THIS LAND: THE AVEBURY WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN ITS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

PROCEEDINGS OF AN AVEBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH GROUP SYMPOSIUM, DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE.

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1. Preface, 2026

Amanda Chadburn

In 1995, the Avebury Archaeological and Historical Research Group (AAHRG) – not long established – organised a day-long symposium in Devizes, Wiltshire about Avebury and World Heritage management. A number of eminent speakers attended, and they later submitted papers in 1997 to be published in a proceedings volume. This was to have been edited by Gill Swanton and myself, as co-organisers of the symposium and co-chairs of AAHRG. Unfortunately, this never happened although some preliminary editing work was done in 1998.

In the thirty-plus years that have passed since that symposium, much has happened, but these papers are still worthy of publication, not least as a moment in time recording the earliest stages of World Heritage Site (WHS) management in the UK. I was fascinated reading them in 2026. I would also like to gratefully acknowledge the speakers at the 1995 conference and the contributors to this volume who included archaeologists, planners, heritage professionals and conservation experts.

I would like to dedicate this volume to my friend, the late Gill Swanton, who did so much for the Avebury WHS. The volume title is as I remember it from her. However, I have made one change from the original *This Land: the Avebury World Heritage Site in its national and international setting.* These days, “setting” has a tighter meaning and so I have changed that word to “context”.

The contents of the volume are varied and rich. After an introduction by the then Chief Executive of Wessex Archaeology, there are three general papers on world heritage including a case study on Ironbridge; three papers on Avebury follow; then there are two papers about other WHSs in the UK, and finally the volume concludes with a paper on the consequences of world heritage designation, including a case study on Avebury.

It is fair to say that after over thirty years my memories of the original event are hazy, and so I have given these papers the lightest of edits, turning them into a coherent monograph. The original conference paperwork and edits are currently missing, along with the cover illustration, symposium title, and other figures, although I remain hopeful they will be recovered. If so a further, more substantial, edit will be done in future. Meanwhile, these fascinating papers are finally published on ASAHRG’s new website, for the benefit of the global heritage community and those interested in Avebury and World Heritage Sites.

AC, Bristol, January 2026.

2. Chairman's Introduction

Andrew J. Lawson

Avebury is internationally renowned for its remarkable complex of ancient monuments.

In making such a statement, I am aware that I am guilty of enormous presumption because there will be many, possibly the majority of the nation's population, who have no understanding of its meaning. I sincerely hope that anyone with an interest in British prehistory has heard of Avebury but even the most industrious student of other disciplines may never have encountered it, let alone those members of the public for whom study of the past seems to have little contemporary relevance. One of the major challenges for the conference held on 27 October 1995 and of this publication is, therefore, to impress on all the singular importance of the Avebury area and the reasons why it should be treated differently - sympathetically.

Some of the ideas for change at Avebury might appear superficially to be acceptable, or even to be beneficial to the area's well-being but deeper examination of such proposals often exposes potential problems. The function of the following papers must be to demonstrate convincingly why it is that archaeologists, historians, or those who just love the English countryside feel so passionately about the need to protect Avebury in the face of increasing pressures. These pressures arise from changes seemingly demanded by the continuing evolution of our society. New development, more efficient agriculture, increased tourism and leisure pursuits all threaten to alter, erode or even destroy the very thing that people have come to admire, if they are not carefully managed.

Avebury is a small village in the rural heart of Wiltshire, situated some 14 km north east of Devizes and a slightly greater distance south of Swindon. It lies at the source of the River Kennet, a major tributary of the Thames, on undulating Chalk at 150m OD, beneath steep scarps which lead up to the Downs both to the east and the south. These bare facts, however, do not convey adequately the true character and importance of the place. Indeed, one of the objectives for the future must be the formulation of a description which portrays accurately the uniqueness of this part of England - which defines what makes the Avebury region special - different from other revered patches of the globe.

The concept of 'landscape' has been appreciated in Britain for centuries and from the birth of archaeology the relationship of different monuments to each other has been a hallmark of contextual studies. In 1743 William Stukeley was not only the first author to publish a comprehensive study of *Abury* but through this and other works to establish the tradition of 'landscape archaeology' by observing, describing and illustrating the field monuments apparent to any perceptive observer. He concluded that many of these monuments were the surviving evidence of various episodes of former land use and in so doing inspired a whole discipline to look beyond the confines of individual sites and to articulate different fragments of antiquity.

Any archaeological study of the Avebury area will show that it contains remains of every period of the past. At different times different zones, upland, slope or valley, have been exploited for different purposes. In some parts, physical traces of former activities are visible as banks and ditches, standing stones, walls, woodland or hedgerows and so on, while other evidence remains invisible. It may be no simple matter to assess buried or obscured evidence but it has particular value for archaeology and untold potential for future study. In attempting to define a limit or boundary to any area the nature of the evidence called upon to characterise that area may be problematic and certainly the boundary of the 'Avebury area' is not self-evident. Yet instinctively one knows that it is not limitless and through careful thought it must be possible to distinguish the combination of features which encapsulates the character of the place and distinguishes it from others. The character of a landscape might be defined from its visual elements but in the case of Avebury some of the most important visual elements are archaeological monuments which should not be dissociated from less visible archaeological remains. In the same way, if we attempted to characterise an iceberg from its visible parts and to ignore the unseen, we would fail in our task. In the case of ancient landscapes, the remains are not usually continuous and extrapolation between identified 'islands' is necessary to develop a complete picture. The remains from each period of the past are different and may include humanly created works but also induced or semi-natural deposits, such as ploughsoils, alluvium or peat. Any single suite of evidence might be important in its own right but even greater importance might be attached to areas where different suites of evidence occur. In the case of Avebury the whole certainly seems even greater than the sum of the parts. In attempting to characterise the Avebury area we must identify its essential components and delimit the spatial extent of each. Having superimposed the distributions of these components, we can see where they coincide and where they no longer do. Thus, we can decide where the boundary of that combination of essential characteristics which uniquely defines the Avebury area can be drawn.

Fortunately, at Avebury spectacular elements of former landscapes have survived remarkably well, most notably those of the Neolithic. It is the importance of these monuments which has led to international acclaim and the strongest weapons of protection through designation. Whilst admiring the scale of the many well-preserved monuments we must be conscious of the less obvious but equally significant traces of mundane activities which in everyday life complemented the ceremonial.

Silbury Hill has been mentioned since the tenth century, was described by Camden in the sixteenth century and together with the other earthworks at Avebury has been debated since John Aubrey 'discovered' them in the mid-seventeenth century (Ucko *et al* 1991). Despite this long history of interest, we remain ignorant about much of the apparently well-known landscape. Numerous excavations have taken place, some such as those by St George Gray (between 1908 and 1922) or Alexander Keiller (between 1934 and 1939) were on an heroic scale but recent work amply demonstrates what surprising secrets remain in this familiar territory. The most striking monuments in the Avebury area are the related earthworks, stone circles and avenues, themselves contemporary with Silbury Hill and the later use of earlier

monuments. However, continuing research demonstrates new features of these monuments (such as the central ring ditch within the Avebury stone circle; Featherstone 1996) or completely new classes of structure (such as the timber palisades of West Kennett Farm; Whittle 1991). All these enrich what has been termed a 'synchronous relic cultural landscape'(*sensu* Darvill et al 1993).

New information is not limited to the Neolithic, as the identification of hitherto unrecorded Romano-British settlement remains east of Silbury Hill attest (Barnes at al 1996). When all this evidence, from palaeolithic to industrial age, is taken into account it is undoubtedly possible to proclaim the value of the Avebury area as reaching well beyond the Neolithic and for it to be widely acknowledged as one of the finest examples of a 'diachronic relic cultural landscape' in Britain.

The wealth of archaeological remains highlights the need for diligent management of the area. The implications of any proposed land use change (or alteration of an important building) must be carefully considered in advance least irrevocable damage is done. One small change may seem insignificant but the effect of many is cumulative. Not only is the physical fabric at risk but changes in use can alter perceptions and character. So as to ensure that those who might permit change are sufficiently well informed, a comprehensive assessment of archaeological and historical resources must be at their disposal. Where gaps in knowledge exist, they must be highlighted (in a 'research agenda') and a strategy adopted to address priorities (Brown et al 1995). Former studies may have concentrated on prehistoric monuments but others based on less well-known aspects, for example of the Anglo-Saxon or medieval periods, may prove necessary to complete our diachronic picture. The evidence which forms the basis of these studies may take a variety of different forms offering complementary data so that, for example, soil sequences may infer as much about farming as documents do about manors and religious houses. using a different form of evidence, the buildings along the village streets act as a guide to vernacular architecture over at least four centuries, portraying changes in the use of raw materials and advances in construction technique, as well as reflecting the social implications of position and grandeur.

Although it is possible to demonstrate continuity of occupation from prehistoric times, Avebury lives still. The juxtaposition, even stratification, of village over henge is an essential archaeological feature but in a living environment the daily needs of the local population must be taken into account. In the views of many, the necessities of employment, for utilities and communication networks are legitimate interests which may outweigh considerations of the past. The task of balancing the needs of conservation, maintenance and development is not easy but requires the cooperation of all sections of the community. Active dialogue, consultation, a willingness to compromise and above all a commitment to reaching a solution must all play their part if a workable framework for the management of Avebury is to be established (Fielden 1996, Gingell 1996). The creation of a Management Plan acceptable to all will not be achieved lightly.

Designations for the protection of different facets of the area abound. Avebury (with Stonehenge) is the only World Heritage Site in Britain inscribed by the World

Heritage Committee of UNESCO by virtue of its prehistoric remains of 'universal value'. English Heritage has established the principle that all positively identified examples of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments where there is the potential for surviving archaeological remains should be regarded as sites of national importance and should be individually protected by law. Hence, 6 long barrows, 97 round barrows, 13 ceremonial sites and 12 ring ditches within this section of the World Heritage Site are scheduled, with a further 180 scheduled monuments of these periods in the area immediately beyond. Avebury lies wholly within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and under the Development Plans of Wiltshire County Council within an Area of Special Archaeological Significance. A National Nature Reserve and several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have been notified within the area. All of these designations place a plethora of constraints on owners and managers. If confusion is not to reign, there must be harmonisation and coordination of the management strategy. Daily life must continue without being so regulated that those who we rely on to sustain the local flavour become disaffected and are no longer willing to embrace a conservation ethos.

Specific guidance on the way archaeological sites and their settings should be considered in the face of development has been issued by Government (DoE 1990) but no additional statutory controls have been put in place to reflect the international status that designation as a World Heritage Site confers (DoE 1994). Instead, it is for the local authorities (Kennet District Council and Wiltshire County Council) to ensure that specific planning policies protect Avebury. Consequently, the need to protect the area for the benefit of future generations, as well as our own, figures prominently in the Avebury Local Plan, the Wiltshire Structure Plan and their draft replacements. But this is only one measure and others may be needed. The needs of those who live and work in Avebury or who visit it in search of a memorable experience are not static and will inevitably change. If we are to know how best to cater for this ever-changing situation, it is vital that we understand as fully as possible the essence of Avebury. If we are to sustain its character, we must establish through dialogue and mutual respect workable solutions to the management of this complex yet cherished landscape. The papers of this conference are offered as a contribution to that end.

21 February 1997

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3. SIGNIFICANCE AND VULNERABILITY: CONSERVATION PLANS, MANAGEMENT PLANS AND SUSTAINABILITY AT A WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Kate Clark

Introduction

There is a great fashion at the moment for writing management plans for heritage sites of all sorts. Thick, worthy tomes, which after a cursory glance at the history of the site, go on to explain the meat of the matter, which is often how best to accommodate the growing hordes of visitors and maximise profits. Management plans are often about the need for a visitor centre, the age-old problem of toilets, and of course, where to put the cars.

These are all important issues for our time and do need to be debated. But in all this planning, we have lost the central thread, and that thread is the significance of our sites and what is happening to it. The significance of a site is after all why it was first designated or protected, and it is this significance which we would presumably hope to pass on to our successors. By focusing on the short-term management requirements of organisations who often only control part of a site, many management plans have lost the opportunity for wide ranging, creative debate about the long-term management of change.

Management planning at its worst results in an unseemly tussle between the often business-trained site manager and the archaeologist or historic buildings specialist who finds themselves on the periphery - asked to write a statement of significance but then excluded from the process.

This paper calls for a reappraisal of the traditional management plan approach, in the light of the 'lessons of Rio' - the international debate about sustainability. It also calls for a return to some of the basics of conservation planning as set out in Feilden & Jokilehto (1993), in particular the need to understand significance and document sites as a constant part of the planning process.

The evidence on which the paper is based derives mainly from the experience of researching, surveying and defending the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage site, between 1985 and 1992. In particular, it draws on a detailed survey of the Gorge funded by the Nuffield Foundation, which provided data of a quality which can be used to generate a more explicitly sustainable approach to the management of the significance of the site than is usually possible in most management plans.

Management Plans

Guidelines for managing World Heritage sites were set out by Bernard Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto in 1993, a broad ranging document which covers the main principles of conservation planning.

The basic elements of the process are defined as

> Survey : methodical inspection, survey and documentation of the resource its historical setting and its physical environment
>
> Definition: critical-historical definition and assessment of the object and its setting so giving it its significance
>
> Analysis: scientific analysis and diagnosis of the material substance and associated structural system with a view towards its conservation and:
>
> Strategy: long-term and short-term programmes for conservation and management of change, including regular inspections, cyclic maintenance and environmental control (Feilden & Jokilehto 1993:14).

The document stresses over and over again that the aim of conservation is to safeguard the quality and values of the resource, protect its material substance and ensure its integrity for future generations (14)

The Rio Summit

The need to be concerned about what we are passing on to future generations was central to the deliberations at the Rio Earth Summit.

In 1992 world governments and non-governmental organisations met in Rio for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to debate conservation. One of the main issues to emerge was Agenda 21 - an action plan for environmental programmes in individual countries. The UK was one of the countries to sign Agenda 21, but only now, some years later, are the implications beginning to sink in.

There was nothing new about Agenda 21, even in 1992. It arose from the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, a document which codified many of the long-standing concerns about the relationship between development and conservation. Basically, it sought to demonstrate that development and conservation were not opposing concepts but could be reconciled. The focus of the document was on how to achieve 'sustainability', defined in the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report) as being able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Agenda 21 was a practical set of actions designed to achieve this.

Sustainability in the UK Planning System

Since then, much has happened. The UK published a report on implementing sustainable development in 1989 ("Sustaining our Common Future") , a white paper, "This Common Inheritance" in 1990 and follow up reports. Sustainability is mentioned formally in PPGs (Planning Policy Guidelines) 1, 7, 12 and 15. Many Local Planning Authorities have published their own strategies for implementing Agenda 21.

There has been considerable disagreement and some cynicism about what this might all mean. Debate has centred around how precisely to define those resources which should be handed on to future generations; which of these are 'critical' and in effect not tradeable, and which are 'constant' i.e. might be 'exchanged' for something else.

This debate however overlooks the central and very valuable principles of sustainability, which are that we should think more carefully about what it is we are handing on to future generations. We should take a long term, rather than a short-term view of conservation.

It is often forgotten that there is a great deal more to Agenda 21 than simply the debate about critical and constant resources. In particular, Agenda 21 and the thinking behind it emphasises the process of conservation as much as the action of conserving something. Agenda 21 stresses the need to see conservation as an interactive process, and that success in conservation is dependent not just on 'top down' diktats but on a 'bottom up' approach, a recognition that if local people are not involved in the conservation process or see some degree of benefit from it, that it is unlikely to succeed. This would seem to be as important to the long-term management of an African wildlife park as it is for a World Heritage Site in Britain.

Sustainability and the Historic Environment

Much of the action on sustainability has been directed towards the reduction of carbon emissions, the management of land and water resources, waste disposal, recycling and transport rather than the conservation of the historic environment.

One school of thought certainly argues that sustainability should apply only to those natural assets whose loss will threaten the survival of the planet or its species.

Feilden & Jokilehto, however, argue that

> "since physical cultural heritage is one of the world's most important non-renewable resources a special effort is needed to redress the imbalance between our needs and its protection" (12)

Certainly in its original consultation paper on sustainability in 1993, the UK government omitted any mention of the historic environment.

An important public inquiry in Chester in 1992 demonstrated conclusively that concepts of sustainability were relevant to the historic environment. At issue was the extent to which the historic town of Chester could sustain the additional demands placed upon it by expanded development in the green belt. As a result of the inquiry, a method statement on sustainability in historic towns was published (Arup et al 1995).

Archaeologists recognised the importance of sustainability to the historic environment in a conference at Leicester in 1993 devoted to the Historic Environment (Swain 1993). The conference followed a growing recognition by archaeologists that they needed to go beyond the isolated site or monument in their inquiries, and to understand the context of the whole site.

Since then, PPG 15 the government's guidance on Planning and the Historic Environment recognises explicitly that. By using the term Historic Environment, the PPG implicitly recognises that the past in this country is more than the sum of a collection of individual, important monuments, but a whole environment. It is easy to draw parallels between the natural and historic environment – a natural species, such as an elephant, cannot be conserved in isolation from its habitat, and so a monument, such as Stonehenge, should not be conserved in isolation from the historic environment or context which gives it meaning. The diversity in historic places, which distinguishes one town from another, one city from another, one rural landscape from another, has resonance in the concept of biodiversity in the natural world - the importance of conserving not just important species, but the whole diversity.

