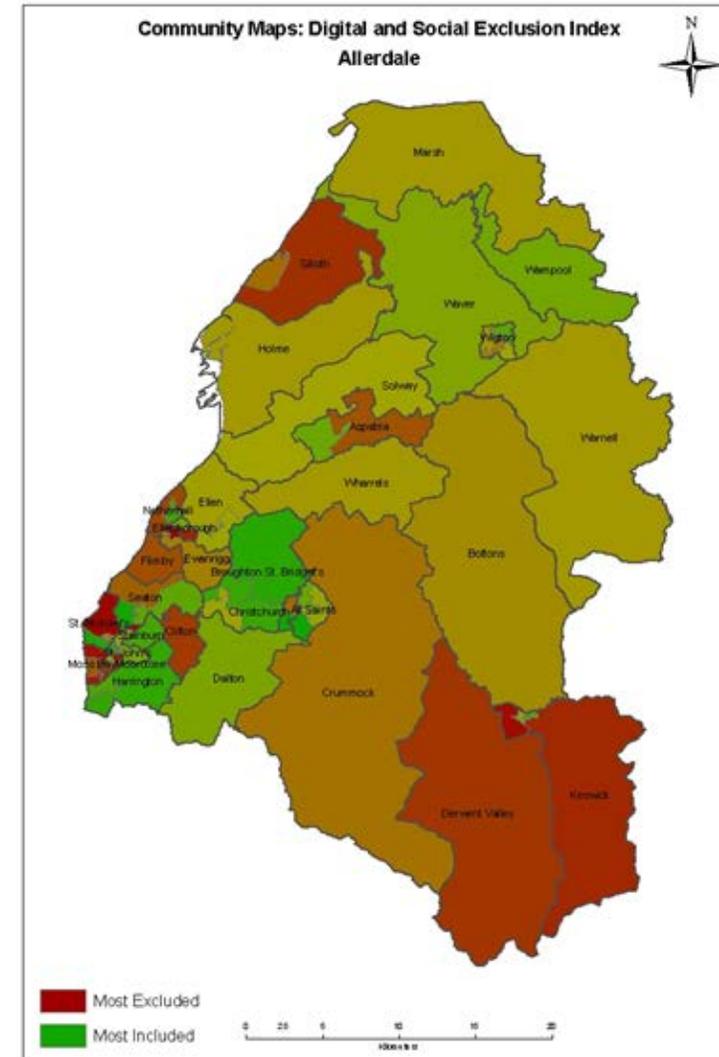
A scenic sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright yellow and orange glow that reflects on the water's surface. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds. In the foreground, a large, dark, rounded rock sits in the water, its reflection visible below. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

Aligning Values for Rural Tourism: Tourism on the Solway Coast

Jo Guiver
Dorota Ujma

Original Title of the work: Living on the Edge





Edges

- Sea
- Cumbria
- England
- Lake District
- *Unfortunately for us, you have to drive through one of the most beautiful places in the world to actually get here.*
- Holiday trends
- Tourism viability



Dialectical Approach

Which assumes:

- Every entity is created and maintained by processes
- Entities are assumed to be internally heterogeneous, ie contradictory and there are no irreducible 'building blocks', "so it is legitimate to investigate each level of organisation without having to search for fundamental units"
- "Parts and wholes are mutually constitutive of each other" which means they are simultaneously subjects and objects, causes and effects.
- Change is a characteristic of all systems, entities are in a permanent state of 'becoming'

Harvey, D. (1996). *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Basically:

Local tourism is subject to many forces both internal and external and is in a state of constant change.

The forces include:

- Accessibility
- Economy
- Politics
- Fashions
- What competitors do

Different timescales:

- “... the area is slowly rising in response to isostatic uplift”

(Halcrow, 2011, cited in Coastal Engineering, 2013, p. 60)

- “The Romans, Vikings, Reivers and eventually ourselves have shaped the Solway Coast into what it is today” (Solway Coast AONB, 2011)

- “The dune systems within the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are proactively managed to enhance their coastal defence, wildlife habitat, and leisure amenity value.”

