

Historic urban landscapes : an assessment framework part II

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J kʌqt kə'Wɪdɔp'Nɔpɪf ʉɛr gʌ: An Assessment Framework Part II

LOES VELDPAUS¹, ANA PEREIRA RODERS¹
¹Eindhoven University of Technology, Eindhoven, the Netherlands

ABSTRACT: Current theory defines conservation, or heritage management, as 'managing thoughtful change' and recommends a landscape-based approach towards heritage management. Moreover, it indicates a landscape-based approach to heritage management as a key indicator for sustainable socio-economic development. The recent UNESCO (November 2011) recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) provides guidance on such a landscape-based approach at international level. Yet, it is now up to the national and local governments to adapt, disseminate and facilitate its implementation. The research aims to develop a method to reveal the way historic cities currently manage contemporary socio-economic transformations. This is done by evaluating their management practices by means of an assessment framework. This framework has been deduced from a thorough literature survey to identify the evolution and guidelines on international cultural heritage management, including those proposed by HUL. The framework intends to be a method to reveal the differences and resemblances between existing local policy and management practices and those recommended by the HUL approach, defined for 4 dependent variables: attributes, values, stakeholders and strategies. The part of the framework presented in this paper to reveal how the values of cultural heritage are addressed in current policy. The recent adoption of HUL makes it difficult to assess the results of its implementation; therefore the framework will be used to assess the policy and management practices in cities that previously implemented measures similar to HUL such as Amsterdam.

Keywords: Heritage Management, Historic Urban Landscape, Assessment Framework

INTRODUCTION

Buildings and cities are always subject to change, whether it is human, societal, urban, economic, or natural. The transformation of the environment, active or passive, is on-going to match societal current and future needs. Protection can be understood as a challenging form of transformation; a form of transformation which main aims are to maintain and restore cultural significance, even when proposing to improve or partially replace cultural heritage properties. Thus, if protection is a particular form of transformation, the approach taken to transformation should be based upon carefully (re)thinking what to change, why and how. Therefore, sustainable management of the 'resource' heritage should be dealt with professionally, like any other vital resource e.g. energy and the EU's "20-20-20" targets.

Current theory on cultural heritage management defines heritage management as 'managing thoughtful change' and recommends a landscape-based approach towards heritage management [5]; [2]; [1]. Over the past decades the definition of heritage management has been evolving from an object-based approach towards a more all-inclusive approach that also includes notions such as the intangible, setting and context, and urban- and sustainable development, accompanied by a greater consideration of the social and economic function of

(historic) cities. This approach is known as a landscape-based approach.

The recent UNESCO [15] recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) provides guidance on such a landscape-based approach at international level (fig 2). Yet, it is up to the national and local governments to adapt, disseminate, facilitate and monitor its implementation (fig.1). Implementing a landscape-based approach is not an easy task [6]; [17]. The research presented aims to assist on such implementation, taking HUL as a starting point. To understand how 'to adapt' those general guidelines for local use and vice versa, an assessment of current policy is needed, to determine how it already reflects those guidelines. This paper aims to present the second part of a framework for such assessment, concerning the values of cultural heritage.

Historic Urban Landscapes Approach

Veldpaus et al. [17] show that a landscape-based approach such as the one guided by HUL, is the expected future trend in heritage management, as well as, a key indicator for sustainable urban development. Additionally, both intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations such as CoE [4], and ICOMOS [7] have accepted this approach and as such have been defining strategies to address it. The

combination of the process of implementing HUL (fig.1) and the steps proposed in HUL (fig.2) allows identifying cultural significance and change agents, proposing measures or alternative scenario's and monitoring impact of urban development and other change agents on cultural significance, and as such, it strongly depends on integrated Environmental Assessments.

