

UNITED KINGDOM¹

Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall)

Brief description

The site consists of sections of the border line of the Roman Empire at its greatest extent in the 2nd century A.D., part of what is known as the "Roman Limes". All together, the Limes stretched over 5,000kms from the Atlantic coast of northern Britain, through Europe to the Black Sea, and from there to the Red Sea and across North Africa to the Atlantic coast. Vestiges in this site include remains of the ramparts, walls and ditches, watchtowers, forts, and civilian settlements, which accommodated tradesmen, craftsmen and others who serviced the military.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1987, 2005

Agency responsible for site management

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2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (ii), (iii), (iv)

Justification as provided by the State Party

Taken as a whole, with all its complex of structures, forts and earthworks of the Roman period, the Hadrian's wall zone is one of the most significant complexes of archaeological remains of the period in the world. Its importance rests on a combination of several factors.

Diversity

The remains in the Roman military zone are of many different types. As well as the structure of the curtain wall, its milecastles and turrets, and all the

associated earthworks, there are 17 forts either on the Wall or closely linked to it, each of which has an individual history of occupation, as well as having attracted to itself a settlement of civilians or camp-followers. In addition, there are further forts or smaller posts in the controlled territories both north and south of the Wall, linked by military roads. These, together with their associated signalling- or watch-towers, marching camps, quarries, aqueducts and settlements emphasise Roman control over their landscape.

Complexity and archaeological potential

The remains are of great complexity. Many of the fort and settlement sites were occupied for a considerable timespan, and can be shown to have undergone many changes in layout and planning during their period of use. Examination of these in detail can pave the way to substantial advances in understanding of the nature and character of Roman occupation of specific sites.

Group value

The value of the Hadrian's Wall complex as an inter-related group of sites cannot be over-estimated. Data from individual sites can be readily assessed against other immediately comparable sites, and the study of the frontier as a whole can lead, in a way not easily paralleled by other archaeological material, to conclusions which may have a direct bearing on military and hence Roman political history.

Preservation and condition

Although the Wall is overlain by the modern conurbations of Newcastle and Carlisle, about four-fifths of its line runs through more open country. Within the central 28 miles (45 km) of its course (Wall miles 33-62), the remains are in an exceptionally good state of preservation, surviving as part of a landscape which still contains significant traces of the Roman military presence. Even outside this central zone, however, many individual sites are well-preserved: of the 17 forts on the wall or in close association with it, there are now 10 which are virtually free from development or encroachment, and the sites of only four of the remainder are completely overlain by modern urban or village settings. Research on the Wall, which has reached its peak in the last 60 years or so, has shown that there is a large store of information about the Wall and its structures still buried intact. All elements of the surviving remains have potential for containing significant information.

¹ Transnational site with Germany since 2005. Only the United Kingdom was to report on this site for the European Periodic Reporting exercise.

Documentation

The Wall is mentioned in Roman historical accounts, and there are many surviving inscriptions from Wall sites. From such material the framework of the history of the frontier can be plotted, but much of the detail has to be added as a result of archaeological work. The fact that the Roman frontier works and the Wall itself are mentioned in contemporary source material gives the remains an enhanced importance and a secure context for their study and evaluation.

Scale

The overall scale of the Wall and its associated frontier works gives it particular prominence. The strategic prowess of the Romans, shown by the way the planning and siting of the Wall makes full use of the landscape, commands respect. It is a significant factor in understanding Roman military skills and practices to be able to see these remains within their overall setting.

Rarity

Although large in itself, and extending over a wide area, the combination and complexity of this associated series of Roman frontier works is unparalleled in Britain. Any assessment of the rarity or uniqueness of the monument must be set on a European, if not world, scale. There are other Roman frontier works in parts of what was once the Roman world, but few are so concentrated, so well-preserved or so immediately dependent on one another as those in the Hadrian's Wall area. There can be no hesitation therefore in claiming that the Wall and the Roman military zone surrounding it are of the highest national archaeological importance and form one of the nation's monuments which ranks high on a world or European scale of importance.

Overall assessment

In terms of its documentation, diversity, complexity, group value and state of survival, the combination of Roman remains and landscapes in the military zone in the north is of major national importance. Its scale and rarity as a group of inter-related monuments, in effect the survival of a large swathe of territory which still bears the marks of Roman military occupation, mark it out as one of the most important archaeological sites in Europe.

UNESCO Criteria a(ii), (iv) and (vi).

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

(1987):

Criterion II. Hadrian's Wall exerted great influence on the spatial organization of the British limes over approximately 300 years. This frontier zone is still a part of the landscape from Tyne to Solway.

Criterion III. This military zone bears exceptional testimony to Roman colonization by the large number of human settlements associated with the defences: the vicus of Vindolanda (Chesterholm) is an excellent example of a garrison settlement which contributes to an understanding of how, in times of peace, away from the entrenched camp, soldiers and their families lived.