There is also a growing recognition by many that the natural and historic conservation need to be better integrated. In 1993 English Heritage published 'Conservation issues in Strategic Plans' jointly with English Nature and the Countryside Commission showing how scenic, countryside, and ecological issues could be considered at a County structure plan level. This has since been followed by, "Conservation Issues in Local Plans". The Council for British Archaeology explicitly recognises sustainability in its own policy statement for the historic environment and the National Trust have been actively considering the integration of issues of sustainability into its management policies.

A discussion paper sustainability and the historic environment was published by English Heritage in 1997 and has been widely circulated (English Heritage 1997).

Agenda 21 and the World Heritage

The agenda created by the sustainability debate is a really quite radical one in the context of the definition and management of World Heritage sites, and one which may initially at least, be an uncomfortable one.

The lessons of Rio are at least that conservation must:

* start with a clear understanding of what it is which is to be conserved
* recognise the importance of diversity and the whole environment not just single species
* take a cumulative view of the impact of change.
* recognised the links between economics and conservation
* involve local communities

How for example, does one reconcile an international designation with the values of a local community, who need to work and live in that area rather than in a theme park.What happens if ecological and cultural conservation objectives clash? Would we be prepared to trust the conservation of an internationally important monument to a parish council or local group in line with the 'bottom up' approach advocated in Agenda 21. And how realistically can resources for conservation be generated if it is not through increasing tourism and travel, which in turn creates pressures on the monument, the environment and the local community.

The difficulties of this approach were clearly demonstrated during the preparation of the Hadrian's Wall management plan where a huge consultation exercise - 800 copies of the plan and 30,000 summary leaflets led to two further revisions, and an awareness of the complexities of the different views on the conservation of the monument.

Other World Heritage Sites are now either in the throes of preparing a Management Plan or considering doing so, strongly supported by ICOMOS UK.

So how might the lessons of Rio and sustainability be applied in the individual circumstances of the preparation of a World Heritage Site Management Plan?

Understanding and Managing Change in the Ironbridge Gorge

The Ironbridge Gorge is currently the subject of a public consultation exercise at the outset of the management plan process. It is therefore a useful time to review the results of a major information gathering exercise on the Gorge, and what implications that might have for shaping the management plan process.

Between 1986 and 1988, the Nuffield Foundation supported a detailed survey of the Ironbridge Gorge. Two years were spent, compiling an inventory of each of the plots of land, looking holistically at above and below ground archaeology, at buildings, earthworks, whole monuments and fragmentary remains of the systems of waterpower, transport, industry, settlement which created the Gorge. The research drew heavily on existing historical work (Trinder 1981). It did not discriminate between archaeological and architectural evidence, and nor did it discriminate on period, collecting information from the earliest times to the present day. The

intention was not to create a value free survey, but to examine how the historic environment as a whole developed and altered through time, and how this gave rise and meaning to that well-known icon the Ironbridge.

The net result of the survey - published in both the popular and academic press (Alfrey & Clark, Clark 1994) and as data reports - has been a body of data which can be interrogated in different ways. At the time, it was used mainly it to understand how the historical development of the Gorge, although the data proved useful in planning issues.

The data can also be used to inform the management plan process in two ways. Firstly, it shows how the significance of the parts can be related to the whole, and thus provides a basis for day-to-day planning decisions and secondly.

Secondly, the survey provided data about the historical patterns of survival and loss and the decisions which precipitated them. This information can in turn can be used to extrapolate the impact of present-day decisions. A strategic understanding of the cumulative impact of present-day decisions is essential if we are to plan sustainably for the future.

Significance: minor elements

In dealing with a major site such as a World Heritage Site, we tend to take its significance as given; to assume that the international designation overrides every other issue and is in itself sufficient as a statement of significance. Yet that designation is of no help in making day to day planning decisions about for example, where to focus scarce resources for repair or whether or not to allow a new building on an infill site. Many but not all of these decisions will be covered by general policies in the statutory local plan which in turn need to be defensible in national policy terms, but invariably the weight given to the policy depends upon the significance of the individual item.

Thus, however good the national or local policy framework, individual decisions within a World Heritage Site - and of course any historic site - ultimately come down to our understanding of the significance of the parts in relation to the whole.

The Nuffield Survey showed how these individual parts contribute to and are part of the whole. Minor items such as sluice gates of little ostensible importance in their own right, contribute to our understanding of the far better known Old Furnace used by Abraham Darby to smelt iron using coke and not charcoal. The survey demonstrated the diversity of remains and the interrelationships between industries - so for example, the remains of clay using industries (brickworks, potteries, clay mines, tramways) are related to and dependent upon iron industries. Patterns of house building cannot be separated from the industrial context in which they operate - a context which is often only documented by a fragmentary tramway or plot divisions.

The lessons of the survey were therefore that the conservation of seemingly minor items is essential if the overall integrity and pattern of the whole is to be conserved.

It is as important to be exercised about the survival of a fragmentary length of tramway as it is over the relatively minor problems facing the major monuments.

Significance: value and context

It is also important that any survey or data collection exercise gives both value and context to its data. Heritage items do not exist in a vacuum - they are only important in relation to each other, and to the values we assign them. Any data collection exercise does have to include an intellectual framework for assessing individual components, and an academic justification for retaining them.

As a result of the Nuffield survey, I would argue that the academic discipline of archaeology, as a discipline founded on the placing of things in their temporal and spatial context, with a critical approach to field evidence is - with good historical research - an essential part of this process.

Significance: other values

One of the central themes of sustainability which the Nuffield survey certainly, in retrospect, overlooked is that the archaeological and historical understanding of the whole and the parts of a site is of course, only a small part of their significance. As conservation professionals we often forget the other values associated with heritage sites. These values are most publicly visible at Stonehenge and Avebury, but a survey of any World Heritage site would most likely reveal a multiplicity of values. At Ironbridge for example, the remains of brickworking industries are archaeologically very important, but in communities such as Broseley there is a deep ambivalence about the significance of the surviving sheds which serve as a reminder of the appalling conditions in the works. Equally, the war memorial in the centre of Ironbridge has a community resonance that the bridge lacks.

Recognising these values must be part of any management strategy; Agenda 21 recognises that if conservation is to be successful it must work with rather than against local values. In countries such as Australia and the USA, heritage professionals have had to learn to work with the values which different communities place on the historic places. Not doing so is to put at risk the long-term acceptability of any conservation strategy. Any attempt to direct public resources towards the conservation of brickworks in the Gorge would, for example, lead to a degree of public ambivalence, as did the original attempts to designate a Conservation Area in the centre of Broseley.

How significance is vulnerable

If the Nuffield survey data provided a new understanding of how the myriad elements which make up the historic environment of the gorge may be important, it also enabled us to explore how that significance is vulnerable - to understand what

factors affected the significance of the Gorge in the past, are doing so now, and may do so in the future if current practices continue.

This understanding of what is happening to a site is a central part of the methodology of sustainability. If we are to pass sites on to future generations that are as significant as those we inherited, we need to think in a long term and strategic manner about precisely what it is that we need to manage today in order to secure the future.

In order to understand how significance is vulnerable, it is first necessary to analyse the historical and modern processes of change and the cumulative effects of past decisions.

Table One provides a rough 'profit and loss' account for the Ironbridge Gorge, highlighting some of the key factors which shaped what survives today from each period in the past. Behind these themes are a number of identifiable processes:

Vulnerability: decay of fabric

Physical decay of fabric is the most common concern for those who manage heritage sites, and is an area on which the management guidelines concentrate heavily.

Of course built fabric decays through time, but only where it is not in beneficial use and there is not economic benefit to keeping it in good repair. Thus the maintenance of the Iron Bridge falls into state care once it ceases to become a profitable enterprise. The bridge itself has been the subject of extensive conservation, and most recently resurfacing. However, the survey shows that the most significant decay in the Ironbridge Gorge today arises in those sites and areas which are less well known, have no beneficial use and have not come into state care - the limekilns, former water power systems.

One of the issues a management plan must balance is the allocation of scarce resources between the better-known elements of the site, and those minor items which nevertheless contribute to the diversity of the place.

Vulnerability: patterns of loss

What survives today is a small sample of the historical total. It is not of course a random sample but one predicated on definable patterns of loss. That pattern of loss continues today, and it is important to understand why and how it occurs if we are to consider future management.

Only those industrial buildings which were adaptable enough to find an alternative use survived - small, single storey sheds, which could be adapted from ironworks to warehouses, and from warehouses to modern day garages, for example. Of the domestic housing stock shown in 19th century maps a large proportion survives; of the industrial buildings, only a small proportion remains. In other towns it has been

possible to demonstrate that back yard out buildings are the buildings which have been most commonly lost between the 1880s and today.

Survey therefore shows disproportionate levels of loss in certain categories of buildings - in particular small industrial sheds. Domestic housing survives relatively well. Understanding the biases which exist in the pattern of survival matters if we are to retain the diversity of the building stock. The pattern may, for example, point towards policies which place more emphasis on finding new uses for small sheds and preventing casual demolition (usually for building materials) than has hitherto been the case.

Vulnerability: pressure for access

The drastic changes in the viability of different forms of access to and from the Gorge have radically shaped the patterns of the landscape. The earliest routes down to the river shaped settlements and roads, from there wooden railways leading to riverside wharves were displaced by first a complex and heavily engineered canal system, and then the Victorian railways. Each of these new forms of access reshaped the pattern of settlement, demolishing old houses and creating new foci, first at river crossings, then at the new settlement at Coalport and finally along the routes of new roads in and out of the gorge.

More recently, pressure for better road access through and across the gorge led to proposals for a new road bridge, which were defeated at inquiry.

New forms of access can have in the past had a disproportionately large effect on the pattern of settlement and survival of historic fabric. It is very likely that any new or greatly improved road access would have a similar effect which may not be compatible with conservation aims.

Vulnerability: local and national policy

Local and national policy - often created with the best of intentions - has had a major impact on the survival of the historic fabric of the gorge. Victorian railways swept away whole areas of early housing; other housing stock was demolished as part of formal slum clearance. The early policies of Telford Development Corporation were specifically directed at the 'greening' of the gorge, and resulted in the demolition of perhaps the earliest surviving industrial building.

Where funding is tied to policy - as for example in finance in the early 1990s for derelict land reclamation - the result can be new pressures on hitherto 'safe' survivals. So, for example, the infilling of the famous limestone caverns with pulverised fuel ash resulted in the loss of one of the most exciting and dramatic 'monuments' in the gorge. Were the policy guidelines to have allowed the funding to be available to have made them safe and conserve them, rather than to infill them, a major monument may have survived.

Government resources directed at solving one problem - derelict land - ironically inflicted more damage on historic fabric.

Vulnerability: well-meaning conservation

Another force for change - and one for which each of us working in professional conservation must take responsibility - is the depredations which result from well-intentioned conservation. It is easy to apportion blame, but not one of us is likely to be free from the stigma of a poor decision in the past, or more likely, one which was rational then but would not be acceptable today. The moving of buildings for conservation is an example of a practice which was formerly more acceptable than it is today, and has resulted in a form of preservation which adds little to the significance of a place.

In the Ironbridge gorge the early 'green' conservation ethic resulted in the loss of buildings; later care was lavished on new street furniture and paving in the area around the Iron Bridge , but not on the stabilisation of less visible historic structures. The demand for conservation materials created by local authority policies on materials, has ironically created a market for historic bricks and tiles, a market which is regularly fed by the demolition of minor outbuildings and sheds.

As part of understanding the processes of change, we need to learn to be self-critical, and to recognise that conservation is a dynamic learning process. If we do not acknowledge and learn from the mistakes of the past, we are likely to exacerbate them over the next 20-50 years. Any survey should therefore ensure that we document the last 50 to 100 years, noting what we have done, and what impact it has had on the place we seek to conserve.

A worst-case scenario

If one were to extrapolate these patterns of change over perhaps the next 30 years - what might one expect?

On current patterns in the Ironbridge Gorge, one would expect the few remains of the water power systems to collapse, leaving blocked channels to be replaced by modern concrete drains. Rising house prices may place a premium on houses in the gorge, and there would be further pressure to modernise extend and improve historic houses. If the roads were to be improved, the restraints on new developments in say Coalport and at Maws would be removed, resulting in pressure for new housing on former industrial sites. Few commercial shops are likely to survive and no industries. Those industrial buildings which have not been converted into houses are likely to have decayed rapidly, their bricks and tiles lost to a growing market for conservation materials. Small, neo vernacular houses on infill sites will outnumber the historic housing stock, each with a two-car garage created on a new platform on the steep hillside. The sandstone walls of Ironbridge will be all but lost to new car parking places.

The horizon on both sides will be colonised by new houses, outside the boundary of the conservation area, but hungry for views across the river valley.

And finally, the march of uniform black cast iron bollards, stone paving and new railings will extend throughout the gorge, quietly the replacing the old iron kerbstones, the rough surfaces made up of blue blast furnace slag which befit an industrial place, the retaining walls of slag and old roof tile and the odd bits of gas pipe which formerly provided railings.

By such small actions is the industrial character of a place eroded.

Policies for management

Whether or not this doomsday scenario is correct, the simple exercise of visualising it generates a framework for management policies. By thinking about the cumulative impact of the many small and seemingly insignificant decisions which are made on a day-to-day basis, one is forced to confront the long-term issues. This is precisely the approach which is encouraged by sustainability and Agenda 21.

The present guidance on managing World Heritage Sites stresses the importance of understanding and defining a site (15ff, 24) but is less clear about how you measure and define what is happening to that significance as an exercise in its own right.

If the aim of management is to conserve the significance of a site in all its diversity, then the management process must go beyond the requirements of the visitor and the immediate problems of fabric decay.

Policies must address the most appropriate uses, how future intervention is to be controlled, the cumulative effect of individual decisions, the protection of small and seemingly minor aspects of the site, the reconciliation of the needs of local residents and visitors and the problems of access.

If the whole significance of a site with all its values and diversity is to be passed on to future generations it is necessary to take this broad, creative and visionary approach to conservation. It can be argued that this is precisely what the current approach to World Heritage Site Management Plans is intended to achieve - and indeed with the right approach, many plans will succeed in doing so.

The Conservation Plan

In 1980, James Semple Kerr first published a guide to the production of Conservation Plans, a document which has most recently been revised in 1997. The document provides a practical guide to drafting Conservation Plans, based on the author's experience in a variety of sites. The principles of the approach are of course not new; they have direct parallels in the American Historic Structure Plans, and the UK traditions of recording and understanding sites and buildings (ICOMOS 199-).

However, what Kerr stresses, and it is an important lesson for anyone who has been involved in assessing sites is the logical, philosophical link between understanding the significance of the place and the drafting of policies for retaining that significance. Too often archaeological assessments, building records or landscape evaluation documents - and this includes the Nuffield survey - break off at the point at which the site has been described. They rarely extend the process into either an explicit statement of significance, or the next steps of how that significance is vulnerable and thus how it can be managed. Good studies end up on the shelf, unused and thus irrelevant to day-to-day management. The Conservation Plan is a model for ensuring that causal link between understanding and managing a site is made.

It is this philosophical link between understanding and managing which makes the Conservation Plan the better model for the first part of the site management process. Unless an explicit understanding of significance and how it is vulnerable in its broadest sense is bolted firmly into the structure of the management documentation, then that plan becomes a weak and reactive document with no central logic. The management plan and strategy can of course follow the conservation plan, and indeed becomes an easier document to write once the conservation plan is in place, but without the analysis of significance and the factors affecting it, one may be managing, but one is not conserving.

The Conservation Plan process - for whatever the document is called, it is the logical process rather than the title which is paramount - provides the missing link between the principles of sustainability and the survey and understanding of the historic environment. It enables survey, archaeology, architectural history and all the other tools by which we understand the significance of the fabric of a site to be fully integrated into the management planning process, rather than standing outside it as a worthy but obscure academic exercise of little practical value. It is this inherent structural logic, and this emphasis on what is happening to the core significance of the site which sets the Conservation Plan process aside from the management plan.

Conclusion

The preparation of World Heritage Site Management Plans is well underway, and all new sites for designation will require something similar. This is a worthy exercise which can only benefit sites. However, we must never forget that in seeking to manage World Heritage Sites, we must also seek to implement the best international practice.

In particular, we must take on board the lessons of sustainability, and look more explicitly at the cumulative impact of the decisions we make each day. This means understanding the significance of sites as a whole, and in detail, and it means understanding more precisely what is happening to that significance. The net result should be brave and creative policies for retaining significance, not all of which may be palatable.

In the long run, the most successful World Heritage Site management plans are those which are based on a thorough understanding of the resource as a whole and

in parts; they will have explored the significance of the site and the variety it represents; they will demonstrate an incisive analysis of what factors are affecting the significance of the site based on an assessment of long term issues, and from that will have drafted polices which retain diversity, recognise the capacity of the site for change and more importantly, recognise the role of local communities. Such plans will be consultative, participatory, and in practice, extremely difficult to write. It does not mean that the exercise will not be worthwhile; simply that good conservation is, and always has been, difficult to do well.

