National Parks in Scotland and sets out proposals for refreshing the approach to National Parks.**

## (1) The role of national parks

### 1. Do you support "leadership of nature recovery and a just transition to net zero” becoming the overarching purpose of Scotland’s National Parks? If not, what else would you propose?

We strongly support the proposal that national parks should serve the purpose of leading on nature recovery and a just transition to net zero; however this must not be to the exclusion of other outcomes. Overarching purpose must not mean “only purpose.” It is important to look at national parks in the wider policy context; they will continue to have a multi-faceted role for communities, regardless of the overarching purpose(s).

The Landscape Institute’s response to the recent Glover Review in England stated *“(Designated) landscapes are often best placed to deliver on a range of other national priorities, from climate change to biodiversity. “Landscape” is the framework within which other ecosystem services and functions can be delivered, and this should be encouraged”.[[1]](#footnote-2)* A balanced approach should be taken with the heritage, natural character and natural beauty of the land also being reflected in the purpose of national parks.

There can be contradictions between protecting and restoring nature recovery and the move to net zero. For instance, the development of new onshore wind farms and other types of onshore renewable infrastructure is vital for net zero targets; however, this can be on occasion be at the cost of other outcomes – for instance creating wildlife corridors for biodiversity. Trade-offs are inevitable, and it will be crucial to consider the natural capital of national parks in the round, to ensure that National Parks can deliver outcomes for the whole of Scotland.

It will be important to ensure that there is a professionally managed approach to making decisions around land use and that skilled landscape professionals are involved in this process, with decisions being made on a case-by-case basis.

### 2. 2. Which of the proposed elements of leadership and action set out in the list above do you support? What others - if any - would you propose?

We support the proposal that national parks act as accelerators to implement solutions to climate change and address biodiversity crisis and see this as an opportunity to drive land use innovation. Consideration will be needed as to which decision-making mechanisms will support this process, and whether National Park Authorities are currently sufficiently empowered and resourced to achieve this.

We welcome the interconnectivity with other Scottish Government policies such as NPF4, the biodiversity strategy and the environment strategy. Clear, joined up policies will be needed to support the development and management of national parks. There should be clarity around how national planning policy will connect with National Park policies, especially given the differences with the two current national parks, where Loch Lomond is the planning authority for development management, but this is not the case for the Cairngorms.

We strongly support the proposal that natural capital approaches should sit at the heart of national parks with a focus on wellbeing and sustainable growth. Greater emphasis is needed on the role that National Parks can have on the health and wellbeing of the nation, and equitable access to nature will be key to this. We welcome private investment in natural capital as more resources and funding will be needed to effectively prioritise nature restoration, this should be carefully managed and aligned with national and local policies and priorities.

It is encouraging to note the focus on skills and employment as part of just transition. There is a current skills gap in many landscape and land management roles and there should be investment into funding the training and education that will be needed to fill this gap, while at the same time creating employment opportunities. This could be linked with wider employability programmes including the No-one Left Behind agenda, which supports people into fair and sustainable employment and works with partners to respond to emerging labour market demands. Organisations such as the Landscape Institute could also play a role in sharing knowledge and supporting landscape employees to adapt to future demands, and a strong partnership approach will enable the sharing of expertise and support the just transition process.

We strongly welcome the intention that national parks will lead “on improving ways of design and place making that achieve optimum outcomes for people, nature and landscapes” – It is positive to see the inclusion of landscape in this statement and that design and place making will play a key role in development of new national parks (and potentially roll out to existing national parks). Embedded placemaking principles will help to build attractive, vibrant places for people to live and will be key in making rural communities desirable place to live in.

### 3. What opportunities are there for National Parks to generate private investment in natural capital?

We support the exploration of opportunities for private investment in natural capital in National Park settings. However, to do this at scale, we believe new skills and resources would be needed within national parks including additional finance, legal, and governance resources.

There is scope to learn from the work of good schemes that are happening elsewhere in strategic authorities, e.g., Greater Manchester’s Combined Authority’s Ignition Project – which aimed to develop innovative financing solutions for investment in the natural environment in the area with a view to improve resilience against climate change.[[2]](#footnote-3) To our knowledge this approach has not been taken by other national parks (although several have undertaken natural capital assessments with a view towards investment readiness, such as Exmoor and Dartmoor). If this route is followed it will be important to distinguish between investing in a national park authority as an organisation, rather than conserved public land being used as an asset to leverage capital; as such, bespoke public-private financial vehicles for national parks may be necessary.

