

Natural England and the Lake District World Heritage Site

In order to meet Natural England's remit as a Landscape Advisor under the NERC Act, and as a partner in the LDNP partnership, we complete a World Heritage Site Checklist with all Agri-environment Scheme Application/Agreements we advise on.

In addition, under EIA regs, Natural England decides if a proposal to change the use of rural land is likely to have a significant effect on the environment through the EIA Screening process and example of this is erecting fencing on a Common using a S38 Consent.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eia-agriculture-regulations-apply-to-make-changes-to-rural-land>

Again, we need to ensure that we have not had any impact on the OUV of the WHS.

What is the Lake District World Heritage Site?

The Lake District National Park is a World Heritage Site. It is a designated heritage asset. World Heritage Sites are designated with attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The case for Outstanding Universal Value for the Lake District is based on a combination of attributes falling under three themes taken from the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value - Brief Synthesis:

Theme 1: A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro pastoral and local industry which gives it special character

Theme 2: A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark

Theme 3: A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes

These three themes are interdependent and intertwined. It is their combination that gives the Lake District its Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural landscape.

The Lake District World Heritage Site Nomination documents provide a wealth of information on the Lake District, including details of the Attributes that make up the Outstanding Universal Value of the Lake District and chapters on the 13 valleys and information on their distinctive character and features.

We use the Nomination documents to help complete the checklist.

<http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/projects/whs/lake-district-nomination>

Appendix One - World Heritage Site Checklist

Taking into account the following context, identify the Attributes of the World Heritage Site that are affected by the Application/Agreement/Project. Use the checklist below to identify which Attribute(s), if any, are relevant to the Application/Agreement/Project and how these impacts would affect the significance of the World Heritage Site.

World Heritage Site Checklist

Site address

Mungrisdale, Saddleback and Bowscale Commons

Proposal

Existing fencing around seven woodland and scrub enclosures on Mungrisdale, Saddleback and Bowscale Commons to be retained for a further 20 years. These were previously permitted under a S38 consent and are now subject to a renewed SoS application for continued consent. Maintenance of these enclosures is part of an ongoing Agri-environment Scheme AG00353862 with the Commoners Association.

Prior to installation of these enclosures, remnant woodland was present in a few gill areas and on some steep rocky/scree slopes but with very restricted regeneration due to the pressure of sheep grazing. Restoration and creation of areas of woodland and scrub was intended to support the conservation objectives of Skiddaw Group SSSI and Lake District High Fells SAC. The primary objective of the fencing was to remove pressure from livestock in order to protect tree planting and allow for natural habitat regeneration. The benefits of these enclosures are already evident, and continued fencing is proposed to continue the current trajectory of habitat restoration.

Q. Which of the 13 valleys is your proposal in?

Borrowdale and Bassenthwaite

Volume One, Section 2 of the Nomination document provides an introduction to the 13 Valleys and can help you to identify the relevant valley to the application/agreement/project

http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/729679/2.c.0-Introduction-to-the-13-Valleys-of-The-English-Lake-District.pdf

In what way does the application/agreement/project impact the significance of the World Heritage Site and the particular Attributes of the valley context in which it lies?

The fenced enclosures have been in place for 15 years, so present before WHS designation and therefore the proposal represents no change in the heritage asset. However, the objectives of retention of the fencing also support a number of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

- 1. A landscape of exceptional beauty shaped by persistent and distinctive agro pastoral and local industry which gives it special character:**

Enhancing/supporting the extraordinary beauty and harmony of the landscape by:

Renewal of permissions for temporarily fenced enclosures allows for habitat restoration to continue that is enhancing the landscape. Growth of woodland and scrub within the enclosures, both planted and mature, is repairing the current imbalance in woodland distribution and supporting growth where, without land use pressures, it would naturally occur within the WHS.

The enclosures are all within gills or the fell sides, so are not impeding views across the landscape. Instead, successful establishment of these areas long-term will add to the interest and mosaics within the landscape at a local scale.

As well as contributing to the visual landscape, the outcomes of this proposal also contribute to the resilience of the WHS, particularly in a changing climate. The conditions already shown to be developing within the enclosures, such as recovery of heath and establishment of structural diversity in the vegetation (scrub and thick grass and moss swards), are needed to slow water flow off the fells and reduce soil erosion.