The point was made well by Neil Cossons in a photographic essay on Ironbridge published in 1977, when he said,

> To some extent the problem, as with all major areas of conservation concern, lies not only with the individuals who wish to alter their properties, fell their trees or render their brickwork, however 'insensitive' their actions may be, but with the very statutory bodies in hose hands on a macro scale the future of the landscape lies. The reconciliation of the voices of the past and future with the obvious necessities of everyday life today demands much more than considerable sums of money which in themselves can be a recipe for disaster. It requires understanding, depth as well as breadth, a detailed archaeological, historical and ecological appreciation of why what is there is there, a conscious ability to exercise restraint and a dedication to do nothing when nothing might be the right answer, but above all a sense of humility. (Cossons, 1977:20)

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4. Implementing the World Heritage Convention

Henry Cleere

The Background

The Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (better known as the World Heritage Convention) was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 17th Session on 16th November 1972. It was the culmination of many years of debate and negotiation in which the USA played a major role. The original concept of some sort of world convention to protect the heritage had been enunciated as far back as 1931, within the context of the League of Nations. In 1965 during the Nixon administration, at a White House Conference on International Co-operation, impetus was given towards the drafting of the present Convention by Russell E. Train, then Chairman of the US Council of Environmental Quality.

Objectives of the Convention

The Convention is posited on the awareness that there are certain parts of the cultural and natural heritage whose value to the world as a whole is so outstanding that their protection, conservation and transmission to future generations are matters not merely for the individual countries in which they occur but also for the international community as a whole. It also acknowledges that many of the countries which are most richly endowed from the artistic, archaeological, architectural, palaeontological, biological, geological and ecological points of view lack adequate resources to protect this heritage.

The Convention provides for the establishment of a World Heritage List of such properties deemed to be of “outstanding universal value”. The latter is the leitmotiv of the Convention and incidentally a fine-sounding phrase, the precise interpretation of which is currently the subject of an in-depth study – for which adequate measures are in force to ensure their continued protection, conservation and management. Those countries that have ratified the Convention undertake to provide the necessary statutory and infrastructural backing for this purpose. The States Parties signed to the Convention also contract to make regular payments to a World Heritage Fund based on their agreed contributions to the UNESCO General Budget. In the case of States Parties that are not UNESCO members – the United Kingdom and the USA in particular – this contribution is assessed through negotiations between UNESCO and the government concerned. The resulting fund is used to provide services to less wealthy State Parties, including technical assistance, training and specialized equipment.

Getting under way

The Convention came into force in 1976, when it had been ratified by twenty countries. The first ‘eight cultural properties’ (in UN jargon) were inscribed on the World Heritage List in September 1978 and it is interesting to look at these as a guide to the future trajectory of the List. They were the city of Quito (Ecuador), Aachen Cathedral (Germany), L’anse aux Meadows (Canada), Mesa Verde (USA), the rock-hewn churches of Labibela (Ethiopia), the Ile de Gorée (Senegal), the historic centre of Cracow and the Wieliczka salt-mine (both Poland).

They were selected according to the six criteria developed by the World Heritage Committee which have survived with minor modifications to the present day. Cultural properties for inclusion on the List must fulfil one or more of the following criteria (there are separate criteria for natural properties):

i represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

ii exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscaping design;

iii bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization or cultural tradition which is living or which has disappeared;

iv be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

v be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it had become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

vi be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion on the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria, cultural or natural).

[REFERENCE]

Of these six cultural criteria, all were applied in the first round of inscriptions on the List with the exception of (v), which was not used until the following year, in the case of medieval Cairo. Since that time the number of States Parties to the Convention has risen to 142 and the total number of inscribed to 440. Of these 326 are cultural sites and monuments, 97 are natural sites and 17 are so-called “mixed” sites, inscribed on the basis of both cultural and natural criteria. They are located on the territories of 100 States Parties.

In addition to these “cultural” criteria, properties nominated for inclusion on the List must also fulfil two further criteria dealing with the material aspects of properties. The first relates to authenticity in design, materials, workmanship or setting (the last word is especially significant in relation to Avebury). Authenticity is extremely difficult to define: many hours of discussion in various parts of the world and many thousands of dollars have been spent over the past two years in the attempt but they have succeeded is doing little more than declaring solemnly that different concepts of authenticity are specific to different cultures.

The second criterion relates to management. Nominated properties must:

Have adequate legal protection and management mechanisms to ensure the conservation of the nominated cultural property. The existence of protective legislation at the national, provincial or municipal level is therefore essential…. Assurances of the effective implementation of these laws are also expected. Furthermore, in order to preserve the integrity of cultural sites, particularly those open to large numbers of visitors, the State Party concerned should be able to provide evidence of suitable administrative arrangements to cover the management of the property, its conservation and its accessibility to the public.

[Reference]

This concern for management is a recent phenomenon for the World Heritage Committee, dating back to around 1987, even though it is in fact spelt out in the Convention itself. There had been less stringent scrutiny of this aspect of the Convention before that time. This can be seen by visiting some of the properties inscribed earlier on the World Heritage List or by studying earlier ICOMOS evaluations. The latter make little or no reference to management aspects of sites, preferring to concentrate on their cultural qualities. The Committee’s concern has been developed and refined since that time to include, for example, a requirement for evidence of an effective buffer zone around the site to be supplied.

How does the Convention work?

Overall management of the Convention is in the hands of the World Heritage Committee (WHC). consisting of twenty-one States Parties elected at a triennial General Conference. Efforts are made to ensure satisfactory world-wide representation from the different regions of the world. The WHC meets annually at the beginning of December in a different venue each time – Banff Canada) in 1990, Carthage (Tunis) in 1991, Santa Fe (USA) in 1992, Cartenga de Indias (Colombia) in

1993, Phuket (Thailand) in 1994 and Berlin (Germany) in 1995. The Committee elects from among its membership a Bureau of seven members, again as representative as possible. This group meets early in July to take interim decisions and make recommendations for the main Committee meeting.

The Secretariat for the Committee is provided by the World Heritage Centre at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. Professional advice is provided by two non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which are named in the Convention: the World Conservation Union (IUCN), based in Geneva, for natural properties and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), based in Paris, for cultural nominations. The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome, an intergovernmental organisation, also has a role under the Convention as an adviser on mainly technical aspects of conservation. The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in Cambridge assists IUCN in its work and is currently working with ICOMOS and UNESCO in the creation of a comprehensive World Heritage database.

Nomination dossiers prepared according to the detailed prescriptions laid down in the Committee's Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1995) are submitted by States Parties to Paris. It should be emphasised her that only national governments/States Parties have the possibility to submit nominations. It is not possible for these to be made by individuals, NGOs or city administrations, for instance. The nominations are then studied and evaluated by the NGOs and this paper will now be confined to the work of ICOMOS in respect of cultural properties.

Initially there is consultation of acknowledged experts on the cultural values of the nominated properties compared with the criteria. These experts are identified from among the over five thousand members of ICOMOS world-wide, its scientific committees and the interlocking networks with which the organisation is associated, formally and informally. ICOMOS then sends one or more experts on a mission to each nominated property. They will usually select from the region concerned and possess special knowledge of the management and conservation aspects of heritage protection. The reports of these experts then form the basis of a draft evaluation and recommendation that is presented to the ICOMOS Bureau, the latter consisting of the Officers and some invited experts. Following this meeting formal ICOMOS evaluations and recommendations, running to six or seven pages, are prepared for presentation to the World Heritage Bureau meeting.

The World Heritage Bureau in turn receives a presentation of the ICOMOS evaluations and recommendations given by the World Heritage Coordinator and makes its formal recommendations for submission to the Committee at its December meeting. Recommendations may take one of four forms:

- Inscription – Inscription on the World Heritage List without further delay or debate; ICOMOS specifies the criterion or criteria under which it considers the property to be eligible for inscription with a short citation which will be

used by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in subsequent publicity and promotion.

- Rejection – In this case the property is not inscribed on the list and may not be resubmitted in the same form.

- Referral back to State Party – This is tantamount to a conditional acceptance so long as the State Party can satisfy the Bureau on certain points. These usually relate to definition of boundaries of inscribed sites and/or buffer zones and certain management aspects. The ICOMOS recommendation is accompanied by proposals for criteria for eventual inscription. States Parties are required to provide the missing information by 1st October. In the event of their doing so the nominations are considered again at the short meeting of the WH Bureau that immediately precedes the meeting of the WH Committee.

- Deferral – Reasons for deferral are more fundamental than those for referral and deferral does not carry with it a presumption of eventual inscription. Deferral may recommend to await the results of a comparative study of this type of property, for a proposed management plan to demonstrate its viability, for reports on the operating efficiency after a specified period of implementation of new management plans or for a radical redefinition of the boundaries of a proposed property.

Certain of these recommendations, notably referral, may involve a good deal of additional work on the part of ICOMOS, especially where the Bureau requires a comparative study to be carried out. The whole procedure is then repeated again in December at the meeting of the World Heritage Committee, at which final decisions regarding listing (or otherwise) are taken.

The way forward

The twentieth anniversary of the Convention in 1992 was the occasion for a review of what had been achieved so far. UNESCO commissioned an independent study by a distinguished scholar who had been associated with the Convention from its earliest days (Pressouyre 1993). The Committee also carried out an internal strategic review of its activities over the past two decades. This identified a number of problem areas. One source of considerable concern was the fact that whilst 132 countries had joined the Convention at the end of 1992, only 82 of these had sites on the World Heritage List. Certain countries had relatively large numbers of sites: France (22, of which 21 cultural), India (19, 14 cultural), Spain (18, 17 cultural), USA (17, 8 cultural), UK (14, 11 cultural). The Committee therefore resolved to take steps

to correct this imbalance. One of those steps was the introduction of the concept of cultural landscape (von Droste et al 1995). This would favour countries with non-monumental cultures, such as those in the Pacific region and those with a relatively modest architectural and archaeological heritage but agricultural or pastoral landscapes of considerable antiquity, for instance the countries of sub-Saharan Africa or northern Europe and America.

Several other fields of heritage that were inadequately recognised on the List were also identified. One of these was the industrial heritage, represented by no more than a handful of sites (Ironbridge in England, the Wieliczka salt mine in Poland, the Rammelsberg copper mining area and the Völklingen ironworks in Germany, the Engelsberg ironworks in Sweden). The assistance of The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial heritage (TICCIH) was invoked by ICOMOS in the preparation of indicative lists of the most important industrial monuments in the world, sector by sector, to act as a guide for States Parties and the Committee alike. These have already been prepared for bridges, canals and “company towns”.

Twentieth century architecture is also largely absent, the only examples being three masterpieces of Gaudi in Barcelona and the city of Brasilia. Here the specialised advice of the International Group for the Documentation of the Modern Movement (DoCoMoMo) has been sought by ICOMOS.

These two specialist studies form part of a much wider project being developed by the World Heritage Committee. It has drawn up a global strategy to identify those aspects of the world cultural heritage that are currently under-represented on or absent from the World Heritage List .

A statistical analysis of the sites inscribed on the List by the end of 1993 revealed a number of significant lacunae and anomalies. Instances include: of the 320 sites and monuments on the List, 154 were in Europe, 67 in Asia, 43 in Africa (including the Maghreb countries), 23 in North America, 29 in Central and Southern America and only 4 in Australia and Oceania. Of the 90 religious monuments (churches, cathedrals, monasteries, temples, shrines etc.), 65 were Christian with the remainder being spread over Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu and other monuments. No fewer than 96 were archaeological sites and 86 historic towns or town centres, whereas there were only 4 vernacular settlements inscribed. A series of regional meetings is under way, so far in the Philippines (specifically on rice-producing landscapes) and Australia (on the non-monumental heritage of Australasia and Oceania – currently represented only by the sacred mountains of Tongariro in New Zealand and Uluru-Kata Tjuta [Ayres Rock] and the Olgas in Australia). A further meeting has just been held in Zimbabwe to consider the heritage of southern Africa.

As with industrial heritage and twentieth century architecture, groups of experts will also be invited to indicate what they consider to be the most significant sites and monuments within their respective fields. These will then be made available to States Parties who will be invited to consider whether the wish to nominate those on their territories. There will be no compulsion to do so, since the right of nomination is the prerogative of States Parties and cannot be arrogated by the World Heritage Committee, nor will the appearance of a property on such a specialised list be an

assurance that it will automatically be included on the World Heritage List. It is hoped in this way to make the List more truly representative of the world's cultural heritage. The Committee has rejected the proposal made on more than one occasion that there should be a maximum figure (numerus clausus) imposed upon the List, since it believes that this would militate against probable future extension of the concept of what constitutes the cultural heritage. It recognises however that the number of new nominations will dwindle from the present level of around thirty annually to a trickle in the next century.

Some examples of properties on the World Heritage List

To illustrate the application of the criteria for inclusion on the World Heritage List, the following are some examples of properties inscribed under the six criteria:

Criterion i "represent a masterpiece of human creative genius"

The Taj Mahal (India); the Pyramids of Gizeh (Egypt); the Athens Acropolis (Greece); the Buddhist temples of Borobodur (Indonesia); Stonehenge and Avebury (United Kingdom).

Criterion ii "exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town planning and landscape design"

Diocletian's Palace at Split (Croatia); Xanthos (Turkey); Hadrian's Wall (United Kingdom); the Great Wall (China); the Moscow Kremlin (Russia); the Völklingen ironworks (Germany).

Criterion iii "bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilisation or cultural tradition which is living or which has disappeared"

Mesa Verde (USA); the Imperial Palace, Beijing (China); Mont-Saint-Michel (France); Moenjodaro (Pakistan); Angkor (Cambodia).

Criterion iv "be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history"

Jesuit monasteries in the Guayrá region of Argentina and Brazil; the Qin Tomb at Xi'an (China); Delphi (Greece); Baalbek (Lebanon); Seville (Spain); the Castle of Himeji-jo (Japan); Taos Pueblo (USA); the Nazca Lines (Peru).

Criterion v "be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it had become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change"

Meteora (Greece); Venice (Italy); Shibam (Yemen); the vernacular village of Hollokö (Hungary).

Criterion vi "be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion on the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria, cultural or natural).

The Statue of Liberty (USA); L'Île de Gorée (Sénégal); Jerusalem (nominated by Jordan); Rome and the Vatican (Italy); Uluru-Kata Tjuta (Australia); Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (Canada).

Conclusion

This has been a rapid survey of a complex subject and does not deal with many other aspects of the World Heritage Convention, such as the programme of systemic monitoring of properties on the List now being launched. It has been intended to serve as an introduction to the Convention and to explain and illuminate what may sometimes seem a somewhat arcane procedure to those concerned with the management and presentation of some of the properties on the World Heritage List in the United Kingdom.

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5. World Heritage Sites in the Planning System

John Lee

Until September 1994 one might have been forgiven for believing that, as far as the planning system was concerned, World Heritage Sites did not exist. At the time there were those who saw nothing peculiar in this state of affairs. At the time there were those who saw nothing peculiar in this state of affairs. Even as late as 1989 and 1991 my Council was receiving decisions on planning appeals where, at least in the mind of the Council or the principal objectors, the existence of the World Heritage inscription was a crucial issue and yet the planning Inspectors were referring to the advice from Government that the existence of a World Heritage Site conveyed no special or particular degree of protection to the area above and beyond other 'normal' planning conditions.

Understandably many people found it difficult to grasp that a site could be recognised internationally as being representative of a significant aspect of the development of mankind and yet the 'home' Government could be content that this required no special additional protection or consideration beyond those already in existence.

Inevitably this issue was raised in Parliament through the mechanism of asking questions of the Government of the day.

Thus in February 1989, in the House of Lords Lord Hesketh, for the Government, replying to questions from Lord Kennet, Lord Falkland and Baroness Birk made the following statement:

> "My noble friend suggested that local planning authorities needed more guidance on how they should applications affecting such particularly sensitive sites.
>
> The Government do not consider that there is a need for special guidance for local planning authorities. We believe that the natural and cultural heritage of World Heritage sites is adequately protected by the statutory provisions relating to development control and additional safeguards in respect of the built and natural heritage. There are no specific additional restrictions associated with developments in or near World Heritage sites."

and

> "I must stress … that inclusion of a site on the World Heritage list is not of itself an instrument of control. It merely signals the particular importance of that site as a material factor to be taken into account by a local planning authority in determining an application..."

Clearly the government believed that the very reasons which would lead to inscription as a World Heritage Site would inevitably and invariably mean that other planning concerns, be they related to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty,

Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings would apply and would provide sufficient protection for these Sites within the planning system.

While this may, in fact, have been the case and certainly applied to the proposed development sites within the Avebury area that had been the focus of the original questions, the response from the Government did seem to miss the point. World Heritage Sites were recognised because they represented properties having outstanding universal value. To many this meant that they should have equivalent recognition within the planning system. Also, even if it were accepted that it was appropriate to treat the fact of a World Heritage Site as a 'material consideration' for planning purposes, it would still have been of great value to have had guidance from Government as to what conclusions local planning authorities were entitled to draw from this and how it should actually impact upon the process of dealing with development proposals.

Lord Hesketh and the Government held the view that, because all World Heritage Sites are different, it would be inappropriate to offer general guidance on their management and conservation.

That response from the Government failed to offer comfort to those who believed that World Heritage Sites required, or rather demanded, an extra dimension of recognition within the only statutory system that might effectively control the process of physical development (as opposed to natural change) which had the potential to irredeemably change their character and appearance. Pressure continued to be applied to Government to offer more guidance.

The eventual response of the Secretary of State for the Environment was the publication of Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 15 Planning and the Historic Environment in September 1994. PPGs set out Government policy on planning issues and provide guidance to local authorities and other on the operating of the planning system.

In PPG 15, for the first time, the Government made a statement of policy about the relationship between World Heritage Sites and the planning system.

