



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



A Guide to World Heritage Nomination

World Heritage Advice Series No. 1
2023



Prepared by the Department of
Housing, Local Government and Heritage
gov.ie



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Acronyms Used Throughout This Document

Organisations Active in World Heritage	
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LP	Lead Proponent
Minister	Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
NMS	National Monuments Service
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPW	Office of Public Works
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHC	World Heritage Centre
WH Comm	World Heritage Committee
WHU	World Heritage Unit (Ireland), part of NMS within DHLGH

Publications/Strategies/Documents/Locations/Concepts	
Convention	UNESCO 1972. Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage / World Heritage Convention
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OGs	Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SOUV	Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
TLS	Tentative List Site
WH	World Heritage
WHP	World Heritage Property



View of Upper Lighthouse
on Sceilg Mhichil

Acknowledgements

The National Monuments Service (NMS) acknowledges the many individuals and organisations that assisted during the production of this guidance manual, in particular the World Heritage Technical Advisory Group, which advises the NMS in relation to World Heritage (WH) matters. It also gratefully acknowledges the input of WH experts Chris Blandford and Professor Gabriel Cooney. The Royal Sites Steering Group, Sligo County Council and Kerry County Council also provided valuable input and advice, as did Parks Canada. The NMS thanks Dr Christopher Young, who assessed this manual considering the 2021 World Heritage Operational Guidelines. Finally, NMS thanks Alessandro Balsamo, Head of the Nominations Unit, and his team at the World Heritage Centre (WHC) for their support in preparing this document.

Foreword

In 1991, Ireland formally ratified the World Heritage Convention, signalling its commitment to promote understanding, peace and cooperation in order to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit to future generations the outstanding cultural and natural heritage sites found around the world.

During the 1990s, two of Ireland's most important historic sites, Sceilg Mhichíl and Brú na Bóinne, were inscribed on the World Heritage List. Brú na Bóinne, an extensive funerary landscape of great ritual significance, contains the largest and most important expression of prehistoric megalithic plastic art in Europe. Sceilg Mhichíl is the most spectacularly situated of all early medieval island monasteries and one of Ireland's most important sites for breeding seabirds. With three sites currently on the Tentative List – the Royal Sites of Ireland, the Passage Tomb landscape of Sligo and the Transatlantic Cable Ensemble: Valentia Co. Kerry, and Heart's Content, Newfoundland – Ireland's number of World Heritage Properties (WHPs) is expected to grow over the next decade. All these sites celebrate key aspects of Ireland's past that have helped to shape our national and international identity.

Since the 1990s, our understanding and conception of World Heritage (WH) has changed enormously. It is now accepted that WH increasingly plays a key role in valuing, conserving and restoring biodiversity. The impacts of climate change and the need for sustainable development and sustainable tourism are not only matters of environmental and nature protection but are also essential for the preservation of cultural heritage. The role of the community in protecting cultural heritage is also critical, which is why it is essential that we work together at all levels to ensure that our common heritage can be passed on unharmed to future generations.

The National Monuments Service is pleased to publish this manual as an introduction and guide to the nomination process. Through it, readers should gain an understanding of what is involved in preparing a nomination for consideration by the World Heritage Committee (WH Comm), the key issues involved in preparing a nomination, and Ireland's ongoing responsibilities in managing WHPs in Ireland.



Solstice at
Newgrange Passage Tomb

Introduction

This manual is designed to introduce the fundamentals of the **World Heritage Convention** (the Convention) and the **Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention** [Link] (OGs). It is intended to provide a greater understanding of what is required to develop nominations that make a successful case to the World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) for inscription on the World Heritage List.

This manual is one of a series of advice manuals being published to support the implementation of the forthcoming **World Heritage Strategy for Ireland, 2024–2034** (Strategy), which aims to ensure that Ireland fulfils its obligations as a State Party to the Convention. Other advice manuals will be prepared in relation to the Tentative List process and the management of a World Heritage Property (WHP). These will deal, among other topics, with the expectations and obligations that are part of the ongoing relationship between site managers, stakeholders, the State Party, the WH Comm, and their expert Advisory Bodies and Secretariat, if a nomination should prove successful (see Section 2 for definitions of these terms).

This manual has been written to reflect the requirements of the 2021 version of the OGs but should be read in conjunction with the most recent version of the OG and World Heritage (WH) advice manual on **Preparing World Heritage Nominations (2nd edition 2011)** [Link]. Other resource manuals that will assist with preparing a nomination are available from the **World Heritage Centre (WHC)** [Link]. These include manuals on managing natural and cultural WH (due to be replaced by an integrated manual supported by a revised edition of **Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit**), as well as **Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context** (UNESCO 2022), and the resource manual on **Managing Disaster Risks** (UNESCO 2010).

Readers should also consult the **World**

Heritage Policy Compendium, which is a database of WH policies organised around the 5 Strategic Objectives of the Convention – known as the 5Cs – that comprise Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication and Communities.

The World Heritage Centre (WHC) frequently publishes documents on various WH subjects that are available on its **website** [Link], including reports from seminars, workshops and meetings. When preparing a nomination, it is essential to review thematic studies relevant to the site being proposed for nomination, particularly in relation to global Comparative Analyses. Thematic studies for cultural properties can be found on the **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) website** [Link] and thematic studies for natural properties are available on the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) website** [Link].

It is important to note that the process and requirements for nominating a site for inscription on the World Heritage List change over time. Manuals and documents published by the WHC and the Advisory Bodies are periodically revised to reflect changes in WH policy and implementation. Consequently, this manual and other WH advice manuals published by the NMS will be updated accordingly. They should not be considered as definitive resources and should always be read in conjunction with the most up-to-date edition of the OGs.

This manual does not purport to be a legal interpretation of the Convention or of national law. It is issued as a **non-statutory advisory guide** to the nomination process. Nothing in this manual impinges on the statutory obligations of the NMS and the Office of Public Works (OPW) in respect of National Monuments or monuments in state care or guardianship. All hyperlinks were correct at the time of publication.



South Peak
at Sceilg Mhichil

1. Overview of the Nomination Process

The process of nominating sites for inscription on the World Heritage List (and their conservation and management once successfully inscribed) is the key objective at the heart of the Convention. There are four main stages in the pathway to nomination:

1.1 Stage 1: Review and Preparation of the Tentative List

The first stage of the nomination process is for the State Party to make an inventory of its important natural and cultural heritage sites that are deemed to have potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and that meet the rigorous nomination standards for inscription on the World Heritage List. This inventory of potential sites is known as the Tentative List. Ireland last reviewed its [Tentative List in 2022 \[Link\]](#). The WH Comm will not consider a nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List unless the nominated site has already been included on the State Party's Tentative List for at least one year.

1.2 Stage 2: Preparation of the Preliminary Assessment and Nomination Dossier

From 2027 it will be mandatory to submit to the WHC two documents successively. The first is the Preliminary Assessment request. The second is the Nomination Dossier.

The purpose of the Preliminary Assessment request is:

- to provide an opportunity for enhanced dialogue with the Advisory Bodies;
- to establish the feasibility of a potential nomination;
- to avoid the use of resources to prepare nominations that are unlikely to succeed; and
- to provide guidance on the potential of a site to justify OUV, including integrity and/or authenticity, and, if information is provided, on the requirements for protection and management.

This is a desk-based review of the proposed nomination. Properties nominated under cultural criteria are assessed by ICOMOS and those relating to natural properties are assessed by IUCN. Nominations for mixed properties or Cultural Landscapes are assessed by both IUCN and ICOMOS. This is to establish, at an early stage, the feasibility of a potential nomination and to prevent wasting resources on an unattainable designation.

Depending on the outcome of the Preliminary Assessment, work to develop the Nomination Dossier will either come to a stop (if the proposed nomination is not deemed viable) or will progress in accordance with the feedback received in the context of the Preliminary Assessment request.

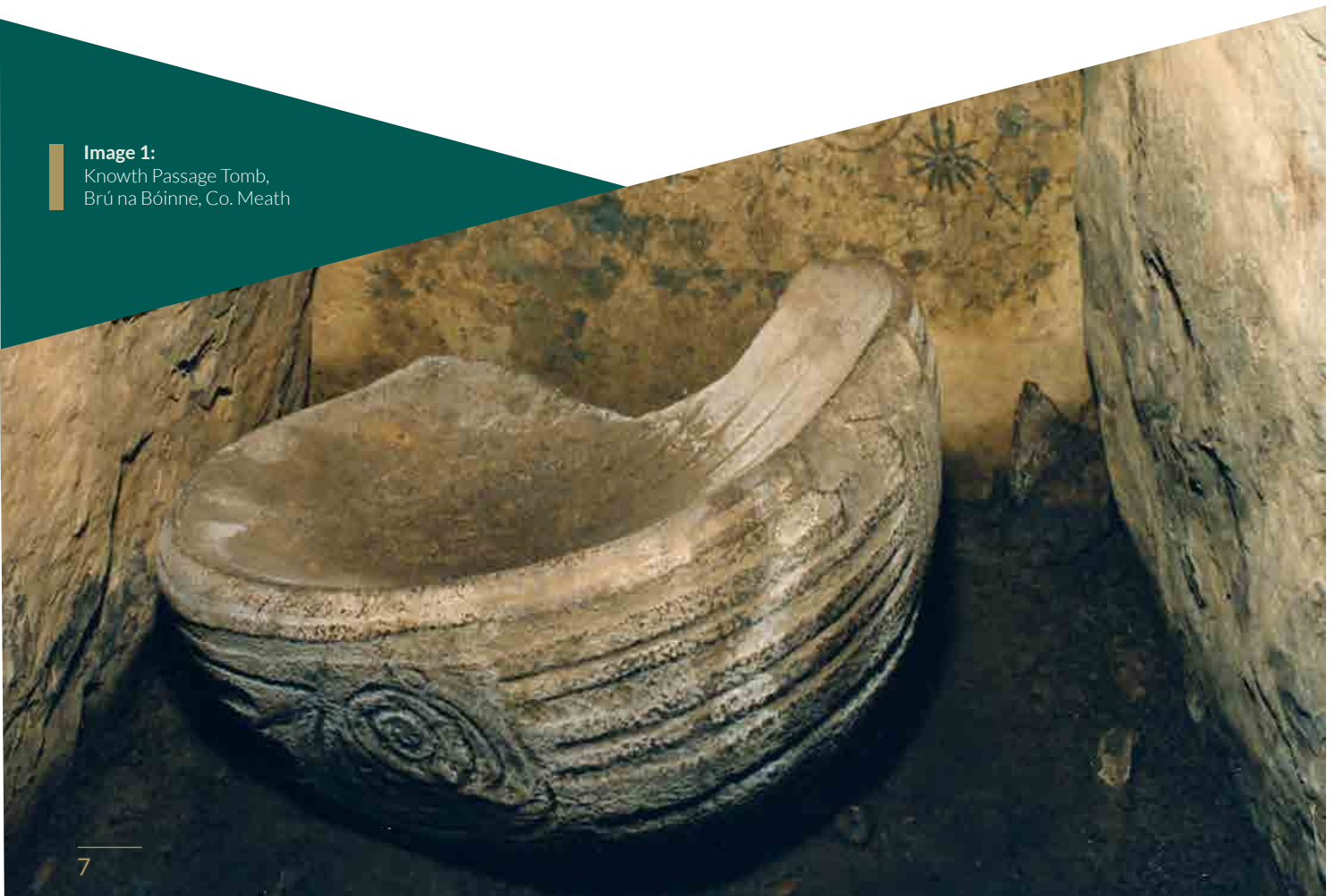
If work does proceed, the Nomination Dossier cannot be submitted for at least a year after the evaluation of the Preliminary Assessment request has been completed. The purpose of the Nomination Dossier is to present a full case for the site's potential OUV. The Dossier is the basis for the desktop evaluation of the site and for the site-based evaluation by the Advisory Bodies, and for the subsequent decision by the WH Comm on inscription onto the World Heritage List. The Nomination Dossier needs to clearly set out the following:

- The nature and extent of the site and how it is documented;
- Justification for its OUV;
- Criteria (Attributes and Values);
- Authenticity and integrity;
- Protection and management;
- The site's state of conservation and the factors that are affecting or will affect it;
- How the site will be conserved, presented and monitored in relation to its OUV;
- Stakeholder and community support; and
- Resources that are or will be put in place to sustain the management of the site and protect its OUV into the future.

The nominated property must satisfy the WH Comm that it has OUV, integrity and/or authenticity (cultural properties only), and that it has effective protection and management. It can only be deemed to be of OUV and inscribed on the World Heritage List if it satisfies all these requirements.

Image 1:

Knowth Passage Tomb,
Brú na Bóinne, Co. Meath



1.3 Stage 3: Evaluation

Once submitted to the WHC, the finalised Nomination Dossier will be checked for completeness. If considered complete, it will be transmitted for the full evaluation process by the relevant Advisory Body/Bodies, which will advise the WH Comm on whether the property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List or whether it should be referred or deferred.

The evaluation process has three parts:

1. A technical assessment of the OUV through desk-based evaluation by relevant specialists;
2. An expert mission comprising relevant specialists who carry out a field evaluation of the site, concentrating on practical aspects of conservation and management, as well as the management and protection arrangements proposed in the Nomination Dossier; and
3. A critical review of the Nomination Dossier by specialist panels of the respective Advisory Bodies, using the results of the desk study and the expert mission, which then prepare their reports and recommendations for WH Comm's consideration.

1.4 Stage 4: Decision by the World Heritage Committee

During its annual meeting the WH Comm decides about the nominated site, based on the evaluations by Advisory Bodies, and whether it should be inscribed on the World Heritage List or if it should be referred, deferred, or rejected.

2. Key Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier requires considerable multidisciplinary and cross-departmental/agency collaboration. The role of each of the key bodies involved in the nomination process is summarised below.

Table 1 summarises these and other important bodies that could play a role in the process.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

UNESCO is a specialised, intergovernmental agency of the United Nations. It was established in 1946 as a post-World War II response to the belief that educational, scientific and cultural collaboration among nations is necessary to build a lasting peace. UNESCO continues to strive to build networks that foster and support international unity and cooperation across these three main areas of focus. In the cultural sector the World Heritage Convention (Convention) is one of UNESCO's most widely recognised and successful areas of work.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee

The World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) of UNESCO is the main governing body of the Convention. The WH Comm meets at least once a year and comprises representatives from 21 of the States Parties (countries) to the Convention elected by the World Heritage General Assembly. Based on recommendations from its Advisory Bodies the WH Comm undertakes the final evaluation and decides on Nomination Dossiers at its annual meeting. It also examines reports on the state of conservation of inscribed properties and asks States Parties to follow up on any state of conservation concerns. The WH Comm also decides on whether sites should be included on,

or removed from, the List of World Heritage in Danger or deleted from the World Heritage List entirely. Furthermore, it makes decisions regarding use of the World Heritage Fund and sets international policy concerning the Convention. Election of WH Comm member countries is conducted to ensure that equitable regional representation and membership are rotated on a regular basis.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre

The World Heritage Centre (WHC), located at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, is the Secretariat of the Convention and the focal point and coordinator within UNESCO for all matters relating to World Heritage (WH). The Centre oversees the day-to-day management of the Convention, organises the annual sessions of the WH Comm and the biennial sessions of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention, provides advice to States Parties in the preparation of site nominations, coordinates the evaluation of the nomination files, organises approved international assistance from the World Heritage Fund upon request, and coordinates reports on the condition of World Heritage Properties (WHPs), namely, Periodic Reporting, Reactive Monitoring, and Advisory Missions). The Centre also organises technical workshops, liaises with WH partner organisations, and keeps the public informed about WH issues.

The WHC and Advisory Bodies provide 'upstream advice' in relation to the nomination of sites, if requested (see **Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention** (OGs) Para 121 and 122 (i), for the relationship between the Upstream Process and Preliminary Assessments). The Upstream Process is designed to identify issues encountered during the evaluation process for more challenging nominations by enabling the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat to provide advance support in the form of advice, consultation and analysis directly to States Parties prior to the

preparation or submission of a nomination. For the upstream support to be effective it should be undertaken from the earliest stage in the nomination process. It is an optional process and has no connection with the mandatory Preliminary Assessment request. The Upstream Process can also take place after a site has been included on the State Party's Tentative List (OGs Para. 62–76), but before any Preliminary Assessment request has been submitted.

International Advisory Bodies

Three international, non-governmental or intergovernmental organisations are named in the Convention to assist and advise the WH Comm in its deliberations. They provide expert review and commentary on whether individual nominations have Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), meet the conditions of integrity and (when relevant) of authenticity, and meet the requirements of protection and management. The Advisory Bodies evaluate nominated properties in two ways.¹ First, they call on experts to carry out desk reviews. Concurrently, an evaluation mission is sent to the site to verify the boundaries, buffer zone and elements of authenticity and integrity, to discuss the protection and management regime, and to meet site managers and stakeholders. From 2027 the Advisory Bodies will also undertake a Preliminary Assessment of a proposed nomination, based on a Preliminary Assessment request submitted by the State Party. They are also involved in the post-inscription monitoring of sites, which includes reviewing State of Conservation reports and undertaking expert missions where necessary. The three Advisory Bodies are:

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

IUCN [\[Link\]](#) is a membership union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides the WH Comm with technical evaluations of natural, mixed and cultural landscape heritage sites and, through its worldwide network of specialists, reports on the state of conservation of WHPs. The IUCN was established in 1948 and is based in Gland, Switzerland.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

ICOMOS [\[Link\]](#) is a global, non-governmental organisation that works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places. ICOMOS provides the WH Comm with evaluations of cultural, mixed and cultural landscapes nominations and recommendations concerning the state of conservation of WHPs. The organisation was founded in 1965 and its international secretariat is headquartered in Paris, France.