Criterion IV. Hadrian's Wall is an outstanding example of a fortified limes. No other ensemble from the Roman Empire illustrates as ambitious and coherent a system of defensive constructions perfected by engineers over the course of several generations. Whether with respect to military architectural construction techniques, strategic design in the Imperial period or a policy for ground use and the organization of space in a frontier zone, this cultural property is an exceptional reference whose universal value leaves no doubt.

(2005): ICOMOS recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-05/29.COM/8B,
2. Inscribes the property on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria ii, iii, and iv** as an extension of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site:

Excluding:

- Reconstructions carried out since 1965;
- Urban development above Roman remains;

And provided that satisfactory documentation to reflect these exclusions can be agreed before the next World Heritage Committee Meeting.

3. Recommends that the reconstructed elements excluded from the nomination, together with development above the Roman remains, be considered as a buffer zone for the inscribed site.

4. Further recommends that the nomination be seen as the second phase of a possible wider, phased, serial transboundary nomination to encompass remains of the Roman frontiers around the Mediterranean Region.

5. Recommends that the combined Hadrian's Wall and Upper German-Raetian Limes sites together be known as the Frontiers of the Roman Empire.

6. Recommends that the Hadrian's Wall site be known as Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Hadrian's Wall and that the Upper German-Raetian Limes site should be known as the Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Upper German-Raetian Limes.

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- Proposal for text has not been made by State Party
- No change required to UNESCO's official description of the site

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: inadequate
- Proposals for revision of the boundaries will be first presented to the management plan committee for their endorsement. Subject to their agreement, proposals will be submitted to the Department for Culture Media and Sport as the State Party who will then submit them to the World Heritage Committee in due course
- Buffer zone exists but the site has been extended so the buffer zone is no longer adequate
- Proposals for changes to buffer zones will be included in proposals for revision of the boundaries of the site and submitted to the State Party. The UK government's Department for Culture Media and Sport as the State Party will then submit such proposals to the World Heritage Committee in due course

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained
- An outline proposal has been put forward to reconstruct the entire circuit of the fort defences at Carvoran. It is probable that it would result in the destruction of the authentic foundations and could have a significant impact on the setting of the WHS. This will not affect the outstanding universal value of the site.

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- The site is equated with those parts of the frontier which are protected by scheduling under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983. The scheduling was last revised in the late 1990's

- Local authorities are encouraged by the management plan to develop effective local planning policies which protect the site and its setting. These local plans vary across the Site, but most have separate policies which relate to the Site itself and to the buffer zone, known as "the Setting" (e.g.: Carlisle City Council's policy E25, E26, E27 on buffer zone restrictions). Allerdale Borough Council, Tynedale Council and Northumberland National Park all have policies which are similarly zoned for the site itself and its buffer zone
- The two planning policy guidance documents PPG15 and PPG16 were issued by the Department of the Environment. PPG16 (1990) places responsibility for dealing appropriately with any archaeology within a planning application with the applicant: archaeological remains of national importance whether scheduled or not should be preserved *in situ*, and this provided a new protective measure for the remains of the WHS
- The protection arrangements are considered highly effective

Actions taken/proposed:

- Revision of the boundaries to include those parts of the Roman frontier which are not scheduled. This will enhance their formal status by recognising their universal significance and thus give added protection through the planning system
- National, regional and local levels of action. Timeframe: not know

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, national park, rural landscape
- Only approximately 10% of the WHS is owned or managed by bodies who manage these parts for conservation and public access

Highway: between Newcastle and the eastern end of the Whin Sill, Hadrian's Wall itself is buried beneath a public road. In Cumbria a further stretch of Hadrian's Wall west of Birdoswald for approximately 5km as far as the village of Banks lies beneath a minor road or in its northern verge

Urban: about 10% of the WHS is largely buried by development, both privately and commercially owned, in the cities of Newcastle and Carlisle, as well as a number of villages which have grown up on the line of Hadrian's Wall

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group formally set up on 01 January 1993 to oversee and agree the production and implementation of the WHS management plan
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Management by the State Party; management under protective legislation; management under contractual agreement between the State Party and a third party; consensual management
- A large part of the central section of Hadrian's Wall is owned and managed by the National Trust, which is a national charitable body committed to conservation of both the cultural and natural heritage. The excavated remains of part of the civil settlement attached to the fort of Vindolanda, as well as the unexcavated fort of Carvoran, is owned and managed by the Vindolanda Trust, a charitable trust formed for the purposes of acquiring and managing the archaeological sites within its ownership and promoting research, principally through excavation and publication
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national (DCMS, English Heritage, English Nature); regional (Countryside Agency, ONE North-East, North-West Regional Development Agency); local (Charitable Trusts: the National Trust estate includes approximately 9.6km of Hadrian's Wall. Two forts including their museums are owned and managed by the Vindolanda Trust, a charitable trust set up with the purpose of acquiring land around its two forts for conservation and for research and excavation. The small but important museum at Maryport is again not formally part of the site, but houses a collection of finds including a series of altars unique in the Roman Empire: this is also managed by a charitable trust.)
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- To develop a single co-ordination unit (Long-term non-project based funding and support for the co-ordination role is needed. At present it consists of two bodies, the co-ordination unit which manages the development of the management plan and co-ordinates its implementation, and the Tourism Partnership. need to develop a single unit)
- Timeframe: not known