Paragraphs 6.35 to 6.37 inclusive set out information about the World Heritage Convention, list the inscribed World Heritage Sites in England and encourage local authorities to work with owners and managers of World Heritage sites and other agencies to ensure that comprehensive management plans for the Sites are put 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

The key advice to local planning authorities appears, however, in paragraphs 2.22 and 2.23 of the document.

The advice remains that “no additional statutory controls follow from the inclusion of a site in the World Heritage list”. All that does follow is that the site is highlighted as of having outstanding international importance and this is a key material consideration to be taken into account by local planning authorities. It goes on to advise that local planning authorities should formulate specific planning policies for protecting these sites and should include these policies in their development plan. It also suggests that significant development proposals affecting World Heritage Sites will generally require formal environmental assessments, to ensure that their immediate impact and their implications for the longer term are fully evaluated.

The addition of the word “key” to the concept of material consideration does little to carry the guidance forward in the persistent absence of advice as to the direction in which taking account of that key consideration should lead. That issue has been dealt with elsewhere, particularly in an excellent article by Chris Pound in the first issue of Heritage Matters, the news sheet of the Local Authority World Heritage Sites Forum and will not be discussed further here. Suffice to say that the most helpful element of change in the advice was the reference to the wisdom of including policies for control of development in World Heritage Sites in the development plans.

To local planning authorities and to those who had campaigned long and hard for the strengthening of controls over development in World Heritage Sites this second change was at least a step in the right direction, taken together with other changes which were taking place in planning legislation.

In 1991 the Planning and Compensation Act had introduced a change in emphasis for the rôle within the planning process that the development plan and the policies within it should play. Prior to 1991 the development plan had been recognised as one, but only one, of the factors which a local planning authority would take into account in making planning decisions. The 1991 Act required that in future, when a local planning authority had to have regard to the provisions of the development plan, it would determine the question in accordance with the development unless there were other material considerations which indicated otherwise.

What the advice which emerged in PPG 15 was doing, therefore, was to offer the local planning authority the opportunity to create its own level of recognition of the importance to be afforded to a World Heritage Site by putting forward appropriate policies for discussion in the development plan process and subsequently by adopting those policies in the development plan. By doing this the local planning authority would achieve a statutory point of reference for dealing with development proposals within a World Heritage Site and prospective developers would have the certainty of knowing what response they were likely to receive from the authority.

The proof, of course, will lie in the decisions which the Secretary of State or his Planning Inspectors make on appeals or ‘called-in’ applications. As far as my authority is concerned the batch of significant planning decisions related to the World Heritage Site were made at the end of the 1980s or the beginning of the 1990s. That is, prior to the open expression of Government advice in PPG 15 and at the time when decision makers were still reliant on the ‘material consideration’ argument. Ironically, for those who are strong supporters of the notion that all development proposals in World Heritage Sites ought to be resisted, the lack of detailed guidance and the lack of any special controls turned out to be no great hindrance to their aims!

Since the advent of PPG 15 we have had no proposals of similar magnitude to test the robustness of the current approach. We are in the process of adopting a Local Plan covering the whole of the District which incorporates policies founded on the advice in PPG 15 and on which we will rely for making decisions on planning applications in the future. Given the nature of the advice in PPG 15 we would expect to be successful in defence of those policies.

It does remain the case, however, that there is no ‘special’ status afforded to World Heritage Sites within the planning system. Clearly the mechanisms through which the existence of a World Heritage Site can be taken into account in individual cases are there, and the eventual adoption of Local Plans by all local authorities will create a situation where policies are in place appropriate to the local situation but if this proves to be insufficient to protect Sites from development pressure then we can expect more calls for a further elevation of the status of World Heritage Sites in the system.

6. Managing the Avebury World Heritage Site

Melanie Pomeroy

Introduction

Since September 1996 English Heritage have been funding the preparation of a Management Plan for the Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS). In April 1998, a Draft Plan was launched for widespread consultation and discussion. This paper discusses the process of developing the Plan, and outlines some of its aims and objectives.

Background

The Avebury complex of sites and monuments, situated on the edge of the Marlborough Downs in north eastern Wiltshire, represents a unique surviving example of outstanding human endeavour in Neolithic times and later. Avebury Henge, Stone Circles and associated sites, seen in juxtaposition to later historic features - small villages, designed parklands and large manor houses, greatly contribute to a distinctive historic and cultural landscape. The particularly rich assemblage of archaeological sites, both visible and buried, provides a vivid record of past landscape patterns and use. Indeed, these monuments and features have exerted a considerable visual and cultural influence on the surrounding landscape for almost 5,000 years. Since 1986, the outstanding universal value of the Avebury complex has been recognised by its inscription, together with Stonehenge, as a WHS under the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention.

The boundary of the Avebury WHS encloses an area of 22.5 square kilometres around the six key prehistoric monuments in the care of the state (in Guardianship) which form the basis of the WHS designation. These monuments are: Avebury Henge and Stone Circles; Windmill Hill; Silbury Hill; West Kennet Long Barrow; West Kennet Avenue and the Sanctuary. These monuments are managed by the National Trust who own and manage just under a third of the WHS for the purposes of permanent preservation and public access. The rest of the WHS is in multiple ownership and is an intensely farmed landscape with a thriving local village at the core of the area. The Avebury WHS also contains many important features of built heritage and nature conservation value. The overall importance of the conservation value of the WHS is reflected in its inclusion within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The majority of the Avebury WHS is, therefore, subject to a variety of pressures from modern life. The present land use pressures on the historic and natural resources arise principally from agriculture, tourism and traffic.

The process of drafting the Management Plan

The Draft Management Plan has been prepared on behalf of the Avebury WHS Working Party (chaired by English Heritage), as a basis for consultation with local people and all those with an interest in the management of the area. The Working Party comprises representatives from the agencies who hold management responsibilities in the WHS, such as the National Trust, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the local authorities and Avebury Parish Council. English Heritage, as the lead body developing Management Plans for World Heritage Sites in England, has funded this two-year collaborative project which aims to have a Management Plan in place for Avebury before the end of 1998.

Understanding the resource is a vital part of the process of developing a good management plan. Therefore, a great deal of research, survey and consultation has taken place over the last few months. As part of this process, English Heritage employed consultants to undertake a landscape assessment and a visitor and traffic management assessment of the WHS. In addition, English Heritage has developed a comprehensive database of all the cultural and environmental assets of the WHS, held within a Geographical Information System (GIS). These projects form the main building blocks of the Draft Management Plan.

Key to the success of the Plan is consultation and the involvement of local people. A visitor survey and a number of local community discussion workshops have been held over the last few months. A public consultation exercise is currently in progress (April-July 1998) in order to seek the views of local people, farmers, landowners and all interested in the management of the WHS, prior to the implementation of the Plan.

The preparation this strategic Draft Management Plan for the entire WHS is a significant move forward in securing the future character and quality of the WHS landscape as a whole, which is locally cherished and internationally recognised. The Plan provides a framework for the holistic and proactive management of the landscape, helping to ensure that the special qualities of the WHS are sustained and preserved for future generations.

In particular the Draft Plan aims to:

- establish an overall vision for the long-term future of the Avebury WHS which will be widely accepted.

- explore opportunities for positive management with farmers, landowners, and other agencies which will enhance the landscape character of the WHS whilst respecting economic interests.

- provide guidance and attract widespread support and which will lead to an increased understanding, respect and care for this exceptional cultural landscape.

The contents of the Draft Plan

The Plan comprises a statement of the objectives necessary for the long-term preservation of the site and its landscape setting. The objectives also aim to balance the interests of conservation, public access and of those who live and work in the WHS. The objectives are based on the identification of the values of the Site, key management issues and an assessment of why the WHS is sensitive and vulnerable to the pressures of modern life.

The first part of the Draft Plan contains an assessment of the cultural values that make Avebury special, including justification for its inscription as a WHS. The protection of WHS values and sympathetic land management within the area greatly depends on identifying and resolving key management issues. The second part of the Plan contains the descriptive information used in the identification of 51 issues related to management needs. Following on from the description and evaluation, the third part of the Plan sets out objectives for the management of the WHS based on a strategic view over thirty years, and medium-term objectives for five to ten years. In total, twenty-five objectives have been identified. The overall long-term objectives set the context for the more detailed medium-term objectives, strategy and programmes of action outlined in the final part of the Draft Plan.

Overall objectives for the next thirty years

- Understand and influence the long-term change in the WHS cultural landscape for the benefit of the historic environment.

- Gain recognition for Avebury as a very special place for which special treatment should be given by government departments, agencies and landowners, in order to safeguard the historic environmental assets of the WHS and their setting for the benefit of succeeding generations.

- Meet Britain's obligations under the World Heritage Convention in relation to the effective management of the Avebury WHS.

- Ensure the sustainability of all uses of the WHS.

Objectives for the next 5-10 years

LAND USE AND CONDITION OF THE MONUMENTS AND THEIR IMMEDIATE SETTING

- Provide the most appropriate landscape setting for all the major monuments and to halt ongoing degradation of sites and monuments currently under current land use.

- Enhance and conserve the landscape character of the WHS with respect to tree cover and other planted features.

- Enhance and protect the visual sensitivity of the key monuments and their setting.

- Ensure the boundary of the WHS offers the best possible protection for the monuments and their landscape setting.

- Establish an accurate picture of the current condition and vulnerability of all monuments.

THE PLANNING AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Maintain and enhance the rich built heritage features in the WHS, recognising their relationship to the monuments and landscape.

- Optimise the use of agri-environmental schemes and other management agreements in order to enhance the protection of the monuments and their landscape setting.

- Enhance the protection of the monuments and historic landscape setting of the WHS afforded by the Local Plan and policy framework.

- Enhance the protection of the WHS from the activities which do not currently require planning permission but are potentially damaging to upstanding and buried archaeological features.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Implement measures to provide comprehensive treatment of all important road links within the WHS, in order to improve safety and the quality of the historic environment.

- Implement a strategic policy to reduce parking congestion in the Village area on peak days, dispersing the pressure without exceeding the overall capacity of the WHS historic landscape to absorb change.

- Reduce the reliance on the private car by visitors to Avebury WHS by encouraging the uses of more sustainable methods of transport to get to the site and to move around within it.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Ensure all aspects of public access and tourism at Avebury are sustainable, despite the likelihood of increasing visitor numbers in future.

- Mitigate the physical damage caused to monuments and footpaths by the impact of visitor pressure and restore the areas significantly affected.

- Reduce the negative effects of visitor pressure at Avebury on the quality of life of local communities.

- Encourage visitor appreciation of the wider landscape in order to enhance enjoyment and understanding of the WHS at the same time as dispersing visitor pressure from the Village area.

- Ensure that the development of any further visitor facilities at Avebury are compatible with sustainability objectives.

- Establish an integrated monitoring programme which will promote proactive management by predicting potential damage to the site and will assess the effectiveness of management actions in tackling the problems.

RESEARCH

- Encourage and promote academic research to achieve a deeper understanding of the WHS necessary for its appropriate management. All research should be carried out with due regard to the principles of sustainability and to appropriate standards of work.

Implementing the Management Plan

The implementation of the Plan will be achieved by a variety of agencies and individuals who own or currently have management responsibilities in the WHS. Some objectives will require collective action, while others will fall to a single agency or individual. The major share of the responsibility for meeting the objectives will fall to the National Trust and the other landowners and tenant farmers within the WHS. The willingness of owners and farmers to support the Plan and contribute to the maintenance of the historic landscape features is fundamental to the achievement of the objectives.

Two specific mechanisms are proposed to aid the successful achievement of the objectives. Firstly, it is proposed that the Avebury WHS Working Party should oversee the implementation and delivery of the Plan and monitor its success. The Working Party, composed primarily of the agencies and groups involved with the developing the Management Plan itself, will need to continue to meet on a regular basis (every 3-6 months) and in due course, guide the revision and updating of the Plan.

Secondly, English Heritage has proposed to provide the funding for a WHS Management Plan Implementation Officer. The post, initially to be funded for a two-year period and accommodated by Kennet District Council, will provide the necessary local liaison and coordination to aid the implementation of the Management Plan. Primary roles of the post-holder will be reviewing the effectiveness of the Management Plan, and identifying grant-giving bodies and make bids or funding.

The achievement of the Plan's objectives is likely to be constrained by several issues which have a strong bearing on the management of the WHS but which are generally outside the possible scope of the Plan. For example, the achievement of the overall objectives will only come as a result of modifying society's attitude towards its heritage assets and through changing patterns of consumption and behaviour towards the environment. This is especially relevant with regard to the effects of traffic and busy roads within the WHS. Moreover, the levels of funding necessary to achieve some of the proposed objectives are quite considerable, possibly beyond the scope of many of the agencies and individuals concerned.

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Draft Man Plan ref (c.1996-8)

7. Squaring the Avebury Stone Triangle: a brief account of the growth of the management role of the National Trust at Avebury.

David Riddle

Paper submitted 1997, edited 1998 by GS and AC

Ten years ago the 880 acres owned by the National Trust at Avebury ranked as a minor agricultural property in terms of its management responsibilities. On acquisition from Alexander Keiller in 1943 the Great Henge, the restored section of the West Kennet Avenue and Windmill Hill were placed in Guardianship of the then Ministry of Works (now English Heritage) who took on the care of the monuments and the visitors to them. The Trust looked after the trees and the wider landscape, most of which had been let under agricultural tenancies in the wartime push to maximise food production, and it employed a single warden who kept an eye on Avebury along with the Trust's other north Wiltshire open spaces.

Now as its ownership and responsibilities have grown, Avebury must be classed as one of the National Trust's most important properties with ten staff employed on site, including four archaeologists. This paper provides a brief account of that transition and some management implications of caring for such a complex and sensitive site.

Things began to change in the late 1980s in three distinct areas: in 1986 Avebury (together with Stonehenge) was inscribed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites which greatly raised awareness of the importance of the area; three Public Inquiries relating to proposed developments within the World Heritage Site highlighted the potential threats and finally some important opportunities arose for the National Trust to acquire land for protection.

In 1988 the Trust was able to acquire 480 acres of the land at West Kennet Farm which included important archaeological features and the setting for the Avebury monuments up to the Ridgeway in the east. Each of the Planning Inquires, which rejected proposed commercial developments, resulted in an opportunity for the Trust to acquire the site: in 1989 the Ridgeway Café, which the Trust promptly demolished as a landscape improvement; in 1991 Avebury Manor, where the Trust was faced with 27 enforcement notices requiring the removal of buildings erected without planning consent by the previous owner, and in 1994, the acquisition of the West Kennett Farm buildings. These together with the most recent purchase in 1995 of 112 acres to the south of Waden Hill securing the last substantial section of the West Kennet Avenue, brought the Trust's ownership to over 1500 acres or about one third of the Avebury World Heritage Site.

This process, of the Trust actively fighting developments at Public Inquiry and purchasing threatened land, very significantly changed the balance between it and English Heritage. It was becoming increasingly clear that unity of management was important for a landscape of this type and that the existing division of responsibilities was confusing and often counter-productive. The growth of the Trust's own expertise

in managing archaeological sites further eroded the logic of the post-war arrangement.

After several years of discussion, it was agreed in 1994 that the National Trust would enter into “Local Management Agreements” with English Heritage, resulting in the day-to-day management of all six Guardianship Sites being devolved from English Heritage to the Trust. They included three sites also in the Guardianship of the Secretary of State but which had other owners: West Kennet Long Barrow (owned by a local farmer); Silbury Hill (owned by Lord Avebury) and the Sanctuary (owned by the Secretary of State). In addition, another Local Management Agreement provided for the management of the Alexander Keiller Museum (owned by the Trust but in Guardianship), and those archaeological collections held there which are owned by and in the Guardianship of the Secretary of State.

That brief account therefore outlines the transformation of the National Trust’s interests at Avebury over the last decade and the accumulation of what UNESCO would describe as a “heritage asset” for which it now cares.

In the care of its properties the National Trust has two principal duties: firstly, their long-term preservation which it achieves through ownership and management, and secondly, providing public benefit which it achieves through allowing access to its land wherever possible. These duties are laid down in statute through the National Trust Acts but there is a third and very important responsibility which may not be written down in statute but is implicit in much of the Trust’s work. That is a responsibility to the communities related to the land it owns. These three interrelated interests can be envisaged as the sides of a triangle, each having an influence on the others. This is not unique to Avebury but is a common thread through many areas of conservation management.

I am not sure if the triangle is always equilateral as each side will exert pressures on the others in differing degrees. At sites like Avebury we are all too aware of the pressures from tourism. Like it or not Avebury is famous, attracting visitors from all over the world, best estimates suggest around half a million people per year. This inevitably exerts physical pressure on the monuments which leads to erosion, erosion which now cannot be expected to be self-healing and which requires active management to mitigate its effects. With visitors comes the pressure for facilities: for parking, for food, for souvenirs, and the ever-important lavatories! A thirst for information, not only basic information like “where are the loos?” but the need to satisfy the inevitable curiosity – What is Avebury? Why is it there? Who built it?

Of course the Avebury we see today is very much a product of Alexander Keiller and it is very fortunate that as part of his work he created a museum to display what he discovered. This museum is therefore as much a part of the history of Avebury as the stones Keiller raised. It is now an invaluable resource which can be used to help visitors understand the sheer wonder of the place.