The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

ICCROM [\[Link\]](#) is an intergovernmental organisation working in service to its Member States to promote the conservation of all forms of cultural heritage in every region of the world. It provides expert advice on conservation and training. ICCROM was established in 1956 and is located in Rome.

¹ The procedures and format of ICOMOS and IUCN evaluations are described in Annex 6 of the OGs.

ICOMOS Ireland

The Irish National Committee of ICOMOS [\[Link\]](#) offers advice and support to the State Party concerning the implementation of the Convention in Ireland and comments on matters relating to Irish WHPs and Tentative List Sites (TLSs) in Ireland. ICOMOS Ireland serves as a forum for discussion and reflection linking public authorities, institutions, professionals, local authorities and individuals interested in cultural heritage conservation. It also promotes the exchange of national and international information concerning best practice in the field of cultural heritage conservation and management. **National Committees of ICOMOS are not directly involved in the evaluation of nominations made by their State Party.**

State Parties

Ireland is one of nearly 200 countries (**States Parties**) that has ratified the Convention. As part of their responsibilities, States Parties identify sites from their national territory to be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List (the Tentative List), protect and conserve WHPs, and adopt measures which ensure their continued protection and management. States Parties are obliged to report regularly to the WH Comm on the state of conservation of their WHPs. They are also encouraged to strengthen public appreciation of WHPs and to enhance their presentation through educational and information programmes. Article 5 of the Convention sets out State Party responsibilities for cultural and natural heritage as a whole. The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage (the Minister) is the competent authority for Ireland regarding these responsibilities and works in cooperation with such other ministers of the Government as may be appropriate in relation to WH. This is particularly the case for environmental and spatial planning matters.

The National Monuments Service

The National Monuments Service (NMS), which is part of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), plays a key role in the protection of Ireland's archaeological heritage with responsibility for archaeological issues at more than 800 National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister. It is also responsible for the formulation and implementation of policy relating to the protection of Ireland's archaeological heritage. Through its **World Heritage Unit (WHU)** the NMS acts as a Focal Point for WH in Ireland and oversees the overall implementation of the Convention on behalf of the Minister.

The WHU's responsibilities include:

- providing general guidance and advice on the effective management of Irish WHPs;
- leading on the drafting and implementation of Management Plans for WHPs in State ownership or where the State is a major stakeholder;
- encouraging, coordinating and strengthening the engagement and participation in WH matters across Government, including the implementation of the WH Strategy;
- preparing and maintaining Ireland's Tentative List;
- preparing, with key stakeholders as appropriate, communications strategies and materials related to the WH Comm's decision;
- providing technical and financial support to Lead Proponents (LPs) responsible for preparing nominations, including expertise to develop and complete the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier (see box below) and expert independent advice;²

² The WHU, with the agreement of the LP/Nomination Team, may appoint a WH expert to help develop the Nomination Dossier. The WHU may also establish expert advisory groups, as required, to provide objective and strategic advice on WH and to advise on the interpretation, obligations and implementation of the Convention and the OGS.

- participating in the Nomination Team for WHPs and TLSs;
- reviewing each nomination at various stages and ensuring quality control (the nomination will not be signed and submitted by the Minister until the WHU recommends that it is ready);
- providing strategic direction on the preparation of the nomination, facilitating onsite evaluation, and addressing any subsequent requests by the WHC for additional information;
- formally submitting the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier to the UNESCO WHC on behalf of the Minister, and managing communications between Ireland and the WHC; and
- supporting the capacity building, promotion and management of WHPs in Ireland.

A **WH expert** with sufficient experience in submitting successful nominations should be appointed to oversee the compilation and preparation of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier. Good practice shows that clear, consistent and successful nomination documents are best organised and edited objectively by experts or specialists with detailed knowledge of WH processes and requirements. The expert will work closely with the WHU and the Project Manager/LP to ensure that the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier are completed to the requisite standard. As such, it is critical that their expertise closely aligns with the character and nature of the site.

The Office of Public Works (OPW)

Working in partnership with NMS, the OPW has responsibility for the conservation, interpretation and presentation of National Monuments in the Minister's ownership or guardianship. As part of this key function the OPW provides visitor services at more than 70 heritage sites nationwide. The OPW also manages the State-owned elements of Ireland's two WHPs, Sceilg Mhichíl and Brú na Bóinne, and is a key stakeholder in sites on Ireland's Tentative List.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)

The NPWS has responsibility for managing, maintaining and conserving State-owned National Parks and Nature Reserves. It is also responsible for the protection of Natura 2000 sites and for sites of global importance under certain international conventions. The NPWS will be a key stakeholder in relation to potential natural, mixed, or cultural landscape-nominated sites/WHPs, particularly if they include State owned lands and involve the conservation and management of important ecosystems. WH nomination also includes the potential for transboundary and transnational cooperation for the inscription of Natural Sites.

The National Commission for UNESCO

The Department of Education is the Irish National Commission for UNESCO and is an essential partner in promoting WH nationally and through the education system.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)

The DFA, through Ireland's Permanent Representation to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UNESCO, plays a vital role in promoting WH at an international level and facilitating dialogue with the UNESCO WHC in Paris.

Fáilte Ireland

As the National Tourism Development Authority, Fáilte Ireland is required to support long-term sustainable growth in the economic, social, cultural and environmental contribution of tourism to Ireland. It works in partnership with the NMS and OPW, other Government departments, State agencies, local authorities, representative groups and industry to develop tourism across Ireland by creating destination development plans and networks and investing in infrastructure, activities, visitor attractions and festivals.

Local Authorities

The support of Local Authorities (senior management and elected officials) is vital for nominations to succeed. Local Authorities play an important role in protecting and preserving sites and supporting site management structures, particularly in the context of their statutory role in the local planning system and in the preparation of spatial plans. This will be critical to the preparation of the Nomination Dossier, as well as providing for the long-term protection and management of a nominated site; the nomination process is the time to identify and put in place these supports. Local Authorities are also in a position to provide technical expertise and support throughout the nomination process across the areas of strategic development, heritage and conservation, biodiversity and ecology, planning and environment, tourism and transport, and community and landowner engagement. It is recognised that expertise on WH will have to be nurtured and developed in the Local Authorities, particularly in relation to the management of WHPs.

Lead Proponents (LPs)

The LP is the organisation or body that proposes and applies for a site to go onto the Tentative List and who will lead and manage the nomination process in partnership with the WHU and other key stakeholders. The LP can be either Central Government, Local Authorities, site owners or managers, local community groups, the private sector or non-governmental organisations, or a combination of any of the above.

The key responsibilities of the LP during the nomination process include:

- leading and preparing the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier, including the allocation of necessary resources for this task, in partnership with the WHU, local stakeholders and communities;
- appointing a Nomination Team to oversee the process;
- appointing a Project Manager and, if necessary, a Project Team to manage the project;
- establishing a Community Stakeholder Forum to include stakeholders and rights-holders, national and local organisations, local communities, and relevant interested parties, as required;
- establishing Targeted Working Group/s, to contribute and advise on the Nomination Dossier, as required;
- putting in place a budget to support the nomination process; and
- developing and agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Project Charter in partnership with the WHU, that sets out how the nomination process will progress.

The Nomination Team

Preparing a WH Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier usually requires a multidisciplinary team approach because of the scale and complexity of the task, the range of key stakeholders involved, and the range of expertise required. It is therefore recommended that the LP should set up and establish a Nomination Team early in the process, to provide overall direction and management of the nomination process and to lead and coordinate the preparation of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier. The team composition should also ensure diversity, gender equality, social inclusion and equity. See [Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit](#) for further information on ways and foci for developing a nomination team.

It is important to compile a list of key stakeholders and rights-holders, as a first step to forming a Nomination Team. The range of members should reflect the range of values

of the nominated site. These may include personnel in the LP organisation, the WHU, the OPW, elected Local Authority members, landowners, local community representatives, Government/heritage agencies, and NGOs. Important skills that should be reflected in the Nomination Team include:

- the ability to advise and support the project team;
- the ability to work with diverse stakeholders and right-holders;
- a general understanding of the Convention and the OGS, as well as an understanding of other sources of advice from UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies;
- the ability to communicate accurately the progress of the nomination with supporting documentation.

See [Figure 1](#) for an example of a possible nomination structure that the LP might follow. It is up to each LP to determine the nomenclature applied to the nomination structures.

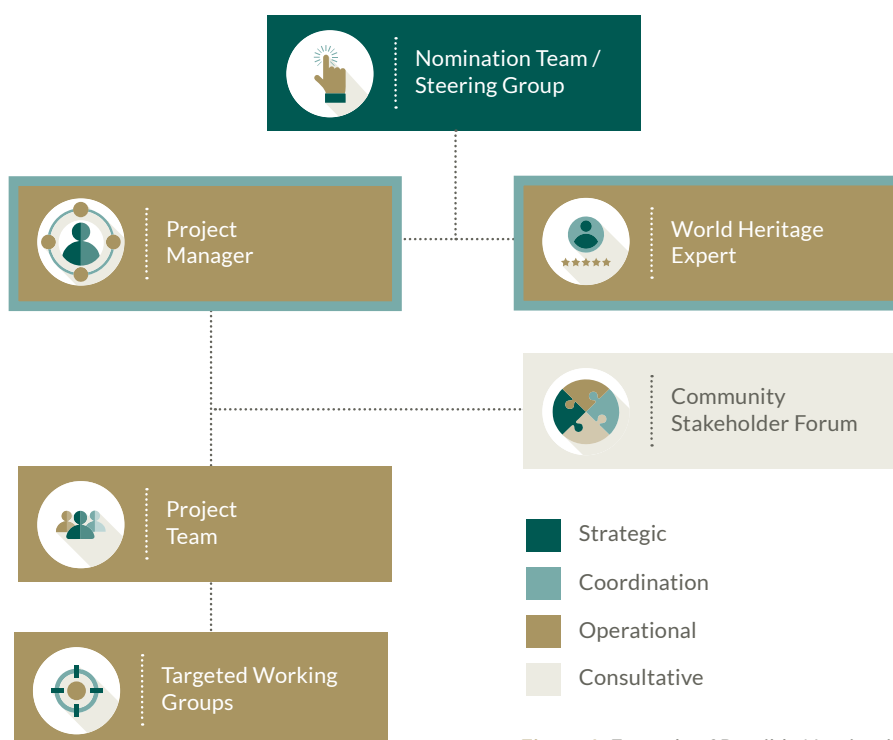


Figure 1: Example of Possible Nomination Structure

Project Manager and Project Team

The manual on **Preparing World Heritage Nominations** notes that “in some cases it may be useful to have a small core team or project team to work on the nomination itself” with responsibility for key areas and for coordinating groups with relevant expertise. It is up to each LP to decide what structure works best within its relevant organisation framework but appointing a core team to develop the project is strongly advised.

A key requirement in respect of supporting both the Nomination Team and leading the Project Team is the appointment of a **Project Manager** to manage and oversee the nomination process at local level. The Project Manager should be regarded as the lead manager of the process on behalf of the LP. This role includes leading and coordinating both the development of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier, including the preparation of a management framework for the site. The Project Manager should act as the main contact point for liaison between the LP and the WHU. They should be able to manage and coordinate a range of inputs from experts and stakeholders and also produce concise and accurate information with clear supporting documentation. Other key duties should include facilitating Targeted Working Groups, consulting stakeholders, facilitating input and participation in the nomination process via a Community Stakeholder Forum. A budget will be required to support the role of the Project Manager as part of the nomination process.

The Project Manager will work closely with the WH expert and the WHU, to ensure that the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier are completed to the requisite standard. It is important to remember that the knowledge of the nominated site will come from local input, which experts will then help to bring out and fit it into the requisite WH format. Local capacities for, and knowledge of, WH systems and processes will be built and enhanced by working closely with the expert. This is crucial, as the periodic reporting and ongoing site management will be carried out locally and not by external experts/specialists.

The Project Manager and WH expert should be able to draw on the skills and expertise of the Nomination and Project Teams, as well as the LP, and will require access to experts who understand the site in an international WH context, as the creation of a robust Comparative Study with other WHPs around the world is a key part of the nomination process.³ The LP should also consider, from the outset, the proposed role of the Project Manager, Project Team and Nomination Team in the long-term management of a nominated site, if it is successfully inscribed onto the World Heritage List.

Targeted Working Groups

There must be effective and inclusive participation (before, during and after the entire nomination process) by all stakeholders and rights-holders, national and local organisations, local communities, researchers and academics, and relevant interested parties, including landowners and occupiers. It may therefore be helpful to establish specialist technical or other subgroups within the Project Team to develop specific elements of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier.

³ Detailed competencies required for these positions are outlined in **Appendices I and II**.

It is advisable for the LP to establish these Targeted Working Groups to support participation and to provide information/inputs/reviews to parts of the nomination document, for example, site description, comparative analysis, site history, creating a research framework, developing the Management Plan, and interpretation strategy. Targeted Working Groups will also play a crucial role in the long-term management and monitoring of the WHP, ensuring the adoption of a participatory management system.

The LP may also establish additional groups, as required, that can feed either into the nomination process or into regular Targeted Working Group meetings. This will ensure that every opportunity will be offered to all the relevant organisations and bodies to take an active role in the process.

Consultation and Community Involvement

In 2007, the WH Comm adopted the strategic objective of “enhancing the role of communities in the implementation of the Convention” (OGs. Para. 26). This commitment is elaborated in OGs Para 117:

States Parties are responsible for implementing effective management activities for a World Heritage Property. States Parties should do so in close collaboration with property managers, the agency with management authority and other partners, local communities and indigenous peoples, rights-holders and stakeholders in property management, by developing, when appropriate, equitable governance arrangements, collaborative management systems and redress mechanisms.

Therefore, a critical requirement of any successful nomination, and indeed of the overall management of a WHP, is effective involvement of the local community or communities associated with the site. The Convention encourages the involvement of local communities/civic society and other key stakeholders, and a crucial consideration in the Advisory Body’s evaluation of the nomination will be the extent to which the local community is engaged in the management of the property and is supportive of the nomination to the World Heritage List. Their role in the ongoing management of a WHP should also be determined during the preparation of the Management Plan of the property.

It is advisable that a Community Stakeholder Forum – to include local experts, landowners and tenants, local businesses, tourism operators, rights-holders, community groups and user groups – is established, in order to ensure participation of the local community in the nomination process and in the definition of boundaries, buffer zones and landscape attributes, as well as to enable and ensure that the community has a shared responsibility in caring for the site. This will lead to an increased local awareness and sense of ownership, and a commitment to a site that is internationally important.

Recognising that each site on the Tentative List is different, it is not possible or necessary for the LP to establish a single set of standards for appropriate community engagement. However, the WHU would expect them to include specific documentation on the community engagement process that has supported the nomination process. This could take the form of conferences, exhibitions, lectures, seminars and workshops dealing with the many aspects of information-gathering, assessment, discussion and evaluation. **It is always better to start this engagement as early as possible in the process.**

Table 1: Summary of Key Bodies and Potential Players

International	
UNESCO WH Comm	UNESCO WHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inscription decisions • Site management • State of conservation • WH Convention policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat of the Convention • Coordinates the evaluation of the nomination files
WH Comm Advisory Bodies	State Party/DHLGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICOMOS, ICCROM, IUCN • Assessment of Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier • Advice on management of WHPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focal point for liaison with WHC • Submits Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier to WHC
National	
DHLGH - NMS	OPW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WH technical inputs • Archaeological heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational manager of all/parts of WHPs and TLSs • Conservation and technical input • Visitor experience and facilities
NPWS	DHLGH - WHU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife conservation • Enforcement and grant consents for activities • WH technical input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the WH Strategy in Ireland • Advice/support to WHPs/TLSs • Tentative List management • Nominations overview • Appoint WH expert
Central Government	DFA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, DFA and other Departments • Irish National Commission for UNESCO • Fáilte Ireland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes WH • Facilitates dialogue with UNESCO
ICOMOS Ireland	Irish Heritage Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert WH advice • WH capacity-building • Linkages with ICOMOS international, ICCROM and IUCN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Council • An Taisce • NGOs • Academia

Local	
Lead Proponents	Local Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management • Appoint Nomination Team • Appoint Project Manager and Project Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected members support • Senior management support • Strategic support • Financial support • Technical support • Community engagement • Planning, heritage, landscapes and development
Nomination Team	Project Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidisciplinary team works together to progress the nomination • Establishes workflow and research priorities and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement/consultation • Prepares draft Management Plan • WHU liaison
WH Specialist Consultants	WH Expert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary/landscape studies • Tourism studies • Comparative Analyses • Sustainability studies • Climate risk studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination adviser/author • Prepares Nomination • Coordinates Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier • Specialist advice
Targeted Working Groups	Community Stakeholder Forum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fáilte Ireland and other agencies • Local experts • Landowners/farming community • Research community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community • Participation in the nomination process • Stewardship of site

3. The Context

The Nomination Dossier is the official application for World Heritage (WH) inscription. It is the basis for the evaluation of the nominated site and, alongside recommendations from the Advisory Bodies, it is the basis for the subsequent decision by the World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) whether to inscribe that site onto the World Heritage List. This section of the manual introduces the reader to some of the documents and concepts that are central to the nomination process, including both the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier.

