

Proposal for a Buffer Zone for the World Heritage Site of Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey



**Submission to the World Heritage Centre
February 2012**



National Trust



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organisation



Studley Royal Park including
the Ruins of Fountains Abbey
inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 1986



ENGLISH HERITAGE

PROPOSAL FOR A BUFFER ZONE FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE OF STUDLEY ROYAL PARK INCLUDING THE RUINS OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY - SUBMISSION TO THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE FEBRUARY 2012

Prepared by the National Trust and English Heritage December 2011

Introduction

Although the area within the boundary of the World Heritage Site is unlikely to be subject to development proposals which adversely impact upon its outstanding universal value (due to the fact that it is wholly managed by the National Trust), outside the designated World Heritage Site there are a number of developments which could, potentially, threaten its outstanding universal value. For example large scale or poorly sited renewable energy schemes, large-scale agricultural developments, and inappropriately sited buildings could harm its setting or key views into and out of the designated area. Since 2001 there has been a proposal in the *Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site Management Plan* to establish a buffer zone for Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site.

The requirement for a buffer zone was again raised in the *Periodic Monitoring Report 2006*. The *Periodic Monitoring Report* stated that the boundaries of the site were inadequate and there was a need to define a formal buffer zone. It stated

‘Although the World Heritage Site boundary covers the core area of the designed landscape, some significant features lie outside. There is a need to review the boundary to ensure that it includes those areas that are essential to retain the site’s outstanding universal value. There is also a need to develop a formal buffer zone.’

This submission proposes the establishment of a buffer zone around the World Heritage Site and sets out how the buffer zone will contribute to the maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the site, the legal protection for the buffer zone and the implications for management of the site. Revisions to the boundary of the World Heritage Site will be considered as part of the review of the *World Heritage Site Management Plan in 2014*. This will allow full consultation with relevant landowners and stakeholders.

1. Area of the Property

Area of the inscribed World Heritage Site	309 ha
Area of the proposed buffer zone	1622 ha
Total area	1931 ha

2. Description of the Buffer Zone

The buffer zone covers the immediate setting of the World Heritage Site and the key vista from the main deer park avenue east to Ripon Cathedral and beyond to Blois Hall Farm. Detailed maps of the World Heritage Site boundary (Map 1) and the proposed buffer zone (Map 2) are included in Section 7 of this submission.

The proposed buffer zone aims to:

- (i) Protect the visual setting of the monastic precinct and the Aislabies' designed landscape at Studley Royal.
- (ii) Respect the integrity of the Aislabies' designed landscape including the visual setting (contrasting with the agrarian setting) where this was visible from within the bounds of the designed landscape.
- (iii) Protect the views and vistas which were key to the Aislabies' design.

In producing a candidate boundary the following principles were adopted:

a) Both of the key historic entities – the Cistercian abbey of St Mary of Fountains, and the Aislabie family's Studley Royal Estate – held enormous landed estates beyond (but often adjoining) the World Heritage Site, frequently containing significant archaeological remains. The World Heritage Site inscription is most directly concerned with the Aislabies' designed landscape and the enclosed precinct of Fountains Abbey. The buffer zone therefore includes outlying parts of the designed landscape and precinct (and their visual settings) where these had not been included in the World Heritage Site boundary.

