

PTE/19/28

East Devon Locality (County) Committee
18 July 2019

Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Partnership Plan Development and Public Consultation

Joint Report of the Jurassic Coast Trust and the DCC Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee:

- (a) Approves the process and timetable for undertaking the WHS Partnership Plan development and consultation;**
- (b) endorses the draft policy framework presented in Appendix I for inclusion within the Consultation Draft of the new Partnership Plan 2020-2025 and delegates to officers the final agreement of any outstanding detailed issues and content for the document;**
- (c) notes that the final version of the new Partnership Plan will be adopted through delegated cabinet member decision in late 2019 / early 2020 following public consultation.**

1. Background

The East Devon Coast between Orcombe Point and Lyme Regis forms part of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site (WHS), otherwise known as The Jurassic Coast.

The site management plan, updated every six years, demonstrates to UNESCO that this globally significant asset is being managed in a way that meets the UK Government's obligations to the World Heritage Convention. The forthcoming iteration of the management plan will be presented as a 'Partnership Plan'.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is the lead government department on World Heritage issues and is responsible for ensuring that the UK, as a State Party, fulfils its obligations under the World Heritage Convention. Responsibility for the management of the Dorset and East Devon Coast WHS is devolved to Dorset and Devon County Councils, who led the original process for the designation of the site. Since July 2017 the Jurassic Coast Trust (JCT), a registered charity, has been in receipt of a grant from both Councils to take responsibility for maintaining the extensive partnership of stakeholders along the 95-mile site and involve them in the creation and implementation of the WHS Partnership Plan.

Central to the JCT's WHS management role is the Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) which, as a formal Committee of the Board of Trustees, is made up of key stakeholders for the site, including representatives from local communities, communities of interest, funders and those with scientific expertise in the field. Each Local Authority also has a representative on the PAC, as both responsible parties for the creation of the Partnership Plan but also as active delivery partners in some areas of work.

This report outlines the process being undertaken by the Jurassic Coast Trust to develop the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Partnership Plan and seeks the Committee's approval of the approach to its public consultation and subsequent approval. Any views of the Committee will be addressed before finalising the Plans.

2. Content of the Partnership Plan

The Partnership Plan will emphasise the collaborative nature of managing the WHS. Policies will reflect legislative changes, new ways of partnership working and current/future issues and opportunities e.g. climate change, public health/well-being agendas and UN Sustainable Development Goals. The latest draft of management aims and associated, which will form a core part of the WHS Partnership Plan to be subject to public consultation, is set out in Appendix I.

3. The Process and Timetable in Devon

The Consultation Draft of the Plan is currently being prepared. Relevant local authorities are being asked to endorse the structure, outline content and consultation plans through their participation in the PAC. Prior to consultation during summer/autumn, the Consultation Drafts will be approved the JCT board on which a DCC member (Councillor Stuart Hughes) and officer are represented.

Public Consultation will take place during August and September. Account will be taken of the feedback and comments and an amended draft final plan will be produced by December. Local authorities will be asked to adopt this final Partnership Plan in late 2019/early 2020. It is proposed that the document be signed-off on behalf of DCC by delegated cabinet member decision.

4. Financial Considerations

The costs associated with the production of and consultation on the Partnership Plan will be met directly by the JCT. The production of the plan is one of the core functions which is supported by a combined grant from Dorset Council and DCC. Costs linked to the implementation of the Plan will be met respectively by each of the organisations which is actively involved in the management of the WHS.

5. Environmental Impact, Equality and Public Health Considerations

The World Heritage Site Partnership Plan will be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment. These will be drafted alongside the public consultation. This should ensure that sustainability, environmental, equality and public health issues have been fully considered. This will include consideration of climate change issues linked to the future management of the WHS.

6. Legal Considerations

Although there is no statutory duty to create a management plan (or equivalent) for any World Heritage Site in the UK, they are the main mechanism by which the UK Government meets its obligations to the World Heritage Convention in demonstrating effective WHS management is in place.

7. Risk Management Considerations

Risks associated with the Partnership Plan can be categorised as reputational, relating to not undertaking full public consultation; political, relating to not having a plan in place to ensure effective management of the WHS; and financial, related to lack of strategic context for making funding bids to deliver activity.

8. Options/Alternatives

The two County Councils could have resolved to undertake the creation of the Partnership Plan themselves or in conjunction with the relevant District Councils. This would have ignored the existing governance structure and partnership arrangements for the WHS and expertise of the JCT and PAC.

9. Reasons for Recommendation/Conclusion

The review procedure will allow the County Council to fulfil its responsibility to the WHS and also to ensure that the forthcoming Partnership Plan is subject to appropriate consultation.