The World Heritage Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2024-2034

The Strategy (which will be launched in 2024) will provide an overarching vision to deliver an ambitious future for WH in Ireland. This includes the exemplary protection and management of World Heritage Properties (WHPs), empowered local communities and stakeholders, enhanced awareness of WH generally, and the inscription of further Irish properties onto the World Heritage List, chosen to reflect their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and to represent the best of Irish cultural and natural assets. The Strategy will be achieved through seven specific goals and associated strategic objectives and actions, which are to:

1. Increase the number of Irish sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and undertake a regular review of Ireland's Tentative List.
2. Provide statutory and non-statutory guidance for developing and managing WH in Ireland.
3. Enhance the capacity and capability of all stakeholders to protect and manage WH in Ireland.
4. Support the proper protection, conservation, management, interpretation, and presentation of Ireland's WHPs and Tentative List Sites (TLSs).
5. Integrate WH into the wider framework of sustainable development to demonstrate and promote the benefits of heritage management in Ireland.
6. Contribute to WH initiatives, including research and international collaboration.
7. Communicate the values and benefits of WH inscription effectively and widely.



Image 2:
Sunrise at Brú na Bóinne,
Co. Meath

The World Heritage Convention

In 1972, the **Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage** was adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Convention reflects the idea that some of our cultural and natural heritage is priceless and irreplaceable and may possess such exceptional qualities that they are considered to have OUV, making them worthy of protection for the benefit of humanity. In adopting the Convention, States Parties assume a responsibility to identify, protect, conserve and present the world's heritage. To achieve this mission the WH Comm manages the list of cultural and natural heritage considered to have OUV, namely, the World Heritage List.

Operational Guidelines

UNESCO's requirements for the nomination of sites are set out in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs) that provide **official** guidance on the implementation of the Convention, including the inscription process and timing, the criteria for assessing the significance of a site, and the required contents of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier. Apart from the whole nomination process the OGs provide guidance on all other aspects of the Convention, including the management of WHPs, their future monitoring, and the role of the WH Comm in advising on the state of conservation of properties.

The Committee first adopted the OGs in 1977, since when several major revisions have since taken place to reflect subsequent decisions. At the time of publishing this manual the most recent version was updated in 2021. Lead Proponents (LPs) preparing a WH nomination should become familiar with the latest version of the OGs.

Outstanding Universal Value (OGs Para. 49)

The OGs define the OUV of a WHP as being its:

Cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole.

For a nominated property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List it must demonstrate OUV through meeting one or more of 10 criteria required for inscription (see below), meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity, and have an adequate protection and management system (Figure 2). All three requirements must be fulfilled for a property to be recognised as having OUV (OGs Para 78).

It should be noted that the term 'property' is used by UNESCO in a very specific way to define the area/site that has OUV, rather than referring to ownership. In an Irish context the word 'property' implies ownership and therefore can be misleading. WH status does not affect Irish ownership or property rights and WHPs do not become public property; nor does their ownership pass to any international body. Ownership remains as it was prior to inscription, and Irish laws still apply.

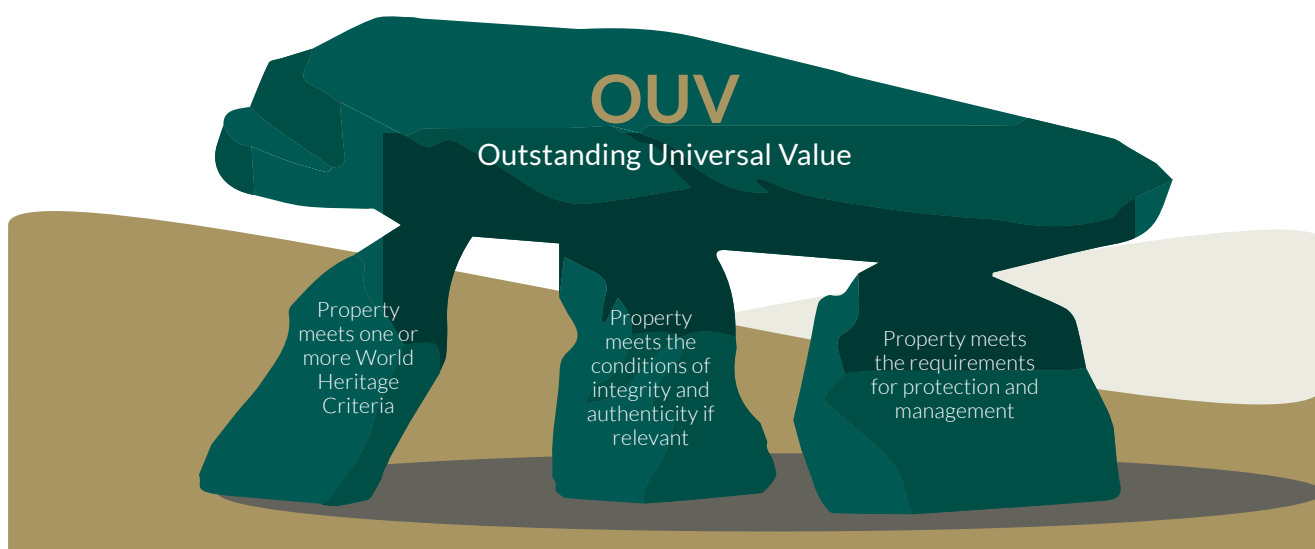


Figure 2: Pillars of Outstanding Universal Value.

World Heritage Criteria (OGs Para. 77)

The OGs identify 10 criteria for WH inscription, as outlined below. Criteria (i) to (vi) relate to cultural nominations and the remaining criteria (vii) to (x) relate to natural nominations. The inscribed property must:

- (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 civilisation 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 (or stages) 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, with beliefs, or with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. This criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria;
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be an outstanding example representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant, ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be an outstanding example 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; and/or
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of OUV from the perspective of science or conservation.

Cultural Properties include Cultural Landscapes that represent the “combined works of nature and of [humanity]”, as designated in Article 1 of the Convention (OGs Paras. 47, 47bis). There are three main types of cultural landscape:

- landscapes designed and created intentionally by people;
- organically evolved landscapes (both relict or fossil landscapes where human activity has largely ceased, or continual landscapes where social activity continues); and,
- associative landscapes.

The evaluation of Cultural Landscapes is carried out by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in consultation with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), as appropriate. Many properties exhibit more than one of these types and they may overlap. This is a dynamic aspect of the Convention and the concepts are being increasingly reinterpreted (Figure 3).

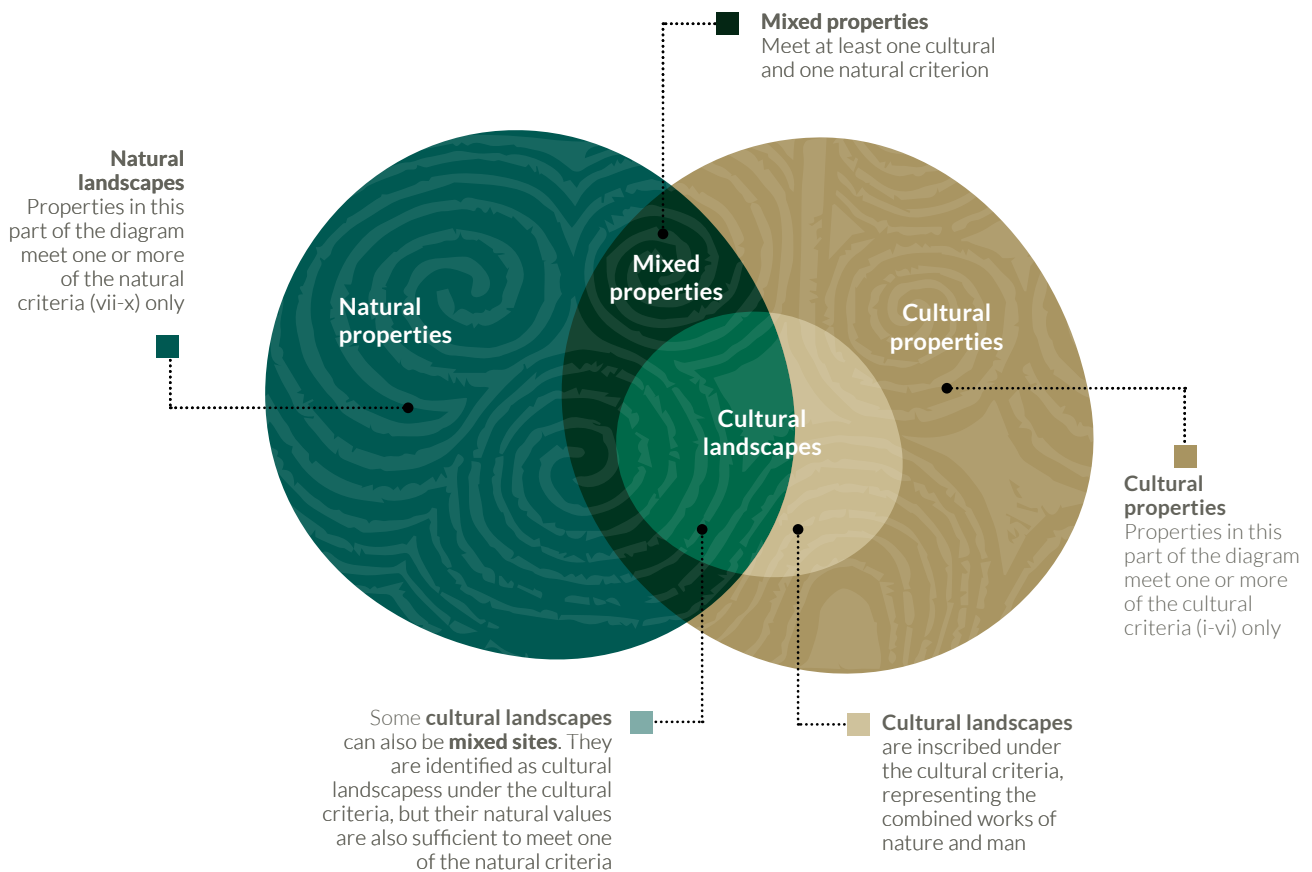


Figure 3: Categories of World Heritage Property (Preparing World Heritage Nominations, 2011).

Values and Attributes (OGs Annex 5 2.a)

Attributes are an increasingly important concept in the identification and management of WHPs.

Attributes of OUV

According to the OGs:

Nominated properties are required to demonstrate their potential Outstanding Universal Value through their attributes. Attributes convey the potential Outstanding Universal Value and enable an understanding of that value. These attributes will be the focus of protection and management actions, and institutional arrangements, and their spatial distribution and respective protection requirements will inform the boundary of the property.

Attributes can be physical qualities or fabric, but can also include processes, associated with a property, that impact on physical qualities, such as natural or agricultural processes, social arrangements or cultural practices that have shaped distinctive landscapes. For

natural properties they can be specific landscape features, areas of habitat, flagship species, aspects relating to environmental quality (such as intactness, high/pristine environmental quality), scale and naturalness of habitats, and size and viability of wildlife populations (OGs Annex 5, 2.a).

Identifying the values and attributes of OUV is central to understanding and communicating the authenticity and integrity of a site (See Appendix III for an example of the attributes identified as supporting the OUV of an Irish WHP). Furthermore, they should be the focus of measures to protect, conserve and manage the site. Any potential threats or risks (current and potential) to a WHP must be considered through their impact on the values and attributes of the property. See Figure 4 for the Burra Charter Process, which outlines the steps in planning for and managing a place of cultural significance, and Figure 5 for the WCPA Framework for Assessing Management Effectiveness of Natural World Heritage Sites.

The Burra Charter Process

Steps in planning for and managing a place of cultural significance.

The Burra Charter should be read as a whole. Key articles relevant to each step are shown in the boxes. Article 6 summarises the Burra Charter Process.



The Burra Charter Process: flow chart from the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013, p.10. ©Australia incorporated 2017. This may be reproduced, but only in its entirety.

Figure 4: The Burra Charter Process

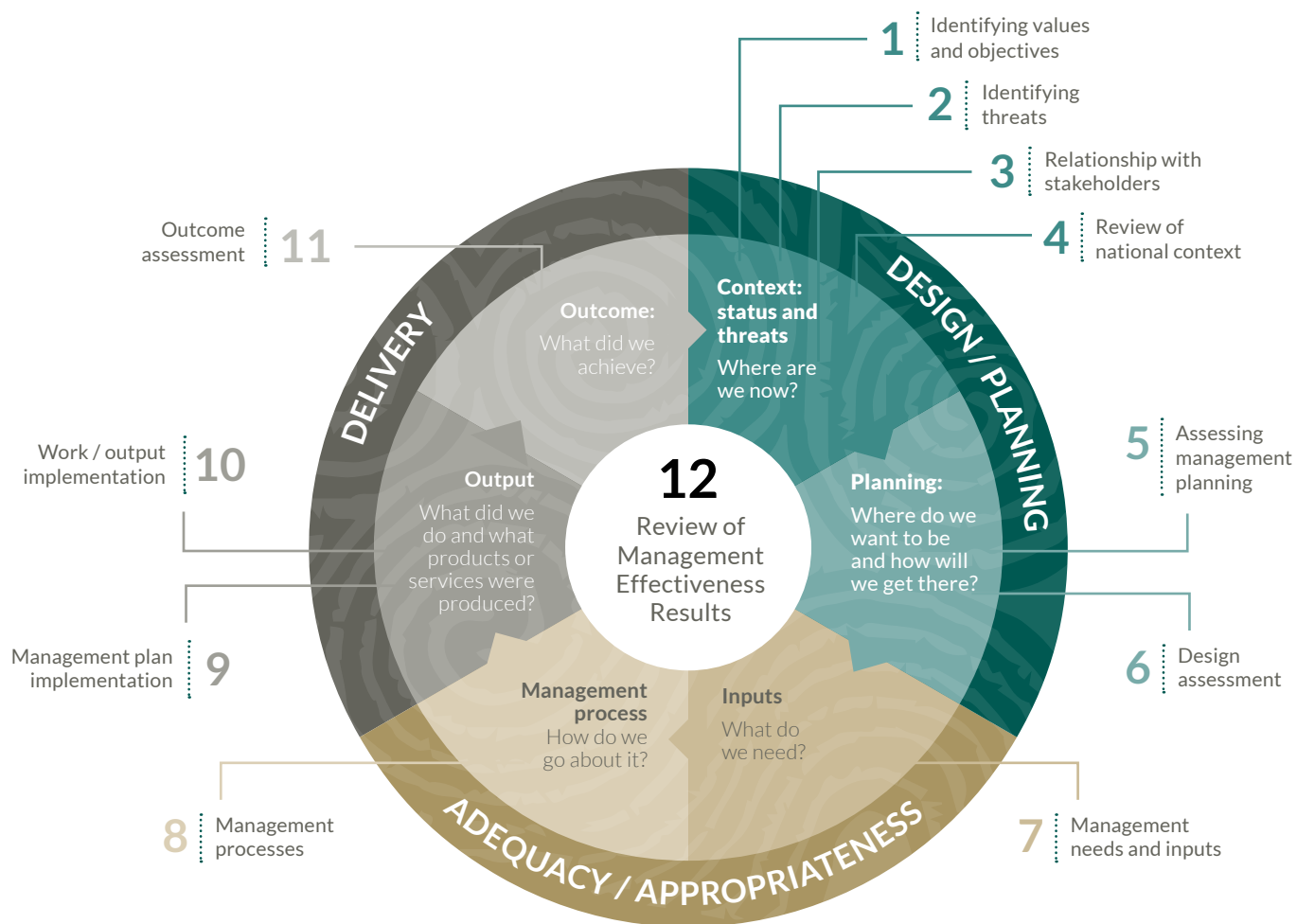


Figure 5: The WCPA Framework for Assessing Management Effectiveness (Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit, 2008).

Authenticity (OGs Para. 79-86; see also OGs Annex 4)

Two of the other important requirements specified in the OGs relate to the authenticity and integrity of the site. **Authenticity applies only to cultural nominations and to the cultural aspects of 'mixed' nominations.**

Notwithstanding the attributes of OUV, the OGs also use the term 'attribute' to define the qualities by which the authenticity of the property are evaluated. These are listed as:

- Form and design;
- Materials and substance;
- Use and function;
- Traditions, techniques and management systems;
- Location and setting;
- Language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- Spirit and feeling;
- Any other internal or external factors. (OGs Para 82)

The links between the attributes of authenticity and OUV need to be truthfully and credibly expressed from verifiable sources of information so that the attributes can fully convey the values of the WHP. The process of demonstrating and describing the authenticity of a nominated property is essentially one of assessing the degree to which the adjectives “genuine”, “real”, “truthful” and “credible” can be applied to the property’s attributes. As also expressed in the [1994 Nara Document on Authenticity \[Link\]](#), concepts of authenticity are culturally specific; they can be absolute in some cultures (Europe) but relative in others (South East Asia). Which of the tests outlined above from OGs Para 82 should be used in each case will depend on the character of the OUV proposed for the property.

Integrity (OGs Para. 89-95)

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of a site’s natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes which convey OUV. Examining conditions of integrity involves assessing the extent to which the property:

- includes all the elements necessary to express the OUV;
- is of adequate size to ensure complete representation of features and processes to convey the property’s significance; and
- suffers from adverse effects of development and or neglect.⁴

To be inscribed on the World Heritage List both natural and cultural properties must meet the condition of integrity.

⁴ Resources for determining the integrity of natural sites could include conservation monitoring reports, surveys and species action plans.

Commitment to Protection and Management (OGs Para. 96-119)

The Preliminary Assessment request (as far as it is possible at the time of drafting) and Nomination Dossier should set out how a site will be protected, conserved and managed as a WHP, including effective legal protection. Before the WH Comm inscribes a property on the World Heritage List, it must be confident that the property will be effectively protected and managed in perpetuity. The adequacy of existing protection needs to be examined at the outset of the nomination process. **A nominated site that does not have satisfactory protection will fail to achieve World Heritage inscription.** Threats to, or pressures on, the OUV of the site, including its integrity and/or authenticity, are an important consideration in the assessment process. The OGs identify three major groups of factors which can affect a property:

- Development pressures and management responses;
- Environmental pressures, natural disasters and risk preparedness (including impacts of climate change);
- Visitation, other human activities and sustainable use (OGs Annex 5 4.b).

