



## UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:  
[UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

### (1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

Wye Valley and Forest of Dean

### (2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

England and Wales border & West Midlands / South West England border

Grid reference to centre of site

3552 2095

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

### **(3) Type of Site**

Please indicate category:

Natural  Cultural  Mixed  Cultural Landscape

### **(4) Description**

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

The limestone plateau of the Forest of Dean and the adjacent gorge of the Wye Valley became the crucible of the industrial revolution and the birthplace of landscape conservation. The area has a full sequence of the Carboniferous Limestone Series and excellent exposures and formations including limestone pavement, caves, natural stream channels and tufa dams, alongside the deeply incised meanders of the River Wye and one of the largest concentrations of ancient woodland in Britain. Within this evolved an intricate field pattern, often bounded by drystone walls. The lower Wye Valley and Forest of Dean have long been recognised for the exceptional landscape quality and provides internationally important habitats for a range of species. The area has rich and diverse heritage with evidence of settlement, defence and industry from prehistoric period to the recent past, including palaeolithic occupied caves, Bronze Age funerary monuments, Iron Age hillforts and Roman iron workings, Offa's Dyke, 5 castles, Tintern Abbey, early industrial remains and the setting for Rev William Gilpin's historic Picturesque landscape. With its ready supply of water, iron ore and wood for charcoal it provided the perfect setting for extensive concentrations of early iron smelting in Britain.

### **(5) History**

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

The notion and depiction of landscape as 'Picturesque' evolved from Reverend William Gilpin's travels on the 'Wye Tour' in 1770. He published the seminal 'Observations on the River Wye' in 1782 and was succeeded by Coleridge, Pope, Tennyson, Thackeray, Wordsworth and many other writers, poets and artists, including JMW Turner, who came to marvel and extol the special landscape of the valley, including the innovative industry.

Picturesque tourists were encouraged to reshape the landscape as settings for country estates. Following Gilpin's advice, many landowners began designing gardens with irregular sight lines and 'ruins' of 'classical' structures, such as Uvedale Price and Payne Knight. This in turn led to a new appreciation of natural landscapes and the concept of 'conservation'.

Iron resources made the area a strategic objective in the Roman Period. It was thoroughly exploited during the English Civil War and after the Restoration with the ability to supply munitions from the ironworks. In the 19th century Robert and David Mushet owned and experimented at several iron works in the area. Mushet worked in partnership with Bessemer to develop Self Hardening Steel without which the industrial age would have faltered, railways would not have been built, nor modern empires.

**(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?**  
Give reasons. 200 words

The Wye Valley and Forest of Dean are internationally recognised for their landscape and nature conservation importance but the value of the outstanding heritage is largely overlooked. The diverse evidence of occupation, appreciation and utilisation of the landscape and natural resources over 12,000 years is a key feature. The area is internationally significant both for its artistic / cultural influence and for the impact of the industrial processes that were initiated here. Being a WHS would promote the understanding and appreciation of the interaction between landscape and the evolution of cultural – but particularly attitudinal / artistic and industrial - development. It was also the place where these two came together with the Wye Tourists finding beauty and awe in the new industrial works within the landscape.

Most of the area falls within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Forest of Dean is also recognised as being a unique cultural landscape worthy of special designation. The partners in the Wye Valley AONB and

Forest of Dean have an established track record of cross-border co-operation in managing this administratively complex and dynamic landscape, and in attracting project funding. WHS status would further consolidate these established partnerships.

