This case study was prepared as part of a collaborative research project investigating the economic, social and developmental benefits of World Heritage Site designation to historic cities that was organised and funded by Tsinghua University of Beijing, China. The research methodology follows the guidelines set out for the overall research, which is also reflected in the section headings and organisation of the paper.
Introduction

The city of Bath is located in South West England on the River Avon. An important centre in Roman times, the city flourished as a medieval market town and again in the 18th century, when it became a popular resort and spa town. It is this period that endowed Bath with its classical buildings in a cream lime stone, which have come to define its distinct characteristic as a historic town and successful nomination as a World Heritage Site in 1987. The City of Bath World Heritage Site is a 29 square kilometre site covering much of the city of Bath. Following a boundary change since the nomination in 1987, the city centre is now administered by Bath and North East Somerset District Council. With the exception of Bath and three other much smaller towns, this is a largely rural area.

The focus of this paper is the economic and social cost and benefits of World Heritage Site status has brought to Bath. However, in historic towns that are in any case popular visitor attractions it is not always easy to delineate between economic gains that would have occurred in any case and those brought through a World Heritage Site listing. In order to be able to better quantify these benefits, where appropriate comparative figures will be used with the cities of York and Oxford, both of similar size and popularity in the UK, but not World Heritage Sites.

The research for this paper includes quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Quantitative data has been obtained to understand tourism flows and economic development in the region. A couple of problems have been encountered in this respect. The first is that data relating to the early 1980s is either not available or much less detailed than data that has been collected over the past 20 years. Secondly, the City of Bath is governed by Bath and North East Somerset Council, which covers a rural hinterland alongside the World Heritage City. This results in the distortion of some of the data as it is not necessarily representative or indicative of what is happening in the city centre and WHS. The quantitative information has been analysed accordingly and compared to other places where comparable data sets can be obtained. In addition, the study incorporates a number of interviews with key informants in the Council’s Planning and Conservation Departments, Development & Regeneration Unit and Bath Tourism Plus.

The costs and benefits of World Heritage Site inscription are currently being discussed and researched in the UK. An overview of the findings have been summarised in Section I. All economic data has been given in UK pounds (£) as this is the currency in which data was available.
I. OVERVIEW

World Heritage Sites in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has 28 World Heritage Sites. Of these the City of Bath, the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and the more recently inscribed Maritime and Mercantile Liverpool are the only three historic city sites. Several others, including Westminster, the Tower of London and Maritime Greenwich in London, and the Castle and Cathedral precincts in Durham, are located in city settings.

In the UK, sites are nominated from a Tentative List prepared by the Department of Culture Media and Sport. Sites and places wishing to be considered for WHS status must now compete to be placed on the Tentative List. Within the context of current restrictions placed on the number of nominations by the World Heritage Committee, only one UK site can be nominated each year. Nominations made before 1997, including Bath, were proposed and supported at national level. Since 1997 the process has become competitive and is more likely to be driven locally. This also means that the majority of the nomination costs are incurred locally.

At the current time there is no specific legislation relating to World Heritage Sites in the UK. Their status, however, is recognised in the planning system and their protection is assured through a number of statutory and subsidiary planning vehicles. The historic buildings and monuments within a WHS are likely to be protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments or as Listed Buildings and urban areas are protected through Conservation Area legislation. In addition, local plans can include policies that support the protection of key views to and from a WHS or its buffer zone.

Proposed changes to the legislation will introduce special protection for World Heritage Sites, and enable the designation and protection of buffer zones, which is not possible under the current legislation.

Economic costs and benefits of World Heritage Sites in the UK

In 2006 the Department of Culture Media and Sport commissioned a report into the costs and benefits of World Heritage status in the UK from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Although the PwC study considered six case studies, the City of Bath was not one of them.

The PwC report is only concerned with direct costs and benefits associated with WHS status. The benefits of WHS status are considered to be: increase in partnerships, tourism, funding, regeneration, civic pride, social capital, learning and education. The direct costs incurred are the one off costs of preparing the nomination, the ongoing costs of managing the WHS, opportunity costs associated with development control and congestion, and related costs such as marketing and infrastructure provision (PwC, 2007).

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1 Equivalent to the Ministry of Culture.
Of the costs, the average cost of preparing a nomination dossier today is calculated as shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHS co-ordinator: salary over 4.8 years</td>
<td>£200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff time, including consultation</td>
<td>£41,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document production</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional studies that are required</td>
<td>£80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Plan</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time assisting Management Plan</td>
<td>£41,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total costs</td>
<td>£462,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Estimated cost of WHS nomination in the UK (adapted from PwC, 2007)

According to the report the cost of preparing a WHS nomination taking into account staff costs, commissioning of various reports and the preparation of the documentation to be submitted can be in the region of £462,000. Bath was inscribed in 1987, when the requirements of the Operational Guidelines for WHS nomination were much less onerous. Nonetheless, a management plan has had to be prepared retrospectively for Bath. This will be discussed in more detail in Section II. Management plans need to be revised every five years.

The second area of costs is the yearly direct costs of managing a World Heritage Site. For a site with a WHS coordinator such as Bath, the annual cost is estimated to be in the region of £130,000-£215,000.

The third area of costs are incurred in support of the WHS status, from periodic reporting requirements to preparing (often in-depth) responses to reactive monitoring reports from UNESCO. This could be as much as £10,000 a year.

