

# Developing Theory of Public Involvement in Landscape Planning

Democratising Landscape

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# Developing theory of public involvement in landscape planning. Democratising landscape.

## Abstract

Public involvement has been recognised as a fundamental aspect of landscape planning for over 40 years, and has been more recently legitimised in policy through the European Landscape Convention. However, the practice of public involvement in landscape planning remains questionable. In this thesis I develop the argument that failure in public involvement is founded on a weakness in theoretical understanding within the discipline. Consequently I argue for a strengthening of the theoretical base underpinning public involvement in landscape planning, and seek to contribute to the development of this theory.

The research which this thesis builds on examines how public involvement is theorised and practised in landscape planning. The empirical material which supports this analysis has been gathered by examining landscape assessments, which are identified as a key moment in the landscape planning process. I use landscape character assessments, undertaken in England, as a case for analysing how practitioners engage the public and handle their multiple values.

In this thesis I expose the dynamics between theory and practice within landscape planning. I argue that an ambiguity in the discipline is created by the presence of plural understandings of landscape. In particular, two contrasting theorisations of landscape drive a gap between the rhetoric of practice, and its conduct. The first theorisation, expressed in the ELC and forming the rhetoric of practice, identifies landscape as a dynamic, holistic entity dependent on perceptions. The second theorisation which is operationalised in the conduct of practice is an objective outsiders' view, where landscape is understood as a physical surface. I further argue that this confusion relates to a weakness of substantive theory in the landscape planning discipline. Practice builds on procedural theories which have weak substantive grounding, brought about by the discipline being driven and developed by practice, and falling back on an objective outsiders' view of landscape. Such a view of landscape means that landscape planners lack adequate tools for handling the diverse and dynamic values which are experienced in landscape, and therefore have no sound basis for dealing with conflicting values.

This thesis contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of landscape planning, and begins to develop a theoretical position, with landscape as a democratic entity as the focus for public involvement. The thesis explores the implications of the theorisation of a democratising landscape for the discipline of landscape planning.

*Keywords:* landscape, landscape assessment, landscape planning, public involvement, landscape values, theory.

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# Dedication

To Emma for helping me through this and Rufus and Teddy for all of your hugs.

“You can't wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club”

Jack London





## Acknowledgements

It is almost six years since I started my PhD education, during this time I have been helped, supported and encouraged by innumerable individuals. Without the many chats and discussions I have had over my time as a PhD, the path to completing this thesis would not have been as fulfilling.

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Now let's have a summer holiday

Uppsala, June, 2014

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## List of Publications

This thesis is based on the work contained in the following papers, referred to by Roman numerals in the text:

- I. Butler, A. & Berglund, U. (2012) Landscape Character Assessment as an approach to understand public interests within the European Landscape Convention. *Landscape Research*, ifirst article, 1-18
- II. Butler, A. & Åkerskog, A. (2014) Awareness-raising of landscape in practice: an analysis of Landscape Character Assessments in England. *Land Use Policy*, 36, 441-449.
- III. Butler, A. Landscape values in Landscape Character Assessment. (14/05/26) In process of submission in connection with special issue of *Landscape Research* as edited by Kenneth Olwig.

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My contribution to the papers included in this thesis was as follows:

- I. I developed the research design, developed the theoretical framework for assessing the documents undertook the empirical work, and wrote the text. Ulla Berglund assisted with the discussion of both the theoretical framework and the findings.
- II. I developed the research design, developed the theoretical framework for assessing the documents undertook the empirical work and wrote the text. Ann Åkerskog assisted with the discussion of the theoretical framework.
- III. I am the sole author for this paper



# 1 Introduction

This thesis is driven by a realisation that landscape planners struggle to handle multiple and conflicting landscape values. This is founded on an inability to address how landscape is experienced.

Public involvement has been a part of landscape planning since the 1970's (Thompson, 2000a, Selman, 2006) and has over the ensuing years come to be viewed as a fundamental aspect of the discipline. Yet it was only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the European Landscape Convention (ELC) that public involvement attained mainstream status (Prieur and Durosseau, 2006, Jones, 2007, Selman, 2010, Clemetsen et al., 2011, Jones and Stenseke, 2011b, Majchrowska, 2011). The relevance of public involvement in landscape issues is primarily seen as giving those who experience and are affected by landscape a voice in its future. Despite the perceived importance of public involvement, its position in landscape planning is still questionable, with a significant gap between rhetoric and practice. This gap has been identified in both academic and professional practice. In academia the rhetoric is towards inclusion of the public through transdisciplinary approaches in landscape research (ESF/COST, 2010), yet in reality it is a scientific, expert view which prevails (Conrad et al., 2011b, van der Brink and Bruns, 2012). The same holds true in practice as planners tend to treat landscape as a professional domain at the expense of those insiders who directly experience it (Conrad et al., 2011a, Scott, 2011).

My main argument through this thesis is that this gap is in part due to ambiguity in the conceptualisation of landscape. An ambiguity founded on multiple and dynamic meanings which landscape planners struggle to handle. While landscape is increasingly referred to as an entity based on perceptions and experiences rather than a physical or scenic entity (Council of Europe, 2000a, Antrop, 2006a, ESF/COST, 2010), it still tends to be handled as a visual entity reliant on traditional aesthetic qualities. I further argue through the thesis that this ambiguity is created by a weakness in substantive theory in landscape

planning. A weakness which has come about due to the discipline's establishment and advancement through practice, developing procedural theory at the expense of broader conceptual development (Stiles, 1994, Marsh, 1998, Murphy, 2005, Ahern, 2006, Selman, 2010, van der Brink and Bruns, 2012). I claim that the confusion around the conceptualisation of landscape means that there is little understanding of what values constitute landscape. Consequently it is difficult to address what value the public attribute to their landscape and thus how they can engage in landscape planning processes.

Procedural theory in landscape planning, relating to public involvement has been drawn from a variety of other disciplines (Roe, 2013a) with their own substantive bases. However the implications and significance of the transfer of these procedural theories into landscape planning has tended to go unquestioned. I claim that the lack of substantive theory within the discipline means that the entity or phenomenon which practice deals with often goes unquestioned. Consequently, I argue that the ambiguity this creates is one of the reasons why practice falls short of its ideal when engaging the public

I further contend that how landscape is conceptualised affects what involvement of the public means. Involvement in issues relating to the physicality of landscape requires a different philosophical view to involvement in landscape as an entity built on the perceptions and experienced of those who encounter it. Thus how the landscape is conceptualised affects how it is handled. Uncertainty in the discipline intern manifestes itself in confusion when engaging the public in questions of landscape. In order to deal with this ambiguity, I argue, that there a need to readdress the substantive basis on which procedural theory and practice are operate.

In this thesis landscape character assessment (LCA) is used as the means to identify how practice handles multiple landscape values. The LCA approach has been identified as a tool for implementing ELC. The ELC provides a substantive core and creates a procedural understanding of landscape. Through the thesis the LCA in the context of the ELC is used as a means to gauge practice, questioning how both substantive and procedural theories are handled in landscape planning.

This first chapter outlines the background to the research and presents the aims and questions of the thesis. Section 1.1 outlines the thesis structure. This is followed by section 1.2 which describes my personal background and how this has informed the thesis. Section 1.3 describes the background to the thesis itself and the factors which were instrumental in defining the research project. This informed the formative research problem and provided the initial direction for the research. The research aims and questions are finally introduced in section 1.4.

## 1.1 Thesis structure

This thesis uses three papers and the five chapters of the cover story to develop an argument for strengthening theory in landscape planning. This is initially based on a ground clearing of existing theoretical work, before questioning practice and the theoretical base which practice is founded on. This thesis finally establishes a contribution to public involvement in landscape planning theory.

This first chapter briefly describes the background to the thesis, outlining the initial research problem and how this has developed to create the present research aims and questions. Chapter two presents the methodological approach used in the thesis, outlining the research strategy and the relationship between the empirical data and theoretical work. In the third chapter I undertake a ground clearing of the theoretical and conceptual understandings relating to public involvement in landscape planning. I develop my argument that the study of landscape planning is characterised by theoretical confusion, which affects the understanding of the values present in the landscape. Chapter four provides a brief summary of the articles, presenting the main findings. I conclude in chapter five by relating the findings of the study to the research questions and returning to the aims of the thesis.

## 1.2 Background

In this section I begin (1.2.1) by briefly summarising my personal background in relation to the departure point for this thesis. I then describe the background to the thesis (1.2.2) outlining the research problem as it was identified at the start of the PhD project and sketching out how this altered through the course of the PhD. The section then concludes by presenting the research aims and questions that have ultimately informed this thesis.

### 1.2.1 Personal background

Prior to commencing this PhD project I worked as a landscape architect. The majority of my formal education for this was at Leeds Metropolitan University in the UK, a school where the focus was primarily on design. My studies in Britain were supplemented and enriched by exchanges to landscape architecture programs at both SLU Alnarp, and the University of Ljubljana. While experiencing these different educational institutions the question of what a landscape architect/planner *does* was frequently discussed. However the question of what landscape architects/planners are or what they engage with, (what is landscape?) was rarely broached. Throughout my graduate and post-

graduate studies landscape was viewed primarily as a visual entity, grounded in a traditional understanding of aesthetics; an entity to be designed or managed.

As a professional landscape architect I have worked in both Britain and Sweden. For much of this time I was engaged with the creation and development of landscape assessment; working in England, Wales and Sweden, on assessments ranging from regional to municipality level. During this time there was neither the time nor catalyst for extensive reflection on the assessment process. The question of whose values of landscape were promoted in the assessment and which voices were ignored was not explored. However, the fact that experts define the landscape, the surroundings for peoples' lives, seemed somewhat presumptuous and arrogant. While not having the opportunity to investigate the problems with practice, there was also little chance to reflect on the positive aspects of landscape assessments: how they offer the opportunity to promote the landscape as a cross-sectoral entity for discussion in policy; and how they have the *potential* to engage various communities and individuals.

It has become increasingly clear as I have taken the journey through my PhD studies how my cultural background as well as my educational and professional experience has coloured my engagement with landscape. I originate from England where the landscape is traditionally expressed as a visually experienced entity and is clearly tied to human manipulation of the land. Although it is an urbanised population the country is still promoted romantically as W.G Hoskins' (1955) rural depiction in *The making of the English landscape*. Contact with the land is primarily linked to a network of footpaths through private land, where access to the landscape is often contested. This view from the footpaths means that immersion in the landscape is orchestrated and dependent on the historical practices and activities of those who went before us.

For the past 10 years I have resided in Sweden where landscape has traditionally been linked to the use of the land and practices relating to it (Olwig, 2005, Eriksson and Wästfelt, 2011). This is played out in *Allemansrätten* (right of public access), recognising access to land as a right (Naturvårdserket, 2014) and allowing (often) unhindered engagement with the landscape. Being exposed to these two differing ways of engaging with the landscape brought into question what landscape is and how people relate to it.

Applying for a PhD position provided the catalyst for questioning my understanding of the work I had previously undertaken, the field I was engaged with and the cultural understandings of landscape which I held.

### 1.2.2 Background to the thesis

The announcement for the PhD position ‘with specialisation on Landscape Analysis’ was within the ‘Architecture and Planning in the Urban Landscape’ (APULA) research school. In 2008 when I developed my application for the position, sowing the seed for this thesis, Sweden was already a signatory to the ELC but had yet to ratify it<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence, questions of what ratification of the convention could mean were mooted. A central undertaking for the implementation of the ELC is *identification and assessment* of the landscape, recognised as a specific measure within the convention (Art.6.C). The ELC expects signatories to “*identify its own landscapes throughout its territory [...] taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned*” (Council of Europe, 2000aArt. 5,C,1). This undoubtedly informed the direction for my PhD application.

The research problem which I identified was that Sweden lacked a recognised form of assessment which would respond to the ELC’s call for identification and assessment of the landscape. More specifically my interest lay in the inclusion of ‘public’ values in landscape assessments, and in the problem of public involvement being a weakness in the assessment process. This manifested itself in the early stages of my PhD research project, as recognised in the initial project title:

“Development of the inclusion of public perception within analysis of the urban landscape and its incorporation as a tool to augment and inform a transparent method for landscape assessment.”

Resulting from the background outlined above the main research question from my start seminar was formulated as:

‘How can public aspirations and perceptions of the urban fringe be incorporated into a holistic and transdisciplinary landscape analysis which will inform sustainable and inclusive development of the “everyday” landscape?’ – January 2009.

This question focused on developing methodological approaches and advancing procedural theory. Consequently the initial case selection and gathering of early empirical data focused on the procedural aspects of landscape assessments. Through examining these aspects and trying to identify

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<sup>1</sup> Sweden signed the European Convention in February 2001, but did not ratify it until January 2011. The convention finally came in to force in Sweden, in May 2011.

good practice, several recurring themes have created stumbling blocks. These made me query what I was addressing: whose values are taken in? Which values define landscape? Thus what are landscape and landscape planning? And also what is public involvement in landscape planning? These questions started to expose an ambiguity in the substantive theory in landscape planning and initiated my investigation of what underpins the discipline especially in relation to public involvement.

Expanding the scope of the thesis to engage with substantive theory, altered the focus of the research. What became central was how practice and theory relate to each other, this informed the final aims and questions of the thesis.

### 1.3 Research aims and questions

This thesis has two broad aims, these are addressed through five objectives contained within the research questions outlined below.

The first of these aims is:

*To reveal dynamics within landscape planning theory, and between theory and practice, in relation to concepts and meanings of landscape, and practices of public involvement.*

The purpose of this aim is to expose how theory and practice in landscape planning relate to and inform each other. This provides a means for understanding how the discipline operationalises theory and recognises practice. Such an understanding also helps to recognise how the discipline develops. This aim is addressed through three research questions: one empirical (EQ) and two theoretical (TQ1 & TQ2). The empirical question responding to this aim is:

How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?

Questioning how landscape planners engage with landscape values also queries what are recognised as landscape values and how they are handled in the planning process. Asking these questions creates a context in which to address the first aim's theoretical questions. The first of these is (TQ1):

How is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?

This begins to reveal substantive theory behind landscape planning, addressing what the discipline is dealing with. Such questioning attempts to realise what constitutes the theoretical base of the profession.

The final research question to address this aim (TQ2) is:

What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?

This builds on TQ1 to understand the dynamics which exist between the procedural and substantive theories at play in the discipline.

The discussion which develops around the first aim informs the second aim of this thesis:

*To strengthen the substantive aspect of landscape planning theory in order to strengthen participatory theory of landscape planning.*

This relates directly to the thesis title ‘Develop theory of public involvement in landscape planning’. This aim deals with the realisation that it is the connection between substantive theory in planning and the procedural understanding of participation which need strengthening. This aim is examined through a single theoretical research question TQ3:

How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning?

Table 1 provides a summary of the research questions and their relation to the research aims. How the research questions are explored in the thesis is outlined in section 2.4 *handling the research questions*. The aims and questions are finally returned to in chapter 5 *Presentation and discussion of the findings* in light of the empirical and theoretical findings of this thesis.

Table 1.

| <b>Aims</b>  | <b>Research questions</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Aim 1</b> To reveal dynamics within landscape planning theory, and between theory and practice, in relation to concepts and meanings of landscape, and practices of public involvement. | <p><b>EQ</b> How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?</p> <p><b>TQ1</b> How is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?</p> <p><b>TQ2</b> What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?</p> |

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**Aim 2** To strengthen the substantive aspect of landscape planning theory in order to strengthen participatory theory of landscape planning.