Sam Scriven (Jurassic Coast Trust)/Dave Black (DCC)

Electoral Divisions: Axminster, Exmouth, Exmouth & Budleigh Salterton Coastal, Feniton & Honiton, Otter Valley, Seaton & Colyton, and Sidmouth

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper

Date

File Ref.

Jurassic Coast Trust web site at

<https://jurassiccoast.org/>

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Draft Policy Framework for the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Partnership Plan 2020-2025

Overarching principles
<p><i>Working from Evidence</i></p> <p>One of UNESCO's strategic aims is that World Heritage Sites should be credible. Therefore, Site management in all areas will be based on evidence, sound science and our best knowledge and understanding of the coastline.</p>
<p><i>Life on a World Heritage Site</i></p> <p>The brand 'Jurassic Coast' is not just a marketing tool, it is the name of an authentic and unique heritage asset. It brings many benefits to the area, binds our community together and connects us to wider, global values. As the custodians of this World Heritage Site we are challenged to create an inclusive and sustainable way of life that celebrates Outstanding Universal Value and puts people at the heart of decisions.</p>
<p><i>Collaboration and cooperation</i></p> <p>The protection and presentation of this World Heritage Site is not within the power of a single organization. It requires people to come together in support of a common cause and for mutual benefit. The String of Pearls is a concept that encapsulates that reality, every part of the Jurassic Coast making an important contribution to the whole. It means that collaboration and cooperation are the lifeblood of this Site, enabling us to safeguard the quality of this landscape and create experiences for visitors and residents that are distinctive, complimentary and responsive to its overarching identity as a WHS.</p>

Policy Framework

<p>Protecting Outstanding Universal Value</p> <p>The World Heritage Convention states that each State Party recognizes the duty of ensuring the identification and protection of natural heritage that possess Outstanding Universal Value and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes.</p>	
<p>Strategic Aim with Commentary</p>	<p><i>Aim 1. To protect the Site's OUV and World Heritage Status</i></p> <p>Policies within this section set out the parameters for clear, unambiguous long-term protection for the World Heritage Site and setting through integration in the planning system and based on rigorous scientific evidence. The emphasis is on the prevention of activities that might negatively affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site, or the mitigation of the negative impact of activities that are unavoidable. There is a focus on allowing the natural processes of erosion to continue; thus maintaining the coastal processes, landforms and exposures that underpin the Site's</p>

	OUV. This aim relates not just to the Site itself, but to activities in the setting that might have an impact on the Site's OUV, or might damage the setting itself.
Critical Success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No developments cause significant negative impact on Site's OUV ◦ Responsible fossil collecting continues to be widely adopted as a management approach across the World Heritage Site
Policies – Group 1 The partnership policy is that...	Regulation
P1	The OUV of the Site is protected by preventing developments that might impede natural processes, or obscure the exposed geology, as set out in the GCR / SSSI details, now and in the future.
P2	Where developments affecting the Site or setting do take place, they avoid or at least mitigate negative impact on the natural processes of erosion and exposed geology.
P3	Developments in the Site's setting that may warrant a future need for coastal defences are opposed
P4	The landscape character, seascape, natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the Site and setting are protected from inappropriate development.
P5	<p>Emergency plans will be maintained in order to respond effectively to major incidents* that might have significant consequences for the condition and presentation of the Site. Emergency plans will also ensure that the response actions themselves do not cause further damage.</p> <p><i>* Such as landslide or rockfalls, disease or oil spills</i></p>
P6	The regulatory protection of the WHS will continue to be improved in places where there is vulnerability
Policies – Group 2 The partnership policy is that...	Industry and Military
P7	Port or harbour managers minimise the risk of potential negative impacts on the Site and setting from shipping activity through sensitive management.
P8	Aggregate or mineral extraction, oil or gas exploration and exploitation, and renewable energy developments within the Site boundaries are prevented
P9	Adverse impacts from proposals for aggregate or mineral extraction, oil or gas exploration and exploitation, and