Finally, there will be costs associated with the participation of partners and advisors in working groups or steering committee activities to monitor the progress of the management plan. For a site like Bath, where there is a large number of partners and stakeholders, these costs can reach £34,000 a year.

Alongside costs incurred by the local partners, and the local council in the case of an urban site, there are costs that are borne by national level institutions such as English Heritage and Historic Scotland for their WHS monitoring and advisory role, coordination of new applications and involvement in reactive monitoring cases.

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2 Maximum figures have been taken.
Most notably, the report identifies that WHS status has made little or no impact to visitor numbers at UK World Heritage Sites (PwC, 2007:7). It also notes that sites that are well recognised brands where tourism is concerned make limited effort to promote their WHS status in their promotional activities. Other international research cited in the report also provides evidence on the limited tourism increases as a result of WHS status, especially for sites that are already popular tourist destinations for their recognised heritage assets.

A more recent study in 2009 by Rebanks Consulting Ltd. for the Lake District World Heritage Project investigated the potential economic opportunities of World Heritage Site status through a series of case studies. This study places the purpose of WHS nomination into four economic development categories as follows:

1. Primarily about the preservation of heritage
2. Primarily about heritage with some economic linkages
3. Preservation with socio-economic aspirations
4. Designation is a socio-economic driver (Rebanks Consulting, 2009:16)

Bath is most likely to fall into category 1 or 2, where the purpose of seeking WHS designation is about recognising the cultural significance of the place and protecting it. This is also a reflection of Britain’s WHS policies for pre-1989 nominations. The report has identified 11 different ways in which WHS status can make an economic impact on a place. One of these is the improvement of quality of life that in itself is seen as an economic driver, which will attract people to live, work and establish a business in a place. This approach is illustrated through the example of Edinburgh Old and New Towns WHS3, where the management team are actively involved in promoting the World Heritage Site message to the residents (Rebanks Consulting, 2009).

**Bath World Heritage Site**

**Location and extent of the World Heritage Site**

The Bath World Heritage Site is defined as the city boundaries at the time it was inscribed in 1987. The boundaries were formalised in the 1997 Local Plan for Bath and cover an area 29 square kilometres in size. Like other nominations at the time, the WHS does not have a buffer zone, although the landscape setting of the city is recognised as very important to its historic value. A medium term goal stated in the Management Plan is to establish a buffer zone for the site (B&NES and EH).

**Nomination criteria (Outstanding Universal Value)**

The City of Bath was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987. The inscription was made under the following criteria:

Criterion (i): Bath’s grandiose Neo-classical Palladian crescents, terraces, and squares spread out over the surrounding hills and set in its green valley are a demonstration par excellence of the integration of architecture, urban design, and landscape setting, and the deliberate creation of a beautiful city. Not only are individual buildings such as the Assembly Rooms and Pump Room of

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3 Inscribed as a WHS in 1995.
great distinction, they are part of the larger overall city landscape that evolved over a century in a harmonious and logical way, drawing together public and private buildings and spaces in a way that reflects the precepts of Palladio tempered with picturesque aestheticism.

Bath’s quality of architecture and urban design, its visual homogeneity and its beauty is largely testament to the skill and creativity of the architects and visionaries of the 18th and 19th centuries who applied and developed Palladianism in response to the specific opportunities offered by the spa town and its physical environment and natural resources (in particular the hot springs and the local Bath Oolitic limestone). Three men – architect John Wood Senior, entrepreneur and quarry owner Ralph Allen, and celebrated social shaper and Master of Ceremonies Richard “Beau” Nash – together provided the impetus to start this social, economic, and physical rebirth, resulting in a city that played host to the social, political, and cultural leaders of the day. That the architects who followed were working over the course of a century, with no master plan or single patron, did not prevent them from contriving to relate each individual development to those around it and to the wider landscape, creating a city that is harmonious and logical, in concord with its natural environment and extremely beautiful.

Criterion (ii): Bath exemplifies the 18th century move away from the inward-looking uniform street layouts of Renaissance cities that dominated through the 15th–17th centuries, towards the idea of planting buildings and cities in the landscape to achieve picturesque views and forms, which could be seen echoed around Europe, particularly in the 19th century. This unifying of nature and city, seen throughout Bath, is perhaps best demonstrated in the Royal Crescent (John Wood Younger) and Lansdown Crescent (John Palmer). Bath’s urban and landscape spaces are created by the buildings that enclose them, providing a series of interlinked spaces that flow organically, and that visually (and at times physically) draw in the green surrounding countryside to create a distinctive garden city feel, looking forward to the principles of garden cities developed by the 19th century town planners.

Criterion (iv): Bath reflects two great eras in human history: Roman and Georgian. The Roman Baths and temple complex, together with the remains of the city of Aquae Sulis that grew up around them, make a significant contribution to the understanding and appreciation of Roman social and religious society. The 18th century redevelopment is a unique combination of outstanding urban architecture, spatial arrangement, and social history. Bath exemplifies the main themes of the 18th century neoclassical city; the monumentalisation of ordinary houses, the integration of landscape and town, and the creation and interlinking of urban spaces, designed and developed as a response to the growing popularity of Bath as a society and spa destination and to provide an appropriate picturesque setting and facilities for the cure takers and social visitors. Although Bath gained greatest importance in Roman and Georgian times, the city nevertheless reflects continuous development over two millennia with the spectacular medieval Abbey Church sat beside the Roman temple and baths, in the heart of the 18th century and modern city. (www.unesco.org/en/list/428)

The statement of significance (its Outstanding Universal Values) is described as:

The Roman remains, especially the Temple of Sulis Minerva and the baths complex (based around the hot springs at the heart of the Roman city of Aquae Sulis, which have remained at the heart of the City’s development ever since) are amongst the most famous and important Roman remains north of the Alps, and marked the beginning of Bath’s history as a spa town.