At Avebury the principal “visitor attractions” are interwoven with a living community. The demands of tourism will inevitably create pressures for residents, whether it be through the congestion on the High Street, the impact on privacy, the creation of

litter, or the creation of noise be it the enthusiastic chattering of large groups or the all-pervading sound of a digeridoo. The community also includes business interests some of which depend on tourism, others, perhaps like farming, which welcome it less. The potential conflicts between public access and farming interests are well known. Visitors can have an impact on farming – gates being left open or crops being trampled are frequently quoted examples. Equally, farming activities can restrict access to land or monuments of great interest to the visitor and can have a physical impact on the archaeological sites themselves.

There is a complex relationship between the three sides of this triangle and the whole question of management is about trying to strike the right balance between them. In fact, it might better be visualised as three overlapping circles with the size of the areas of overlap representing the degree of mutual impact between these interests. There is no perfect balance; at best it is a dynamic equilibrium where very often the Trust can only hope to maintain an acceptable tension. The mechanism used to minimise tension is the preparation of management plans which try to take all interests into account in order to reduce potential conflicts and to find acceptable compromises. At the end of the day, compromises will have to be made and it is interesting to note that the “Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites” (Fielden and Jokilehto 1993, PAGE) talks of selecting the “least bad” management plan.

Communication with interested groups and individuals is a vital part of trying to arrive at the “least bad” plan and the Trust has embarked on a lengthy consultation process to help it reconcile its statutory duties of preservation and public benefit with the interests of the communities involved. It would be naïve to expect a consensus to emerge but the process will undoubtedly highlight the issues and concerns which the Trust will have to take into account in its ongoing care of this property.

The Trust must prepare a management plan for its land at Avebury from the point of view of an owner who will actually have to implement the policies and make decisions about its land, which will have an effect on others. It cannot ignore the responsibilities set out in its Acts of Parliament but it must be able to account to those affected for why it is doing what it does.

The Trust must also recognise that plans for its land are part of a bigger picture – the World Heritage Site itself. The process for the production of a plan for the World Heritage Site as a whole has begun. Whilst that plan must seek to influence private landowners and address strategic and planning issues which affect the wider site, the Trust hopes that its own conclusions and proposals will have an important part to play in improving the presentation of Avebury to its world audience.

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8. The Avebury Neolithic project, 1987-1993: aims and results, reflections and implications

Alasdair Whittle

Aims

Colin Renfrew comments in one of his fieldwork reports that some of the real possibilities of a project only emerge during its course and after its completion (Renfrew 1979, 2). I used to find this puzzling, but I understand now what he meant. A successful project should generate new questions which were not evident at the outset.

In the many grant applications which I made on behalf of The Avebury Neolithic project, I stated the primary aim of the project over and over again as the better definition for the Neolithic period of the basic sequence and of the development of the physical environment in the area; any better understanding of the context as a whole including subsistence, settlement and the history of any particular monument was to be seen as a bonus, in the context of debate about the nature of the Neolithic lifestyle and the rate and character of Neolithic development in southern Britain as a whole. This was sound enough, not claiming too much, and appropriate to the scale of fieldwork which a university-based project could attempt at the time. In retrospect, this was to claim too little, and in a sense therefore to undervalue the enormous potential of an area such as that around Avebury for continuing and future research. It proved relatively straightforward - although it involved a lot of hard work and cooperation by many colleagues - to get samples from secure contexts for radiocarbon dating and for environmental analyses (Whittle 1993; Whittle et al. 1993; Whittle 1994; Whittle 1997a; Whittle et al. forthcoming). Much more unexpected was the level and quality of information which new work would bring, from discovery of a major new site to re-evaluation of existing ones, and the implications much of this had for my view of the Neolithic period as a whole, not just in north Wiltshire or central-southern England. But at least the fruits of this spiralling 'hermeneutic circle' (Hodder 1992, 214) can be used in helping to plan for the future.

Principal results

The Avebury Neolithic project involved seven successive seasons of research fieldwork. Five sites were investigated: the West Kennet palisade enclosures (a new and major discovery of the project itself: in 1987, 1990, 1992); Windmill Hill causewayed enclosure (1988); part of the area outside Windmill Hill causewayed enclosure (1993); Millbarrow destroyed chambered tomb (1989); and Easton Down long barrow (1991). In addition, publication of earlier excavations at Silbury Hill (Whittle 1997a) and slightly further afield at Wayland's Smithy, Oxon (Whittle 1991) was done on behalf of English Heritage and was closely linked to the project.

New radiocarbon dates were obtained from Windmill Hill, Millbarrow, Easton Down long barrow and West Kennet, and it was possible to use these and existing dates to

suggest a six-stage local sequence, Phases A-F (Whittle 1993). Linked to previous investigations, including those in the Kennet valley (Evans et al. 1993), new environmental research especially at Windmill Hill, Easton Down and Millbarrow (Whittle et al. forthcoming; Whittle et al. 1993; Whittle 1994) helped to expand our understanding of Neolithic impacts on the physical environment, showing activity on the Lower Chalk plateau and much variation across all parts of the area. There were probably cycles of short-term clearance and cultivation in the Early Neolithic, there was still much woodland in the middle part of the Neolithic and the trend to more open country in the Late Neolithic can be in part related to cycles of monument construction and ritual gathering.

The excavations at Windmill Hill confirmed the existing perception of the dominance of cattle in the faunal assemblage of the earlier part of the Neolithic. These results and reassessment of the Keiller archive showed how often bone had been fragmented and stored elsewhere before final deposition in the ditches in the enclosure ditches; few concentrations of bone in the ditches seem to consist of the remains of single or near-complete animals. The excavations also showed that cereal remains were present in many contexts at the enclosure, but in small quantities.

It is impossible to extrapolate the balance in the subsistence economy between cereals and domesticated animals from such data, and the special context of the enclosure may anyway have been one in which particular emphasis was laid on selected aspects, but the impression left is nonetheless one of a world dominated by animals, their movements, their consumption and the treatment of their remains after death and use. The same pattern was in essence repeated in the later Neolithic context at West Kennet (Whittle 1997a): plant remains were present in small quantities and fragmentary condition, along with many bones. Now the dominant species was pig, as in most other major later Neolithic ritual structures in southern Britain. It is unclear in this context also whether this dominance accurately reflects principal subsistence concerns. Pigs may have been reared for the specific purposes of feasting attendant on the construction of the enclosures; and there seems to have been careful selection of sides and parts of the animals for appropriate deposition. In the slightly later Beaker context at Hemp Knoll, excavation by Mrs Robertson-Mackay had shown a cow to be the animal selected for feasting or other ritual attendant upon burial ceremonies (Robertson-Mackay 1980).

The project did not examine occupations or settlement as such, on the assumption that both the Windmill Hill causewayed enclosure and the West Kennet palisade enclosures are not principally to do with occupation. One exception was the occupation surface under the outer bank at Windmill Hill. This raises a significant question of categorisation, since most of the activities represented in the enclosure ditches were already present on the pre-bank surface: the use of pottery and the deposition of it as sherds, consumption of meat and some cereals, the deposition of animal bone and treatment of the human dead. Was this in fact 'ordinary' occupation?

The fieldwork in 1993 outside the Windmill Hill enclosure revealed a few pits only beneath the remains of the well-known lithic scatter on the south slope of the hill. Both earlier and later Neolithic pits have signs of structured deposition within. The bulk of the flint from the lithic scatter may have been of later Neolithic date, and this locale emerges as probably another place of periodic or episodic gathering, rather than as a settlement as such. In other ways, the impression was gained of a surprisingly sparse density of lithic remains over the surface of the area as a whole: from the lack of finds on the Lower Chalk around Millbarrow and to its north, from the low quantities in test pits around Easton Down long barrow on the higher chalk downland to the south-west, and from the lack of struck flint in the fields across which the West Kennet palisade enclosure complex lies, supported also by the results of the sewage line surveys carried out by Wessex Archaeology (Powell et al. 1996). This is clearly not the whole picture, as seen in such surface survey as has been carried out (e.g. Holgate 1987) and from the Keiller notebooks recording the acquisition of flints from the area in the 1920s and 1930s, but the lack of obvious traces of occupation continues to be striking.

The apparently straightforward procedure of site sampling by cuttings across ditches produced some surprises and generated a lot of further information. The Millbarrow excavations gave a new example of a two-phase chambered tomb, its double flanking ditches being quite unexpected. The work at Windmill Hill has given much new understanding of how the causewayed enclosure developed and was used. In the end the 1988 excavations were most effective in conjunction with the reassessment of the Keiller archive. The inner and middle circuits may precede the outer. Different kinds of message were conveyed in the deposits of the different circuits. Essentially, the enclosure may have celebrated fundamental aspects of the new Neolithic lifestyle, presenting and working ideas to do with community, lifecycle and the remembered past.

That the West Kennet palisade enclosures existed at all was a major surprise. They were used for shorter periods of time than the enclosure at Windmill Hill. Their construction involved not only large-scale tree-felling but also large-scale feasting on pigs. The palisades may have enclosed sacred domains. The two enclosures were probably successive and can be linked - if the radiocarbon dates allow overlap - to the construction of Silbury Hill, in a united complex of ideas to do with earth symbolism, rebirth and continuity (discussed at length in Whittle 1997a). Each enclosure probably ended in major conflagration, and from the flames of one ending came a new beginning, just as the great mound of Silbury Hill itself was being built, perhaps by analogy to symbolise ideas of cycle and rebirth and of the earth itself.

Reflections

This project has therefore produced rich results. How could similar work be better done in the future? My first reflection is on the constraint that narrow cuttings produced. Many of these were unavoidable in practical terms. We excavated on scheduled sites, where the constraint was imposed for perfectly understandable and normal reasons. Where the site was not yet scheduled, at West Kennet, the primary

aim was discovery and initial characterisation. It should be an aim of future research, however, to excavate a whole segment of one of the local causewayed enclosures, to uncover a large area of the interior of one of the West Kennet palisade enclosures, or even to strip a substantial portion of the valley edge (cf. Evans et al. 1993) to give the opportunity for investigation over more meaningful areas. For occupation evidence, this is currently being done in one or two locations in southern Britain, under rescue conditions, for example at Yarnbury in the upper Thames (Hey 1997) and the Eton Rowing Lake in the lower Thames (ref???). It may be hard to replicate in an area such as around Avebury but it should remain a goal.

Three other reflections come to mind. One is that a certain amount of basic work still remains to be done, at a developed stage in the history of research in the area. Systematic surface survey would test some of the claims I made earlier about occupation density. This could also serve, by extending into neighbouring areas such as the surrounding vales, the Lower Chalk plateau, the Kennet around Marlborough and the Marlborough Downs, to test the intuitive notion of region which is caught up in so many discussions of the area. After the Stonehenge Environs project, there seems to have been a loss of nerve in funding such enterprises. The second reflection is that it has also taken a long time to undertake basic inventorisation and especially systematic assessment of the air photographic record. This at least is now underway in the capable hands of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (England). The third reflection is that much could be achieved by more of the same as practised in 1987-1993, by small-scale targeted investigations at selected sites. This would need appropriate funding. As conditions in universities have become ever more competitive in the culture of research assessment and as competition therefore increases for scarce fieldwork research grants, there is less merit in carrying out work which endlessly repeats itself. Here is a strong case for far-sighted public funding.

Apart from all this, there remain sites about which we know all too little. There is a strong case for more work at Avebury itself, at Silbury Hill and around it, on the line of the West Kennet Avenue and on local stone circles apart from Avebury and The Sanctuary themselves. There is no shortage of things to be done.

Implications

It is important to relate the results and the potential of this one complex to research over a wider area. These are exciting times for Neolithic research in Britain as a whole. Much effort recently has gone on the one hand into individual projects and now their publication, and on the other into remodelling and rethinking our general approaches to the period as a whole. There is a need now to think about regions together, to try better to understand diversity and varying sequences as well as common features of change. For me, it has been significant to compare, for example, the sequence around Stonehenge with that around Avebury, and to compare and contrast the nature of Stonehenge and Silbury Hill (Whittle 1997a; Whittle 1997b). Something similar has been attempted by Julian Thomas (1984; 1991), but other writing has been either at a much broader or at a much narrower

interpretative scale. In this context, the concept of region itself will need to be reconsidered. There can be no a priori reason to separate investigation of, say, the Vale of Pewsey from that of the upper Kennet. This is one dimension in which the limitations of the World Heritage Site classification and demarcation are exposed.

On a wider scale, the project has contributed to debate about the nature of the Neolithic in southern Britain as a whole (cf. Whittle 1996). It has encouraged me to support a model of slow beginnings and gradual development, of settlement dispersal and continued mobility, and of the importance throughout the sequence of ritual cycles and communal activity. The results of the project do not support any model of marked social hierarchy by the later Neolithic, though the nature of the sequence varied from area to area. We are thus required to think about the nature of Neolithic histories, from region to region and between regions. This raises a final task for the future, to unite our understanding of the Neolithic period, as we currently define it, with that of the very different landscape which emerged here, as elsewhere, in the later Bronze Age (see, for example, Gingell 1992). Crudely put, how do we get from the world of monuments to that of fields, boundaries and settlements? Not the least interesting part of the Neolithic sequence in the Avebury area is how it came to an end. It is time to abandon the restrictive terminology of the Three Age system, and to begin to incorporate a new view of the second millennium BC into our understandings of the third and fourth millennia.

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9. HADRIAN'S WALL

Christopher Young

At the Avebury seminar in 1995, Stephen Johnson described the process then underway of developing a management plan for the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and reported on the position that had been then reached. Since then the Plan has been completed and published (English Heritage 1996), and its content and approach has been summarised elsewhere (Young 1996, forthcoming). Aspects of its implementation are well advanced.

The opportunity to contribute this paper has been used, therefore, not to repeat the progress report of 1995, but to reflect on one aspect of the production of the Plan. This is the question of public and institutional involvement and consultation. It is a commonplace of the management of sites of natural or cultural heritage interest, that successful management should involve the public, and in particular, the local community affected by the site in question. Such local involvement is, indeed, a specific requirement of UNESCO's Operational Guidelines for World Heritage Sites (UNESCO 1997).

In the case of Hadrian's Wall, this aspect is particularly complex. The Wall itself is 73 miles long while the Cumbrian coastal defences extend at least to Maryport with outpost forts as far south as Ravenglass. In addition there are a large number of ancillary sites, including forts, the Roman town of Corbridge and roads at some distance to the north and south of the Wall. Comparatively little (around 10%) of the World Heritage Site is owned by bodies whose primary interest is conservation and managed by them for public access. Some of the remainder is owned either by local authorities for other reasons, for example the long stretch of the Wall under the B6318 road in eastern Northumberland. However, the vast bulk of the Site is owned by private estates or individuals whose prime interests tend to be agricultural, notwithstanding the pride and interest of most local inhabitants in its existence. Inevitably the existence of the World Heritage Site can place restrictions on some of their activities through the operation of either scheduled monument legislation or the planning system. Because of the size of the World Heritage Site, the number of owners and occupiers is very considerable, even in the rural areas

Approaching 10% of the Wall lies in the urban areas of Tyneside and Carlisle where the potential for affecting the local population is also considerable, as is evidenced by the fact that in the last thirty years the forts at Wallsend and South Shields have been progressively freed of the housing which previously encumbered large parts of them. Additionally the Management Plan defines a Setting around the World Heritage Site of some 450 square kilometres,

primarily in rural areas, in which the existence of the World Heritage Site is a key material factor in determining planning applications.

Apart from the potential effects of statutory controls through the planning system over large areas, there is also the effect of tourism on local inhabitants. c.1.25 million people (including day visitors who may themselves be local residents) are believed to visit the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site annually. Of these, approaching half a million visit staffed sites managed specifically for public access. The remainder visit sites in the open countryside by public footpaths or permissive access, nearly all in the Northumberland National Park which covers the central sector of the Wall where it passes through the most dramatic scenery along its route.
Some of these areas are very heavily visited. This access, even to many of the parts of the Wall in public care is across agricultural land, mainly upland pasture, and is perceived by some farmers to interfere with their livelihoods. More generally, heavy visitor numbers can affect adversely the life style of many local inhabitants through congestion and intrusion as well as providing a very substantial input to the local economy. Heavy visitor numbers can also damage the archaeology through erosion.

The size of the World Heritage Site means that there are very large numbers of official and other bodies involved . Apart from the main conservation organisations, other government departments and agencies involved include the two Government Regional Offices for the North-East and North-West, the Countryside Commission, the Rural Development Commission, two regional tourist boards, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. There are twelve local authorities covering parts of the World Heritage Site and these tend to be interested not just in planning control but also in terms of economic development and tourism promotion.

It was therefore recognised from the outset that a successful Plan could only be produced on the basis of a partnership not just of conservation bodies but of all those involved with, or living in or near the World Heritage Site. Its development was shaped to encourage the growth of such a broad partnership not just of government and local government bodies but also of the representatives of both the principal landowners in the rural areas and also of the tourism industry. It was recognised that consultation would be an integral part of the process but hoped that this would be informed and made easier because of the degree of prior involvement of the principal stakeholders in drafting the Plan.

It is helpful at this point to review briefly the processes and timescale through which the Plan was developed. English Heritage's intention to lead the production of the Plan was announced by its Chairman in June 1993. A Working Party, with representation of central and local government bodies, the tourist boards, the National Trust as a major landowner and the National

Farmers Union and Country Landowners Association was established in February 1994. The Working Party established four sub-groups to look at particular aspects of the Plan's development. These covered local planning, visitor services, rural land-use and policy and the urban areas. In each case representation was extended to include those with specialist interests in the subject area In the case of tourism, representation included also the Country Landowners Association and National Farmers Union because of the perceived impact of tourism on their interests. The sub-groups were supported by consultants producing reports. English Heritage also had access to the advice of the Hadrian's Wall Advisory Panel composed of archaeologists with particular interests in the Wall.

