

## THE IMPLICATIONS OF WORLD HERITAGE PROTECTION

### The Convention's requirements

- 1 By ratifying the World Heritage Convention, the United Kingdom has undertaken to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit to future generations places of outstanding universal value (World Heritage Convention, Article 4). Sites on the World Heritage List are recognised as being such places (Article 11,2). States Parties have to report on how they discharge their responsibilities (Article 29).
- 2 It is for each State Party to decide how it will implement the provisions of the Convention.
- 3 According to the Convention's Operational Guidelines (February 2005; available on [whc.unesco.org](http://whc.unesco.org)), the United Kingdom should report to the inter-governmental World Heritage Committee any proposed developments which will impact on the Site or when exceptional circumstances (such as natural disaster) occur (Operational Guidelines paras 169, 172).
- 4 The Operational Guidelines also require each World Heritage Site to have in place an appropriate management plan or other documented management system specifying how the outstanding universal value of the property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means (para 108). The Guidelines recognise that management systems will vary according to the characteristics and needs of each Site and according to different cultural perspectives (para 110). Effective management involves a cycle of long-term and day-to-day actions to protect, conserve and present the property.
- 5 The Guidelines (para 111) say that common elements of an effective management system should include:
  - (a) a thorough shared understanding of the property by all stakeholders;
  - (b) a cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback;
  - (c) the involvement of partners and stakeholders;
  - (d) the allocation of necessary resources;
  - (e) capacity-building; and
  - (f) an accountable, transparent description of how the management system functions

- 6 If a state party fails to protect the outstanding universal value of a World Heritage Site, the Committee can recommend that the state party should take necessary measures to deal with the situation, or to place the Site on the World Heritage in Danger List or, ultimately, to remove the Site altogether from the World Heritage List.

### **The UK Government position**

- 7 The only official guidance issued by the United Kingdom government on the management and protection of World Heritage Sites in England is contained in PPG15. This says:

*2.22 Details of World Heritage Sites in England are given in paragraph 6.35. No additional statutory controls follow from the inclusion of a site in the World Heritage list. Inclusion does, however, highlight the outstanding international importance of the site as a key material consideration to be taken into account by local planning authorities in determining planning and listed building consent applications, and by the Secretary of State in determining cases on appeal or following call-in.*

*2.23 Each local authority concerned, taking account of World Heritage Site designation and other relevant statutory designations, should formulate specific planning policies for protecting these sites and include these policies in their development plans. Policies should reflect the fact that all these sites have been designated for their outstanding universal value, and they should place great weight on the need to protect them for the benefit of future generations as well as our own. Development proposals affecting these sites or their setting may be compatible with this objective, but should always be carefully scrutinised for their likely effect on the site or its setting in the longer term. Significant development proposals affecting World Heritage Sites will generally require formal environmental assessment, to ensure that their immediate impact and their implications for the longer term are fully evaluated (see paragraph 2.13 above).*

*6.35 The World Heritage Convention (adopted by UNESCO in 1972) was ratified by the United Kingdom in 1984. The Convention provides for the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value, and requires a World Heritage List to be established under the management of an inter-governmental World Heritage Committee, which is advised by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Individual governments are responsible for the nomination of sites, and for ensuring the protection of sites which are inscribed in the List.*

*There are, at present, ten World Heritage Sites in England:*

.....

**6.36** *Full details of the operation of the World Heritage Convention, including the selection criteria for cultural and natural sites, are contained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.*

**6.37** *The significance of World Heritage designation for local authorities' exercise of planning controls is set out in section 2 (paragraphs 2.22-2.23). Local planning authorities are also encouraged to work with owners and managers of World Heritage Sites in their areas, and with other agencies, to ensure that comprehensive management plans are in place. These plans should:*

- appraise the significance and condition of the site;*
- ensure the physical conservation of the site to the highest standards;*
- protect the site and its setting from damaging development;*
- provide clear policies for tourism as it may affect the site.*

*ICOMOS can provide advice and assistance in carrying forward this work.*

- 8 World Heritage Site Management Plans in the UK are not statutory but depend for their effectiveness on consensus and the commitment of key stakeholders. Broadly the existing UK World Heritage Site Management Plans follow the Operational Guidelines requirements summarised above (para 5). It is unlikely that the existing controls for World Heritage Sites would in practice be more onerous than those already applying in a National Park

### **The Implications of the Heritage Protection Review**

- 9 The Government is revising the system of heritage protection. It is intended to combine the existing designations into one unified register of historic assets though different levels of protection will apply to different types of asset within that register. World Heritage Sites will for the first time be given statutory recognition by inclusion in this new register. The implications of including World Heritage Sites in the new unified designation system have still to be fully worked out.
- 10 The Government have said that current levels of protection must be maintained in the new system. They have also said they do not seek to

increase the levels of protection for assets (such as registered parks, gardens, and battlefields, and World Heritage Sites) currently dealt with as material considerations within the mainstream planning system. We will gain a clearer idea of exactly what is intended for them when the White Paper is published next spring.

- 11 The new heritage protection system will also include provision for statutory management agreements for which World Heritage Site Management Plans could provide one model.