The Georgian city reflects the ambitions of John Wood Senior, Ralph Allen and Richard ‘Beau’ Nash to make Bath into one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, with architecture and landscape combined harmoniously for the enjoyment of the spa town’s cure takers.
The Neo-classical style of the public buildings (such as the Assembly Rooms and the Pump Room) harmonises with the grandiose proportions of the monumental ensembles (such as Queen Square, Circus, and Royal Crescent) and collectively reflects the ambitions, particularly social, of the spa city in the 18th century.

The individual Georgian buildings reflect the profound influence of Palladio, and their collective scale, style, and the organisation of the spaces between buildings epitomises the success of architects such as the John Woods, Robert Adam, Thomas Baldwin, and John Palmer in transposing Palladio’s ideas to the scale of a complete city, situated in a hollow in the hills and built to a Picturesque landscape aestheticism creating a strong garden city feel, more akin to the 19th century garden cities than the 17th century Renaissance cities. (www.unesco.org/en/list/428)

Both the nomination criteria and the statement of significance provide a summary of the city’s history. In terms of attractiveness and management challenges, one of Bath’s most interesting aspects is its multi layered characteristics including surviving layers from the Roman period through to the 20th century, including notable structures of the industrial age. At the same time, the predominantly 18th century architecture in the local limestone gives the city its unique uniform classical appearance. Most notably the World Heritage Site area is also a living, changing and evolving city.

Protection of the WHS

In the UK, where there is no specific legislation for the protection of World Heritage Sites, the City of Bath WHS is protected through a combination of different regulations. Overall the boundaries of the WHS are recognised in the local plan. Two thirds of the WHS area is designated as conservation areas and protected through the Town and Country Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990. There are a total of 4,980 listed buildings within the WHS, of which 635 are Grade I listed – the highest category. Listed Buildings are also protected through the Town and Country Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990. A further five sites are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Other parts of the WHS are protected through designations as Areas of Archaeological Potential, through English Heritage’s Registry of Parks and Gardens, as Areas of National Beauty (nature) and through the green belt (B&NES and EH, 2003).

Since completing the first management plan, the council has employed a World Heritage Manager, who coordinates all work connected with the WHS and the implementation of the management plan.
II. COSTS AND BENEFITS

Benefits of World Heritage Status to Bath

‘The city has a wide range of businesses and industries and there is a close relationship between the heritage and the success of the modern city.’ (B&NESC and EH, 2003:1) The direct and indirect benefits of WHS status to Bath are wide ranging and complex. As a historic city, the largest economic benefit is through tourism, though it is not possible to ascertain how much WHS status influences tourism revenue\(^4\). Other tangible and intangible benefits range from additional income for the WHS and for conservation projects, to the learning and educational benefits of a WHS, and a level of civic pride it instils in its residents.

Tourism in Bath

The greatest economic benefit of heritage to Bath is through tourism. How much this figure is affected by the WHS status of the city, however, is unclear and most likely unquantifiable. The total value of tourism is estimated as being £195 million for Bath, rising to £349 million for Bath & North East Somerset, with an estimated 7,834 actual jobs directly related to tourist spend in 2007 (www.visitbath.co.uk, accessed April 2010).

Cultural heritage is the strongest attraction for tourists visiting Bath. Visitors participating in surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2006 rated the attractiveness of the city as follows:

- Architecture/historic buildings

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\(^4\) There has been no specific study carried out in Bath to identify the direct economic benefit of being a WHS.
Atmosphere/ambience
History
Attractions
Compactness

The typically visitor profile is middle age or older and travelling in adult only groups. Some 19% of visitors arrive through organised tours (SWT, 2004).

It is not clear whether tourists visiting the city are aware that Bath is a WHS\(^5\). The Visit Bath website does not carry the WHS emblem on its front page but the WHS is mentioned in various parts of the text (www.visitbath.co.uk, accessed April 2010). Bath Tourism Plus, the local tourist board behind the website have deliberately chosen a soft approach to marketing the WHS status of Bath. Most visitors to the city come for the already known attractions such as the Roman Baths, which is one of the reasons that the city is a WHS in any case. Bath is already a recognised destination and ‘brand’ and additional WHS branding is not seen to be necessary. This is also seen as being in keeping with UNESCO’s approach (Bath Tourism Plus, interview May 2010).

Bath Tourism Plus, supports the strap-line: ‘Promoting the stunning, UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bath to visitors in the UK and Worldwide’. There is a growing consciousness of the value of the WHS status and another recent action has been to embed the WHS logo into the pavement in front of the Pump room.

**Additional sources of income for the World Heritage Site**

Its size and geographic location within a largely rural area has made Bath an important regional centre for retail and business. Although this is not connected to its WHS status, and could potentially distort some of the statistics on the economic benefits of WHS status, the economic and particularly cultural vibrancy that is attributed to the city is more relevant. It could be argued, therefore that although the city would have been an important retail and commercial centre for the region, its historic character, cultural vibrancy and additional facilities (e.g. café and restaurant offer generated by tourism) adds value to this economic activity, by attracting more people and enabling them to spend longer time and therefore more money in the city.