- (Allerdale Borough Council, 2014).

Research

- Tourist providers in area
 - AONB
 - Wetlands project
 - RSPB
 - Local entrepreneurs
 - Caravan site manager
 - Britain's Energy Coast
 - Community Engagement Officer

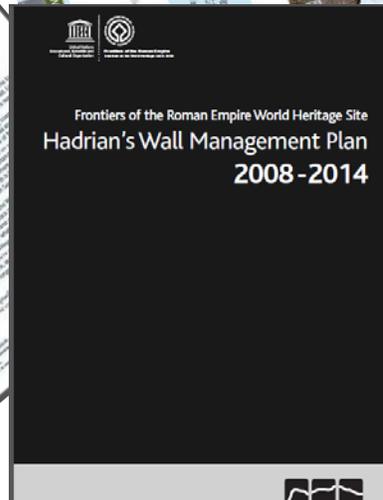
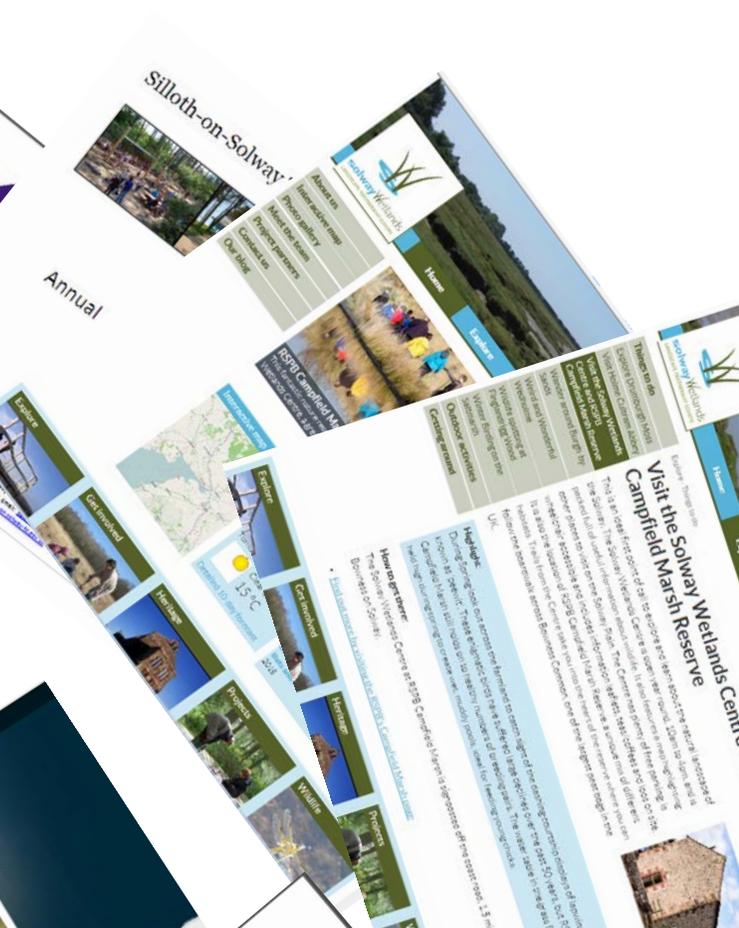
Interviews:

- Face to face or telephone
- Semi-structured
- Recorded and transcribed



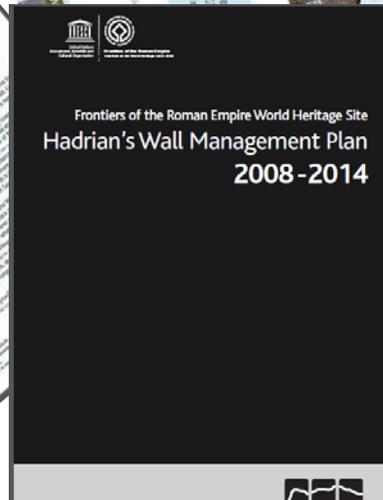
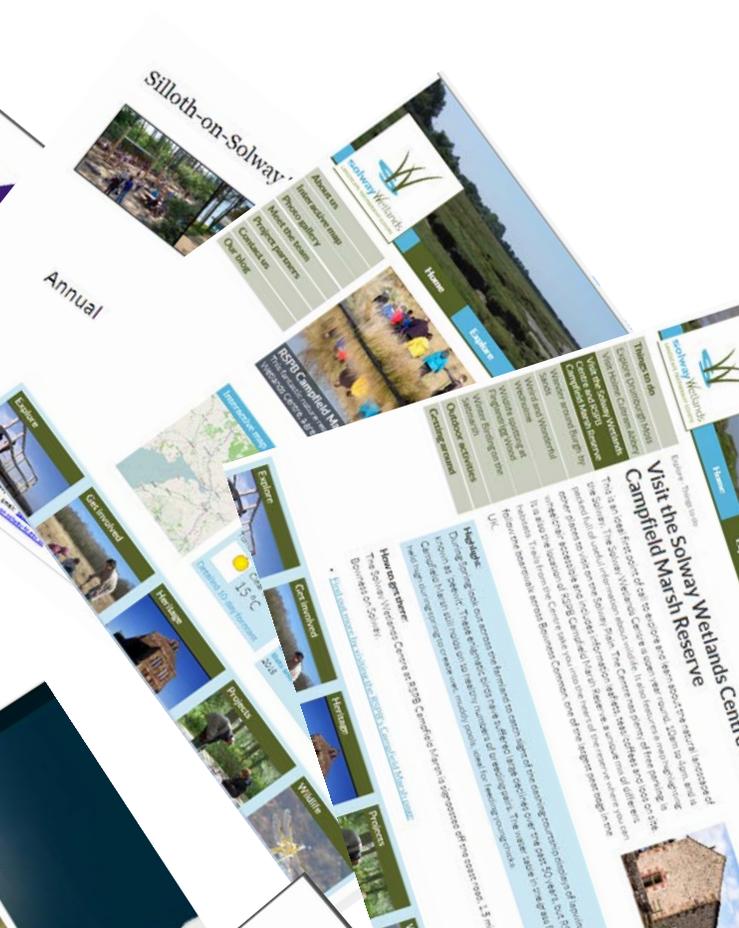
Other Material

