Communicating World Heritage: Newgrange and the Bend of the Boyne (Brú na Bóinne) World Heritage Site

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Disclosure

Specialist area of archaeological research – Neolithic period

Member of steering committee for BnaB WHS management plan since 2013- representing ICOMOS Ireland

Chaired steering committee for BnaB WHS Research Framework, Heritage Council, 2008-2009

Member, team led by Bright 3D, Boyne Valley Masterplan

Dowth Lands, major private land holding (20% of WHS), research partnership with UCD School of Archaeology

Expert member, International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM), ICOMOS

PERSONAL VIEW...
Why Newgrange and Brú na Bóinne WHS as a case study?

PHOTOS:NMS, DCHG
• **Criterion (i):** The Brú na Bóinne monuments represent the largest expression of prehistoric **megalithic rock art** in Europe.

• **Criterion (iii):** The concentration of social, economic and funerary **monuments** at this site and the long **continuity of occupation** or use from **prehistory to the late medieval period** make this one of the most significant archaeological sites in Europe.

• **Criterion (iv):** The **passage grave**, here brought to its finest expression, was a feature of **outstanding importance** in **prehistoric Europe** and beyond.
European Context

Links with other megalithic WHS...
Stonehenge and Avebury, Heart of Neolithic Orkney, Antequara (Spain), ….Carnac (France), candidate site

• In a European context Ireland could be seen as under-represented in terms of WHS, but recognised internationally for the high quality of preservation of archaeological monuments and historic landscape character

Irish Context

Brú na Bóinne is the key site in the Irish World Heritage programme, central to the development of the programme
The Heart of Neolithic Orkney WHS

WHS and Buffer Zones (Historic Scotland, 2014, 5).
World Heritage Sites in the Republic of Ireland

Archaeological Ensemble of the Bend of the Boyne (1993) (i), (iii) & (iv)

Skellig Michael (1996) (iii) & (iv)
Brú na Bóinne communication profile

- Inscribed 1993
- Visitor centre 1997
- Management Plan 2002
- Reactive mission 2004
- Slane bridge by-pass planning case 2010-11
- Retrospective statement of OUV 2013
- New Management Plan 2017 (process started 2011)
Winter solstice sunrise
Brú na Bóinne WHS archaeological sites, core and buffer zones

Legislative/protection focus on sites

The landscape a living, farmed landscape
ICOMOS

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)

Emphasis: Representativeness: ecosystem, landscape, habitat and species conservation through effective PA systems and ecological networks

Determinant: Outstanding Universal Value
Sites nominated individually or serially can cross the threshold if they meet one or more WH criteria and stringent requirements of integrity.

Relationship of World Heritage Sites to other types of protected areas (PAs) in terms of Outstanding Universal Value versus Representativeness as key determinants.

Regional Sites and Networks
(e.g. Natura 2000, ASEAN Heritage Parks)

Sub-Regional Sites
(e.g. transboundary PAs, Peace Parks)

National Sites/PA Systems
(e.g. national parks, nature reserves, private reserves, monuments, NGO designations such as IBAs, ecological networks)

Sub-National Sites
(e.g. regional parks, provincial and district reserves)

Potential OUV (T/Lists)

Decreasing Global Numbers; Increasing International Recognition

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)
Who looks after Ireland’s World Heritage Programme?

**Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)**
Heritage Policy and Architectural Protection
**National Monuments Service – World Heritage Unit and website**
*OWNS* monuments in State Care, represents the State Party

**Office of Public Works**
Historic Properties and Facilities Management Services
Heritage Services
National Monuments – Conservation
**MANAGES AND CONSERVES** monuments in State Care

**Local Authorities (Co. Meath, Co. Louth)....Development Plans**
Comparing the Tentative Lists

1992

• The Burren (Mixed)
• Céide Fields (Mixed)
• North West Mayo Boglands (Natural)
• Clonmacnoise (Mixed)
• Killarney National Park (Natural)
• Clara Bog (Natural)
• Cashel (Cultural)
• Western Stone Forts (Cultural)

2010

• The Burren (Mixed)
• Céide Fields and NW Mayo Boglands (Mixed)
• The Monastic City of Clonmacnoise and its Cultural Landscape (Mixed)
• Dublin - The Historic City of Dublin
• Early Medieval Monastic Sites (Clonmacnoise, Durrow, Glendalough, Inis Cealtra, Kells and Monasterboice)
• The Royal Sites of Ireland (Cashel, Dún Ailinne, Hill of Uisneach, Rathcroghan Complex and Tara Complex...Navan)
• Western Stone Forts

• Evaluation in process
Wider role of Brú na Bóinne in the Irish World Heritage Programme

What happens in the Boyne Valley has significant influence in wider Irish World Heritage programme...policy and public perception...the Newgrange factor

• In the management of the site – we see the articulation between global world heritage policies and how they are implemented at national level

• Models of management and communication...there are tensions present

• Complexity of the management of the property
Heritage: A changing international framework

- The development of holistic landscape based approaches to conservation

- A widening of heritage values to include communities

- A shift from control based approaches to conservation towards those based on dynamic management of change