### **Buffer Zones**

- 12 The Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Committee recommend that an adequate buffer zone should be provided wherever necessary for the proper conservation of a World Heritage Site. The buffer zone is seen as an area surrounding the World Heritage Site which gives an additional layer of protection to the property. The Guidelines recommend that it should include the immediate setting of the Site, important views and other areas or attributes functionally important as a support to the Site and its protection.
- 13 In England, buffer zones have only been effective when policies to protect them have been included in the development plans of the relevant local authorities. Again it seems unlikely that the practical effects of a buffer zone would be more onerous than the controls already existing for the National Park.
- 14 We do not know yet the implications of the Heritage Protection Review for buffer zones.

**Dr Christopher Young**  
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**English Heritage**

October 2005

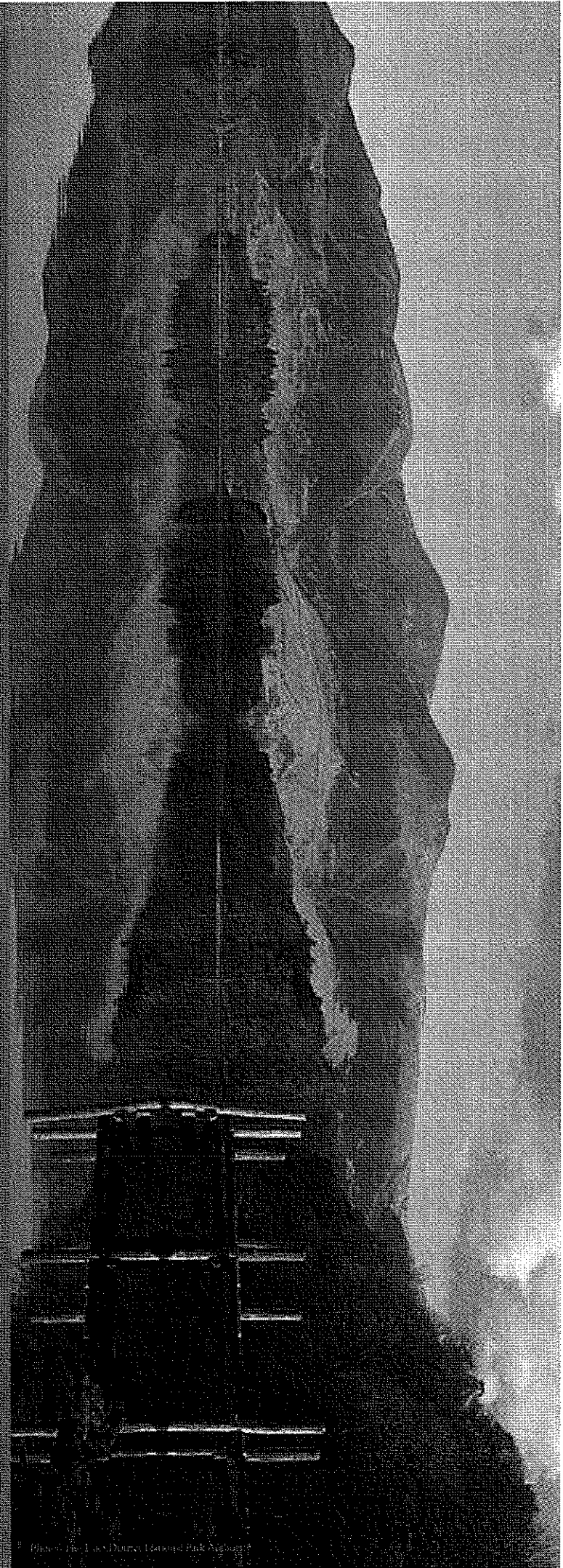


Photo: The Lake District National Park Authority

The Lake District "a blended loveliness of earth and sky"

William Wordsworth

# TOWARDS WORLD HERITAGE

DECEMBER 2015

Appendix 2



Photo: Ian Brodie, Friends of the Lake District

Shaped by the Ice Age more than 1 million years ago  
Inhabited for over 12,000 years  
885 square miles of national park  
1,744 listed buildings  
275 ancient monuments  
21 conservation areas  
132 sites of special scientific interest  
12 million visitors each year  
42,000 residents  
**One world-class cultural landscape**

This paper is concerned with the notion of World Heritage Site inscription for the Lake District. The aim here is to summarise the debate so far and describe the potential benefits, opportunities and value of achieving World Heritage Site inscription.

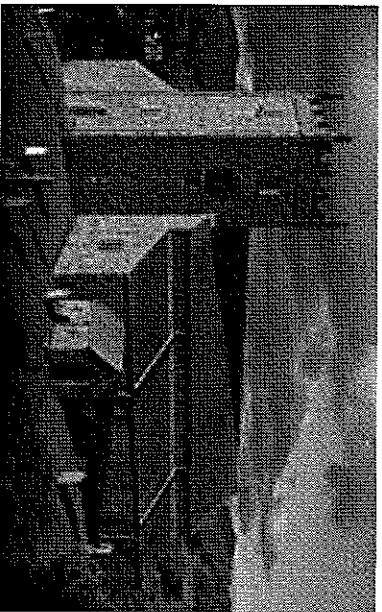


Photo: Ian Brodie, Friends of the Lake District

*Achieving World Heritage Site inscription is a prestigious honour in a world of such stunning heritage assets.*

## Heritage

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations. It encompasses the landscape, the built environment, our cultural and artistic endeavours, the irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

World Heritage embodies the notion of 'universal value', with heritage as an asset that belongs to the people of the world, transcending political and geographical boundaries. The protection, conservation and management of our heritage are a vital part of celebrating what it is to be human. In the case of World Heritage it is the observation of human endeavour and nature at its most unique, thrilling and epic.