These headings summarise [14 primary factors and 70+ secondary factors \[Link\]](#) that could potentially affect a property. These are used by the WHC and Advisory Bodies for both Periodic Reporting and Reactive Monitoring and are a useful aide-memoire for reviewing the factors that may potentially impact negatively the nominated property. For all factors identified the proposed management response should be identified. Accordingly, the information provided about the state of conservation of the site should be realistic, supported by evidence, and not overstated on the one hand or understated on the other. The state of conservation of the attributes identified for the property should be described (OGs Annex 5 4.a). Protection and management are discussed in more detail in Section 6.

Boundaries (OGs Para. 99-102)

The adequate size and completeness of a site are critical factors in defining the potential for OUV. Well-defined boundaries are a precondition in relation to the demonstration of effective protection and management, as without them it is not possible to define clear legal protection or a management system. Key points to consider when establishing boundaries include the following:

- The property boundaries must encompass the features (attributes) necessary to meet the conditions of integrity, and, for cultural properties, authenticity.
- Boundaries must be clearly defined and related to the legal protection and management of the property. In other words, there should be a very strong link between defining boundaries and the development of the Management Plan.
- The boundaries of the properties must be logical and justifiable.
- The boundaries of the property should be readily identifiable if they are to be useful for management.
- Boundaries do not create binary conditions, allowing something on one side of a line but prohibiting it on others. An activity outside of the boundary can still impact OUV just as one within it may not.
- Good quality mapping of boundaries is essential.
- Defining boundaries must involve stakeholders and rights-holders.

Buffer Zones (OGs Para. 103-107)

Buffer zones are clearly delineated areas outside a WHP, and adjacent to its boundaries, that contribute to the protection, conservation, management, integrity, authenticity, and sustainability of the OUV of the property. Such areas, while not contributing to OUV in their own right, are critical to protecting the OUV of the nominated property. This may include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views, and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. While the OGs suggest that a buffer zone may be optional, in practice the Advisory Bodies and the WH Comm expect that a buffer zone will be established in most cases. **Failure to establish a buffer zone around the nominated property is often seen as a weakness in the nomination.** Changes to the buffer zone must be approved by the WH Comm (OGs Para. 107).

Nominated sites and their buffer zones should be defined and protected by Local Authority County or City Development Plans. Significant landscape and visual qualities, together with the context of the immediate and wider setting, should also be protected. Buffer zones support the integration of a WHP into the wider landscape and into sustainable development. Stakeholders and rights-holders should be involved in defining buffer zones. (See **Figure 6**). It is intended that ministerial guidelines to assist Local Authorities in this regard will be issued in due course.

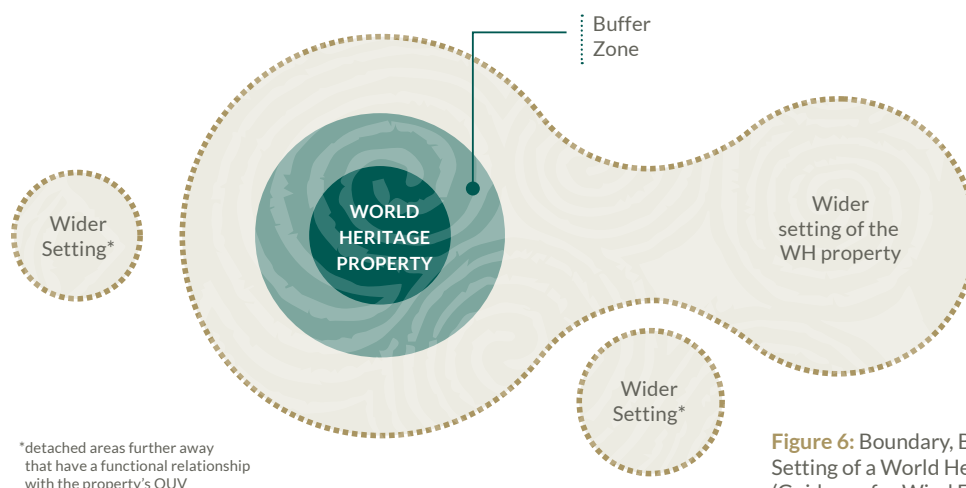


Figure 6: Boundary, Buffer Zone, and Wider Setting of a World Heritage Property (Guidance for Wind Energy Projects in a World Heritage Context, 2023)

Serial, Transboundary and Serial Transnational WHPs (OGs Para. 134–139)

WHPs inscribed on the World Heritage List are typically those defined area located within the borders of a single country (Figure 6). However, there are exceptions to this, as follows:

1. **A Serial WHP** comprises a series of individual components/areas that are not contained within a single boundary. Components may be quite close or geographically remote, but they are all located within a single country. Each component part must contribute to the OUV of the property as a whole in a substantial and discernible way. The resulting OUV should be easily understood and communicated, and coordinated management of the separate components is essential. It is important to note that the removal of one or more serial components of a site will negate the entire nomination process (OGs Para. 137-139). Serial sites are inscribed as a single WHP and are treated accordingly. If the values of one component are threatened, this endangers

the entire property's WH status.

2. **A Transboundary WHP** is a single area divided by the frontier between adjoining jurisdictions. Preparing a transboundary nomination, and providing for its ongoing protection and management, requires coordination and cooperation between individual State Parties. The OGs say that the States Parties concerned shall establish a Joint Management Committee or similar body to manage a transboundary WHP (OGs Para. 134-136).
3. **A Serial Transnational WHP** is another form of serial property but, in this case, components are in the territory of two or more countries that need not be contiguous. Serial transnational nominations very much reflect the spirit of the Convention as a tool for international cooperation. They create an opportunity for shared approaches regarding WH and better management and conservation practices. A serial transnational nomination should be prepared in the same way as a transboundary nomination as outlined above.

In relation to sites on the island of Ireland, it is advisable that existing North-South and East-West bodies are consulted in the first instance to advise on the preparation of any potential transboundary or transnational nominations.

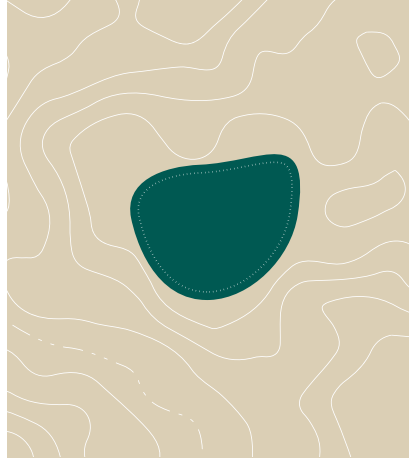
Further information on transboundary/transnational nominations can be found in **Appendix IV**.

National Properties:
One country (A)

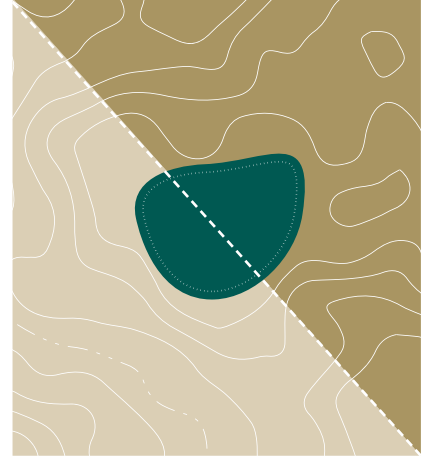
Transboundary/Transnational
Properties: Two or more
countries (A, B and C)

One area

National Properties

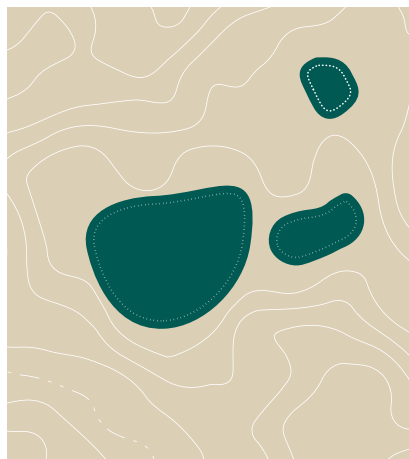


Transboundary Properties

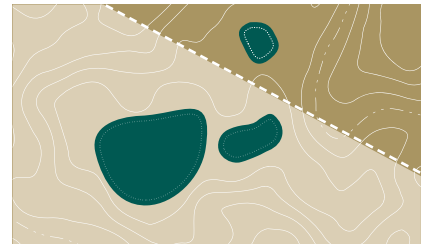


More than
one area:
Serial properties

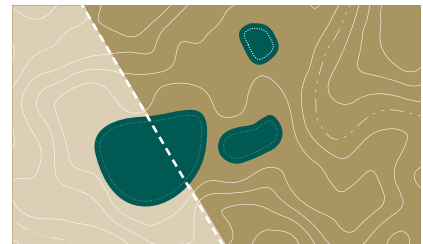
Serial National Properties



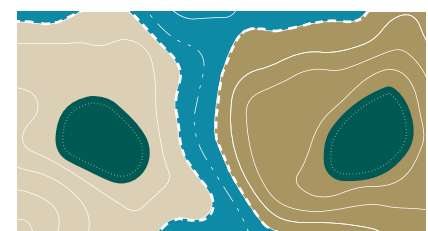
Serial Transnational Properties
(some potential configurations)



A linked series of components,
each entirely within one country.



A linked series of components, some of which
are shared between more than one country.



Serial properties may include components
in countries that do not have a shared
border, although such examples are
unusual and currently only found in
cultural properties (e.g., Struve Geodetic
Art, and Frontiers of the Roman Empire
World Heritage properties). The example
series above has component parts in
countries B and C, but not in country A.

Figure 7: Types of World Heritage Property
(Preparing World Heritage Nominations, 2011)



Image 3:
Dún Ailinne, Co. Kildare
– part of the Royal Sites of Ireland,
a transboundary Tentative List Site

4. The Pathway towards Nomination

There are many different ways to prepare a nomination, and the diversity of sites, management structures and local circumstances means that each nomination process will be different. Remember: the primary purpose of the nomination is to get the property on to the World Heritage List. To achieve this the process has four main end goals:

- to describe how a site meets the criteria for inscription;
- to incorporate the values and attributes of the Statement of OUV (SOUV) necessary for the future protection and management of the site;
- to establish that the property has integrity and authenticity (if cultural); and
- to ensure that the property has adequate protection and management.

To be deemed as being of OUV, as well as having OUV, the property must also meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity and must have an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding (OGs Para 78).

It is critically important to allow for realistic and adequate preparation time to develop a Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier, as the aim is to have a successful nomination that leads to inscription onto the World Heritage List, together with the long-term conservation and presentation of the site. Experience has shown that if the nomination is developed too hastily, it can lead to a deferral, a referral or a rejected nomination and is a waste of resources.

Inadequate preparation time is the biggest enemy of successful nominations. Far too many nominations are prepared against unrealistically short timeframes, resulting in documentation that is inadequate and unprepared for evaluation. It is also crucial to manage expectations throughout the nomination process.

Stakeholder mapping and consultation are essential. The OGs (Paras 12, 123, Annex 5 5.a) now ask for the identification of stakeholders, including owners, inhabitants, indigenous peoples and local communities, governmental, non-governmental and private stakeholders, and rights-holders, as applicable. It will require time and dedication to ensure that adequate protection and conservation strategies are in place and that stakeholder support is secured. Evidence of the extent of participation in the nomination process of stakeholders and rights-holders is required in the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier, along with the demonstration of the extent of their consultation and collaboration in the management of the nominated property.

Adequate time is also required to allow for establishing the management framework (Nomination Team, Targeted Working Groups, Project Manager, etc.) before writing begins, thus ensuring a participatory process from the outset. Developing effective relationships with the various stakeholders is a time-consuming process for which adequate time is required. For the writing process, time should also be allowed for adequate consultations and review, and for assembling suitable maps, illustrations and supporting documentation.

Similarly, there is often a lack of readily available information for the Comparative Analysis, and data and research may need to be commissioned to achieve credible conclusions. This may also lengthen the overall time needed to develop a successful nomination. Remember that the Comparative Analysis ascertains whether there is scope in the World Heritage List for the inclusion of the nominated property, so a broad overview is essential at this stage. Using an expert group to develop Comparative Analysis is recommended and it is important to document a clear methodology. The starting point is to define “the significance of the property and how this is manifested”. The attributes and values must be clearly defined at the outset to find suitable comparators. A reasonable contingency time should also be built into the process to cope with unforeseen obstacles.

Generally, a **minimum of five years** (in a best-case scenario) is needed to prepare a strong nomination with the best possible chance of success for submission to the WHC, including the submission of a Preliminary Assessment request.⁵ However, in very complex sites with many stakeholders a longer preparation period may be necessary. Sites must be on the Tentative List for at least one year prior to the submission of a Preliminary Assessment request to the WHC for an initial desk-based review by the Advisory Bodies. Ongoing communication between the team preparing the nomination and the WHU during the period leading up to the nomination submission is critical. Sufficient time is required to develop a common understanding of the project and to identify and resolve issues. The following indicative timeline gives an overview of the process:

- **Year 1:** Preparatory work includes establishing appropriate structures to support the nomination (Nomination Team, WH expert, Project Manager, Project Team, etc.), research, data collection and a more detailed boundary definition. In the case of sites on the Tentative List, considerable research has already been undertaken to draft an initial SOUV and commence stakeholder consultation. This information should be included in the **Preliminary Assessment**. The Preliminary Assessment will help to establish the feasibility of a potential nomination and prevent wasting resources in the preparation of nominations that may be unlikely to succeed.⁶
- Depending on the work already undertaken, the Preliminary Assessment can be submitted to the WHC by 15 September in **Year 2** following an appropriate evaluation by or on behalf of the WHU. The assessment by the relevant Advisory Body will take one year to complete and will be relayed by the WHC back to the WHU by 1 October of **Year 3**.
- A full year (**Year 4**) must then elapse before a full Nomination Dossier can be submitted by the WHU to the WHC.⁷
- **Years 3 and 4** should therefore focus on writing the text for the documents in the Nomination Dossier, including the management system, together with a consultation programme with stakeholders. However, the actual time will depend on the complexity of the site, new research needs, the outcome of the Preliminary Assessment request, additions to existing protective designations, gaining stakeholder consensus, and the potential need for stronger management systems

⁵ Note that where the Preliminary Assessment request is excluded, a minimum of three years is needed to prepare a Dossier. Preliminary Assessment request will become mandatory in 2027.

⁶ The WHU will submit Preliminary Assessment requests to the WHC according to the timetable set in OGs Para. 168, and using the standard format provided in Annex 3.

⁷ If a Nomination Dossier is not submitted to the WHC within three years of their receipt of the Preliminary Assessment report, the applicant will need to resubmit a Preliminary Assessment request, thus restarting the process.

to be put in place. A review of the draft Nomination Dossier by an expert group appointed by WHU will be undertaken at this stage. The WHU will not submit a draft Nomination Dossier that fails to pass this internal review. It is good practice to submit a draft Nomination Dossier to the WHC by the September deadline of **Year 4**, to give the Centre time to request clarifications in case of imprecisions or incompleteness.

- 1 February **Year 5** is the latest possible date for submission of the complete Dossier. A nomination, once submitted, passes through a cycle between the time of its submission and the decision by the WH Comm. The cycle normally lasts one and a half years between submission in February of **Year 5** and the decision of the Committee in June of **Year 6**.

Table 2 depicts this timeline in more detail.

Please note that the above timeline is **only indicative**. It is up to each Lead Proponent (LP) to determine what works best for its own site and to set out a timetable accordingly to keep the process moving. The schedule should be flexible. Ultimately, how a nomination progresses will depend on how much work needs to be done.

The WH Comm has defined a strict timetable for submitting and evaluating submitted nominations (OGs Para. 168). In **Table 2** below, the key dates of 15 September, 30 September, 15 October, 15 November, and 1 February are non-negotiable dates set by the WH Comm.

Table 2: Indicative Roadmap towards Nomination.

