

Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan 2020-2025

Joint Report of the Cornish Mining Team and DCC Head of Service for Planning, Transportation and Environment

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee be asked to endorse the World Heritage Site Management Plan prior to its formal adoption by DCC through a delegated Cabinet Member decision.

1. Summary

Brief overview/purpose of report.

The report outlines the process for, and progress in, reviewing the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) Management Plan and asks Committee to endorse the attached draft final plan, prior to formal adoption through a delegated decision by the Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services.

Original plans to present the draft Site Management Plan to the committee prior to public consultation were unable to take place due to delays in the process caused by Covid-19. This meant that the draft was not ready in time to present in the planned schedule of Locality Committee meetings. Consequently, the final draft is presented here for endorsement.

DCC officers and councillor representatives for the World Heritage Site have been involved in the development of the reviewed Site Management Plan throughout the process. DCC's officer response on the draft document, submitted as part of the public consultation process, was forwarded to the WHS Partnership Board in August 2020 and its recommended amendments have been incorporated into this draft of final plan.

Local authorities are now being asked to adopt this final version of the reviewed and updated Management Plan.

2. Introduction

The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (CMWHS), also known as “Cornish Mining”, was Inscribed by UNESCO on its World Heritage List in 2006. The World Heritage designation covers ten geographical areas, nine in Cornwall and one in Devon covering the Tamar Valley and Tavistock.

The purpose of the Management Plan is to create a strategic policy framework within which the various management interests can operate. To do this it explains the reasons for designation, describes the WHS and its key features, defines how it is protected, outlines the key management issues and defines policies and strategic actions.

Both UNESCO and the UK Government require those responsible for World Heritage Sites to produce and periodically update a Management Plan, to identify the site’s principal management needs and strategies to address them. A review of the previous Management Plan (2013-18) commenced in 2017, guided by a steering group that included officers from both Devon County and West Devon Borough Councils. The revision was informed by an ongoing process of monitoring, review and analysis of progress during the previous Plan period, but also factors in significant developments in UNESCO guidance and the strategies of key partner organisations. This included the declaration of a Climate Emergency by all three partner local authorities (Cornwall, Devon County and West Devon Borough Councils) in 2019. This has shaped the Partnership’s shared policy aims and strategic management objectives, in consultation with the communities living within and around the WHS.

3. Proposal

The Plan encompasses both the substantial physical assets and landscapes that make up the WHS, together with the cultural traditions that created them, as elements of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Significant improvements in the conservation, interpretation, access to and public information about the Site’s OUV were delivered during the last seven years, with:

- *15 conservation projects;*
- *a cultural events programme that delivered over 150 performances to an audience of 180,000;*
- *£10.1m investment in heritage-led regeneration;*
- *education projects that reached 9,000 pupils.*

During that time knowledge of climate change and its impacts on planetary ecosystems grew significantly, together with the recognition of how humanity depends upon these. UNESCO has also highlighted the combined value of cultural and natural heritage (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/biodiversity/>).

As a result, the Partnership have incorporated biocultural protection and stewardship across the Site into the scope of this Plan, to respond to UNESCO’s focus. This will require the WHS Partnership to access new areas of expertise and offers opportunities for new collaborations.

The Partnership has also aligned its delivery of the World Heritage Convention with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), incorporating cultural, social, economic, environmental, and ecological objectives for the benefit of all. In 2015 UNESCO's General Assembly adopted its Policy on the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention, with the goal of assisting Member States, WHS management bodies and communities to harness the potential of World Heritage to contribute to sustainable development.

The CMWHS Vision, Mission and Aims were reassessed in terms of how they meet this Policy, with the conclusion that the existing CMWHS management approach serves the UN SDGs well, whilst considerable scope exists for enhancing its environmental contribution. Section 5 of the Plan articulates the value of the WHS landscape in that wider sustainable development context, with the emphasis on the priority areas of activity for the period 2020/2025 of:

- social equity
- climate resilience
- international partnerships.

Related planning policy documents, strategies and programmes that were considered during the review process include:

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Cornwall Local Plan (2017)
- Cornwall Council Environmental Growth Strategy (2015)
- Cornwall Council Mineral Safeguarding DPD (2018)
- Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2019)
- Devon County Council Minerals Plan (2017)
- Local Climate Emergency Declarations/Action Plans (as referenced above)

Section 6 of the Plan sets out the key management challenges and opportunities to address them. Specific conclusions from this review were that the Local Plans and related strategies set out cross-cutting provisions relating to development that highlight the importance of environmental infrastructure, ecosystem services and biodiversity, green spaces, and restoring and enhancing habitats and their connectivity. Improving the resilience of ecosystems can enhance the preservation of cultural landscapes and the wider historic environment, protecting important views and/or the setting of designated and non-designated assets, and the character of settlements within the WHS.

Early formative consultation with key stakeholders had identified that the existing policies in the 2013 -18 Plan were still relevant and fit for purpose and, therefore, remain unchanged from the 2013-2018 Management Plan. The assessment of the CMWHS Vision, Mission and Aims and the policies that flow from these concluded that, whilst the existing CMWHS management approach serves sustainable development and achievement of UN SDG goals well, its environmental contribution could be increased. As a result, the Partnership is proposing two new policies in this Management Plan:

Policy on Support for renewable energy (Policy C5)

Proposals for renewable energy installations will be supported where they do not adversely affect the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the Site.

Policy on Biodiversity net gain from major developments (Policy C7)

Development proposals should ensure that the biodiversity and geological diversity that contributes to the distinctiveness of the Cornwall and West Devon mining landscape is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, having due regard to maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the Site. Developments of a significant nature will be expected to deliver appropriate biodiversity net gain.