In the UK, there are no additional funds available from central government for World Heritage Sites and the financial burden of maintaining and managing them invariably falls on owners and local councils.

**Environment, Regeneration and Conservation Benefits**

Bath is today recognised as an exemplar of building conservation practice and conservation work and urban realm improvements, which have undoubtedly benefitted from the city’s WHS status. Furthermore, strict development control has ensured that new buildings are of a high architectural quality and developments generally do not detract from the sought after historic character of the city.

The management plan launched in 2004 has been a valuable vehicle for identifying projects and

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\(^5\) A recent survey in Edinburgh for example revealed that only 41% of visitors surveyed were aware of the City’s WHS status (Rebanks Consulting, 2009). No comparable surveys have been carried out in Bath (Bath Tourism Plus, 2010).
subsequently securing partnership funding for their realisation. Most notably a £154.6 million grant was obtained from English Partnerships, the regeneration agency, towards conservation of the Combe Down stone mines. Another grant from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport has enabled improvements at the Temple Precinct and Roman Baths (B&NESC and EH, 2008).

Learning and Educational Benefits
Bath Preservation Trust in particular is involved with a number of educational projects around the World Heritage Site and the World Heritage theme (http://www.bptrust.org.uk). This includes projects with local schools aimed at increasing their awareness of World Heritage and what it means to Bath. A funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop more educational activities was not successful, but one Bath school benefits from an exchange with a Portuguese school as part of the OWHC school twinning programme (B&NESC and EH, 2008).

Although the University of Bath runs a successful masters programme in the conservation of historic buildings, the University has not been involved in hosting any specific events or conferences directly related to World Heritage issues.

Community Benefits and Civic Pride
A sample survey of 100 local residents undertaken by Coles and Shaw on residents’ attitudes to tourism identified that 90% accepted that tourism was a good thing for the locality, economically and in job creation. Positives were also noted as pride that people wanted to visit the town (71%), and recognition of the enhanced facilities in the city as a result of tourism (Coles and Shaw, 2002).

Now in its second year, the annual World Heritage Day when locals are given free access to some attractions in the city and a series of events and family oriented activities is proving to be very popular.

Costs of World Heritage Status
The World Heritage Application Process
The PWC report (2007) as explained in Section I above calculated the cost of WHS nomination in England today as being in the region of £462,000. In the 1980s when Bath was nominated, this cost would have been much lower. Firstly, the requirements set by UNESCO for nominations were much less onerous at that time; a management plan was not required for example and additional studies would rarely have been called for. Secondly, the process was managed centrally by national authorities and would not have created a significant cost burden on the local council. Thirdly, linked to the previous point, was the limited desire or requirement at the time to extensively involve the local community in the process.

The Management Plan
The ‘City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan’ was prepared in 2003 and officially launched in September 2004. The plan covers the period of 2003-2009. The plan was prepared as a collaboration between Bath and North East Somerset Council and English Heritage, and overseen by a Steering Group made of representatives of local and national organisations with management responsibilities within the WHS and representatives from various sectors of the city (B&NESC and EH, 2003). A revised management plan is due in 2010.
The cost of preparing the management plan has not been disclosed. The salary of the World Heritage manager is paid for by the local council.

Other Additional Costs to the Local Council

The WHS status of the city places additional responsibilities on the local council that are beyond its normal duties. However, these are not recognised by central government funding for local councils and therefore the council does not receive additional funds for fulfilling its WHS obligations. It is noted in the management plan that Bath and North East Somerset Council 'does not have the resources to finance all the extra responsibilities attached to the care of the World Heritage Site' (B&NES and EH, 2003:34). The additional costs that have to be borne by the local council include administrative costs, the costs of six yearly monitoring reports to UNESCO and establishing monitoring benchmarks and responding to UNESCO missions and reports when called upon to do so.

There is also additional work required in the planning process to ensure development proposals do not threaten the outstanding universal value of the WHS. In particular some large scale developments that have attracted attention over the past few years have involved a lengthy planning application process. These are discussed in more detail in Section IV, Development Challenges.

The importance placed on promoting high quality architecture for new developments as stressed in the Management Plan, especially in terms of maintaining and not jeopardising the outstanding universal value of the WHS, will also mean that planning applications need to be carefully scrutinized. This may involve seeking feedback from design and advisory panels, with associated time and cost implications.

Improving the public realm and facilities within the WHS to a high standard from paving to seating and litter bins is also a cost that has to be borne by the local council. However, these types of improvements can also be seen to benefit tourism in maintaining a high quality destination. This is an investment from which the council will no doubt economically benefit from business taxes and the like.

In addition to these there are also desirable actions and initiatives that would help to improve the management and understanding of the WHS, such as an integrated database and GIS that is widely accessible to stakeholders and those responsible for managing the WHS.

Other Costs

With high private ownership within the World Heritage Site, property owners have an obligation to maintain and conserve their property to the required standards. Since 1987 there has been a steady reduction in the grants available to assist with historic building conservation, and currently grants that are available to individuals are very limited. This can place an additional economic burden on local owners of historic property within the WHS.
III. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The direct economic benefits of WHS status to the city of Bath have been difficult to quantify, as Bath regardless of its WHS status was and continues to be a popular tourist destination. Similarly, it has not been possible to isolate social and development statistics to directly link them to the WHS status. Other figures, such as house price indices, have been difficult to extract as they are generated for Bath and North East Somerset rather than the centre of Bath.