## World Heritage Site Inscription

World Heritage Site status recognises that the most cherished heritage assets are irreplaceable. They are of such outstanding universal value, that their existence is more than part of our history; it is part of our identity.

As the name suggests, World Heritage inscription is first and foremost a global seal of approval, acknowledgement that a site has reached a status deemed to be of global significance. Such sites are inscribed on their merits by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre as the best possible examples of built, natural or cultural heritage. Of the 812 World Heritage Sites on the list, the UK has 26, with Liverpool's – 'Maritime Mercantile City' being the most recent addition in 2004.

Other sites include the Great Barrier Reef, The Great Wall of China, the Pyramid Fields of Egypt, the Taji Mahal and Stonehenge. Achieving World Heritage Site inscription is a prestigious honour in a world of such stunning heritage assets.

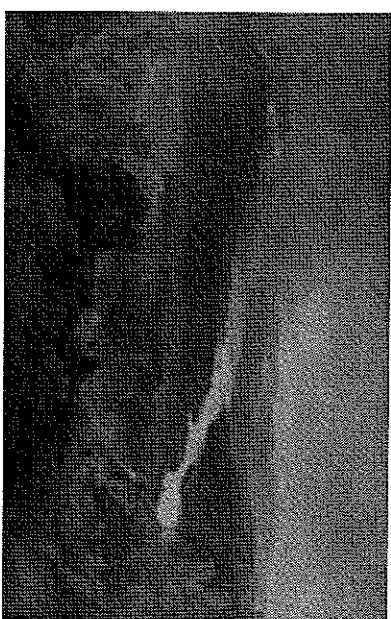
## The Lake District as Cultural Landscape

In 1992 the World Heritage Committee recognised 'cultural landscape' as a category within the convention's guidelines. This new category, established in direct response to the Lake District's previous submissions for World Heritage inscription in the 1980s, aims to "reveal and sustain the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment, to protect living traditions and preserve traces of those which have disappeared" (World Heritage Centre).

The Lake District is in many ways the epitome of a cultural landscape, an expression of the interplay of humanity and nature at its most triumphant. The category of 'cultural landscape' perfectly characterises the Lake District, whose historic landscape and cultural stature are a result of the inter-actions between social, economic, cultural and environmental elements.

The combination of epic landscape, dramatic geology, rich archaeology and tranquil lakes created a magnetism for cultural expression that led to writers, painters and intellectuals forming an almost spiritual bond with the a landscape they grew to adore.

*“Bewitching” and “spiritual” are adjectives reserved for landscapes as awe inspiring as the Lake District, a place that has for over 300 years touched the heart and soul of millions of visitors, artists, poets, writers and those who seek to find a sense of escape and inspiration.*



Wordsworth Trust

The area is an intoxicating mix of vibrant visitor destination and cultural attraction. “Bewitching” and “spiritual” are adjectives reserved for landscapes as awe inspiring as the Lake District, a place that touches the heart and soul of millions of visitors, artists, poets, writers and those who seek to find a sense of escape and inspiration.

As England’s largest and most visited National Park, the Lake District is already one of the nation’s national treasures. The expansive waterways, glacial valleys and chiselled peaks are overlain with the remains of a long and distinctive history of human settlement, which epitomises the cultural connection between people and places.

Archaeological sites, historic buildings and ancient and designed landscape features combine in the Lake District to form a rich and distinctive history, spanning at least 12,000 years.

There is evidence of Neolithic stone circles, Bronze Age settlements on the lower fells and medieval remains of the iron industry. Agriculture too, has left its indelible mark, with a legacy of distinctive, thirteenth century, stone-walled field patterns. From the seventeenth century there are numerous

heritage farmhouse and barn buildings, while the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to the development of country houses and Victorian hotels and mansions.

But what is so unique is how the Lake District for 300 years or more has been the life-force for artistic and intellectual movements that continue to resonate beyond the UK, to Europe and across the world.

The full breadth of cultural significance that the Lake District landscape engenders is too numerous to be captured here, but of most significance is the blossoming of the Picturesque and Romantic movements, which became synonymous with the area.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, increasing numbers of artists were attracted to the Lake District as a landscape comparable in status and beauty to that seen on the European Grand Tour. The Lake District was seen to embody the essential elements of the Picturesque and the Sublime, an approach to defining and viewing different types of landscape. Some of the greatest English artists were inspired by the landscape’s combination of ‘beauty, horror and immensity’ and paintings by Turner, Constable and Thomas Gainsborough have immortalised

the Lake District through their picturesque interpretation of the landscape. Writers of the Romantic period (1780 to 1830) were influenced by theories of the Picturesque and the Sublime, and viewed the Lake District landscape as an embodiment of the Romantic idea of man and nature bonded in total harmony.