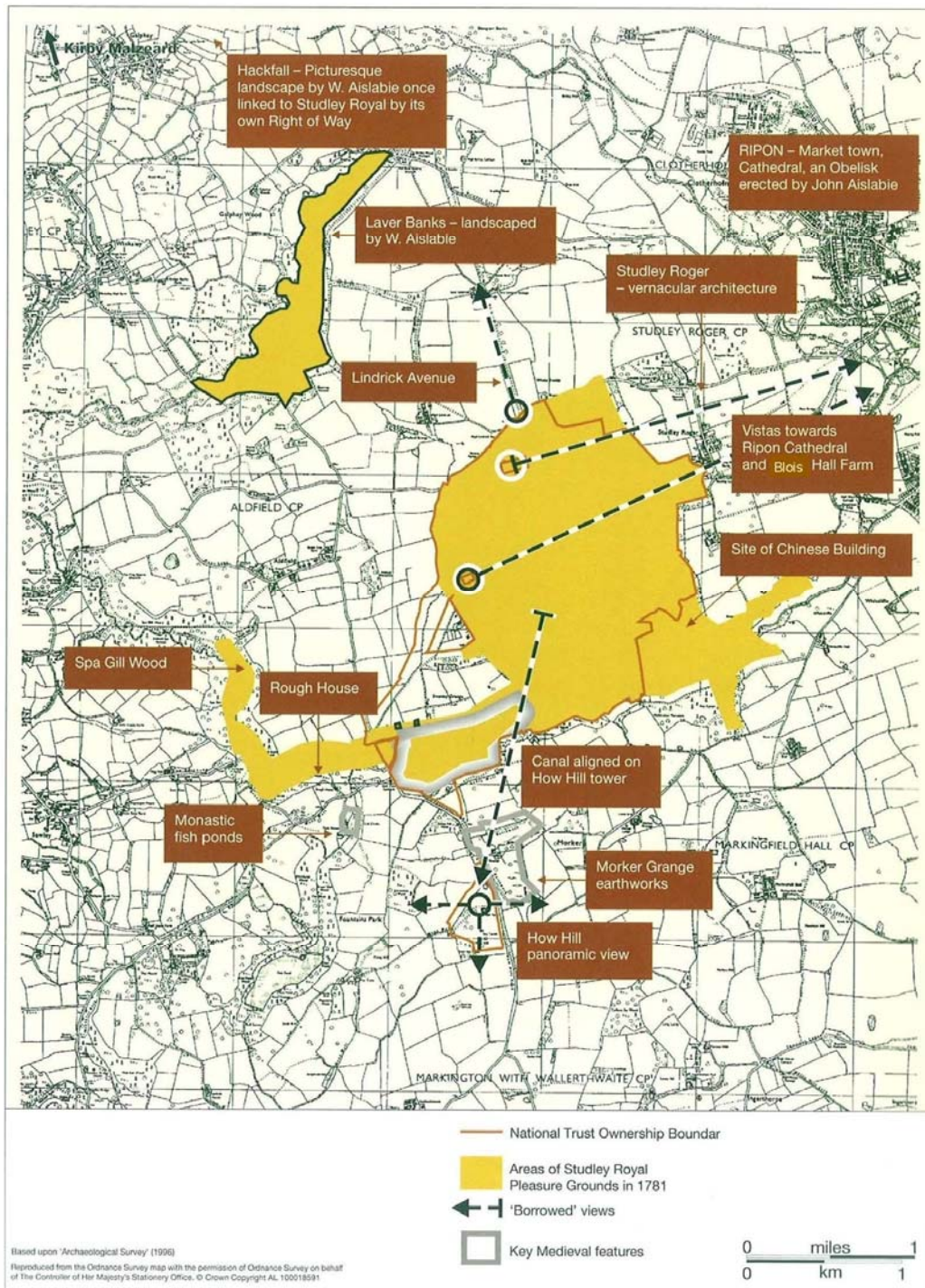


Figure 1 – Key features outside the World Heritage Site Boundary (Source: World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-2014)

b) The buffer zone also primarily aims to protect the visual setting of the designated World Heritage Site.

c) A third issue affecting the proposed buffer zone boundary arose from understanding of visual envelopes. In general, the visual envelope is very tightly drawn with three significant exceptions. The first of these is the narrow, but critical, vista line from the main deer park avenue east to Ripon Cathedral and then beyond to Blois Hall Farm, crossing the city of Ripon. This is included within the proposed buffer zone. The second and third exceptions arise from the wide-sweep external vistas, obtained from the eastern side of the park, especially Gillet Hill, over the Vale of York to the North York Moors beyond, and from the summit of How Hill stretching to Selby and beyond. These views were key to the Aislabie design, but extend over areas too large to be contained within a buffer zone boundary. Their significance will be recognised elsewhere in the planning system.

The buffer zone does not seek specifically to include all the archaeological features associated with Fountains Abbey, although one section of the boundary is affected by protected archaeology associated with the abbey.

The following is a detailed description of the proposed buffer zone boundary. Key places referred to in the following description are shown on Map 3.

i) Galphay Bridge to Lime Kiln Wood

The northern extent of the boundary, at Galphay Mill Bridge, marks the point where the Aislabie route to Hackfall left the environs of Studley Royal. Historically, the estate owned Galphay Mill on the other side of the river; this is not recorded as a Picturesque detail in any surviving account, but may have functioned as such. The line initially follows the Studley Roger Parish boundary and road for administrative convenience, although its line also marks the limits of viewshed up the significant vista through Lindrick (framed, from within the park, by the Lindrick Gate). It then continues to follow the parish boundary along the slope crest marking the viewshed of the park to the north, running east to include Lime Kiln Wood. The planting of this wood today forms a valued component of the visual envelope, although it seems to be a post-1850 planting.



Figure 2 - The vista through Lindrick framed, from within the Park, by Lindrick Gate

ii) "Duck House"

The boundary next follows the B6265 to Bishopton bridge before turning SE to Mill Farm and continuing up the Skell to Hell Wath. This section effectively encloses the eastern side of the Duck House landholding. Historically this was owned and managed by the Studley Royal estate, but relatively little else is currently known of its developmental history, which probably owes more to its nineteenth century owners than it does to John and William Aislabie. By the 1830s, the estate's owner had a private drive from the park entrance to Bishopton Bridge through this land (marked today by lodge buildings). Its primary significance to the buffer zone today, though, is visual. This area formed the foreground of the designed views out of the park, seen along the main vista and Oak Avenue, as well as from the Belvedere on Gillet Hill, and more generally from the eastern park over the ha-ha'd section of park wall. Its character has been significantly affected (adversely as far as the original design is concerned) by tree planting in recent years.



Figure 3 - Spectacular views from Gillet Hill to Ripon Cathedral and the North York Moors beyond



Figure 4 - View along the Oak Avenue in the Deer Park focusing on Ripon Cathedral



Figure 5 - New tree planting in the proposed buffer zone between the Oak Avenue and Ripon Cathedral

The river forms a sensible boundary here as the limit of Aislabie designed landscape work. Modern development and riverside planting limit significance further to the east or north, with the exception of the vista through to the Ripon Cathedral.

iii) Hell Wath to Mackershaw Trough

The boundary follows the side of the Skell valley to join and follow Whitcliffe lane southwards. This takes in the banks of the Skell, which were part of the Aislabie design, with walks through at least as far downstream as Marl White Wood. Whitcliffe Lane marks the visual envelope as seen from inside the property (except from the summit of Gillet Hill) in this direction. The main route through Mackershaw Trough exited the estate onto the lane (providing potential access to Ripon) and it also marked the southern limit of woodland planting at Mackershaw, indicating that it was an original boundary to the designed landscape at this point.