### 4. What role should local communities play in the National Park and how should National Park authorities work with and for them to secure a just transition?

It will be vital that local communities play a key role in the development and ongoing management of national parks.

Local communities will be impacted most by the new designation and the resulting opportunities and challenges that this may bring. It is encouraging that Scottish Government have chosen to take a bottom up, co-production approach to designating a new national park, and this should be continued in a strong community engagement approach going forward. Local communities should also have equitable access to new employment opportunities that a national park is likely to generate and should be supported through relevant training and employability schemes.

Having robust communication channels built into the management structure of national parks will also be essential in order to create a feedback loop to address ongoing issues and concerns of local communities.

### 5. Do you support a “vision and mission” for all of Scotland’s National Parks being clearly set out in a national statement? If not why not?

Yes, we support this. A clear vision and mission statement will be beneficial to communicate aims and role of national parks, especially as the purpose of future national parks may look significantly different from existing national parks.

### 6. If you favour a national statement for Scotland’s National Parks being developed, what else should it cover?

The national statement should highlight the role of landscape as the framework within which the other services and functions can be delivered. There are existing definitions which could be considered, such as the European Landscape Convention which defines the role of landscape as “part of the land, as perceived by local people or visitors, which evolves through time as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings”[[3]](#footnote-4). Although there is likely to be a new focus on nature restoration and the move to net zero, the need to preserve and restore designated landscapes primarily for their natural heritage and landscape quality will still underpin the role of national parks and as such should be covered in the national statement.

### 7. To what extent should new National Parks be about the future potential of an area for nature restoration as well as what’s currently in place.

The original purposes of designation will continue to be important in the role of national parks, in terms of protecting and enhancing the character, beauty and heritage of special landscapes; however, there is also the potential to develop areas of land that sit within or around the boundaries of national parks which do not meet the current criteria, but which have the potential for uplift in landscape terms, or for other outcomes (e.g. nature restoration).

The use of landscape assessments and maps will be a useful tool to map out the character of different landscapes within and around national parks. A recent landscape designation programme by Natural England, included the development of an All England Strategic Landscape Mapping tool which will help to identify areas that may have potential to be future national parks and will look at “new *approaches to improve landscapes for people and nature” and “will enable a more collaborative process to designate new National Parks and AONBs”[[4]](#footnote-5)*  This model could be useful in considering areas with future potential to be included in / as national parks in Scotland.

We consider all landscapes to be important and are supportive of an approach that sees the potential in areas that might otherwise have been overlooked in the designation of previous national parks. The Landscape Institute’s response to the Glover review in England highlighted that “*There are areas of open land which do not currently meet a high standard of “natural beauty”, but which have the potential to do so in the near-to medium future and could deliver significant benefits for nearby urban population*”[[5]](#footnote-6), this is equally relevant in Scotland as in other parts of the UK.

There is scope to positively encourage change in these areas and to invest in local scale projects that would support the future potential of local areas, such as biodiversity projects, sustainable local food production and in restoring the soil health in areas where this has declined. The use of legislation that would allow national parks to have flexible boundaries and for parks to be extended over time to include areas with potential that sit outside / around the boundaries should be considered, in order to be inclusive and to widen national park areas over time.

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## (2) The statutory aims of national parks

### 8. Are any specific changes to the existing four Aims required? If so why, and what are they?

As noted, none of the current statutory park aims explicitly refer to nature recovery or a just transition to net zero, although this in implied through the descriptions such as conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of areas and through the focus on sustainable development. We would suggest that the aims are changed to include an explicit mention of nature recovery and net zero, especially as this is likely to be included in the vision and mission statement – this would allow for a more coherent and consistent message to be delivered and ensure that this sits at the heart of national parks.

**9.** **Which of these possible options, or mix of possible options, do you think would help strengthen the focus and contribution of National Parks, and why?**

We would suggest that the original policy intentions of each of the aims remains are reworded to better reflect the new vision and mission in the national statement – The current aims reflect the natural, cultural, social, and sustainable development purpose that national parks offer, and it is important not to lose focus on these as they will continue to be important moving forward and give a balanced picture of the role of national parks, rather than a singular focus.