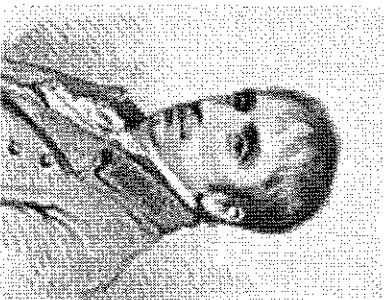
Romantic poetry is said to have begun in 1798 with the publication of ‘Lyrical Ballads’, a collection of poems by the English poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge who lived most of their lives in the Lake District. As the guiding light in the Romantic movement in English poetry, Wordsworth was instrumental in articulating the mystical correspondence between man and nature, with the Lake District as its apotheosis.

It was, for them, their life-blood and along with Robert Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge became known as the Lake Poets. Other writers such as Thomas Gray, John Keats, John Ruskin, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Alfred Lord Tennyson were also strongly associated with the Lake District.





Brantwood Trust



John Ruskin (left) and William Wordsworth

*On the world stage, arguably the most widely known of the Lake District's literary talents is Beatrix Potter whose love of the area not only created a literary legacy but also an environmental legacy when her land and property assets were bequeathed to the National Trust.*

John Ruskin (1819 – 1900) was a key figure and one of the greatest Victorians. Ruskin's intellect was immense and his achievements span across disciplines from the artistic and literary to the religious and philosophical. He was also one of the earliest conservationists, inspiring the founding of the National Trust, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Labour Movement. Ruskin's work influenced the thinking of Ghandi, Tolstoy and Proust and his advocacy of the Romantic movement and Wordsworth helped shape the cultural landscape of the Lake District.

On the world stage, arguably the most widely known of the Lake District's literary talents is Beatrix Potter whose love of the area not only created a literary legacy but also an environmental legacy when her land and property assets were bequeathed to the National Trust.

In 1905, Beatrix used her publishing earnings to buy Hill Top farm and her acquisition of property and land continued with her growing success and wealth. Beatrix was a passionate conservationist and as a farmer she became best known for the breeding of Herdwick sheep, Lakeland's own breed. When she died in 1943, aged 77, Beatrix Potter had written 27 books and left £211,636, 14 farms and 4000 acres of land to the National Trust, together with her flocks of sheep.

The Lake District's history is also inextricably linked to the conception of the conservation movement, more specifically the establishment of the National Trust and the UK National Parks model.

The National Trust is now the largest conservation body in Europe and during its 110 years has influenced the conservation movement of a host of countries in Europe as well as those in Australia, Malaysia, Malta, Barbados, Canada and New Zealand, to name but a few.

The UK National Parks movement also has its origins in the Lake District, with the notion of a park for the people being first described by William Wordsworth in 1810 when he referred to the Lake District as “a sort of national property in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy.” This concern for environmental conservation manifested itself again in the 1936 agreement between the Forestry Commission and the Friends of the Lake District. The Lake District National Park was established in 1951 and since then, the area has played a pioneering and influential role in developing international models of park management that include and involve local communities and recognise social and economic imperatives, along with the protection of natural assets.

In short, The Lake District triggered both an artistic temperament and a management ideal – that our environment should be shared, cared for and cherished for future generations to enjoy. This is as fundamental today as at any time in history and underlines the Lake District's role as a catalyst for a way of thinking about the value of the environment and landscape. This growing awareness of man's relationship with and connection to landscape and local communities are today recognised as an embryonic form of sustainable development.

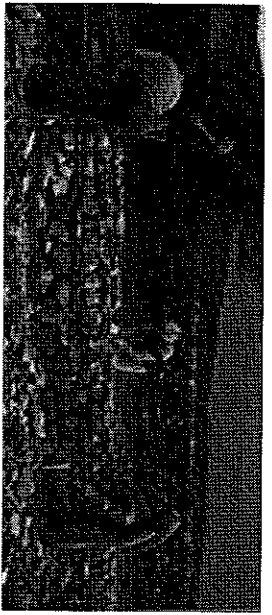


Photo: Friends of the Lake District

*For the Lake District, World Heritage Site inscription is an opportunity to re-position one of Britain's most cherished landscapes on the global stage, to join a prestigious list of the very best of the world's heritage assets.*

**What are the benefits of World Heritage status?**

From wild fell tops and rugged peaks to tranquil farns and lakes, the Lake District already commands international attention – World Heritage Site status can only strengthen this further.

For the Lake District, World Heritage Site inscription is an opportunity to position one of Britain's most cherished landscapes on the global stage, to join a prestigious list of the very best of the world's heritage assets.

World Heritage status will develop international understanding and acknowledgement for the Lake District's cultural heritage, boosting its image and appeal throughout the world. This wider recognition could also be used to help unlock new funding opportunities of heritage-focused projects both within the World Heritage Site and, by close association, throughout Cumbria.

**New visitor appeal**

World Heritage Site inscription, if marketed and managed successfully, can bring global attention and new audiences to an area. International visitors, heritage specialists, cultural tourists, eco-tourism, poets and artists would all see the Lake District afresh as a 'must visit' destination.