Figure 6 - View of the Seven Bridges Valley and Chinese Wood, probably Balthasar Nebot in the c. 1750s showing paths along the Skell Valley.

iv) Mackershaw Trough to How Hill

In this section, Whitcliffe Lane marks both the limit of the viewshed into and out of the World Heritage Site and a clear landscape feature to form the southern limit of the buffer zone. The lane bisects the well documented agrarian holding of the abbey, but this was not a material consideration for present purposes. For part of this section the designed landscape had a clear boundary further to the north in the form of the park wall at Mackershaw, but even this benefited from the backing of the woodland between it and the lane. To the west of this point, the agrarian fields themselves formed the backdrop to views out of the Skell Valley.

v) How Hill and Fountains Park

The boundary follows field margins around the skirt of How Hill, which can now be clearly seen as an outlying element of the Aislaby designed landscape. Since 1986 it has been discovered that the Tower originated as the first building of the Water Gardens (predating any others by around a decade) operating as an eyecatcher for the vista line along the main canal. While the whole of the hill's enclosure was managed as the setting for this building, it does not appear to have been linked to the main gardens by designed landscape, the contrast offered by intervening agrarian usage clearly being part of the intended aesthetic effect.

The physical mass of the hill forms the south-western limit of the main viewshed.

To the south-west of How Hill, the boundary follows the outline of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the wall of the abbey's hunting ground of Fountains Park. There are views into this area from within the main World Heritage Site, and it is this rather than the administrative lead of the protected archaeology that suggests this boundary.



Figure 7 - How Hill tower



Figure 8 - View of Lake and Water Gardens along the canal with How Hill in the background, Balthasar Nebot, c.1750s



Figure 9 - Aerial photo of How Hill tower and surroundings



Figure 10 - Looking to the east from How Hill towards Whitcliffe Lane which forms the southern boundary of the buffer zone.



Figure 11 - View of Huby's Tower and St Mary's Church steeple looking north from How Hill

vi) Spa Gill

From Fountains Park, the boundary turns north-west to follow the southern crest of Spa Gill. The boundary both follows the visual envelope of the core areas of the World Heritage Site and also the edge of a short lived but significant extension of the designed landscape along Spa Gill. Only part of the valley fell into Aislabie hands, the rest belonging to Lord Grantham, though pleasant rides through the whole were apparently possible.



Figure 12 - View looking to the west showing Spa Gill woods



Figure 13 - View along Spa Gill

vii) Horsley Gate to the River Laver

This section of boundary follows a stream course and present woodland boundaries to connect with section viii). The buffer zone was extended beyond the visual envelope in this area to completely include Aldfield Parish and follows the parish boundary. This approach follows ICOMOS guidance that advises buffer zones fit in with existing designations or clear physical boundaries.

viii) Ings Bridge to Galphay Bridge

This section follows the river Laver at the foot of the steep north-west facing valley side of the river. This line extends outside the visual envelope of the core property, as research has shown that William Aislabie managed the wooded slopes at Laver Banks as a third section of designed landscape, on the route from Studley Royal to Hackfall. The Jeffery's map of 1775 shows woodland dissected by meandering paths on the east bank of the Laver, while another source mentions a timber bridge, possibly either Ings or Galphay, but more likely a private one, between the two. In reality the designed landscape here would have integrally included the views north and west out into the agrarian landscape, but given how little is known about the details of the design, it is impossible to put a western boundary on the relevant viewshed, the river itself being the more justifiable boundary.



Figure 14 - Thomas Jefferys, Map of Yorkshire, detail showing Studley Royal, 1775

viii) The buffer zone includes the crucial vista from the deer park to Ripon Cathedral and on to Blois Hall Farm. The vista was part of the early landscape phase of the deer park at the end of the 17th century. Framed by Studley Gate and a formal lime avenue, the vista extends outside the boundary to Ripon Cathedral and then beyond to Blois Hall Farm. Protection of this view is critical to the protection of the outstanding universal value of the site.



Figure 15 - View to the east down the deer park avenue with Studley Gate and Ripon Cathedral



Figure 16 - 18th century painting (possibly by Balthasar Nebot) of the Lime Avenue with view of Ripon Cathedral

3. Justification for the Buffer Zone

The establishment of a buffer zone together with an appropriate policy framework within the Harrogate Local Development Framework (LDF) will help ensure that planning decisions around the World Heritage Site fully consider the potential impact which they might have upon those elements which contribute to the site's outstanding universal value. By this means it helps to ensure that important views and vistas and the wider setting of the World Heritage Site are appropriately managed.

It should also be noted that the buffer zone does not represent, in spatial terms, the "setting" of the World Heritage Site. Whilst there may be some coincidence between the boundary of the buffer zone and certain areas which contribute to its setting, as the English Heritage Guidance Note *The Protection and Management of World Heritage Sites in England* points out, the setting of most World Heritage Sites will be substantially larger than the area encompassed within its buffer zone.