**TQ3** How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning?

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## 2 Methodology

This chapter presents the research strategy which has driven this thesis. I begins in section 2.1 by outlining the relevance of theory for the thesis, describing how the research has engaged with theory, and how the strategy is based on tacking back and forth between theory and empirical data. In section 2.2 I introduce the case which was studied. I begins by outlining the ELC which provides context for the study before introducing LCA as the case; examining how landscape planners engage with public landscape values. I present the reasoning for selection and a description of the case. In section 2.3 I introduce the research process and outline the methods used in the study. I then briefly explain the relevance of the cover story for the thesis in section 2.4. In section 2.5 I relate the research strategy to the research questions in order to clarify the relationship between theory and empirical work. The final section of this chapter, section 2.6, is a brief personal reflection on the research strategy.

### 2.1 Research strategy

As the title of this thesis denotes, and as elaborated through the aims, the purpose of this research is to contribute to theory of landscape planning in relation to public involvement. To study this I use the LCA approach as a case for examining how landscape planners engage with public landscape values. The LCA approach represents a means for implementation of the ELC and as such allows questions relating to the landscape convention to be addressed. In this thesis the ELC is seen as an instrument for developing policy in landscape planning and providing the basis for practice. The landscape convention provides a substantive understanding of landscape, one reliant on the perceptions of those who experience it. The convention also expresses procedural means for addressing landscape in line with this understanding of landscape. How these substantive and procedural aspects and their relationship to practice has driven this thesis is outlined in the following sections.

### *Use of theory in this thesis*

Theory within landscape planning is recognised as being weak. It is a relatively small and developing academic discipline which has been based on practical approaches, with the focus on procedural rather than substantive theories (Stiles, 1994, Murphy, 2005, Ahern, 2006, Selman, 2010).

As stated earlier, the research on which this thesis is grounded began by focusing on practice (section 1.2) without questioning the substantive nature of what the practices were dealing with. However, through examining procedural theory relating to empirical data from the case study it became evident that the substantive nature of the discipline is ambiguous. It was difficult to see what landscape represented when handled in practice. As a result the aim of the research shifted to examine the interaction between substantive and procedural theories and practice (see 1.3.1). It is this interaction which became fundamental to the research strategy.

In this thesis, I recognise theories as being built on associated concepts, providing explanations for observable phenomena through abstract principles (Groat and Wang, 2002, Bryman, 2004). Consequently theories represent generalisations and codifications of knowledge (Swaffield, 2002). In order to *accurately* transfer knowledge of observed phenomena, statements need to be formulated in the language of some theory. As a result statements can only be as precise as the language of the theory which frames them (Chalmers, 1982). This ability to relating theory to empirical reality and vice versa, is seen as a sign of maturity of an area of intellectual pursuit (Faludi, 1973) and helps scientific fields to develop (Groat and Wang, 2002).

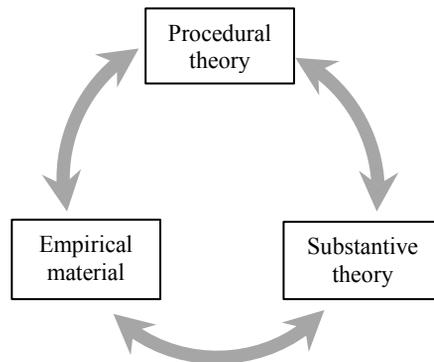
Within landscape architecture and landscape planning two main categories of theory are recognised; procedural and substantive (Murphy, 2005, Ahern, 2006). *Procedural theory* addresses methodological issues. It relates to functions and relationships for transferring knowledge into action. It is procedural theory which informs the types of process used for making decisions; how values are included, who is involved in the process etc. (Murphy, 2005). This is what Faludi (1973) calls theory *for* [landscape] planning. *Substantive theory* provides the knowledge base to inform a better understanding of the subject; how the subject is recognised. Within landscape planning this tends to be based on theory from other disciplines relevant to the situation (Murphy, 2005). This can be seen as theory *in* [landscape] planning (Faludi, 1973). A third form of theory, taken up by the planning academic Ernest Alexander (1992), is *Definitional theory*. This represents the body of theory that describes what a discipline *is* and how it fits into the social context. It represents theory *of* landscape planning, examining the role of the discipline within wider systems in which it operates. It embodies both the objective and

procedural aspects, how they relation to each other and their relation to practice (Alexander, 1992). The context dependency of a discipline such as landscape planning, means can only really be a broad agreement on the basic structure of the discipline (Stiles, 1994). Although this thesis does not engage with definitional theory, the recognition of the interplay between substantive and procedural theories and their relation to practice starts to develop an understanding of the fundamentals of the discipline when involving the public.

### *An iterative process*

Through this thesis it is recognised that substantive and procedural theories develop through an iterative relationship. Substantive theory provides the context for procedural theory; conceptualising what landscape represents and thus how it can be handled. Procedural theory in turn provides the focus for engaging with the substantive conceptualisation; informing the development of tools which are used to address landscape. Therefore procedural theory and consequently practice will always relate to some form of substantive theory.

Theories represent a codification of real world phenomena and as such are reliant on the context in which those phenomena are experienced. Basing the development of theory on empirical data and addressing its context is essential for grounding theory in reality and preventing it from becoming an abstract entity (Flyvbjerg, 2001). For this reason an iterative approach for examining the phenomena in its context has been employed in this research (Yin, 2003), circulating between substantive theory, procedural theory and empirical data (figure 1).



*Figure 1.* The iterative process

Empirical material has been used to identify and explore the theoretical perspectives at play in landscape planning, and to help focus the research, retaining focus

on a specific case. It has helped define the scope of the research by exposing what landscape planner's address and has provided the material to develop the theoretical framework needed to understand the phenomena.

Theories, both procedural (addressing how landscape is handled) and substantive (addressing how landscape is represented) have been used as frames for identifying relevant data and analysing the empirical material. Both

forms of theory have also been used to question each other: substantive theory of landscape to question what procedural theories are addressing, and procedural theory to question the relevance of substantive theory employed in landscape planning.

The way in which the research has been driven by both empirical and theoretical work is further explained in the subsequent sections.

## 2.2 Case study description

In this section I introduce and describe the case. Firstly I provide an introduction to the ELC which provides context for the case (section 2.2.1). I describe what the ELC represents, how it came about and its relevance to this research. I then introduce the LCA approach (section 2.2.3) as the case; a means for examining how landscape planners handled public values. In this section I also justify the case selection.

Initially, in this research LCA was considered one of two embedded case within the ELC. Examining how landscape planners handle public values was originally juxtaposed with a second embedded case: a study of an *everyday landscape*. The aim of this second case was to comprehend what landscape values insiders hold for the landscape. The case was located in Norrköping, Eastern Sweden and was part of a larger research project: *Bättre landskapsanalys för transportsektorn* (Better landscape analysis for the transport sector). This second study used both interviews and map based questionnaires to address the diversity of values recognised in the landscape. Although this empirical data has not been incorporated into this thesis, it has informed many decisions and helped to formulate the theoretical framework. The findings from this second study also helped question what values the public relate to the landscape expanding the substantive aspect of landscape.

The LCA approach, as a case, represents a means for examining how landscape planners handled public values. The ELC as the context for the case represents the principle tool for developing policy in landscape planning. It provides both a recognised and accepted substantive base for dealing with landscape and outlines the procedural aspects used to address this.

### 2.2.1 Description of the European Landscape Convention

The ELC is the first international treaty to directly address landscape<sup>2</sup> and as such represents an important policy tool for landscape planning. Sweden, which has been my base while undertaking this PhD project, ratified the convention in 2011. The United Kingdom, where the empirical work was undertaken, ratified the convention in 2007. Although the work of this thesis began in 2008, prior to Sweden's ratification of the convention and while it was still in its infancy in England, discussion around the convention was already well developed. Academic researchers in both countries has been active with dealing with the convention since the ELC was instigated, for example: Swedish scholars Ingrid Sarlöv-Herlin (2004, 2007), Kenneth Olwig (2007a, 2007b), Hans Antonson (2009) and the English scholars Peter Howard (2004, 2007) and Michael Dower (2007)<sup>3</sup>.

The convention is a Council of Europe (CoE) initiative and as such represents the Council's aims of promoting democracy and the protection of human rights (Council of Europe, 2011). Unlike the European Union and European Council, conventions of the CoE do not represent law, but rather what Kenneth Olwig (2007b) likens to the moral voice of Europe. What the convention requires of signatories is that they recognise landscape in law and implement the convention in line with the legal system and policy frameworks existing in each nation. Accordingly the ELC does not dictate how landscapes should be handled. As Michel Prieur (2006:13) puts it, the convention "does not impose a set menu, it merely lays down the order of courses".

As well as representing the values of the CoE, the ELC also responds to a realisation that landscapes across Europe are becoming degraded (European Environment Agency, 2007) and that there is reluctance of the populace of Europe to accept the disturbance to their landscape (Prieur, 2006). Although there are a multitude of International conventions, European directives and national, regional and local policies, which impact upon landscape, they tend to be sectoral and not have a landscape perspective, for example the Common

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2. The ELC was open for signatures on 20/10/2000 and came in to force on 1/3/2004 after being ratified by ten nation states. As of 14/04/2014 the convention has been ratified by 38 nation states and signed but not ratified by two member states of the Council of Europe (Iceland and Malta). Seven member states have neither signed nor ratified the convention: Albania, Austria, Estonia, Germany, Liechtenstein, Monaco and Russia (CoE, 2014).

3. A 'Scopus' search for "European Landscape Convention" in April 2014 provided 130 results, showing a steady increase since 2000 and peaking at 28 articles in 2013. The nation with the largest percentage of articles directly relating to the convention, 17% (22 of the results), is Sweden, with the UK second, with 18 results (14%). When it comes to institutions addressing the ELC Sveriges Landbruksuniversitet (SLU) has the greatest output with 13% of all articles (17 articles).

Agricultural Policy or the Water Framework Directive. The implementation of these sectoral agendas does not consider their impact on landscape, but see it as a vessel in which the interventions occur. As a result sectoral work has created fragmentation of landscape (Selman, 2012).

Recognition that landscape is of benefit for all and of value for individuals and society, is central to the ELC. This reflects the CoE's aims of promoting democratic and human rights and provides the substantive base for the convention. Landscape is defined as:

“an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.” (Chapter 1, Art 1)

This makes landscape reliant on the perceptions of the people who experience it, moving it away from being a professional topic which is treated sectorally. Geographically the ELC also democratises the landscape, as it is seen that it:

“[...] applies to the entire territory of the Parties and covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas [...] It concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as every day or degraded landscapes.” (Chapter 1, Art 2)

As such the everyday landscapes of all citizens are recognised as being of value, not just outstanding or sectoral valued landscapes. Landscapes become seen as being informed and created by those who inhabit or experience them, and as such all are stakeholders in the landscape (Jones, 2007). The centrality of this to the convention is taken up through the more prescriptive general measures where signatory parties are expected to:

“...recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity” (Chapter 2, Art 5a)

This stipulates that the substantive understanding of landscape has to be enforced in law, so while Michel Prieur (2006:13) states that the convention “does not impose a set menu...” it certainly appears to lay down what ingredients to use. Accordingly landscape is seen as where people engage with everyday life and as such is important for defining individual and group identities. Landscape thus becomes the all-encompassing surroundings to life, understood as a holistic entity.

The democratic values of the CoE are taken up more specifically through prescriptive measures for implementing the convention. These are directly

expressed through measures for participation, where involvement of the general public is recognised as a means of implementing the ELC. This is expressed in the general measures of the convention, as the need to:

“...establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies...” (Chapter 2, Art 5c)

The convention does not directly outline how this should be undertaken. It is seen that such operational procedures need to fit within the existing legal and policy framework of the signatory nations. However the specific measures, grounded on the conventions understanding of landscape, further advance the values of the CoE. Two of the three specific measures directly engage with public involvement and transfer of knowledge. These are: awareness-raising, and identification and assessment. Under awareness-raising it is stated that:

“Each Party undertakes to increase awareness among the civil society, private organisations, and public authorities of the value of landscapes, their role and changes to them” (Chapter 2, Art 6A)

The importance of awareness-raising is further stated and clarified in the 2008 guidelines, where it is recognised as being “understood as a knowledge-spreading process operating in all directions” (Council of Europe, 2008). This moves it from a traditional, top-down process towards awareness-raising as a process for handling landscape as a dynamic entity constructed by those who encounter it.

A further measure which is central for implementing the convention is the identification of landscape of the territory. Signatories are expected to:

“...assess the landscapes [...], taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned” (Chapter 2, Art 6C)

The landscape understood here is in line with the definition and scope of the ELC as defined above. Both of these specific procedural measures, with focus on the involvement of the public, compound the substantive basis of the convention.

In this section I have revealed how the ELC provides both a substantive base and procedural signposting for landscape planners. I have also outlined more specifically how the convention provides directions for involving the public and enhancing participation.

### 2.2.2 Case study: landscape character assessment

In this section I outline LCA as a case for examining how landscape planners handled public values, in the context of the ELC. I begin by justifying the use of landscape assessment as a means for examining landscape planning. This is followed by an explanation of the rationale behind the use of LCA as a case for understanding landscape assessment. The section then goes on to outline the LCA approach including its origins, before explaining how the empirical data was attained.

As outlined above, the ELC recognises landscape assessment and identification as an opportunity to engage the general public. It signifies the early part of the landscape planning process, the point where the landscape is framed and landscape values are recognised. Consequently landscape assessment provides a means for understanding how landscape planning addresses the multiplicity of values existing in the landscape. Thus landscape assessment represents a significant point at which involvement of the general public can be instigated, representing an opportunity to question procedural theory. It also offers the possibility to unravel the substantive theory on which the procedural understanding and practice are based.

The LCA approach has been utilised for understanding landscape assessment. LCA was chosen, not because it is necessarily viewed as the best tool for landscape assessment or public engagement but because it represents the dominant approach (Selman, 2010). The approach was developed in England and Scotland towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Swanwick, 2002, Jensen, 2006) and has since been widely utilised in Europe and beyond (Kim and Pauleit, 2005, Caspersen, 2009, Vallés et al., 2012, Demková, 2011). The development of the LCA approach in England is briefly outlined in paper III.

As well as being the dominant form of landscape assessment, LCA was selected due to the understanding of landscape expressed in the guidelines to the approach, which appears to mirror that of the ELC. Landscape is defined as being:

“[...] about the relationship between people and place. It provides the setting for our day-to-day lives. The term does not mean just special or designated landscapes...People’s perceptions turn land into the concept of landscape.”  
(Swanwick and Land Use Consultants, 2002: 1.11)

The guidelines for the LCA approach and supporting topic paper, *how stakeholders can help*, also identify the need to involve the public, as stakeholders in the landscape:

“Their involvement can produce a more informed assessment, greater ownership of applications, and establish valuable partnerships for future work” (Swanwick et al., 2002: 1.1)

Although the use of the LCA approach is becoming geographically wide spread, its use in England has been the focus of the empirical study. England was chosen for four reasons: firstly the LCA approach was initially established in England and Scotland and has had time to develop, meaning that there is an abundance of empirical material; secondly in England LCA is seen as an approach for implementing the ELC (Natural England 2014); thirdly practice from Britain including landscape assessment approaches were instrumental for informing the ELC (Dower, 2007); the fourth reason was the accessibility to documents both physically and linguistically, English being my mother tongue.