New types of visitors bring their own demands on the landscape but they also bring new wealth and spending patterns. The 'cultural visitor' market is an opportunity to expand the out-of-season tourism offer and capitalise on the international appeal of the Lake District's poets, artists and writers. Currently, the most commonly cited reason to visit the Lake District is walking, with other forms of recreation following close behind. The World Heritage 'Cultural Landscape' brand is an opportunity to develop new visitor experiences, extending the product offer and bringing new wealth to the area.

World Heritage inscription would be a natural extension of the democratisation of the Lake District that began over 300 years ago with the arrival of the first landscape tourists to the area. It continues the grand tradition of the area as a place for people – this time from all corners of the globe.

**Image and pride**

World Heritage Inscription also matters to the Northwest as a region. Inscription for the Lake District would contribute to the image transformation of the region, providing further evidence that the Northwest offers a high quality national and international visitor destination and cultural experience.

For this reason, the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) will continue to work with the Lake District World Heritage Site Group to advocate that any WHS designation is pursued only where it has true cultural landscape significance and helps positively address the issues faced in the communities and economy of the Lake District. NWDA's position is set out in more detail in its Lake District Economic Futures Study Policy Statement.

It is an opportunity to heighten awareness of Cumbria, both its assets and challenges, with key decision-makers at both a national and international level. This new awareness is an important step towards greater influence over key issues that could affect future developments in the area.

Locally, World Heritage status is a new tool to capture the imagination of the public and boost the ambitions of the many partners working to protect and enhance the Lake District. World Heritage Site inscription is an opportunity to bind together all those living and working in the county under a shared vision; re-igniting a sense of shared civic pride and responsibility.

*World Heritage Site status will serve to reinforce and strengthen this existing framework rather than add a further layer of planning control.*

#### Future development

World Heritage Site inscription need not inhibit or curtail growth. There is no existing legislation in the UK to regulate World Heritage Sites as the necessary powers to sustain them are contained within current planning legislation.

World Heritage Site inscription is already a planning consideration and National Park designation along with the existence of the National Park Management Plan provide a level of protection appropriate to sustain the proposed World Heritage Site. World Heritage Site status will serve to reinforce and strengthen this existing framework rather than add a further layer of planning control.

Inscription does provide a major opportunity and a process to reassess priorities for the area's future and, if required, develop a more holistic management approach embracing environmental, social and economic dimensions, underpinned by a shared view on the value of the cultural landscape.

The benefits World Heritage Site status can bring to the communities, the economy and environment of the Lake District and to Cumbria as a whole are many and varied. **That said, these benefits are not set in stone or inevitable. Like any accolade it is what you make of it that counts.** The benefits differ for each of the 812 sites currently on the World Heritage registry, with some sites taking a more proactive approach to maximising the opportunities than others.

World Heritage Sites are not 'museum' communities, trapped in time, but living, breathing and evolving places, with buoyant economies and dynamic environments. World Heritage status does not equate to halting development, rather it is means of focusing attention on protecting and enhancing the assets the Lake District has for maximum social, economic and environmental benefit.

In short, WHS status could be used as a tool to attract new visitors, new investment and a new sense of purpose to The Lake District National Park. It is a means of bringing partners together to re-energise the park's image, its tourism offer and its economic development. What's more, in terms of added security World Heritage Site status could provide added 'insurance' for the area in the long-term.



Photo: Ian Brodie, Friends of the Lake District



Photo: The Lake District National Park Authority

*The notion of World Heritage inscription already has the support of many key stakeholders in the area, but understandably there are challenges to be resolved as the process moves forward.*

#### Towards World Heritage

The Lake District is renowned as a high quality environment that combines conservation and protection of landscape and heritage assets with a modern approach to land management, and a significant visitor industry. World Heritage Site inscription is a major opportunity to champion the Lake District's assets and generate benefits for all by placing the area at the forefront of internationally recognised destinations.

Many of the key stakeholders in the Lake District have already invested in the process of World Heritage Site inscription. Two previous bids were deferred in 1986 and 1989, which culminated in a review of the inscription criteria in 1993 and the creation of a new category of site – Cultural Landscape.

An initial steering group has been meeting and progressing the intelligence-base required for a third application for some three years. Two reports have been commissioned to assess the potential for a World Heritage Site: 'The Study of Cultural Landscape Significance' 2002 and 'An Objective Appraisal of the Impact of WHS Inscription of the Lake District' 2004.

A detailed mapping exercise has been undertaken using Geographical Information System (GIS) data sets. Considerable staff time and resources have already been invested in bringing the partnership together and working towards a third bid for World Heritage inscription.

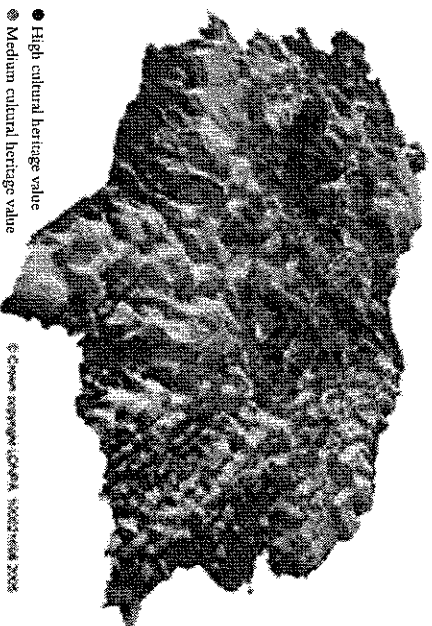
Extensive work carried out by the Lake District World Heritage Site Steering Group has established that a robust case can be made

for inscription in line with the World Heritage Committee's criteria for Cultural Landscape. The intelligence-base for this assessment has been further boosted by a Technical Working Group which has identified a potential World Heritage Site boundary and buffer zone both lying within the National Park boundary, using a programme of (GIS) modelling.