The advantages of identifying a buffer zone are:-

- a) A buffer zone provides the basis for the formal adoption of policies to protect the visual integrity of the site and also to protect outlying portions of the designed landscape and other features associated with Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey.
- b) For Planning Officers making decisions on planning applications, it provides a simple visual indication of the areas where the impact of new development upon the World Heritage Site may be an issue.
- c) For those preparing planning policy documents, it will help identify where sites which are being put forward for development may impact upon the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site.
- d) For developers, it will help them develop proposals and suggest mitigation measures which minimise the adverse impact upon the World Heritage Site
- e) For neighbouring landowners and communities it provides opportunity for partnership working to manage the area and develop projects to conserve the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site.

The identification of a buffer zone helps to provide increased "certainty" for those involved in managing change in the areas around the World Heritage Site.

4. Contribution to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value

The proposed buffer zone will make an important contribution to maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the property as set out in the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. Through policies included in Harrogate Borough Council's spatial plans, the Local Development Framework and associated documents, the buffer zone will specifically:-

- 1. Ensure the protection of views and vistas from within the World Heritage Site to the surrounding area, which were an important element of the Aislabies' design and therefore the site's outstanding universal value. Through inclusion in the buffer zone, these views and vistas will be protected from developments which

may obstruct, intrude on or detract from them. These include views from locations within the site including from Gillet Hill east to Ripon and the Moors, from How Hill to the surrounding countryside and the key designed vista down the deer park avenue to Ripon Cathedral and beyond to Blois Hall Farm. The significant views are shown on the map below which is taken from the *World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-2014*.

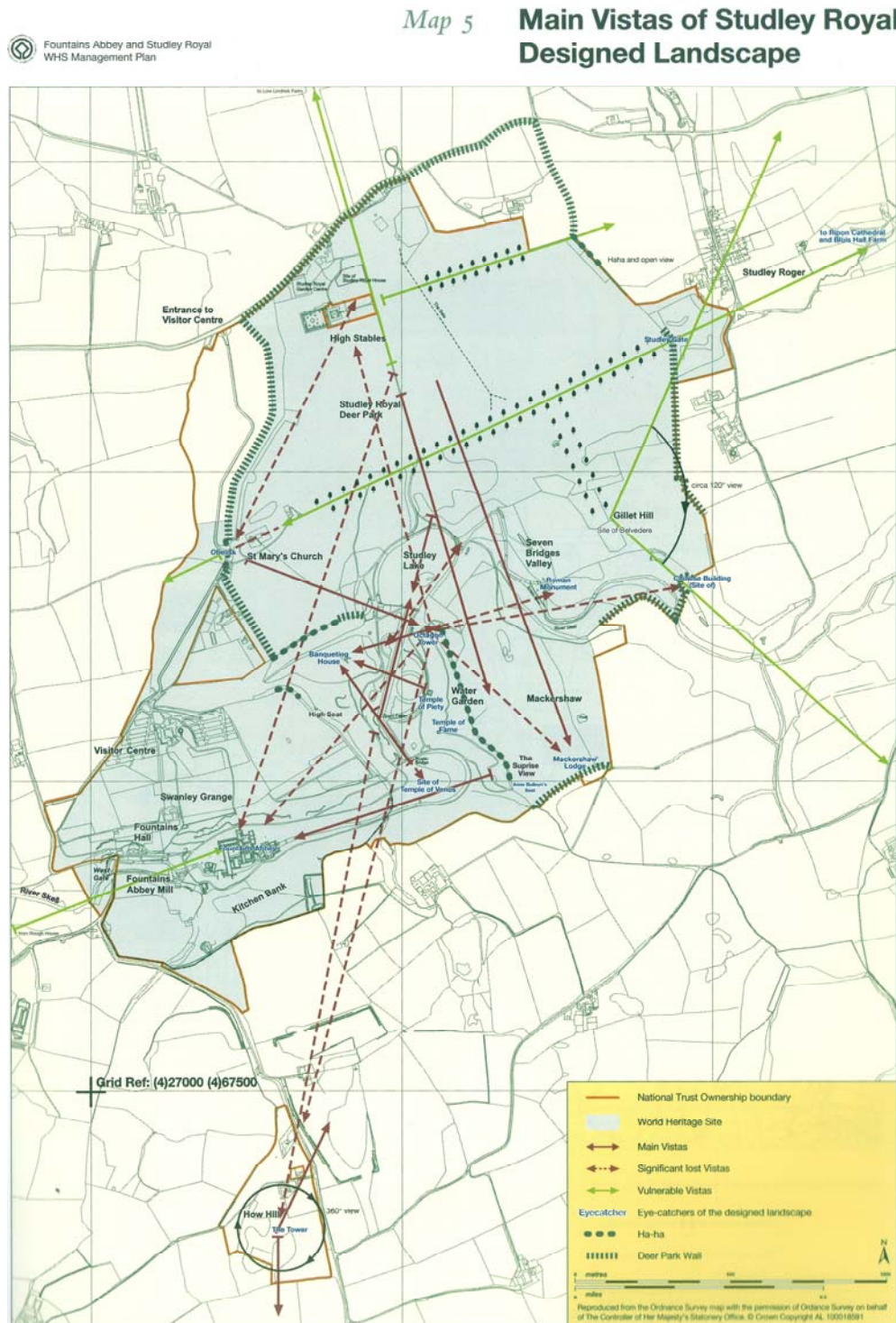


Figure 17 – Map of significant views taken from the World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-2014