By April 1995, the work had advanced sufficiently to hold a seminar for an invited audience in Newcastle to explore some of the options. This brought together members of all the groups who had been working on the Plan and some others with an interest in the management of the World Heritage Site. With the results of the seminar it was possible to produce a consultation draft of the Plan in July 1995 (English Heritage 1995). The intention was to have a consultation period of three months and then publish the final version of the Plan. 400 copies of the consultation draft, together with 50,000 summary leaflets seeking views were produced in the first instance.

It would be fair to say that the development process was quite successful in involving official and institutional interests prior to the consultation launch. Comparatively little was done in this stage to involve the wider community through the media or through meetings. It was hoped that involvement of the Country Landowners Association (CLA) and the National Farmers Union (NFU) would adequately represent the interests of the individual farmers.

In the event, the consultation period lasted twelve months, with the final Plan being produced in July 1996 and over 800 copies of the consultation draft being eventually produced and distributed. After the July 1995 launch there was very lively press comment and considerable concerns were expressed on a number of issues. Over 200 responses were received and these were followed up in writing and, if necessary, by meetings of which a large number were held. Concerns were expressed particularly by farmers and landowners, but comments came from many others, including parish councils, amenity societies, archaeologists and individual local residents.

Meetings were largely targeted at those who had shown the most concern who were farmers and landowners. Their principal concerns were the effects of the Management Plan and of defining the boundaries of the World Heritage Site and its Setting on their ability to earn their living since they perceived the Plan as a further level of control. There were fears of widespread enforced change in farming practices, and of increased bureaucracy and controls. There were also considerable concerns about the impact of tourism, and

about possible traffic controls. Discussions with the NFU culminated in a semi-public meeting in Hexham with over 100 farmers present in December 1995. Other meetings were held with bodies such as parish councils, local authorities and amenity societies.

Following this series of meetings, a second consultation draft was produced in February 1996 and circulated to all who had commented on the first draft. This draft addressed a number of issues raised in the consultation and in particular the definition of the boundaries of the World Heritage Site and its Setting. Over 400 copies were issued and about 70 responses received. Following consideration of those responses and further meetings with interest groups, the Plan itself was published in July 1996.

There are a number of lessons to be learnt from the events summarised above. Consultation had been built into the process from the outset but clearly we had failed to get our message through to many of those involved until after the launch of the consultation draft. It is clear that involvement before the July 1995 launch had worked best at the official and institutional level. Representatives of bodies such as the CLA and NFU or even of some of the local authorities on the Working Party had clearly not been able to carry their parent bodies fully with them, as well as in some cases still having considerable reservations even at the draft stage. Effective communication with affected individuals had not happened in this stage of the process.

It is also clear that consultation requires time. Particularly with the scattered rural communities typical of much of the area of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, there is no way of short-circuiting this process. It is also clear that unless there are genuine issues of concern, the interest of busy people with many other preoccupations will not be engaged. Once their interest is engaged, only time and discussion will move things forward. In retrospect, it is clear that three months was too short a timescale for what was required. Those managing the consultation clearly need to be flexible in their approach to it if satisfactory results are to be achieved. Above all, there has to be a genuine willingness to listen and to respond, and if necessary to make changes in the Plan where this is possible and seen to be desirable.

The Management Plan gained greatly from the consultation process between July 1995 and July 1996. In retrospect, the controversy inspired in certain quarters was very useful in engaging the wider interest needed to get wide and genuine response. If policies had not been perceived to cause concerns, it is very unlikely that we would have received the genuine feedback we did in fact get.

The results of the consultation affected the shape of the Plan and had a considerable effect on how the World Heritage Site and its Setting were eventually defined and on some of the policies contained in the Plan. The

process also did much to make those producing the Plan aware of concerns of those affected by it and to make the latter more aware of the need for the Plan. Hopefully, the close negotiation over many months has laid foundations on which the successful implementation of the Plan can now be built. Maintaining and developing the communication established during the consultation is one of the priorities of the Hadrian's Wall Co-ordination Unit. Much of this is through working parties and the like concerned with particular aspects but, with our colleagues in the Hadrian Wall Tourism Partnership, we intentionally try to develop contacts with the wider world. The most effective ways to date have been speaking to a wide variety of groups, and the publication three times annually of a newsletter, News from Hadrian's Wall. Having a local presence is also extremely helpful.

There are of course ways in which the consultation process could have been managed more smoothly. Fundamentally, a formal stakeholder analysis at the outset would have identified more clearly the principal partners and individuals who needed to be involved. Having done so, it would have been wise not to rely solely on the formal meetings of the working parties and the circulation of papers but also to spend more time on discussions with the various interest groups and to seek opportunities to reach the wider audience potentially affected by the Plan. This of course requires sufficient time. It also requires a very clear grasp of the fundamental requirements of the Plan to achieve its objective of conserving and enhancing the World Heritage Site in all its aspects, as well as a willingness to share thoughts widely before policies have been formulated. It is vital too to communicate widely the purposes of the Plan and what is being done to achieve them. This requires outreach in the wider community and also a fairly proactive policy with the media. Again much of this comes back to the availability of time and resources.

To conclude, genuine consultation is essential to the production of a successful management plan. This will take time and resources and requires very careful preparation. It also requires a willingness to alter the plan in response to the consultation, particularly when the producer of the Plan cannot control implementation of all parts of it. The consultation process obviously begins at the outset through the involvement of people in the work of its drafting but a wider, formal process is also essential and should serve not just to gain acceptance of the published document but also to build up commitment to its future implementation. Informal contact with the wider audience needs to be fostered from the outset of the drafting process. It is therefore vital that those producing the plan should have a local presence on the ground to build the necessary contacts and partnerships. Without such consultation and commitment from at least the major stakeholders, the eventual plan is unlikely to succeed.

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10. Recording a World Heritage Site: Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal.

Keith Emerick.

How should World Heritage Sites be recorded and should they be recorded to a standard different from that created at other sites?

World Heritage Sites will inevitably be recorded using the techniques currently employed on other sites, the only difference being that the area of a World Heritage Site tends to be larger than the average site one might survey and would in all probability contain a greater variety of “types” – high status and vernacular buildings, different landscape styles. The archaeology may not be more complex in terms of its stratigraphy but will be present over a wider area. Thus the problem faced at many World Heritage Sites is that the combination of survey and recording techniques required to audit and analyse a plethora of features tends to be greater and more complex to dovetail. Recent work at Fountains Abbey, North Yorkshire, is offered as an example in the expectation that our mistakes can be avoided and any achievements built upon.

Fountains Abbey is a complex site – archaeologically and legally. The Abbey buildings, Inner and Outer Courts are only a small portion of the World Heritage Site. Responsibility for the complete site is split between the National Trust, which owns the Abbey, Gardens and Deer Park in perpetuity and English Heritage, who are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the Abbey buildings because they are in the Guardianship of the Secretary of State. The shooting rights across the site are owned by a private individual. The area of the Inner and Outer Courts is a Scheduled Monument, whilst Fountains Mill and Fountains Hall, within the Outer Court, are also Listed Buildings. Harrogate Borough Council has designated the River Skell which runs through the estate and lower valleys, a Special Landscape Area. The encompassing area, known as Nidderdale, has been declared an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Even with such a layering of ownership and responsibility, the ICOMOS Site Monitoring Report states that although the policies are in place to provide effective protection “it is clear that the boundaries of the site itself need protecting” (ICOMOS UK, 1994).

Archaeologically, the site consists of two principal elements: a Cistercian Abbey complete with Outer Court overlain by an eighteenth-century designed landscape which comprises Water Gardens, Chinese Landscape, Formal and “Wild” portions. Some of the related economic elements of the Abbey, the “home” granges, are adjacent and classified as Scheduled Monuments, but are not part of the World Heritage Site. Similarly, parts of the eighteenth-century landscape are currently outside the World Heritage Site.

Archaeological survey and research are split between the National Trust and English Heritage. The National Trust archaeologist is responsible for the area outside the Abbey precinct. The English Heritage Historic Properties Inspector of Ancient Monuments is responsible for the Scheduled Area, particularly the area in Guardianship. The obvious fault here is such a division had militated against the

formulation of a research design which covered the whole site with a common survey and recording methodology. This division of responsibility is further exacerbated by the fact that the English Heritage input is geared towards providing documentation for the consolidation and works process – there is little scope or time for analysis.

The situation has improved in recent years. The National Trust has embarked on a programme of documentary and landscape survey entitled The Archaeology Property Survey which seeks to compile a Sites and Monuments Record for the whole estate. This work, conducted by Mark Newman, consists of ten volumes of detailed record volumes accompanied by 12 sheets of AO 1:500 topographic survey, inventory and analysis volumes. This work is effectively a landscape history from the Neolithic to the Second World War, including site descriptions, bibliographic and pictorial sources and space for recommendations and suggested monitoring regimes. The topographic survey covers the area inside the National Trust boundary. Information on the Abbey is included in the form of an overview, rather than the detailed manner of the bulk of the survey. This survey is currently being examined and will shortly be available as a reference source in digital format.

The Historic Properties North part of the English Heritage has created a recording system of standing buildings now used on those structures within the Guardianship Area. This could be applied to the rest of the estate, and by extension the World Heritage Site. This system is based on the manipulation and enhancement of photogrammetric or rectified photographic base survey through AutoCAD to produce “intelligent drawings” which contain contextual, archaeological, structural, sampling and architectural detail records; information of the depths of weathering and open joints is also recorded. In short, the aim is to produce a “layered” document which satisfies archive, works and analytical demands – a management tool. It is a system designed to be flexible and is used throughout the English Heritage North Region on sites ranging from Roman to early twentieth century, so its suitability to record multi-period buildings to a common standard has been proven.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 here

With some of the recording elements in place, all that is needed is a mechanism to weave the two systems together into a strategy which will provide the base detail for the Management Plan.

The principal survey and management dilemma at a site such as Fountains is that of vistas. The concept of “buffer zones” is important to World Heritage Sites, but is a concept not recognised in English law; indeed the assumption has been that the existing legislation and guidelines, such as PPG 15, the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act with its requirement for Scheduled Monument Consent and the Local Instruments, is sufficient protection for such sites. The problem, in both legal and recording terms, with a designed landscape such as Fountains is that it works on the principal of vistas and surprise views, many elements of which are not in English Heritage or National Trust control, but which fall within or across the

surrounding buffer zone. For example, one of the most important vistas is that from St. Mary's Church, Studley, (designed by Williams Burges in the 1870s) to the east end of Ripon Minster approximately three miles distant, based on an earlier eighteenth century vista. The view is framed by the eighteenth-century Gatehouse, crosses the National Trust boundary and thereafter crosses several more recent residential parts of Ripon. Is it necessary or even practical to survey and record elements of such a "feature", or can one leave this area to be policed by other agencies so that new buildings do not encroach onto the vista? Exactly how much of a landscape is it feasible to record?

In reality the planning side of this problem will be dealt with as part of the Management Plan which is now under discussion between the relevant parties. The decision not to record, or to record the level and the level of record required will be dealt with in the recording strategy which is part of that Plan. The level of recording is a key element because of the multiplicity of features will have various grades of significance. Some of the vernacular buildings on the estate may have a greater significance that the older, higher status buildings, because the vernacular material gives regional character, identity, is in situ and reveals changing practice over time, whereas the higher status features may have been rebuilt, moved or both. Therefore one might expect to see a different level of record, but within the overall strategy.

In Historic Properties North, English Heritage, the decision was taken to survey all standing buildings to a scale of 1:20. This was considered by the archaeologists and architects to be the most useful scale at which to specify works, record structural , archaeological and design features and provide the best base detail to satisfy archival and analytical demands. In most cases all flat elevations are recorded using rectified photography, those with depth using photogrammetry. Combinations of survey types are used as necessary depending on the object and the desired outcome. Obviously not all buildings will be worked on at the same time, or prove to be significant; in such cases although the photography for the building survey is taken at 1:20, the finished base survey drawing can be issued at 1:50. This gives the flexibility to upgrade a survey if necessary, should a building need consolidating or prove to be more important than originally thought, as one can scale down from 1:20 to 1:50 but not the reverse.

There are two important points to make about survey:

1. Survey is not an end in itself.

2. Survey can be expensive.

Survey and recording should operate within an agreed strategy so that the levels of work are identified. This is essential if the user is to have an informed Management

Plan. It ensures also that existing funds are used correctly, directing energies towards those elements which require intense survey, placing others on the back-burner and applying the most suitable technique to the relevant project.

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11. WORLD HERITAGE DESIGNATION: expectations and consequences

P.J. Fowler and M.J. Stabler

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Introduction

Conservation designation is already ubiquitous in the United Kingdom (UK). A tinge of doubt about the nature of the achievement can cross the mind as we survey the *c.*450,000 listed buildings, the *c.*600,000 acres of National Trust (NT) inalienable land and the thousands of Conservation Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments, not to mention a further multitude of widely different categories of different designations across the natural and cultural fields. Virtually any expanse of British landscape, not just the built environment, is now an often thickly intermeshed patchwork of designations made at institutional, local, regional, national and international levels for a plenitude of good reasons. One expectation of a new type of designation could well be, therefore, that it is unnecessary. A consequence could be that it is not welcomed.

That may indeed have been a reaction in certain quarters in the UK to the arrival of World Heritage in 1987. Britain had already enjoyed or suffered from, depending on your point of view, well over a hundred years of conscious and active cultural conservation. This conserving tradition was based entirely on the particular premise that it is possible to select for preservation those bits of the heritage worth preserving. Protection therefore becomes particularist and highly judgemental. This contrasts with other approaches elsewhere in the world, notably that which opts for overall protection of heritage whether or not it has yet been identified let alone assessed. World Heritage designation clearly belongs to the former, British tradition, so it ought to be at least ideologically familiar to UK politicians and bureaucrats. As the grandest particularist concept of them all, however, it arrived late in an overcrowded British landscape of designation and was initially neither welcomed nor even particularly noticed. The UK government had voluntarily invited it into our homelands but it was not

initially seen as bringing consequences so it raised no expectations. As late as 21 October 1993, Lord Kennet felt obliged to remark in the House of Lords that

> '*It seems ….. that the Government are not too concerned about their commitments to world heritage sites under the 1972 convention ….. The point is that the Government of this country have under this convention assumed certain obligations, and have done so before world opinion. That is what treaties mean.*' (Hansard 1993).

Events were, however, already changing official indifference. Particularly influential was a series of Public Inquiries involving proposed development in UK World Heritage Sites. These occasions provided a splendid platform from which to adumbrate the World Heritage concept and to begin to explore its consequences. Expectations, therefore, began to be articulated and defined. The tender concept of heritage as a global and not just a national component of human culture tentatively took root in a country with, at the time, a xenophobic tendency, so too did the realisation that Britain's ascription to the World Heritage Convention actually brought official responsibilities. Avebury itself played a key role in these embryonic stirrings. We therefore take that numinous place as our case study. It is also part of our purpose to encourage the process whereby we, the British, come if not to love, at least to respect both our World Heritage Sites and the concept they represent. Such, minimally, is an expectation of us and we really must take the consequences seriously.

The rest of the world wants World Heritage Sites; people crave their World Heritage designation; enormous efforts, great ambitions and, frankly, wildly optimistic economic dreams cluster around the World Heritage concept. This is true among governments in some cases, and among inhabitants elsewhere in the face of government indifference or incompetence. Indifference was for some years the apparent attitude of the UK government but the Department of National Heritage (now the Department of Culture, Media and Sport) produced some welcome official words about World Heritage Sites in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15,1995 (PPG 15). While others such as the French, for example, press ahead with work on 'cultural landscapes', the new type of World Heritage designation, the Department has indicated its unwillingness to

consider them. This is a pity for the world, for Britain, especially on its uplands like Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor and in the Lake District, displays some of the best examples in the world (von Droste *et al*. 1995; Fowler and Jaques 1995).

Expectations of designation and the consequences of designation vary, even when we are theoretically dealing in an even-handed way with a supposedly uniform 'gold standard' of heritage. This comes in the expectation of excellence, however that quality manifests itself and in the expected standards of management in its widest sense. Fortunately, such a standard varies in practice for the best possible reason. One of the lessons that the World Heritage Committee has learnt the hard way and now values, is that underneath the blanket of World Heritage application and designation is the most important quality of all, diversity.

We try to say something here in general terms about expectations and consequences of World Heritage designation, articulating very little more than commonsense, first order inference and guesswork. Of course, post-designation studies exist of individual World Heritage Sites e.g. in von Droste 1995 and an interest in the economics, costs and underlying philosophies of general heritage activity is more or less continuously manifested in the late 20th century in many countries e.g. for Britain (Fowler 1987; Comptroller General 1992). We have however found no major overview of this field in a World Heritage context, particularly with regard to `expectations` or about economic consequences. We there briefly explore the concept of consequence, in particular anticipatory beneficial consequence, of World Heritage designation.

We know that World Heritage as an idea does raise high expectations; here we overtly recognise that the idea has to compete with all sorts of other demands in the world, particularly in those areas where the supply of resources for matters other than economic survival is fierce. Nevertheless, we note that much of the rest of the world is taking World Heritage very seriously, and that now, in 1997, the UK is at last stepping in the same direction, led by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), English Heritage (EH) and a new Government, which has recently rejoined and is participating in United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) . We applaud the

publication of a management plan for Hadrian's Wall (English Heritage 1996) and the work towards a similar plan for Avebury itself (English Heritage undated [1997]) .

