



Heritage, Pride and Place

Exploring the contribution of World Heritage Site status to Liverpool's sense of place and future development

Final Report



Project Research Team

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*The Institute of Cultural Capital is a strategic partnership between
University of Liverpool & Liverpool John Moores University*

Abstract

The report considers opportunities and challenges for Liverpool to make the most of its World Heritage Site (WHS) designation, building on the methodologies applied within the Impacts 08 programme to assess the multiple impacts of large-scale cultural interventions. The analysis focuses primarily on the impact of the WHS designation on the image and reputation of Liverpool, as well as on local citizens' sense of place.

Whilst acknowledging findings from previous reports commissioned by English Heritage in relation to the possible impact of development on the Liverpool World Heritage Site's 'Outstanding Universal Value', this study also explores the socio-cultural, economic and political impact of the designation and management of the WHS on the city and its residents.

About the authors

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About the ICC

The Institute of Cultural Capital (ICC) is a strategic collaboration between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) which researches, interrogates and shapes the debate on policy making around cultural innovation and practice.

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Abbreviations

BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India and China
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHS	World Heritage Site

Introduction

The World Heritage Convention was established by UNESCO in 1972 to protect unique examples of world heritage that are threatened by economic and social upheaval. Under the terms of the Convention, it is the responsibility of signatory states to identify and nominate suitable sites onto a Tentative List, for possible future inscription onto the World Heritage List. Liverpool was placed on the Tentative List by the UK government in 2002, and was immediately asked by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to prepare a formal bid in 2003. This was subsequently accepted and inscribed at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee, in 2004, with the site declared to have ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ in three of the criteria used by UNESCO, pertaining to Liverpool’s role and significance as a world port.¹

Initially, support for the site in Liverpool was forthcoming from a wide range of agencies and government bodies, all of whom were united by the consensus that WHS status presented a number of valuable opportunities to the city region. However, since designation, public and stakeholder opinion has appeared to divide over the value of the site and its role in relation to the future development of the city, with much of the controversy and debate seemingly precipitated by the proposed Liverpool Waters scheme and its plans to redevelop a derelict area of dockland to the north of the city centre.² The perceived threat posed by these plans to the ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ of the Liverpool WHS prompted monitoring missions to the site by UNESCO and the International Council on Monuments and Sites in 2006 and 2011, and ultimately led to the site being placed on the ‘List of World Heritage in Danger’ by the World Heritage Committee in 2012.

Despite being one of the more recent sites in the UK to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, the future of the Liverpool WHS is therefore now in serious doubt. Yet the very real possibility of removal from the World Heritage List has so far failed to deter city authorities from pressing ahead with the controversial redevelopment plans, which it is claimed will involve billions of pounds of inward investment and thousands of new jobs. Indeed, faced with what is often portrayed in the local media as a straightforward choice between heritage and development, many stakeholders and members of the public who lack a clear understanding of the value of the WHS can comfortably envisage a future for Liverpool without the site. The current context makes this assessment of the value of the WHS designation and how the city might use it more proactively in future all the more timely.

¹ UNESCO currently use 10 criteria of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ (OUV) (six cultural and four natural) to evaluate proposals and designate a site as either a cultural, a natural or a mixed WHS.

² <http://liverpoolwaters.co.uk/content/home.php>

Research objectives

This study assesses the impact of the Liverpool WHS designation and considers opportunities and challenges for the city to make the most of its World Heritage Site. Similar to the 2008 European Capital of Culture title, the Liverpool WHS has become viewed increasingly in terms of the economic value it contributes to the city, rather than as an international accolade to celebrate and own from a social and cultural perspective.³ The study seeks to address this imbalance by adopting a more holistic approach to assessment that acknowledges the essential value of the social and cultural dimensions of the WHS, in addition to their instrumental role in facilitating desirable economic impacts. The findings presented by the study are structured according to the following four key research questions:

- Does the Liverpool WHS contribute to the sense of pride of place that local people and communities feel for their city?
- What are the cultural, economic and image-related impacts of the Liverpool WHS?
- What more could be done in the future to capitalise on WHS status?
- What risks are posed by the potential loss of WHS status for the city?

Each of these questions addresses an issue of particular salience within the current policy context. The first two questions acknowledge the diverse motivations behind the original bid and use these as benchmarks against which to assess the impacts of the WHS since designation; the third question responds to the prevailing sentiment that WHS status has not been capitalised upon, by suggesting ways in which the WHS might be reformed; and the fourth question explores the possible consequences of losing WHS status as a result of the Liverpool Waters urban development proposals.

³ Indeed, the same economic pressures that partly motivated the original bid have ironically led to the site being placed on UNESCO's 'World Heritage in Danger' list, thereby raising the possibility that the city could lose its WHS status.

Methodology

Building on the methodologies applied by the Impacts 08 programme to assess the multiple impacts of large-scale cultural interventions, this study adopts a mixed method approach capable of contextualising and collating a broad range of views regarding the Liverpool World Heritage Site, with the triangulation of methods considered critical in order to allow the different data sources to ‘talk to each other’ in the analysis.

In total, the project involved six parallel data collection methods:

1. Literature review. This involved a review of commissioned reports, academic articles and books on cultural heritage, in general and on World Heritage specifically, covering topics from the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage List, to the management and promotion of individual sites.

2. Promotional analysis. The approach to promotional analysis entailed a qualitative review of websites and relevant printed material where the Liverpool WHS was likely to be featured as a tool for the promotion of tourism or city branding. The majority of the material analysed can be considered part of the tourism and visitor economy. Whilst the sites reviewed do not give the full picture, they do provide a strong indication of the extent to which the WHS brand has been appropriated and used to define and/or improve the image of the city, which was seen as a key benefit of inscription.

3. Media analysis. This involved a search of UK press articles using the key words ‘Liverpool’ and ‘World Heritage’, spanning from August 1998 (when an announcement was made regarding the intent to be placed on the UK’s Tentative List) until 25 June 2012 (the date of inscription onto the List of World Heritage in Danger), and produced 337 articles for analysis. Five broad subject themes were identified, each of which were in turn sub-divided on grounds of their immediacy to the WHS (from articles focusing on the title specifically, to simply mentioning it in passing). The five themes used were:

- a. **Liverpool WHS** – articles on bidding, designation and management of the WHS (41%)⁴
- b. **UNESCO WHS** – articles discussing UNESCO/other sites and referring to Liverpool (9%)
- c. **Tourism and Events**⁵ – articles using or referring to the Liverpool WHS in the context of other local event promotions (9%)
- d. **Branding and economics**⁶ – articles referring to the Liverpool WHS in the context of discussion over branding and/or regeneration of the city (14%)
- e. **Sense of Place**⁷ – letters, comments and features on Liverpool heritage and development more broadly (27%)

⁴ Percentage of total articles.

⁵ This theme fits with the idea of using the World Heritage designation for city marketing, or to gain ‘image’ benefits.

⁶ This theme fits with the idea of using World Heritage as a ‘place-making’ mechanism (Rebanks 2009) leading on to economic benefits.

⁷ This fits with the idea of World Heritage as possibly fostering ‘pride’ in the city or, contrastingly, resulting in ‘contested heritage’ discussions.

4. Stakeholder interviews. Stakeholder interviews were conducted to explore and to develop an understanding of perceptions concerning the impact of the WHS on Liverpool. Furthermore, discussions were held concerning the potential of the WHS to contribute positively to the city's future trajectory. 15 interviews were conducted with key representatives from: city policy organisations; organisations that promote and manage the city's visitor economy; a city centre property developer, and a newspaper reporter who has covered local politics since 2007. These interviews were complemented by informal discussions with heritage campaigners and professionals. Stakeholders were asked to offer retrospective and prospective opinions and perspectives on the title's significance to Liverpool.

5. Citizen focus groups. Focus group Interviews were held to explore residents' views and opinions concerning:

- a. Liverpool WHS, how it is understood and its profile within the local population
- b. Buildings and sites of heritage which invoke feelings of pride and sense of place

Three focus groups in total were conducted (two with city centre residents and one with a group from Anfield in North Liverpool). The city centre residents tended to be working or retired professionals living in or around the WHS – white, middle-class, of mixed age and gender and predominantly originating from the city region. The North Liverpool group was composed of white professional women with a working class and social enterprise/activities background, and all but one originated from the area.⁸ Participants were asked to give a brief indication of their personal biography in relation to the city. After this, the aim was to organise free flowing discussions around three themes: WHS and Sense of Pride of Place, WHS and The City's Reputation, and the Future of WHS in Liverpool. However, after the introduction of the first theme, the discussions tended to take their own direction, and for explorative reasons this was allowed. Thereon, questions were posed when applicable to gather data on the other themes.

6. Citizen online survey. After piloting a survey on participants within the city centre focus groups, modifications were made and an online citizen survey went live for three weeks from 28 September 2012.⁹ There were 216 completed surveys and a further 28 incomplete surveys. The survey was promoted via a series of mailing lists coordinated by the ICC, the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University and was forwarded to numerous parties and stakeholders for further circulation.¹⁰ Apart from canvassing attitudes towards the WHS in terms of pride in place, its perceived impact on the city, and on the perceived impact of its potential loss, the survey quizzed respondents on the details of the nomination criteria and the site itself. This was done to explore the linkage between WHS literacy and attitudes towards the WHS.

⁸ Attempts to conduct further focus groups in the south of the city and with ethnic minorities proved unsuccessful. However, due to weak WH literacy among many discussants, and with the heritage versus development narrative dominant in the discussions, further groups were considered unlikely to have contributed new ideas and opinions.

⁹ For the online survey, the study used the Bristol Online Surveys platform (<http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/>).

¹⁰ Hence, like most online surveys, it does not comply with a probability sampling methodology and therefore cannot claim to be representative of the total Liverpool population

Structure of the report

This combination of different data sources provides a rich basis for the analysis and conclusions presented in the report, which is organised according to the main research questions that the report seeks to address:

- Chapter 1 examines the extent to which the **WHS contributes to the sense of pride of place that local people and communities feel for their city.**
- Chapter 2 considers the extent to which the **WHS contributes to Liverpool's national and international reputation, and whether it has created cultural and economic value for the city.**
- Chapter 3 focuses on **what can be done in the future to capitalise on WHS status**, including recommendations for the future management of the site.
- Chapter 4 looks at the **risks posed by the potential loss of WHS status for the city.**
- And the final chapter offers a **conclusion** to the report.

Additional details on respective methodologies and supplementary data analysis, meanwhile, can be found in the appendices to the report.

1. Does the Liverpool WHS contribute to the sense of pride of place that local people and communities feel for their city?

In this chapter, the study estimates the extent to which the Liverpool World Heritage Site contributes to citizens' sense of pride in Liverpool, and considers some of the factors that promote or inhibit the perception of the site as a source of local pride. The analysis is broken into two sections, with the former dedicated to quantifying the extent to which the WHS contributes to local citizens' sense of pride, and examining the reasons for the uneven distribution of this sentiment; and the second devoted to exploring how pride in the WHS relates to wider attitudes towards Liverpool's built environment.