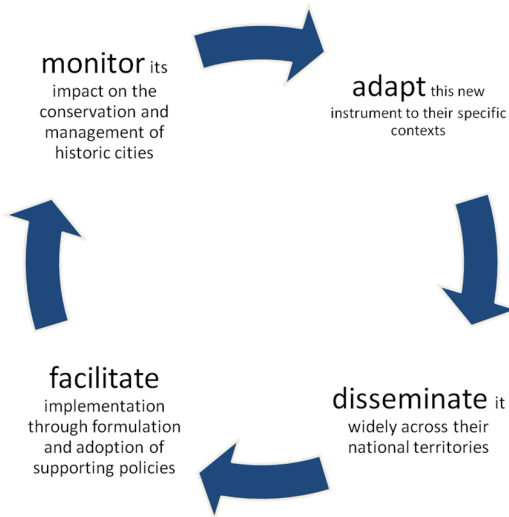


Figure 1: implementation of HUL (adapted from UNESCO, 2011)



Figure 2: critical steps of HUL (adapted from UNESCO, 2011)

METHOD: BUILDING A FRAMEWORK

Theory on the landscape-based approach is in place and literature on the history and theory of HUL is already growing [1]. The HUL recommendation as adopted in 2011 provides guidance on such approach, and does so by building on the wide range of preceding standard-setting instruments in the field of human and urban development and heritage. The evolution of concepts behind HUL therefore is expected to reflect evolution of the application of global theory into local policy. As such they are taken as the base of the assessment framework to assist evaluating current

policies and determine the local application of the HUL approach. The framework builds upon the principle of a Leopold-matrix [9], a proven method to relate (project) activities to (environmental) parameters [20].

Defining activities and parameters

The activities in this case are fixed: the steps defined by HUL (figure 2). The development of the set of parameters depended on the evolution of concepts behind HUL. Determining them followed three stages: first, a qualitative content analysis was conducted to reveal the main concepts of HUL. The concepts of HUL were identified by analysing the recommendation on: the definition of heritage (what is heritage); the general principles behind it (main aims); the defined strategies and tools recommended to manage heritage (how is heritage being managed); and the stakeholders (who is involved).

Secondly, those concepts were traced back in international cultural policy to reveal their evolution. For this, the 28 international policy documents (1962-2008) have been considered to narrow the sample of documents to be surveyed. Those are the ones referenced in the recommendation (UNESCO, 2011) and the preliminary study of the technical and legal aspects (UNESCO, 2009). The documents were analysed using NVivo9, a data analysing tool that supports qualitative and mixed research methods. The found evolution was complemented by, and compared to, concepts and frameworks found in literature study, and constructed into a set of parameters.

The last stage comprised a definition of the scale to which the activities and parameters will be held in order to assess their relation. This scale is to be used to 'fill in' within the matrix, allowing the assessment to reveal the level of compliance with HUL in an objectified manner.

RESULTS: THE FRAMEWORK PARAMETERS

Stage 1: main concepts

The main concepts of the HUL approach as identified by analysing the recommendation are the following:

What is heritage: the Historic Urban Landscape is defined as "the urban area understood as the result of an historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of "historic centre" or "ensemble" to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting." As such the definition of cultural heritage is being stretched to include a wide – nearly unlimited – range of tangible and intangible attributes, without a specific geographic demarcation. Such concept considers all layers of cultural significance conveyed in the urban landscape, and their varied interpretations, as possibly valuable, so not only the aesthetic, historic, and scientific values, but

also values of e.g. economic, social, ecological or political background.

Why is heritage being managed: the main aim of HUL is to provide guidance on sustainable urban (heritage) management, by means of a comprehensive and integrated approach for management of the significance of urban landscapes within an overall sustainable development framework.

How is it being managed: national and local authorities are stimulated to (re)develop instruments and tools sensitive to local values and needs, related to 1) regulatory systems and measures; 2) environmental (impact) assessments; 3) participation processes; and 4) capacity building and sustainable socio-economic development.

Who is involved: HUL addresses the policy, governance and management concerns involving a variety of stakeholders, including local, national, regional, international, public and private actors in the urban development process. It strongly promotes a participatory approach involving communities, decision-makers, professionals and managers.

Heritage is being managed for its past, current and future significance to mankind, which is the value it has to, and according to, the stakeholders. This is the case since the first theory on heritage [11], though the reasons for something to be heritage have changed, as has the definition of heritage itself [17];[18].