	renewable energy developments within the setting are minimised and mitigated
P10	Military activity avoids adverse impacts on the Site or setting
Policies – Group 3 The partnership policy is that...	Codes of conduct and site management provisions
P11	Fossil collecting within the Site will follow, in general, the principles of Natural England's national approach based on the concept of responsible collecting.
P12	The West Dorset Fossil Collecting Code for Lyme Regis to Burton Bradstock and the Undercliffs Fossil Collecting Code for the Axmouth to Lyme Regis National Nature Reserve sets the collecting guidance for these two areas and will continue to be implemented by all involved parties.
P13	Rock samples collected from anywhere within the Site will be taken in line with Geologists' Association Code of Conduct for Geological Fieldwork.
P14	Cliff climbing in sensitive areas will be managed by landowners in order to avoid negative impacts on the quality of the Geological exposures of the Site or its wildlife.
Conserving natural heritage The Convention recognises the duty of ensuring that natural heritage is conserved and transmitted to future generations	
Strategic Aim with Commentary	<p><i>Aim 2. To conserve and enhance the Site, its presentation, setting and its attributes</i></p> <p>This aim relates to positive and forward-thinking actions for improvements in terms of the Site's OUV and condition. Policies within this aim will cover a range of areas relating to conserving the geo-heritage assets, broader landscape and nature conservation and enhancements within the setting. Conservation actions need to be supported through appropriate scientific research, which is also highlighted here. Fossils and other geological specimens have a set of dedicated policies that reflect the resources needed to support their conservation, from being collected from the Site to becoming part of a public collection.</p>
Critical Success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ All SSSIs and GCR sites are in the same or better condition than at the start of this Plan period. ◦ Diverse research continues to be carried out along the WHS. ◦ An increase in the number of scientifically important fossils found along the Site that are acquired by, or loaned back to, local accredited museums.

Policies – Group 1 The partnership policy is that...	Conservation of Site and setting
C1	The conditions of GCR sites and SSSIs will be improved in ways that are consistent with or build on natural processes and do not conflict with other conservation objectives.
C2	The ongoing condition of the Jurassic Coast will be monitored with a particular focus on identifying the potential impacts of climate change on the attributes of the Site.
C3	Both the causes and consequences of marine and land-sourced litter will be addressed in order to reduce negative impacts on the Site's condition and presentation.
C4	Features and sites inland and seawards from the coast that help to illustrate the OUV will be highlight or improved, especially aspects of the WHS story that are hard to access on the coast itself.
C5	The conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape character in the Site and setting will be supported in ways that are complementary with its OUV.
C6	Along parts of the Site where a new, bespoke approach for managing fossil collecting is needed, collaborative arrangements will be made*. <i>* Partners will include Natural England, landowners, accredited museums, the academic community and collectors (amateur and professional)</i>
C7	Opportunities provided by quarrying to make gains for geological conservation will be responded to positively.
Policies – Group 2 The partnership policy is that...	Research
C8	Research under a wide range of disciplines will be encouraged in order to expand our understanding of the WHS and the benefits of World Heritage Status.
C9	Research on the World Heritage Site will follow high ethical standards and adhere to relevant codes of conduct, site management provisions, conservation designations and legal requirements.
C10	Geological material collected from the WHS for research, especially specimens described or figured in published research, should be deposited in a publicly accessible collection.
C11	Partners will share data (e.g. scientific, economic demographic) relating to the Jurassic Coast and World

	Heritage Status wherever possible, and work together to identify key research needs.
Policies – Group 3 The partnership policy is that...	Fossils and other geological specimens
C12	The discovery, rescue and preparation of significant fossils by responsible collectors is actively recognised by the partnership as an important contribution to Site management.
C13	Building and maintaining strong relationships between collectors, academics and museums is encouraged and supported in order to help facilitate palaeontological research and the acquisition of important specimens by public institutions
C14	Where possible, important fossils and geological specimens from the Jurassic Coast are acquired and/or displayed by local accredited museums for the direct benefit of Jurassic Coast communities.
C15	Museums will maintain ethical collecting practices that are responsive to relevant codes of conduct, Site management provisions, conservation designations and legal requirements when acquiring geological specimens from the World Heritage Site.
C16	Support is given to developments that improve the acquisition, curation, research, and exhibition of Jurassic Coast fossils where there is a recognised gap in provision and an identified need.
C17	Documentation of important geological collections from the Jurassic Coast is improved.
C18	Accredited museums local to the Jurassic Coast are supported to enable them to maintain important geological collections and public engagement programmes.
Presenting the World Heritage Site The Convention states that effective and active measures are taken for the presentation of natural heritage and that appreciation and respect of that heritage should be strengthened through educational programmes	
Strategic Aim with Commentary	<p><i>Aim 3. To inspire and engage people with the Site and deepen their understanding of its values</i></p> <p><i>Aim 4. To maintain and improve access to and experience of the Site</i></p> <p>Welcome, access, understanding and enjoyment are intrinsically linked on the World Heritage Site. Policies within this aim are focused on making appropriate, realistic and sustainable improvements that enable people enjoy the coast</p>