**(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words**

The Picturesque Movement and the development of Steel are the pinnacles of the area's OUV. However the palimpsest of cultural influences in the landscape is also an outstanding feature. Geology created the natural resources that were covered and exploited. The Iron Age hillforts, scowles and Roman infrastructure, then Offa's Dyke, made magnificent use of the topography protecting the mineral wealth of the area, followed by the medieval castles. The Cistercian Monks built Tintern Abbey for the seclusion and productive potential of the area, establishing expertise that turned into 'freelance' industries with the dissolution of the monasteries. The woodlands provided abundant timber and charcoal, cascading tributaries gave focus to settlements and power to pioneering industries including brass-, copper- & wire-works, papermaking, tanning, tin-plate and quarrying. The river was the conduit for trading goods leading to quayside developments and shipbuilding. This declined with the coming of the railway which itself subsequently declined and eventually closed with the demise of local industry. The Wye Tour developed as part of this river trade, attracting writers and poets to marvel and extol the spectacular landscape. The Wye Tour leaves tangible and intangible remains in descriptions, paintings and designed landscapes.

**(8) Outstanding Universal Value**

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In 1857 Mushet was the first to make durable rails of steel rather than cast iron, providing the basis for the development of rail transportation throughout the world in the late Nineteenth century. In a second key advance in metallurgy Mushet produced the first commercial steel alloy in 1868
(ii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Picturesque movement initiated a reshaping of the perception of landscape, inspiring landscape design and a new appreciation of natural landscapes leading to the evolution of the concept of 'conservation'.
(iii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Free mining; whereby coal & minerals have been mined by the Free Miners of The Forest Of Dean for seven hundred years. The free mining birthright is available to any man born and living within the Forest of Dean. He has to be aged 21 or over and must have worked a year and a day in a coal or iron mine. In its heyday, around 1849, there were more free miners working beneath the Forest floor than men of any other professions on the surface. Three mines are still worked by freeminers.
(iv)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gunns Mill is the earliest surviving charcoal fired blast furnace in England and one of European significance.
(v)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(vi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Wye Valley was the focus of the 'Wye Tour' undertaken by Reverend William Gilpin's in 1770, where he wrote on the notion and depiction of the landscape as 'Picturesque'. He subsequently wrote the seminal text 'Observations on the River Wye' in 1792 and was succeeded by Wordsworth, Pope, Grey, Southey, Tennyson, Thackeray and many other writers, artists and poets who came to marvel and extol the special landscape of the valley.
(vii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The seclusion and natural beauty of the Wye Valley has attracted people from the Cistercian Monks who built Tintern Abbey in 1191, to the 19th century tourists on the Wye Tour, to the modern visitors who continue to flock to the area for its strategic viewpoints, dramatic cliffs and dense ancient wooded slopes. The lower Wye Valley remains an important tourist destination today with an estimated 2 million visitors annually from around the world
(viii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The area has a full sequence of the Carboniferous Limestone Series and excellent exposures and formations including limestone pavement, caves, natural stream channels and tufa dams. The Old Red Sandstone creates fertile red soils along

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	with the floodplain alluvium. These softer rocks allowed the river to meander widely. Elsewhere the river cuts in and out of the harder Carboniferous Limestone strata forming dramatic gorges. The Gorge is also an important district for palaeontologists, with caves and rock shelters yielding material from the Pleistocene. With important examples of active and past geomorphologic processes the area is widely used for geological education.
(ix)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The area is particularly important for its rich wildlife habitats with the remarkable juxtaposition of three separate SACs; the entire length of the river; 960ha of ravine woodland; and 15 roost sites for Greater and lesser Horseshoe bats. Within this are 4 National Nature Reserves (NNRs). The limestone woodlands are a refuge of many rare species, including sorbus varieties on cliffs, and form part of one of the largest remaining areas of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland in the UK. There are also significant mosaics of species rich grassland bounded by drystone walls interconnected with the woodland.
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)**

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

Most of the principle features remain in the landscape as accessible and visible structures. Many are in benevolent ownership and managed with public access. The early industrial sites are in various states of care and decay, but early/pioneering design of some of the key sites is still evident. Many retain their context of associated works, kilns, storage buildings, quarries, tramways, workers cottages etc. The surrounding woodlands similarly contain extensive evidence of the charcoaling industry that fueled the blast furnaces and forges, alongside the mines, scowles and quarries that fed these works. Two area of scowles are managed and open to the public. One iron ore and one coal mine are also open to the public as working mines. Similarly quays and warfs are in evidence along the river and still used by leisure craft.