Population and Demographic Changes

The population of the City of Bath is around 84,000 and the city has enjoyed a stable population since the 1950s when it had 80,000 inhabitants. WHS status has not impacted on the growth or decline of the population and the population is described as being stable since the early 1990s.

The Bath and North East Somerset Council covers an area of 3,500 hectares, most of which is rural. Half of its 167,000 population (2003 figures) live in the City of Bath. In the City of Bath, 70% of residents live and work in the city (B&NES, 2003). Of the whole, 52% are female and 1.6% black and ethnic minority groups, the latter being below the UK average of 4.1%. There has been limited population growth since 1991 (B&NES, 2003). A demographic shift and increasing life expectancy, however, means that an 18% population growth has been forecast over the next twenty years, with a predicted 16% increase in the number of people over the age of 80 (B&NES, 2010:10).

Figures for per capita income of local household growth in Bath for the period 1982 to 1992 are not available (Sketchley, email correspondence, May 2010). More recent figures refer to Bath and North East Somerset as a whole and are too broad to provide an accurate picture for the WHS area and city centre.

Local Economic Development

Industrial Structure

The largest employment sectors in Bath and North East Somerset are:

1. Public administration: Ministry of Defence, the Council and Health Sector (a total of 23,800 jobs in 2003; accounting for 35% of all jobs in 2008)
2. Distribution, hotels and restaurants (a total of 18,900 jobs in 2003)
3. Banking, finance and insurance (12,700 jobs in 2003)

(B&NES, 2003 and 2010)

Bath and North East Somerset has a low unemployment rate compared to national averages and employment growth was reported to be 6.6% from 1998 to 2003. Of a total workforce of 75,000, 60% work in the City of Bath (B&NES, 2003).
Although cuts in Ministry of Defence employment have been a concern, the public sector remains a strong employer for the city since the 1990s. Of greater concern has been the steady decline in manufacturing and the loss of jobs in this sector. Approximately 20% of manufacturing jobs were lost between 1980 and 1995 and the decline has continued to the current time (Bayliss, 1995 and B&NESC, 2010).

The 2003 Economic Development Strategy identifies 8,000 employers in Bath and North East Somerset. Most are small business with less than 1% employing more than 200 people (B&NESC, 2003). Although Bath has a good track record of small businesses and entrepreneurship, the lack of affordable business premises is causing local businesses to leave the area. (B&NESC, 2003)

There is also a frequently expressed concern that the economy has become too reliant on public and tourism sector employment and that more should be done to harness and grow other aspects of the economy (B&NESC, 2003).

**Economic Development Policies**

The 2010-2016 Economic Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset recognises that the historic atmosphere of the city is its ‘key strength’ and sees this as a unique selling point for attracting businesses, clients and employees to the city (B&NESC, 2010:34). Nonetheless, the core policy aims of the strategy focus on developing the innovation and the knowledge sectors, upgrading local skills and diversifying the economy. This follows similar policy objectives from the 2003 Economic Development Plan (B&NESC, 2003) and those reported by Prof. Brian Bayliss of the University of Bath in 1995 (Bayliss, 1995). Overall the dependence on the service sector as a major income generator is seen as a weakness, because this sector can be volatile and most of the jobs created are not skilled positions.

**Job opportunities created by the WHS**

The primary employment benefit from the WHS will be in the tourism sector that is discussed in more detail below. It is not possible to identify what increase in employment WHS status may have brought, since Bath has always been a popular tourism destination and would have continued to do so without the WHS status. Other linked areas of employment are the opportunities created in the arts and cultural sectors, and jobs generated through the conservation and maintenance of historic buildings. A small number of people are directly employed by the council to manage the WHS and coordinate various actions and activities related to it.

**Retail sector**

Bath remains an important retail and shopping centre for the region and retail is therefore a strong economic sector linked to tourism and leisure. The city has 90,000 square metres of retail space and 600 retail units, which places it in a competitive position in the region (B&NESC, 2010).

In a city centre retail survey undertaken in 2004, where 550 shoppers were interviewed, 53.3% confirmed that shopping was the main purpose for their visit and 57% were regular visitors. Only
9.8%\(^6\) said they would also be visiting a tourist attraction (NLP, 2004). A large number (60%) were shopping for non-food items, and 41% distinctly identified clothes and shoes as their main intended purchases. The average spend of £47.97 per visitor was £10 higher than that reported in a similar survey undertaken in 2000. The study also identified that Bath attracted a high proportion of shoppers from the most affluent socio-economic groups. Furthermore, because of its popularity as a tourist destination the city has a higher than average number of cafes and restaurants that increases its attraction to shoppers and the length of time they spend in the city. A good mix between mainstream and specialist retail units was also reported in the study. However, the comparatively high rental value for retail units, especially as a deterrent to new businesses, was also noted (NLP, 2004).

Some of the problems associated with retail are also linked to the WHS status of the city. For example there are not a sufficient number of retail units available that are of a good size for modern retail needs, while listed building status make it difficult to alter or combine others. Southgate, a new retail development within the city centre, is aiming to address some of the imbalance (see Section IV). Overcrowding around key heritage attractions that are in close proximity to the retail areas increases congestion.