It is increasingly recognised by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and UK heritage agencies that World Heritage status can foster local pride and promote social cohesion, in addition to acting as a focus for education and development.¹¹ This trend is reflected in the current strategy of English Heritage, for example, which aims to explore and establish the link between built heritage and sense of place, as well as in the organisation's *Heritage Counts 2009* report (2009), which was specifically dedicated to this topic. The findings presented in this chapter build on the report by English Heritage (2009), which demonstrated that people who live in areas rich in historic buildings tend to have a stronger sense of place.¹² However, it also attempts to address two of the report's most important shortcomings: namely, the use of the number of listed buildings in an area as a proxy measurement for the historic built environment (which necessarily ignores local colloquial definitions of heritage, that may differ from official listings and titles); and the failure to explore the relationship between sense of place and the *condition* of the historic built environment (which renders the report unable to determine how the re-use or, alternatively, the neglect and under-use of listed or unlisted buildings in localities shape people's sense of place). The current study sought to avoid these pitfalls by probing respondents to the online citizen survey to name the parts of Liverpool's historic built environment that they value, in order to see if these confer with, overlap or diverge from those which the title celebrates; and, through focus groups with residents in different localities, considering how the state of local heritage relates to residents' sentiments surrounding the WHS.¹³

1.2. The WHS and pride in the city

Pride in the heritage and regeneration of Liverpool, in general, was a finding which emerged strongly from a number of the ICC's research exercises. Focus group discussions, for example, revealed that residents are proud of the city, its buildings and its place in history; and that linkages between built heritage and personal biography and genealogy – intangible heritage – are important for people in developing a sense of pride in their locales and their city. With regards to

¹¹ This is so even if, for UNESCO, a site's OUV (a highly contested term in its own right) remains its principal concern (Norman 2011).

¹² Based on a survey of 500 adults, the report found that older and female respondents tended to value the historic built environment more in terms of their sense of place.

¹³ The authors do not know of any other study that has deliberately explored how the World Heritage title contributes to people's sense of pride in place, or how this relates to local definitions of heritage and the state of the historic built environment.

the WHS, specifically, the online citizen survey found that, overall, the WHS contributes significantly to people's sense of pride in the city. The words 'pride' and 'proud' (together with 'restrictive') were, for instance, among those most cited by respondents in relation to the WHS; whilst a majority reported that the site 'definitely' (46%) or 'slightly' (22%) contributes to their sense of pride in the city.

However, the degree to which the WHS contributes to a sense of pride in Liverpool varies dramatically according to factors such as gender, geography and social class. As illustrated by Table X below, women are more than twice as likely as men to answer 'definitely' when asked if the WHS contributes to their sense of pride in the city, and are considerably less likely than men to feel that WHS status does not contribute to their sense of pride.

Table 1: Sense of pride, by gender

	Does Liverpool's status as a WHS contribute to your sense of pride in the city?					
	Definitely	Slightly	No Opinion	Not Really	Not at all	Total
Male	40 (31%)	32 (25%)	3 (2%)	32 (25%)	21 (16%)	128 (100%)
Female	62 (70%)	17 (19%)	2 (2%)	5 (6%)	2 (2%)	88 (100%)

Source: ICC citizen survey

Likewise, the participants in the focus group discussions who live in the city centre felt that the WHS contributes to their sense of pride in Liverpool; whereas the focus group from the Anfield neighbourhood of North Liverpool (a more deprived area of the city) did not make personal connections to the regeneration of the city centre or the WHS title, with it becoming evident that neither development contributed to their sense of pride in the city:

Female 1 (Liverpudlian, Anfield): 'The World Heritage thing, like, I don't even know when we got it. I don't even know where it started. I've just, like, lived in Bath for a year, and I know that Bath's – they're World Heritage and they kept banging on about it. But if someone took away that certificate, people aren't going to stop going to Bath. And people who, like – people, like, come here 'cause they love the Beatles, and it's almost like – and all that stuff, the footie and duh, duh, duh, duh, and because it's got a good reputation on its own now as being somewhere for a good night out, blah, blah, blah, blah. And it's like, the World Heritage thing might have put it on – helped put it on the map, but I think if you speak to most locals...'

Female 2 (Liverpudlian, Anfield): 'It doesn't really mean anything'

Female 3 (Liverpudlian, Anfield): '...they wouldn't know if we'd had it or we hadn't had it'¹⁴

¹⁴ 'Liverpudlian' was a term used to denote a participant who identified as being from the city, with the term 'newcomer' used to denote participants who identified themselves as being from elsewhere.

The online survey and focus groups generated no evidence to suggest that residents' knowledge of the WHS is significant in shaping sense of pride in the city, meaning that this can therefore be discounted as a possible explanation for the disparities in pride between social groups. Indeed, evidence from the online survey suggests that relatively high levels of pride in the WHS appear to exist *despite* low levels of knowledge in relation to the site.¹⁵ The focus group discussions, similarly, showed that interest in the city's heritage is not matched by WHS literacy.¹⁶ All of this rebuffs Rebanks' (2009) idea that 'WHS literacy' improves people's appreciation of the title (a notion that is discussed in more detail later on in the report), but leaves largely unanswered the question of why the WHS contributes to the sense of pride of some residents whilst leaving others unmoved, ambivalent or even antipathetic.

Arguably, the difference in levels of support for the title across the city, between residents in the city centre and in the north and south of the city, suggests a correlation between the socio-economic situation of a locality and its appreciation and support for the title. The online citizen survey, for example, found that residents in areas with fewer empty and underused historical buildings and streets (i.e. more regenerated heritage) were more likely to be supportive of the heritage title and see it contributing to their sense of pride for the city. These findings are supported by those from the focus group discussions, in which all discussants acknowledged the city's rich cultural heritage, but only the city centre participants appropriated the title in a rejuvenation of their pride in the city. Overall, the Anfield residents were no less proud of their heritage than city centre residents; however, the empty and under-threat heritage assets in their locality were seen to epitomise the wider socio-economic issues affecting the area and its neglect by public and private bodies. As a result, unlike city centre participants, their pride in their city and their neighbourhood was disjointed, with the latter strengthened not through regeneration but through the perceived prioritisation of other areas in the city:

Female 1 (Liverpoolian, Anfield): 'There's also an argument on my side that all the money in the city goes to the South of Liverpool. So when you've got the World Heritage, right, or whatever, it wouldn't affect us, because all the money just gets ploughed down South because it's easier, because the people there are more recipient of it, they're more acceptant of it, any arts projects, everything like that goes South, and nothing comes here. The Giants is the first thing that has ever come here.'

It is possible that the 8% of survey respondents who feel that the title is good for Liverpool but do 'not really' agree that it contributes to their sense of pride in the city (as shown in Table X) represent the voices of those in areas such as north Liverpool, where the WHS is viewed as benefiting the city centre but not addressing the personal heritage of local residents.

¹⁵ In the online survey, respondents were, on average, able to identify only three of the six areas in the WHS and one of the three criteria for its designation. The three areas that respondents tended to identify were the Pier Head, the Albert Dock and the Stanley Dock, which overlap closely with the words that respondents most commonly associate with the WHS – among which were 'Docks', 'Architecture' and 'Waterfront'. Based on these findings, it would therefore appear that many residents believe the site to consist of the waterfront alone.

¹⁶ In fact, for some city centre participants, registering for the focus group was a way to inform themselves on the issues surrounding the WHS and the Liverpool Waters scheme.

Table 2: Cross-tabulation of support for title and contribution to pride

Does Liverpool's status as a WHS contribute to your sense of pride in the city?						
Is the World Heritage title good for Liverpool?	Definitely	Slightly	No Opinion	Not Really	Not at all	Total
Yes	111 (45%)	44 (18%)	5 (2%)	20 (8%)	3 (1%)	183 (75%)
No	3 (1%)	9 (4%)	2 (1%)	24 (10%)	23 (9%)	61 (25%)
Total	114 (47%)	53 (22%)	7 (3%)	44 (18%)	26 (11%)	244 (100%)

Source: ICC citizen survey

1.1. The WHS and attitudes to the city's wider heritage

The variety of buildings, monuments, streets and public places in Liverpool that respondents to the online survey 'love' and 'loathe' (the most popular of which are summarised in the table below) reflects the diversity of views regarding Liverpool's built heritage, and clearly illustrates that neither the favourite nor most reviled aspects of Liverpool's built environment fall entirely within the WHS (or even within the city centre).¹⁷

Table 3: Most loved and loathed places

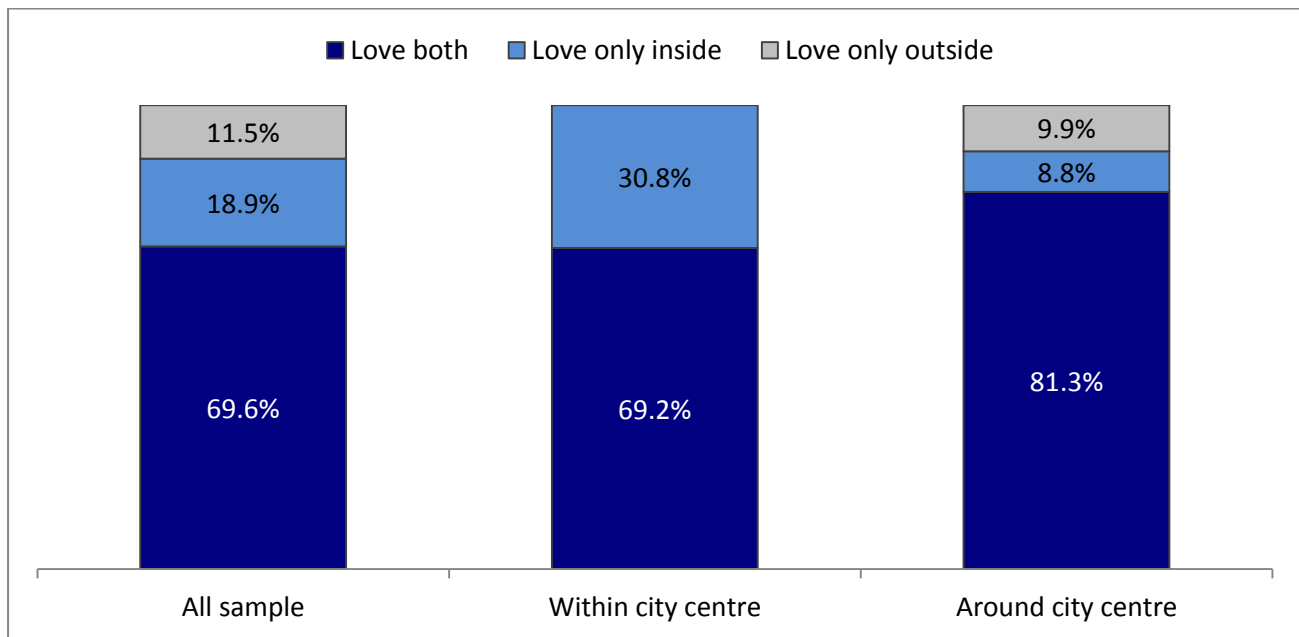
Most loved	Most loathed
'Three Graces'	St. Johns Shopping Centre
Albert Dock	Clayton Square
The Cathedrals (Anglican and Catholic)	Queen Elizabeth II Law Courts
St George's Hall	Royal Liverpool Hospital
Hope Street and the Georgian Quarter	Mann Island Development (together with other new developments north of the Pier Head)
Sefton Park	Museum of Liverpool
Calderstones Park	New Ferry Terminal
Otterspool Park	The old Royal and Sun Alliance building (known locally as the 'sandcastle')
The Bluecoat Chambers	
Mann Island	Halifax Building
India Buildings	Crowne Plaza Hotel
Oriel House	Merseyside police HQ

Source: ICC citizen survey

¹⁷ This idea was taken from the Museum of Liverpool's Skylight display, where visitors could outline the buildings they love and loathe. The main places that respondents to the ICC survey 'love' and 'loathe' correspond closely with the places commonly mentioned by visitors to the museum.