5. Management Plan

- Management plan is being implemented

- Implementation commenced: July 1996 (revised: December 2001)
- Adequate
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: the management plan committee meets at six-monthly intervals and receives an update report from both the co-ordination unit and the HW Tourism Partnership. The co-ordination unit maintains the action plan derived from the management plan and submits this to the committee to inform on progress

6. Financial Resources**Financial situation**

- Heritage lottery Fund; English Heritage; European Union; National Trust
- The sites within Hadrian's Wall WHS are operated by seven different organisations, two of which are national organisations and the remainder local ones
- No funding drawn in through World Heritage Fund
- insufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 19
- Total of 11 staffed sites within or related to the WHS
- Highly professional staff amongst partner organizations. A number of the organisations involved in the WHS employ archaeologists with both curatorial and excavation roles. There are also a number of universities with academic interests in various aspects of Hadrian's Wall.

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Very good: conservation, management, promotion, interpretation; education, visitor management
- Staff resources are inadequate
- Staffing is adequate except for the National Trail – need for more groundsmen. This will be achieved through re-allocation of existing financial resources
- 58 part-time volunteers who patrol the National Trail who greet visitors and report on the condition of its infrastructure

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- The training needs are met by the individual organisations employing the staff. The project in the Proactive Management of Archaeological Earthworks which the site hosted for 4 years, funded through the EU Raphael Programme, provided additional training for staff across the site on earthwork management and this training has influenced the management of the Hadrian's Wall National Trail in particular, as well as conservation issues arising from conflicting uses such as agriculture
- Training needs: none

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 632,192 visitors in 2004. Trend: not provided
- Visitor facilities: all 11 sites have admission points and retail points for visitors, including guidebooks to the site, other relevant literature and souvenirs. Also: site museums, catering and car parking, guidebooks, central information telephone line
- Visitor facilities are inadequate
- Visitor needs: there is no single centre which gives visitors an overall understanding of the whole frontier (a location at Haltwhistle was suggested)
- There is a tourism/visitor management plan for the site. Its principles are set out in the management plan and arise from a study of visitor facilities carried out in 1994

10. Scientific Studies

- There is no agreed research framework/strategy for the site
- Risk assessment; studies related to the value of the site; monitoring exercises; condition surveys; archaeological surveys; visitor management; transportation studies. Also: interpretation, mortars
- Studies used for the management of site (various aspects of management mentioned)

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on publications

- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local authorities. Inadequate: local communities, businesses
- Need for awareness raising: two of the Hadrian's Wall Tourism Partnership projects are specifically directed at raising awareness of the WHS with local businesses and communities.
- There is an education strategy for the site: Its overall aims are to promote and facilitate the best educational use of the WHS and develop a strategic approach to educational provision. It covers all aspects of formal and informal education and life-long learning
- Special events and exhibitions concerning the site's World Heritage status
- Website available
- Local participation: various events organized

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- World Heritage Bureau sessions: 21st (1997)

Conservation interventions

- Many conservation/restoration works and archaeological excavations on the site and related monuments
- Present state of conservation: Needs more resources

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure, environmental pressure, visitor/tourism pressure, agricultural/forestry regimes
- Visitor pressure on the site has always existed, but the WHS status through the management plan, the creation of the National Trail and the development of new attractions since the Site was inscribed, has encouraged visitors to spread their visits more widely across the site. Also :urban pressure (Newcastle), burrowing animals, natural erosion, fluvial and coastal change, increase in visitor numbers, management of the forest, agricultural regimes
- Emergency measures: extend the boundaries of the World Heritage site. The proposal to extend the boundaries of the WHS to include the entire length of the Wall and the Vallum is seen as strengthening the protection afforded to parts of the archaeological core within urban areas that are currently subject to development pressure. Timeframe: not provided

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme
- Visitor figures to the staffed attractions within the site are recorded annually and are analysed monthly to monitor change
The condition of the National Trail is monitored by fixed point photography and scored to monitor changes in the condition. There are also person-counters throughout the length of the Trail. Meteorological data is also collected. A first-time full condition survey of the earthworks of the WHS under grassland and woodland was carried out in 2000-3, but there are insufficient staff resources to repeat this to monitor change.

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic, management. Also: education and protection
- Weaknesses of management: 1- The linear nature and size of the site across two government regions creates anxieties and tensions between the two regions. 2- The number of organisations involved in managing the site necessitates voluntary partnership involvement, and the partnership is only as strong as the weakest partner of the lowest common denominator of agreement. 3- Potential tension between individual organisations viewing other organisations both as partners and as competitors for visitors and visitor spend. There is also a tension between collaboration in the site as a whole and promoting their own organizational identity

Future actions:

- Creation of a new single management organisation in the form of a not for profit company is in the course of being set up to take responsibility for the implementation of the major study and bring together the roles of HWCU and HWTP. It may take over responsibility for maintenance of the National Trail
- Is WH Funding sought: not provided. Timeframe: not provided