



LAND MANAGEMENT

# INTRODUCTION

Many people are now buying country properties with a few acres of land, with the aim of being as self-sufficient as possible and embracing the many 'green issues' that will ensure sustainability. While you may have considerable enthusiasm, you may not have much experience in small-scale farming. You may not know where to start, or even how to start. This can mean a great deal of wasted time, labour and expense. The result may well be that the reality does not live up to your expectations.



Farming a small area of land is not an easy undertaking. The effort involved can be huge, particularly in the early stages, and you need to be aware of the many hours of hard work and the determination needed to manage a smallholding successfully. Each day will bring fresh challenges – but it will also bring new rewards, and there is no doubt that the effort is well worthwhile. I know this from my own experiences, both in England and New Zealand. I have no regrets, and only gave up this kind of lifestyle due to circumstances beyond my control.

# THE REASON

In order to realise your dream it is essential that you have an overall Management Plan that will ensure that you make the best use of your land physically, naturally and visually. Even small areas require meticulous planning to ensure that the land is used to best advantage throughout the year. Whatever the size of your property, there are essential elements that must be considered in order to use and manage the land efficiently, effectively and sustainably.

A Land Management Plan is not just a drawing but a document that assesses your site as it is today and sets out how best to reach your future goals. It includes detailed designs that show you how best to locate new structures and features, along with a costed programme of work that will let you proceed in the most efficient and economical way.

# THE NEED

A Land Management Plan will let you clarify your aims and aspirations, and open your eyes to possibilities you may not have thought of. If you have a family with their own ideas for your property, the process of creating a plan will help you to share suggestions, achieve consensus and secure everybody's commitment to the outcome.

When your Land Management Plan has been created, you will have a clear vision of how to proceed and a programme of work which will let you move towards defined and achievable goals. You will be confident that your construction projects are based on sound decisions, thus avoiding the risk of costly mistakes. You will be clear that you are using your land in the best possible way, and you will be able to realise your dreams in harmony with nature.



# LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

## AIMS

A broad statement of the principles which will underlie the management of the land.

## SURVEY

A comprehensive record of what exists on the land and its present management.

## REQUIREMENTS

A summary of the owners' requirements and their aspirations for the property.

## ANALYSIS

An interpretation of all the survey information, identifying the inter-relationship between existing and potential land uses. Problems, conflicts and opportunities examined. From the decisions reached, the Objectives are then formulated.

## OBJECTIVES

Specific statements on how the Aims are to be realised in both the shorter and longer terms for all the various land uses.

## DESIGN

Drawings produced to show the proposed layout for the various uses of the land covering the whole property.

## OVERVIEW

A summary of the work required and the resources needed to achieve the Objectives and the Design, and their approximate costs.

## IMPLEMENTATION

A detailed action programme drawn up from the Overview that will allow the implementation of the work according to the agreed budget and time.

# ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

There are many elements to be considered in a Land Management Plan, but the main ones are as follows:

Natural factors such as climate, soils, water, etc  
Buildings – residential and utility  
Services – overhead and underground  
Productive and ornamental gardens  
Orchard  
Poultry  
Small animals – pigs, goats, sheep etc.  
Large animals – cows, ponies, horses, alpacas etc.  
Arable land for crops  
Grassland for grazing, hay and silage  
Wild flower meadows  
Wetland – lakes, ponds, pools, bogs, marshes  
Woodland – copses, spinneys, woodlots  
Hedges, hedgerows and hedgebanks  
Nature and conservation, wildlife – habitats  
Recreation and hobbies – swimming pool, tennis court etc.