J. Hudson & P. James 2007 ‘The changing framework for the conservation of the historic environment’ in Structural Survey vol 25, no.3/4, 253-64
# Changing paradigms for protected areas (MCWH 2013)

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>As it was: protected areas were...</th>
<th>As it is becoming: protected areas are...</th>
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| **Objectives**    | • Set aside for conservation  
                    • Established mainly for spectacular wildlife and scenic protection  
                    • Managed mainly for visitors and tourists  
                    • Valued as wilderness  
                    • About protection | • Run also with social and economic objectives  
                    • Often set up for scientific, economic and cultural reasons  
                    • Managed with local people more in mind  
                    • Valued for the cultural importance of so-called ‘wilderness’ |
| **Governance**    | • Run by central government                                                                                   | Run by partners and involve an array of stakeholders                                                   |
| **Local people**  | • Planned and managed against people  
                    • Managed without regard to local opinions                                                              | • Run with, for, and in some cases by local people  
                    • Managed to meet the needs of local people                                                            |
| **Wider context** | • Developed separately  
                    • Managed as ‘islands’                                                                                   | • Planned as part of national, regional and international systems  
                    • Developed as ‘networks’ (strictly protected areas, buffered and linked by green corridors)         |
| **Perceptions**   | • Viewed primarily as a national asset  
                    • Viewed only as a national concern                                                                         | • Viewed also as a community asset  
                    • Viewed also as an international concern                                                                   |
| **Management techniques** | • Managed reactively within a short timescale  
                                                                                                      | • Managed adaptively in a long-term perspective  
                                                                                                      | • Managed with political considerations |
| **Finance**       | • Paid for by taxpayer                                                                                       | Paid for from many sources                                                                               |
| **Management skills** | • Managed by scientists and natural resource experts  
                                                                                                      | • Managed by multi-skilled individuals  
                                                                                                      | • Drawing on local knowledge |
**Brú na Bóinne** represents the most complex management scenario example in the World Heritage Manual.

A variety of entities involved in management of the property as well as the buffer zone.
Recognition of key issues

- Complex pattern of land ownership, State as a minority landowner, multiple landowners, rich agricultural land

- WHS designation/Protected Area status seen as imposing constraints on activity/development

- Decrease in resources for management and conservation since 2008

- Capacity of the World Heritage Unit, DCHG and Office of Public Works to manage and plan effectively
Ireland: A change in approach?

• Seminar in September 2013, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (now DCHG) organised to encourage public participation and debate

• No site on the Tentative List would be considered for nomination without local support and consent

• Support for locally based initiatives...the Burren and the Royal Sites evaluation
Evaluation of the Royal Sites of Ireland ongoing

Cashel, Dún Ailinne, Hill of Uisneach, Rathcroghan Complex, and Tara Complex (and Navan/Emain Macha, Northern Ireland (UK))

....transnational serial nomination

Associated with a unique expression of kingship, inauguration ritual > meeting of heaven and earth....‘genus locii’
Practice on the ground in Brú na Bóinne...

• Management Plan 2017 – **in theory**, participation and involvement of a Steering Group – *to represent stakeholders, help oversee preparation*

• **In practice** top-down approach to management reflected in the production and communication of the plan...Steering Committee has not met since 2015...

• Lack of consistency and clarity in management processes and communication

• Particular problem is the issue of community engagement

THERE IS A PLAN...IS THERE AN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

THERE IS A DISCONNECT IN PERCEPTION... BETWEEN **NEWGRANGE (GOOD)** AND **WORLD HERITAGE (PROBLEMATIC)**
Brú na Bóinne MANAGEMENT PLAN: Objective - Liaison with Local Communities

The Management Plan sets out to protect the sustainability...of the communities living within... the World Heritage Site. Key to the sustainability of these communities is their ability to continue to live, work and engage in recreation within the area.

A spokesperson for the Boyne Valley Consultative Committee said: "After 20 years of unfair planning refusals and restrictions... the committee are delighted to have made significant ground with representatives of State bodies...to discuss the current draft Brú na Bóinne Management Plan and its potential impact on the communities surrounding the site."

Meath Chronicle 18th February 2016.
And the future...

In the Management Plan...key immediate actions are set out

- Establishment of a Management Plan implementation Group

- Appointment of a Site Manager and Management Team

- Appointment of an Expert Advisory Committee

- Boyne Valley Consultative Group....to give all stakeholders full insight into the management of the World Heritage Site
A must see destination...

- Recognition of the key role of the World Heritage Site as a tourist attraction

- Strategic partnership between Fáilte Ireland (Tourism Authority) and the Office of Public Works and National Monuments Service

- Boyne Valley Interpretive Masterplan

- Interpretation and Exhibition Design and Project specification for the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Brú na Bóinne

- Local authorities – study of their responsibilities
The big question...

- Will Brú na Bóinne remain what people primarily think of as World Heritage in Ireland?

- With the proposed actions in the Management Plan, is there the potential for communication within and about the site to inform and change public opinion and policy about the future development of the World Heritage Programme in Ireland?
Thank you