- Brochures
- Management plans
- Websites
- Town Council newsletter, etc



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Literature Review

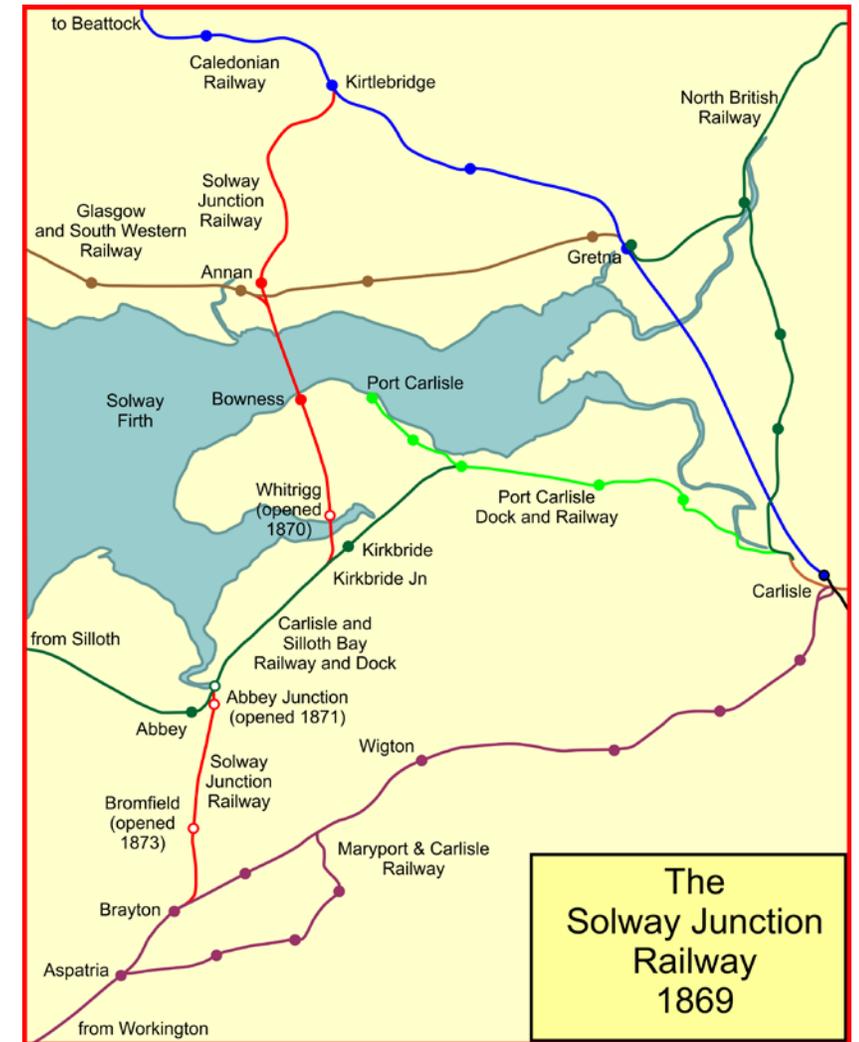
Peripheral places

