

WORLD HERITAGE LIST

Nomination Form

Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage

Under the terms of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, called 'the World Heritage Committee' shall establish, under the title of 'World Heritage List', a list of properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which it considers as having outstanding universal value in terms of such criteria as it shall have established.

The purpose of this form is to enable States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Committee nominations of properties situated in their territory and suitable for inclusion in the World Heritage List.

This 'Nomination Document' has been prepared in accordance with the 'Format for the nomination of cultural and natural properties for inscription on the World Heritage list' issued by UNESCO.

The form has been completed in English and is sent in four copies to:

The Secretariat
World Heritage Centre
UNESCO
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION

Foreword

Two of the great global challenges facing us today are how to find a solution to the impact of climate change, and how to halt the alarming loss of our world's biodiversity.

I believe we need to take every possible opportunity to explore what more we can do to meet these challenges. The World Heritage Convention provides just such an opportunity. One of UNESCO's most successful Conventions, it helps us to understand the environmental factors essential for the conservation, protection and sustainable development of the world's cultural and natural heritage, and the vital role that nature, science and technology can take in safeguarding that heritage.

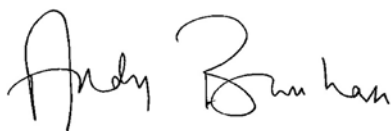
Scientific endeavour and discovery are key to understanding our planet, the threats to its heritage and how to ensure its future survival. To acknowledge this, the World Heritage Committee has called for a greater representation of sites on the World Heritage List that have outstanding universal value and recognise and celebrate exceptional achievements in science and technology. The United Kingdom supports the Committee in this goal and, in January 2008, hosted an international expert meeting to develop a framework for the identification and recognition of such sites on the World Heritage List.

Conclusions and recommendations from that meeting were welcomed by the Committee at its 32nd session in Quebec in July last year. So I am delighted that the United Kingdom is again nominating the site where the modern scientific study of natural life was pioneered: Darwin's Landscape Laboratory.

Darwin's contribution to our understanding of the natural world is unrivalled. His life of science was based on meticulous research in and around his home and the surrounding farmed valleys. These still survive as the tangible context for his original scientific insight. They remain – 200 years exactly after his birth - an inspiration to shape the thinking of future generations on the approach to biodiversity, ecosystems and the role nature can play in helping people adjust to the effects of climate change.

I would like to express my thanks to the many people and organisations that have worked so effectively to develop this Nomination Document. On behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, I am very pleased to give my full support to this nomination for World Heritage status.

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport



Andy Burnham

Darwin's Landscape Laboratory

World Heritage Steering Group

The following organisations are committed to the Darwin's Landscape Laboratory nomination for World Heritage Status:



MAYOR OF LONDON



THE CHARLES
DARWIN TRUST



DOWNE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Preface

We are delighted that Darwin's Landscape Laboratory is being nominated as a World Heritage Property in recognition of its importance to the work of Charles Darwin. If inscribed, the area will join London's four other World Heritage Properties: Maritime Greenwich, Palace of Westminster, Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's Church, the Tower of London, and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. The seven square kilometres of farms, fields, and woodland around Down House in the London Borough of Bromley will be a wonderful addition to that list, demonstrating the importance of rural countryside and wildlife to London's diverse environment.

Links with other World Heritage Properties important to Darwin's work, such as the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew have been forged and they provide a bond connecting Bromley and London with the rest of the world.

It has been fascinating to follow the direction the project has taken, from the initial idea over a decade ago to producing the final documents. During these years we have been fortunate to have had the dedicated support from a number of individuals and organisations listed in the Nominated Document.

World Heritage status would not only give the landscape surrounding Down House international recognition and increased conservation but will ensure that Charles Darwin's work is understood and appreciated by adults and children globally. His work continues to be the inspiration behind modern scientific discoveries and the modern day concepts from sustainable development to global warming.

We fully recognise that World Heritage status would bring many responsibilities which we address in the Management Plan. The public have been very supportive and provided us with a clearer image of the current and potential issues. Together we are dedicated to the long term sustainability of the Property.

It is essential that we maintain and protect the natural environment for our future generations. It is remarkable that we can walk in the historic woods and country around the village of Downe, just as Darwin did over one hundred years ago.