2. Ensure consideration is given in planning decisions to outlying elements of the Aislabies designed landscape not currently within the World Heritage Site but within the proposed buffer zone. These important elements of the designed landscape lie outside the World Heritage Site boundary and may be vulnerable to change. The buffer zone would therefore protect the integrity of the wider historic estate. These areas include Spa Gill Woods, Chinese Wood, How Hill tower and Laver Bank. The significance of each of these sites to the 18th century designed landscape, a key element of the site's outstanding universal value, is set out in the detailed description in section 2.
3. Ensure that large and inappropriately sited developments do not impact negatively on the visual setting of the site, in particular the surrounding agrarian landscape which was an important aspect of the Aislabies' design and therefore the outstanding universal value of the site.



Figure 18 - Aerial view with the Fountains Abbey in the foreground showing the agrarian landscape providing a setting to the designed landscape

5. Implications for legal protection

The UK Government protects World Heritage Sites and their buffer zones in two ways. Firstly individual buildings, monuments, gardens and landscapes are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act and secondly through the UK Spatial Planning system under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The buffer zone is protected from inappropriate development by several statutory and non-statutory designations and will be given important additional consideration in planning decisions through the developing planning policies in the Harrogate Borough Council Local Development Framework.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

The UK Government is currently reviewing national planning guidance. At present national planning policy is set out in a series of government planning policy statements, guidance and circulars. Collectively this national policy framework seeks to ensure that planning facilitates and promotes sustainable, balanced and inclusive patterns of development that deliver active economic growth, improved social well being and robust protection of the environment. The government have decided to replace over 3000 pages of national planning guidance with one document of 52 pages. This National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will in future be the basic national guidance on the government's approach to spatial planning. Consultation on the draft NPPF finished last October so that its final form is not yet known.

The NPPF will replace PPS5, currently the principal guidance on the protection of the historic environment in England. The government have stated that protection of the historic environment will not be weakened by the NPPF. There are specific references to World Heritage properties. The document says that 'Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional' (paragraph 183). It also urges local authorities to 'look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance.... World Heritage Sites' (paragraph 188), and makes clear that World Heritage properties are designated heritage assets.

PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment (2010)

PPS5 sets out planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment consistent with the UK's obligations as signatory to the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Guidance to help practitioners to implement this is provided by the PPS5 Practice Guide. This carries governmental weight and is a material consideration in planning terms. The following policies recognise the importance of World Heritage Sites:

POLICY HE3: REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING APPROACHES

HE3.3 'Some individual heritage assets such as World Heritage Sites are likely to have regional significance in plan-making'.

POLICY HE9: ADDITIONAL POLICY PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR CONSENT RELATING TO DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

HE9.1 'There should be a presumption in favour of conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park and garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'

Planning Circular 07/09: Protection of World Heritage Sites (July 2009)

This circular published jointly the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Department for Cultural, Media and Sport, provides updated guidance on the protection and management of World Heritage Sites. It is supported by the English Heritage Guidance Note on the Protection of World Heritage Sites. The Circular makes clear the need for the protection of Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity and integrity of World Heritage Sites in England, to be achieved through local planning policies and decisions on individual planning proposals.

The Circular emphasises the need to protect the setting of World Heritage Sites as well as the Properties themselves. It defines the setting as 'the area around it (including the buffer zone as defined below) in which change or development is capable of having an adverse impact on the World Heritage Site, including an impact on views to or from the Site.'

Local Planning Policies

Harrogate Borough Council Local Development Framework

The National Trust and English Heritage, as site managers, have been working closely with Harrogate Borough Council, the Local Planning Authority, to ensure policies are adopted in the statutory planning framework for the district which gives the buffer zone, and therefore the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site itself, a level of protection. The Local Development Framework for Harrogate District comprises the adopted Core Strategy and the draft Sites and Policies Development Plan Document.

Harrogate District Core Strategy 2009

The Core Strategy was adopted by Harrogate Borough Council in February 2009. This is the key document within the Local Development Framework and set out the direction and strategy for development and conservation in the district up to 2021 and 2023 for housing. The Core Strategy includes Policy EQ2 which sets out the strategic policy for protecting the Natural and Built Environment which includes World Heritage Sites. The policy is as follows:

POLICY EQ2: THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN BELT

The District's exceptionally high quality natural and built environment will be given a level of protection appropriate to its international, national and local importance. In addition, more detailed protection and where appropriate enhancement measures will be applied through the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, relevant management plans and by working in partnership with landowners and interested parties.

Subject to the District's need to plan for new Greenfield development, the landscape character of the whole District will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.

The extent and detailed boundaries of the West Yorkshire and York Green Belts in the District will not be changed.

Where criteria based planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection, local

landscape designations will be identified:

- To protect the high quality of the landscape which is important to the setting of the towns of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon;
- To protect those 'green wedges' in Harrogate town which are an important part of its character and distinctiveness;
- To protect appropriate green space within the main built up areas of Group A, B, and C settlements listed in Policy SG2 of this Core Strategy.