	Time	Activity	Prime Responsibility
Draft Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier Preparation	Year 0	Tentative List A proposed site is included on Ireland’s Tentative List.	LP, WHU
	Year 1	Preparatory Work Set up Nomination Team/management structure, procure external expertise, continue research/ data collection, undertake boundary studies, OUV refinement and Comparative Analysis, continued engagement, and local consultation.	LP/Partners/ WHU
	Year 2	Preparation of Preliminary Assessment Request Use information from preparatory work and collect additional information to compile Preliminary Assessment request.	LP/Partners/ WHU
	Year 2 15 May*	Technical Evaluation/Peer Review of Preliminary Assessment Request If required, a review of the draft Preliminary Assessment request by expert group/peer review at national level, appointed by WHU.	WHU/LP
	Year 2 15 Sept.	Preliminary Assessment Request Preliminary Assessment request sent to the WHC. This is a desk-based review of the proposed nomination by the Advisory Bodies. Note that a site must be on the Tentative List one year prior to the submission of a Preliminary Assessment request.	WHU, WHC, Advisory Bodies, LP
	Year 2 15 Oct.	Assessment of Completeness of Preliminary Assessment Request and Transmission to Relevant Advisory Bodies Incomplete Preliminary Assessments notified/ transferred to next year’s assessment. Complete Preliminary Assessments transmitted to Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS/IUCN) for evaluation, if they fall within the overall limit of 35 Preliminary Assessment requests evaluated annually. Note that work on the Nomination Dossier and management system should continue throughout Year 3 pending the outcome of the Preliminary Assessment request.	WHC

	Time	Activity	Prime Responsibility
	Year 3 15 Oct.	Preliminary Assessment Results Results of Preliminary Assessment request conveyed to the WHU by 15 October. A minimum of 12 months must then pass before the Dossier can be submitted.	WHU/ WHC/ Advisory Bodies
	Year 4	Complete initial Draft of Nomination Dossier Continued refinement of text/diagrams for Dossier, preparation of Management Plan, ongoing stakeholder consultation.	LP/ Partners/ WHU
	Year 4 31 May*	Technical Evaluation Review of draft Nomination Dossier by expert group at national level, appointed by WHU.	WHU/ LP
Evaluation and Decision	Year 4 30 Sept.	Submission of Draft Nomination Dossier to the WHC.	WHU
	Year 4 15 Nov.	Deadline by which the WHC responds concerning the completeness of draft proposals. If proposal is incomplete, additions will be requested.	WHC
	Year 5 1 Feb.	Submission of Nomination Dossier.	WHU
	Year 5 March	Assessment of Completeness of Dossier and Transmission to Relevant Advisory Bodies Incomplete Dossiers notified/transferred to next year's assessment. Complete Dossiers transmitted to Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS/IUCN) for evaluation, if they fall within the overall limit of 35 nominations evaluated annually.	WHC
	Year 5 March to Year 6 May	Evaluation by Advisory Bodies.	ICOMOS/ IUCN
	Year 6 31 Jan.	Advisory Bodies' Interim Report to State Party Bodies send interim report on evaluation status/ information requests to State Party.	ICOMOS/ IUCN/WHU/ LP
	Year 6 28 Feb.	Deadline within Which Any Required Additional Information Must Be Sent to Advisory Bodies by States Parties via WHC.	WHU
	Year 6 June/July	WH Comm Examines Recommendations, and Votes (Inscription, Referral, Deferral, Not to Inscribe).	WH Comm

*Note the deadlines of 15 May, Year 2 and of 31 May, Year 4 are set nationally by the WHU. The remaining deadlines are set by the OGs.



Image 4:
Cormac's Chapel, Rock of Cashel,
Co. Tipperary – part of the Royal Sites of Ireland,
a transboundary Tentative List Site

5. Preparing a Nomination

The four logical phases for preparing a nomination are as follows (although they will overlap):

5.1 Phase 1: Preparatory Work

The information prepared for the Tentative List application will provide the basis for further work to refine and establish in more detail a site's potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including integrity and authenticity. While the preparation and completion of the Nomination Dossier text is an iterative process, the preparatory phase should involve:

- identifying, defining and refining potential OUV;
- identifying and defining relevant attributes and values supporting the proposed OUV;
- identifying other attributes, not relevant to the OUV, but which will need to be managed within the proposed property (e.g., natural values in a cultural property);
- checking potential OUV against World Heritage criteria and identifying appropriate criteria;
- assessing authenticity, if relevant;
- assessing integrity;
- identifying and defining appropriate robust boundaries and buffer zones in consultation with relevant stakeholders;⁸
- developing relationships with key stakeholders, including local communities and landowners/occupiers;
- preparing description and history in relation to the World Heritage (WH) nomination;
- commissioning studies to further define further, rationalise and justify the inclusion/selection of the site, if required;
- commissioning studies for the refinement and definition of component boundaries and buffer zone, if required;
- Collecting further data at the site and its wider setting, context and landscape;
- undertaking a Global Comparative Analysis;⁹
- analysing of the contribution that the site would make to fill gaps in the World Heritage List;
- writing a draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) (see box below); and
- ensuring that data compiled can be used for future monitoring and periodic reporting.

8 Boundaries “should be drawn to incorporate all the attributes that convey the OUV and to ensure the integrity and/or authenticity of the property” (OGs Para. 99). It is important to get this right from the outset because while minor modifications can be made, a significant extension will require a resubmission of a nomination. However, it is important not to be too prescriptive about boundaries too soon because it is from understanding the property's OUV that boundaries will be defined, updated and mapped. Boundaries must be fully agreed before a buffer zone can be selected

9 The Comparative Analysis should include a thematic study placing the site in the context of other similar sites in Ireland, Europe and elsewhere (including other relevant World Heritage Properties (WHPs), Tentative List Sites (TLSs) and uninscribed sites). Often, not enough importance is given to the Comparative Analysis, but it will determine whether there is scope on the World Heritage List for inclusion of the site in broad terms. It is therefore a very significant part of the nomination process

Comparative Analysis

The purpose of the Comparative Analysis is to ascertain, first, whether there is scope in the World Heritage List for the inclusion of the Irish site being proposed for inscription, and second, to demonstrate that there are no comparable WHPs, TLSs or sites in the same geocultural area (cultural properties) or globally (natural properties) with similar values that might be nominated in the future. Some types of site are over-represented on the World Heritage List in comparison to others. The aim of the Comparative Analysis is not to demonstrate that the nominated site is unique, but to explain the importance of the site both in its national and international contexts and to show conclusively that it has an exceptionally strong claim to be of OUV. Thorough and objective Comparative Analyses greatly contribute to successful nominations. It should be noted that authenticity and integrity are an important part of the Comparative Analysis, and among comparable properties, some might

have greater or lesser authenticity and integrity, which will influence potential OUV. The combination of values and attributes on which the Comparative Analysis is based must match the key aspects that are relevant to the definition of the OUV of the nominated property. Three key principles to be considered in preparing a Comparative Analysis are that:

- the analysis should be as rigorous and objective as possible and should always maintain a global scope, keeping aside issues of 'national pride', which could distort its objectivity;
- should be supported by the best information available, both at the national and international levels. Grey literature, such as unpublished reports and management documents, can be used if copies of the articles and publications are referenced in the nomination file; and
- relevant thematic studies should be referred to as background context for the development of a full analysis.

5.2 Phase 2: Preliminary Assessment Request (OGs Para. 63)

As noted in Section 4, the Preliminary Assessment request comprises a desk-based review of a site on a State Party's Tentative List that it proposes to nominate to the World Heritage List. The Preliminary Assessment request is an opportunity to start a dialogue with the Advisory Bodies and will help to establish the feasibility of a potential nomination. From 2027, a Nomination Dossier will not be considered complete unless the nominated property has already been included on the State Party's Tentative List and has undergone a Preliminary Assessment. **This process will help to identify whether there are any issues with the nomination and will give advice and support the preparation of a strong Nomination Dossier, while preventing the potential waste of resources.** A State Party can only submit one Preliminary Assessment request each year.

Information included in the Preliminary Assessment request should build on the information provided in the Tentative List application form. **One year must elapse between the results of the Preliminary Assessment request being issued by the Advisory Bodies to the State Party and the submission of a full Nomination Dossier by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre (WHC).**

Work undertaken during Phase 2 should build on what has been done in Phase 1. It should also involve the research and collation of additional information needed for the preparation of the Preliminary Assessment request (see OGs Annex 3). Work should focus on:

- identifying basic topographical and locational information, and providing a location map and a map showing locating the main heritage features and attributes;
- preparing a summary description and history of the potential property;
- describing the extent of the documentation and the relevant available research;
- describing the immediate and wider setting of the property;
- establishing reasons for the global significance of the property within the context of the World Heritage Convention;
- identifying relevant OUV criteria and drafting citations for each;
- describing the nomination strategy (regarding serial, transboundary/transnational, Cultural Landscape nominations);
- identifying the potential attributes of OUV, their state of conservation, and the extent to which they suffer from actual/potential adverse effects of development and/or neglect, and describing any measures taken to remove/reduce any negative impacts;

- describing how each relevant attribute conveys truthfully and credibly the values expressed in the proposed criteria;
- identifying main factors that will need to be considered in order to develop a comparative analysis in relation to the potential OUV of the property, and outlining the main elements of the proposed comparative framework;
- listing the most relevant comparable areas to the proposed OUV of the property;
- for serial sites, describing the approach used to select the component parts, and the rationale for the selection;
- identifying gaps/underrepresented areas in the World Heritage List that the property might fill, and how this would help to achieve a more balanced and representative World Heritage List;
- describing current legislative and regulatory measures at the national and local level;
- providing a brief description of the organisation, priorities, and conservation measures, as well as the adequacy of available resources of the current or envisaged planned management system;
- for serial properties, providing information on whether an overall management framework exists or is envisaged; and
- explaining how local communities and key stakeholders are represented and have participated in the preparation of the Tentative List and the Preliminary Assessment request.

It should be noted that the Preliminary Assessment request format sets word limits for each of its sections (**Table 3**).

Before the draft Preliminary Assessment request is completed, the World Heritage Unit (Ireland) (WHU) may carry out a review or another type of technical assessment to confirm that it is of sufficient quality to be submitted to the UNESCO WHC. In such cases, the draft Preliminary Assessment request will need to be delivered to the WHU by 15 May.

While a main focus of this phase is preparing the Preliminary Assessment request, it is equally important to continue to develop the Nomination Dossier, including the management system, to build positive relationships with key stakeholders, including local communities and landowners, and to carry out necessary research on improving our understanding of the potential OUV of the property and developing the Comparative Study.

5.3 Phase 3: Complete Initial Draft of the Nomination Dossier

Work undertaken during Phases 1 and 2 should have completed the research necessary to draft a SOUV and describe attributes, assess authenticity and integrity, define the boundary and buffer zone, and establish or identify an appropriate system for protection and management of the property. Phase 3 should focus on:

- continuing to refine the completed elements;
- updating the draft SOUV;
 - drafting the state of conservation of the site, including any threats or pressures;
 - updating and drafting the site's description and history;
- preparing mapping and explanatory graphics;
- consulting with stakeholders on the draft nomination document (or parts of it), and reporting on the consultation results;
- further developing relationships with key stakeholders, including local communities and landowners, and including them within the management system;
- preparing a draft Management Plan (see Section 6);
 - outlining how the nominated site is or will be protected;
 - outlining how the nominated site will be monitored into the future, including its state of conservation and protection; and
- drafting an Executive Summary.

Statement of OUV (OGs Para. 155)

Since 2007, the WH Comm [World Heritage Committee] has adopted a SOUV when a site is inscribed on the World Heritage List. That SOUV will be based on the draft provided in the Nomination Dossier edited by the Advisory Body and possibly amended by the Committee. Editing will address both content and length. The recommended length of the SOUV is two pages of A4 or around 1600 words. It is important that the draft in the nomination adheres as much as possible to the limits proposed by the Advisory Bodies (UNESCO 2011, 74) since editing for length can affect the content also.

The preparation of a World Heritage nomination is, in effect, the presentation of an evidence-based argument for inclusion on the World Heritage List. It is therefore critical to remember that the SOUV in particular should present clear and compelling reasons why the property merits inscription on the World Heritage List. Drafting the SOUV is one of the most difficult and important tasks in a good nomination and requires careful consideration. It needs to define the core values of the property, identify its attributes, powerfully inform future monitoring and management, and convey the property's values to all interested parties. The SOUV should be:

- The strongest statement of global value and significance that can be made for the property;
- A concise and sufficient description, describing the most important features, values and attributes of the property;
- Contains an assessment of the integrity (all sites) and/or authenticity (cultural criteria only);
- Written with clear reference to the World Heritage criteria used to support OUV;
- Includes clear reference to the findings of the global Comparative Analysis;
- Includes and explains the important values that need to be protected, managed and monitored; and
- Written to engage a wide range of people, avoiding jargon and specialised language.
- The SOUV is the basis for the future protection and management of the property (OGs Para 155). It will be used for:
 - Monitoring by the State Party and site managers;
 - Any input from the Advisory Bodies;
 - Any intervention by the WH Comm
 - Ongoing decisions on conservation and site management;

- Periodic reporting;
- Reactive monitoring and State of Conservation reporting;
- Inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- Possible deletion of a property from the World Heritage List, and,
- Decision makers, planners, stakeholders and the general public.

It is highly recommended that a robust and rigorous draft SOUV be prepared well in advance of the process of actually writing the Nomination Dossier. It is always an **iterative process** and the draft SOUV may be rewritten numerous times during the preparation of the nomination. It is important to remember that the focus of a nomination can very well change due to the findings of, for example, the Comparative Analysis, and SOUV needs to reflect this.

5.4 Phase 4: Technical Evaluation at National Level

Before the WHU submits the draft Nomination Dossier to the WHC for a review of its completeness, it will be technically evaluated at the national level to provide guidance on any possible issues or concern, to recommend improvements, and to ensure readiness. The Dossier will need to be submitted to the WHU by 31 May in the same year in which it is proposed to submit the draft Nomination Dossier to the WHC for review.

In the case of transboundary or serial transnational nominations, other State Parties may have additional requirements/procedures that may need to be considered at this stage and before submission.

Challenges and Risks of the Nomination Process

Those going through the nomination process will face a range of challenges at different levels, both locally and nationally. The complexities of a nominated site and the demands of the preparation process itself can create issues. The nomination process requires commitment of time and effort over at least five years. Sufficient resources and support will be crucial for producing a credible and exemplary nomination. It is important from the start to ensure clarity on the type of site being nominated (i.e., Cultural, Cultural Landscapes (a sub-set of Cultural properties), Natural or Mixed Sites). It is important also that a clear SOUV concept is prepared and agreed by stakeholders at the start of the nomination process and actively reviewed throughout the process. Ensuring that the Project Manager and

Image 5:
Colony of Puffins at
Sceilg Mhichíl, Co. Kerry



Nomination Team have the requisite set of skills and access to appropriate specialist support is essential as ensuring that the nomination documentation is prepared and led by an experienced WH specialist. It is also essential to select and define the attributes, boundaries and the extent of the buffer zone that the properly encompasses, as well as reflecting the OUV in consultation with local communities, landowners, and other key stakeholders. Likewise, with demonstrating how a nominated site and buffer zone will be protected. Finally, the preparation of a global Comparative Analysis is required to demonstrate how the site is distinctive and different.

In the case of serial nominations and transnational or transboundary nominations, all component parts must be brought forward at the same pace; the narrative around OUV must be coherent; and all key stakeholders must be fully involved and in agreement. Conflict of interests may arise in the process and mediation strategies should be put in place to prevent any disagreements.

At the international level, a risk to nomination is the method of final decision-making by the WH Comm at its annual meeting. Despite comprehensive evaluation by the Advisory Bodies over a year or more, the time that each individual nomination is given for consideration at the annual meeting itself can be very limited. It is therefore important to provide documentation that is clearly presented and as easy as possible to follow, to facilitate assessment. It is also important to remember that while the evaluation by the WH Comm is based on expert analysis and advice by the advisory bodies, the final decision, to some extent, is made by the State Parties on the Committee. It is therefore crucial that all stakeholders manage expectations accordingly.

Finally, continued collaboration and communication between the WHU and the Nomination Team/LP will be essential for addressing key challenges that may arise from the demands of the nomination process.

Communications

Not everyone will be satisfied with the decisions made during the nomination process. Given the high level of public interest that generally develops in relation to nomination projects, a communications strategy is essential for helping to keep key stakeholders, civic society, the public, and the media informed. This will provide them with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the process, and in generating discussion, opportunities and/or solutions. In particular, the communications strategy should address communications associated with the submission of the nomination, the evaluation mission, and the Committee's discussion of the Advisory Body's recommendation. Given the Minister's role as the States Party representative for Ireland, some key communications activities will need to be coordinated with the WHU on a national basis. It is appropriate that being identified on the Tentative List, and/or being inscribed on the World Heritage List, is celebrated. The following are examples of communications vehicles that can be used to communicate with stakeholders:

- Public consultation sessions
- Public Participation Networks
- Advertising
- Surveys
- Websites and social media
- Various publications, press articles, brochures
- Television and radio programmes
- School programmes such as the [World Heritage in Young Hands Kit \[Link\]](#)
- Other heritage toolkits, manuals, and programmes
- Signposting and information panels
- Permanent and/or temporary itinerant exhibitions
- Celebration of special days such as 'World Heritage Day'
- Social media campaigns

6. Preparing a Management Plan

All World Heritage Properties (WHPs) must have an adequate, long-term (that is regularly updated every 5-10 years) legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection and management framework that specifies how the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a property will be managed and protected. The Nomination Dossier must include a summary of this requirement and a comprehensive management framework must be included as a supporting annex. During the evaluation of nominations, a common issue that is raised is whether the State Party has an appropriate and approved management framework in place for a nominated property. **The World Heritage Unit (Ireland (WHU) strongly recommends that Irish nominations submit a Management Plan as an annex to the nomination.** A nominated site that fails to demonstrate a satisfactory management approach at the time of nomination is unlikely to achieve World Heritage (WH) inscription. If nomination of the site is successful, this commits Ireland (via the Lead Proponent (LP)) to the ongoing and long-term care of the property to ensure that its OUV is protected, conserved, interpreted, presented, managed, and monitored.

The principal focus of managing a site is the definition of its values – the tangible, intangible and/or attributes that attest to these values, and which are associated with or convey its OUV – and these are set out in its Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV). The aim of the Management Plan should be to set out how the OUV and any other significant values (such as natural values in a cultural property) are protected and sustained into the future, how potential threat or changes will be considered (as per the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs) Para. 108), and how, within these constraints, the property can be used sustainably in accordance with the policy set for sustainable use in OGs Paras 14bis, 15(o), 119, 214bis. Measuring the impacts of any proposed threats or changes should use the following guidance issued by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Advisory

Bodies: [Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context \(2021\)](#) [Link].