An example of rewording would be changing the first aim from “*Conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area” to* “Conserve, restore and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area for all”, and the fourth aim could be changed from “*Promote the sustainable social and economic development of the area’s communities” to “Support the area’s communities to adopt a net zero approach to social and economic development”.*

Alternatively, we would be supportive for the original aims to remain unchanged but for an additional aim to be added that outlines the nature restoration and net zero objectives.

**10. Are there other options that could be considered? If so, what are they?**

We have outlined our preference in the previous question.

### 11. Do you think there should be any changes to the wording in the Act to require public bodies to support delivery of National Park Plans? If so, what would you propose?

We feel that the wording should be strengthened to require public bodies to support the delivery of national parks, however that this should be backed up by increased resources and designated funded to enable public bodies to effectively deliver national aims. Local authorities and other public bodies are under pressure to deliver more with stretched budgets and competing priorities which can mean that there is a conflict with national aims. A joined-up partnership approach with appropriate funding and strengthened legislation would reduce the potential for future conflict and bureaucracy, which will be especially important if national parks are to act as accelerators for change which will require flexibility and a minimal amount of red tape. There could potentially be a role for COSLA to work in partnership with Scottish Government (For example through a partnership agreement) supporting the national aims of national parks and working with local authorities to positively roll out the delivery of national priorities.

### 12. Do you have any other suggestions for improving partnership working to support the implementation of the National Park Plan by all?

It will be crucial to engage local communities and land users / owners, and so a strong community engagement support will be needed to ensure buy in and support the implementation of the national park from those who are directly impacted by the change to national park status. A localised, open, and transparent approach is important to address concerns, challenges and opportunities that are likely to impact local stakeholders.

There should be a mechanism to engage with all sectors operating in and around the national park area, including third sector, private and public sector organisations to create a forum to share ideas and expertise that will be needed to roll out the implementation. This could take the form of a steering group or managing board, bringing together representatives from all stakeholder groups, including Scottish Government. Regular dialogue and a mechanism which allows an effective feedback loop will be key in addressing ongoing challenges and opportunities.

It will also be key to effectively engage with the landscape sector and to ensure that skilled landscape professionals are involved in landscape / land management planning and are involved at all levels throughout the implementation.

National Park management plans should act as the guiding principles for land management goals in the area, both by local land users and by public bodies. Management Plans should encourage partnership working with/amongst landowners and farmers, with shared outcomes and incentives.

(3) Powers and functions of national park authorities

### 13. Could any of the existing powers and functions be used more effectively? If so, which ones and how?

As a membership organisation, the Landscape Institute are aware from contact with our member that national parks could work better and that there are often frustrations regarding existing powers and functions. We feel that the powers and functions of national park authorities are too a large topic to cover within the scope of this consultation but would be happy to engage with our members to discuss these issues in depth and contribute to the ongoing discussion around this.

### 14. Are any of the existing powers or functions redundant or unnecessary? If so, which ones and why?

See question 13.

### 15. What, if any, changes to the powers and functions in these areas should be considered and why?

See question 13.

### 16. Are there any other areas where strengthened or new powers and functions will be needed by the National Park Authority? If so, what are they?

See question 13.

(3) Diversity in approach

**17. Should the powers and functions of National Park Authorities be decided on a Park by Park basis? Should any apply to all National Park Authorities? If so, which ones and why?**

There should be a consistent approach to all national park authorities, and all National Park Authorities should follow the same core principles, powers and functions. This will allow for clarity for stakeholders, a streamlined system for the implementation and management of national parks and a clear public message in terms of the purpose and functions of national parks.

It could be beneficial to have some level of localism and a park-by-park approach for some functions / powers that sit outside of the core principles, to address specific issues, challenges or opportunities that are specific to a particular national park. This could be particularly relevant should the new national park be designated as a marine national park rather than a land-based area.

**18. Are there any changes you would want to see to the governance and management arrangements of all National Park Authorities?**

Successful governance and management will depend on the skill of land management professionals and a joined up, design approach which gives an oversight of all issues with a greater role for national expertise on boards. There is a role for strengthened landscape management plans which bring together the aims and objectives of key stakeholders and create a foundation for working towards shared objectives.