Despite this, the work required to 'make the case' for World Heritage Site inscription is far from over, but the groundwork and intellectual rigour are being taken forward to make a strong and compelling bid.

#### Cultural Heritage Map – Work in Progress

*Indicative map of cultural heritage depth throughout the Lake District.*



- High cultural heritage value
- Medium cultural heritage value
- Low cultural heritage value

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## Support for World Heritage

The notion of World Heritage inscription already has the support of many key stakeholders in the area, but understandably there are challenges to be resolved as the process moves forward.

Despite the potential benefits, there remain concerns amongst local stakeholders and organisations within Cumbria that World Heritage may fail to deliver tangible benefits to the area. These concerns appear to stem mainly from fears over increased bureaucracy, increased regulation or doubts that WHS inscription will address wider social and economic issues in Cumbria.

It is clear that World Heritage is not a panacea for an area's economic or social ills; it is, however, an opportunity to join an exclusive global community that is taking positive steps to manage and maintain the very best of our planet's cultural landscape assets. If managed appropriately, **inscription would not create barriers or blocks to further development or progress; indeed it should provide a catalyst for economic growth.**

World Heritage status would not supplant other efforts to regenerate or improve Cumbria; it is an additional tool to enhance and re-energise those efforts.

At a more local level, the advantages are there to be built upon and exploited. From hotels, guest houses and the leisure industry to local food suppliers, manufacturers and retailers, World Heritage inscription would provide a new and exclusive key selling point; a valuable asset in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

As the jewel of Cumbria, the Lake District already has the market potential to support the revival of Cumbria as a whole. World Heritage status can also become an income generator in its own right, as illustrated in Liverpool (inscribed in 2004) where the work of the project officer helped to draw in £4.5 million of public subsidy, which has been more than matched by the private sector.

If embraced with conviction and energy, World Heritage status could provide a powerful catalyst for change, an opportunity to determine the future of the Lake District and to set a new benchmark that sees the area's management as a genuine fusion between conservation and sustainable economic progress. The Lake District as a living embodiment of an environmental economy – a new heritage for future generations.

## What happens next

The World Heritage Site inscription process is detailed and extensive, taking some years to achieve. The timetable includes the development of a co-ordinating partnership, the drafting of a statement of significance, management plan and inscription document, a period of wide ranging consultation, followed by the submission and evaluation of the nomination itself.

The immediate step is to develop an active partnership to take the bid forward. This partnership will be responsible for putting the case to Government through a submission to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The final decision on the nomination rests with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee and their chosen advisory bodies.

There is no guarantee that the bid, if submitted, would be successful. What is clear is that the Lake District is an iconic cultural landscape which combines spectacular natural features with the unique heritage of human settlement. Sharing these assets within a global community under the auspices of World Heritage is the natural place for such wonders to be found.

## For further information

For further information or to comment on this paper please contact in the first instance:

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The Lake District and World Heritage Site Inscription  
**Questions and Answers**

**What is World Heritage Site Status?**

World Heritage Sites form an international register of sites that have great natural or cultural value. Some sites are listed because of their spectacular or unique scenery, others because of their importance as part of humanity's cultural heritage. Some areas possess both natural and cultural importance.

The World Heritage List was established at a General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1972. The aim is to protect, conserve, and transmit the cultural and natural heritage to future generations. The list includes monuments, buildings, and cultural and natural sites. Sites are included if they are judged to have outstanding universal value from a historic, artistic, or scientific viewpoint.

**How does a World Heritage Site differ from a national heritage site?**

World heritage is our shared heritage; it is by definition considered irreplaceable. It refers to a country's or area's history and historical buildings and sites that are considered to be of importance and value to present and future generations.

What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application; sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.

It is the term 'outstanding universal value', which signifies the difference between a national heritage site and a World Heritage Site. World Heritage is considered to be the very best possible examples of cultural and natural heritage.

**Where did the idea of preserving World Heritage come from?**

The idea of creating an international movement for protecting heritage developed from two separate movements: the first focusing on the protection of cultural sites, and the other dealing with the conservation of nature.

The catalyst for the merging of these two movements was the decision to build the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, which would have flooded the valley containing the Abu Simbel temples, a treasure of ancient Egypt. Following an appeal from the governments of Egypt and Sudan, UNESCO launched an international safeguarding campaign in 1959. Archaeological research was accelerated in the areas to be flooded, resulting in the Abu Simbel and Philae temples being dismantled, moved to dry ground and reassembled.