### 2.3 The case study process

Studying a case keeps the phenomenon in its real-life context allowing complexity of relationships to be examined (Yin, 2003, Flyvbjerg, 2006). In this study it relates to how landscape planners relate to the ELC in their professional work. The LCA approach acts as a case for examining how professionals engage with public values in the ELC and offers opportunity to address both substantive and procedural theories. The case thus provides an insight into how professionals operate (see figure 2).

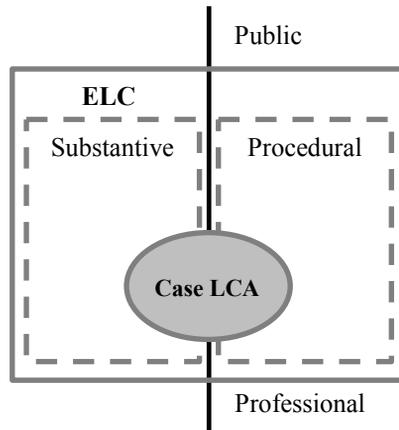


Figure 2. ELC and LCA relationship

I have used case study methodology for this research as it can help expose complexity and identify the multiplicity of factors which affect a phenomenon (Stake, 1995, Groat and Wang, 2002, Yin, 2003). The development of a deep understanding is seen as helping to understand theorised phenomena and provide the possibility to generalisation beyond the case (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2006).

Triangulation has been used across the case in order to enhance validity of the research as is common in case study approaches (Johansson, 2007).

Empirical triangulation has meant that multiple data sources have been drawn up on, from a variety of assessments (section 2.3.1). Triangulation was also achieved through data collection methods, through interviews and different forms of document analyses. Theoretical triangulation has also been important to this case study, using both substantive and procedural frameworks to address empirical material (figure 3).

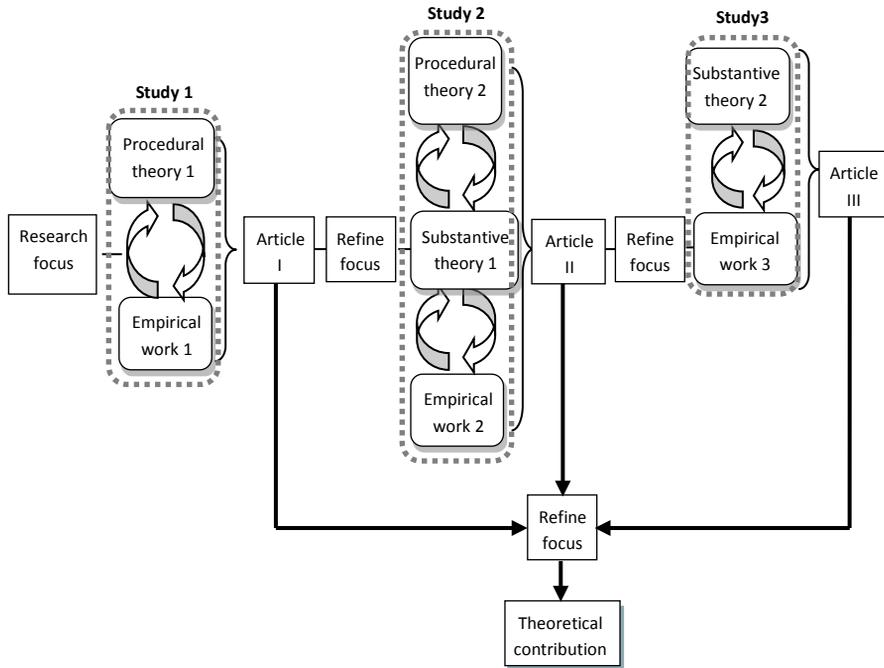


Figure 3. The research process

The iterative process between the theoretical frameworks and empirical work (2.1), helped to formulate two significant questions; what does public involvement mean in landscape issues? And what does ‘landscape’ mean in processes involving the public? The first of these questions, which is covered by the empirical research question (EQ) and theoretical research question 2 (TQ) (see section 1.3), pointed to a need to address procedural theory within landscape planning; The second question, handled in the EQ and TQ 1 and 2, pointed to a need to understand substantive aspects of landscape planning. The issue of the substantive theory is further examined through the cover story as is the relationship between procedural and substantive.

In this section I explain how the research was undertaken. I begin by introducing the three separate studies through which I have undertaken to

investigate the case; these are presented in the following section. For each of the studies I outline the focus of the study and describe the methods and theories used. The different studies have had different relationships between theory and practice as outlined in figure 3. This has generated the iterative form of the thesis, moving back and forth between empirical work and substantive and procedural theory in order to address the relationship between the three.

### 2.3.1 Case study data collection

An initial understanding of the context, which forms the policy background was attained through examining the ELC. The ELC provided both a substantive and procedural grounding and focus for the study. The foundation for addressing the convention was primarily through documentation. This primarily consists of the convention proper (Council of Europe, 2000a), but also includes the explanatory report (Council of Europe, 2000b), which is a non-binding document and also the guidelines for the implementation of the ELC (Council of Europe, 2008).

The examination of the LCA started as an exploratory study for understanding procedural aspects of involvement of the public in landscape planning. This involved questioning public involvement in landscape planning practice, based on the procedural aspects in the ELC. The point of departure was to develop a theoretical framework in order to examine the empirical material pertaining to involvement in landscape planning. LCA approach was initially addressed through the guidelines for the approach (Swanwick and Land Use Consultants, 2002), related topic papers (Swanwick, 2002, Swanwick et al., 2002, Swanwick, 2003) and workshop preceding to help form a basis for understanding the embedded case. The core of the research builds on empirical data obtained from seventy eight completed assessments which were accessed and examined to provide a broad understanding of practice. This provided an overview of how the approach is used and how practice in general addresses landscape and the ELC. The means of accessing the empirical data is outlined in papers I-III.

The case of the LCA approach has been examined through three separate iterative studies founded on separate empirical works and theoretical frames. These relate to the three papers contained within this thesis (figure 3).

#### *Data collection study 1*

In the first study I used a document analysis (empirical work 1 in figure 3) to examine LCAs. LCAs from 2007-2011 were analysed, 2007 represented the year when the ELC came in to force in the UK. In total I examined fifty two

assessment documents. The initial focus of this study was to ascertain the assessments which had engaged the public to some extent. The aim of this was to providing a broad understanding of the uptake of insider views in the LCA approach. Fourteen assessments were identified which engaged the public, these were further analysed to gain an understanding of how practitioners handle public involvement in landscape assessments. The aim of this study was initially to determine good practice, in line with the original focus of the PhD project (see section 1.2). In order to analyse these assessments I devised a theoretical framework grounded in the idea of landscape as a perceived entity (paper I, pp 2-4). The framework was built on procedural participation theories as described in paper I (pp 9-11), this is expressed as procedural theory 1, in figure 3. Through an iterative process the theoretical framework was also explored in relation to the empirical findings, thus refocusing the frame by which the empirical data was analysed. This allowed the focus of the research to shift to theoretical development and enabled the refinement of the research question, exposing the need to understand the substantive nature of what landscape planners are handling.

### *Data collection study 2*

In the second study I focused on knowledge transfer in the landscape assessment process, by exposing how awareness-raising is used in landscape assessments. This drew on empirical data from documents and interviews (empirical work 2, figure 3). The empirical work for this study was initiated by undertaking a second document analysis; the scope for this was extended covering assessments undertaken between 2007 and 2012, in order to bring the empirical data up to date. In total I analysed 78 assessments for this study. The focus of the document analysis was twofold: firstly how the concept of landscape was defined in the assessments, as a means of understanding the substantive base for action, and secondly whether stakeholders were engaged in the assessment process (paper II, p 444). The aim of this analysis was to start to identify how the rhetoric of landscape as promoted by the ELC was taken into practice. Analysis of the documents also informed the interviews. Practitioners and civil servants, who engaged in ‘good practice’, were identified as potential interview informants through the document analyses from both papers I and II. The analysis of documents also provided the frame for the interviews, drawing on the specifics of the assessments documents and questioning their logic.

In total seven semi-structured interviews were undertaken lasting between 1 and 2 hours. The respondents had been involved in 14 assessments all of which were discussed in the interviews. The semi-structures interviews (Kvale and

Brinkmann, 2009) were framed by the document analysis and a conceptualisation of awareness-raising developed in paper II (pp 442-444). The interviews explored the complex ideas of landscape and awareness-raising, as well as questioning issues of participation and landscape values in order to put it in context, primarily focusing on how the process functioned. How as professionals they recognised landscape and participation and the problems they experienced with both of these

Subsequently an iteratively process developed between the empirical data the substantive and procedural theories; how landscape as forwarded by the ELC (fig. 3, substantive theory 1) related to awareness-raising (fig. 3, procedural theory 2) and how this relates to practice (procedural theory 2). The interviews provided a deeper understanding of how practice recognises the substantive nature of landscape and how this impact on procedural theories.

### *Data collection study 3*

In the third study I addressed how landscape values are handled in landscape assessments. This study once more focused on the LCA documents. The study initially draws on the document analysis from paper II, which identified assessments which expressed landscape as a perceived entity and engaged the public in the assessment process. This suggested that the procedural and substantive aspects relate to each other. The focus of this study was on how landscape planning handles the multiplicity of values (substantive theory 2), ten assessments were identified. The identified documents were analysed using a framework built on theoretical understanding of landscape values. The framework is presented in paper III (pp 4-6). The aim of the analysis was to identify how practitioners include multiple values in landscape assessments. I began with a broad analysis of all ten assessments and then focused on a detailed analysis of a single assessment ‘The Peak District landscape character assessment’ (empirical work 3). The purpose of the detailed study was to reveal the logic of the documents in relation to landscape values. This built on the first two studies and used the empirical data of the assessment documents to address the substantive nature of landscape planner’s engagement. This allowed the description of individual landscapes to be compared with the conceptualisation of landscape within the document.

## **2.4 The purpose of the cover story**

Rather than simply drawing together the loose ends and clarifying the link between the individual papers, I use the cover story to further develop the theoretical understanding of the thesis. I extend the conclusions from the

empirical analysis and theoretical argument outlined in the papers beyond the case of LCA. The cover story provides the opportunity not only to theoretically question participation in landscape planning but also to examine the foundations of the discipline itself.

The cover story also provides the possibility to reformulate the focus of the thesis, enabling the research to evolve. It gives the opportunity to juxtapose the procedural and substantive theory against each other and against empirical findings. Consequently the theoretical argument, which has its origins in the papers, is developed, exposing connections between theories and expanding the argument beyond the case.

## 2.5 Handling the research questions

In this section I explain how the research process has addressed the research questions. The questions are handled individually and a small diagrammatic representation, relating to the research process figure 3, is presented to help explain the relation to the overall strategy.

*Empirical question - “How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?”*

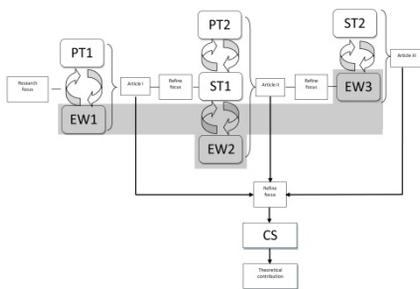


Figure 4. EQ in relation to research process

Empirical work 1 (EW1) provides an initial understanding of how the public are involved in landscape assessments, in order to ascertain how landscape values are attained. Reflections from EW1 provided the catalyst for questioning what public involvement in landscape assessment entails. This shifted the focus of the research in EW2 to address awareness-raising as a means of understanding values in the landscape. EW2 also begins to unravel

how landscape and the values and meanings related to it are seen within assessments. The question of landscape values is the focus of the final empirical work, EW3, which assesses how landscape values are handled in the assessment document.

*Theoretical question 1 - “How is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?”*

I examined this question through the substantive theoretical discussion which surfaced from EW2 and EW3. This question is explored by analysing the substantive theory in relation to and in light of the empirical work. ST1 starts to address how landscape is conceptualised in relation to participation and awareness-raising; ST2 examines landscape values and their relevance in landscape assessments. These findings are further developed through theoretical worked in the theoretical chapter of the cover story (chapter 3).

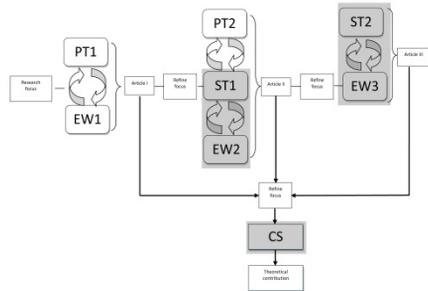


Figure 5. TQ1 in relation to research process

*Theoretical question 2 - “What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?”*

In order to address the second research question both procedural and substantive theories are drawn on. PT1 and PT2 provided an understanding of the procedural theories relating to public involvement in landscape issues, through examining participation and awareness-raising. These are set against substantive theoretical position developed in ST1 and ST2. This is further expanded through the argument which develops over the course of the cover story.

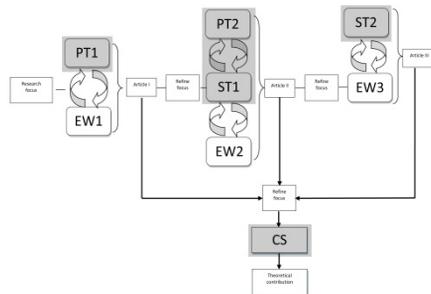
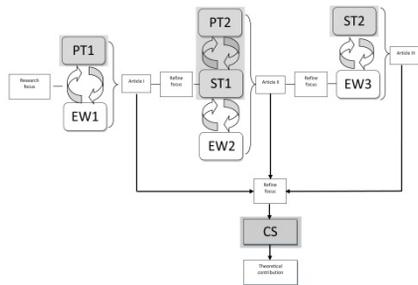


Figure 6. TQ2 in relation to research process

*Theoretical question 3 - “How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contributes to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning?”*



The third theoretical question represents a culmination of the earlier questions. Although mainly addressed within the argument outlined through the cover story, it also builds on the theoretical work from all three of the articles.

Figure 7. TQ3 in relation to research process

## 2.6 Discussion of methodology

The research strategy in part tells the story of my development from a practitioner towards becoming an academic. It outlines the learning process I have followed in becoming increasingly critical in my thinking. This is reflected in how the thesis has shifted from the development of methodological approaches, to focusing on advancement of the theoretical base of the discipline.

As a starting point, looking at procedural aspects of landscape assessments helped in identifying an ambiguity in professional practice and a gap in substantive theory. It became evident that what I was focusing on would perpetuate this gap. The early output of the research suggested that I needed to reflect, beyond the procedural aspects of the assessment process.

The nature of this research has been anything but linear. The iterative nature of bouncing back and forth between theories and empirical data has at times felt confusing to an ex-practitioner used to more systematic processes. Yet the iterative process opened up the discipline for examination and allowed a deeper understanding of both substantive and procedural theory to develop through the thesis.

While the change in research question has been quite dramatic, the empirical focus has remained quite unaltered. It is the theoretical lens through which the empirical data has been examined which has changed. While the embedded case was initially addressed in order to ascertain best practice in landscape assessment, the focus of analysis shifted to examine how practice

engages with and frames the landscape. Changes have come about through insights from empirical investigations, which helped refine the focus.