The Landscape Institute response to the Glover review highlighted that “*Landscape management priorities can provide a framework for determining strategic priorities and funding decisions for any area of land. Landscape” is a term understood by the public, and it can help to mediate discussions with communities about value and change in their surroundings. Management Plans can articulate this long-term vision for a landscape: its history and geodiversity, what people value about their present landscape including its ecosystem services, and options for change”[[6]](#footnote-7)* As such we recommend that the governance and management of National Parks are underpinned by such plans.

We welcome the reference to natural capital accounting in the consultation and as part of the governance and management of national parks would strongly advocate the use of a robust metrics system to monitor progress and measure success on an ongoing basis. There should be flexibility built into the system however to ensure there is a balance between measurement and analysis, and the ability to act quickly and make the bold decisions that will be needed to accelerate change.

Any new legislation should also be flexible in order to adapt to future needs and circumstances so that there is a fast-track system to tweaking legislation if required – This will be particularly important to push through the changes that may be required to adapt to the biodiversity and climate change crises in reaction to uncertainty and fast-moving changes in the future.

# Section Two – Criteria for selecting national parks

### This section considers the issues that need to be addressed in selecting new National Parks.  While NatureScot has been asked to provide advice on how it should be done and what it should comprise, the Scottish Government will lead the development of the evaluation framework and the nomination process itself.

(4) Developing a nomination process for national parks

### 19.  Are these the key elements of an effective nomination process for National Parks in Scotland?

We would agree that this is an effective nomination process and support the open, bottom-up approach based on the principles of co-production. The decision on where the next national park will be situated will affect local communities, the Scottish economy and well the wider Scottish population to some extent. The evaluation framework being suggested appears to follow a just and equitable approach to open up and support nominations from across the country and sits well with the outcomes of the national performance framework, such as community, human rights and fair work and business.

Making advice and support easily accessible to prepare nominations will be key, and this should be promoted across Scotland to ensure that less well resourced, more deprived areas are able to effectively submit their nominations. Clearly defined criteria will be an essential element of the assessment tool, however there should also be space for qualitative /descriptive information to be included that allows nominations to capture the unique selling points and qualities that they may have which do not necessarily fit into boxes.

### 20. Do you have suggestions for improving any of the specific elements of the process?

See question 19.

**21. Are there additional elements you want to see included, and if so, what are these?**

See question 19.

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## (5)- Criteria for nomination and evaluation

Questions 22-37 (on the following pages) seek views on possible criteria against which nominations for new National Parks could be evaluated.

Possible criteria that could be included in the Evaluation Framework are as follows

What are the special qualities of the area that merits its designation as a National Park? (“Outstanding national value”)

Does the area proposed make sense as a National Park? (“Size and coherence”)

How would establishing a new Park help deliver nature recovery and a just transition to net zero in this area? (“Need or added value”)

Is the investment in creating a new National Park Authority for this area justified in terms of these outcomes, or are existing approaches sufficient? (“Need or added value”)

Is there sufficient evidence of local support for this proposal to be considered further? (“Degree of support”)

Would the designation of the area increase the impact of Scotland’s National Parks as a whole? (“Strategic contribution”)

For each of these criteria, a number of components are suggested that could be expanded on as part of the nomination and reviewed as part of the evaluation processes. Further consideration is needed on how far we try to quantify these components or whether they should be left more open-ended. (“Other issues”).

(5.1) Outstanding national importance

**22. Do you agree that outstanding national importance should be a criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved and, if so, how?**

We agree that outstanding national importance should be a criterion and support the case for having a suite of National Parks that are representative of “all of Scotland’s nature and landscape.” We consider all landscapes to be important and although there will be unique, special qualities attached to national park areas, the potential of an area should also be explored considering qualities such as future value for increasing biodiversity, or future ability to improve to the health and well-being of the population. The definition of national importance should therefore be based on whether a proposed area represents various aspects of, and potential benefits linked to the unique landscape in Scotland.

We would also emphasise the need to consider the interconnectivity of national parks with wider areas, and as there are many green spaces that do not benefit from the investment focused on national parks (And are not deemed to be of importance nationally), more clarity is needed on how the benefits of national parks can be rolled out to benefit the country more widely and equitably.

**23. Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?**

National parks should be looked at as multi-functional in their national importance and should encompass several considerations, including biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, social benefits, and natural capital value (All of which we welcome the inclusion of in the list of components). Landscape should however be considered as the framework in which national parks will deliver each of the proposed components and should underpin decisions that are made around national importance.