World Heritage designation: expectations and economic implications

We first outline the organisational and socio-political dimensions and then turn to economic ones, which are inextricably bound up with them. In doing so, we consider the international expectations as well as those of national governments, local communities and visitors engendered by the attainment of World Heritage Site status.

The organisational and political dimensions of WHS designation

The agent of designation, the World Heritage Committee, has its own expectations. It presumes that a nomination will measure up to the criteria of the Convention and therefore that the nominating State Party appreciates, for example, the need for a Site to be of universal value, not merely a jingoistic flag-waver. Furthermore, the state should have the means to manage it, for example a national archaeological service and a management plan preferably developed with local partnership. A further expectation is that public access will be encouraged, though of course with due regard to the qualities which support the nomination in the first place.

The government (or State Party in UNESCO terms) submitting a nomination will also have expectations, signalling that it not only possesses something of global significance but also that it is sufficiently civilised to want to share its good fortune with mankind and is capable of maintaining this heritage in good order. Such a wish to enhance the image of the state will almost certainly be intertwined with more overt external and domestic political objectives. For example, externally, World Heritage designation affords status providing an attractive image which can be commercially and economically exploited through the tourist industry *(cf*. general discussion in Boniface and Fowler 1993). Domestically, expectations are also likely to centre around economic gain,

rather than in more abstract concepts of heritage pride or communal responsibility, such as the expectations of the inhabitants living near Hadrian's Wall. Elsewhere, wild hopes of designation providing a plug into Western capital are followed by the disappointment of realising that the only available grants are from a very small World Heritage Fund.

Notwithstanding that the motivation and intention of the World Heritage Convention was to impart a conservation benefit, designation can be a catalyst for drastic, sometimes rapid, change, and generally carries a native expectation of economic benefit in the modern, tourism-driven world. Now, quite specifically in the case of 'cultural landscapes', designation looks to afford some encouragement to the traditional maintenance of traditional ways of life. That is, rather than merely protecting a monument on the one hand or triggering a rapid shift to a tourism-led economy, World Heritage designation is looked to by some in the expectation that it will ring-fence a community against radical change and thereby perpetuate a way of life as well as its landscape. Such motivation does not, of course, deny tourism altogether, though it should reject some of its grosser manifestations e.g. of natives having to put up with too many visitors who despoil the distinctiveness of a locality by swamping it with their own 'tourist culture'. Rather, the World Heritage ethic seeks to encourage respect in host and visitor through a mutual enjoyment of traditional culture.

Then there is the expectation of visitors to take into account. It is probably fair to recognise two types of World Heritage Site in this context. There is the Site where designation has been applied to an already famous, much-visited site like the Pyramids, the Taj Mahal or Bath. These are the sort of existing tourist honeypots which, in a sense, do not need designation to add to their attractiveness. Then there are the less obvious Sites, perhaps long known to the scientific élite or discerning tourist but not (yet) on the hit-list of mass tourism. In such cases, designation can bring an accolade, though it may well be in addition to scientific, architectural or conservation distinctions already acquired.

The visitor seeking out a World Heritage Site as such is likely to go to a Site in the second type, one which (s)he might well otherwise not have visited;

whereas practically everyone who can travel will want to visit Sites in the first type. Either way, the visitor expectation will be of something really worth going a long way to see, perhaps even of uniqueness. For many, the quality of their visit will lie in qualities of visual drama, physical presence and historical significance rather than some of the other, more ethereal, aspects of World Heritage. For example, surveys have shown that the qualities of a striking landscape and the perennial military appeal of the Romans, rather than its archaeological or metaphorical values, which lure people in their tens of thousands each year to the central sector (but not elsewhere) of Hadrian's Wall. What the visitor is openly expecting to find increasingly nowadays is high standards of presentation and good visitor facilities, just as in any other visitor attraction, which of course could be to mar the very spirit of the place which gave it that special quality leading to designation in the first place. Clearly, by the late twentieth century, a noble and essentially simple idea for another strand of global harmony has developed a high potential for tension due to heightened public expectations.

High standards bring us to another expectation which, without in any way wishing to be arrogant, can honestly be recognised. The rest of the world looks to the UK to be among the leaders in these matters. Global conservationists in particular expect Britain to be setting professional standards, and that applies to World Heritage Sites as to other sorts of conservation management (*cf*. Berry and Brown 1995). Because of the century-long experience in this field, and the relatively large resource invested in it, British expertise is sought elsewhere. The NT, for example, has a welcome but considerable management problem in coping with the demand for its advice from around the world. The management plan for Hadrian's Wall assembled by EH is also in great demand as an exemplar and others want to hear about how it was put together, a very considerable achievement of leadership, consensus and common sense, as much as discuss its contents. Indeed, it would be fair to say that, until the development of that plan and the concurrent appraisal by ICOMOS of the management of other UK World Heritage Sites, the good British reputation in the field of cultural resource management rested rather on the professionalism

of its experts rather than on official support given to the idea and practice of World Heritage itself.

The economic dimensions of WHS designation

An economic dimension also has to be taken into account in these considerations. We firmly believe that an economic perspective can make a contribution to a debate concerning the expectations raised and the consequences of both the designation of World Heritage Sites and their subsequent management. In this sub-section of our essay, therefore, we explore the economic implications of designation and the subject's approach to evaluating resources such as World Heritage Sites before considering the consequences of being accorded such status.

Some expectations, such as an enhanced national image, a sense of pride and community responsibility, appear to be purely abstract and not quantifiable, certainly not in monetary terms. Others such as encouraging public access, advertising the world status conferred through publications and postage stamps and tapping the World Heritage Fund, can clearly be assessed in economic terms. The most significant of these is undoubtedly the expectation that large numbers of visitors, both domestic and foreign, will wish to see the Site. Central and local government and heritage bodies would therefore, mindful of their reputations, expect to have to provide adequate infrastructure, interpretation and management. They would also anticipate that national benefits would accrue, such as those concerning economic diversification and development, foreign exchange earnings, contribution to the balance of payments: in short, all the economic advantages which flow from increased tourism. Additionally, they might expect international aid to improve infrastructural elements, for example, upgraded roads, hotels and tourism facilities and services. Visitors would expect the experience to be of a high quality and that their aesthetic and material needs would be met. The local community would expect income and employment to flow from the status accorded the site.

While it is possible to estimate whether expectations of designation will be fulfilled in the light of experience of sites of comparable importance which are not designated, it is not particularly useful merely to consider the benefits. A more dispassionate and realistic stance would lead to the recognition that expectations of advantages inevitably brings disadvantages. It is therefore more revealing to assess from an economic standpoint both the expectations and the impact of designation in terms of its consequences. This perspective does not signify that we consider these two issues should be addressed by resort to the market, and certainly not in terms of applying economic criteria to identify and select sites of global importance. The starting point of our thesis is that designation, by whatever means, holds economic implications because the very act of doing so assigns an implicit value.

Take, for example, the UNESCO documentation on eligible artefacts and the criteria which should be met for bids for World Heritage Site status (UNESCO 1995). The presumption is that the resources nominated will be preserved in their current state and that adequate legal and/or traditional protection and management mechanisms exist to ensure that the nominated property is conserved. Such an implication has a price on it, even if that is not the initial concern of the disinterested, almost detached impartial mechanism for assessing the UNESCO criteria on a global scale.

The document acknowledges that inscription as a World Heritage Site could have an impact on its future and that the implications might be far-reaching. Designation immediately places an obligation on nations and their citizens to accept responsibility and a financial burden. Other, wider, ramifications include that merely designating a site raises its profile and initiates other economic issues, such as the possibility of attracting a sufficient number of visitors whose expenditure could contribute to earning foreign exchange, or diversifying an economy over-reliant on a single primary product, or the need to provide the infrastructure and provide facilities and services. Furthermore, it introduces the necessity, at an operational level, of not only managing the site to achieve conservation objectives but also doing so efficiently by, for instance, devising a business plan and the requisite management systems. Indeed both conservation and business objectives should be compatible in achieving

sustainability as well as viability, for example by reducing the use of inputs from non-renewable sources and minimising waste. Environmental auditing, as a precursor of introducing effective management policies, systems and monitoring procedures, illustrates the complementarity of the two objectives. A crucial issue concerning the management of heritage sites is that in some countries its costs have to be met from the conservation budget. This reinforces a need to adopt sound business practices. The contribution economics can make to resolving these issues is outlined in our Avebury case study.

While acknowledging that designating and managing World Heritage Sites should not be appraised by criteria applied in commercial markets, it nevertheless needs to be recognised that more informed decisions are likely to be made if a market for them, albeit hypothetically, is created. This is necessary as such Sites are simply undervalued vis-à-vis other possible uses because they seldom yield monetary returns, certainly not at a level commensurate with those generated by commercial activities. In market economies, given competing demands and scarce financial resources, largely unprofitable projects like heritage sites are disadvantaged. It is crucial, therefore, to show that they have value, perhaps well above many market-based activities, in order that funds allocated to them for their conservation and management are justified. Accordingly we turn attention to a number of relevant economic concepts and methods.

Elements of the economics of heritage conservation

Most heritage sites are wholly or partly outside a market context, by which is meant that they are not traded in the same way as consumption goods and services and productive resources where price is the measure of their value. Indeed, a fundamental difficulty in establishing their value is that they are characterised by often being ‘collective consumption’ or ‘public’ goods essentially because access to many of them cannot be excluded, or it would be costly to do so, even if they are in private ownership. Consequently it is not feasible to charge a price. For example, it is possible to observe Stonehenge,

albeit from a somewhat more distant vantage point, without having to pay. Perhaps a more valid instance is that of an attractive landscape such as the Lake District in the UK, which can be experienced and enjoyed at no cost apart from the expense of travelling to it. Thus, there is no common measure by which to compare the value of heritage sites with the *opportunity cost* (defined as cost as expressed in terms of the value of a resource in possible alternative uses) of their use as a productive resource. An example of opportunity cost would be the site of a deserted medieval village (DMV) which could be ploughed up to grow cereals or timber.

Economics identifies another facet of heritage artefacts as relevant in assigning a value to them. The concept of *externalities*, defined as an uncompensated cost suffered or benefit conferred by the owner of such resources whether the owner is the state, a commercial organisation or a private individual. To illustrate an external cost the example of the DMV can again be cited. The owner not only foregoes the value derived from it were it to be used for some productive activity, but also might suffer disturbance and damage to property by visitors wishing to gain access. The significance of identifying externalities is, however, more pointedly recognised in considering benefits. This is because it can be shown that, even if the artefact is in a market context, for example a castle to which access can be excluded and therefore a price charged, there are indirect or unpriced benefits generated. For instance, society may take pride in the fact that the castle represents part of its cultural heritage. Similarly the conservation of historic buildings and quarters in urban areas illustrate external benefits. The capital values, rents and yields of listed residential, commercial and industrial buildings thrown up by the market do not necessarily reflect the value society places on them. For instance, occupiers and/or owners of historic buildings may derive well-being from living or working in attractive and elegant surroundings and inhabitants of and visitors to old cities and towns can gain from looking at such buildings.

Economics goes further in recognising that, except under restrictive assumptions and specified conditions, market prices do not fully reflect the value of historic sites. Very many historic resources are highly valued by society because it is acknowledged that they are unique. If they are destroyed

they cannot be reproduced; if they are over-used an irreversible trend is likely to be initiated leading to their destruction, for example in cases of rare flora and delicate archaeological features. Moreover, it can be argued that not only use-values accrue but that there are also non-use values. The concept of *total economic value* posits that in addition to direct (priced) and indirect (externalities) use benefits, non-use benefits are also enjoyed, namely *option value*, *intrinsic* or *existence value* and *bequest value*.

Definitions of non-use benefits

- ***Option value*** is the expression of willingness to pay for, say, historic resources to be conserved so that the possibility of using them in the future is retained. This value can include the option for others to enjoy the resources.

- ***Intrinsic value*** represents that which transcends the instrumental use to human beings. Historic sites are, therefore, considered worth retaining even though people have no intention of ever using them.

- ***Bequest value*** is in essence an option value whereby the current generation wishes to pass on resources for the benefit of future generations.

These notions, therefore, underpin the methods which economics has derived over the last four years, and is continuing to develop, concerning two important aspects of decision-making on the allocation of resources.

Decision making: estimating non-monetary value

We first consider the techniques which have been applied in the fields of environmental and leisure economics to estimate the non-monetary values which consumers and society at large perceive as very real but might be

considered as immeasurable. Different techniques serve different purposes. One, known as the ***hedonic pricing method***, concentrates on the impact of designation or listing on property and land values and therefore applies only to owners or occupiers. Another, the ***travel cost method***, is mainly focused on visitors to specific sites, whether they are tourists or more local inhabitants. It assumes that the costs of travel, both in money and time, can be used as a proxy for the willingness to pay to visit a site, representing the value to individual visitors of that site. A third, the ***contingent valuation method,*** endeavours to capture the value of certain resources using survey methods whereby, in the light of information given on a site or project and the means of funding it, respondents are asked to state their willingness to pay to gain access. This method is more comprehensive and is politically acceptable as it has the advantage of being potentially the most democratic way of ascertaining the value society places on non-traded resources, such as historic buildings and sites and landscapes, both physical and cultural.

The application of these three techniques is not pursued further here. Their relevance to heritage designation and management has been demonstrated in a number of pieces of research, for example Hanley and Spash (1993), Stabler (1995, 1996) and Allison *et al.* (1996).

Decision making: cost-benefit analysis

The second aspect of importance is the framework which economics employs to appraise capital investment projects which effectively is the consequence of World Heritage Site designation. Not only does the act of designation generate potential benefits but it also imposes costs in the form of ongoing conservation capital expenditure and maintenance and management commitments. The economic approach to project appraisal is much more comprehensive than that in business sectors which encompasses only direct monetary returns and costs, often over quite short time horizons, to establish whether a particular investment is commercially viable or not. What is known as ***cost-benefit analysis*** consists of a number of variants to meet differing circumstances (*see* Lichfield *et al.*, 1993 for a useful review). In addition to identifying and

evaluating direct monetary returns and costs, it also embraces the indirect static and dynamic benefits and costs of a non-monetary nature referred to above. Furthermore, it can take account of distributional effects, for example a welfare gain or loss experienced by a community which is responsible for a World Heritage Site. The merit of cost benefit analysis is that it is capable of indicating whether designation confers net benefits or net costs. Indeed, it possesses criteria for ranking projects by their net benefits or costs should it be necessary to prioritise a number of projects.

In considering the possible economic expectations and consequences of designation, the valuation methods and the cost benefit analysis analytical framework are useful tools for they enable the ramifications of doing so to be identified and evaluated in an objective measurable way. In looking at expectations and consequences from an economic perspective, attention is concentrated on visitors, local communities and a nation's society at large. Anticipating possible conclusions, we would posit that expectations tend to focus on benefits whereas consequences are more likely to indicate costs.

Some consequences of designation

An obvious consequence could be that nothing happens. Designation can be ignored or at best only acknowledged in a luke-warm sort of way. Until the 1990s such, in general, was the reaction in the UK. Carried to its logical conclusion, such a strategy could lead to removal of World Heritage status from a Site so designated. Fortunately, not least because of the seminal role played by Avebury in increasing official and public awareness of some consequences of designation, the tide of indifference and ignorance has been at least stayed. In 1997, happily but challengingly, Britain is recognising the consequences of designation. PPG 15 is the official mark of our reaching that stage.

An obvious consequence of designation is that the Site will become more visible, more obvious, for example, as a destination. Designation will attract attention to the Site: it moves very much into the public eye. Visitors will come, probably in increasing numbers, at least initially if only out of curiosity to see what is so special about the place. If things go wrong, the immediate

consequences will be common knowledge. If a World Heritage Site is damaged, it will attract the attention of the world media. Designation will also result in higher public awareness. In countries where there is a conservation lobby, for example, the designation will not be allowed to be forgotten and pressures to make it mean something will develop. Casual management is more likely to be noticed. While designation may result in damage of various types, a consequence will be an expectation of better management going far beyond merely holding the line against greater wear and tear. Conservationists, and probably the general public too, will expect to see higher standards of stewardship. Otherwise, what is the point of designation?

Such consequences will be expressed in various ways. A management plan is now essential; we would argue that that should include a business plan side by side with its concerns with preservation and moving visitors around the Site. While remaining of the highest professional standards, management should also be open to inspection, democratic and participatory, not secretive, oligarchic or exclusive. A consequence management should expect, however, is that almost certainly it will be criticised whatever it does; for instance while being expected to cope with existing visitor levels, pressures to develop an infrastructure to attract more visitors could become very strong. This will almost certainly be incompatible with the motives of the original designation. Stonehenge is currently (May 1997) a sad example of precisely that, while Avebury, developing its own management plan, carries high hopes of a future based on sustainable rather than exploitative strategies.

A particular consequence of designation is that presentation will have to be changed with the intention of improving it to meet the status of the Site and the enhanced expectations of increasing numbers of visitors. While there are outstanding examples of such a change being implemented with sensitivity and panache, at Uluru and Cahokia for example, perhaps in as many as half such cases the change will be deleterious to the Site, the visitor experience or both. A reason for this can all too easily be that visitor demands, and perhaps political or fiscal pressures to push more visitors through the Site to increase revenue, lead to a presentational downgrading in terms of what the Site and its status deserve and can stand, both physically and intellectually. This is the area in

which tension really can develop, not merely between Site ambience and tourist exploitation but also between tourists' expectations and commercially-driven management.