### 3 Theoretical and conceptual context

One of my aims in this thesis is to “...*strengthen the substantive aspect of landscape planning theory in order to strengthen participatory theory of landscape planning*” (see section 1.3). Accordingly theory is fundamental to the research. In this chapter I will develop my argument that the study of landscape planning has been characterised by theoretical confusion, and that the plurality of concepts of landscape which characterise landscape studies is significant in this theoretical confusion. I further argue that this affects how values are recognised in the landscape, consequently influencing how the public are involved in landscape planning processes. In this chapter I will develop my line of argument by undertaking a ground clearing of the theoretical and conceptual understandings which impact on landscape planning in relation to public involvement. This ground clearing, will then, establish the basis for the theoretical problem which I will address throughout the remainder of the thesis.

I begin this chapter by building the foundations for my line of argument in section 3.1. In this first section I examine the plurality which exists in landscape studies, the confusion this creates for landscape planning and how it allows a certain form of visual understanding of landscape to prevail. I present and examine four commonly recognised, broad, theoretical perspectives of landscape which are relevant for this thesis. I conclude 3.1 by highlighting the significance of the theoretical ambiguities developed around this plurality. In Section 3.2 I present the field of landscape planning as the central focus of my research and how the problem of theoretical ambiguity around landscape unfolds within the subject. In section 3.3 I address the multiple and dynamic nature of values in the landscape, highlighting them as a problem for landscape planners. I examine landscape assessment in section 3.4, as a practical tool for handling values in landscape planning. In this section I go on to examine how the weakness of substantive theory in landscape planning plays out at the

assessment stage by developing ambiguity during the assessment process and through the assessment document. In section 3.5 I discuss public involvement in landscape issues and how participation as a democratic process is reliant on the manner in which landscape is understood. I conclude this chapter by summing up the disparities between these related aspects, the challenges which arise from them and the consequences which this ground clearing exposes. In section 3.6 I conclude with a brief summary of the discussion which has built through this chapter.

### 3.1 Landscape studies

Through this section I argue that the plurality of theoretical perspectives within landscape studies creates a source of confusion. I will first briefly map out the plurality present in landscape studies (3.1.1) before outlining the relevance for this thesis, of four key perspectives on landscape as: visual entity (3.1.2); an experienced phenomenon (3.1.3); a source of polity and practice (3.1.4); and a physical entity (3.1.5). I conclude this section (3.1.6) by suggesting that this plurality of concepts creates a catalyst for confusion when landscape is operationalised.

There are multiple ways of studying landscape, which have been categorised by numerous scholars (Jones, 1991, Muir, 1999, Wylie, 2007, Kirchhoff et al., 2012, Thompson et al., 2013), all of which advocate different ways of perceiving the landscape (Meinig, 1979, Howard, 2013). In section 3.1, I will briefly outline some of the disciplinary traditions which have implications for this thesis, and present them in a way which clarifies the line of argument I am developing.

#### 3.1.1 Plurality of landscape

As individuals we encounter two related but very different landscapes, the *real* landscape composed of the physicality and the *perceived* landscape, based on memories and hypothesis about the real landscape (Jackson, 1980, Muir, 1999). As a perceived entity it constitutes our everyday surroundings and how we directly relate environmental issues to our personal lives. Landscape represents a monument and documentation of a shared past, which is read by contemporary society (Scazzosi, 2004). Consequently landscape is loaded with cultural traditions which create a multiplicity of meanings (Schama, 1995, Scazzosi, 2004, Cosgrove, 2008).

Landscape is also the field of study for a variety of diverse scholarly disciplines with at times unrelated perspectives linked only by the study of the environment and its representation (Tress and Tress, 2001, Bell et al., 2012,

Fairclough, 2012, Thompson et al., 2013, van der Heide and Heiman, 2013). These different disciplines define both what they study, as landscape, and how it is studied. Consequently landscape research can be seen as representing an ongoing debate over the definition of landscape (Wylie, 2013). Rather than fusing landscape studies around a common understanding the increased interest in the topic has created divergence as different fields of study have focused on specialisation (Muir, 1999, Tress and Tress, 2001). The diversity which results in this specialisation means that most who engage with landscape are concerned only with a small section of its multitude of meanings and related knowledge (Lowenthal, 1986, Tress and Tress, 2001, Bell et al., 2012). The different academic subjects and their subsets have consequently established a plethora of conceptualisations of landscape. This has resulted in research on landscapes which is alien to most who have the landscape as the surroundings to their lives (Ryan, 2011, Bergeron et al., 2014).

### 3.1.2 Landscape as a visual entity

In this section I will argue that although there are multiple understandings of landscape, theories in landscape studies have traditionally been dominated by a specific visual approach. This has resulted in other aspects and views of landscape being subordinate.

Visual is the primary sensory experience for most people. It allows us to experience before we engage, yet it is a distancing sense (Ingold, 2000), which keeps us removed from direct experience unlike the more intimate senses (Tilley, 2004). This plays out in how landscape is conceptualised.

Concepts of landscape have traditionally focused on a *certain* form of visual appreciation (Scazzosi, 2004). This represents a view of landscape which has its origins in the Italian Renaissance when a perceived separation of man from nature was constructed through the development of the gaze (Milani, 2012). The idea of the gaze was advanced through creation of techniques for observation and perspective drawing, representing dominance and control over nature, transforming it into what is now termed *landscape* (Cosgrove, 1984, Olwig, 2002, Olwig, 2004). Such representations became especially prevalent in Flemish landscape paintings of rural idylls (Muir, 1999, Olwig, 2002). The work of these artists later helped to inform the European aristocratic appreciation of landscape. This manifested itself in the Grand Tour of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the adventures of young gentlemen exploring Europe were informed by an education of art studies, influencing their appreciation of the landscapes they experienced (Milani, 2012). The idea of landscape as a rural idyll, as nature tamed and dominated has held sway in general Anglo-Saxon understandings of landscape (Scazzosi, 2004, Olwig, 2005, Olwig, 2013). This

resulted in the dominate social concept of landscape, and accordingly nature, being represented through the aesthetics of a certain class (Brook, 2013).

The visual emphasis on the gaze still holds sway as the dominant discourse in contemporary society and landscape planning (Jones, 2006, Conrad et al., 2011a). Even though new techniques of exploring landscape have developed they are still based on the same traditional understanding. This Anglo-Saxon centred understanding of landscape contrasts with terms from other cultures, also with their roots in the Italian renaissance, which are often interpreted as 'landscape'. These terms include the French "*Paysage*" (Scazzosi, 2004, Olwig, 2013) and the Scandinavian "*Landskap*" (Olwig, 2005). These two terms rather than being reliant on the visual, relate more closely to activity and polity (3.1.3). This has the potential to create misinterpretation, creating confusion when landscape is addressed globally (Antrop, 2006a), for example when the British LCA approach is implanted in a Scandinavian context giving dominance to the visual over practice and polity (Olwig, 2013); or the development of a European convention on landscape based on *paysage* (Olwig, 2007b), to be implemented in an Anglo-Saxon context.

Cultural studies of landscape during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were heavily influenced by the work of Carl Sauer, who developed the concept of landscape as a cultural entity shaped by practice, stepping away from the visual (Wylie, 2007, Stephenson, 2008). This opened up the field for J.B. Jackson's work, developing the concept of vernacular landscapes, looking at meanings, perceptions and symbols of the landscape (Jackson, 1980, Jackson, 1986, Wylie, 2007).

The recognition of landscape as a cultural entity in turn provided the catalyst for exposing its subjectivity. This developed through the cultural turn in geography in the 1970's which shook up the innocence of what was previously considered to be an inert and neutral field (Muir, 1999, Thompson et al., 2013). Landscape was examined, initially from a Marxist perspective as an ideological way of seeing, focusing on meaning and representation (Cosgrove, 1984, Cosgrove and Daniels, 1988). Landscape was seen as being internalised, no longer an entity which was purely out there, as such its recognition as an innocence backdrop was replaced by the view of landscape as a veil, disguising that which actually forms the landscape (Cosgrove, 1984). Landscape becomes seen as a set of hidden values, ideas and unquestioned assumptions about the way a society is, or should be organised (Muir, 1999, Wylie, 2007). While this politicised the landscape through ideological questioning it avoids the issue of individual's and the conflicts within the landscape.

The cultural turn advanced the subjectivity of landscape and questioned its underlying meaning (Muir, 1999). Yet it continued to represent a subjectivity which gave priority to the visual (Macpherson, 2006). The dominance of the visual is exemplified by Meinig's (1979) ten notions of landscape. Each act of seeing creates an ideal landscape within the viewer, not just based on aesthetics but also reliant on ethics (Milani, 2012, Howard, 2013). While these notions are all reliant on subjectivity, it is a subjectivity which is built on the visual landscape as opposed to recognising other forms of engagement.

Although the meaning of landscape has been extensively criticised and redressed it has been questioned on the basis of an Anglo-Saxon perspective and thus have been tied to a distanced visuality of landscape. Alternative perspectives are underpinned by this form of visual, consequently landscape remains a way of *seeing*. However these alternative theoretical interventions have raised the possibility of different ways of understanding the subject; allowing landscape as an entity to be addressed through other conceptual lenses e.g. phenomenology (3.1.2). This has in turn led to the argument for a pluralistic view of landscape.

### 3.1.3 Experiencing landscape

In this section I will engage with the idea of landscape as more just a subjective visual representation arguing that it is also a subjective experience, based on existential engagement with the landscape.

Rather than starting from a traditional understanding of landscape as an entity to be viewed, several scholars have addressed landscape from a phenomenological perspective (Ingold, 2000, Wylie, 2002, Benediktsson and Lund, 2010). Essentially, phenomenology addresses landscape as a milieu of engagement and involvement. This idea has been explored by scholars from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds including: cultural geography (Tuan, 1974, Relph, 1976, Wylie, 2002), anthropology (Ingold, 2000) and archaeology (Tilley, 2004). A phenomenological way of understanding constitute the ties between the conscious and the physicality of the world from which meanings develop; intertwining people and things (Tilley, 2004). What we experience is tied to human embodied perception, not only the visual but all sensing and even as muscular consciousness (Urry, 2000). Consequently landscape is recognised as a phenomenon known to those who 'dwell' in it and involves the removal of distance from our surroundings (Thomas, 1993, Ingold, 2000, Tilley, 2004, Ingold, 2011) landscape becomes more than a gaze. As a result our relationship to the world cannot be seen as a scientific relationship, or understood as purely a representation but rather one founded on meaning and

significance. Landscape is brought into being through engagement rather than scrutinising and analysis (Thomas, 1993), representing a practical approach to understanding landscape rather than a theoretical perspective or representation (Watererton, 2013).

However this experiential understanding of landscape has been criticised primarily for having a preindustrial, rural and romantics view (DeLue and Elkins, 2008, Eiter, 2010) the same argument which has been levelled against landscape as a distanced visual gaze. The relevance of the lived experience has been brought in to more contemporary situations by the work of constructivist Michel de Certeau's and Marc Augé. Certeau's *The Practice of everyday life* (1984) and Augé's *Non Places* (1995) argue that experience with our surroundings is expressed through movement and engagement with modern society as we attempt to negotiate daily life. Experiential perspectives are further criticised for their focus on the individual and the exclusion of the social, economic, historical and political which shape the individuals context and understanding (Thomas, 1993, DeLue and Elkins, 2008). Yet it has been argued by proponents of an experiential understanding of landscape, that focusing on the individual can reveal wider societal implications which are embedded in acts of engagement (Benediktsson and Lund, 2010, Wylie, 2013)

While the perspective of landscape as experience has its shortcomings, it brings to the forefront the subjective, non-visual and non-scientific nature of landscape and how we relate to our environment. It expands the understanding of what landscape represents, the diversity of experiences on which it builds and the values this generates.

#### 3.1.4 Landscape as polity and practice.

In this section I will address landscape as a social product, based on the cultural turn, which was touched on in section 3.1.1. This perspective focuses on ideology and representations, redressing some of what are seen as the shortcomings of the experiential perspective. I will outline the argument that landscape represents more than just the places we directly encounter; it is also an expression of wider societal influences.

As a social product, landscape is the result of the collective transformation of nature; a historic process which takes form through cultural construction (Muir, 1999). The landscape is built on the processes, practices and cultural discourses which provide both visible and invisible traces of historic power structures. Although these traces may be invisible they nevertheless have strong influence on the landscape (Palang et al., 2007). These represent the practice which existence in the landscape (de Certeau, 1984, Olwig, 2005). It is not only activities which take place *in* the landscape which shape it but also the

immaterial laws and customs which lie over the land (Olwig, 2005, Eiter, 2010).

Landscape is also seen as being constantly influenced and shape by factors outside of its immediate sphere, being shaped by regional, national and international agendas (Swaffield and Primdahl, 2006, Primdahl, 2007, Sassatelli, 2010). Consequently the place where a landscape is created is not necessarily the point where it exists. Initiatives such as the sustainability agenda, the Common Agricultural Policy, (Swaffield and Primdahl, 2006, Primdahl, 2007) international monetary fund initiative, labour laws (Mitchell, 2003, 2007) and the politics behind them all shape the landscape. As a result everyday landscapes are subject to frequent and unpredictable changes in use and ownership, influenced by external forces, creating new and often contested landscapes (Penning-Rowsell, 1986). This pits global unseen powers against the local, creating contestation of the experienced and perceived landscape (see 3.5.2); as Tom Mels remarks:

“...landscape remains caught between the spatial ambitions of globalizing states and the palatial expression of practices of habitation. And hence, landscape continues to reanimate ancient issues of political power and representation.” (Mels, 2009)

The argument outlined in this section shifts the focus from landscape as viewed or reliant on how it is experienced by individuals to also being recognised as a social entity reliant on polity and place. Landscape, in this light, is the sites where cultural or political entities manifest and assert their often unseen influence.

### 3.1.5 Physicality of landscape

The focus of this section is on the tangible and physical properties of landscape. The focus of the discussion so far has been on landscape as a representation and an experienced phenomena, yet underlying this is the materiality which influences the social, engendering relationships within the landscape (Meinig, 1979, Cosgrove, 2008, Stephenson, 2008, Olwig, 2011) and providing the basis for practices and experiences (Ingold, 2000, Tilley, 2004). The perspective of the physicality of landscape dominates in the fields of applied landscape sciences yet is also necessity in order to address landscape as a holistic entity. Both of these perspectives will be taken up in this section.

A strong emphasis on the physicality of landscape is expressed within applied landscape sciences (Rodiek, 2002, Gobster and Xiang, 2012b). Here the focus is often placed on the functionality of landscape, the processes which occur within it and the scales at which these occur (Sarlov Herlin, 2007). An

example is recognised in landscape ecology in the American tradition, as a sub-discipline of ecology (Kirchhoff et al., 2012). In this conceptualisation landscape can be defined as:

“a distinct, measurable unit defined by recognizable and spatially repetitive cluster of interacting ecosystems, geomorphology and disturbance regimes.” (Forman and Godron, 1986: p 11).