Some 50 countries contributed to the costs of this enormous effort, illustrating the value of solidarity and shared responsibility for protecting global heritage assets. Its success led to other safeguarding campaigns across the world and to the preparation of a draft Convention on the protection of cultural heritage. By regarding heritage as both cultural and natural, this Convention is a reminder of the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

World Heritage Sites are irreplaceable source of inspiration, considered to have a value that demands a collective responsibility. This shared responsibility is expressed through the World Heritage Convention, an international agreement that aims to secure the necessary financial and intellectual resources to protect World Heritage sites.

**How many World Heritage sites are there worldwide?**

The World Heritage list currently contains 812 sites which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value. These include 628 cultural, 160 natural and 24 mixed properties. Places as diverse as the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef, the Taji Mahal, Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall.

**How many sites are there in the UK?**

The UK has 26 World Heritage Sites, with Liverpool's – Maritime Mercantile City' being the most recent addition in 2004. Twenty one sites are designated Cultural sites, including, Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey, and St Martin's Church (1988), the City of Bath (1987), Ironbridge Gorge (1986), Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (2003), Saltaire (2001) and the Tower of London (1988). One site is designated as Mixed, while the remaining four are designated as Natural sites, including the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast (1986) and Henderson Island (1988).

In the UK, only Blakenonon Industrial Landscape (designated in 2000) is designated under the Cultural Landscape criteria for World Heritage Site status.

***Why is World Heritage Site status relevant to the Lake District?***

The quality and importance of the landscape and the cultural heritage of the Lake District make it a potential World Heritage Site. The area submitted bids in 1986 and 1989 and on both occasions the application was deferred. The bids didn't fail but the criteria which were used to assess World Heritage Site proposals at that time didn't accommodate the Lake District's submission. As a direct result of this, a new category was established in 1992 which is ideally suited to the Lake District (see below).

A number of organisations in the Lake District re-examined the case for WHS inscription in 1999 when the Lake District was placed on the UK Government's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites and came to the conclusion that it offered many potential benefits. The benefits would include a supportive framework for sustainable development, better landscape management and protection, increased profile for the Lake District and a stronger local partnership.

If anything, the relevance and potential benefit of WHS inscription has increased since 1999 with increasing pressure on upland farming and social and economic pressures within Cumbria.

***What is a World Heritage Site 'Cultural Landscape'?***

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) encourage the identification, protection and conservation of both cultural and natural heritage considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

The Lake District bids for WHS inscription in the 1980s led directly in 1992 to the establishment of a new category of WHS called Cultural Landscape.

The Cultural Landscape category considers the interchange between human activity and the landscape and incorporates recognition for landscapes that are associated with cultural traditions, ideas and beliefs of an artistic or literary kind.

***What qualifies the Lake District as a 'Cultural Landscape'?***

The landscape history of the Lake District is inextricably linked to a range of cultural, literary and artistic movements, along with a strong association with the birth of the conservation movement in the UK and internationally. These factors, combined with the stunning landscape quality and the heritage-rich assets of the Lake District amount to an outstanding Cultural Landscape.

The Lake District has a long history of human settlement beginning with hunter-gathers at the end of the last Ice Age (c. 12,000 BC). There remains a legacy of prehistoric settlements, Roman forts, medieval abbeys, industrial and agricultural remains and settlements that shapes the unique character of the area. This 'historic environment' combines in the Lake District with spectacular natural features to form a rich, distinctive and highly significant landscape.

The Lake District landscape has also inspired generations of painters, poets and writers and has played a crucial role in the development of the internationally significant Picturesque and Romantic movements. What's more, the Lake District has provided the impetus for the genesis of the conservation movement, with the formation of the National Trust and UK National Parks movement.

These factors in combination rank the Lake District as internationally significant. There is no guarantee that the Lake District would succeed in gaining World Heritage Site inscription but the evidence-base is strong and is continuing to develop.



***What are the potential benefits of WHS inscription?***

The benefits of World Heritage Site inscription are different for each country and each location. The benefits for the Iguaçu National Park in Brazil are inevitably going to differ from the benefits experienced by Liverpool in Northwest England.

World Heritage Site inscription is a prestigious accolade but the benefits in terms of funding, image enhancement, tourism, education and economic growth are dependent on a host of locally determined factors.

World Heritage Site status for the Lake District has the potential to bring significant benefits to the area and to Cumbria as a whole. The extent of these benefits will depend on local support, the scale of the vision and the enthusiasm of the many communities and stakeholders who care deeply about the Lake District and its future.

At this stage there can be no certainties, but the obligations that central government would have for the protection and support of a Lake District WHS may prove to be of crucial importance in the future. At the very least this could result in a heightened profile for the Lake District and the benefits might extend to assistance with agricultural subsidies and support through the economic development agencies. This has certainly been the case with other World Heritage Sites in the UK.

Other benefits could include international recognition of the value of the Lake District, further protection of the landscape from inappropriate developments, increased opportunities to attract a new type of visitor to the area, new international funding opportunities, new public/private partnerships, a broadening of the tourism offer and a boost to the rural regeneration of Cumbria.

***What will World Heritage for the Lake District mean for the rest of Cumbria?***

World Heritage Site Status is an opportunity to increase the profile and image of Cumbria and build a destination brand that is of international stature. This will require partnership working, including engagement with central and regional government, and a carefully considered marketing effort.