	responsibly and encourage them to become invested in its ongoing protection. There is an emphasis on the way that the destination is promoted, on visitor safety and on the maintenance or improvement of those facilities that are crucial for visitors, including interpretation provision that celebrates the unique and global heritage value of the Site.
Critical Success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Choice, frequency and information about responsible access to the Site is maintained or enhanced. ◦ Walking routes accessing the Site continue to be developed and managed to a high standard. ◦ The level of enjoyment of the visitors' Jurassic Coast experience is maintained or enhanced.
Policies – Group 1 The partnership policy is that...	Destination marketing
Pr1	Promotion of the Jurassic Coast is sensitive to the needs of, and issues faced by, local communities and the World Heritage Site.
Pr2	Information about events, promotions and campaigns relating to the Jurassic Coast is shared between Partners and destination marketing agencies.
Pr3	Collaborative working is actively encouraged to promote public behaviour change, particularly in the following areas: Safety and selfies; Littering and other fouling; Fossil collecting; Sporting or similar events; Marine behaviour – e.g. tranquillity or landing in sensitive areas.
Pr4	Relevant partners will collaborate as much as possible in order to provide consistent messages about responsible fossil collecting and safety
Policies – Group 2 The partnership policy is that...	People's experience of the Site
Pr5	Signage at access points to the coast is coordinated, consistent and sensitive to the location and visitor needs. Permanent installations along undeveloped parts of the coast are kept to a minimum.
Pr6	Partners with a responsibility for Jurassic Coast visitor infrastructure will maintain and improve these in line with demand, quality guidelines and expectations. These might include toilets, car parks, viewpoints, piers, seafronts, amenity beaches, TICs and other visitor facilities.
Pr7	Public access to beaches within the Site is maintained, but with sensitivity to wildlife and safety considerations.
Pr8	Place-based interpretation and information about the Jurassic Coast emphasises locally distinctive needs and stories that

	are linked to the wider narratives of the Walk Through Time and the value of geodiversity
Pr9	When implementing emergency plans partners carefully manage any impacts on public access to and perception of the Jurassic Coast
Policies – Group 3 The partnership policy is that...	Interpretation and learning
Pr10	Development of Jurassic Coast interpretation, learning and outreach is embedded in existing engagement programmes whenever possible.
Pr11	The approach to interpretation, learning and outreach programmes about the Jurassic Coast follows industry best practice.
Pr12	Interpretation <u>content</u> about the Jurassic Coast is high quality and guided by the Jurassic Coast Story Book.
Pr13	Opportunities for improving interpretation and learning through remote and global access will be developed where possible within partnership initiatives.
Involving Communities The Convention states that World Heritage should become a function in the life of the community, and ultimately, if communities value it, their members will look to protect and conserve it.	
Strategic Aim with Commentary	<i>Aim 5. To enable the World Heritage Status to be of benefit to people and communities</i> It has been shown that the Jurassic Coast's designation as a World Heritage Site has brought a strong sense of identity to the area. This has stimulated the local economy and been a catalyst for civic pride and social enterprise. Policies within this section will look to build on this progress in sustainable ways and emphasises how sense of place, local business, well-being, and access and inspiration are integrated aspects of this protected landscape.
Critical Success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Jurassic Coast continues to be seen as a positive asset for the local communities [measure through council surveys] ◦ Economic benefit of Status grows past 2015 level [redo 2015 study] ◦ Community assets along the coast, including public transport and amenities are improved [do 2020 baseline and compare against]
Policies – Group 1 The partnership policy is that...	Well-being

C1	Growth in more sustainable means of accessing the coast is encouraged and supported, in line with the Environmental values of the Site
C2	Initiatives to promote the Jurassic Coast as an area supportive to well-being and / or health are strongly encouraged, as long as they are within agreed environmental tolerances
C3	Volunteering programmes contributing to management and sustainability of the World Heritage Site are encouraged supported
C4	Accessibility and inclusivity are strongly supported as a means to build a cohesive community, locally and internationally, that is invested in the future of the Site.
Policies – Group 2 The partnership policy is that...	Economy
C5	The economic value of the designation is evaluated, promoted and demonstrated, particularly to encourage sensitive business growth and encourage a greater year-round economy
C6	Long terms sustainability of the Visitor Centres and Museums that support World Heritage Status is all of our responsibility
C7	Local producers and service providers are used and advocated for where possible in respect of activity relating to the management of the World Heritage Site
Policies – Group 3 The partnership policy is that...	Civic Pride
C8	The profile of the Jurassic Coast, World Heritage Status and its significance is increased within towns and parishes close to the Site.
C9	The use of the Jurassic Coast and UNESCO brands should be nurtured in order to strengthen the integrity of the designation.