Preparing the Management Plan is a consultative process that is best undertaken under Phase 3 of the nomination process. Preparatory work, particularly discussions and the establishment of relationships with key stakeholders, could usefully begin in Phase 2 and even in Phase 1. Preparation of the Management Plan is among the key tasks that should be undertaken by the Nomination Team and Project Manager. As noted previously, the SOUV will be a key reference in preparing a Management Plan but there is no preference for a specific management system, if it supports a model of **participatory governance** and addresses the requirements outlined above. It is up to the LP to determine the appropriate arrangements to optimise the management of the nominated site, as it will likely become the Lead Agency responsible for managing the site if it is inscribed onto the World Heritage List. However, as a rule, the Management Plan structure and content should include:

- details of the significance of the nominated site, the potential OUV and the tangible, intangible and/or attributes justifying its inscription;
- a description of the site, the landscape, archaeology, natural and built heritage, etc.; it is also useful to include information on land ownership and type(s) of land use;
- clear maps showing the boundary of the site, its setting, and the buffer zone;
- a long-term vision for the site;
- an outline of the statutory and non-statutory national and local policies that will deliver effective protection of the site;
- details of the current management structure (if applicable);
- an assessment of key current issues and future challenges (Risk Assessment);
- the establishment of procedures to mitigate or prevent negative impacts;
- a list of key management objectives, actions and measurable goals over the next 5-10 years;

- reference to sustainable development principles and climate change objectives;
- an assessment of key opportunities for the sustainable use of the nominated property;
- a Conservation/Biodiversity Plan;
- details of plans for sustainable tourism management;
- an explanation how the Management Plan will adequately be resourced and implemented;
- details of the consultative/communicative methods that will be used to engage key stakeholders, including local communities, landowners and the public;
- regular monitoring to assess OUV and implementation;
- a regular review mechanism; and
- details emphasising the opportunities that WH inscription brings.

Management Plans should be integrated with Local Authority County or City Development Plans. The Management Plan and any changes to it will require screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Appropriate Assessment to ensure compliance with the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and the EU Birds and Habitats Directives under EU and national legislation. Many Management Plans for Tentative List Sites (TLSs) fail to adequately address the need to integrate conservation with the impacts that may arise from ongoing research, such as archaeological excavations or investigative works.

Serial, Transboundary and Transnational Management Structures

Particular care should be given to the design of management systems for serial, transboundary and transnational nominations. These nominations present several complex challenges and require strategic coordination and robust management structures. The States Parties concerned should establish a Joint Management Committee or similar body to oversee the management of the whole of a nominated serial transnational property (OGs Para 138bis). It is likely that more than one level of coordination and management will be needed.

Responsibilities should be mapped out at an early stage and communication protocols should be followed to increase the cohesion and effectiveness management of the WHP. It must be clear how a coordinated overall management strategy is to be achieved for the separate components, especially where different managers, management systems and legal safeguards may apply. The management framework/plan should be finalised before inscription, but it should contain an inherent flexibility to accommodate any recommendations that may arise from assessments and inscription, and it should be updated periodically.

As part of the series of [World Heritage Resource Manuals \[Link\]](#), two valuable resources are the **2013 Managing Cultural World Heritage Manual** and the **2012 Managing Natural World Heritage Manual**. The **Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit** document is another key resource that should be used. It is expected that the World Heritage Leadership Programme will soon publish a unified manual for the management of all WHPs, whether cultural or natural.

Sustainable Development Goals

WH has huge potential to contribute to social, economic and environmental goals. The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \[Link\]](#) adopted by the UN General Assembly integrated, for the first time, the role of culture, through cultural heritage and creativity, as an enabler of sustainable development across 17 Sustainable Development Goals. WH inscription can enable new approaches that demonstrate the relevance of heritage for sustainable development, while respecting its primary purpose and mandate of protecting the OUV of a WHP.

Natural WHPs contain some of the planet's richest combinations of terrestrial and marine biodiversity, and are a fundamental contribution to environmental sustainability. Most of these sites have developed over time through mutual adaptation between humans and the environment, and thus demonstrate how natural and cultural diversities interact with and affect one another in complex ways.

WH can also be important asset for economic development by attracting investments and ensuring green, locally based employment, only some of which may be related to tourism. Activities associated with the stewardship of cultural and natural heritage sites are 'local' by definition and green 'by design', as they embody an intrinsically more sustainable pattern of land use, consumption, and production, developed over centuries, if not millennia, of slow adaptation between communities and their environment. This is true, of course, for natural protected areas rich in biodiversity, but also for cultural landscapes and historic cities.

WH is also beneficial to the spiritual wellbeing of people for its powerful symbolic and aesthetic dimensions. The acknowledgment and conservation of the diversity of the cultural and natural heritage, fair access to it, and the equitable sharing of the benefits deriving from its use, enhance the feeling of place and belonging, mutual respect for others, and a sense of purpose and ability to maintain a common good, which all contribute to the social cohesion of a community as well as to individual and collective freedom of choice and action.

Experience has shown how the degradation of natural resources, neglected rural areas, urban sprawl and poorly engineered new constructions increase the vulnerability of communities to disaster risks, especially in poorer countries. On the other hand, a well-conserved, natural and historic environment, based on traditional knowledge and skills, considerably reduces underlying disaster risks' factors, strengthens the resilience of communities, and improves lives.

In 2015, the World Heritage General Assembly adopted a [Policy on the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention \[Link\]](#). The overall goal of the policy is to harness the potential of WHPs and heritage in general, to contribute to sustainable development, and therefore increase the effectiveness and relevance of the Convention, while respecting its primary purpose and mandate of protecting the OUV of WHPs. In line with the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), this new policy revolves around the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental sustainability, inclusive social development, and inclusive economic development, all of which should underpin the development of the Management Plan for a nominated site.

Relevant aspects of the policy have been incorporated into the OGs (see, for example, Paras 14bis, 15(o), 119, 214bis). LPs should also consider how Management Plans can incorporate reference to relevant Sustainable Developments Goals and [The National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024 \[Link\]](#).



Image 6:
Knocknarea, part of the
Passage Tomb Landscape of
Sligo Tentative List Site

Tourism

The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme [\[Link\]](#), the 2022 ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism [\[Link\]](#), and the 2011 IUCN Sustainable Tourism and Natural World Heritage [\[Link\]](#) stress that responsibly managed tourism can be a powerful vehicle for the preservation of OUV and for sustainable development, whereas poorly-managed tourism can have harmful effects on sites and may jeopardise their WH status. The UNESCO Programme contains guidance and tools on WH tourism management. Ensuring sustainable and responsible tourism is a major challenge for WHPs, given the potentially large numbers of visitors and the need to present the WHP, as well as other visitor facilities. The specific effects of WH designation (including the likelihood of increased visitor numbers) should be anticipated and the Management Plan should address issues linked with tourism. In many cases, a separate sustainable tourism strategy should be prepared for sites, in partnership with the Local Authority and Fáilte Ireland, and integrated with the general site Management Plan. The plan should ensure that the development of tourism and visitor activities associated with WHPs will be undertaken in an inclusive and participatory manner, respecting and empowering the local community, including property owners. All the agencies involved need to be consistent in their public stance on sustainable and regenerative tourism.

Tourism management strategies should be implementable, measurable, monitored and effective. Fundamentally, tourism must be consistent with, and sympathetic to, the protection, conservation, and management of OUV.

Climate Change

UNESCO is currently drafting a new 'Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage'. The policy recognises that climate change has become one of the most significant threats to WH, impacting on the OUV and the economic and social development of communities. For future Irish nominations, it will be a requirement to acknowledge the potential vulnerability of nominated sites to climate change impacts and to include a clear plan that outlines adequate adaptation and mitigation measures to preserve and protect OUV.

Regarding Cultural and/or Mixed Sites, the LPs are advised to use the [Built and Archaeological Heritage Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan \[Link\]](#) as a toolkit to consider heritage resources and assess their vulnerability to climate change, and to develop sustainable policies and plans for climate-change adaptation of built and archaeological heritage. Regarding Natural and/or Mixed Sites, the [Biodiversity Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan \[Link\]](#) should be used as a toolkit to enhance understanding of the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and to illustrate how adequate monitoring and evaluation measures can be put in place. Management Plans should also consider the requirements of the [National Climate Action Plan 2023 \[Link\]](#) and the Climate Action Plan of the relevant Local Authority (or Local Authorities). It is recommended that Climate Vulnerability Index surveys are carried out during the nomination process to establish a baseline for the site.

7. The Structure of the Preliminary Assessment Request and Nomination Dossier

The World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) has approved an official format for Preliminary Assessment requests and World Heritage (WH) nominations, and the latest version of this information must always be followed when submitting a nomination (as set out in Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs), Annex 3 for the Preliminary Assessment request and Annex 5 for the Nomination Dossier).¹⁰ The formats are designed to provide the WH Comm and its Advisory Bodies with consistent information about nominated sites, at a specified standard. It is important to note that only Preliminary Assessment requests and nominations regarded as complete at the deadline for submission will be examined.

For a Preliminary Assessment request to be considered complete using the headings set out in the OGs Annex 3, the following points must be included:

1. **Identification of the potential nominated property** – location, mapping of attributes, identification of property and buffer zone boundaries (if known), title of relevant Tentative List entry, other international designations;
2. **Description of the potential nominated property** – summary and description of potential property, status of research and historical documentation, and identification of settings;
3. **Significance of the potential nominated property** – global significance of potential property: choice and citations for WH criteria, potential serial/potential transboundary/transnational and potential Cultural Landscape nomination;
4. **Integrity** – main attributes included within potential property: their condition, and the extent to which potential property suffers from actual/potential adverse effects;
5. **Authenticity** – truthfulness and credibility of attributes;
6. **Framework for comparative analysis** – proposed approach for comparative analysis, comparison with other similar properties/sites, justification for inclusion of components in the case of a serial property, and gaps and underrepresented heritage in World Heritage List addressed by the potential property;
7. **Protection and management** – current legislative and regulatory measures of potential property and of settings of property, actual or envisaged management system, with brief description of its organisation, priorities and conservation measures, and adequacy of capacity and financial resources.

See **Table 3** for the layout of the official Preliminary Assessment request.

¹⁰ The 2021 OGs are likely to be updated before the first Irish submission is ready so the Lead Proponent should always work to the most up-to-date version of the OGs.

Table 3: The Official Preliminary Assessment Request Format (OGs Annex 3).

<p>1. Identification of Potential Nominated Property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country (and State Party if different) • County • Name of potential nominated property • Latitude and Longitude coordinates • Map showing features/attributes of the potential nominated property • Name and date of submission of the potential nominated property on the Tentative List of the relevant State(s) Party(ies) • Has the potential nominated property received funds from the International Assistance mechanism? • Has the potential nominated property received advice through Upstream Process mechanism? • International designations 	<p>4. Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of attributes in property (max 750 words) • Conservation status of attributes and factors affecting property (max 750 words)
<p>2. Description of the Potential Nominated Property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary description and history (max 3,000 words) • Status of research and historical documentation (max 500 words) • Settings of potential property (max 500 words) 	<p>5. Authenticity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes and Information sources (max 750 words) • Changes to relevant attributes (max 750 words)
<p>3. Significance of the Potential Nominated Property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global significance of property (max 500 words) • World Heritage criteria applied (max 100 words per selected criteria) 	<p>6. Framework for Comparative Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed approach to comparative analysis (max 1500 words) • Comparison with other similar properties/ sites (max 1000 words) • Selection of components for serial nomination (max 500 words) • Gaps/underrepresented heritage on World Heritage List addressed by this potential property (max 500 words)
<p>Nomination Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential serial nomination? (max 500 words if yes) • Potential transboundary/transnational nomination? (max 500 words if yes) • Cultural Landscape nomination? (max 500 words if yes) 	<p>7. Protection and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection status (max 500 words) • Management status (max 500 words) • Engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (max 500 words) • Additional key questions and issues (max 500 words)
	<p>8. Contact information of Official Local Institution / Agency / Organisation</p>
	<p>9. Signature on behalf of State Party</p>

For a Nomination Dossier to be considered comprehensive and 'complete' using the headings set out in the OGS, the following must be included:

1. **Concise Executive Summary** – including draft statement of OUV. The summary is a key element of the Dossier that sets out the essence of the nomination.
2. **Clear identification of the site** – location and mapping of its boundaries and buffer zone.
3. **Description of the site and its setting** – description of the component parts of the site; an overview of its history and development, and any significant changes that underpin the site's potential OUV.
4. **Justification for inscription** – expanding on the SOUV and demonstrating in detail why the site has OUV; indication of the criteria on which the site is nominated, including a statement on the site's integrity and authenticity, and a Comparative Analysis.
5. **State of conservation and factors affecting the site** – existing physical condition and conservation measures and how the site is documented and monitored; description of factors/threats affecting the site and a mitigation strategy.
6. **Protection** – legislative, regulatory planning, contractual, institutional and other measures/policies, and their applicability most relevant to the protection of the site.
7. **Management** – summary description of the management system that underpins or will underpin the protection of the OUV of the site, its attributes, and its buffer zone. This should set out who will be involved in the process; and how the site is/will be presented or interpreted to visitors and others.
8. **Monitoring** – regular monitoring of the key indicators in place or proposed, to measure and assess the state of conservation of the site, factors affecting it, and conservation measures.

The Nomination Dossier must include an annex of supporting documents to ensure that the nomination document itself is well focused and not too long. This will include the **Management Plan** referred to in Section 6. Other potential appendices will vary according to the complexity and type of the site. They may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Landscape character and sensitivity studies
- Boundary and buffer zone definition studies
- Archaeological/monument research and recording
- Research framework/agenda
- Basis of monument and other protective designations
- Ownership information (subject to GDPR)
- County/City development plan extracts and other relevant policy documentation
- Extracts from other relevant county/regional strategies, e.g., cultural heritage, biodiversity, tourism, or climate change
- Evidence of the stakeholder and rights-holders consultation programme and outcomes
- Contextual mapping and detailed mapping of the individual components of the site

See **Table 4** for the layout of the official nomination format.

Table 4: The Official Nomination Format (OGs Annex 5).

Executive Summary	
1. Justification for Inscription	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country (and State Party if different) County Name of property Geographical coordinates to the nearest second Maps and plans showing boundary of area proposed for inscription and of any buffer zone Area of property proposed for inscription (ha.) and proposed buffer zone (ha.) 	
2. Description	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of Property (max 16,000 words) History and Development (max 6,400 words) 	
3. Justification for Inscription	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief synthesis Criteria under which inscription is proposed (and justification for inscription under these criteria); Statement of integrity Statement of authenticity for nominations made under criteria (i) to (vi) Protection and management requirements 	
3.2 Comparative Analysis	
	3.3 Proposed SOUV
	4. State of Conservation and Factors Affecting the Property
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present state of conservation Factors affecting the property Development Pressures (e.g., encroachment, adaptation, agriculture, mining) Environmental pressures (e.g., pollution, climate change, desertification) Natural disasters and risk preparedness (earthquakes, floods, fires, etc.) Responsible visitation at World Heritage sites Number of inhabitants within the property and the buffer zone
	5. Protection and Management of the Property Ownership
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protective designation Means of implementing protective measures Existing plans related to county and region in which the proposed property is located (e.g., regional or local plan, conservation plan, tourism development plan) Property management plan or other management system Sources and levels of finance Sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques Visitor facilities and infrastructure Policies and programmes related to the presentation and promotion of the property Staffing levels and expertise (professional, technical, maintenance)

6. Monitoring

- Key indicators for measuring state of conservation
- Administrative arrangements for monitoring property
- Results of previous reporting exercises

7. Documentation

- Photographs and audio-visual image inventory and authorisation form
- Texts relating to protective designation, copies of property management plans or documented management systems and extracts of other plans relevant to the property
- Form and date of most recent records or inventory of property
- Address where inventory, records and archives are held
- Bibliography

8. Contact information of responsible authorities

9. Signature on behalf of State Party

There are no defined standards for overall physical and graphic design, but Irish Preliminary Assessment requests and Nomination Dossiers should aim to meet the high standards achieved by other countries in recent years. Reviewing successful and unsuccessful nominations for similar sites is extremely useful to determine an appropriate level of presentation. The Nomination Dossier needs to be focussed and targeted to achieve its purpose. Length and complexity is not necessarily an indication of a good nomination. As the Nomination Dossier emerges, constant checking will keep it balanced, coherent and properly focused. As outlined earlier, to keep the Dossier as manageable as possible, detailed material should be included in annexes, leaving the main text for setting out the key messages and ensuring that these are not obscured by too much detail. Dossiers must be concise and coherent; a good Dossier assists with inscription while a poor Dossier undermines the entire process.

The OGs require a certain number of hard copies of the nomination to be provided depending on the type of nomination (OGs. Para. 132.10). In all cases, the hard copies and electronic copies should be identical, even if one copy is considered to be the original. In addition to one copy being retained by the WHC, other copies are distributed to the Advisory Bodies for assessment, and it is important that exactly the same information is provided in each copy. Also note the requirements in the OGs about the format for the Dossier (OGs Para. 130).