We would also suggest that greater emphasis is given to the health and well-being of the nation in the proposed components and that to do this thought will be needed around equitable access to national parks and to the potential geography of any proposed national park area.

We agree that the potential for nature recovery and a just transition to net zero should be included in any area that is nominated, especially as this is likely to be included as part of the vision and mission for national parks.

(5.2) Size and coherence

**24. Do you agree with size and coherence as a criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved and, if so, how?**

We agree that size and coherence should be part of the criterion, but that this criterion should be fairly flexible to allow for equal opportunities for smaller geographic areas to be considered, especially given that there may more than one new national park designated through this consultation process.

 Although a new national park should also have defined, clear borders as is the case with existing national parks, legislation should allow for these borders to be flexible over time to allow bordering communities to be included in response to future developments and to potentially benefit from future investment. There should also be a focus on the interconnectivity of national parks in terms of how their benefits can move beyond defined geographical areas over time.

Robust land management plans, managed by experts in the field and supported by a clear communication strategy and stakeholder engagement plan will be needed to effectively manage the new national park, regardless of its’ size and geographical placement.

### 25. Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?

We agree with the proposed components but would refer to the previous question regarding the defined geographical area and size of a new national park.

Heritage should be given strong consideration in the selection of a new national park and the inclusion of historically significant areas and structures, however the cultural associations and traditions components should be viewed in light of the multi-cultural society that Scotland represents today and should reflect not one shared tradition, but the coming together of many.

It will be important to consider the impact of intensive land or sea use / infrastructure, particularly being mindful of future land use and how this will impact on public access to the national park area and on the visual impact / natural beauty of the area.

(5.3) Need or added value

**26.** **Do you support the consideration of the potential contribution of the National Park in delivering nature recovery and a just transition to net zero as criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved and, if so, how?**

We strongly support the potential contribution of the national park in delivering nature recovery and a just transition to net zero. Tackling the biodiversity and climate change crises are crucial and we support the role that national parks will play in finding and testing solutions and in providing leadership and practical action around nature recovery and a just transition to net zero. The inclusion of this criterion will also align with the focus of wider national policies such as NPF4 and Scotland’s Biodiversity Strategy.

Clarity could be provided around how this is expected to work in practice, alongside addressing how the work being done in national parks will be replicated and built into Scotland’s nature recovery and net zero targets overall.

**27.**  **Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?**

We agree with the proposed components, specifically that they are forward thinking and include future as well as existing opportunities for nature restoration.

We also welcome that the components include improving accessibility to nature for all – This is not the case with current national parks which can be difficult to access, particularly for more disadvantaged groups who may have issues with transport or overcoming other barriers to accessing nature. The provision of sustainable transport options and improved visitor and tourism management will be crucial to ensure that access to nature is equitable and also aligns with net zero objectives.

There will be important landscape considerations regarding transforming the land and sea to meet net zero objectives and these have to be balanced with preserving the natural beauty of the national park, and in protecting biodiversity.

The focus on growing the well-being economy by increasing natural capital, creating nature-based skills and jobs, and supporting community capacity and development is particularly positive, and there is a role for organisations such as the Landscape Institute to support Scottish Government in developing expertise and providing practical advice in creating new nature-based jobs and skills training.

**28. Do you support the assessment of the merits of a National Park compared to existing or other approaches as a criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved and, if so, how?**

We support the merits of a national park and that investment in creating a new national park authority is justified in terms of these outcomes.

Designation of landscapes has proven to be successful already, however, there is an overdue opportunity for reform, to protect their original purpose, and to maximise public benefit. The original purposes of national parks should be celebrated as special places protected on the basis of their character and natural beauty, however, there is also the potential for these areas of land to do more, and for their governing authorities and landowners to support the delivery of other vital ecosystem services[[7]](#footnote-8).

Strengthening the role of national parks will require greater resourcing not only through funding but also through access to specialised training, advice, information resources, etc. Some of this exists, and simply requires better signposting or minor strategic investment. Strengthening their role also necessitates a review of governance structures in some cases, particularly a greater role for national expertise at board level.[[8]](#footnote-9)

**29. Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?**

Please see question 28.

## (5.4) Degree of support

**30. Do you support the consideration of existing support as a criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved?**

Consideration of existing support will be a crucial part of the criterion, as local buy in and cooperation will be needed in the development and management of a new national park. There will need to be a robust evaluation system to gauge the level of support by communities and stakeholder groups, and a co-production approach should be implemented from the very beginning of the process.