Indeed, over half of the ‘loved’ places mentioned by respondents are located outside the WHS, and as Figure X demonstrates, the places most loved by a majority of people (70% of 162 responses) are both inside and outside the WHS. When exploring the citations in relation to where respondents reside, people living within or around the city centre (postcodes L1, L2 and L3) tended to list places which are located across the city region; whereas residents outside the city centre – the majority of the sample – tended not only to cite more places outside the WHS, but at times did not cite any buildings or streets within the WHS at all.

Figure 1: What people ‘love’ by location of residence (%)



Source: ICC citizen survey

Note: The categories for the column charts, above, denote whether respondents indicated a love for locations that are exclusively *inside* the WHS area, exclusively *outside* the WHS area, or spread across both areas. The number of respondents classified as living ‘within city centre’ and ‘around city centre’ does not sum to the figure represented by ‘all sample’ because not all respondents that provided data on loved and loathed places also provided their postcode.

Overall, these findings therefore suggest that whilst the WHS is a source of pride for many, some residents feel disengaged from the site due to its failure to encompass what they personally appreciate about the city’s heritage; or because the WHS is seen to symbolise the neglect of their own neighbourhood at the expense of the city centre and other areas of the city. Given that the Liverpool Waters development of the northern docks intends to positively improve the economic situation in the north of the city, it is not surprising that the Anfield focus group participants were generally supportive of the project, as they directly correlated potential positive benefits of the scheme to their personal circumstances. Furthermore, unlike the city centre residents, none cited the potential loss of the WHS title as significant to the prosperity of their area or its built heritage. Possible reasons why the WHS has failed to resonate in certain areas of the city are explored in Chapter 3.

2. What are the cultural, economic and image-related impacts of the Liverpool WHS?

Although Liverpool's bid for World Heritage status was motivated by a number of factors, it is evident that, post-designation, the World Heritage Site has increasingly had to justify itself in terms of the economic value it contributes to the city rather than in terms of other types of social or cultural values.¹⁸ More specifically, it is expected that the site should provide evidence of the proportion it can contribute to Liverpool's visitor economy, which was estimated at £1.9bn in 2010, and has become the city's largest industry (ENWRS 2012).¹⁹ These developments reflect a wider trend – recognised across the World Heritage literature – for the award to be increasingly sought for its perceived economic benefits,²⁰ albeit despite the fact that most of the reports published on the subject to date comment on the difficulty of measuring the economic impact of WHS status in the general absence of sufficient empirical evidence.

This chapter responds to the increasingly narrow focus on the economic worth of the Liverpool WHS by seeking to evaluate the contribution of the award not merely in terms of its value to the visitor economy of the city region, but also in terms of its capacity to contribute to the city's image-transformation more broadly and produce a range of important cultural impacts. Such an approach recognises that the dedication of resources towards the conservation and management of the site creates intangible benefits which are difficult to measure in extrinsic economic terms.

The analysis presented in the chapter is structured into two sections. In the first section, evidence relating to the impacts of the designation on tourism, image and reputation, and heritage management is presented; whilst in the second section, the chapter considers factors that may explain the limited positive impact of the WHS in particular areas.

2.1. Impacts of the Liverpool WHS

2.1.1. *Impacts on the image and visibility of the city*

Based on the data collated by this study, it is very difficult to judge the extent to which the WHS designation has impacted on the image and visibility of the city at home and abroad, either positively or negatively. Although respondents to the online citizen survey see the title as positive for improving the city's profile in the UK and internationally and raising public awareness of the

¹⁸ Rebanks (2009) argues that, for most applicants, there are four main reasons for seeking site designation: as a 'celebration' (an acknowledgement and reward for previous heritage preservation); as a heritage 'SOS' (designation in order to preserve heritage at risk); as a marketing/quality logo/brand; or as a 'place-making' catalyst (to encourage economic development and new place identities). In the case of Liverpool, there were signs of each of these four categories, as outlined on the website of the WHS. However, more recent documents, such as the draft of the 2012 WHS management plan (Liverpool City Council 2012) and the 2011 visitor management plan (Liverpool City Council 2011) are suggestive of the growing prioritisation of economic impacts.

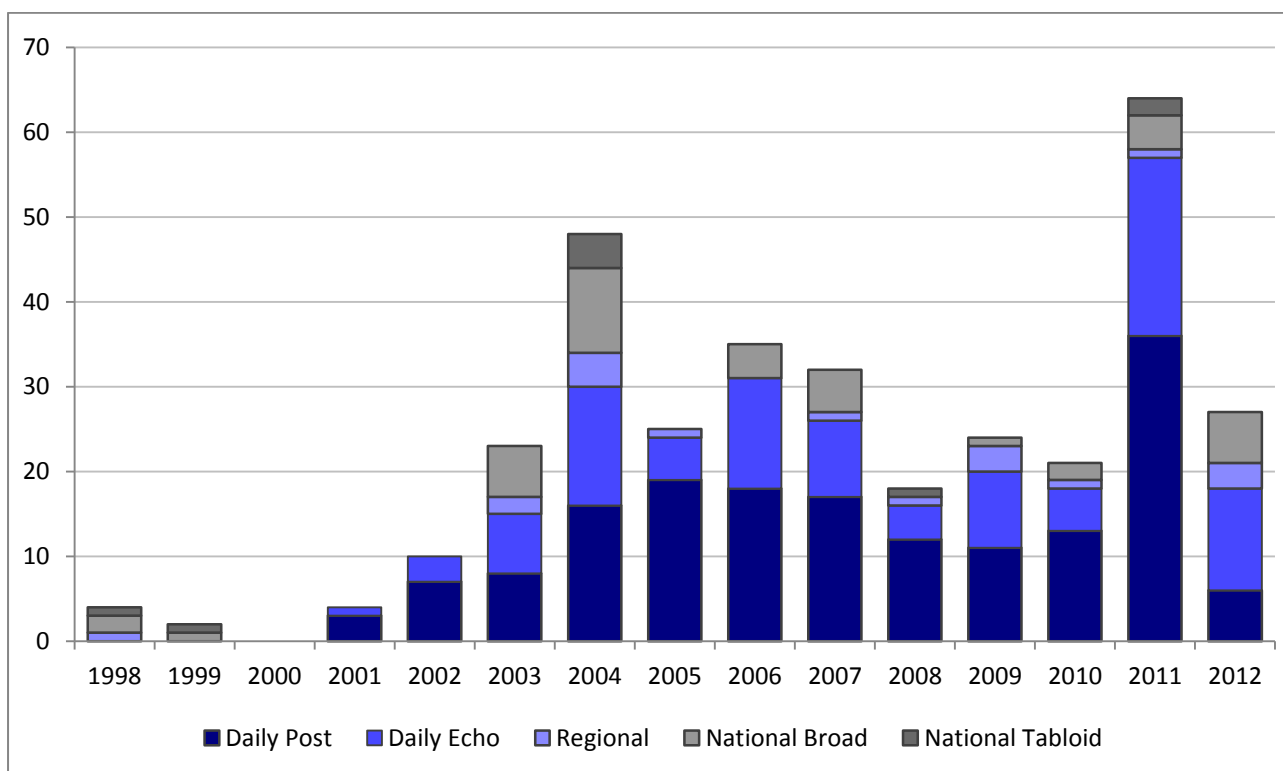
¹⁹ According to the Liverpool Enterprise Partnership, the figure rises to £3bn for the visitor economy in the city region, supporting 42,326 jobs (ENWRS 2012).

²⁰ Indeed, Rebanks' 2009 report, itself entitled *WHS – is there opportunity for economic gain?*, followed the PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2007 report, *The Costs and Benefits of UK World Heritage Site Status*, for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and two separate reports in 2006 looking into the costs and benefits of potential inscription onto the World Heritage List for Cumbria and the Chatham Docks.

city's historical significance, the general perception amongst the stakeholders interviewed was that the emphasis on planning as set out in the WHS draft management plan (Liverpool City Council 2012) – which lacked a wider educational and social vision – together with the lack of promotion to the public, has resulted in a loss of the full potential of the image and place-making benefits of the award.

Although unable to measure the possible impact of the award on *international* perceptions of Liverpool, the press data collated by the research team for the period 1998-2012 is one of the few useful means available to the study for forming general impressions of the image and visibility-related impacts of the WHS designation at a local, regional and national level. This data shows us that the Liverpool WHS became a more regular news item from 2000, as a result of the city's bid, and that coverage culminated in 2004, when the city was inscribed onto the World Heritage List. Following this, however, the total number of articles per year has generally been lower – with the exception being 2011, when UNESCO's monitoring mission in November of that year to assess the potential impact of the Liverpool Waters scheme led to renewed attention in the local and national press, and an overall peak in the number of articles.

Figure 2: Coverage by different newspapers (n)



Source: ICC media analysis

As shown by Figure X, the majority of the coverage featuring the Liverpool WHS²¹ has been concentrated within the local press, with considerable overlaps in reporting between the *Liverpool Daily Post* and the *Liverpool Echo* on the topic.²² These two sources are almost fully responsible for

²¹ Which was identified using the terms 'Liverpool' and 'World Heritage'

²² This is unsurprising, given that the two titles belong to the same newspaper group and share a number of resources.

the coverage of the bidding and award stages and also for covering articles discussing public and/or community issues around notions of preservation, heritage and development planning affecting people's sense of place. In contrast, the exposure of the site at a regional and national level has been far more limited. Indeed, whilst UK national broadsheets account for some articles, the majority of these are about Liverpool being awarded WHS status and the subsequent UNESCO monitoring missions to the city in light of development plans for the waterfront. For regional newspapers, features on Liverpool as a tourist destination increased over the period, as did mentions of Liverpool's WHS by regional newspapers based in areas that were also formulating a WHS bid. However, national tabloids barely covered the issue, with a meagre total of nine articles over the entire period.