Enhancing/supporting the agro-pastoral system by:

Fenced enclosures of small areas of the common allow for habitat restoration priorities for designated sites to be achieved alongside continued fell grazing. Without the protection of fences, establishment and regeneration of woodland, and the associated mosaic of habitats, would only be possible with a massively reduced stocking rate. Enclosures allow grazing of sheep to continue and ensures sustainable flocks of traditional sheep breeds are kept on the fell. Fence lines were initially designed in collaboration with the commoners to minimise impact on traditional practices, such as not to disrupt gathering routes.

The enclosures are supported by agri-environment scheme funding awarded to the Mungrisdale, Saddleback and Bowscale Commoners Association. Management of this agreement, and associated communal works to maintain enclosures, are part of the continued evolving traditions of the agro-pastoral system and farming on commons. The agri-environment scheme also gives significant financial support to the farm businesses that are part of the agreement.

Presence of the fences over the past 15 years have shown that temporary enclosure of a section of the common to exclude livestock does not result in harm to the long term future of grazing on the common; there has been no reduction in fell flocks on the common in this time.

The proposal does not have an impact on attributes of the WHS relating to local industries or towns and settlements.

2 A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark

The proposal does not have an impact on this theme for the WHS.

3 A landscape which has been the catalyst for ideas encompassing the emotional relationship between people and the landscape, their right to enjoy it and the need to protect it

Enhancing/supporting landscape conservation by:

The primary purpose of this proposal is to continue the trajectory of habitat restoration and landscape conservation already started by installation of the enclosures. Public money through the Commoners Association's agri-environment scheme is supporting nature conservation alongside the cultural values of traditional fell grazing. The enclosures are already shown to be supporting gradual restoration of woodland and scrub areas. Continued presence of these enclosures will support improving the condition of habitat features within the areas designated for nature conservation and to contribute to resilience of the landscape.

Two of the enclosures are ensuring the survival of historic upland woodland and scrub (Young Wood and the juniper at Swineside). These are remnant habitats that would previously have been more widespread across the Lake District fells. Protection of these means these elements of the WHS landscape are conserved for future generations to enjoy.

Enhancing/supporting the ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the lakes District by

All enclosures have strategically positioned gates so that open access across the fell is maintained. The enclosures are all within gills or the fell sides, so are not impeding views across the landscape. Instead, successful establishment of these areas long-term will add to the interest and mosaics within the landscape enhancing the experience for people visiting the WHS.

OUV Checklist

These are the attributes of OUV.

Which attributes are relevant to the application/agreement/project?

Theme 1:

A landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by persistent and distinctive agro pastoral and local industry which gives it special character.

Attribute	Components of Attributes	Impact positive or negative and explain your thinking
<i>Extraordinary beauty and harmony</i>	The physical natural landscape of mountains, rivers, lakes, and valleys	Positive impact - Redress woodland imbalance and protecting the few existing woodland areas.
	The physical cultural landscape in the main the product of agro-pastoralism, settlements and local industry, including woodlands	Positive impact on woodlands as above. Also positive impact as agri-environment payments support farm businesses
	The variety and combination of differing landscape characters and physical attributes of each of the 13 valleys	Positive impact, as above
<i>Agro-pastoral system</i>	Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways,	No impact/Not relevant
	Farmsteads and Farmhouses	No impact/Not relevant
	Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports.	No impact/Not relevant
	The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system,	Positive impact - Allows grazing of sheep to continue at a viable level alongside habitat restoration.

		Flocks of Herdwick are kept on the fell.
	The surviving physical and social elements of hill farming e.g. shepherding and common gathering	No impact - Initially designed so as not to disrupt gathering routes
	Local techniques of landscape maintenance (stonewalling, hedging, pollarding,	No impact/Not relevant
	Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeders associations and commons committees	Positive impact - Agreement between Commons association, supports a continuation of local management and governance
	Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management,	Positive impact - Allows grazing of sheep to continue alongside habitat restoration. Commoners work together to maintain enclosures
	Semi-natural habitats created and sustained as a result of a continuing agro-pastoral systems, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi-natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape,	Positive impact – redress woodland imbalance and allow for restoration of ground flora to enhance the mosaic of semi-natural habitats on the fell alongside continued grazing.
Local industries	Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands,	Positive impact - Young Wood protected
	Traditional local woodland industries, people and skills,	No impact/Not relevant
	The physical remains of past woodland industries, buildings,	No impact/Not relevant

	structures (i.e. Bark Barns, Charcoal Sheds),	
	The physical remains of historic mines and quarries which have shaped the landscape),	No impact/Not relevant
Towns and Settlements	The English Lake District's settlement pattern of individual farms, small hamlets, large villages and market towns, historically derived and functionally.	No impact/Not relevant
	Medieval buildings,	No impact/Not relevant
	Vernacular buildings	No impact/Not relevant