Stage 2: from evolution to parameters

The categories of cultural heritage changed in meaning in multiple directions over the past decades e.g. [8];[10]. Looking the definition of heritage a shift from object towards landscape can be determined in tangible heritage assets, and also a shift from valuing the tangible result of the intangible towards valuing the intangible e.g. traditions and processes themselves [18]. The framework on this component consists of a set of two: one on tangible assets and one on intangible assets.

In terms of the *why* the analysis of the set of 28 documents confirmed the set of eight primary cultural values as defined by Pereira Roders [11] and Tarrafa & Pereira Roders [19], the more traditionally occurring values aesthetic, historic, age, scientific, then there are the more community related values: social and political and the values that often relate mostly to process: the economic and ecological value. Based on this evolution, the eight categories for data collection (values, in grey) that fit the three categories for assessment (in black) have been selected (table 2).

Stage 3: assessment range

Analysing local policy using the in the framework should be done per HUL-step (A-F, table 1). The categories (and subdivisions) can be given a grey-scale

showing the ‘range of application’ varying from no never to always. The range is based on if the value is being considered, and if so, for either tangible or intangible heritage, or both, as shown in table 3. As such, the results can then later be correlated to the outcomes on another part of the framework, considering the tangible and intangible attributes.

Table 3: WHY component of the HUL assessment framework

	Traditional values				Community values		Process values	
	Aesthetical	Age	Historic	Scientific	Social	Political	Economic	Ecological
A. Map resources								
B. Reach consensus on what to protect								
C. Assess vulnerability								
D. Integrate A, B,C in urban management								
E. Prioritize actions								
F. Define partnerships								

Table 4: Range of application

0	no for nothing
1	yes but only for tangible attributes
2	yes but only for intangible attributes
3	yes for both tangible and intangible attributes
4	yes for everything

Organizing the framework

This part of the framework is expected to reveal how the values of cultural heritage are addressed in current policy. What values are mapped, what values are protected, what values are assessed on vulnerability etc. The combination with the framework component on what [18] (table 5) it is expected one can reveal what is considered heritage and which values are addressed in the process. In addition, a more general understanding of

the type of attributes and the related values can be shown.

Table 5: organising the whole framework

[concepts]	WHAT		WHY	WHO	HOW
[parameters]	Tangible attributes	Intangible attributes	Values	Stakeholders	Strategies & tools
[evolution]	object ensemble area cultural landscape	asset asset & people people process & people			
[activities]					
step A					
...					
step F					

CONCLUSION

Relating the outcomes of the framework parts on “what is defined as heritage” and “why is it being managed” will reveal the definition of heritage used in the policy assessed, in terms of the values and attributes related to both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage, and their combination. Then, this is also expected to indicate an inclination towards the concepts behind the definition and as such, the level of application of HUL e.g. if heritage management is more inclined to use the tradition values or are also the other values present? This can be related to the outcome of the *what* framework e.g. to see if an object-based view on what heritage is also implies certain values are more often considered. As such this part of the framework is expected to be relevant on its own, for the understanding what values are addressed in policy when it comes to the categories of cultural heritage being applied in practice.

Revealing in how far HUL is already part of local policy will allow for a better decision on what changes in policy should or shouldn't be facilitated. It can for example reveal which parameters are or aren't in need of further development at the moment. If, for example, if social values are being mapped, valued or assessed, it could imply the local system lacks a certain value type in its of heritage management, though it could also imply such value is not recognised by the stakeholders, and therefore not in need of management in terms of heritage. However, when the values are mapped and consensus is reached on their significance, but they are not assessed or integrated into a wider urban development framework, this indicates possible gaps in the current system.

The framework is currently being validated, using case studies methods and in a later stage it will also be tested at a broader scale as a monitoring tool, to monitor the change in level of application. Moreover, as the landscape-based approach is considered to be of growing importance to sustainable urban development, HUL is expected to further increase in relevance. As such it will influence requirements for Environmental Assessments; both in urban development generally and in the field of cultural heritage specifically. As one of the main aims of an impact assessment is to reveal the impact of development on the significance of attributes and their respective values, the combined what-why framework will already be instrumental.

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