Notably, there has been a significant absence of articles – only nine in total – that use a reference to the WHS directly or indirectly to promote events in the city and the city in general over the entire period surveyed, which arguably suggests that the site is not being utilised effectively by the city as a marketing asset. Overall, the national broadsheets have focused on covering the designation, the city's renaissance and issues concerning proposals of development; while regional newspapers have mentioned the WHS in the context of coverage about the city as a tourist destination or in relation to other UK sites bidding to be placed on the UK's Tentative List or on the World Heritage List.

Articles were also analysed in terms of their attitudes towards the WHS and Liverpool more generally, with Table X, below, cross-tabulating these variables to explore possible correlations. Here, the dominance of neutral reporting on both the WHS and the city clearly emerges.²³ However, the more interesting trend over the period is for positive coverage of the WHS (36%) to significantly outstrip positive coverage of the city (22%), largely due to the high proportion of articles that are positive towards the WHS but negative towards the city itself (or more specifically, towards the city's leadership and its approach to managing the site). Indeed, only 15 articles (4%) are openly negative to the WHS over the entire period studied.

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of attitudes across all articles (%)

Attitude to WHS	Attitude to city			Total
	Neutral	Negative	Positive	
Neutral	51%	3%	5%	60%
Negative	1%	0%	3%	4%
Positive	9%	12%	14%	36%
Total	62%	16%	22%	100%

Source: ICC media analysis

Breaking down the analysis according to newspaper type (as in Table X) shows that non-local newspapers (national broadsheets and regional titles) have had a greater tendency to express positive attitudes towards the city, in conjunction with their positivity towards the WHS, than the

²³ However, as noted previously, neutral reporting often entails remaining impartial whilst presenting both negative and positive views on Liverpool and its WHS.

local press; and that all negative reporting towards the WHS has emanated from the local press. Irrespective of whether this reflects the polarisation of attitudes and the debate at a local level, the findings therefore suggest that the WHS designation has had positive benefits for improving the ‘image’ of Liverpool nationally.²⁴ Indeed, the little negative reporting of Liverpool among the national broadsheets has been in relation to the management of the site with respect to new and proposed developments. As such, any potential loss of the award would likely entail more negative reporting of the city, counteracting the positive reporting associated with the inscription of Liverpool onto the World Heritage List.

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of attitudes by press type (%)

Attitude to WHS by press type		Attitude to city			
		Neutral	Negative	Positive	Total
Neutral		51%	3%	5%	60%
	<i>Non-local</i>	11%	1%	1%	12%
	<i>Local</i>	40%	3%	4%	47%
Negative		1%	0%	3%	4%
	<i>Non-local</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%
	<i>Local</i>	1%	0%	3%	4%
Positive		9%	12%	14%	36%
	<i>Non-local</i>	2%	2%	4%	8%
	<i>Local</i>	8%	10%	10%	28%
Total		62%	16%	22%	100%

Source: ICC media analysis

Thematic analysis of the press coverage reveals, however, that the dominant media narrative surrounding the WHS is heritage/preservation versus development, with little coverage on details of the site, preservation initiatives, UNESCO’s role or associated events. Otherwise, the WHS is mentioned in passing in local and regional articles when an event is held on the waterfront, or in national broadsheet features specifically about the city’s renaissance. On the relatively few occasions where the award has been used or referred to in relation to tourism and events or city branding, the overwhelming majority of articles are, again, neutral in their attitude towards both the WHS and Liverpool. Overall, there are very few articles that are explicitly positive towards both, This is surprising considering that the ‘image’ and ‘place-making’ benefits of the WHS were among the initial motivations behind the inscription, and suggests that the WHS brand has not been fully capitalised on in terms of ‘image’ or ‘place-making’ by city champions.

²⁴ Although the WHS award also creates potential benefits for the city’s image *internationally*, an analysis of international press coverage is outside the scope of this particular report.

2.1.2. Tourism impacts

The significance of heritage tourism to the UK's national economy is considerable. The Heritage Lottery Fund (2010) estimates that the sector contributes £21bn annually to the gross domestic product of the UK once economic 'multiplier' effects are included, supporting a total of 466,000 jobs. Furthermore, over half of this figure (£11.9bn) comes from cultural heritage as opposed to natural heritage. This means that, in Liverpool, which is rich in cultural heritage assets, the contribution that the sector makes to the region's economy is likely to be greater than that witnessed nationally, as evidenced by the 75% of visitors citing heritage as a reason for their visit to Liverpool. Indeed, if the Heritage Lottery Fund report's figures were replicated regionally, there is reason to suppose that cultural heritage could account for £335m of the region's £1.9bn visitor economy, supporting roughly 8,000 jobs.²⁵

The WHS title is often seen as a means for Liverpool to bolster these figures, with designation expected to improve Liverpool's 'visitability' (Dicks 2003) and attract high-spending visitors (Rebanks 2009). The few studies that have attempted to measure the impact of World Heritage inscription on tourism revenues at individual sites provide a degree of evidence to support these ambitions, with specific examples in China (Yang et al. 2010) and elsewhere (van de Aa 2005) showing a marked impact on the number of international visitors, which tend to grow faster than other groups, even if this is not reflected in overall visitor number increases. Indeed, as Yang et al. (2010: 834) note, World Heritage status has a considerable effect on tourism (controlling for other variables), with the addition of one World Heritage Site in a region found to generate around six times the amount of international tourist arrivals that would otherwise be generated by the addition of a new nationally designated site.²⁶

Nevertheless, calculating the impact of the Liverpool WHS on the city's tourist economy is challenging, due partly to the difficulty in separating the impacts of the site from other, contemporaneous developments, such as the Liverpool One complex and the legacy of the European Capital of Culture year; and partly because of the nature of the site as one that is not totally enclosed. As Shackley (2006: 198) explains:

'Not all World Heritage Sites charge for entry and even when a charge is made it may apply to only part of a complex site. The more complex the site, the more likely it is to consist of some paid elements (museums or specific attractions) and many unpaid elements, some of which will be utilized by local people.'

Consequently, attributing an actual percentage of the city's income from tourism to the WHS is problematic. Whereas the contribution made by the Beatles or Football – a significant element of the city's tangible and intangible cultural heritage – can be counted in terms of museum admissions, ticket sales and estimations of visitor expenditure, the same currently proves difficult for the WHS.

²⁵ Although these should be seen as rough estimates rather than exact calculations.

²⁶ The China National Tourism Administration rates domestic tourist attractions using five categories, ranging from '1A' (the lowest rating) to '5A' (the highest rating). Yang et al. compared the impacts of World Heritage Sites with '3A' and '4A' sites.

In terms of *perceptions*, we know from the online survey conducted by this study that the title is seen by the public as positive for attracting tourism, but that opinion is divided with regards to its relationship with growth and jobs. Stakeholder interviews, meanwhile, revealed a widespread assertion that the economic value of the WHS needs to be justified and articulated better, particularly bearing in mind the costs of the site. Indeed, many of the stakeholders that were interviewed struggled to identify any clear economic benefits of the designation, either for the wider economy or their own organisation, beyond possible associative benefits:

Stakeholder 8: '[whether the WHS has had an economic impact] it's a difficult [claim] to grasp, from a business perspective, because the temptation is to think, not really. It hasn't really. I can't think of instances of end users who have been attracted, business users who have been attracted as a result of World Heritage status /.../ I think that the benefit is more an associated one to the business community. In other words, I suppose I'm merging it in with the general benefit that it has for Liverpool, as opposed to directly having an impact on our business.'

Overall, many of the stakeholders representing Liverpool's visitor economy that were interviewed believe that the city's tourist sector is now strong enough to survive without the WHS – which they often perceive as a luxury no longer worth having (or no longer affordable), due to its perceived restrictions on new development. However, what little actual evidence there is relating to the impact of the site on the tourist economy goes some way towards rebuffing the more negative perceptions of stakeholders as to WHS added-value. For instance, data from the city council relating to visitors' motivations and awareness of the title, suggests a high level of awareness and appreciation of the WHS amongst visitors to the city:

'In [20]08/09 information about awareness of WHS was included in the monthly surveys of visitors to the city. This showed very good awareness of WHS amongst visitors with some 75% of those interviewed stating that Liverpool's World Heritage Site Status was a reason for visiting the city.' (Liverpool City Council 2011)

Visitor survey figures from the Liverpool Local Enterprise Partnership for 2012, meanwhile – whilst confirming that the Beatles remain the city's dominant brand, particularly with overseas visitors – emphasise that more significant for attracting visitors is the *range* of attractions and events in the city; and that while weaker than other brands, the World Heritage title cannot therefore be dismissed.²⁷ Indeed, the report acknowledges that the title is more significant to international than national visitors; and that, alongside the Beatles, the title is seen as particularly important for attracting visitors from emerging markets such as the BRIC countries. The title, like the Beatles, is therefore a global brand which is important for attracting overseas visitors and should not just be considered a luxury for the city.

²⁷ LEP (2012) Significant Brands – Liverpool City Region (Unpublished report). 'Architecture' was named as a more significant brand.

2.1.3. Impacts on heritage management

Among partners in the Liverpool WHS steering group, a consistent line has been the reference to clear positive networking outcomes as – much like the 2008 European Capital of Culture title – the WHS has required public agencies to work more closely together over a sustained period of time. Beyond this, however, there is little evidence that the management of heritage in the city has become more inclusive or participatory as a result of the World Heritage designation. Referring to her experience working on a site nomination in the UK, Norman (2011) outlines how the increased demands now placed on cities in developed countries to achieve the award can lead to the democratisation of heritage due to the need to involve more stakeholders in the management and promotion of the site, which ultimately brings wider and longer lasting benefits to the site and the local community. Yet besides some evidence that, in Liverpool, public consultation by the city council proved beneficial for its designation, there is no clear legacy of this consultation in terms of community representation (for further discussion, see Section 3.3).²⁸ Indeed, large sections of the local populace in Liverpool are either unaware of the city's WHS status or exhibit low levels of knowledge with regards to the WHS (as highlighted in Section 1.2).

As evidence gathered and presented elsewhere in this report suggests, the limited WHS literacy of key stakeholders and local residents has restricted the quality of the debate surrounding the site, which in turn has impacted on its management and value. As such, instead of a catalyst for the democratisation of heritage (Norman 2011) in Liverpool, it could therefore be argued that the award has coincided with the centralisation of heritage in the city, with a few outspoken or dominant parties forging an increasingly polarised debate pitting conservation and World Heritage against modern development, and preventing a more thorough and consensual vision of Liverpool's future from being realised.