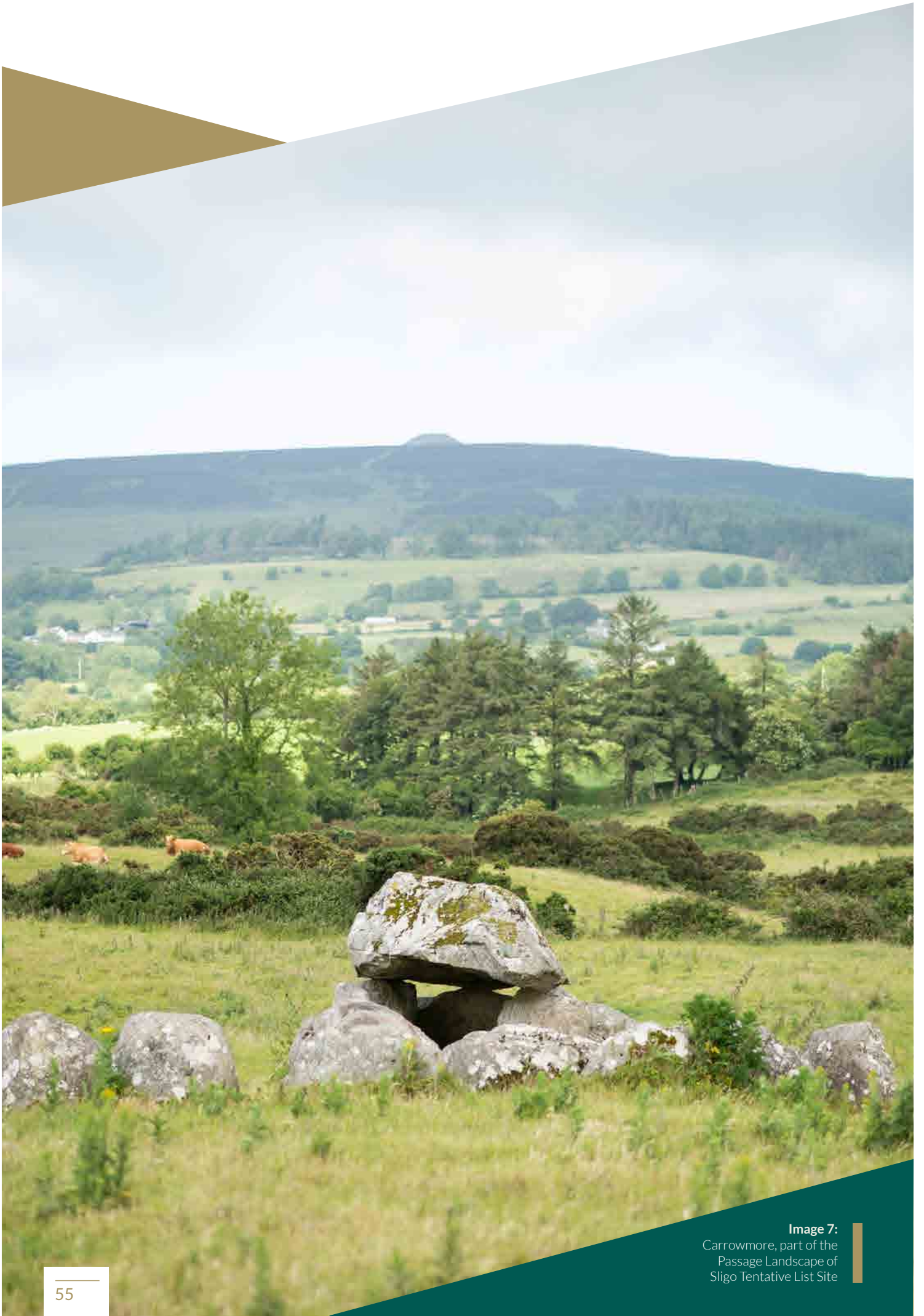


Image 7:
Carrowmore, part of the
Passage Landscape of
Sligo Tentative List Site

8. Evaluation Process

The World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) has set a limit of 35 on the total number of nominations it will consider at each annual meeting. Furthermore, only one nomination per State Party will be considered on an annual basis. **Considering this, nominations will only be submitted to the Committee when the Minister, acting on the advice of the World Heritage Unit (Ireland) (WHU), considers it to be complete and ready for evaluation.** Following submission of the completed Nomination Dossier, with the requisite number of copies, the evaluation process begins (See **Figure 8** for International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) evaluation process)¹¹. The first step is a check by the WHC to ensure that the Dossier is complete. If it is considered to be incomplete, it will not be forwarded to the Advisory Bodies for evaluation, and will have to be resubmitted the following year or later. If it is considered complete, the Dossier is independently evaluated by one or both of the Advisory Bodies mandated by the Convention: ICOMOS and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). For a detailed description of the evaluation procedures used by ICOMOS and IUCN see Annex 6 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs).

In brief, the evaluation procedure of the Advisory Bodies comprises:

- a **desk review** of the nomination by relevant experts¹²;
- an **evaluation mission** to the nominated site. The mission is planned co-operatively by the Advisory Body, the States Party (through the WHU) and the Project Manager;

- **the first meeting of the Advisory Body's World Heritage (WH) Panel** in December to review the evaluation mission, the desk review, and all other background material;
- an **interim report** outlining the status and any issues relevant to the evaluation process, and any further requests for supplementary information sent to States Parties and copied to the WHC for distribution to the Chair of the WH Comm by 31 January of the year in which the nomination will be considered by the Committee (OGs. Para. 149);
- Any **requests for additional information** must be sent back to the WHC prior to 28 February (OGs Para. 148 (i)) for it to be considered by the Advisory Bodies. The OGs formally prevent the Advisory Bodies from considering any information that is sent after this date;
- a **second meeting of the Advisory Body's WH Panel** in March/April to finalise review and prepare an evaluation report, which includes a clear 'recommendation to the WH Comm; and
- an **evaluation report** sent to the WHC for distribution to States Parties six weeks prior to the WH Comm meeting in May/June of Year 6 of the nomination process.

As part of the evaluation process States Parties can engage in dialogue with the Advisory Bodies before the evaluation mission, during the evaluation mission, after the evaluation mission, and after the first WH Panel meeting.

The State Party can also write, in the appropriate format, to the Chairperson of the WH Comm before the Committee meeting, pointing out any factual errors in the Advisory Bodies' evaluation (OGs Para. 150). It is important that the State Party and the Lead Proponent (LP) should inform the WHC about any developments affecting a nominated site during the evaluation. Such information may have an important impact on the evaluation.

11 The IUCN Evaluation Process is like ICOMOS' process. See Annex 6 of the OGs.

12 ICOMOS receives advice from its International Scientific Committees as well as expert bodies such as The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage, the International Federation of Landscape Architects, and the International Committee for the Documentation and Conservation of Monuments and Sites of the Modern Movement.

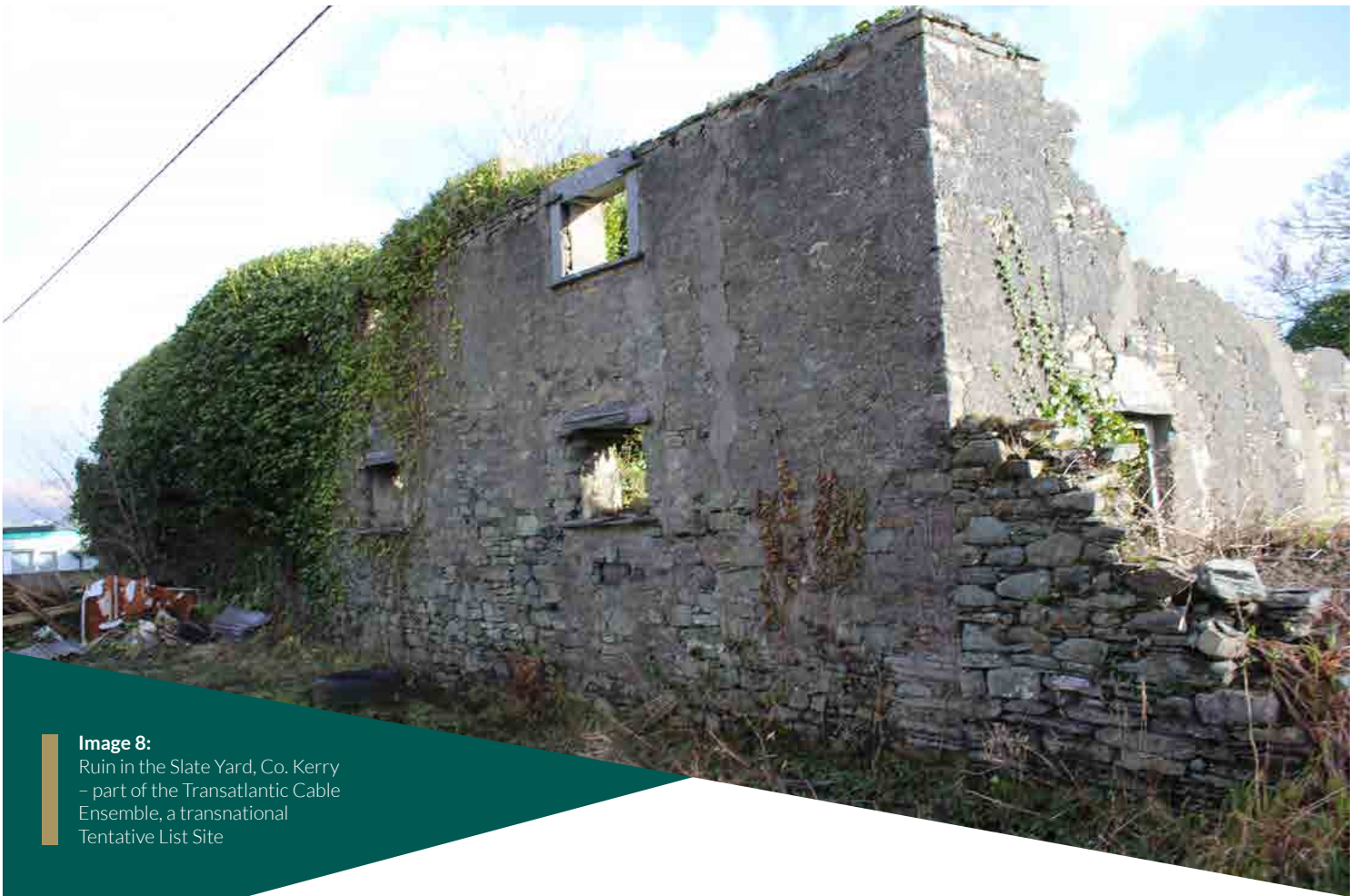


Image 8:
Ruin in the Slate Yard, Co. Kerry
– part of the Transatlantic Cable
Ensemble, a transnational
Tentative List Site

The WH Comm makes the decision during its annual meeting on whether to inscribe a site. In making this decision, the Committee is assisted by a recommendation from the relevant Advisory Bodies. For each individual nomination, the Committee can decide to:

- inscribe the property onto the World Heritage List;
- refer the Nomination back to the States Party for additional information, typically in relations to a site's protection or approval of a Management Plan (the Committee notes that the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) has been established and the nomination may be resubmitted within three years once the technical issue has been resolved);
- defer the Nomination (the Committee concludes that a more in-depth assessment or a substantial revision is needed before it is possible to conclude that the nominated property has OUV)¹³; and
- reject the proposed inscription, as the property is determined not to be of OUV. In this case, the nomination may not be presented to the Committee again, except in exceptional circumstances. A nomination may be withdrawn before consideration by the Committee, to prevent this recommendation from becoming a formal decision.

¹³ If the States Party wishes to have the property considered again for inscription on the World Heritage List, it must submit a new nomination, which will be evaluated completely by the appropriate Advisory Body, including another mission to evaluate the site.

ICOMOS Evaluation Process

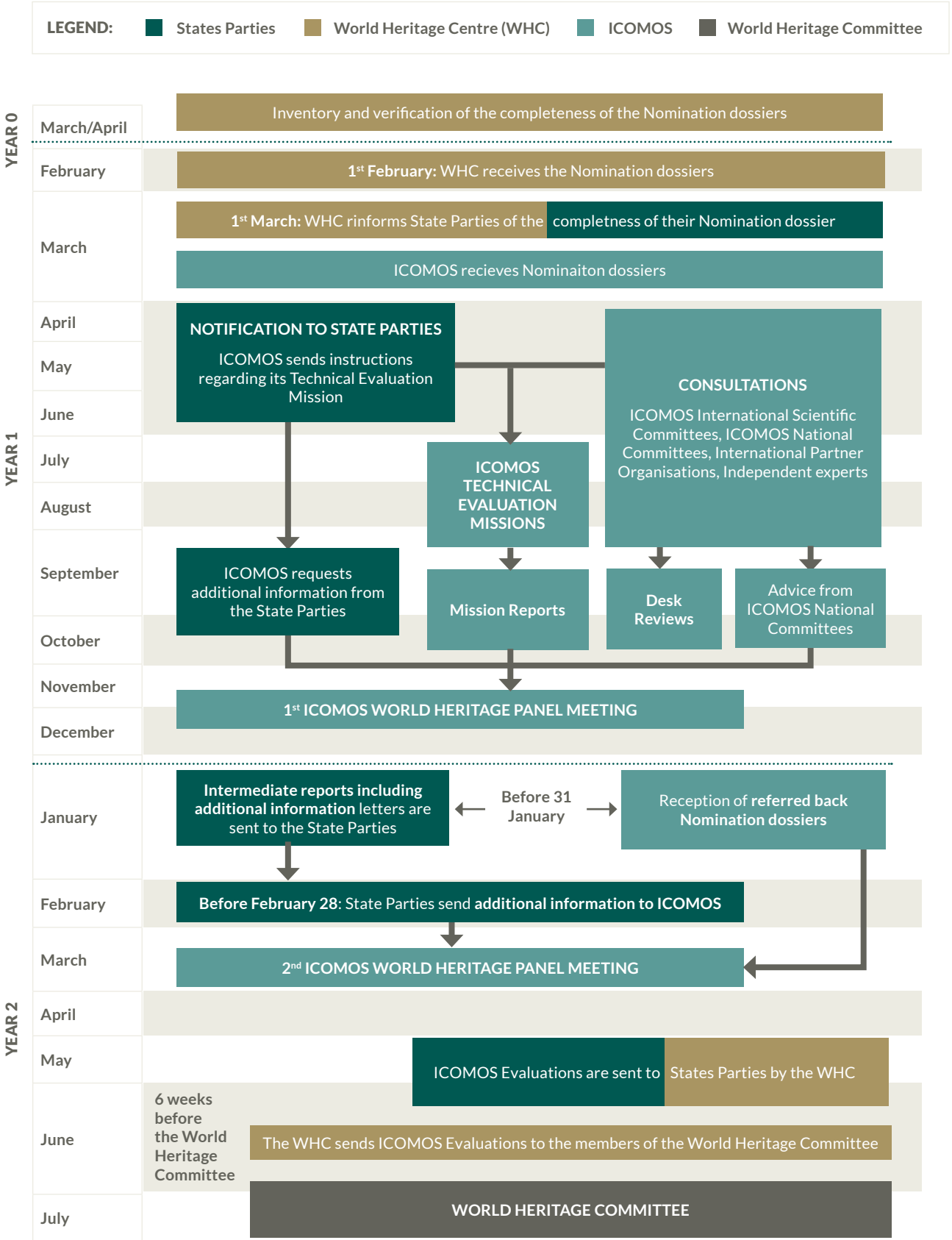


Figure 8: ICOMOS Evaluation Process.

9. World Heritage Obligations

A separate guidance manual will be prepared on managing World Heritage Properties (WHPs) in Ireland. However, the following key points should be considered when preparing a nomination so that the Lead Proponents (LPs) and all key stakeholders are aware of the obligations that the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) and inscription on the World Heritage List entails. These obligations include:

- **showing accountability** to the international community, represented by the World Heritage Committee (WH Comm), for conserving the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the property, through proper protection and long-term management measures;
- **reporting** to the WH Comm about factors that might affect the OUV of the property (Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs) Para. 172);
- submitting a **periodic report** on the state of conservation of the property to the WH Comm on a regular six-year reporting cycle (OGs Para. 199-210; OGs Annex 7). The periodic reporting serves three main purposes: (1) to provide an assessment of the application of the Convention by the States Party; (2) to provide an assessment as to whether the World Heritage (WH) values of the property inscribed on the World Heritage List are being maintained over time; and (3) to provide updated information about the WHP to record the changing circumstances its state of conservation. In certain circumstances, the periodic report allows the WH Comm to decide on the need to adopt specific measures to resolve recurrent problems; and

- agreeing to work with Advisory Bodies and the WHC to address any **state of conservation** concerns for the property (OGs Para. 169-176). Under OGs Para. 172, States Parties are expected to inform the Committee, through reports submitted to the WHC, of their intention to undertake or authorise projects that might affect the OUV of a WH site. The Committee expects that these reports be submitted as far in advance of project implementation as possible, and before irreversible work is undertaken, so that it can assist in finding solutions that assure the conservation of the property's OUV.

It is important to note that the reactive monitoring and state of conservation reporting process can also be initiated by stakeholders writing to the WHC or Advisory Bodies, or in response to media reports about relevant issues. Based on these reporting and monitoring processes, the Committee can request a country and a site's managers to take certain actions (and/or to avoid taking other actions) to conserve the site's values. Further, it can request that the country invite a 'reactive monitoring mission' (an on-site inspection) to a WH site, if it believes that such a mission would contribute to the long-term safeguarding of the site.

At each Committee meeting, the Committee reviews 'State of Conservation Reports' for several properties, arising from the reactive monitoring programme, and makes recommendations and requests to the relevant States Parties.