Priority measures to protect and enhance the District's natural and built environment are to:

- Increase wildlife habitats and species in accordance with the District's Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Review and update the Council's local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation;
- Improve the condition of the District's Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Carry out appraisals of the District's Conservation Areas incorporating measures for the protection and enhancement of their special interest;
- Reduce the number of 'Buildings at Risk'; and
- Ensure that new development incorporates high quality locally distinctive design.

Harrogate District Draft Sites and Policies Development Plan Document with Proposals Map 2011

The *Harrogate District Sites and Policies Development Plan Document* (DPD) identifies site allocations and policies to manage development for the district up to 2021 and 2023 for housing. The buffer zone will be made effective because policies for its protection are included in the draft DPD. The proposed buffer zone boundary is also shown on the Proposals Map which forms a key element of the DPD. The buffer zone boundary shown in the DPD does not include the vista to Blois Hall Farm.

A copy of the Plan including the Proposals Map is enclosed. The policy is as follows:

POLICY EQ4: DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Proposals for development should protect and where possible enhance the significance, integrity, character and appearance of the following designated heritage assets and their setting:

EQ4a: Studley Royal Park, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site

EQ4b: Studley Royal Park, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site Buffer Zone

EQ4c: Conservation Areas

EQ4d: Historic Parks and Gardens

EQ4e: Historic Battlefields

EQ4f: Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Listed Buildings

The justification to the policy states that 'new development within the WHS or affecting its setting should incorporate the highest standard of landscape and architectural design. There will be a strong presumption against tall or very large buildings within the WHS or its visual setting' (para 6.17). It also states that 'development within the buffer zone that would adversely affect the significance of

the WHS, and particularly affecting key views, will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances' (para 6.18).

The DPD went out to public consultation in September 2011 for 8 weeks. The public consultation was led by Harrogate Borough Council. A Statement of Consultation is enclosed. There were no objections to the buffer zone and three representations of support from English Heritage, the National Trust and Ripon Civic Society. These organisations asked for the buffer zone to be amended to include the vista from the Deer Park Avenue to Ripon Cathedral and beyond to Blois Hall Farm. In response to these comments Harrogate Borough Council are proposing to amend the boundary to include the vista to Blois Hall Farm within the buffer zone. They will be consulting on this amendment in spring 2012.

Harrogate Borough Council is intending to hold the Public Examination on the Development Plan Document in August 2012 and looking at adoption of the Plan in 2013. However, the proposed buffer zone is already given weight in planning decisions through its inclusion in the Draft Development Plan Document.

Harrogate District Local Plan – Saved Policy Version September 2007

While the Local Development Framework is being developed a number of policies are still in place from the Harrogate District Local Plan 2001. These include the policy for World Heritage Sites which is as follows:

Policy HD7 – World Heritage Site
Development within the World Heritage Site of Studley Royal Park and Fountains Abbey will only be permitted in very exceptional circumstances where there is no adverse effect on the cultural, natural and man made interest which led to the site's designation and either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. It is required to enhance the interpretation of the site's cultural, natural and man-made interest for visitors; orB. It is essential for the management of the site or of visitors to the site. The Council will encourage appropriate conservation and restoration measures.
The setting and views of the site are protected by policies C2 and HD7A of this Plan and will be afforded the strictest protection.

Statutory Designations

There are a range of statutory designations on landscapes and historic features within the buffer zone which offer these areas and elements statutory protection. These are shown on Map 4.

Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The inscribed World Heritage Site and the western and southern areas of the buffer zone lie within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The landscapes and scenic qualities of AONBs share the highest level of protection with National Parks; the Countryside and Rights of Way Act of 2000 imposes a duty care on all organisations whose activities have an impact on AONBs to maintain natural beauty. The area of the buffer zone which lies within the AONB has a higher level of protection in terms of its landscape qualities than the area directly to the

north of the World Heritage Site and between the site and Ripon which are outside the AONB.

Registered Park and Garden

Parks and gardens of national importance are listed in the English Heritage Register of Park and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey is Grade 1. The boundary of the Registered Park and Garden extends beyond the inscribed World Heritage Site and into the buffer zone to include Lindrick Avenue, Chinese Woods, Wheatbrigs House and the route extending east from the site to Bishopton Bridge in Ripon.

Listed Buildings

A range of buildings and structures in the buffer zone are listed under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as buildings of special architectural and historic interest. These include important buildings associated with the Aislabies landscape including Wheatbrigs House, Rough House and How Hill Tower.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the buffer zone, principally relating to the monastic complex of Fountains Abbey. These sites are protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Most of the scheduled sites lie in the south eastern area of the buffer zone.

Conservation Areas

Local Authorities have a duty to designate 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' as conservation areas under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There is one Conservation Area within the buffer zone which covers the historic village of Studley Royal.

6. Implications for management arrangements

Land Ownership

The National Trust purchased the Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Estate (674 acres) from North Yorkshire County Council in 1983. Since then the National Trust has extended its holding, acquiring How Hill, a major feature of the Aislabie estate. How Hill lies outside the inscribed World Heritage Site but within the proposed buffer zone.

The buffer zone is largely agricultural land and almost wholly in private ownership. It includes the small villages of Aldfield and Studley Roger. The National Trust owns 6 houses in Studley Roger and 1 in Aldfield. Most the dwellings within the buffer zone are in private ownership. There are a number of large landowners who manage the land in the buffer zone. The adjoining landowners are all part of the World Heritage Site Management Plan Consultative Group and were key stakeholders in development of the Plan which includes the buffer zone proposal.