2.2. Factors inhibiting the impact of the WHS

2.2.1. Inadequate branding and promotion

Following inscription onto the World Heritage List in 2004, there has been a distinct lack of resources invested in the promotion and branding of the Liverpool WHS, which is clearly reflected in the stakeholder interviews conducted by this study; the promotional and branding materials produced by local and national bodies; and trends in press coverage (for further discussion of which, see Section 2.1.1). Among stakeholders directly involved with promoting and managing the city's visitor economy, there was a general acceptance in the interviews conducted by the study that the promotion of the site has been very poor:

Stakeholder 3: '... I think the impact [of the WHS] has been modest. It's been particularly modest in and around Liverpool/.../But I think it's also been modest outside Liverpool. And the reason for that is quite simply that it's been very badly promoted. In fact, it's hardly been promoted at all. I would go so far as to say it's not been promoted. It's not been promoted to outsiders. It's not been explained to people that live here. It's a big lost opportunity. Most other cities, that are similar to Liverpool, as in modern post-industrial growth, would love to

²⁸ The proposed revised Management Plan (Liverpool City Council 2012) acknowledges that greater public engagement in the management of the site is necessary, however, as yet there are no clear directives planned to achieve this.

have World Heritage Site Status. Liverpool has World Heritage Site Status and appears to not understand it, and certainly doesn't use it. So, because of that, I think that the current debate about how valuable it is are almost utterly pointless because local people have no idea of the value, 'cause nobody's ever explained it to them.'

The deficiencies identified by stakeholders are reflected, moreover, in the promotional and branding materials reviewed by the study. Amongst all of this material, perhaps most notable is the limited appropriation of the award – both in terms of tourism and city branding – on the city's own official World Heritage website, which currently shows a low level of maintenance and functionality, and few links to the website from other relevant sites.²⁹ In addition, the study found that the official tourism website for the Liverpool City Region does not highlight or use the award and the UNESCO World Heritage symbol of patrimony on its homepage.³⁰ Indeed, the website of the Albert Dock was the only local website reviewed which refers to the award on its homepage.³¹ Two local tourist attractions that use the city's cultural heritage, the walking tours of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and Lovehistory, also do not explicitly use the UNESCO accreditation to attract or inform visitors of the city's heritage or add credibility to their activities, either on their websites or on their walks.³²

The appropriation of the award by national tourist bodies is slightly better, but the title is used mainly to certify the quality of the city's attractions, with little or no content on the details of the site or its designation. In the travel guide for Liverpool on the website for VisitBritain, for instance, the UNESCO award is referred to, but there are no links for further information; whilst on the same website's dedicated page to World Heritage Sites, Liverpool features in a list of the top ten sites in Britain. However, throughout the VisitBritain site, the UNESCO symbol of patrimony is not used, and it is difficult to find pages relevant to the Liverpool WHS using the search function.³³ On the website for VisitEngland, the Liverpool WHS title is also mentioned in the travel guide for the city

²⁹ The last updates to the official website date back to August 2011; as such, the contact details provided are to the former World Heritage Officer, who left the post in the autumn of 2012. Indeed, the poor functionality of the website was raised in focus group discussions, as some participants had used it to better acquaint themselves with the site prior to interview.

³⁰ visitliverpool.com website reviewed on 11/12/12. The award is first mentioned after clicking on the page 'things to do in Liverpool', which has an embedded link for 'UNESCO World Heritage City'. This link takes the visitor to the 'heritage' page, where one can search heritage attractions across the city region. On this page, the motivation behind the award and the scope of the site is briefly presented. For more detailed information, embedded on this page is a link to the official website of the World Heritage Site. Whilst there is therefore not a significant presence of the award on the official tourist site, visitors arriving in Liverpool also have the option of using a free visitor map, which details in brief the six areas of the WHS.

³¹ Neither Tate Liverpool or Liverpool Museums, the overarching website for numerous museums located within the WHS, use the award or have visible links for further information. While a search for 'UNESCO' on Liverpool Museums' website provided 15 hits, there is no direct appropriation of the award in the marketing of its numerous attractions located across the site.

³² Analysis conducted between November and December 2012, including attendance at respective walking tours without prompting questions on the WHS.

³³ On the site, a search for 'Liverpool' produces numerous hits (as one might expect), but not a single one that specifically refers to 'Liverpool World Heritage City'. A search for Liverpool and World Heritage together provides no results either (searches conducted in December 2012). More interestingly, when searching for UNESCO, unlike other World Heritage cities in the UK (Bath, Canterbury and Edinburgh), Liverpool is not featured on the first page.

and features in the ‘Cultural city breaks’ tab of the website, although again mainly as an accreditation for the city’s attractions.³⁴

Although TripAdvisor stands out as a site that actively works with and promotes UNESCO’s World Heritage List, all three international travel websites reviewed by the study (TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet and Rough Guides) mainly used the Liverpool WHS as a stamp of approval for the city, with two (Lonely Planet and Rough Guides) conflating the site with the waterfront.³⁵ Of the budget airlines that operate out of Liverpool, all but Flybe mention the title in their travel guides. However, the title is again used as an authorisation of the city’s attractions, with no further directions or links to information sources, as in the following introduction by Wizz Air:

‘A centre of maritime, artistic and sporting excellence, Liverpool’s successful crowning as the European Capital of Culture by its unrivalled architecture and heritage, including its world-famous waterfront, itself named as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.’

The poor appropriation of the award in terms of tourism and events is repeated by the bodies responsible for promoting business and enterprise in the city region. Liverpool Vision, the Liverpool Local Enterprise Partnership, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Liverpool City Council refer to the city’s rich cultural heritage on their websites but do not actively use the UNESCO WHS brand to attract inward investment or entrepreneurial talent into the city, instead presenting the WHS mainly as a means to improve the region’s visitor economy and, perhaps unsurprisingly, using their websites to prioritise and promote plans for development of the city, particularly the Liverpool Waters proposal. Of the three universities in the city, only Liverpool Hope University actively uses the label in conjunction with the other cultural assets of the city to attract students, with their website providing a link to UNESCO UK.

The findings attained from the promotional analysis, though not extensive, are supported by those from the media analysis, which demonstrate that the city has not fully appropriated the award to promote tourism and events or brand the city. Indeed, with 41% of the 337 local and national press articles reviewed covering the bidding, designation and management of the city and a further 27% of articles concerning people’s sense of place, it is apparent that very few articles originate from press releases by the Council or organisations using the award to promote the city.

In conclusion, policy makers and organisations in the city appear to have not grasped and run with the notion that the World Heritage title and UNESCO brand is what you make of it. The weak promotion of the site is likely to be a consequence of numerous intersecting factors, mainly the initial emphasis on planning within the WHS original management plan and subsequent updates (Liverpool City Council 2003, 2009, 2012) and city officials’ preoccupation with delivering a successful European Capital of Culture in 2008. However, this reasoning may disguise a shortfall in will and/or strategy surrounding the use of the title – a point raised by numerous stakeholders. For

³⁴ The WHS is mentioned on the Liverpool city travel guide under the heading ‘History and Heritage’, and on a further link to the ‘Three Graces’, the following text is used: ‘This, however, is only scratching the surface of Liverpool’s architectural treasures. After all – the whole city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.’

³⁵ Interestingly, Liverpool, unlike London, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Manchester and Birmingham, is not currently included on the Rough Guide’s drop-down menu of popular destinations.

instance, the WHS was not actively used in the delivery of the European Capital of Culture, a brand which visitors to the city are significantly more aware of.³⁶ In sum, while the WHS adds global recognition and authentication of the city's cultural heritage for overseas visitors, the title has not played a significant role in the regeneration narrative of the city, with the apparent lack of appropriation by stakeholders and city authorities becoming ultimately detrimental to its status in the city.

2.2.2. Lack of knowledge and public awareness

It is apparent that, in Liverpool, there is a general lack of awareness and knowledge of the WHS among stakeholders and members of the public (what Rebanks (2009) refers to as 'WHS literacy'), which has the effect of undermining the legitimacy and efficacy of the title and prevents meaningful and well-informed debate. This lack of WHS literacy was noticeable among members of the public involved in the study through focus groups and the online survey (see Section 1.2), as well as among stakeholders not directly engaged with the WHS. The problem is also acknowledged in the draft 2012 WHS management plan (Liverpool City Council 2012), despite being expressed predominantly in terms of economic benefits that are not being capitalised upon:

'To date the management of change in and around the WHS has consumed the vast majority of staff time and resources that Liverpool City Council, English Heritage, private sector business and the wider heritage sector have invested in the WHS. Understandably, fewer resources have been left to dedicate to the transmission of WHS values to the wider community and maximising the economic benefits that WHS status can bring, particularly to the visitor economy of the city.'

The absence of WHS literacy manifests itself in various ways, besides low knowledge scores among respondents to the online citizen survey. For example, almost all of the stakeholders interviewed – including those engaged with the visitor economy – struggled to recall any concrete examples of how WHS status had impacted on their organisation or business sector. However, perhaps the most important corollary of weak knowledge and awareness is that, without any educational, cultural or social activities tied to the title in the minds of the local population, the title has become primarily evaluated only in terms of its economic value; or in other words, heritage as a commodity. Yet as a commodity that is difficult to grasp, the tendency has been to measure the title in terms of what it is seen to hinder, resulting in the site being increasingly juxtaposed with development – in particular, the projected growth and jobs associated with the proposed Liverpool Waters project.³⁷

This juxtaposition of the WHS with development in the public consciousness has itself helped to cultivate and sustain a polarised debate locally between those who prioritise heritage and those who prioritise development, which is reflected in the findings of the media analysis undertaken by the study, as well as in the comments made by stakeholders and participants in the focus groups.

³⁶ LEP (2012) Significant Brands – Liverpool City Region. (Unpublished document)

³⁷ Indeed, so pronounced is this trend that stakeholders interviewed as part of the study found it difficult to discuss the title in isolation from development, with many able to talk at length on the pros and cons of the Liverpool Waters project, but few willing to discuss the role of the WHS title in the future development of the city, or capable of recognising wider issues in terms of the potential educational and social benefits of the WHS.

This means that, even for those supportive of the title, it is difficult to avoid discussing it in juxtaposition to the dominant narrative of growth and jobs associated with the Liverpool Waters project, as the following response from a stakeholder shows:

Stakeholder 3: ‘the current [WHS] debates about how valuable it is are almost utterly pointless because local people have no idea of the value, ‘cause nobody’s ever explained it to them. And it’s very, very disingenuous of anybody to say, “Local people would rather have the jobs that Peel would create” because a) what kind of jobs are they?’ Are they sustained jobs? Is this something that’s going to be of long term benefit to the city, because I would argue the World Heritage Site is of long term benefit to the city, in that its biggest future potential for revenue is from tourism, and you don’t very readily throw away one of your major tourist assets, just for short term gain, when the long term gains are being ignored. And it seems to me that that’s the risk that we’re running at the minute.’

Whilst related, to some extent, to the failure to properly promote the site locally, the lack of WHS literacy therefore constitutes a major barrier in its own right, which not only prevents recognition of what the site has already achieved for Liverpool, but also the maximisation of what it could potentially achieve for the city in the future through a combination of enlightened debate and greater public ownership of the scheme.