# ECO-FACTORS

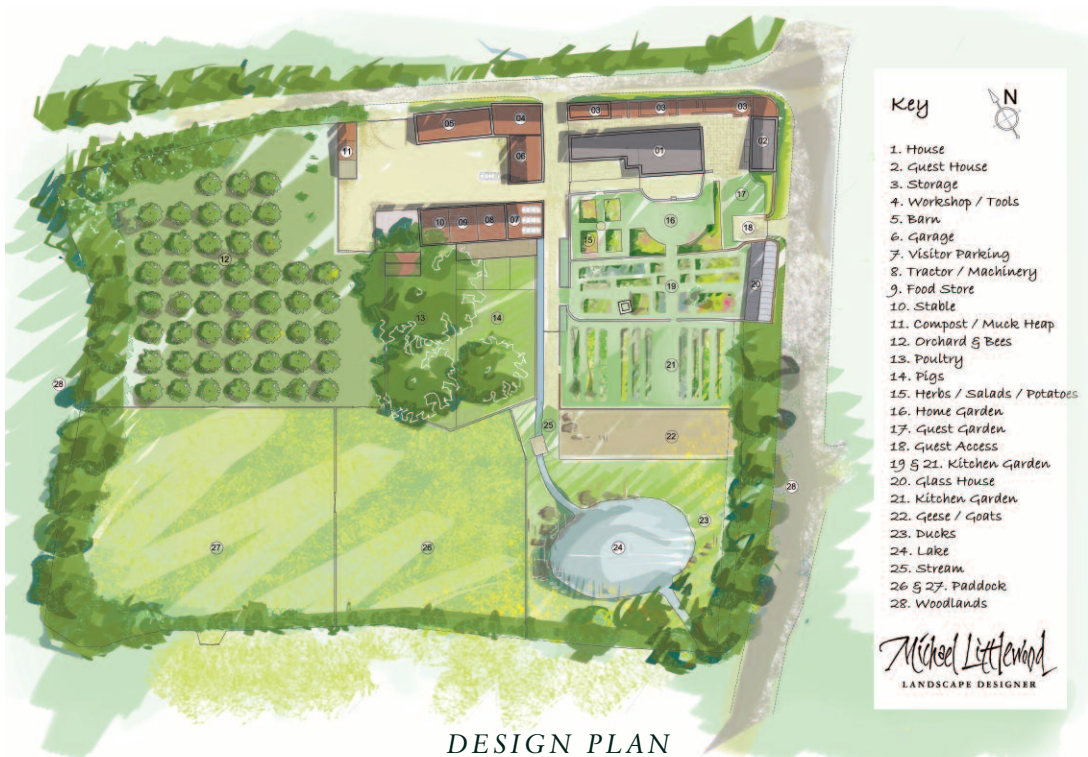
As part of my philosophy for sustainability I promote the following specialisms to my clients. Some have undertaken all of them while others have included just one or two, as appropriate to their circumstances. At long last, eco-friendly choices can be considered as an essential part of your way of living. There is also much more choice now within the various systems, and the costs have all become much more reasonable.