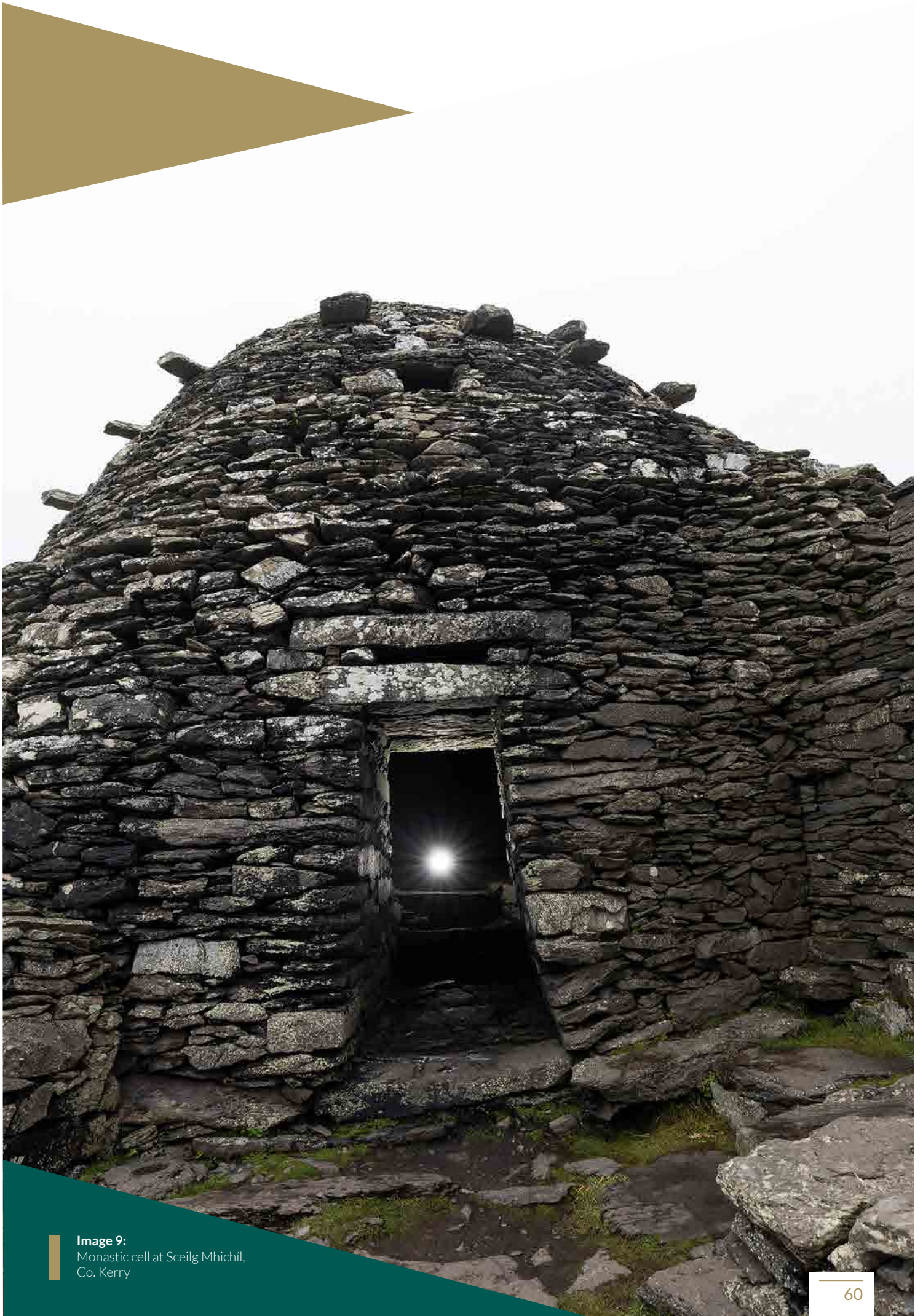


Image 9:
Monastic cell at Sceilg Mhichíl,
Co. Kerry

10. Resources

The nomination process will need to be adequately resourced and funded if it is to be successful. Early in the process, the level of resources and funding should be estimated and sources be identified and confirmed to provide this support. There can be a considerable variation in the resources and costs required for the nomination process, due mainly to the diversity and relative complexity of sites. Both individual sites and their immediate and wider setting involve multiple landowners, land managers and stakeholders. The process can be complex, requiring substantial and additional technical analysis. In general, recent successful European nominations have required an approximate staff commitment of two full-time employees over a period of three to seven years, a substantial budget, and in-kind services to complete.

The potential costs for preparing a nomination include:

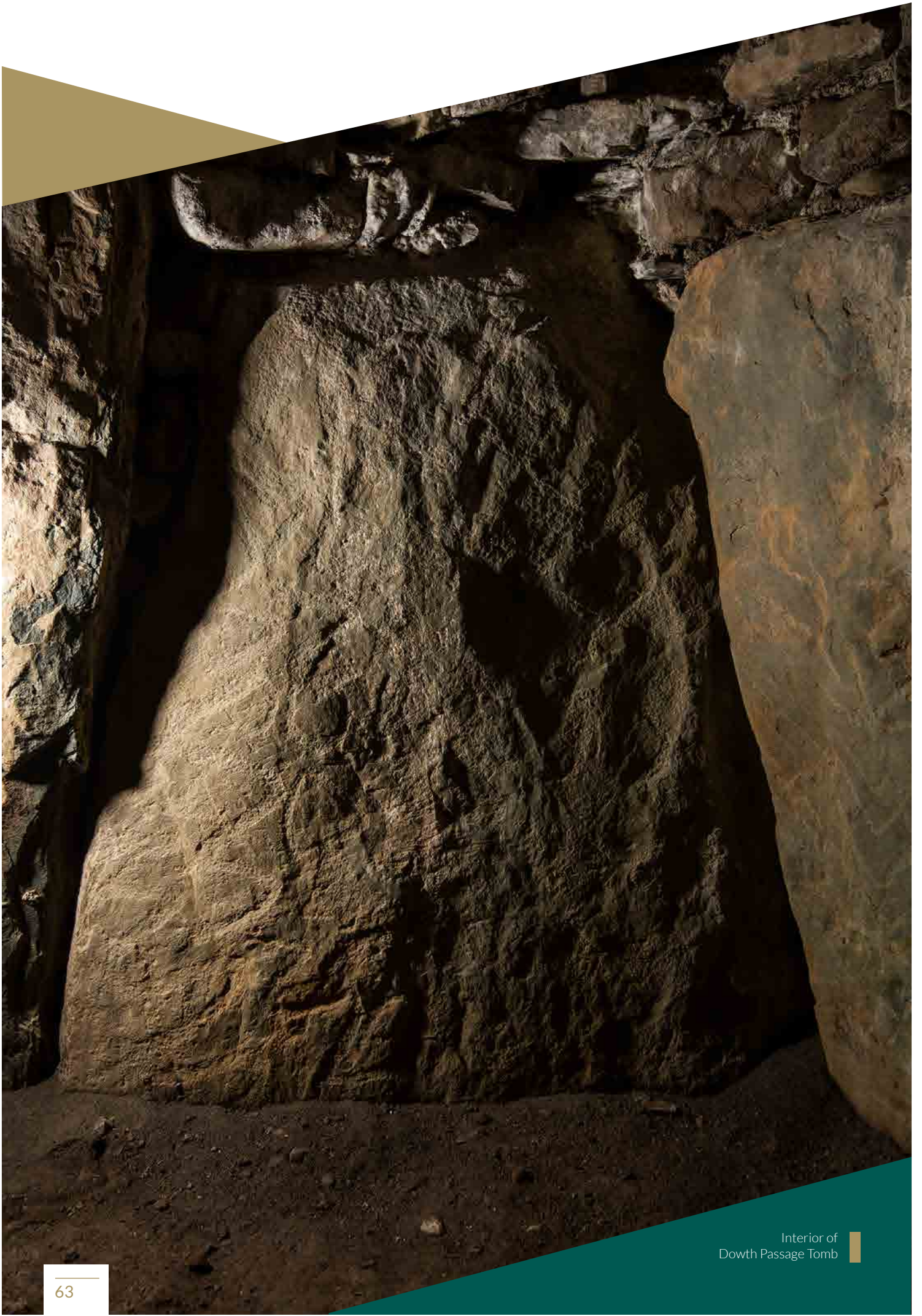
- the services of a World Heritage (WH) expert;
- producing and submitting Preliminary Assessment request;
- producing and submitting a Nomination Dossier;
- Nomination Team costs;
- the services of a Project Manager and Project Team;
- commissioning research studies;
- engaging with outreach/stakeholders;
- preparing a Management Plan and other required documentation;
- Advisory Body site visits;
- attending WH capacity-building events; and
- attending World Heritage Committee (WH Comm) meetings.

Image 10:
Valentia Transatlantic Cable Station,
Co. Kerry – part of the Transatlantic
Cable Ensemble, a transnational
Tentative List Site



The above outlays exclude internal administrative resources and expertise made available to the nomination by the World Heritage Unit (Ireland) (WHU), the Lead Proponents (LPs) and from the Nomination Team. It also excludes capital and maintenance costs for ongoing conservation work and providing visitor facilities at sites.

The most important sources of funding for the nomination process are likely to be provided by Central Government and the LPs but may include other key stakeholders and funding streams. **As a rule, the WHU will contribute funding towards the formal preparation and submission of the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier, on behalf of the Minister, to the WH Comm. The LPs will be responsible for funding the project at local level and putting in place a budget to support and manage it in the long term.** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be agreed between the WHU and key partners in the process, setting out key responsibilities, funding provisions, and how the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier will be developed. The WHU will lead on initiating and developing the MOU in partnership with the LPs.



Interior of
Dowth Passage Tomb

Appendix 1: Role of Project Manager

Required Key Competencies (Not Exhaustive):

The Project Manager should have the following key competencies:

- a strong organisational and project management skills, including the ability to multi-task the countless details involved in preparing and submitting the Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier, and the ability to work to deadlines;
- background knowledge of the Convention, OGs and nomination process and the ability to interpret this information (note that the WHU will provide assistance in this respect);
- an understanding of national and local heritage protection and planning policy and guidance (both to understand existing systems/protections already in place and to ensure that they are adapted/aligned with the Management Plan and guidance required for future site management);
- the ability to bring together and understand information about the property and its values;
- the ability to manage a range of inputs from experts and local stakeholders;
- effective interpersonal and communications skills, particularly with respect to local communities, stakeholders and the media;
- experience in heritage Management Planning and implementation, linking the nomination to the management of the property;
- experience in volunteer management and outreach, and in facilitating and coordinating multidisciplinary Targeted Working Groups;
- experience in liaising with and seeking grant support from key funders;
- a breadth and depth of knowledge of geography, archaeology, history, folklore, etc., in relation to the nomination; and
- an ability to work in collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders.

Key Duties (Not Exhaustive):

Regarding the **nomination process**, the Project Manager should be able to:

- lead and coordinate the activities of the Lead Proponent (LP) in developing and preparing the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier;
- lead the Project Team established to develop the nomination
- work closely with the Nomination Team, WH Expert and the WHU in relation to the preparation and submission of the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier;
- deliver on actions set by the LP/ Nomination Team to progress the preparation of the Preliminary Assessment and the Nomination Dossier;
- liaise with the Advisory Bodies (i.e., ICOMOS) as required;
- act as spokesperson/local contact point on behalf of the LP; and
- represent the LP at meetings with the WHU, the Office of Public Works (OPW), with other relevant organisations/bodies;

Regarding **engagement**, the Project Manager should be able to:

- maximise public participation and engagement with the nomination process;
- facilitate stakeholder engagement and links with the local community and other key stakeholders (i.e., civic society, landowners and tenants, community organisations, businesses, visitors, elected members and other stakeholders);
- facilitate the establishment of Targeted Working Groups
- communicate information regarding the nomination to key stakeholders, the local community and the general public; and
- participate in WH networks and fora, etc.

Regarding **promotion** the Project Manager should be able to:

- facilitate the consideration and establishment of a research framework;
- lead on organising events and communicating activities relating to the nomination; and
- promote the significance and benefits of WH status via the internet, social media, workshops and other means.

Regarding **site management** the Project Manager should be able to:

- lead on preparing (and implementing) the management system/plan including consultation with key partners such as the WHU and OPW, landowners, stakeholders and the public;
- work with the OPW and WHU and landowners in relation to the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan, if required;
- monitor and report on any potential challenges or threats to the site and its potential OUV.

Ideally, the Project Manager should be based at or near the site.

Appendix 2: Role of World Heritage Expert

Required Key Competencies:

The World Heritage (WH) expert should have the following key competencies:

- detailed and expert knowledge of the Convention and process and the application of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (OGs) at all stages, including the WH nomination process;
- background in cultural/natural heritage conservation at both strategic and detailed level;
- a track record in preparation and authoring of Nomination Dossiers leading to successful inscription;
- ability to synthesise large amounts of multidisciplinary information from a variety of sources and distil relevant factors into a concise case for OUV; and
- a proven ability of partnership working including experience of working with diverse stakeholder groups.

Key Duties (not exhaustive):

The WH expert should be able to:

- help to define and manage the timeline in respect of developing and submitting the Preliminary Assessment and Nomination Dossier;
- provide consistent overarching coordination of the nomination process;
- review the progression of work on an ongoing basis;
- edit drafts of Preliminary Assessment request and Nomination Dossier and produce final, print ready designed document;
- ensure that UNESCO deadlines are met;
- accompany the Advisory Bodies' technical evaluation mission;
- provide answers to requests for further information received from Advisory Bodies;
- exchange knowledge/expertise of process with Project Manager and Nomination Team; and
- attend the WH Comm session.

Appendix 3: Attributes

Nominated properties are required to demonstrate their potential Outstanding Universal Value through their attributes. Attributes convey the potential Outstanding Universal Value and enable an understanding of that value. These attributes will be the focus of protection and management actions, and institutional arrangements, and their spatial distribution and respective protection requirements will inform the boundary of the property.

Attributes can be physical qualities or fabric, but can also include processes, associated with a property, that impact on physical qualities, such as natural or agricultural processes, social arrangements or cultural practices that have shaped distinctive landscapes. For natural properties they can be specific landscape features, areas of habitat, flagship species, aspects relating to environmental quality (such as intactness, high/pristine environmental quality), scale and naturalness of habitats, and size and viability of wildlife populations (UNESCO 2021, Annex 5, Section 2 (a)).

See below for examples of attributes for Ireland's two existing World Heritage Properties (WHPs) extracted from their Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).¹⁴

¹⁴ See Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage 2023, *Summary of the Attributes for Ireland's Two Existing World Heritage Properties: 'Brú na Bóinne' and 'Sceilg Mhichíl* [Link] for a detailed report on extracting the attributes for both WHPs.

Brú na Bóinne¹⁵

Landscape

- An extensive funerary landscape of great ritual significance in a bend of the River Boyne with a concentration of social, economic and funerary monuments including 40+ passage graves
- Views into and out of the property

Archaeological Features

- The time depth of Brú na Bóinne from the Neolithic to late medieval periods
- The finest expression of passage graves in prehistoric Europe
- The largest and most important expression of prehistoric megalithic plastic art in Europe
- The design of the passage graves in relation to the skies and astronomy
- The three great burial mounds of Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth and the sites surrounding them
- Knowth group with use spanning from the Neolithic to the Anglo-Norman periods, including passage graves, enclosures, occupation sites and field systems
- Newgrange group of prehistoric sites including passage graves, henge, cursus, and ringfort
- Dowth group of prehistoric and Iron Age, early Christian and early medieval sites including the great burial mound, megalithic tombs, many smaller burial mounds, henge, standing stone, and medieval church and castle
- Other prehistoric, Iron Age, early Christian and medieval sites spread across the landscape

Intangible Features

- Part of an area rich in stories of Ireland's ancient past
- Ambiance of the ritual centre

Sceilg Mhichíl

Landscape

- The most spectacularly situated of all early medieval island monasteries in an isolated and dramatic marine setting, deliberately sited on a pyramidal rock in the ocean
- Dramatic topography and scenery of the island with Christ's Valley 130 m above sea level flanked by the North and South Peaks
- Integration within the landscape of the principal monastic remains on a sloping shelf on the north-eastern side of the island and of the hermitage on narrow terraces just below the South Peak within the landscape of the island

Archaeological/architectural/structural features

- An outstanding example of a perfectly preserved early medieval monastic settlement including landing points, flights of steps, terracing, plots for food production, paved areas, living spaces, buildings for worship
- Intact indigenous stone architecture of a past millennium, uniquely documenting the evolution of dry-stone masonry techniques
- Structural-historical integrity

Intangible Features

- Symbol of the spread of Christianity and emerging literacy across the world, illustrating the extremes of early Christian monasticism
- Strong sense of spirituality derived from the long presence of the monks on the island and the retention of the visual-aesthetic integrity of this iconic site

Natural Feature

- One of Ireland's most important sites for breeding seabirds

¹⁵ The factual errors in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) for Brú na Bóinne noted in the Attributes Report have been corrected for this list of attributes. Corrections will be communicated to UNESCO following established notification mechanisms.

Appendix 3: Guidance for Transnational or Transboundary Nominations

As noted in this guide, nominations can also be:

- a. Transboundary – located in two or more separate jurisdictions with adjacent borders; or
- b. Transnational – located in two or more separate jurisdictions with non-contiguous borders.

Sites must be included on Ireland’s Tentative List for at least a year before the submission of a Preliminary Assessment request to the WHC. Similarly transboundary or transnational sites must be included on the Tentative Lists of all State Parties involved in the nomination for at least one year before submission of a Preliminary Assessment request. Coordinating this will be agreed between the States Parties involved.

Once included in the Tentative Lists of all involved State Parties, agreement must be reached on which State Party will lead and submit the nomination to the WHC. All State Parties involved need to be equally engaged in the process, in full agreement, and constantly cooperating, to ensure that the Preliminary Assessment request and the Nomination Dossier are credible and coherent.

Ireland is committed to reviewing its Tentative List periodically. However, should the proponents of a site in a different jurisdiction indicate that they wish it to be included on Ireland’s Tentative List as part of a strong and credible transnational or transboundary site, their application will be evaluated in its merits outside of the regular Tentative List review process.

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