3. What more could be done in the future to capitalise on WHS status?

At present, the Liverpool World Heritage Site appears to enjoy strong support among the local public, despite ongoing controversy over the site and its role in relation to the proposed Liverpool Waters development. Indeed, three quarters of respondents to the online citizen survey conducted by the study agree that the title is good for Liverpool, with only a quarter disagreeing with the same statement. For supporters of the WHS, the fact that the title has retained such a high degree of support since designation in 2004 is clearly welcome.³⁸ However, the analysis presented in previous chapters also identifies a number of legitimate public grievances with the site, in addition to problems in the way that it is managed and marketed by city authorities.

In this chapter, we consider measures that might help to overcome or alleviate these problems, arguing that the following five interdependent elements are necessary to facilitate opportunities for the WHS to better contribute to the future development of Liverpool, and help realise the benefits that designation was expected to bring:

1. **Communication** – involving the development of educational and cultural programmes to encourage WHS literacy in the city and a knowledge base from which enterprises could potentially develop and stimulate resident/visitor interaction. This should be accompanied by active promotion of the WHS, to be targeted, in particular, at residents who are currently negative or indifferent to the WHS.
2. **Transparency** – more open and transparent debate and information surrounding major development initiatives – in particular, Peel’s plans for the northern docks. This would also help develop knowledge and open up the heritage debate in the city by linking World Heritage to local heritage issues across communities located outside the WHS geographical area.
3. **Democratisation** – extension of the geographic scope of the WHS to be more inclusive of neighbourhoods surrounding the city, coupled with a more democratic managerial framework for the site.
4. **Greater acknowledgement of the socio-cultural values of the WHS** – the social, cultural and educational potential of the award should be harnessed by city authorities, rather than neglected in favour of strategies which prioritise economic goals and measures.
5. **Revised impact assessment framework** – an assessment framework for the site should encompass a wide range of indicators, reflecting the potential of the WHS to effect a variety of changes in the social, cultural and economic spheres. Raw statistical indicators should be complemented with research to contextualise findings.

The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to exploring the rationale for each of these recommendations and providing practical advice as to how they might be realised by city authorities.

³⁸ A MORI poll conducted in 2004 found that 87% responded ‘yes’ and 13% responded ‘no’ in answer to the question, ‘Is the World Heritage title good for Liverpool?’ This was the same question asked of respondents to the online citizen survey conducted by the current study in 2012.

3.1. Communication

A finding that pervades this report is the low level of WHS literacy among many stakeholders and members of the general public. Knowledge scores produced for each respondent to the online survey revealed that only 3.7% could correctly identify the six areas of the WHS and the three motivational criteria for its designation; and that, alarmingly, only 7.0% could identify all of the six areas correctly.³⁹ Other than among the representatives of bodies directly responsible for promoting and managing the WHS, there were also few stakeholders interviewed with an appreciable degree of WHS literacy, as demonstrated in the following discussion:

Stakeholder: ‘... the word that’s missing from the World Heritage Site for Liverpool is as a port. People forget that it’s still a prolific seaport. ... and that’s the essence of Liverpool’s whole existence. If it hadn’t of been a port, well, I don’t think there’d be any Beatles ... You know, it’s a seaport and its heritage is the sea and I think that’s what’s missing from it, is it...’

Interviewer: ‘Well, ironically, that’s the title, Liverpool Mercantile...’

Stakeholder: ‘Oh, is it?’

Interviewer: ‘...Maritime City’

As argued in Section 2.2.2 of the study, this general lack of knowledge in relation to the scope and meaning of the site has a number of deleterious side-effects. Not only does it mean that many do not fully appreciate or envisage the value that the award contributes, or could contribute, to the city; it is also partly responsible for the remarkable lack of nuance in the debate surrounding the WHS, with heritage and development voices increasingly polarised and limited chances available to explore arguments towards a ‘third’ way.

Clearly, weak public awareness is partly a consequence of shortcomings in the promotion and communication of the WHS, particularly in the initial phase of its management, which necessarily prioritised conservation. For instance, the Walker Art Gallery, World Museum and St. George’s Hall have not actively appropriated the title in their marketing or their activities, despite the fact that the Heritage Centre resides within the basement of St. George’s Hall; whilst the title remains inconspicuous in the promotional materials and tours of organisations such as the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and local enterprises such as LoveHistory. However, improving the promotion of the WHS and the dissemination of information related to it offers an opportunity to boost WHS literacy and achieve a number of desirable outcomes in so doing.

For example, the economic contribution of the title is currently depreciated, in part due to the lack of resources invested in its promotion and weak appropriation of the title by organisations and businesses in the city. Yet greater stakeholder awareness of the significance and potential value provided by the award, the site and UNESCO would help them to envisage business opportunities and perhaps boost support for the WHS in the process. In addition, although Rebanks’ (2009)

³⁹ Knowledge scores were produced for each respondent to the online survey by aggregating their responses in section three of the survey. If all six areas of the WHS were identified correctly, along with the three motivational criteria for its designation, a maximum score of 9 was recorded, with an incorrect answer resulting in a one point deduction.

suggestion that public appreciation of the WHS is positively linked to WHS literacy was not supported by the findings of the online survey (which found no correlation between WHS literacy, views on the value of the site and its contribution to sense of pride in place), greater public awareness is arguably essential for the site's future sustainability.

Better promotion of the WHS and provision of public information could also help to foster a more nuanced, inclusive and informed debate, involving a wider variety of voices and sectors, as well as helping to promote democratic engagement more broadly. The focus group discussions conducted as part of this study revealed that residents are keen to learn more about the WHS. As such, we would recommend the creation of an accessible physical information point for the WHS, located in either the Lower Duke St or the William Brown St area (for instance, as a resource in the new library building), as well as for other proposed development plans, which could build on the positive learning emerging out of the ECoC (08 Place) and the Liverpool One development (Paradise Project Information centre). Previous efforts at promotion include the street signage initiative 'Badge of Pride', which aimed to promote the use of the award among businesses located within the site and its buffer zone. However, the lack of attention to other types of stakeholders (local communities, in particular) arguably further isolates the site from the wider heritage assets of the city.

3.2. Transparency

It is a recurring theme of this report that public debate concerning the WHS is dominated by a narrative in which heritage conservation and economic development are held in direct opposition to one another. For example, the research team repeatedly found that stakeholders and focus group participants would steer discussion of the WHS title towards its position in relation to development (in particular, the Liverpool Waters scheme), and that while many associate 'history' and 'pride' with the title, a significant proportion also believe it to be restrictive in terms of jobs and growth.

As argued in the previous section, a major cause of the polarisation of public discourse is the widespread lack of WHS literacy, which could be partly addressed by improved promotion of the WHS and wider dissemination of information related to it. However, the findings from this study also suggest that greater transparency on the part of city authorities may be a necessary prerequisite for the improved *availability* of this information, in the first instance. When online citizen survey respondents were asked whether '*Information on future plans for the city is readily accessible*', we noticed that while those negatively and neutrally disposed towards the value of the WHS were somewhat content with the accessibility of information, those that are positive are less so. (This finding coincides with observations from the city centre focus groups, where many pro-WHS participants attended to better inform themselves on the facts surrounding the title, particularly in relation to the proposed Liverpool Waters development.) In addition, the fact that a significant number of respondents are neither in agreement or disagreement with the statement suggests that many are unsure if the city is forthcoming and open on its management strategy for the WHS and development. This may reflect the lack of community participation and engagement in the management of the site, which to date has remained a centralised function of the city's planning department.

3.3. Democratisation

The democratisation of heritage is a notion which has moved into mainstream debate concerning the World Heritage programme (Millar 2006: 53). In recognition of growing concerns regarding the insufficient engagement of communities in the management of World Heritage Sites in urban landscapes, UNESCO in 2011 adopted the recommendations of the Historic Urban Landscapes approach to site management, with the organisation advising state parties and local authorities to consider implementing the following specific steps:

- To undertake comprehensive surveys and mapping of the city's natural, cultural and human resources
- To reach consensus using participatory planning and stakeholder consultations on what values to protect for transmission to future generations and to determine the attributes that carry these values
- To assess vulnerability of these attributes to socio-economic stresses and impacts of climate change
- To integrate urban heritage values and their vulnerability status into a wider framework of city development, which shall provide indications of areas of heritage sensitivity that require careful attention to planning, design and implementation of development projects
- To prioritise actions for conservation and development
- To establish the appropriate partnerships and local management frameworks for each of the identified projects for conservation and development, as well as to develop mechanisms for the coordination of the various activities between different actors, both public and private. (UNESCO 2011)

Yet despite a wider acceptance that public support and engagement are essential tools for the future sustainability of urban sites, it is clear that the Liverpool WHS has so far failed to capture local people's imagination and be fully appropriated by communities in the city region. Focus group discussions showed that whilst resident communities are enthusiastic about their heritage, their degree of attachment and support for the WHS as an added value to the city weakens in deprived communities located outside of the city centre. North Liverpool (Anfield) residents, for example, were more supportive of the Liverpool Waters scheme due to the perceived knock-on benefits for their area, whilst in contrast they saw the WHS as attracting too much attention to the city centre, at the expense of their own heritage and immediate concerns.

The democratisation of the World Heritage narrative in Liverpool through the extension of the title's narrative beyond the immediate site, and the inclusion of a wider body of stakeholders in its promotion and management, could help to promote the engagement of local communities, as well as achieve a number of other goals. Liverpool is a city region with a rich stock of historical buildings and streets originating from its maritime and mercantile heritage, many of which are situated in areas of socio-economic deprivation. Closely linking the site to the regeneration of cultural heritage assets beyond the WHS and its buffer zone would make the title more tangible and meaningful to a greater number of communities than is the case at present, whilst at the same time helping to promote civic pride and a reinvigorated sense of place. Such a move would also acknowledge that the uses of heritage are often much broader than those designated by heritage professionals and the policymakers from whom they take advice (Smith 2006). Indeed, official heritage designations of nationally or globally important buildings, monuments, streets and landscapes may not confer with, and are unlikely to encapsulate, local notions and definitions of

heritage (Di Giovine 2009, Rakic & Chamber 2008). As such, linking the World Heritage narrative with other heritage – as well as with other regeneration initiatives in the city – would allow discussion of heritage to be more widely appropriated and related to day-to-day concerns, rather than dismissed as a minority or elite concern with little relevance to diverse local communities.⁴⁰