Peripheral Areas Appeal

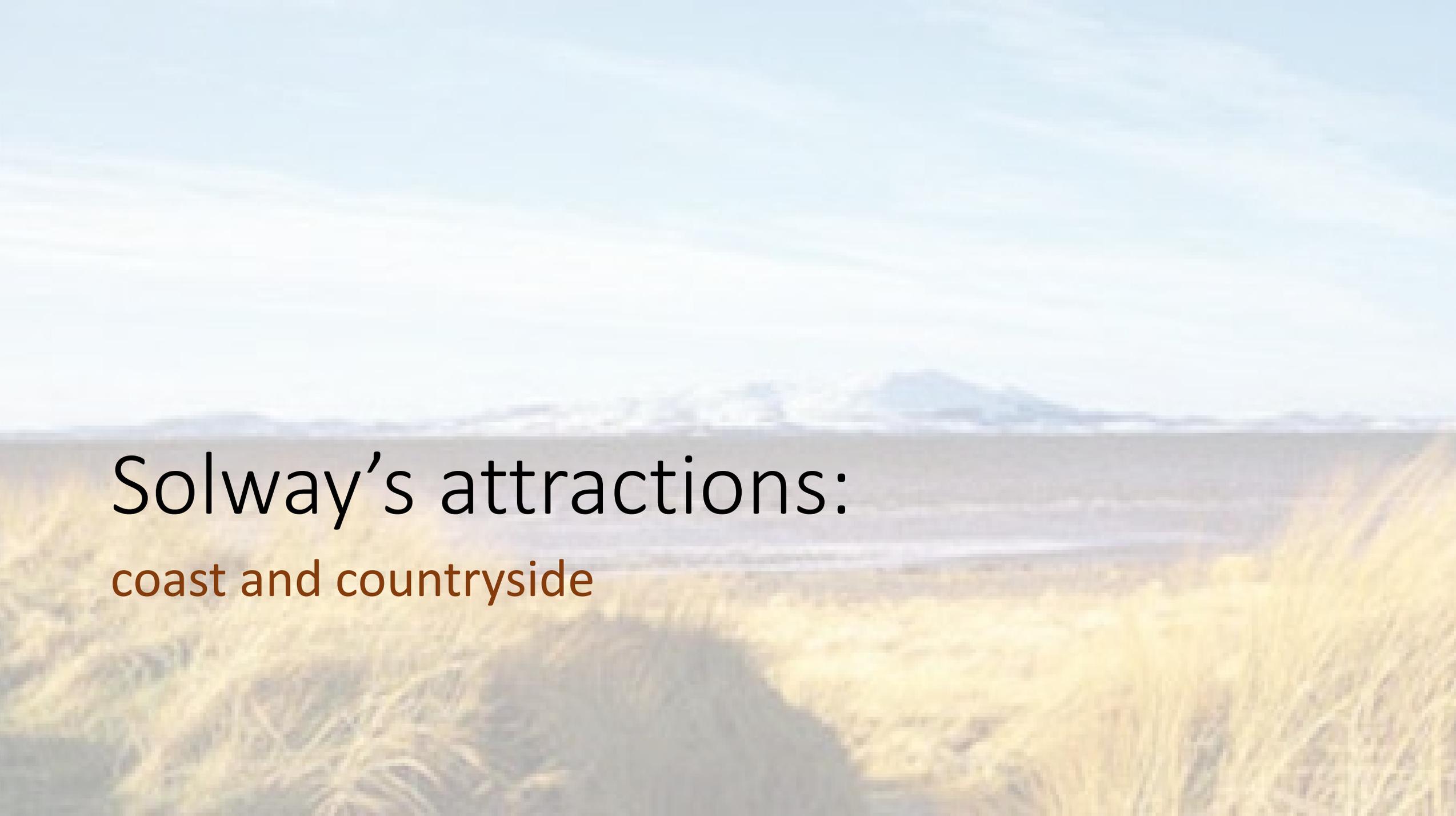
- Less developed
- Less crowded
- Natural habitats
- Wild, can appreciate nature
- Edge of sea
- Edginess?
- Contrast with urban, industrialised centres