Theme 2:

A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscapes that have had global influence and left their physical mark

Early tourism	Places and collections associated with early tourism.	No impact/Not relevant
	Early tourist infrastructure,	No impact/Not relevant
	The location of viewing stations, including structures in very limited cases,	No impact/Not relevant
	Other key views that form the image of the Lake District,	No impact – woodland is within valleys or fell side so not impeding views
	The values, aesthetic ideals and perceptions which led to the creation of early tourism.	No impact/Not relevant

<i>Villas, gardens and formal landscapes</i>	Villa Landscapes – their buildings, gardens and surrounding designed landscapes,	No impact/Not relevant
	The values, aesthetic ideals and perceptions which led to their creation.	No impact/Not relevant
	Physical designed landscapes,	No impact/Not relevant
<i>Sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism</i>	Residences and places associated with significant writers and poets,	No impact/Not relevant
	Key literary and artistic associations with Landscape. Surviving landscape which inspired literature and art	No impact/Not relevant
	The value and significance of ideas and writings of writers and poets and artists,	No impact/Not relevant
	Perception and enjoyment of sites and collections associated with Picturesque and Romanticism, e.g.	No impact/Not relevant
	Key associations with the origins of the outdoor movement.	No impact/Not relevant
	Buildings linked to early outdoor holiday movement..	No impact/Not relevant
	Surviving landscape which inspired early climbing, outdoors recreation and the early outdoor holiday movement,.	No impact/Not relevant

	The Romantic emphasis on outdoor activity and experience – principally walking.	No impact/Not relevant
	The open access to the Lake District Fells and lakes for recreation,	No impact – strategically positioned gates to enclosures so open access across fell is maintained

Theme 3

A landscape which has been the catalyst for key developments in the national and international protection of landscapes

Landscape conservation	Areas of the WH property where historic landscape conservation battles were both won and lost.	No impact/Not relevant
	The idea of landscape conservation inspired by the English Lake District landscape and the universal value of scenic and cultural landscape transcending traditional property rights,	No impact/Not relevant
	The landscape is protected for its scenic and cultural value and is protected for the Nation,	No impact/Not relevant
	The perception that the landscape is protected for its scenic and cultural value and is protected for the Nation by public and state support,	Positive impact - Public money through agri-environment scheme supports nature conservation within the landscape and alongside cultural values of commoners associations and traditional fell grazing.
	Properties owned or managed by the National Trust	No impact/Not relevant

	The knowledge and perception that the creation of the National Trust was inspired by the English Lake District,	No impact/Not relevant
	Landscapes owned and sympathetically managed to sustain our OUV by the Partnership and other landscape conservation bodies,	No impact/Not relevant
	Farms and land purchased by individuals and public subscription to protect the landscape and our OUV e.g. traditional farming,	No impact/Not relevant
<i>The ability of people to experience the spirit and feeling of the Lake District</i>	The ability to feel the values, ideas and perceptions of harmonious beauty and other significance derived from the Picturesque and Romantic traditions specific to the English Lake District,	No impact/Not relevant
	The value of landscape for restoring the human spirit and wellbeing,	Visitor experience enhanced through more and better habitats and willdife
	Opportunities for quiet enjoyment and spiritual refreshment.	Visitor experience enhanced through more and better habitats and willdife

Briefly describe the significance of the affects to help understand the potential impact of your proposal

If you consider that you proposal has no impact on heritage assets, say so.

This Application/Agreement/Project contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Lake District World Heritage Site (WHS) in a number of ways.

2. A landscape of exceptional beauty shaped by persistent and distinctive agro pastoral and local industry which gives it special character:

Enhancing/supporting the extraordinary beauty and harmony of the landscape by:

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Presence of the fences over the past 15 years have shown that temporary enclosure of a section of the common to exclude livestock does not result in harm to the long term future of grazing on the common particularly in terms of continuity of the tradition of common land as part of the agro pastoral traditions and attribute of the Lake District WHS. There has been no reduction in fell flocks on the common in this time.

The proposal does not have an impact on attributes of the WHS relating to local industries or towns and settlements.

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