Councillor Stephen Carr, Leader of Bromley Council
Boris Johnson, Mayor of London

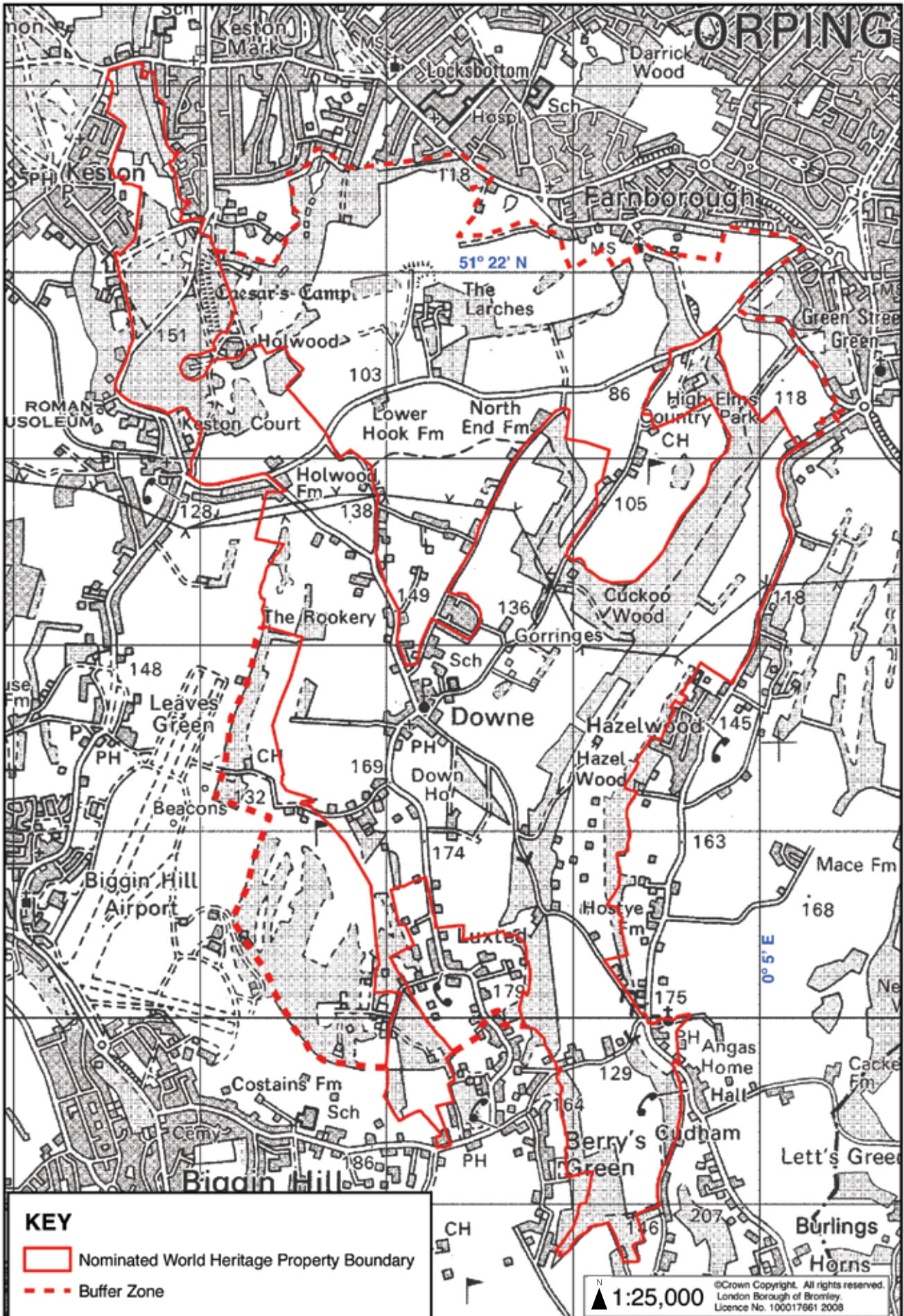


Stephen Carr



Boris Johnson

Map showing the boundaries of the nominated Property and buffer zone



Executive Summary

State Party: United Kingdom

State, Province or Region:

London Borough of Bromley, England

Name of Property/Property: Darwin's Landscape Laboratory

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

Darwin's Landscape Laboratory is situated in the London Borough of Bromley in south east Greater London

The centre of the nominated World Heritage Property, Down House, is at:

Latitude: 51° 19' 50" N

Longitude: 0° 03' 4"

Textual Description of the boundaries of the Nominated Property

The boundaries of the proposed World Heritage Property have been set to include the landscape area of the two compact farmed valleys used by Charles Darwin for forty years to develop and demonstrate his theory of evolution. The boundaries conform to landscape features and roads.

The World Heritage Property and its setting are managed appropriately and to reinforce the proper conservation of the property an external buffer zone is proposed. The main areas of housing developed since Darwin's death in 1882: at Holwood; north of Downe; at Luxted and Single Street; together with two golf courses, are identified in buffer zones. The area of the Property is 721 hectares with a buffer zone of 567 hectares. The visual envelope of the Property - defined by the ridge lines of the two valleys - including its immediate setting is strongly protected by planning designations including Green Belt designation.