Tourism Sector
Role of Tourism as an Economic Sector in Bath

Bath attracts visitors as tourists visiting heritage sites, shoppers, users of a wide range of leisure facilities and those that come to the city for business purposes. According to 2008 figures the total number of visitors to Bath was 4,493,000, of which 3,608,000 were day visitors. The contribution of tourism to the local economy is around £195 million and creates over 6000 actual jobs in Bath. For Bath and North East Somerset this figure increases to £372 million (Bath Tourism Plus, 2010).

It has not been possible to obtain such detailed statistics for the period 1982 – 1992 that would illustrate any growth associated with the city becoming a WHS. However, the following table compares international visitor numbers in Bath with those of two other comparable but non-WHS cities in the UK. All three cities maintain their position amongst the top 15 most visited historic cities in the UK, but Oxford clearly leads in popularity and the position of Bath and York remains interchangeable. The WHS status of Bath does not appear to make an obvious difference to its popularity as a historic town destination in Britain.

\(^6\) This figure had been 5% in a survey undertaken in 2000.
Visitor numbers to the Roman Baths and Pump Room, the primary visitor attraction in Bath also shows a relatively stable trajectory over the period the city became a World Heritage Site. This is illustrated in Figure 1. The slight increase in numbers following inscription, if linked to this, follows a similar pattern across UK WHS where there is a sudden growth in visitors following inscription before numbers even out again. The increase is often attributed to increased local interest in a place or site rather than a growth in international visitor numbers.

Figure 2: Visitor numbers at the Roman Baths and Pump Room five years before and after the city became a World Heritage Site in 1987, numbers in 000s (British Tourist Authority, various years)

Investment in Tourism Services

Of the total of 885,000 visitors staying overnight in 2008, 631,000 were from the UK and 254,000 from overseas (Bath Tourism Plus, 2010). Overnight visitors stay an average of 2.79 nights. Although this figure is small, compared to other historic towns nationally Bath has a higher proportion of staying visitors at 39% where the national average is 23% (SWT, 2004). There has also been a significant growth in visitor nights for Bath, rising from 1.88 at the beginning of the decade. A visitor staying overnight spends £89.83 per person per night, compared to the average spend of £28.04 for a day visitor (SWT, 2004).

Much of the tourist accommodation in Bath is small Bed & Breakfast and guest houses rather than larger hotels. There is a noted gap in conference facilities and recognised international hotel brands in the city. Although there is a willingness to attract larger hotels and create a conference offer, spatial restrictions and planning can be difficult in a WHS city (Bath Tourism Plus, interview, May 2010).

Investment in Associated Cultural Services

The City of Bath has a long history of cultural and natural attractions, some even dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries when it was a popular leisure destination of the upper classes. As noted above, the Roman Bath and Pump Room (made famous through Jane Austen's novels) is regularly ranked amongst top 20 paid for attractions in Britain. In 2008 the Baths ranked 9th with around 850,000 paying visits (South West Tourism). There is notable growth trend in the number of museums in Bath.

The following table lists the key cultural and natural heritage attractions in the World Heritage Site area, including museums and galleries, historic sites and parks. It is clear from the table that the number of museums has been steadily increasing since the WHS inscription while others are being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>390,000</td>
<td>390,000</td>
<td>437,000</td>
<td>437,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>269,000</td>
<td>254,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>270,000</td>
<td>230,000</td>
<td>246,000</td>
<td>249,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: International visitor numbers to historic cities (www.visitbritain.org, accessed April 2010)
updated and renewed. However, also notable is the low visitor numbers to the smaller museums, placing additional pressure on the trusts that manage them and the subsidy they require from the council. An as yet unconfirmed trend is that some of the smaller museums have been benefiting from increased visitor numbers over the past couple of years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>YEAR OPENED</th>
<th>FEE</th>
<th>VISITOR NOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Baths and Pump Room</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1897, 1983</td>
<td>£11.50</td>
<td>834,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Art Gallery</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>117,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>£7.25</td>
<td>88,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jane Austen Centre</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td>£6.50</td>
<td>54,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Lunn’s Ref House and Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>95,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum of East Asian Art</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td>6,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herschel Museum of Astronomy</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>£4.00</td>
<td>5,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number 1 Royal Crescent</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>£6.00</td>
<td>50,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holbourne Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1916, (2011)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre Royal and Masonic Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>£6.00</td>
<td>c. 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Building of Bath collection</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>£4.00</td>
<td>not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum of Bath at Work</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>£4.00</td>
<td>(2002) 6,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly Rooms</td>
<td>Historic site</td>
<td></td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Crescent</td>
<td>Historic site</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Circus</td>
<td>Historic site</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath Abbey</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>307,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath Abbey Heritage Vaults Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>62,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulteney Bridge</td>
<td>Historic site</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildhall</td>
<td>Historic site</td>
<td></td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanical Gardens</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1887, 1987</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Gardens</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Victoria Park</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henrietta Park</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedgemead Park</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>c. 1890</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgian Garden</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parade Gardens</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra Park</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Key cultural and natural heritage attractions in Bath. (BDRC, 2009; various attraction websites and telephone interviews, April 2010)
Cultural Events and Promotion of Local Culture

Alongside a broad range of cultural attractions and leisure facilities listed above, Bath today is also host to a number of festivals. These include:

- Bath International Music Festival (May, June)
- Bath Dance Festival (May)
- Bath Spring Flower Festival (May)
- Flavours of the West (promoting local foods) (May)
- Bath Coffee Festival (May)
- Bath Fringe Festival (drama) (May)
- Bath Food and Drink Festival (July)
- Children's Literature Festival (September)
- The Jane Austen Festival (September)
- Bath Bach Festival (October)
- Bath Film Festival (November)
- Bath Mozart Festival (November)
- Bath Christmas Market (December)
- Christmas carols and other events (December)

There are also a number of one off public art and similar events each year. As an established tourist destination and good catchment area Bath could be considered a mature market where cultural provision is concerned. While the number of new festivals has increased in recent years, some festivals like the Bath Bach Festival now have a 50 year history. This, along with several other linked events and festivals makes a Bath an important and recognised centre for classical music. Many of the concert venues are the historic buildings within the World Heritage Site that help create a special atmosphere for the events. The broad range of festivals and events that take place in Bath today have been tailored to appeal to both visitors and locals, who are encouraged to participate.

Service and Infrastructure Improvements

Transport and Accessibility

Bath and North East Somerset crucially lacks a direct link to the national motorway network (B&NESC, 2003), and improvement to the transport infrastructure and connectivity is frequently quoted as an economic development objective (B&NESC, 2010). This does, however, indicate that the WHS nomination did not contribute to the improvement of traffic infrastructure and the accessibility of Bath beyond the existing provision.

Within the city the historic character adds to the difficulties of traffic management. Congestion, particularly at peak times is a problem, especially around the city centre. This is compounded by a dependence of visitors in cars, with arrivals by car outnumbering other means of transport. A 2004 city centre retail survey recorded 46% of arrivals to be by car and 36% by public transport (NLP, 2004). Coaches, often bringing tourists into the centre on day visits, add to the traffic congestion, impact on the historic fabric and detract from the unique character of the historic city. The council is currently working on new parking, Park & Ride and bus strategies and prioritising pedestrian and cycle access to the city centre.
Local Involvement

Local Involvement during the Bid for World Heritage Status

During the preparation of the Management Plan a stakeholders group was formed from ‘interested local individuals and organisations from different sectors of city life including residents, business, transport, environmental conservation, regeneration, heritage, tourism and education’ (B&NESC and EH, 2003:4). This group was consulted at various levels between 2000 and 2002. One of the roles of the project coordinator was to ensure stakeholders and the general public were consulted (B&NESC and EH). Since most properties within the WHS boundaries are in private ownership regular consultation with the local community is an essential part of managing the WHS.

Current Involvement of Locals

Since the publication of the management plan in 2004, residents are encouraged to become involved with the World Heritage Site through the Council’s website page entitled ‘Your World Heritage’ (http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/BathNES/environmentandplanning/worldheritagesite/YourWorldHeritage.htm, accessed March 2010). The site invites the local community to comment on the management plan and to contact the World Heritage manager with ideas and suggestions for projects that would help enhance the values of the WHS. A photography competition on the World Heritage Site theme was held in 2004 to coincide with the launch of the management plan.
IV. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ITS IMPACT ON THE WHS

Impacts and Conflicts

Visitor and tourism issues

The impacts of tourists on the historic city, especially at peak times have been well documented. In a well publicised case, residents of the Royal Crescent, no longer able to bear the endless commentary of the open top tourist busses passing by their windows hosed down tourists on one open top bus. An enquiry that followed also heard evidence that the busses were damaging the historic paving of the Crescent and the bus route was eventually altered. Given that 16,000 people used the tourist busses in 2008, the impact on the city and its residents can be notable.

Various studies and reports since 1990 have identified the following issues in relation to tourism:

- Concentration of visitors in the city centre and associated pedestrian congestion
- Predominance of day visitors or those staying one night only (especially as they place the same burden on resource for significantly less return than longer staying visitors)
- Heavy traffic and congestion (especially as large number of arrivals are by car), which also impacts on pedestrian movement
- Concentration at a number of core attractions
- Impact on property and land prices

A sample survey of 100 local residents undertaken by Coles and Shaw on residents’ attitudes to tourism found that 61% considered tourism to negatively impact on their lives in some way. This was generally mitigated by local residents altering the way they used the city centre at peak times and/or seeking out facilities away from the centre (Coles and Shaw, 2002). Another study undertaken by Haley et al on the social impacts of tourism, found that residents were more likely to be supportive of tourism than notice the negative impacts. The study did note, however, that those who relied directly on tourism for their livelihood were more supportive of it and that those living in closer proximity to the centre and thus tourist zone were more aware of the pressures and therefore more likely to back restrictive measures. The study reports that 25% of the respondents were born in Bath and this group was more likely to notice the negative impacts of tourism (Haley et al, 2005).

Ever since the inscription of Bath as a WHS there have been attempts to spread tourism to a wider geographic area to reduce congestion around core areas. However, Laws (1995) reports that a tourism management strategy to this effect was met by protests from local residents of middle class areas surrounding the central area not wishing to be disturbed by tourism.