World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-2014

The World Heritage Site Management Plan includes clear objectives and actions for adopting a buffer zone around the inscribed World Heritage Site. The Plan recognised that the setting of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal extends beyond the boundary of the World Heritage Site and incorporates a number of vistas which

need to be protected, most notably the borrowed view of Ripon Cathedral which can be seen from St Mary's Church. It also recognised the impact of development on hydrology and water courses which form such a strong feature of the estate. Any development upstream likely to affect the water course would also impact on the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site. It recognised that the peaceful rural setting surrounding the World Heritage Site is an important aspect of its character and an ongoing priority is to maintain this by continuing to work with neighbouring landowners and partner organisations.

Excerpt from the World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-2014

Issue 4: Protecting the setting and ensuring that the WHS boundary is adequate

Ensuring the setting of the WHS is protected continues to be a high priority and an ongoing issue. At present, a buffer zone* has been proposed but has not been adopted by Harrogate Borough Council. The adoption of the buffer zone* is being pursued by the National Trust and English Heritage to ensure the long-term protection of the landscape features that are outside of the World Heritage Site boundary. This buffer zone*, when adopted, will strengthen the statutory and non-statutory protections that are currently afforded to the site.

Long-term Objective E: Ensure the boundaries of the WHS include the area that give the site its universal significance*, establish a buffer zone* to protect the WHS overall and protect the landscape setting.

6 year key actions:

E1 Ensure the WHS and its universal significance* is protected through the Local Development Framework*

E2 Establish a buffer zone* in the Local Development Framework* and clarify the WHS boundary

E3 Continue to foster good relationships with the planning authorities and neighbouring landowners

E4 Ensure the National Trust and English Heritage are consulted on planning applications within the buffer zone*

E5 Maintain the balance between requirements of the designed landscape and other conservation practice.

The World Heritage Site Steering Group recently published a newsletter for stakeholders and local communities setting out some of the recent projects in the World Heritage Site which included an article on the buffer zone and the implications for landowners and developers. A copy was sent to all stakeholders, including the major landowners and local parish councils. The buffer zone will provide opportunities for joint working with surrounding landowners to encourage management of the areas in a way which would conserve and enhance the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site itself. Positive management of the buffer zone plays a key role in enhancing outstanding universal value as some agricultural developments and tree planting, which can have significant impacts on the outstanding universal value of the site, fall outside the control of the planning system.

The buffer zone also provides opportunities to work with surrounding landowners and local communities to develop projects to conserve and enhance those areas which were part of the original Aislabie landscape such as Chinese Wood and Spa Gill.

The World Heritage Steering Group, which comprises English Heritage and the National Trust, will continue to engage with the wider consultative group as part of

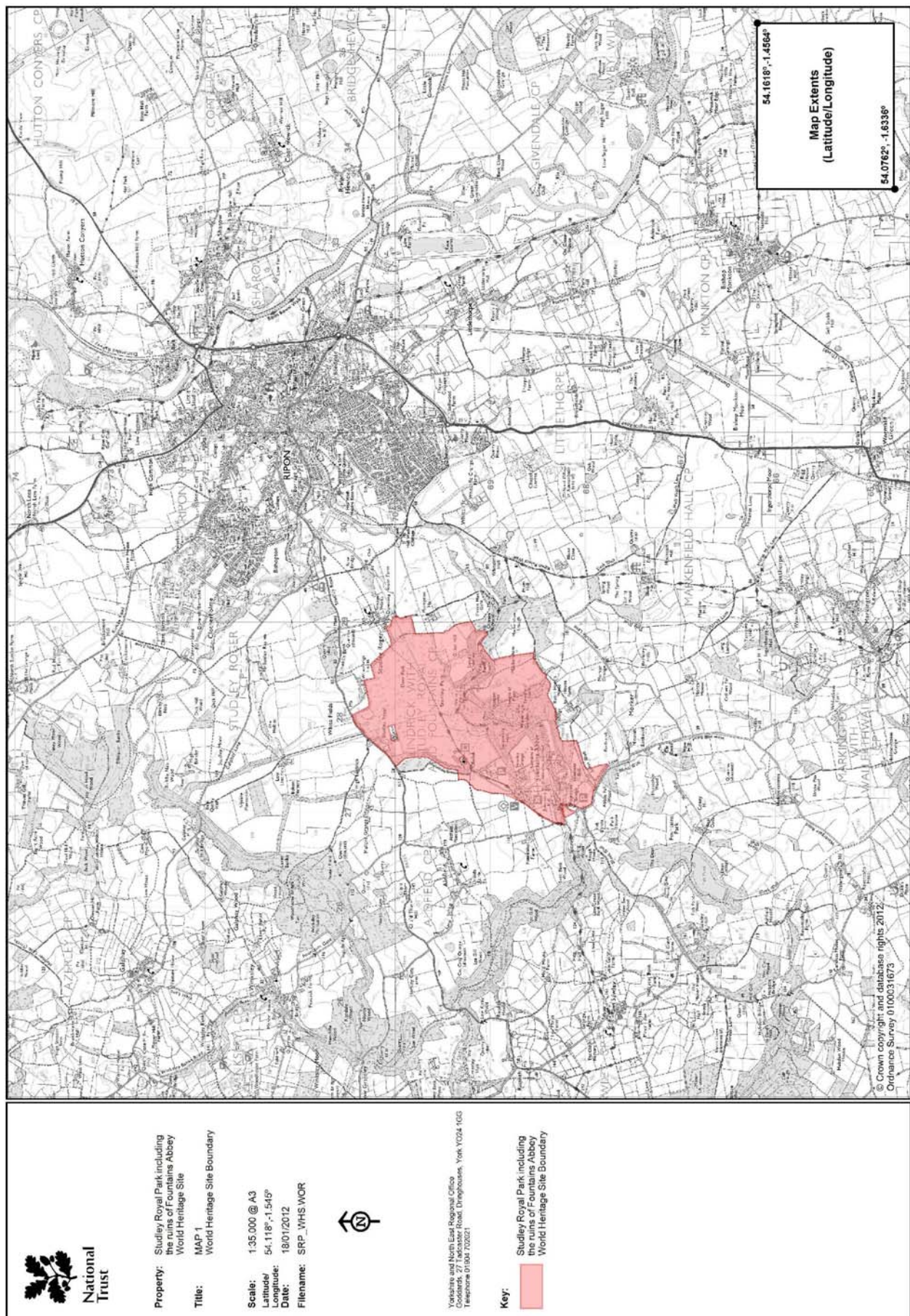
development of management proposals in the World Heritage Site and buffer zone, through annual stakeholder events and in future reviews of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.