This definition differs greatly from that argued by the anthropocentric proponents outlined in the earlier sections of this chapter as well as from other branches of landscape ecology (Kirchhoff et al., 2012). Yet this can still be recognised as a way of ‘seeing’ landscape, albeit from a specific disciplinary perspectives (Meinig, 1979, Howard, 2013). This perspective represents a measurable entity dependent on its functionality understood by abstraction of landscape as an object and separation of the object from the subject. While this gains an understanding of the specifics of the landscape, Tim Ingold questions the rational, by proclaiming:

“Something [...] must be wrong somewhere, if the only way to understand our own creative involvement in the world is by taking ourselves out of it” (Ingold, 2000):173.

However while landscapes physicality is often handled sectorally it is also central to understanding landscape as a holistic entity. As an holistic concept landscape becomes seen as a meta-organisation, representing and makes tangible the relationships between different systems and cultures (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008, Stephenson, 2008); Landscape is recognised as where physical elements meet their meaning (Egoz et al., 2011, Planchat-Héry, 2011). Such a view of landscape has been brought into mainstream policy through the ELC, where landscape is defined as:

“[...] an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (Council of Europe, 2000a): Ch1. Art 1.a)

While this definition differs from the discipline specific understandings of landscape which have been outlined above, aspects from the different fields can be traced through the text of the ELC. The definition of the convention takes a social constructionist view of landscape; it is a view of an object which is built on both natural and cultural factors. (Sarlöv Herlin, 2007, Gailing and

Leibenath, 2013) - see also section 2.2 and papers I and II. Such a definition recognises the physicality as well as how this is perceived blurring the distinction between 'seen' and 'seer' (Watererton, 2013). The definition outlined in the convention lies close to the French term "*paysage*", as outlined in 3.1.1 (Olwig, 2013). However the explanatory report (Council of Europe, 2000b) which accompanies the convention handles the concept as the more Anglo-Saxon notion of "*landscape*"; placing reliance on the physical and visual, and the process of mapping and control, focused on professional way of seeing (Olwig, 2013).

"[...] a zone or area as perceived by local people or visitors, whose visual features and character are the result of the action of natural and/or cultural (that is, human) factors" (Council of Europe, 2000b): Ch1. Art 1.a)

The highlights are added to emphasise the differences between the two definitions. These contrasting understandings of landscape conveyed by the council of Europe add to the sense of ambiguity when operationalising landscape.

### 3.1.6 The enigma of landscape

The perspectives of landscape outlined above have been divided in a way which helps to clarify and reinforce the argument of this thesis, yet there are commonalities between these perspectives. These different understandings of landscape have developed and advanced in response to critique of each other; the representational landscape relating to in practice and polity coming about as a reaction to the perceived innocence of landscape as a gaze; an increased interest in phenomenological ways of engaging with landscape, developing as a response to the life draining scientific and representational approaches; and further developments in representational approaches coming about as a response to the increased focus on subjectivity of non-representational approaches, e.g. phenomenology. All the while the concept of landscape provides the arena for discussions and debates between these different factions.

These varying understandings presents landscape as an enigma and a series of dichotomies based on disciplinary or disciplinary subsets approaches. It is both real and perceived; a complex phenomenon that can be analysed through scientific approaches, a subjective experience as well as a theoretical term (Ipsen, 2012); it is a both the product and the production (Egoz et al., 2011) and consequently always exists yet is constantly coming in to existence (Bender, 1993) (See also paper II).

The loose conceptualisation of landscape studies as ‘the environment and its representation’ has made it possible for diverse disciplines to come together under a general umbrella (Scazzosi, 2004, Wylie, 2013). However I would argue that this umbrella at present creates a false and misunderstood bridge between disciplines. While individual academic disciplines and their subsets may have clear theoretical understandings of landscape, the increased specialisation of these disciplines has fragmented the study of landscape (Muir, 1999, Antrop, 2001, Tress and Tress, 2001). This causes problems when the concepts are used in practice creating a catalyst for confusion. A confusion which then opens the concept of landscape up for misuse and trivialisation (Nassauer, 2012).

## 3.2 Landscape planning

Throughout this section I will develop the argument that the multiplicity of perspectives and lack of cohesion in study of landscape has created a fundamental problem for theorisation in the field of action; ‘landscape planning’. I do this by first exposing the ambiguities of landscape planning tied up in the plurality of theories of landscape (3.2.1). I then map out the development of landscape planning and the dominance of a landscape discourse based on the physical and visual (3.2.2).

### 3.2.1 Ambiguities

In this section I will show how the plurality within theorisation of landscape becomes problematic when introduced into landscape planning; and how this is exacerbated by the discipline focusing on practice as opposed to developing a theoretical base.

Within landscape planning there is uncertainty about its role as an academic and professional subject as well as the phenomenon it addresses (Ogrin, 1994, Stiles, 1994, Selman, 2010, Kidd, 2013). Dusan Ogrin (1994) related this uncertainty back to the educational institutions as the developers of future professionals and base of academic research. Ogrin identified two sources of confusion which create this ambiguity; one normative and the other contextual, yet both interconnected.

Firstly the normative ambiguities; academic proponents of landscape planning have tended to avoid definitive statement of what the subject entails, focusing instead on aspects central to their own world beliefs (see section 3.2.2). This places the focus on a normative exploration of how landscape planning *should* be undertaken rather than what the discipline is or what it addresses (Selman, 2010). Such views are founded on how individuals or the

institutions they represent conceive of landscape, and the values these understandings generate. The individual perspectives of landscape perpetuate the plurality of the discipline.

The second source of ambiguity is the dependence of context in the development of the discipline. Development has been reliant on both the national context and the context within the educational institutions which advance the field of study (Seddon, 1986, Ogrin, 1994). The establishment of landscape planning in different countries has been reliant on the nature of neighbouring disciplines and the gap which landscape planning is seen as filling (Seddon, 1986, Ogrin, 1994). The national context is also reliant on the dominant cultural understanding of landscape (see section 3.1.1). This cultural context creates differing understandings of the discipline and the field of landscape which it addresses (Scazzosi, 2004).

The contextual dependence of the subject on educational institutions relates to the focus of study within those institutions. Scholars of landscape studies are based in a variety of academic institutions ranging from schools of applied sciences to establishments dealing with the humanities (Ogrin, 1994); each drawing their understanding from different theoretical sources. These separate educations, rather than developing cohesive substantive theories, focus more towards practice and procedural concepts (van der Brink and Bruns, 2012), which help them better understand and handle *their* perspective of landscape. These perspectives of landscape draw on substantive theory from other disciplines, for example: ecology, environmental psychology, human geography. Consequently conclusions on practical activities are based on differing understandings of landscape; a point which is compounded by the multitude of disciplines which engage in landscape planning.

Landscape planning cannot be understood solely by the phenomenon it addresses as landscape, as a holistic entity, is the domain of any number of disciplines (Lowenthal, 1986, Ogrin, 1994, Bell et al., 2012). The inability of landscape planning to truly grasp landscape as its phenomenon of study manifests itself in this focus on specific and specialised concepts (Antrop, 2001).

In conclusion, landscape planning has been driven by practice rather than developing a conceptual coherence (Marsh, 1998, Selman, 2010, van der Brink and Bruns, 2012). This is manifested in the focus on procedural over substantive theories (Stiles, 1994, Murphy, 2005, Ahern, 2006). Which when compounded with the plurality of theories of landscape manifests itself as ambiguity in landscape planning theory.

### 3.2.2 Development of landscape planning

In this section I will examine the main developments in landscape planning and how understandings of landscape have been used in landscape planning. I will show how landscape planning theory and landscape planning has been founded on shifting concepts of landscape and become a discipline built on multiple understandings of landscape.

The term landscape planning only came in to common usage in the early 1970's (Seddon, 1986). Yet examples of large scale intervention in the landscape, which today would be classed as landscape planning, have an extensive history. Carl Steinitz (2008) identifies the creation of the West Lake of Hangzhou in China during the 8<sup>th</sup> century as one of the first examples of large scale landscape creation. Another Chinese example Steinitz highlights is the 12<sup>th</sup> century protection of the Yellow Mountains as a symbolic and protected landscape, becoming the first recorded example of landscape designation. Yet in its present guise landscape planning's roots can be traced back to the late 1800's (Sarlöv Herlin, 2004). In the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century planning for landscape developed from two sources; rural, or wilderness (USA), in the form of designations, exemplified by the national park movement pioneered by the likes of Fredrick Law Olmsted and John Muir in the USA; and urban with the provision of civic amenities also pioneered by Olmsted's work in Boston and the Likes of Ebenezer Howard in the Britain (Thompson, 1998, Zube, 1998, Steinitz, 2008, Selman, 2010, Kidd, 2013). Throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the urban became increasingly the domain of town planners (Fairbrother, 1970) and was spurned by the "*Landscape Planning Journal*" as late as the 1970's (Weddle, 1974). As a result the roots of the discipline's development have a predominantly rural focus, mirroring how landscape itself was recognised. The Post world wars era saw attention focused on the compatibility of rural aesthetics with human actions this was especially true and wide reaching in Britain where planning had been newly nationalised. Numerous prescriptive publications were produced during this period (Crowe, 1958, 1963, Colvin, 1970, Fairbrother, 1970). Through this era the dominant landscape planning technique remained designations thus recognising outstanding or special landscapes (Thompson, 1998, Selman, 2010) based on traditional aesthetic values . The reprint, in 1970, of Colvin's 1947 instrumental book "*Planning the Landscape*" points to a lack of development through the ensuing 24 years. It was during the post war era that the term landscape planning emerged (Crowe, 1967, Lovejoy, 1973)

'the substitution of the term landscape-planning for land-planning marks a deliberate widening of the conception of planning to include appearance as well

as use, pleasure as well as fertility, and the whole complex organic fabric of life as well as man's immediate needs' (Crowe, 1967)

This perspective lifts the concern of the discipline above functionality of land, to address the visual, recreational and nature conservation aspects.

In the late 1960's landscape planning, following the modern environmental movement, took an ecological turn (Zube, 1998) supported by a maturing field of applied ecology (Selman, 2010). This was seen as supplementing the visual with ecological processes (Hackett, 1971, Lovejoy, 1973, Rodiek, 2006). At the same time the 'quantitative revolution' impacted on landscape and formulaic abstractions of landscape emerged. While this was criticised for producing irrelevant representations, it allowed landscape to be mainstreamed into plan-making, resulting in a move away from designation to a recognition that all landscapes have significance (Selman, 2010). Development through this period was epitomised by Ian McHarg's 'Design with Nature' (1992). McHarg's and others publications, retained the focused on procedural theory, normative understandings of what landscape planning should handle and practical planning methods, which advanced landscape analysis as a central tool (Lovejoy, 1973, Weddle, 1974, Steinitz, 1990, McHarg, 1992, Rodiek, 2006, Gobster, 2011, Gobster and Xiang, 2012c).

From the late 1970's economists influenced environmental decisions making, ascribing values to non-marketable goods. The publication of Colin Price's *Landscape Economics* in 1978 (Price, 2007, 2013, van der Heide and Heiman, 2013), while controversial in quantifying qualitative and non-marketable goods, brought the issues of landscape planning to a wider public audience.

The 1970's also saw development of citizen involvement in landscape planning. This has continued steadily but sporadically since (Swaffield, 2002, Selman, 2010), gaining favour in through the social changes in 1980's and 90's. This period brought issues of human rights and social responsibility to the foreground (Rodiek, 2002).

Throughout these developments there has been a gradual increase in the interest and impact of urban landscapes, work by Ann Whiston-Spirn (1985, 2000) and others examining landscape processes in the city and the likes of Mattias Qviström in defining engagement with urban fringe landscapes (Qviström and Saltzman, 2006, Qviström, 2008). This shifts the emphasis way from landscape as a rural domain.

In the wake of the Bruntland report (United Nations, 1987) sustainability became implicit in the development of landscape planning (Selman, 1998, Benson and Roe, 2000, Thompson, 2000b, Ahern, 2006, Antrop, 2006b, Selman, 2012). The rhetoric of sustainability saw landscape within landscape

planning reframed as a holistic entity (Gobster, 2011, Gobster and Xiang, 2012a, Selman, 2012). At the same time there was increased consciousness of global influences (Castells, 1992) and their impact on localities of landscape (Swaffield and Primdahl, 2006, Primdahl, 2007, Ipsen, 2012). This exposed the unsuitability of rigid local planning in a world of continuous change, where global factors impact and conflict with local identities. These developments lifted the planning of landscape beyond the scope of a single discipline, which has been recognised in both practice and academia through the promotion and advancement of multi, inter and transdisciplinary approaches (Tress and Tress, 2001, Tress et al., 2003, Antrop, 2006a). As a result there has been a call for more multi-functional landscapes (Fry, 2001, Naveh, 2001, Selman, 2010). These developments necessitate a blurring of the disciplinary divides as landscape moves away from being a sectoral entity (Selman, 2010, Kidd, 2013).

As this overview shows, landscape planning has frequently reinvented itself, in relation to developments in areas of landscape studies. Yet the discipline has always retained a position as a positive practice (Selman, 2010). While in the past landscape planning was seen as a luxury cosmetic exercise (Seddon, 1986), in its present guise landscape planning has become increasingly mainstreamed (Selman, 2010). The activity of landscape planning is now recognised in policy across Europe through the ELC, where it is understood to mean:

“... strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.”  
(Council of Europe, 2000a: art. 1.f)

In academia a more informative definition of landscape planning is exemplified by Tress, Tress and Fry as a:

“Primary attempts to influence the spatial organisation of landscape, making trade-offs between different needs, demands, values and land uses, how to solve land-use conflicts between different interest groups.” (Tress et al., 2006).

Such a definition has differed little over the past 40 years (Crowe, 1967, Weddle, 1974, Turner, 1987). However what this definition represents is reliant on how landscape is conceptualised. The development of the discipline over the last century has been informed by changes in the conceptualisation of landscape, which has in turn informed the scope of landscape planning. As I have highlighted this has shifted drastically and professionals are now met with a call from both academia and through international and national policy via the

ELC for a more holistic understanding of landscape (Sarlöv Herlin, 2004, Macpherson, 2006, Selman, 2010, Jacobs, 2011, Selman, 2012). However as recognised in section 2.1 substantive developments within practice is not always quickly integrated into the practice oriented field where procedures are focused towards the prevailing understanding of landscape. In practice landscape is still considered a fundamentally physical and visual entity (Macpherson, 2006, Selman, 2010, Conrad et al., 2011a), creating a dominant discourse of landscape as a tangible and objective unit of analysis.

### 3.3 Landscape values

In this section I illustrate how differences in landscape values are generated through the plurality of perspectives of landscape. I then argue that this aggravates the confusion which exists in landscape planning. I will further argue that although multiple values are evident planners focus on the visual and physical, perpetuating the dominant discourse of landscape (see also paper III).

At its core, landscape planning is about negotiating multiple landscape values and the differences that arise from them. Values are developed by individuals and communities in relation to the landscape (Jones, 1993, Jones, 2009) and recognition of certain values over others privileges the holder of favoured values. Consequently understanding whose values are recognised illustrates who the landscape is being planned for (Thompson, 2000a).

Here I will briefly show how landscape values develop. Landscape values are recognised as social constructs, interpreted through social and cultural filters, and projected on to the landscape (Planchat-Héry, 2011). As such understanding how a landscape is seen is not just dependent on values relating to its physicality, but also extrinsic values linked to the use and experience of the landscape (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008, Stephenson, 2008). Individuals relate different values to the landscape dependant on their engagement with landscape (Dakin, 2003, Scott et al., 2009), their cultural context (Stephenson, 2008, Jones, 2009) and temporal factors which impact on experience (Geelmuyden and Fiskevold, 2013). Consequently differences arise over what values are attached to an entity (Jones, 2009). However communities develop shared values which are given legitimacy through inter-subjectivity within common spheres of meaning in everyday life (Stephenson, 2008, Jones, 2009).