Downside of peripherality

- Vulnerability
- Lack of power
- Lack of connections
- Lack of hinterland to support attractions



"Solway Jn Rly" by Afterbrunel - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons - http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Solway_Jn_Rly.gif#/media/File:Solway_Jn_Rly.gif

A scenic view of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, a path made of dark, wet sand or mud leads through tall, golden-brown grasses. The path curves towards the right and then straight ahead towards a wide, flat expanse that appears to be a beach or a coastal plain. In the distance, a range of mountains or hills is visible under a clear, bright blue sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Solway's attractions:

coast and countryside

Coast

- “juxtaposition between land and sea” (Fiske, 1989)
- Sunsets
 - Edges of sea, land and sky
 - Day and night
 - Power of natural forces
 - Romantic view (Turner)
- **nostalgia** (Jarratt 2013)

“... glorious sea views and sunsets fine enough to be recorded for posterity by Turner, the famous landscape artist” (Visit Cumbria, 2014)

these beautiful sunsets, wow, there is nothing like it, that view across the Criffel and a really lovely sunset, it's just amazing really.

... as the sun is going down and the sunsets over to the West, ... , when the tide is just on its way out and there's an expanse of sand. All of the tube worms are still under... and you just look across,

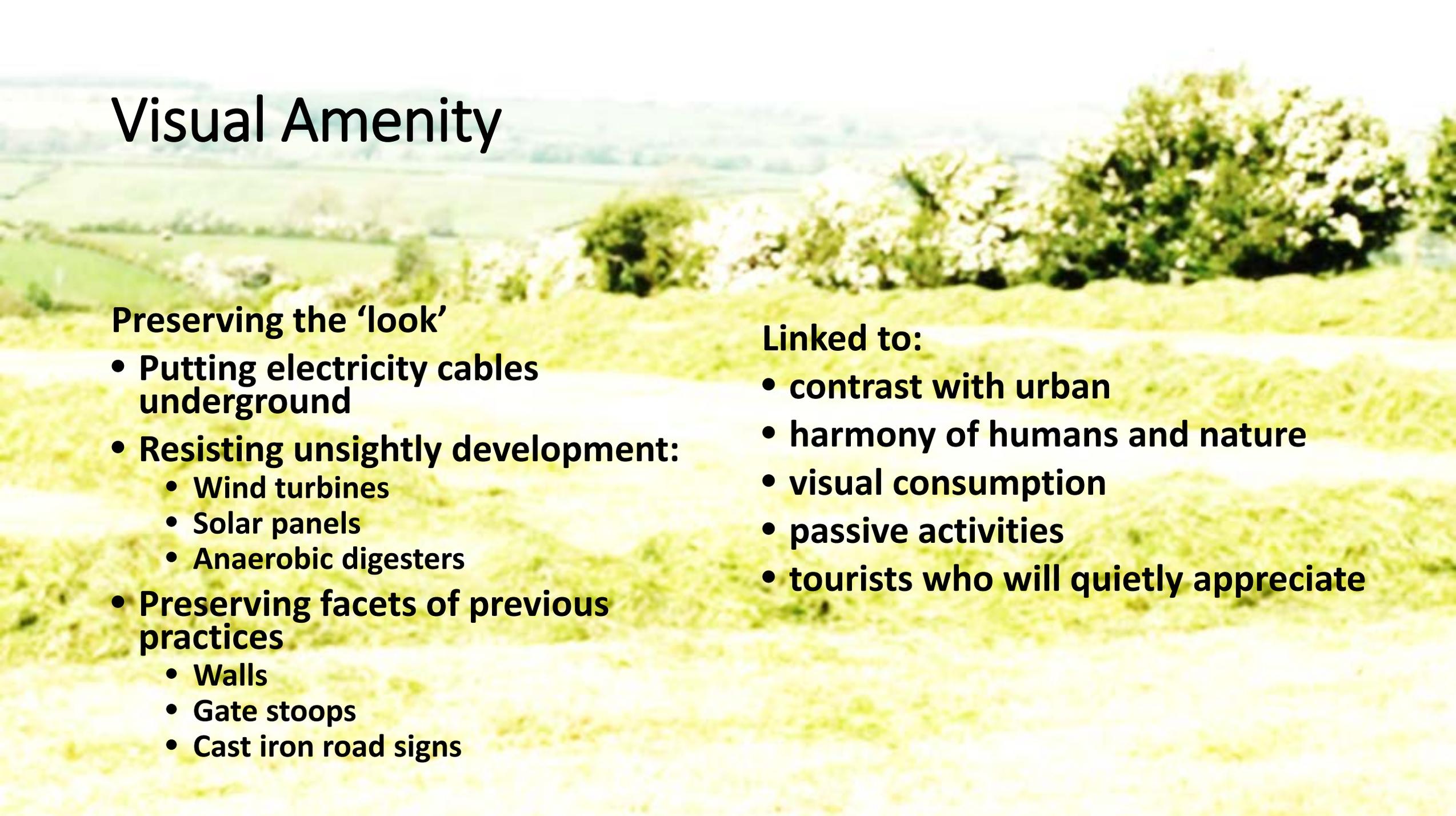
if you get down level, sitting on the edge of the Marsh you get these little spurts of water and it's absolutely amazing to watch and they're all just spurting out the salt water having fed and it's just, it always amazes me to watch that.



Countryside:

Three Interpretations

Visual Amenity

A scenic landscape with rolling green hills, a dirt road, and trees under a bright sky. The foreground is a grassy field with a dirt road leading into the distance. The background shows rolling hills and a clear sky.

Preserving the 'look'

- Putting electricity cables underground
- Resisting unsightly development:
 - Wind turbines
 - Solar panels
 - Anaerobic digesters
- Preserving facets of previous practices
 - Walls
 - Gate stoops
 - Cast iron road signs

Linked to:

- contrast with urban
- harmony of humans and nature
- visual consumption
- passive activities
- tourists who will quietly appreciate

Visual Amenity

A scenic landscape featuring rolling green hills in the foreground and middle ground. A line of trees, including some with white blossoms, runs across the middle ground. The background shows more distant hills under a bright, clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and visually appealing.