Development challenges

Two large development projects proposed for Bath in the past decade have met with considerable reaction from local, national and international bodies, partly due to the city’s WHS status. Being a WHS places additional pressures on the planning and development process.
The first project was the much discussed Southgate project replacing a 1970s shopping centre with new retail and leisure spaces and a new bus station close to the city centre. The £360 million project was granted planning permission in 2003 after much deliberation and has recently been completed, with the final phases opening in 2010. The project is important in that it provides the larger floor plates required by the large retailers and department stores, crucial to maintaining Bath’s competitiveness in the regional retail market. Apart from the bus station, the buildings have been built in a mock-historic or pastiche style using Bath stone, which has been described by UNESCO as ‘regrettable’ (UNESCO, 2008).

The larger of the two projects, the Bath Western Riverside Development is proposed on a former 19th century industrial area that has lain derelict for some time. The site is within the WHS boundaries and although it does not contain some of the historic characteristics that make up the outstanding universal value of the site, any development will be visible to and from the WHS and could impact on its setting. The blueprint for the site was established in a master plan agreed in 2003. Nonetheless, a proposal presented by Crest Nicholson, the developers, in 2007 deviated from the master plan principles and was found to be inconsistent with the historic character of the city in terms of scale and massing (DCMS, 2008). A revised scheme was finally approved in 2008. The largely residential scheme, planned to be built in phases, currently remains unbuilt due to the recent economic slowdown.

The size and more importantly the location of the project within the boundaries of a WHS meant that the planning application had to be determined not by the local council, but at national level by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport with input from English Heritage. Concerns were also raised by the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO) requiring a State of Conservation Report, which was submitted in 2008 (DCMS, 2008). In November 2008 a UNESCO monitoring mission to Bath concluded that the development could go ahead, but requested that the World Heritage Committee were informed of any new development projects within the City and its immediate landscape7, and that by February 2010 the draft revised management plan, an integrated and comprehensive tourism management plan, an integrated movement and public realm strategy and an integrated traffic plan should be submitted to the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2008).

Socio-Economic impacts

The Management Plan (2004) clearly identifies that at the time when Bath was nominated to the World Heritage List, there was little consideration or recognition for the social and economic benefits WHS status could bring to the city. Little has been done in the intervening years to reverse this and to explore ways in which the WHS brand may be harnessed to benefit local economic and social development, particularly for the more deprived areas and groups within the city (B&NESC and EH, 2003:37).

Although Bath is recognised as a desirable place to live with high quality of life standards, this also means that property prices are above the national average and affordability is a major concern.

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7 This is also stipulated in paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.
The lack of affordable housing for key workers (such as teachers, police, nurses) and service sector employees also has implications for their employment in the city and thus for maintaining high quality services (B&NESC, 2003).

**Economic Growth Trend and Impact on World Heritage Site**

Tourism remains the second largest sector in the Bath economy and the city does need to remain competitive to continue attracting visitors. One approach is to regularly improve and renew the visitor offer. One such project, billed as a flagship project, was the opening of a new spa complex in the heart of the historic city, continuing a tradition dating back to the city's Roman origins. Following a lengthy and at times fraught development process, the Thermae Bath Spa Project was opened in 2006. With annual visitor numbers of 200,000 and employment of 145 staff, the Spa claims to have created a £7.4 million boost to the local economy (Bath Chronicle, 2009). The contemporary style building within the heart of the historic city has also been well received.

To remain commercially and economically competitive there is a recognised need for high quality and affordable office space, retail space and housing. The Southgate and Bath Western Riverside projects go some way towards achieving this, although affordability still remains a concern.

**Sustainable Development: WHS protection and local economic growth in Bath**

The high quality of life offered by Bath makes the district an attractive place to locate to for businesses in a range of sectors from retail to creative industries. The biggest challenge for Bath is to establish a good balance between sustaining the values that make it a WHS city and maintaining the competitiveness of retail and other businesses through development opportunities in the city centre, adequate infrastructure and improved accessibility.
Conclusion

A 2008 report\textsuperscript{8}, cited by the Rebanks (2009) study for the Lake District, acknowledges that there is a link between WHS status and economic gain, largely through tourism, but that this link is indeed tenuous. The Bath case affirms this view, that as an attractive and relatively easily accessible historic town, Bath is likely to have remained a popular tourist destination even if it were not a WHS. What Remy Prud’homme points to, however, is to measure what WHS has brought that might not have happened otherwise, such as more development control and better preservation of the asset.

While it has not been possible to extract the economic benefits directly attributed to the WHS status of Bath which is an already popular heritage city attracting visitors, its large WHS area of 29 square kilometres, has significant implications for change and managing change in a living city that also has to remain economically competitive beyond its attractiveness as a tourism destination. The cost of managing a WHS and fulfilling the obligations placed on it by UNESCO can be considerable. This is a shared responsibility, but with significant financial burden on the local council that has clearly expressed that it does not have all the necessary funds to fulfil its WHS obligations. At the time of its nomination in 1986, economic or social benefits were not a concern or seen as a potential benefit of WHS status. This, however, is changing and various authorities in Bath are now working to increase local awareness of World Heritage and seeking ways in which to realise tangible social and economic benefits that reach all parts of the local community.

Although this research has shown that Bath does not gain any discernable additional economic benefit from being a WHS, would things have been different if it were not a WHS? It could be argued that the WHS status has enabled better preservation, stricter development control, attention to detail and investment in the public realm that may not have been as rigorous if it had not been a WHS and thus enabled Bath to remain a well preserved and high quality destination for visitors, as well as a desirable place to live and do business in.

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