Values and the perceptions on which they are grounded, are developed through dynamic interactions (Stephenson, 2008), they change over time and take on different meanings. This is true with both individual values which develop with commitment to place (Muir, 1999, Stephenson, 2008); and

societal landscape values which alter between different places and eras (Lowenthal, 1986). Even if the landscape remains the same, the values attached to it by society may change, as is the case with an open arable landscape in an increasingly urbanised society (Jones, 2009, Ipsen, 2012). As landscape values are non-static so too are the perceptions of landscape which build on them. Consequently if landscape planning is to address these values it must be grounded in a dynamic view of landscape.

However, the values which landscape planners address tend to be based on landscape as an objective unit of analysis, privileging a traditional visual and distanced aesthetic and the physical (Macpherson, 2006, Stephenson, 2008, 2010). This view contrasts with the intimate encounters of those who ‘dwell’ in the landscape, whose relationship is based on landscape as an experience. These two perspectives illustrate the differences built on complex and overlapping values (Oreszczyn, 2000, Scott, 2002, Dakin, 2003, Stephenson, 2008), and highlights the problem of the dominance of a removed and distanced visual understanding in landscape studies.

### 3.4 Landscape assessment

Landscape assessment is a central tool of landscape planning. It frames the landscape and the values which are recognised within it, subsequently informing the landscape planning process. In this section I examine how landscape assessments address and represent landscapes and their values as a precursor to how landscape is handled in planning.

Landscape assessment has been fundamental in the development of landscape planning (Marsh, 1998), as a means for making practice more systematic (Muir, 1999). The importance of landscape assessment is expressed in the ELC and is one of the more prescriptive aspects in the various CoE texts (Council of Europe, 2000b, a, 2008) – see also section 2.2. Early landscape assessments emphasised intuitive judgements by professionals and were criticised for imposing private values on public resources. As noted earlier the 1960’s saw the quantitative revolution develop in landscape planning (Selman, 2010). One of the consequence of this was a sustained effort in landscape assessment this led to sustained effort to devise techniques to quantify scenic values. Although such approaches were precise they were criticised for their irrelevance to how landscape was commonly understood (Muir, 1999, Dakin, 2003). These approaches and the backlash to them created a variety of methods resulting in assessment ranging from professional based expert evaluations, aimed at description and classification of the landscape; perceptual approaches, using landscape features as predictors of how a landscape is appreciated; and

experiential approaches, examining holistic accounts of human-environment interactions (Dakin, 2003).

By the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century LCA, an expert based approach, was beginning to establish as the dominant form of landscape assessment (Jensen, 2006, Selman, 2010) (see also section 2.2, paper I, pp 7-8, paper II, pp 443-444, paper III, pp 3-4). The rapid and wide spread acceptance of LCA both in the Britain and beyond (Kim and Pauleit, 2005, Caspersen, 2009) is unprecedented in approaches to landscape assessment (Selman, 2010). The LCA approach supposedly moves beyond the visual and physical to an understanding of landscape which "... is about the relationship between people and place" (Swanwick and Land Use Consultants, 2002, Jensen, 2006). This is a view which is in line with the ELC, yet as mentioned in section 3.2 this is not the dominant understanding of landscape in landscape planning (see papers I & II) In reality LCA is a professionally informed assessment (Conrad et al., 2011a) which privileges a certain form of visual appreciation (Olwig, 2013).

The reliance on the physicality and visual gaze in landscape assessment is at the expense of ecological and social processes (Selman, 2010) and also produces a static model ignoring the dynamic nature of landscape (Stephenson, 2008, 2010). The reliance on tangible landscape values places the focus on experts and assists in the perpetuation of the sectoral focus in planning and administration of landscape (Dakin, 2003, Sarlöv Herlin, 2004). The specialist becomes the "owner" of the landscape and it is their sectoral values which create what is recognised as the whole (Olwig, 2011). As such a narrow, specialised assessment can develop an unquestioned impression of what a landscape is which is then used as evidence for how landscape should be (Muir, 1999) perpetuating the professional ownership of the subject. Addressing single aspects does not facilitate a true appreciation of the complexity of landscape or its processes and relationships and leads to an impoverished understanding of landscape as a whole (Sack, 1997, Tilley, 2004, Ingold, 2011). To attempt to plan for holistic landscape there is a need for assessments to bridge the gap, recognising that for most landscape is not scientifically defined but represents their everyday life (Thomas, 1993, Muir, 1999). Engaging with the 'lived landscape' changes the assessment from a "procedure observers perform *on* a landscape to activities carried out by engaging *in* a landscape" (Dakin, 2003:198).

The purpose of a landscape assessment has traditionally been to provide insight and present the landscape through identification and interpretation for others to argue for its values (Muir, 1999, Brunetta and Voghera, 2008, Stahlschmidt and Nellemann, 2009). Therefore it is normally considered that an assessment reflects the landscape values, yet in practice the assessment is

dependent on how landscape is acknowledged and therefore what is accepted as a landscape value (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008, Stephenson, 2008). The values, whether formally recognised or informally accepted, form the basis of the scope for the assessment and provide the context of the knowledge base for decision making (Lockwood, 1997). Expressing the values on which an assessment is built provides a way of communicating and legitimising decision, opening up for discussion the values present in the landscape (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008, Jones, 2009). As an inclusive process defining values can help to reinforces a sense of belonging to the landscape (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008). In this light Brunetta and Voghera (2008) recognise landscape assessment as going beyond identification and interpretation to being a learning process for socially legitimising landscape values through dialogue, with the aim of helping formulate policies for enhancing landscape planning.

Although the rhetoric around landscape assessments focuses on seeing landscape as a holistic entity, in practice landscape is focused around specific discourses. This means that the values which can be handled in the landscape assessment and consequently communicated in to landscape planning are framed as predominantly visual, physical and static. This results in the underlying differences in landscape values being ignored with alternative and potentially conflicting values being overlooked.

### 3.5 Landscape participation

In this section I investigate what landscape as a democratic entity entails and how landscape planning handles the values resulting from such an understanding. A theoretical understanding of participation and landscape is also examined in article I.

There is common agreement that the involvement of the public in landscape issues is a positive factor and that landscape creates a common space for the development of democracy. However, I argue that even while the rhetoric of landscape as a democratic entity is gaining dominance, in both policy (Council of Europe, 2000a) and in academic studies (ESF/COST, 2010) of landscape, the subject still remains a scientific/professional domain, based on tangible values. I then introduce the problematic that participation and democracy built on a visual and physical discourse of landscape is flawed.

I begin by outlining how democracy is seen in academia in relation to landscape. There are different sets of values relating to democracy all of which construct multiple meanings. Three main sets have been identified by the environmental philosopher Finn Arler: protection of individual rights and self-determination; co-determination and participation; and objectivity and

impartiality (Arler, 2008). The development of democratic institutions and approaches is dependent on which of these principles is promoted. Michael Dower's (2007) examination of the ELC and the research by Arler (2008, 2011) start to clarify how various institutions working on different sets of democratic values engage with landscape. These range from the moral authority of the CoE; proportional representation of the EU and European Parliament; representational and at times direct democracy at National, Regional and Local level; and direct deliberative and participatory democracy of individuals.

Within landscape studies the main focus has been on principles of direct democracy and participatory and deliberative processes. As with most aspects of landscape planning, development has been based on practical experience, supported by theoretical input from other fields including planning (Innes and Booher, 2004), development (Cooke and Kothari, 2001) and environmental management (Reed, 2008) (also see paper I). Participation is seen as acting as an integral part of direct democracy as well as a supplement to representative democracy, providing the possibility to challenge the establishment democratic structures and question reasoning (Roe, 2013a). In such a way it opens up for landscape to be viewed as a space to express differences and provide the opportunity to question the dominant understanding of landscape.

Involvement of the public has been an aspect of landscape planning since the 1970's (Thompson, 2000a, Swaffield, 2002) but was brought into mainstream landscape policy at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the ELC (Priour and Dorousseau, 2006, Jones, 2007, Selman, 2010, Jones and Stenseke, 2011a). However the position of participation in landscape planning is questionable. 'Expert' led scientific research still dominates studies within the discipline, resulting in limited examination or exploration of participatory concepts and techniques (Conrad et al., 2011b, Bergeron et al., 2014). The same situation prevails in the practice of landscape planning (Conrad et al., 2011a). So while democratic 'values of participation' are put forward, studies and practice draw on what Arler (2008) defines as the democratic 'values of objectivity and partiality'. This subsequently bolsters the perception of landscape as an objectifiable and tangible entity.

Democracy needs tangible spaces, as is provided by landscape, in order for communities to form (Olwig, 2005, Egoz, 2011). Landscape constitutes the everyday surroundings to life and how individuals and society directly relate to environmental issues and consequently it represents an arena which all have the opportunity to relate to (Tuan, 1977, Lowenthal, 1986, Gobster et al., 2007). As such, landscape acts as a concrete realisation of the Aristotelian idea of public space (Strecker, 2011). A view which Joan Nassauer (2012) builds on

through recognising the visual aspect of landscape as a commonly understood anchor for exploring the intangible and differing values of landscape. This allows differing values to be legitimised rather than considered conflicting and thus being suppressed them through ‘democratic’ processes of consensus (Egoz et al., 2011). However such a view regards the visual representation as an inert entity and a universally understood aspect of landscape. The idea of landscape as an inert entity has already been questioned in section 3.2, and the idea of the visual as a universal is criticised by Hannah Macpherson’s (2006, 2009) investigation of how the blind experience the landscape. Yet Nassauer’s thesis does move participants away from solving conflicts to focusing on common ground and developing shared meanings (Dakin, 2003, Macpherson, 2006, Nassauer, 2012). It is these shared meanings which develop what Kenneth Olwig calls the ‘Conventional’ meaning of landscape; an entity developed through everyday practices (Olwig, 2007b) created in the ‘public spaces’ of landscape. Viewed as such a ‘true landscape democracy’ becomes a reasonable option (Jones, 2007, Arler, 2008). However basing participation in landscape on a visual understanding creates a trap which exacerbates the dominance of the dominant way of ‘seeing’ the landscape.

The idea that participation in landscape issues is positive tends to go unquestioned (Selman, 2004, Roe, 2013a). With studies into participation in landscape there is a prevalence to address the procedural theories (Calderon, 2013), while the theoretical basis goes unquestioned (Roe, 2013a). The discussion regarding theorisation of landscape is hard to locate in issues of participation so here I am mapping new ground. I propose that one of the first step in this theoretical questioning has to be what is it participation in, what does landscape constitute? At present the dominant discourse does not allow the differing values to be recognised which instantly brings into question the democratic values which are being drawn on.

### 3.6 Summing up

In this chapter I have developed the twin basis for my argument that firstly the study of landscape planning is characterised by theoretical confusion, and secondly that the plurality of concepts of landscape which characterise landscape studies is a significant factor in this theoretical confusion.

By identifying theories within landscape studies and seeing how they create ambiguity in landscape planning I have been able to highlight the weakness of substantive theory in the discipline. This lack of theory is critical for the authenticity of the discipline and the legitimacy of the practices it employs. The multiple perspectives of landscape, building on the different conceptual

understandings, create uncertainty when landscape is operationalised, as procedural theory lacks substantive grounding. This results in the profession being driven by practice rather than a theoretical grounding.

While multiple understandings of landscape exist in landscape planning, a distanced visual and physical perspective is dominant. This sees landscape as an objective unit of analysis. Such an understanding creates tension with policy rhetoric, as promoted through the ELC. This means that planners struggle with the diversity and dynamism of values experienced in landscape and due to an unclear understanding of landscape have no real basis for handling differences of values. When operationalised through landscape assessment the underlying differences in landscape values are overlooked. It follows that 'landscape' within landscape planning does not create space for handling identity, and thus its credentials for handling democracy are flawed.



## 4 Summary of papers

In this chapter I present a brief summary of the papers which result from the theoretical and empirical work. Each paper is handled in a separate section. I begin each section by outlining the central questions which the paper addresses, followed by a brief description of the empirical work from the case study and related theoretical framework. I conclude each section by presenting the findings of the research as they relate to each article and how these findings have contributed to the research questions. A discussion of the findings from the papers is presented in chapter 5.

All three papers are closely linked, presenting aspects of the incorporation of public values in landscape assessment. The papers all present research based on empirical data attained from the LCA undertaken in the England, which have engaging the public. Each paper directly relates to one of the three studies described in section 2.3.

The findings and discussions presented in the papers inform each other. Consequently the papers reveal a progression of the theoretical understanding of the topic and a shift from a practice driven thesis to one which addresses the substantive theory underpinning the profession. As such the progression through the articles mirrors my development as a critical researcher, becoming more reflective as the work for the thesis has progressed.

### 4.1 Paper I: Landscape Character Assessment as an approach to understanding public interests within the European Landscape Convention.

Butler, A. and Berglund, U. (2012) Landscape Character Assessment as an approach to understand public interests within the European Landscape Convention. *Landscape Research*, ifirst article, 1-18

This paper presents the research from study 1 (section 2.3.1). The question which drove the study presented in paper I was; how participation is handled in landscape planning. This created a practice oriented start to the research, which addressed the significance of participation as recognised in the ELC. In order to address this question I focused on the LCA approach as a means for analysing how public interests are handled and represented by professionals in landscape assessments. The empirical work involving document analysis of LCAs is outlined in section 2.3.1. The assessment documents were analysed through a framework built on procedural theory relating to participation based on a conceptualisation of landscape as a perceived entity. I identified Five categories for analysing public involvement in landscape assessments: representativeness (both geographical and interests); Scope of participation; phase of inclusion; knowledge sought; and transfer of knowledge through Awareness-raising. The findings pointed to discrepancies and uncertainty of what participation entailed in landscape assessments. The main findings are presented in table 2.

Table 2. *Contribution of Paper I to the thesis research questions*

| <b>Research question</b>   | <b>Findings and contributions</b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>Relating to Aim 1</b>   |   |
| <b>EQ</b> How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?  | <p>For the majority of the assessments there was no public involvement.</p> <p>Disparity between official rhetoric and practice</p> <p>Public involvement often represents engagement with the assessment document rather than the landscape itself</p>   |
| <b>TQ2</b> What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?                  | <p>The relevance of awareness-raising was identified as a means to engage the public.</p> <p>If we continue in the same vain we will just have a professional construct of landscape</p> <p>How landscape is defined is an abstraction of professional discourse as a static representation</p> |
| <b>Relating to aim 2</b>   |   |
| <b>TQ3</b> How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning? | Developing of theoretical framework for analysing participation in landscape assessments.   |

## 4.2 Paper II: Awareness-raising of landscape in practice. An analysis of Landscape Character Assessments in England

Butler, A. and Åkerskog, A. (2014) Awareness-raising of landscape in practice: an analysis of Landscape Character Assessments in England. *Land Use Policy*, 36, 441-449.