Tourism has got to fit in with, I suppose, bringing people to the landscape and understanding of the landscape and why it should be enhanced and enjoying the landscape that they are reading, whether it is: walking, cycling, birdwatching.

The sort of tourism people are going to get here is passive, it is not going to be skateboarding and things like that.

Habitat

Preserving nature and other species



Managing the land as a habitat

Sequestering carbon

**Linked to engaging and recruiting
future guardians, especially
children and young people**

Habitat



I certainly see the need for involving people and raising awareness of the importance of nature and wildlife. Until people take the problems on board, then they are not going to feel any empathy in helping us to protect wildlife. ... we are only going to protect them if we get other people feeling the same about them as we do.

Economic Asset

**Prioritises economic function
(eg employment)**

**Sees countryside as benefit to
humans (not stewardship)**

**Allows countryside to be
evaluated against other assets
Measuring the unmeasurable?**

More utilitarian view

**Local tourism only one
of possible employers**

Countryside as Economic Asset

The level of investment that West Cumbria would have to make a significant transformational change in the tourism sector, ... would cost more in terms of hotel developments

Tourism is probably a much more slower, incremental curve as to how we benefit from that and would happen probably much more organically then say how we can capitalise on the nuclear industry.

... we are looking at around an increase of about 3,000 jobs.

Reasons for wanting tourism

AONB

- Help the local economy
- Maintain interest in scenery
- Share the delights

Solway Wetlands Project

- Enhance local environment
- Encourage local pride
- Increase opportunities for local people

RSPB

- Maintain habitat and species
- Explain reasons for habitat preservation
- Recruit new guardians
- Sequester carbon