Map of the Nominated Property (see facing page)

Justification, Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Darwin's Landscape Laboratory is the Property where the modern scientific study of natural life was pioneered with the development of the theory of evolution by natural selection. It is an intimate farmed valley landscape surrounding Charles Darwin's home at Down House in the Kent North Downs. He walked in the Downe and Cudham valleys every day and studied them intensely for the forty years of his scientific maturity.

Many landscape features bear unique witness to the evidence he collected for his world-changing ideas in the natural sciences that were developed at Down House.

Darwin's Landscape Laboratory is of fundamental importance to humanity because of his use of the landscape as a resource for science not simply as a commemoration of the man who developed the theory. The ideas developed at this Property have had a profound influence on life sciences, medicine, agriculture, philosophy and religion, as well as on general views of humankind's relation to other living creatures in the natural world and on the sustainability of the planet's resources.

Following his inspirational 5-year voyage around the world on HMS Beagle including 5 weeks observing and collecting on the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific, Darwin settled in London and then in 1842, moved 16 miles south to Down House to be able to investigate the natural life around him and to cater for his growing family. The surrounding farmed landscape and its varying geology and soil types enabled him to access, via numerous footpaths and lanes, a wide variety of plants and wildlife, the raw materials for his research and scientific work. Finding all that he needed for his science he seldom left the locality until his death in 1882. The farmed landscape, together with Down House and its gardens were thus his workplace for his greatest period as a scientist. Easy access to nearby London and to the worldwide postal system, offered Darwin opportunities to test world-wide opinion of his developing theories from Down. The recognition of the importance of the universality of his theories required information and collaboration from fellow scientists around the world who then went onto replicate his experiments and verify his findings. The works that Darwin's Landscape Laboratory inspired including *The Origin of Species* are one of the greatest and most lasting testimonies to the value of international scientific cooperation

The farmland and woodland management of the two small valleys linked by high ground has been sustained since Darwin's time. Thus the tangible context for his original scientific insight is clearly apparent. Darwin's home, gardens and many of habitats and features in the surrounding farmed valleys which he examined and used, survive to reflect his ideas which we are able to study in extensive and comprehensive collections of Darwin's scientific writings. Due to there being no main roads or railway stations in the area it has escaped much of the 20th century development associated with

London's hinterland and the landscape and buildings remaining remarkably unchanged since Darwin's death.

Darwin's theory of evolution was by no means limited to observations on natural life. It has fundamental importance for the modern understanding of the animal roots of human nature and our place in the natural world. His evolutionary understanding of human origins set out in *The Descent of Man and The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, both written at Downe, explained our shared ancestry with animals and made a strong case for the unity of the human races. *The Descent of Man* offered a naturalistic explanation of the origins of family and wider group bonds and the human moral sense, which has been widely influential in studies of the bases of cooperation in animal and human societies. Darwin pioneered the analysis of human experiences and their communication through the exploration of links with the behaviour of domestic and other animals observed at Downe and in other places. The works are foundation texts for human ethnology and developmental psychology with their behavioural and empirical approach.

Criteria under which the Property is nominated

Inscription is proposed under the World Heritage Committee's Criteria (iii) and (vi)

Criterion (iii) requires that that the nominated Property should bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared.

The living cultural tradition is the modern scientific approach to the understanding of the natural world by observation, hypothesis, experiment, free and wide exchange of information and ideas, theory-building and communication.

The Property is a supreme testimony to that tradition showing how Darwin used the compact, varied and farmed landscape around his home together with his own house and grounds as resources for observations and experiments that were landmarks in the history of science. The patterns of life Darwin first observed are still available for us to see, in the valleys, fields, woods, meadows and grounds where Darwin studied them. The ability to repeat Darwin's observations and experiments, both in the nominated Property and also elsewhere around the world are important foundations of the tradition of modern science and is a powerful education tool. His scientific work was then combined with an exhaustive exchange of ideas with fellow scientists throughout the world and culminated in the development and production at Down House, of

his world changing theories that are of fundamental importance for modern culture.

Criterion (vi) requires that the Property should be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (Paragraph 77 (vi)).

The **ideas** of Outstanding Universal Value with which the nominated Property is directly associated are Darwin's theory of **evolution by natural selection**, his explanation of **global biodiversity** as a fundamental principle of the natural world, and his demonstration of the **ecological interdependence of all life forms**. These three fundamental insights are closely intertwined and together provide the central principles for the present scientific understanding of the history of life on earth,

- the web of interrelations between organisms in ecosystems of all ranges,
- the influence of human pressures on the natural world and
- global needs for survival.

The ideas are of such global outstanding significance that they have transcended the global scientific community and become a central feature in everyday life and understanding.

The event of Outstanding Universal Value with which the nominated Property is directly linked was Darwin's writing and publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859), one of the most influential books of all time. This transformed scientific and wider public thinking about natural life and humans' place in the natural world. The change in thinking that the book brought about was a historic stage in the development of the modern understanding of life on earth and human nature.

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