For the Picturesque landscape there are numerous 18th century landscaped viewpoints, most of which are still popular viewpoints for visitors today. All the Picturesque views remain and can be viewed on foot or by canoe – the modern equivalent or successor to the Wye Tour. There is a wealth of contemporary descriptions, sketches and paintings from the Wye Tour. Many are in local museums or national collections.

## (10) Integrity

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

Many of the scowles and early iron ore workings remain in the landscape. Similarly much of the early industrial works and infrastructure can be seen. Also the seats of power and defences of these resources are evident; the Roman remains of Lydney Park, Offa's Dyke, the castles etc. Later industrial development at some sites and ongoing freemining gives continuity of features from the prehistoric to the present.

Some of the early industrial features are in urgent need of attention. Gunns Mill iron works (1682) at Flaxley, is Grade II\* but Heritage at Risk Priority A and is in a 'perilous condition'. English Heritage noted it as the earliest surviving blast furnace in England and of European significance. Whitecliff Furnace, used by Robert and David Mushet, (used as the cover photo on EH Buildings at Risk Publication) is a Scheduled Monument at risk, being in a poor condition and deteriorating.

All the Picturesque views remain and can still be viewed by boat and on foot – similar to the original Wye Tourists. Many Picturesque viewpoints and early industrial features in the Wye Valley are currently being consolidated and managed through the £2.8m 'Overlooking the Wye' Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme.

## (11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?

Yes  No

If yes, please list. 100 words

Sites with not dissimilar depth of early industrial cultural landscapes are  
Wachau Cultural Landscape, Austria  
Upper Middle Rhine Valley, Germany  
Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape, Japan  
Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun, Sweden  
Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, UK

Sites of later industrial relevance are  
Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, UK  
Ironbridge Gorge, UK

Tintern Abbey as a dissolved Cistercian monastery has similarities with Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey, UK.

**(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?**

150 words

This area has a full sequence of use and development of iron working from the prehistoric period to the industrial revolution, and into the present. Parallel to this industrial development the area was recognised as an outstanding aesthetic landscape for at least 900 years, culminating with a 250 year old tourism industry that is thriving to this day. Few other WHSs exhibit the continuity of mineral exploitation over at least two millennia. A few other WHSs demonstrate pioneering stages in technology. But the evolution of works in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean were critical for the later development of other WHSs such as Blaevon and Coalbrookdale. The experiments and discoveries of Mushett in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean, working in partnership with Bessemer, developed Self Hardening Steel, without which the industrial age would have faltered and railways would not have been built, nor modern empires.

**(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO's priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?**

200 words

The Wye Valley and Forest of Dean provides an outstanding demonstration of human coexistence with the land as well as human interactions, cultural coexistence, spirituality and creative expression. It is an organically evolved landscape, resulting from social, economic, administrative, and religious imperatives and has developed its present form by association with and in response to the natural environment. The area is a living landscape which retains an active social role in contemporary society loosely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.

While the area includes European historic towns and Christian monuments the main focus is on the continuity from the prehistoric period through to the present as a cultural landscape, evolving into industrial heritage with the parallel development of tourism itineraries. It avoids 'elitist' architecture and focuses on the recent and living cultures of the area, exemplified by continued freemining and tourism. Coal mining has also been considered under-represented on the World Heritage List.

**(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?**

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
-----------	-------------------------------------	---------	-------------------------------------	--------------	-------------------------------------

Conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--------------	-------------------------------------	------------	-------------------------------------	----------------	-------------------------------------

Please describe. 100 words.