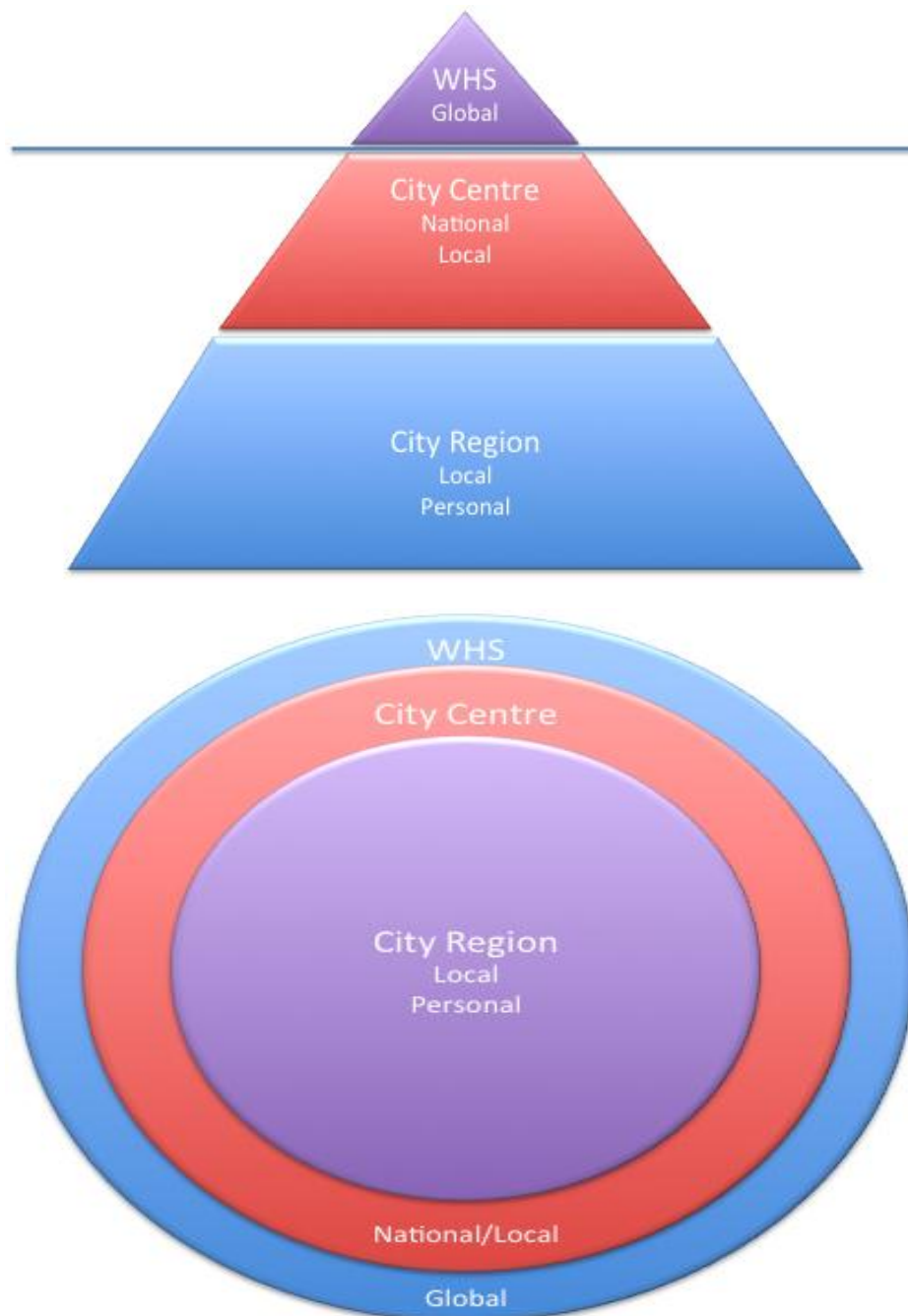
By directly involving local stakeholders in the co-management and co-promotion of the WHS, social, cultural and educational dimensions essential for the dissemination of the site's 'Outstanding Universal Value' can be developed, and economic impact on the city's visitor economy achieved. Further democratisation of heritage narratives in the city would also most likely facilitate access to, and transparency around, decisions on the future development of the city, as well as help to cultivate a more nuanced media narrative surrounding the WHS. Given that inscription onto the World Heritage List involves inherent tensions, as a heritage site is reconfigured from one that is local, and often national, to one that is simultaneously local/national *and* global (Rakic & Chambers 2008), the democratisation of local heritage can also act as a means to alleviate this tension through greater public and stakeholder involvement in the management of a site (Tucker & Emge 2010, Norman 2011, Jones & Shaw 2011).

At the core of these prescriptions is the argument that the idea of 'World Heritage – Your Heritage' or 'Liverpool World Heritage City' has to be developed further. The site needs to become about the broader management of cultural heritage in the city region and its association with regeneration and the promotion of cultural heritage across the city region. The current strategy (referred to in Figure X as the 'heritage iceberg') disconnects major heritage locations from other regional heritage identities and places; whereas a revised strategy (referred to in the same Figure as the 'heritage wrapper') would acknowledge the significance of cultural heritage in the broader social fabric of the city, and how its appropriation and re-use can regenerate and reinvigorate sense of place and identity within communities.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The work developed via the Creative Communities Programme during the Liverpool 2008 European Capital of Culture programme, is a good exemplar of an initiative that succeeded in democratising notions of culture and the arts, making them relevant across community interests and sectors. One of the initiatives touched on heritage and may be worth revisiting in the current context. See: <http://www.liverpool08.com/participate/CreativeCommunities/>

⁴¹ Rise Up Anfield Community Bakery - <http://www.redandwhitekop.com/forum/index.php?topic=300609.0>

Figure 3: Visualising alternatives to the current heritage strategy for the city region



Note: Representing the current strategy, the ‘heritage iceberg’ (at the top of the diagram) disconnects major heritage locations from other regional heritage identities and places; whereas the proposed alternative, the ‘heritage wrapper’, develops major heritage assets as a wrapper around local and personal heritage, and as a major foreground or first point of contact for external parties.

3.4. Greater acknowledgement of the socio-cultural values of the WHS

Against a backdrop of prolonged economic malaise and dramatic cuts in local government funding, the supporters of the Liverpool WHS must now continually justify its existence based on what it does – or potentially could do – for the city region economically, to the detriment of almost any other possible argument. Whilst not initially sought solely as a tool to market Liverpool and encourage new development, the WHS is currently evaluated by the majority of city stakeholders on purely commercial grounds. This is despite the fact that the Liverpool WHS is an open site including many attractions that have not fully appropriated the title for marketing purposes, thereby making any attempt at calculating the added economic value created by the WHS difficult.⁴² Indeed, without the appropriation of the educational or socio-cultural aspects of the title, and with a continually negative juxtaposition of the WHS and development in the media, the WHS title has increasingly come to be seen as a commodity that is depreciating in value – with the emphasis on technical planning and management, rather than education and community engagement, also closing off the political space to voices that could potentially foster greater local democracy.

Clearly, the discussion of WHS values and benefits needs to encompass not only an aspiration to maximise its economic value by contributing to an improved visitor economy, but also references to its wider cultural, social and educational values, which UNESCO emphasise are paramount for the transmission of the site's 'Outstanding Universal Value' to future generations. For instance, the positive governance outcomes emerging out of strengthened partnership and networking around the WHS could be more widely acknowledged; whilst the title could also conceivably be used to tackle wider social issues in deprived communities. In addition, although greater public engagement in the co-management of sites (as recommended above) can be important in supporting and promoting tourism, the benefits of this are accentuated when cultural heritage *per se* and the award, specifically, are used as educational and cultural resources for local communities, as this ensures the legibility⁴³ of the WHS not only to tourists, but also to local residents – which, in turn, is likely to ensure the longevity and legitimacy of the WHS during downturns in the visitor economy.

In order to ensure credibility, support and ownership across stakeholders and the wider population, there must be a balance between the dimensions of value offered by World Heritage status. The draft 2012 WHS management plan (Liverpool City Council 2012) acknowledges the need to better promote the WHS as an educational resource, and currently there are seven schools in the city associated with UNESCO.⁴⁴ However, the rejection of a draft WHS Education and Interpretation Strategy for Heritage Lottery Funding in 2010 leaves an important dimension of these ambitions unfulfilled, and underscores the fact that – in the absence of any significant evidence of the title being appropriated for educational, social or cultural activities in the city more widely – this balance has not yet been achieved.

⁴² Such an evaluation could further strengthen the problematic 'heritage as commodity' doctrine, in any case.

⁴³ The notion of 'legibility' or making WHS legible is a common reference in the context of heritage debates led by UNESCO and other bodies worldwide. It refers to the capacity for the site to be clearly recognizable and understood (ie. 'read') as such.

⁴⁴ Some secondary school pupils attended 2012's Young People's World Heritage Education Programme in Greenwich Maritime WHS.

3.5. Revised impact assessment framework

Although the current draft 2012 WHS Management Plan (Liverpool City Council 2012) notes the potential breadth with which the WHS could be used, it argues that, ideally, studies such as this one by the ICC should be dedicated to identifying socio-economic indicators through which the WHS could be subsequently monitored and evaluated annually:

‘There is little in the way of hard evidence of the potential and actual benefits to Liverpool of WHS status in socio-economic terms/.../Ideally, this research will provide a baseline for future assessment of whether benefits are increasing year on year, and will suggest a suitable indicator or indicators for incorporation into the monitoring framework.’

We believe that working towards such an indication framework is noteworthy, and can be of assistance to advance certain arguments – as was the case for the European Capital of Culture programme in 2008. However, such an exercise should not be undertaken to the exclusion of other, broader measures to assess and understand intangible values (or highlight their vulnerability). A combined assessment framework (consisting of hard indicators and soft contextual research) was the approach taken within the Impacts 08 research programme and this was critical to the validity and appreciation of final findings, which did not emphasise absolute statistical figures in isolation, but rather presented them as a complement to qualitative stories – notably, on the city’s changing image and its effects on both external perception and local confidence.

Moving forward with regards to developing a framework to monitor the economic contribution of the title, the most suitable indicators are likely to be visitor numbers – particularly international visitors and the number of staying visitors – alongside others to monitor the appropriation of the title among local businesses and the start-up of heritage tourism enterprises that use and disseminate the ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ of the WHS.