It can also increase the financial stakes. Development pressure, for example, can paradoxically become an issue after designation, though designation is of course intended to protect the Site. Even if overt commercial development is not proposed, structural development will characteristically be argued to be necessary to meet the needs of visitor access and their management. Completely new and rather grandiose visitor centres have been a characteristic response of the 1980s and, so far, in the 1990s: witness Cahokia on the Mississippi and Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire, and the proposals for Stonehenge and the Pyramids. The Site maintenance requirement will almost certainly rise too. Moreover, it is likely that the quality of the experience will be impaired by overcrowding and possible degradation of the resource. Visitors will also start to affect adversely the quality of life of local communities, through traffic congestion and pollution, overburdening of facilities and services and simply their behaviour.

These kinds of issues have been well documented in the tourism literature (*see* for example Mathieson and Wall 1982 and Pearce 1989) concerning its impact in physical, social and economic terms. In the context of heritage designation, however, consequences are best considered by briefly examining an illustrative example.

Avebury: a case study

The Avebury World Heritage Site is actually quite a big area. It does not consist merely of the Avebury stone circles inside the henge monument, nor even only of the obvious ancient sites in its vicinity. Of course Silbury Hill, West Kennet long barrow and The Sanctuary, all monuments integral to the original designation, are included, but the Site as defined also embraces all the land between them and some considerable way beyond **(fig. 00**). Overall, it stretches some 8 km west-east and 6 km north-south. Its size, and indeed the very nature of this World Heritage Site as a spatial entity, is one of the several

reasons for uncertainty about it among local people and visitors. The idea that an archaeological Site of world significance is actually approaching 23 square kilometres in area (*c*. 5,556 acres) takes some getting used to, especially in a countryside where popular perception and official designation of ancient monuments is of specific mounds and banks existing discretely in an otherwise agricultural, and by implication non-archaeological, landscape.

Some 630 ha. (1540 acres) at the core of the Site are owned and/ or managed by the NT. This estate includes the great Avebury henge monument, the West Kennet Avenue and land to either side, Silbury Hill, with the Neolithic causewayed enclosure on Windmill Hill to the north west and round barrows and other archaeological structures on Overton Hill to the south east. The estate also embraces parts of the existing village, the Manor House and its ground.

Avebury village consists of around 100 households and contains a population of around 250 persons. Accurate visitor counts were taken at Easter 1997 and evidence from studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s indicated an annual visitor rate of between 250,000 and 500,000. Recreational studies (Vickerman 1975, Cheshire and Stabler 1976) suggest that most informal visits are for half a day involving travel totalling 160 km. Free parking and toilets are provided in Avebury village, with a larger car-park, also free but without toilets, on its south western outskirts. It is indeed possible to enjoy virtually the whole site without having to pay for anything. The only current charges are for entry to the Alexander Keiller Museum and the Manor House. Until recently, the Great Barn housed an agricultural museum for which entry was also charged. A major change in function for this latter is planned supposedly in the interests of improving the visitor experience. These entry charges partly offset the NT's costs of managing its responsibilities at Avebury. There are other commercial outlets in the village including the book shop, the sub-post-office, the NT shop, the legendary Red Lion pub and the excellent Stones restaurant where resides, for many, the *genius loci*. Not all the revenue derived from these businesses is as a direct result of visitors to the archaeological site but it is accepted that it is visitor spending which allows these businesses to remain viable. Some people,

for example, simply visit because they like the pub, not because the pub is within an important archaeological site.

Visitor spending increases income, which in turn generates further indirect and induced financial benefit as this initial injection is spent locally. It also creates employment: for example, a number of NT employees are permanent local inhabitants. The World Heritage designation itself has specifically created one post. Funded by English Heritage, the 'Management Plan Officer' is leading the preparation of the World Heritage Site Management Plan as now required by the World Heritage Committee. Between the NT and other local businesses, Avebury as heritage generates approximately four full-time and four part-time jobs. A number of volunteers assist in running the NT property and outside contractors are bought in for specific tasks.

Avebury, therefore, is an enterprise of considerable magnitude as well as a significant archaeological complex worth looking after for its own sake and for people interested enough to visit it. Yet financially the NT operation runs at a net loss, ignoring capital expenditure of between £150,000-200,000 per year. Were it not for the income from sales of *c* £50,000 plus rents, the loss would be even greater. A very rough estimate would suggest that the total cost is probably in the region of £300,000 or more. This is funded from NT central funds, themselves annually replenished by members' subscriptions. Yet it should be realised that Avebury itself is a significant recruiting place of new members (basic individual subscription £26 p.a.), so in terms of income over and above direct entrance fees and sales it effectively if theoretically generates a further proportion of the funds required to operate it. Nor is that the end of the matter: in a sense the NT is subsidising the State to the extent that some of the people required to operate the property might otherwise be unemployed and receiving social security benefit in what is, perhaps surprisingly, a rural area with an unemployment problem.

£300,000 is bound to be an underestimate of the real net cost of operating the NT responsibilities in Avebury. It would escalate if the external inputs by regional and national headquarters and by the Trust's specialist staff were taken into account. Then in addition other professional bodies are involved e.g.

EH, which has statutory duties; the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, which is committed to an Avebury and environs survey project; Kennet District Council, the local planning authority; the County Council, which maintains the Sites and Monuments Record including that for the World Heritage Site; various Universities engaged in research in the area and the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. The latter, though basically an amateur institution, carries a considerable intellectual and conservation responsibility, which despite being partly voluntary, is nevertheless expensive to sustain.

Other ‘real’ costs, not normally considered in conservation circles perhaps, would include those imposed by visitors. Householders as Council Tax payers in the District, for example, meet the costs of waste disposal and other local authority services such as the provision of a Tourist Information Service. The NT, EH and other responsible bodies have to carry the cost of making good wear and tear on car-parks and footpaths and clearing up litter. In 1996, urgent cleansing of graffiti-decorated, multi-coloured megaliths had to be undertaken and in 1997, erosion scars are being repaired. A considerable bill is also immediately in prospect to repair an unacceptably pot-holed southern car-park.

The village community, while it might benefit from visitor spending which provides employment and keeps the pub, shop and post office open, suffers a number of indirect costs in the form of increased traffic flows and the congestion, air and noise pollution which they bring. Crowded streets, especially at weekends, add to villagers’ discomfort in creating a situation familiar at many tourist ‘hotspots’ where it is difficult to deny the disturbance or the reduction in the quality of their way of life. That recent incomers should have expected that does not deny our argument about recognising ‘social cost’, a cost which, incidentally, might include a medical one. We are not aware of any study of possible medical consequences resulting from what might be called ‘tourism stress’, that is the continual pressure on an indigenous population from a continuous tourist presence in its communal space, especially now that tourists come all the year round and not merely during a particular season.

Both directly and indirectly, then, the total costs of maintaining Avebury as a World Heritage Site may well actually be of the order of £500,000 a year; yet when the Site was voluntarily put forward by the British Government for this status, and was approved for such designation by UNESCO, we would guess that not a single thought was given to the financial consequences, either in providing for its stewardship as a World Heritage Site or in such a status being an income generator. Yet, ten years on, there clearly is a real cost, and a not inconsiderable one. Should subscribing NT members, local tax payers and the community underwrite these true costs? Or should it be the visitors, the State, or an international body such as the World Heritage Fund? Or any combination of those providers?

Just as conservation proposes that 'the polluter pays', so economics starts from the premise that 'whoever benefits should pay'. This would suggest that, apart from NT and EH members who would argue that they have paid through their subscriptions, visitors should be prepared to pay for access. We stress that this is the *economic* argument, for we are well aware of the strong argument that the property was given by Keiller, and accepted by the NT, for the public to enjoy freely, quite apart from the local tradition, hallowed since the days of Aubrey and Stukeley, that anybody is free to muse among the megaliths whenever they so wish. Nevertheless, given that a large sum is required annually to operate the World Heritage Site, the most feasible solution would be to charge visitors a sufficiently high car-parking fee to cover the cost of collecting it, maintaining the Site and presenting its features and significance in an attractive way. Allowing for non-paying NT members, and a concession for repeat visitors, then a third of a cautious estimate of 250,000 visitors p.a. would indicate a potential paying total of some 85,000 persons. Assuming an average car occupancy of three, a fee of, say, £10 per car would generate an income of £280,000 which would just about cover the Trust's direct costs of managing its part of the World Heritage Site.

Any shortfall, particularly if arising from management of the whole Site, might come from Government which after all thrust everyone else into World Heritage status. In any case, if the proportion of overseas visitors at all approaches that at Stonehenge (*c* 70%), the nation as a whole and some private interests

benefit from the off-site revenue and employment it generates such as from airport taxis, privatised railways, accommodation, catering and the purchase of other goods and services while on holiday in Britain.

The fact is that both users and non-users place value on and derive benefit from the continued existence of heritage sites such as Avebury. Yet if the state is required to contribute (more than is the present case through English Heritage) to the true cost, on what grounds might it be justified? Economic valuation methods offer some insights. For example, the travel cost method as a measure of willingness to pay to visit Avebury can yield an estimate of the value visitors place on it. Taking our conservative estimate of 250,000 visitors p.a., three to a car and travelling, again erring on the side of caution, say 80 km or 50 miles for the round trip, and assuming marginal costs of motoring at an average of £0.15 per mile, the method gives a total valuation of £625, 000 p.a. The contingent valuation method requires a survey of specific sites or households to ask people about their willingness to pay to gain access, something not yet done for Avebury, but studies of such willingness with regard to other kinds of site suggest that visitors would be willing to pay between £1 and £3. Willis *et al.* (1993), for example, found that Durham cathedral elicited a value of £0.85 per visit. This would indicate that the value of Avebury is *c* £250,000, using cautious estimates of the number of visitors and willingness to pay. The hedonic method is not appropriate in this case though we might remark intuitively that while property values might be enhanced by people wishing to reside in a picturesque village, the effect of visitors is likely to offset this.

This case study, despite the lack of much desirable data, has attempted in however approximate a way to illustrate a number of issues arising from the designation and consequential management requirement of World Heritage sites. The issues are familiar; our economics are simple. Yet we hope that the blend of the two will help bring a helpful perspective to some of those whose involvement with this field has come about primarily from conservation, financial or tourism approaches alone. We have tried to indicate how economics can contribute to making explicit the implicit costs and benefits which arise from designation and, now in a way which was not the case a decade ago, from the

expectations of designation. Though the harsh and unemotional precepts of economics in this field will be unwelcome to some, the fact is that in a world of increasing competition for resources - and though the scales are different, we see that locally in England as well as in much poorer places - even noble concepts have to stand up and be counted so that their claim for their share of sustenance is made, heard and at the very least, considered.

Think globally, act locally

That this sub-title is now a cliché should not detract from the soundness of its advice. We would urge the Avebury ‘natives’, as elsewhere in the world, to take World Heritage designation seriously. Locally, as a consequence of World Heritage designation, there are now expectations of all of us, the ‘Avebury stakeholders’, whether or not we live in the village. We are not just Avebury villagers now; we are all, whether we like it or not, global villagers, and certainly in respect of our obligations as stewards of those parts of our island patrimony which we have voluntarily and proudly put forward as worthy to be part of the world’s heritage.

Designation of Avebury has happened. The shame of going back on it cannot be contemplated, therefore the fact of its existence has to be accommodated into perhaps a slightly re-jigged life-way. But surely, whatever the consequential inconveniences, basically designation is a matter of local pride and, furthermore, a matter which can judiciously be exploited economically. So one message would be simply: ‘Get your act together’. See the creation of the required management plan as a learning experience in its own right: social and professional cohesion could and should be quite as much a product as the Plan itself. That is a consequence of designation which has not yet happened at Avebury, yet it is an expectation which everybody else can reasonably have and be entitled to say so. Above all it should be demonstrated that a commitment has been made. This can be done by strengthening the organisational structure, nationally as well as locally, and expressing a political will through significant financial resources.

We end with three suggestions about Avebury itself, all consequential on designation and all central to the development of the well-being of the place as one of global significance, locally looked after. They are also basic to the Management Plan of the Avebury World Heritage Site.

In the first place, the opportunity should be taken to divorce Avebury from Stonehenge as a joint World Heritage Site. Avebury should be declared a World Heritage Site in its own right. While one can understand reasons for the original linkage with Stonehenge a decade ago, ten further years in the development of knowledge about their archaeologies and, even more pertinently, of understanding of their management requirements, have tended to emphasise their separateness, even distinctiveness. Each has an undeniable claim of world status, and now is the chance to recognise that fact.

Secondly, the area of the Avebury World Heritage Site should simultaneously be redefined. To north and south, the boundary is more or less acceptable in archaeological terms, but to west and east the opposite is the case. One doubts whether a straight north-south line, co-incidentally or otherwise along the edge of the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map sheet, is seriously a well-judged line on the west where, in any case, serious thought must be given to the inclusion of Oldbury hill-fort and its surrounds. This area of magnificent, high downland, has, like so many other significant places in the Avebury landscape, also come into the care of the NT since the first World Heritage designation. The major opportunity to adjust to archaeological reality lies, however, on the east. There the present boundary makes little rhyme or reason in terms of anything significant in the landscape while, on the other hand, recent archaeological mapping and analysis of the landscape of Overton and Fyfield Downs cries out for more than simple revision. It presents a wonderful opportunity to adjust a boundary to take in the whole of an area, much of it a National Nature Reserve anyway, containing a series of wonderfully-preserved, superimposed landscapes from the Neolithic to the 20th century AD **(Fowler *forthcoming*)**. The boundary cannot be left where it is, for to do that would be knowingly to avoid a new state of knowledge. It could, of course, be pulled right back to the west, well inside its present line to somewhere at the foot of the Marlborough Downs. That is not to be seriously considered, if only for tactical and political

reasons; but it would also be cowardly and intellectually dishonest. The proper line would follow fairly precisely that shown on **fig. 00**. This reflects new knowledge acquired since 1987 and makes much better sense of the attempt then to include some of the 'secular' landscape of sarsen stones, settlements and fields which was recognised to provide the essential hinterland to the 'sacred' landscape of the henge and its mighty monuments.

A window of opportunity also exists now in a third respect. A wider Avebury World Heritage Site defined in its own right should be created as a 'Cultural Landscape'. This is a recent addition to the suite of criteria available for World Heritage Site designation, not a third type to stand equally beside 'natural' and 'cultural' Sites but rather a sub-category of 'cultural' Site. Avebury meets most of the criteria admirably; conversely, the definitions of a Cultural Landscape include qualities which neatly embrace what Avebury and its surrounds can offer. We therefore propose that the present thinking about Avebury should profitably conclude that its future lies as an independent World Heritage Cultural Landscape within a redefined boundary.

Conclusion

`Think global, act local` in the present context means `Yes, sort out your problems at Avebury - or Stonehenge, or Hadrian's Wall, or at the Pyramids and at Uluru - sort them out locally, but do so with an eye to us in the rest of the world, here now and yet to come. We rely on you to get it right, and we expect you to do so on our behalf. We are watching.` That Britain is also being watched is a direct result of opting into the World Heritage movement. One consequence of that was that at the 1995 Conference, one of us (PJF) felt it necessary to remark that, in a way which did not exist in 1972 when the World Heritage Convention was born, we must be aware not just of the formal requirements of the Convention but of the higher expectations of our (British) behaviour.

Heritage management is a modern field of activity in which Britain is held in high regard in many parts of the world. There are world standards in these matters to which we have voluntarily subscribed and indeed, as professionals, to which we have contributed e.g. the *Guidelines* for the management of World Heritage Sites (Fielden and Jokilehto 1993). Dr. Henry Cleere, formerly Director of the Council for British Archaeology, is World Heritage Co-ordinator for ICOMOS. The definition of `cultural landscapes` now adopted by the World Heritage Committee is strongly influenced by British precepts in landscape archaeology (UNESCO 1995, paras. 35-42). Indeed, the British contingent, led by Cleere and David Jacques, made signal contributions at the key international meeting (1992) which led to a globally acceptable definition (Titchen and Rössler 1995). Such contributions should continue. Britain nowadays is not after all so prestigious as to be able to jeopardise lightly anything in which we have a world reputation, especially when it involves something intellectually difficult, sensitive, and economically significant, in other words something which is fairly civilised. Let us be global villagers by all means; but let us be civilised ones who, as a consequence, raise our game to meet the expectations of us. Far from detracting from or undermining this, an economic perspective - making society's preferences measurably manifest - should underpin the regard in which the UK is held, by indicating the value of World Heritage Sites to the nation. This value helps to justify the national commitment of substantial resources to preserve and manage World Heritage Sites and society's willingness to pay for this.

In the two years since the conference, several hopeful signs have appeared that we are rising to those expectations while recognising some very real and present dangers. The greatest medium-term threat now is not the physical consequences of tourism but the acceptance of an expectation that designation is primarily a mechanism to promote tourism. Such a threat must be recognised and resisted for the shallow and unacceptable perversion that it is. Promoters of the conservation ethic are nevertheless awakening to the need both to argue and sustain the World Heritage case in the market place, though it is essential that this be done without falling into the trap of embracing any primacy for the marketeering ethic. We hope we have been able to illustrate such an approach

here; while, at the same time, re-emphasising the fundamental importance of clinging on to, nay adumbrating, that vital dimension of visionary idealism without which World Heritage as a concept is nothing.

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