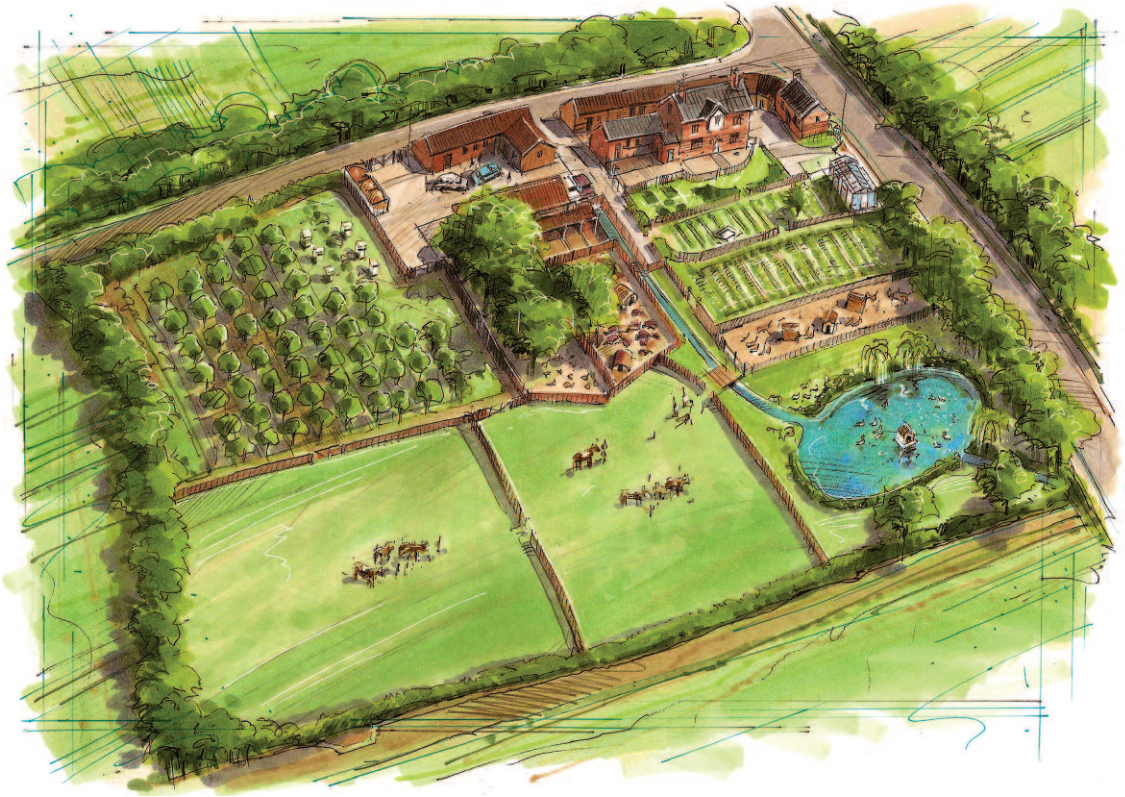
Buildings using all natural materials in their construction  
Waste water treatment through reed beds  
Rainwater harvesting from roofs of buildings  
Renewable energy  
    Solar power – panels, Wind power – turbines, Water power – turbines,  
    Biomass – wood and other vegetation  
Bio-engineering techniques, including the use of plants

# BENEFITS

*Your Land Management Plan will:*

- Identify the appropriate areas for the various functions and elements in your design
- Show how all the natural and physical features of the site can be utilised in harmony with nature
- Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the site's natural resources
- Provide encouragement for the stewardship of the property
- Ensure that visual and aesthetic elements are given proper consideration
- Set out a logical programme of work
- Allow work to be phased according to budget, without restricting future developments
- Identify future requirements and further possibilities for the site
- Provide a permanent record for the whole project
- Act as a focus for continued motivation
- Support any grant aid applications





*DESIGN SKETCH*

## ACTION

A functional, attractive home farm landscape which works in harmony with nature does not come about by happy accident – it is the result of a carefully planned landscape design. Efficiency, economy, visual amenity and sustainability are entirely compatible, and with the right Land Management Plan, you will be able to achieve all this and realise your dreams for your property. Designing in harmony with nature does not cost the earth – it saves it for everyone!

**Please contact me to discuss your requirements.**

# PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Michael Littlewood is a natural landscape architect and environmental planner with extensive experience of successfully designing and implementing sustainable land use projects. His mission has been the introduction of ecological design and planning into the mainstream and is founded on years of practice in a wide variety of situations, landscapes, climates and uses of land for public and private amenities on a scale ranging from the residential garden to a village or town.

His outstanding international reputation derives from work over many years in England, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Greece and Portugal. His clients have included national regional and local governments, landowners, developers, schools, colleges and universities, farms and estates.

His designs have incorporated his specialisms of eco-building, bio-engineering, renewable energy systems, water harvesting, waste treatments, organic food production, natural swimming pools, wildlife and nature conservation.

Details of my Services and Publications  
can be seen (and also downloaded) on my website

**[www.ecodesignscape.co.uk](http://www.ecodesignscape.co.uk)**

Michael is a Fellow of The Landscape Institute  
and a Fellow of the Society of Garden Designers.

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