4. What risks are posed by the potential loss of WHS status for the city?

In the absence of a truly exhaustive assessment of the value *created* by the Liverpool World Heritage Site, the impacts of its potential loss are difficult to estimate.⁴⁵ However, the research methods adopted by this study have provided some evidence of the perceived and likely risks of delisting, particularly in relation to potential negative image impacts for Liverpool. From the results of the media analysis conducted by the study, for instance, it is clear that, although the loss of World Heritage status would not have a significant adverse effect on promoting Liverpool's cultural assets (largely due to the fact that, to date, the site has not been significantly used for such purposes), it would still likely tarnish the image of the city nationally and internationally if it suffered the indignity of delisting, as this could be perceived as evidence that the city has failed to protect a globally prestigious accolade. This point was echoed by a number of participants in the focus groups, who argued that the loss of the WHS would represent a significant setback in the challenge to continue to improve the city's image (or maintain its recently regained positive reputation) in relation to the rest of the UK.⁴⁶

The data collated by the online citizen survey provides perhaps the most illuminating insight into how the local public would expect the city to be affected by the loss of World Heritage status. As part of the survey, respondents were asked to consider the likely consequences of the hypothetical loss of the WHS, in addition to evaluating the impacts of the WHS to date, in relation to seven different areas:

- a. The preservation of historical buildings
- b. Growth and jobs
- c. The city's profile in the UK
- d. Tourism
- e. The city's skyline
- f. The city's profile internationally
- g. Public awareness of city's historical significance

For each of the seven areas, respondents simply had to indicate whether they perceived or anticipated a 'negative' impact, 'no impact' or a 'positive' impact. There are various ways of visualising this survey data, Figure X, below, plots the overall attitudinal position of each respondent, with respect to both the 'perceived impact of the WHS' and the 'expected impact of the loss of the WHS', using a 'bubble' graph which assigns:

- a value of minus one for each issue where a respondent felt that the impact of the WHS had been 'negative'; or where the impact of the *loss* of the WHS was expected by the respondent to be 'negative'
- a value of zero for each issue where the respondent felt the WHS has had no impact; or where no impact was expected by the respondent as a result of the *loss* of the WHS

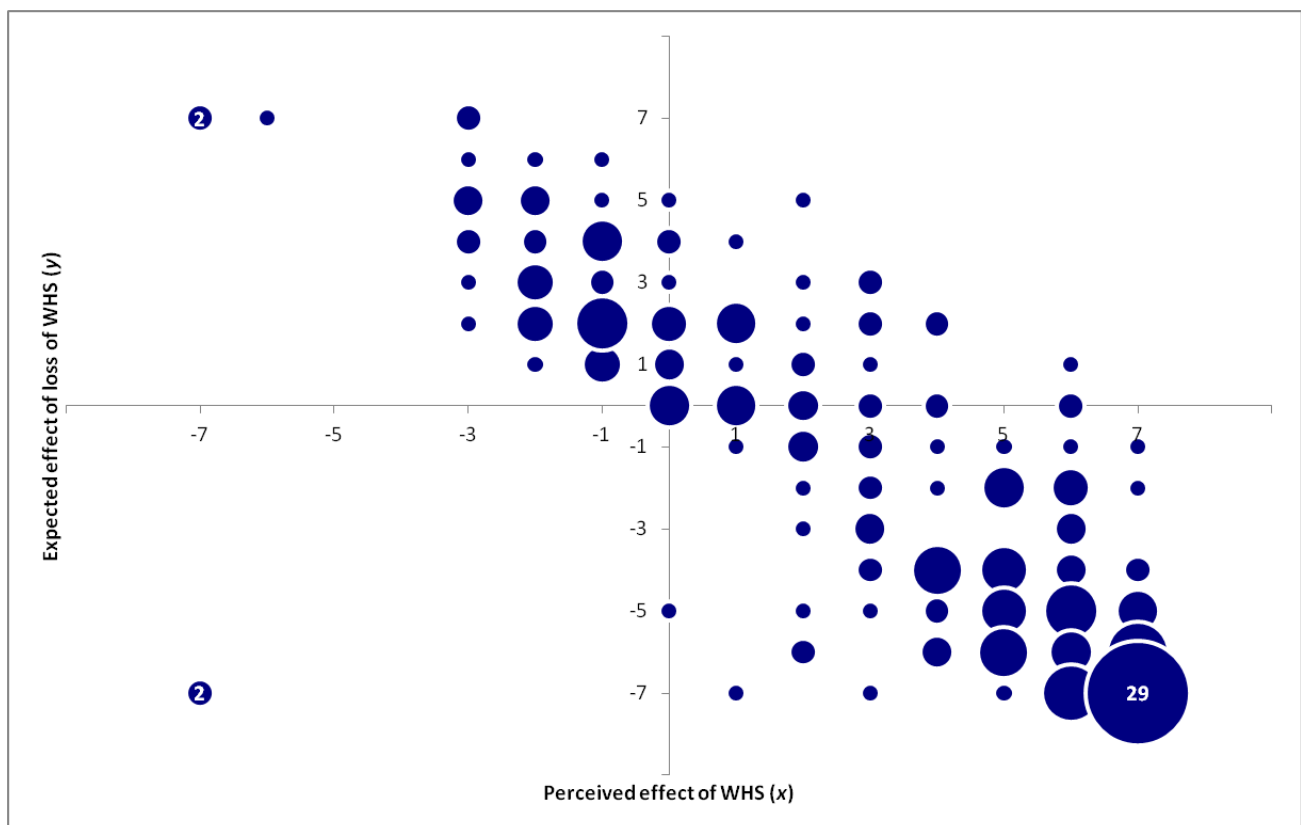
⁴⁵ For instance, whilst the economic impact of the loss of the title may be calculated directly in terms of revenue shortfalls at local museum and heritage attractions, the indirect consequences on the region's economy are incalculable.

⁴⁶ Liverpool Waters, conversely, was seen by these participants as a potential threat to the distinctiveness (or uniqueness) of Liverpool.

- a value of one for each issue where the respondent felt that the impact of the WHS had been 'positive', or where the impact of the *loss* of the WHS was expected by the respondent to be 'positive'.

As there were seven survey questions for both the *perceived impacts* of the WHS and the *expected impacts* of hypothetically losing the WHS – with both sets of questions concerning the same issues – the minimum and maximum scores possible for respondents were therefore minus seven and seven, respectively, for both question sets.

Figure 4: Overall attitudes regarding the impacts of the WHS and the expected impacts of its hypothetical loss



Source: ICC citizen survey

From a review of the data presented in Figure X, it is plain that many respondents scored a maximum of seven on the perceived effects of the WHS and a minimum of minus seven on the expected impacts of a hypothetical loss of the WHS. These respondents, clustered in the bottom right corner of the graph, are therefore extremely positive about the impacts of the WHS and extremely pessimistic about the impacts they expect to see in the event that Liverpool loses its WHS. In contrast, there were very few respondents who vociferously held the opposite view: namely, that the impact of the WHS has been overwhelmingly negative, and that its loss would be a very positive development for Liverpool. Even rarer, still, were respondents who took the seemingly illogical position that the impact of the WHS has been negative, but that its loss would also adversely affect the city.

Whilst it is therefore evident that a majority of those surveyed by this study would regard losing World Heritage status as a monumental calamity for the city, this neglects to consider an arguably more pressing question: namely, whether the risks of delisting – perceived or otherwise – are considered by stakeholders and members of the public to be outweighed by the benefits that the controversial Liverpool Waters development scheme is expected to deliver. On this basis, it seems clear that many members of the public calculate the costs of losing World Heritage status to be offset by the claimed benefits of the Liverpool Waters scheme, with some focus group participants, for instance, interpreting the plans as something that would further symbolise the city's revival:

Female 3 (Liverpoolian, City Centre): 'I also think, and I'm probably very much in the minority here, that for the future and the long-term future, we have to have a heritage of 21st Century development, like the high-rises and the.../.../ You know, that's the future. We can't live in the past, and we can't live in the small area and the small estate as it is now. It's going to have to change'

Some of the stakeholders interviewed also expressed the sentiment that the city would be able to weather the adverse effects of delisting, with the emphasis on planning within the original title bid and management plan, which raised awareness of the city's architectural assets (Liverpool City Council 2003, 2009), ironically appearing to have led to a situation in which the stakeholders can comfortably envisage a future without the authentication of World Heritage status.

Conclusion

The experience of the Liverpool World Heritage Site and other sites has shown that inscription onto the World Heritage List offers a host of potential benefits to the public authorities, commercial enterprises and local communities responsible for managing and promoting a site. In Liverpool, for instance, there is strong evidence to suggest that the WHS contributes to the sense of pride that local people feel for the city, and that the award is important for attracting international visitors, for whom the World Heritage brand is more recognisable than domestic brands such as English Heritage and the National Trust (Smith 2006). Among members of the local public, there is also a perception that World Heritage status has boosted tourism and improved the city's reputation both nationally and internationally. Yet, as Rebanks (2009) argues:

'...WHS status is what you make of it. Where the status has been used to full effect it has brought partners together, leveraged additional funding, led to new development and enhanced educational benefits, improved conservation and even led to regeneration in some locations. Where these opportunities have not been seized there have been more limited benefits. The benefits [and costs]⁴⁷ that the sites attribute to WHS status are therefore strongly related to the motives they had for bidding and correspondingly what they have used [or not] the status for.'

Overall, it is clear that Liverpool is a city which, to date, has not fully capitalised on its World Heritage status. Research undertaken by this study confirms that the title has not been appropriated as a tool for branding the city to an outside audience, or as a mechanism to foster enterprise or social engagement in the city; and that this failure is likely to be at least partly responsible for the low levels of WHS literacy and awareness that the study observed both among the general public and city stakeholders. The low visibility of the site, in general, is not only an impediment to realising the potential of the designation, but also a factor which has gravely undermined and destabilised the World Heritage status of the city. With few tangible benefits or defining features associated with the site in the minds of the local population due to low levels of WHS literacy, the title has become primarily conceived in terms of what it is seen to hinder: namely, development. Yet by being constantly juxtaposed to development, the significance of the title as a cultural accolade has diminished, and an assumption has grown among stakeholders and the public, to a lesser extent, that the title must justify itself in terms of its economic contribution to the city.

Further to this, it is evident that the value currently generated by World Heritage status is not merely depreciated, in general, but concentrated disproportionately within the city centre, at the expense of disenfranchised surrounding areas of the city. Indeed, in the focus groups conducted by the study, it was evident that whilst the regeneration of heritage assets within the WHS and its buffer zone has rejuvenated city centre residents' pride in the city, for other communities, the resources and attention dedicated to the site, rightly or wrongly, represented a devaluation of their own local heritage. As such, whilst support for the WHS among residents remains strong overall, a concentration of resources on the WHS, to the neglect of other heritage assets in the city, appears to have galvanised a section of the public that regards World Heritage status with active

⁴⁷ Words in brackets added.

hostility, but, in contrast, welcomes the Liverpool Waters development as a scheme perceived to be of direct value to deprived areas in the north of the city.

With the most vehement voices in the conservation and development camps now dominating and polarising the debate in the local media at the expense of a more nuanced public debate regarding the city's regeneration and future, and with few benefits of the title being translated to communities outside the site, some communities and stakeholders can now, therefore, easily envisage a Liverpool without its WHS. Indeed, with planning permission now granted to Peel Holdings to commence work on the Liverpool Waters development, there is a real risk that the city will 'sleepwalk' into a situation where UNESCO feels obliged to exercise its right to remove the Liverpool WHS from the World Heritage List altogether.

The evidence presented in this study suggests that such an outcome would be detrimental to Liverpool's long-term development and the so far successful efforts to counter long-standing negative imagery associated with the city – a viewpoint seemingly shared by most of the local residents who participated in the online survey conducted by the study. However, as the recommendations put forward by this study demonstrate, it is still within the power of the city, not only to retain World Heritage status by reconciling the heritage and development camps, but to reform the site in such a way that unlocks its vast potential and extends this value to neglected areas of the city's periphery.

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