This second paper presents the research from study 2 (section 2.3.1). The point of departure for this paper was to ascertain what awareness-raising as an aspect of participation in landscape planning means in practice. The study on which this paper was based also questioned how landscape is conceptualised and handled by landscape planners. The motivation for this study built on the findings of participation from paper I and recognition within the ELC of the importance of awareness-raising in landscape issues.

A central factor for this paper was the ambiguity of what awareness-raising of landscape entailed. A theoretical base was developed, relating the substantive nature of landscape as an entity perceived by all, with awareness-raising as a means for transferring knowledge. The combination of these led to awareness-raising of landscape being recognised in this study as representing a “co-creation of meaning”. This conceptual understanding was used as a lens for analysing practice through LCAs. The results of paper II were founded on both document studies and semi-structured interviews (see section 2.3.1). Document studies revealed that there is wide discrepancy between professionals in relation to how they recognise and then address landscape. Semi-structure interviews with key actors involved in the assessments allowed deeper understanding and revealed the contraction between how landscape is recognised and awareness-raising of it is handled. The findings suggest that while awareness-raising in light of landscape needs to be seen as an entity perceived by all, it is often overlooked or recognised as a top down endeavour. This paper highlighted the potential of landscape assessments for developing co-creation of meaning. The main findings are presented in table 3.

Table 3. *Contribution of Paper II to the thesis research questions*

| <b>Research question</b>  | <b>Findings and contributions</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Relating to Aim 1</b>  |   |
| <b>EQ</b> How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning? | Contradiction between how landscape is recognised and how awareness-raising of it is handled.   |
| <b>TQ1</b> How is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?                   | Diversity and vagueness of understanding of landscape.<br>At European level landscape represents a common concept to engender unity; in a landscape assessment it |

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represents the unit of analysis and for inhabitants it represents the surroundings to life. These understandings are non-static and influence and inform each other.

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**TQ2** What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?

Contradiction between how landscape is recognised and how awareness-raising of it is handled.

Recognised awareness-raising as way of co-creating meaning and as central to a democratic understanding of landscape.

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**Relating to Aim 2**

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**TQ3** How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning?

Conceptualisation of awareness-raising in relation to landscape.

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### 4.3 Paper III: Landscape values in Landscape Character Assessment

Butler, A. Landscape values in Landscape Character Assessment. (14/05/26) In process of submission in connection with special issue of Landscape Research as edited by Kenneth Olwig.

The work presented in paper III relates to study 3 (section 2.3.1). This paper focused on the question of how values are handled by landscape planners in practice; examining how multiple landscape values are handled in LCAs. In this paper landscape assessment is seen as significant for understanding landscape planning as it represents the moment when landscape values are framed in the planning process. In Paper III, I present a framework which was developed in the study to analysing how values are taken up in landscape assessments. The theoretical framework was created through a synthesis of other academic work, relating to: categories of values; the forms that values take and conceptualisation of insiderness. The framework was used to analyse the underlying logic of landscape assessment documents, with the aim conceptualising what landscape values mean in practice. I conclude that the values tend to be experts or objective outsiders, that values are predominantly aesthetic, and that the focus tends to be on the physicality. Main findings are presented in table 4.

Table 4. *Contribution of Paper III to the thesis research questions*

| <b>Research question</b>   | <b>Findings from paper</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Relating to Aim 1</b>   |   |
| <b>EQ</b> How are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?  | Confusion in idea of landscape comes through in to what values are recognised in the landscape.   |
| <b>TQ1</b> How is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?  | Disparity between how landscape is conceptualised and how it is operationalised.<br>Focus on the viewed and physical values of landscape rather than experienced.<br>That landscape planners represent objective outsiders. |
| <b>TQ2</b> What are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?                  | Although conceptualised as being dependant on those who perceive landscape the values which are attained represent landscape as a surface recognised by objective outsiders.  |
| <b>Relating to Aim 2</b>   |   |
| <b>TQ3</b> How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in Landscape Planning? | Development of theoretical framework for analysing the inclusion of multiple values in landscape assessments.   |



## 5 Presentation and discussion of the findings

In this chapter I bring together the findings of the research. Both the empirically results and theoretically arguments are presented in relation to the research questions and the aims of thesis. I first address aim 1 and the research question relating to it in section 5.1: *Dynamics of landscape planning*. I then relate the findings presented to the second aim in section 5.2: *Strengthening theory*. I conclude the thesis by expanding the discussion to question the role of landscape planners.

### 5.1 Dynamics of landscape planning

In this section I address the first aim of the thesis: *to reveal dynamics within landscape planning theory, and between theory and practice, in relation to concepts and meanings of landscape, and practices of public involvement*. This is initially examined through the empirical findings of the research relating to the empirical question in 5.1.1. This is then followed by theoretical questions 1 and 2. This section concludes by relating these findings to the first aim.

#### 5.1.1 Empirical question: how are multiple landscape meanings and values handled in landscape planning?

The empirical findings presented through the three papers reveal how landscape planners struggle to handle multiple values, exposing how values at odds with the professional rhetoric are ignored or at best subordinate. Evidence of this was initially exposed in the preliminary empirical work presented in paper I (p 11). The initial study showed that in the majority of LCAs (thirty eight out of fifty two) there was no public participation and therefore the insiders who experience the landscape were excluded. Consequently the

multiplicity of values and meanings held by those who experience the landscape as their everyday surroundings are missing from the assessments.

The main focus of the empirical work in Paper I was to examine assessments where the public were involved. This work exposed hurdles for landscape planners when trying to handle alternative landscape values. What was initially evident was the inconsistency in how the public were engaged. Of the fourteen assessments which involved the public, four saw participation only as a means for verifying the professional assessment, gaining acceptance for an expert representation of landscape (paper I, pp 11-13). The remaining assessments engaged the public to ascertain how they perceive their landscape, to varying extents. The scope of engagement was predominantly at the level of consultation, with minimal opportunity to influence the assessments or affect the discourse on landscape.

The empirical work presented in paper II also addresses participation, focusing on how knowledge transfer is developed through awareness-raising. The findings in the second paper (pp 446-447) show that awareness-raising, while accepted as central to participation in landscape issues, with landscape being reliant on those who perceive it, is handled as a top-down process. Awareness-raising in practice focuses on dissemination of expert views and values rather than acting as an instrument for co-creating meaning of landscape.

The realisation that the public were either not involved in defining their landscapes or tended to be involved in a superficial way, raises the question of what is the landscape which is being assessed. As presented in section 2.2, the rhetoric around landscape planning based on the ELC points to landscape as a perceived and lived entity, a view also taken up in LCA guidelines. For the majority of the assessments accessed it is difficult to ascertain what is being assessed as they do not define what landscape is, forty three of the seventy eight presented in paper II (pp 445-446), there is no recognised definition of landscape. Consequently it is difficult to identify what is the substantive base for procedural actions. The assessments which define landscape, predominantly recognise it in line with the rhetoric of the ELC (paper II, pp 445-446). However in light of the findings related to participation it can be seen that there is a contradiction between rhetoric of how landscape is conceptualised in practice and how it is operationalised. How can an assessment of a perceived entity not be reliant on those who perceive it?

The empirical findings presented in Paper I began to explore the disparity between practice and rhetoric, by illustrating how the assessments which engaged the public tended not to address landscape as an entity perceived by all. Only one of the fourteen assessments which involved the public used the

process as a means to attain an understanding of landscape as a lived experience, the surroundings to everyday life (paper I, pp 12-13). The remainder of the assessments engaging the public focused on attaining local scientific understandings or knowledge of the landscapes physicality framed by professional values.

This was further examined in the studies relating to papers II and III. The findings presented in these papers, which examined assessments recognising landscape as a perceived entity and engaging the public, showed that how landscape was conceptualised differed greatly from how it was operationalised (paper II, pp 444-447, paper III, pp 6-8). Rather than landscape recognised as being reliant on those who perceive it, it remains a professional domain forwarding a professional discourse. However the fact that the public were involved implies that there is intention to address those who perceive the landscape. This was developed further in the interviews with practitioners, where public involvement was expressed as more than just gaining an in-depth understanding of the physical landscape, recognising the need to engage with the “local sense of meaning” (paper II, p 447-448).

The findings presented in Paper III further exposed how landscape is addressed in the assessments, through examining which values are recognised and communicated in the assessment documents. The findings from this study exposed that, when operationalised it is the physical and visual values which are recognised. These are not just tangible values, they are the values of objective outsider. This subordinates the embedded values attached to the landscape by insiders. This not only place dominance on the visual and physical but also reduces other values to a surface of their full meaning, ignoring relationships and processes. As such the assessments express supposedly neutral or non-contested tangible values representing a traditional aesthetic or values based on sectoral specific.

The empirical findings of this thesis reveal that landscape planners fail to engage the public directly to attain the values they attach to landscape. This is in part caused by poor conceptualisation of landscape which gives rise to confusion of how to handle public involvement. This issue is further confounded by the contradiction between rhetoric and practice, where how landscape is expressed and how it is operationalised create conflict in understanding. As a result landscape continues to be a professional domain, dominated by the visual, surface values projected on to it by objective outsiders (paper III, pp 8-9).

### 5.1.2 Theoretical questions 1: how is landscape conceptualised within landscape planning?

The argument which began to develop in section 3.1 and Paper II (pp 441-442) and III (pp 1-3), shows how landscape in landscape planning is conceptualised in multiple ways (Meinig, 1979, Howard, 2013). It is recognised as a complex phenomenon for scientific analysis as well as a subjective understanding of everyday surroundings (Ipsen, 2012); it is seen as both product and production (Bender, 1993, Egoz et al., 2011); a temporal as well as a spatial phenomenon (Stephenson and Moller, 2010); and representing space as well as place (Olwig, 2002). Additionally it is recognised and handled in various ways dependent on cultural (Olwig, 2005, Sassatelli, 2010) and disciplinary contexts (Muir, 1999, Antrop, 2001, Tress and Tress, 2001). Although appearing to address the same thing, these conceptualisations can be built on completely different substantive bases (Swaffield, 2002). This creates the realisation that different 'landscapes' or constructions of 'landscapes' occurring in the same physical space (Gailing and Leibenath, 2013). This multitude of understandings affects how landscape is handled, producing different ontological understandings as well as epistemological ways of engaging with landscape; for example, a surface to be treated as an objective unit of measurement; or a constructed reality dependent on those who engage with it to reveal its meaning.

As has been emphasised through this thesis, the conceptualisation of landscape in policy is increasingly recognised as being reliant on the perceptions of the people who experience it, based on the ELC (see 2.2). The ELC represents the rhetoric and normative understanding of how landscape *should* be operationalised, aligning the substantive understanding with practice, based on procedural theory. Yet landscape planning is practice focused and as such conceptualisation of landscape becomes context dependent, reliant on the cultural and institutional context within which the practitioner's operate. As identified in the empirical findings this creates confusion when landscape is operationalised. Creating contradiction between the substantive theory of what landscape is and the procedural theory of how it is handled. Consequently tools used to address the landscape are not necessarily in line with how landscape is recognised.

The difference between rhetoric and practice exposes two dominant conceptualisations of landscape; one a democratic entity perceived by those who experience it (Olwig, 2005, Strecker, 2011, Roe, 2013), and the other an objective, physical, viewed and measurable entity. The later, conceptualisation, as exposed in paper III, forms the understanding of how landscape is operationalised in landscape assessments and thus defines the values

recognised in landscape planning. Such a concept, based on a certain aesthetic understanding, privileges the outsider and professional (see 3.1 and Paper III, pp 8-9), at the expense of insider practices and relationships (Macpherson, 2006, Stephenson, 2008). This creates a contradiction between how landscape is expressed and how it is operationalised. The operationalisation of landscape as an objective entity perpetuates the tools which support this understanding of landscape and thus maintaining its dominance. Therefore it is not necessarily how landscape is conceptualised which informs the tools, but how the tools are operated which inform how landscape is recognised.

### 5.1.3 Theoretical question 2: what are the relations between theories of public involvement and theories of landscape in landscape planning?

As becomes evident from the empirical work there is uncertainty of what is entailed when landscape planners engage the public in landscape issues. This is highlighted in section 5.1.1 where I reveal the ambiguity of understanding of landscape and how involvement of the public is framed in landscape issues.

Rhetoric, from academia (ESF/COST, 2010), policy (Council of Europe, 2000a) and practice itself (paper II, pp 446-447 & III, p 6), points to a conceptualisation of landscape as reliant on participation and even recognising landscape as a democratic entity (Olwig, 2005, Arler, 2008, Roe, 2013). Yet when operationalised through tools and approaches for addressing landscape an inconsistency is evident as shown in the empirical findings and argued through theoretical question 1.

While landscape is increasingly theorised as a democratic entity, providing space for multiple values to be addressed (Egoz et al., 2011) it continues to be operationalised in practice as a visual, physical surface experienced by objective outsiders (Stephenson, 2010, Conrad et al., 2011a). This subsequently affects how public involvement in landscape issues is conceptualised and operationalised. How the landscape is theorised in practice is dependent on how landscape planners operate as argues in section 3.2.

The rhetoric of participation in landscape planning, as forwarded by the ELC, points to landscape as a democratic arena for discussion, similar to the Agora of ancient Greece (Olwig, 2002, Roe, 2013). Recognising the substantive base of participation as a democratic value, opens up the potential of what participation can contribute. The idea of the Agora provides a link between a substantive basis of landscape with the democratic values which underpin participation (Olwig, 2002, Arler, 2008). However, the empirical findings allude to the substantive theory behind participation being overlooked, instead being viewed as a procedural tool, a means for disseminating information and attaining knowledge. Failing to recognise that participation

can be an end in itself misses the potential to legitimise ‘others’, developing trust and empowering society (Innes and Booher, 2004, Reed, 2008).

The vagueness of public involvement mounts when the conceptual ambiguities of both landscape and participation are exposed. Thus while participation is seen as a fundamental aspect of landscape planning, it is practiced mainly as a tool which is used to support impartiality and objectivity of professionals. Such a view weakens the position of landscape as a democratic entity and undermines participation with no real basis for handling differences of values. Ultimately it has to be questioned if we do not take in the public’s own values are whose landscape are we recognising?

#### 5.1.4 Aim 1: to reveal dynamics within landscape planning theory, and between theory and practice, in relation to concepts and meanings of landscape, and practices of public involvement.

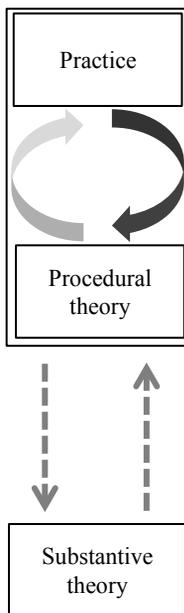


Figure 8. Relationship between theories and practice in landscape planning

Theory is central to this thesis and here I elaborate on the relationship which exists in landscape planning, between substantive and procedural theories and how these relate to practice. The discussion laid out in this section is based on both the theoretical argument and the empirical findings presented the previous sections.