**(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?**

Yes  No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please describe. 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Degradation of key early industrial features through neglect / lack of management

**(16) Legal Protection**

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

Some component sites are Scheduled Monuments &/or Listed Buildings. Some sites are within SAC &/or SSSI woodland, or adjacent to SAC river. Some contain SAC bat roosts. Part of area is within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Some sites within ownership and management of Crown: Forestry Commission or English Heritage, and Welsh Assembly Government: Forestry Commission Wales or Cadw. Area includes The Lower Wye Valley as on Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest In Wales.

**(17) Ownership**

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

Cadw  
English Heritage  
Forest of Dean District Council  
Forestry Commission (Dean)  
Forestry Commission Wales  
Herefordshire Council  
Monmouthshire County Council  
National Trust (Wales)  
Private landowners  
Woodland Trust

Do the owners support the application? Yes  No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

**(18) Local Authority support for the site**

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

Forest of Dean District Council  
Gloucestershire County Council  
Herefordshire Council  
Monmouthshire County Council

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes  No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes  No  Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

The Wye Valley AONB is recognised with specific policies as nationally protected landscape in all local plans. The component sites that are Scheduled Monuments &/or Listed Buildings or within the SACs &/or SSSIs are also covered by specific policies in local plans.  
The AONB Management Plan 2009-14 identifies the area as currently under the Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme and the WHS potential.  
The Forest of Dean was identified by the Countryside Agency as worthy of special cultural and landscape designation and the Forest of Dean District Council have requested that Natural England consider the Forest of Dean for AONB designation.

### **(19) Stakeholders**

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

Cadw  
English Heritage  
Forest of Dean District Council  
Forest of Dean Verderers  
Forestry Commission (Dean)  
Forestry Commission Wales  
Freeminers Association  
Gloucestershire County Council  
Herefordshire Council  
Local History groups  
Local Parish, Town and Community Councils  
National Trust (Wales)  
Monmouthshire County Council  
Private landowners  
Sustrans  
Woodland Trust  
Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Tourism Association  
Wye Valley Society

### **(20) How will the Site be managed?**

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

Management will be through a partnership based on the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC). As with the AONB, the responsibility for the WHS would rest with the constituent local authorities, the respective landowners and the stakeholders. The local authorities and stakeholders have nearly 40 years of experience managing the cross-border Wye Valley AONB and directing the work of a small dedicated staff unit. Similarly considerable management and delivery experience has been developed through the Overlooking the Wye HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme, and a previous EU LIFE-Nature funded project on the SAC Ravine woodlands. The JAC already has representatives from all the local authorities and key interested parties in the area, and involves other stakeholders through related topic groups and advisory groups. A WHS Management Plan would be prepared alongside the AONB Management Plan. Any additional staff could be based at the AONB Offices in Monmouth.

### **(21) Funding: the nomination**

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.  
100 words

The Wye Valley AONB Unit will co-ordinate the nomination. There is tremendous goodwill towards the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean and some of the partners have experience of the Blaenavon application. Most stakeholders are already engaged in the Overlooking the Wye HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme. The various partners will be requested to make contributions in cash and/or in kind as appropriate and as required. We can apply application to the AONB Sustainable Development Fund for additional resources. Also we can approach HLF to investigate the use of any underspends in the Overlooking the Wye scheme to support nomination work.

### **(22) Funding: management**

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

The Wye Valley AONB Unit has considerable experience of co-ordinating management and funding. A mix of public, private and voluntary sector resources will be targeted. Public sector funding will be tight but there are local trusts that can draw on other funding streams. Also local volunteers can make a valuable contribution to site management. The various partners will be requested to make contributions in cash and/or in kind as appropriate and as required. The WHS Management Plan would outline spending requirements and act as a bidding document. Core, project and delegated grant budgets would be established similar to existing AONB budgets.

## Name and Contact Details of Applicant

Name	Andrew Blake
Status	Wye Valley AONB Officer
Address	Hadnock Road Monmouth NP25 3NG
Telephone	01600 713977
Email	office@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk

Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: [UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
2-4 Cockspur Street  
London  
SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

## UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.