Cumbria has a great deal to offer beyond the Lake District, including the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, and it is vital that the economic benefits experienced within the Lakes World Heritage Site extend well beyond the geographical boundary of the area. This may involve the development of gateways to the Lakes World Heritage Site and would provide a valuable tool for attracting inward investment.

***How do you achieve World Heritage Site status?***

Only countries that have signed the World Heritage Convention, a commitment to protecting their natural and cultural heritage, can submit nomination proposals for properties on their territory to be considered for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Nationally, a country must make an 'inventory' of the important natural and cultural heritage sites located within its boundaries. This 'inventory' is known as the Tentative List, and provides a forecast of the properties that a State Party may decide to submit for inscription in the next five to ten years and which may be updated at any time. The Lake District is currently on this list.

For a World Heritage Site bid to be successful it requires local, regional, national and international support and there are a number of steps to go through before this is achieved.

Already, a substantial amount of work has been undertaken to assess the potential, benefits and value of World Heritage Site status for the Lakes.

Once the UK submits a nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the submission is reviewed and the relevant advisory body is advised to carry out an evaluation. The final decision rests with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

***What are the obligations of World Heritage inscription on central Government and Cumbria?***

By joining the World Heritage Convention, nation states are pledged to care for the World Heritage Sites in their territory as part of protecting their national heritage. Inscription of the Lake District as a World Heritage may therefore have far-reaching implications in terms of government support for the area. The obligations on Cumbria would be defined and agreed partly through the World Heritage Site Management Plan process and partly through the inclusion of appropriate policies in Local Development Frameworks (LDF). However World Heritage Site Inscription does not bring any planning constraints over and above those already put in place for the National Park.

Appropriate policies will deal with a wide range of issues including landscape and environmental protection, access and interpretation, transport, economic development and the social well being of local communities.

***Can World Heritage Site inscription be revoked?***

UNESCO can remove a site from the World Heritage List if the universal value of the site is damaged or degraded.

***Who has been involved in the Lake District World Heritage bid so far?***

A broad range of local, regional and national organisations have already considered the opportunities for taking forward the Lake District's World Heritage Site proposal.

The Steering Group currently includes representatives of the Northwest Regional Development Agency, LEADER Plus, Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, the Forestry Commission, the Lake District National Park Authority, the National Trust, Rural Development Service, Government Office Northwest, United Utilities, NFU, and ICOMOS-UK.

If the process is to develop, there will need to be extensive local consultation and engagement and additional organisations will be encouraged to take part.

World Heritage Site status presents a plethora of new opportunities for the area. It is an opportunity for organisations to unite behind a new shared vision for the future of the Lake District. This new vision will capture the imagination of local people, visitors to the area, the international cultural and conservation communities and the many organisations working to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape, its economic prosperity and the well-being of local people.

***What is the NWDA's position with reference to a potential Lake District World Heritage Site?***

NWDA will continue to work with the Lake District World Heritage Site Group to advocate that any WHS designation is pursued only where it has true cultural landscape significance and helps positively address the issues faced in the communities and economy of the Lake District. NWDA's position is set out in more detail in its Lake District Economic Futures Study Policy Statement.

***What is the Lake District National Park Authority's position?***

The Lake District National Park Authority is currently committed to renewing its vision as well as the vision for the National Park. It will also bring forward a review of the National Park Management Plan if necessary. The Authority is also due to begin development of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the National Park. We therefore have a unique opportunity to develop a suite of aligned plans for the Lake District including a World Heritage Site management plan. All these will require wide and detailed engagement with partner organisations and the local community and it is likely that much of this can cover several of the plans at the same time.

***Where is the boundary for the Lake District World Heritage Site?***

A mapping exercise is underway which will help determine the most appropriate boundary for the World Heritage Site. It is common practice to also define a 'buffer zone', which provides a protective area around the main site.

This initial mapping exercise has identified a potential World Heritage Site boundary and buffer zone within the Lake District National Park area. The final agreement regarding the definitive site will require further detailed work.

**Will World Heritage Site status hinder economic development, regeneration or planning?**

World Heritage Sites are not 'museum' landscapes forever trapped in time. The Lake District will continue to develop as land uses change and as a result of existing and new planning and regeneration initiatives. This activity will not stop as a result of World Heritage Site inscription.

There are no extra legislative regulations attached to World Heritage Sites.

**What are the next steps?**

The next steps are to implement extensive local consultation and to develop an active partnership to take the bid forward. This partnership will be responsible for putting the case to Government and working to develop the various aspects of the proposal over the next two to three years. The partnership must have the full backing of the local community in the Lake District and support and participation from key organisations across a range of sectors.

The partnership will decide on the details of leadership and management of the bid process.

**How much does it cost to submit a proposal for World Heritage Site status?**

A great deal of time and effort has already been invested in the process of taking forward the World Heritage Site proposal.

A bid will take two to three years and the experience of other World Heritage sites indicates that a budget of approximately £350,000 will be required to prepare the bid and co-ordinate the process. The funding for this is likely to be found from a combination of local, regional and national sources.

**For further information**

You may well have questions about World Heritage Site status and the Lake District which are not covered here. For further information or to comment on this paper please contact:

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Once submitted, the final decision rests with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and their chosen advisory bodies.