The policy frameworks to guide management of the Site, with a prioritised list of agreed strategic actions for the next five years, are identified in Section 7. Section 8 describes the monitoring and evaluation system whereby the progress in delivering this Plan will be measured.

Three appendices accompany the Plan, including the World Heritage Site Area Statements A1-A10, and these can be viewed online at: www.cornishmining.org.uk

4. Options/Alternatives

A Management Plan is required by UNESCO as a condition of inclusion on the World Heritage List. The WHS Partnership is charged with overseeing the creation of the document, and Cornwall Council, as the lead partner, took responsibility for the review and redrafting process, in close consultation with DCC and WDBC. The attached final draft of the revised Management Plan reflects and contributes to several of this Authority's strategic priorities.

If this Council does not adopt the Plan it would call in to question its commitment to upholding the World Heritage Convention and maintaining the WHS.

5. Consultations

The initial draft Management Plan as signed off by the Partnership Board, on which DCC is represented by Councillor Sellis, on 18 June 2020 was released for public consultation on 10 July, with a closing date of 31 August. The resulting comments have been collated and potential amendments are outlined below.

The public consultation included:

- Uploading the draft Plan, appendices and the sustainability analysis to the WHS website, with an online survey to capture views on new key policy areas, and inviting written submissions via email response;
- Placing a notice in the planning section of local newspapers advertising the consultation, and inviting those without internet access to request hard copies of all the above;
- Issuing a press release to local print and broadcast media;
- Posting items on social media;
- Direct email to all 57 Parish and Town Councils in the WHS areas;
- Technical Panel members circulating to colleagues and elected members in the organisations that they represent;

- Email to 87 stakeholder organisations

The findings were:

Online questionnaire – 171 responses in total (partial and fully completed), providing over 420 comments. The most often quoted concern of all responses (online survey and e-mails) were with planning issues and the perception that the WHS policies on protection and conservation were not always observed.

82% of respondents supported or strongly supported the new Policy C5 - *Proposals for renewable energy installations will be supported where they do not adversely affect the OUV of the Site.*

87% of respondents supported or strongly supported the new Policy C7 - *Development proposals should ensure that the biodiversity and geodiversity that contributes to the distinctiveness of the C&WD mining landscape is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, having due regard to maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the Site. Developments of a significant nature will be expected to deliver appropriate biodiversity net gain.*

In terms of general management priorities, the most frequently listed was conservation and regeneration of settlements in the Site, followed by presentation and learning.

Further detail of the consultation response can be found in the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 – consultation response review of findings.

6. Financial Considerations

DCC currently contributes £25,000 per annum towards the work programme of the WHS Partnership targeted towards implementation of Management Plan policies. The Management Plan review process is part of this work programme and does not incur additional costs.

7. Legal Considerations

Although there is no statutory duty to produce a management plan The Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO 1972) (“the WH Convention”) sets out the obligations that the State Party signatories to the Convention commit to, which recognises their ‘*duty of ensuring the identification, **protection, conservation, presentation and transmission** to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage*’. (WH Convention, Article 4,)

Appropriate management frameworks and Management Plans are the main mechanism by which the UK Government, as the State Party, meets this obligation to the World Heritage Convention in demonstrating effective WHS management is in place.

The overall responsibility for meeting the obligations are part of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) remit. However, many of the

responsibilities of the State Party are in practice delivered by other organisations, most notably local authorities.

8. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change), Equality Considerations and Public Health Impact

A Comprehensive Impact Analysis has been undertaken by Cornwall Council as part of the process; results from this process have influenced the final draft to ensure that sustainability, environmental, equality and public health issues have been fully considered.

The Plan has also been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which focussed on the two new policies proposed for inclusion in the Management Plan 2020-2025, as the existing policies had all been tested via previous SA's for the last Plan, and the Supplementary Planning Document adopted in 2017. The SA report sets out the summary of the conclusions reached during the review and development of the new Plan during 2018/19, with anticipated impacts of the new policies that were proposed as a result and was subject to public consultation alongside the Management Plan.

The previous SA summary report concluded that the policies in that Management Plan were positive and unlikely to have any significant negative effects on the SA objectives. This SA concluded that both of the two new policies had an overall positive effect.

There is a growing evidence base and recognition that the historic environment has a role to play in maintaining and improving the mental and physical health of individuals as well as communities. Policies contained within the Management Plan promote physical and intellectual access to and enjoyment of the WHS. They therefore align well with DCCs public health objectives and have the potential to link with related environmental programmes such as Devon's Naturally Healthy initiative.

9. Risk Management Considerations

Risks associated with the Management Plan can be categorised as reputational, relating to not having a live adopted Plan in place and the potential criticism from UNESCO that this could result in; legal, relating to not having statutory plans in place to ensure protection of the WHS; and financial; related to lack of strategic context for making funding bids to deliver activity. Risks related to the asset itself are covered in Section 6.3.3 (Climate risks) and 6.3.4 (Risk Management and Emergency Preparedness).

10. Reasons for Recommendations

The review of the World Heritage Site Management Plan and DCC's formal adoption of it will allow the County Council to fulfil its obligation as a partner in managing the WHS and ensure that the Management Plan has appropriate endorsement.

Deborah Boden (Cornish Mining WHS Co-ordinator, Cornwall Council)
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Electoral Divisions: Tavistock and Yelverton Rural

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
1. The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 – final draft for adoption		
2. Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 - draft Sustainability Appraisal Report (<i>v2 September 2020</i>)		
3. The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 - Comprehensive Impact Analysis		
4. The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 – consultation response review of findings		

The above mentioned Reports are published on the Council's Website at:

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

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