As I stated in chapter 2, in this thesis, theories are recognised as disciplinary tools for understanding the world by means of abstracting and simplifying knowledge. This means that the world is addressed through an abstraction of itself. How an entity is recognised defines how it is handled, simultaneously how it is handled perpetuates or alters how it is recognised. Thus how the processes of landscape assessment and participation in landscape are undertaken is reliant on how landscape is seen and through an iterative process has the potential to perpetuate or alter the understanding of landscape; substantive and procedural theories are interlinked. Yet as argued through this thesis (sections 3.2 and 5.1.3) the substantive basis of landscape planning is weak

and as the empirical findings show how landscape is conceptualised in rhetoric and how it is operationalised do not necessarily relate to each other (5.1.1). The

problem with practicing one and pushing the rhetoric of another produces conflict in the language used by professionals

The weakness of substantive theory and the fact that the discipline of landscape planning is practice focused results in procedural theories being driven by practice with weak connections to the substantive as expressed in figure 8. As presented through the empirical findings, practice does not necessarily build on the same substantive understanding as expressed through rhetoric; this is the case with both the concepts of landscape and participation.

While rhetoric considers landscape a dynamic entity based on multiple values, when operationalised it becomes as a static surface (Stephenson, 2008). This is exemplified in the empirical findings from the LCA approach (5.1.1), where landscape is handled through expert driven, mapped representations; representing a static discourse of landscape. Consequently this opens up for confusion in landscape planning, built on a plurality of concepts yet struggles to link the rhetoric of the substantive nature of landscape to practice. The empirical findings start to reveal how the inability of practitioners to engage with landscape as expressed in rhetoric, consequently impact on how public involvement in landscape issues are handled.

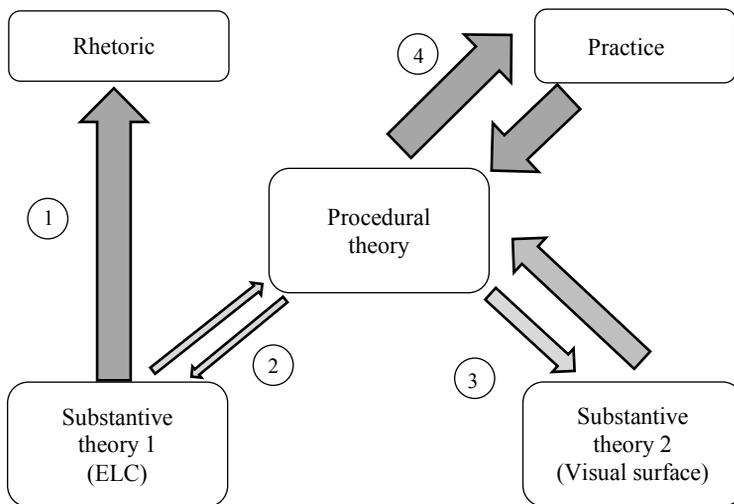


Figure 9. Dynamics of theory and practice in landscape planning.

The situation described through this section is illustrated in figure 9. I have identified that there is a direct relationship between an understanding of landscape as an entity perceived by all (substantive theory 1), relating to the theorisation in ELC, and the rhetoric of landscape planners (1). There is also a

relationship between substantive theory 1 and procedural theory (2); the fact that the public are involved in assessments indicates there is intention in line with the rhetoric. As such, how landscape is handled has been drawn from theory 1. However what the procedural theory then addresses relates to a different theorisation of landscape (3), landscape as a visual surface (substantive theory 2). This then informs practice (4). As can be seen from the illustration, I recognise an iterative process between practice and procedural theory (4) and procedural theory and substantive theory (2 and 3).

Although substantive theory is recognised in academia, practice is more concerned with procedural understandings. The weakness of substantive understanding in procedural theory points to a separation of academia and practice in time and space. This is exemplified by LCA, where practice is far removed from rhetoric which is expressed in the guidelines. It would appear that substantive development is not easily integrated into the practice oriented field where procedures are focused towards the existing dominant understanding of landscape. This highlights the issue of the perceived relevance for practice of academic research and the interest which academia has in the day to day problems of practitioners. As academics are we producing abstract theory which is removed from practice or can we help to bridge this gap?

## 5.2 Strengthening theory

In this section I considering how the discussion outlined above can help to enhance participation in landscape issues. This is in line with aim 2: *to strengthen the substantive aspect of landscape planning theory in order to strengthen participatory theory of landscape planning*. I first address the aim by relating the findings to the third theoretical research question, before directly engaging with the aim.

### 5.2.1 Theoretical question 3: How can a multiple and diverse theorisation of landscape contribute to the theorisation of participation in landscape planning?

Through this section I continue the line of argument from section 5.1, that landscape planners operationalise landscape as a physical, viewed and measurable entity, an understanding which is at odds with the intimate experiences of those inhabiting the landscape (Dakin, 2003). When addressing how participation is operationalised in relation to landscape, such a view is self-defeating. It is not just the process, but also the subject which needs to be democratic, there needs to be the opportunity to affect change. The ambiguity,

outlined in the previous section, brought about through the contradictions between rhetoric and practice belittles not only landscape, but also participation and the professionals which handle these processes. If the concept of landscape is expressed as an experience of everyday surroundings yet handled as a physical entity as experienced by objective outsiders then it would appear that the profession is not well equipped to handle a more holistic view of landscape. However shifting the focus of participation, in order to handle landscape as the perceived surroundings to daily life, requires a philosophical reorientation of both landscape and participation (Dakin, 2003, Stephenson, 2010). This requires a realignment of procedural and substantive theory.

Addressed as an entity which is perceived by those experiencing it opens up the dynamic nature of landscape, as those who perceive it constantly construct and reconstruct its meaning (Gailing and Leibenath, 2013). Yet the objective outsiders understanding of landscape as a surface, which is dominant in the empirical findings, presents a static representation (Stephenson, 2010); a mapped and controlled way of seeing (Olwig, 2013). If conceptualised as a dynamic entity, then the focus of tools and the procedural theories which informs them need to shift, to emphasise process as opposed to static final representations of the landscape.

The theoretical development presented in the three papers help to develop this line of thought and start to explore how it could be. Papers I and III provide frameworks for addressing aspects of public involvement, how existing processes can be assessed in order to identify what is lacking. The findings of paper I addressed the procedural aspects of participation while paper III addresses more substantive issues of how landscape and thus values are recognised and handled. Paper II theorises awareness-raising as a procedural aspect in light of the conceptualisation of landscape, to facilitate democratic engagement, viewing the public as equal justified knowledge holders. This develops the idea of landscape as an open arena for learning.

Recognised as a learning arena, provides the opportunity to engage with more than just the physicality of the landscape. It allows the possibility to discuss the multiple values of insiders as formed through practice and relationships (paper III). Landscape can provide an arena for increased awareness of the role which people, as stakeholders, have in shaping the environment (Jones, 2007). This means that Landscape becomes a democratic entity, the concern of all and as such requires democratic procedures to address it (Council of Europe, 2000b) (Council of Europe, 2000b, Olwig, 2002, Roe, 2013). Such a view shifts the significance of public involvement from participation in the production of a policy document to vehicle for co-creation of meaning.

### 5.2.2 Aim 2: to strengthen the substantive aspect of landscape planning theory in order to strengthen participatory theory of landscape planning

The confusion exposed throughout this final chapter points to a need to strengthen the connections between substantive aspects of the discipline and practice. Practice is driven by rationality, with landscape represented as a geographical concept, an expert driven, mapped representation (Stephenson, 2010). Such a representation perpetuates the centuries old philosophy of dominance over nature and depicts landscape as a static entity missing the dynamism of landscape.

In this thesis I have identified a weakness in the substantive theory of landscape planning. However it is poor connection between substantive and procedural theory and practice which makes this weakness a problem. As has been presented through this thesis, theorisation of landscape as a holistic, perceived entity is well developed and to a large degree recognised in the rhetoric of practice. However what would appear to be lacking are means for operationalising the rhetoric.

The contradiction between practice and rhetoric makes participation in landscape issues disingenuous. As argued through this thesis, the dominant discourse which is operationalised in landscape planning does not provide the space for differing values to be recognised, bringing into question the democratic values which are being drawn on. Involvement in landscape issues tends to be involvement in a non-democratic landscape, a professional, elite conceptualisation; as such participation is procedural with little opportunity to affect change. As has been noted by other academics, there is a need to move beyond the rhetoric of the ELC and to ground landscape more firmly in

planning practice (Conrad et al., 2011a, Scott, 2011), taking the spirit of the ELC seriously. This requires more than mere practical reconsideration, it also needs a philosophical reorientation (Dakin, 2003).

I argue, that to engage with landscape as defined in rhetoric, requires a realignment of the relationship between substantive theory, procedural theory and practice as illustrated in figure 10 (compared with fig 8, p.70). Such realignment would create an

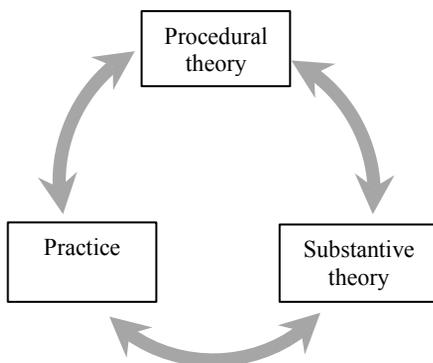


Figure 10. Ideal relationship between theory and practice in landscape planning

iterative relationship between all three aspects, and calls for a more reflective engagement with landscape. This requires redressing the substantive nature of landscape, thus altering the scope of the discipline. Issues relating to the landscape cannot be addressed or solved if we keep falling back on the landscape as a visual surfaces and missing what is central to people's experience.

Redressing landscape points to a more deliberative approach to landscape planning, an approach based on multiple values, recognising all who experience landscape as justified holders of knowledge (paper II). This I argue makes landscape planning a means for co-creating meaning and positions participation as a means of forwarding landscape democracy; *democratising landscape*. Consequently landscape becomes a neutral arena, where conflicting values can be aired rather than making them antagonistic (section 3.5). This sees landscape as a collaborative agenda, with an ongoing discussion on landscape and landscape as an arena for political discussion, such a view requires a common arena.

As stated in section 2.1, a universal conceptualisation of landscape cannot be achieved nor is it desirable as landscape and landscape planning are reliant on cultural, disciplinary and community context, as well as being dependent on the activity at hand (Stiles, 1994, Swaffield, 2002, Stephenson, 2008). However as Janet Stephenson (2008) identifies what is needed is a common frame of reference, what I have labelled the meta-narrative (paper II: 443). Recognition of the metanarrative allows commonalities to be recognised as a basis for discussion on individual landscapes, providing a space for airing and legitimising conflicting views (Mouffe, 2000, Pløger, 2004). While differences in values can create enhanced nuances of the landscape, the commonalities can form an arena for discussion (Strang, 1997, Fiskevold, 2011, Nassauer, 2012, Geelmuyden and Fiskevold, 2013). Joan Nassauer considers the visual representation as the suitable medium for creating commonalities as it represents the complexity of landscape, being based on composition rather than detail. However such a view is dependent on recognising whose visual representation it is building on. Recognising democratic processes in landscape issues is reliant on landscape being conceived of as a democratic entity. I have argued that this leads to the recognition of landscape as a democratic arena, an Agora (Olwig, 2007b, Strecker, 2011). Landscape becomes a learning space where all can openly communicate (section 5.2) and values and conflicts relating to landscape can be aired and discussed.

The realignment I have argued for requires a more reflective approach form practitioners. There is a need to realise that actions need to relate to the substantive understanding of landscape, as well as recognise that these actions

shape and inform what landscape represents. With landscape assessment this means it is not just a passive activity, but is an active shaper of the landscape. However it is not enough just to theorise a way in to a democratic arena, there need to be practical tools aligned with the theorisation. They need to accommodate landscape as a process; as such landscape assessment is seen as a means of developing an open discourse on landscape, airing views and expressing values. It becomes more than just a tool for understanding the landscape and forwarding a specific discourse on landscape. The assessment becomes an instrument for airing opinions and an arena where values can be legitimised. As such landscape assessment becomes an opportunity to recognise conflicts not as issues to be solved but factors for developing a more nuanced discourse on landscape. Whereas typically, it is the assessment which defines the values (section 3.4), I argue that the assessment should be seen as a means of identifying values in the landscape. Consequently landscape assessment becomes a more central part of decision making, with value-identification becoming central to landscape planning (Brunetta and Voghera, 2008). This paints landscape planning as an ongoing process, and the assessment as part of that process. Although the ‘finished’ product is needed it has to be recognised for what it is, a static representation of a dynamic entity.

In order to grasp the full complexity of values it would be desirable to engage the populace who experience the landscape. However this is hardly feasible. The process can however be representative of the populace and the variety of values which are affected by landscape can highlight the commonalities around which future discussions can crystallise and begin to build and develop a nuanced understanding of landscape (paper I, pp 15-16 and section 3.5). This requires a need to reflect over which values have been excluded. The theoretical frameworks devised through papers I and III assists in this. The frameworks I developed providing a means undertaking stakeholder value analysis, as a way for identifying whose values which are included.

An approach for handling landscape values at the assessment stage would ideally be to attain an understanding of the diversity at an early stage (paper I). Using broad but inclusive methods as means of defining the scope of the assessment, recognising the values present in the landscape and highlight conflicts (e.g. map based questionnaires). The diversity and conflicting values can then be taken up through focus groups, where representatives of the different values, identified from the earlier stage are engaged to address deeper understanding.

### 5.3 Further Discussion

Stepping away from practice and the procedural theory of landscape planning and considering how they are impacted by substantive theory has helped me to expose the dynamics of landscape planning (5.1). This has revealed what it means for the development of the discipline to be driven by practice rather than developing a conceptual coherence (3.2). Much of the critique and discussion regarding the ambiguity of the discipline is founded on procedural understandings. Addressing these in light of the substantive nature of landscape in landscape planning opened up the argument that the plurality of theories of landscape manifested in landscape planning theory compound this ambiguity. I have also argued that this manifests in a gap between rhetoric and practice. A dynamic, complex and encompassing conceptualisation recognised in rhetoric but handled as a surface viewed by objective outsiders in practice (Macpherson, 2006, Selman, 2010, Conrad et al., 2011a). This results in the dominant discourse of landscape relating to a tangible entity and an objective unit of analysis. From this I argue that there is a need for closer relationships between theory and practice recognise a need to realign theory and practice (5.2).

The discussion through this thesis opens up for questioning what the role of landscape planners will be in the future. Is it to deal with the small details and the surfaces or can the discipline deal with a holistic entity? This responds in part to whether the discipline continues to develop through procedural approaches or whether realignment can be attained between substantive theories, procedural theories and practice (5.2). The later requires a response by researchers to address the gap, exposed through this thesis

The philosophical shift, which this thesis pertains to, requires a professional to be able to recognise and appreciate the consequence of conceptualising landscape as a democratic entity and be able to drive the processes informed by such a conceptualisation. This moves away from how the discipline presently operates and also how the discipline is handled in education. If education does not question the substantive aspect of landscape, then schools of landscape planning unquestioningly perpetuate the dominant discourse; education becomes a training camp for professionals in the professions own image (Faludi, 1973).

The discussion through this thesis reveals that landscape planners are at present ill-equipped to handle diverse and conflicting landscape values. This raises the question of whether landscape planners are capable of genuinely engaging the public. Should it be other disciplines which undertake this work, should the education redress these short comings or should there be more inter-disciplinary collaboration? The later of these would allow a broader

understanding of landscape to develop, yet would also require educational shift, in order for the disciplines to realise their limitations.

It becomes evident that practitioners would need different guidelines and frameworks of practice, as well as theoretical realignment. This brings me round a full circle to where I began this thesis, with the need to develop tools to engage the public. However through this thesis I have exposed the theoretical implications of this, and thus begun to develop a theoretical base for addressing practice.

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