Britain's Energy Coast

- Jobs for whole area
- Keep landscape attractive

- Entrepreneurs

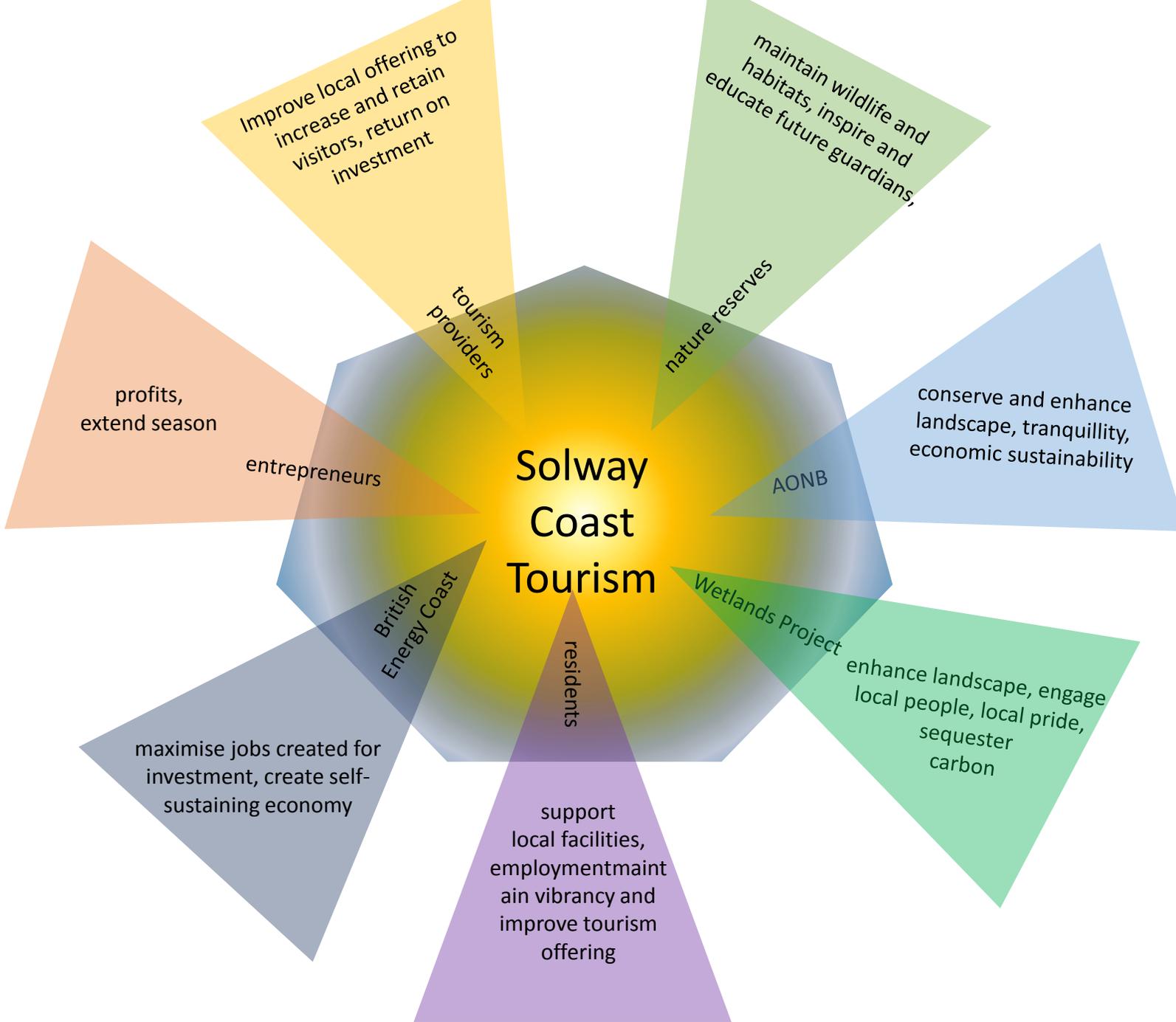
- Make more money
- Lengthen season

- Tourism Providers

- More attractive,
- more services,
- more tourists (new and repeat visitors)

- Residents

- Keep employment in area, esp for younger people
- Keep local services viable
- Maintain vibrancy



However:

Although there are good reasons to work together,
there are tensions:

- Collective action and entrepreneurship
- Conservation and tourism
- Political objectives
- Different areas in Borough
- Priorities

Evidence of disharmony

- *STAG (Silloth Tourism Action Group) members were not talking to AONB staff*
- *STAG feel it is very important to work with the Council, however, I have not witnessed much trust or harmony between the two.*
- *It would also be useful if more businesses got involved in sustaining tourism and if warring businesses could understand the benefits of working together for the benefit of the Town.*

The public sector is diminished and demoralised

- *I had an incredible network of senior officers across the county that I could draw on their expertise, get things done ... That is completely gone, my network has disappeared overnight through staff redundancies across the public sector. (3)*
- *It's a shame that the Hadrian's Wall people have run out of government funding, the second biggest attraction in the country and the Government has just said 'no'.*
- *I can remember when I used to take work home, work in the evenings or at weekends. I just don't do it now.... the passion is drained from you*

The tourist offer is reducing:

Allerdale Council have just cut the funding for the toilets in Bowness

Or not being improved:

We've got an indoor pool, we've got a farm, but it's not enough probably for like older teenagers

The lack of shops, pubs, things like that in the area. Some of them don't open on lunchtimes in the winter, some of them are only open at lunchtimes at weekends.

But

*We eat, we drink, we bathe, we walk, we sleep;
and then we eat and drink and bathe and walk
and sleep again. Only for variety's sake
sometimes we bathe before we walk, and
sometimes we walk before we bathe.*

(Silloth Gazette, 1860, cited in Walton, 1979, p. 205)

Conclusions

- Local tourism is constantly changing, redefining itself
- It is subject to a number of forces most of which it cannot control
- There are multiple reasons for wanting tourism in an area
- For it to thrive, some of those values need to be aligned to common goals

A sunset over a body of water with a large rock in the foreground. The sky is filled with vibrant orange, yellow, and red clouds, reflecting on the water's surface. A large, dark rock is visible in the lower-left foreground.

Thank you for listening

Any Questions?