Having robust communication channels built into the management structure of national parks will also be essential in order to create a feedback loop to address ongoing issues and concerns of local communities.

**31. Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?**

We agree with the components around the need for local support by communities and stakeholders as outlined in question 30.

There may be challenges in aligning local authority policy with national policy, and although this could be considered as a component, there should be a solution focused approach to overcoming any conflicts and the indication of local community support should be given more weighting.

(5.5) Strategic contribution

**32.**  **Do you support the assessment of the strategic contribution of an area as a criterion? Could the clarity of it be improved?**

The strategic contribution should be included as part of the criterion, specifically in relation to the delivery of the 30X30 commitment, to test approaches to nature recovery and net zero and to contribute towards sustainable social and economic development.

We also support that the new national parks will be an exemplar of management and good practice, and there is an opportunity to try out new approaches to land management and in creating a joined-up system in working with a wide range of stakeholders. There is an opportunity for realignment of purpose and to strengthen the role of national parks to deliver public benefits through their role in guiding public investment into land management, and in guiding town/country planning decisions more widely.

**33. Do you agree with the proposed components? Are any components missing and, if so, what are they?**

Please see question 32.

(6)- Selection criteria - other issues

**34. Are there any significant issues that are not covered by the proposed criteria? If so, what are they?**

We feel that the key issues have been covered by the proposed criteria.

**35. Do you think any of the criteria are more important than others? If so, which ones and why?**

We would consider need and value, outstanding national importance, and the degree of support to be the most important criterion for the reasons outlined in the previous questions. The other two criterion are still relevant but should have less weight given to them in the evaluation process.

**36. Do you think the selection criteria and proposed components provide the right balance between covering the issues required and simplicity? If not, how could they be improved?**

The selection criteria and proposed components are well balanced. It is important not to overcomplicate the evaluation process, but also to ensure that key issues are covered and the proposed format does that.

**37. Should more of the proposed components be quantifiable? If so, which ones, and how?**

No response.

# Section Three – Other issues

**This final section covers other issues. This consultation has focused on proposals for the role, powers and functions of National Park Authorities and the criteria for selecting new National Park areas. Future consultations from Scottish Government will follow, seeking views on the detail of any legislative changes Ministers consider are required and on a draft evaluation framework for selecting new National Parks. Following the finalisation of this evaluation framework, a call for nominations for specific areas will then be issued by Scottish Ministers.**

**38. Are there any other issues about either Scotland’s approach to National Parks or the selection of new National Parks you would like to raise in your response at this stage?**

No response.

About the Landscape Institute

The Landscape Institute (LI) is the chartered body for the landscape profession. We are an educational charity that promotes the art and science of landscape practice.

The LI’s aim, through the work of our members, is to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural and built environment for the public benefit.

The LI provides a professional home for all landscape practitioners including landscape architects, landscape managers, landscape planners, landscape scientists, and urban designers.

About LI policy and research

The LI undertakes research, builds networks, and provides policy advice to local and national policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders. We seek to demonstrate how landscape and green infrastructure can deliver maximum benefits for society, the environment, and the economy.

The work of the LI policy team is overseen by the LI Policy and Communications Committee (PCC), one of three standing committees that report to the LI’s Board of Trustees.

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1. [Landscape Institute final response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes | Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/consultation/landscape-institute-final-response-glover-review-designated-landscapes/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [IGNITION - Greater Manchester Combined Authority (greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/ignition/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [The European Landscape Convention (coe.int)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/the-european-landscape-convention#:~:text=What%2C%20according%20to%20the%20Convention,natural%20forces%20and%20human%20beings.) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [All England Strategic Landscape Mapping Hub (arcgis.com)](https://all-england-strategic-landscapes-mapping-hub-luc.hub.arcgis.com/) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. [Landscape Institute final response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes | Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/consultation/landscape-institute-final-response-glover-review-designated-landscapes/) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [Landscape Institute final response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes | Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/consultation/landscape-institute-final-response-glover-review-designated-landscapes/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [Landscape Institute final response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes | Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/consultation/landscape-institute-final-response-glover-review-designated-landscapes/) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [Landscape Institute final response to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes | Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/consultation/landscape-institute-final-response-glover-review-designated-landscapes/) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)