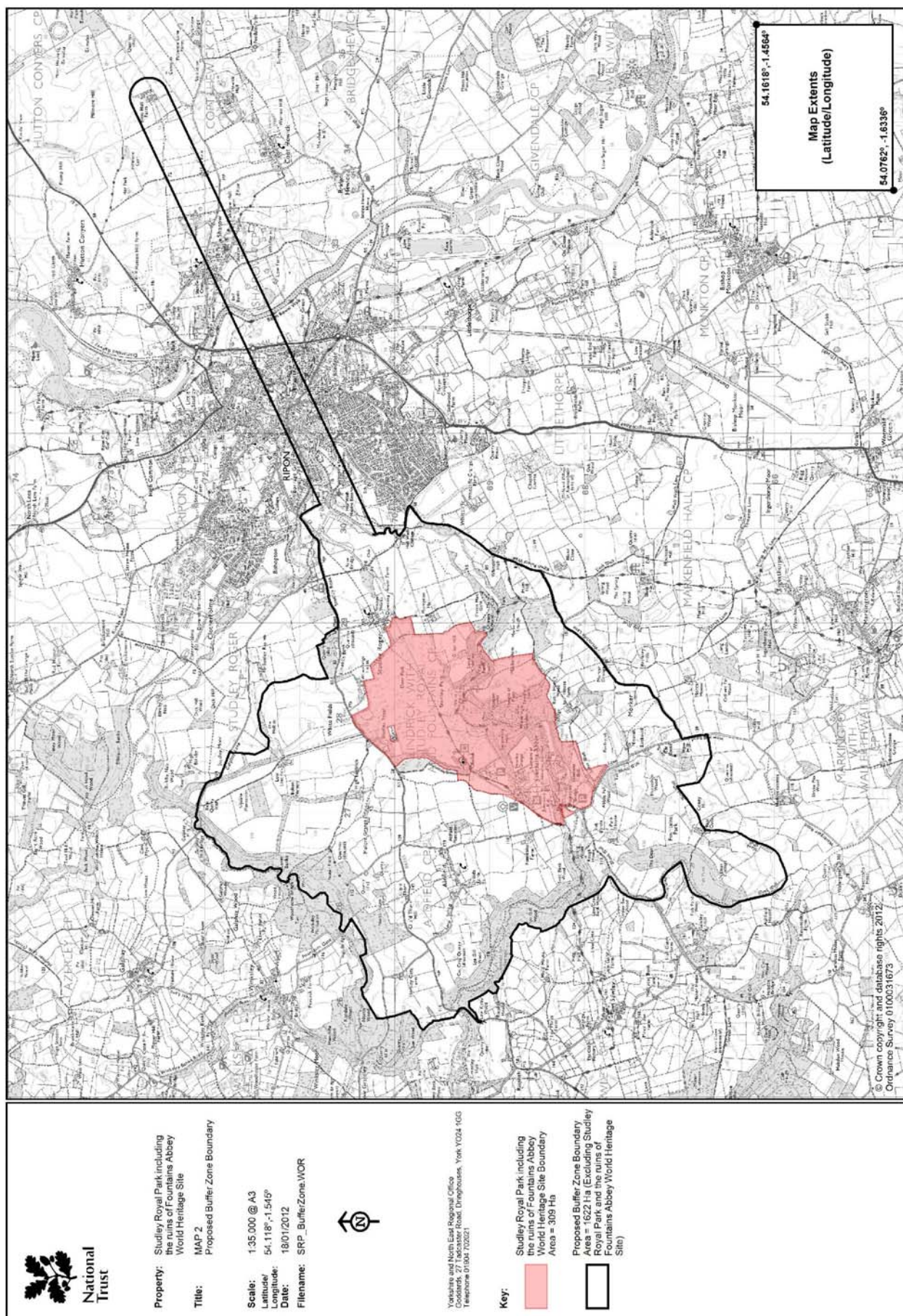
CONCLUSIONS

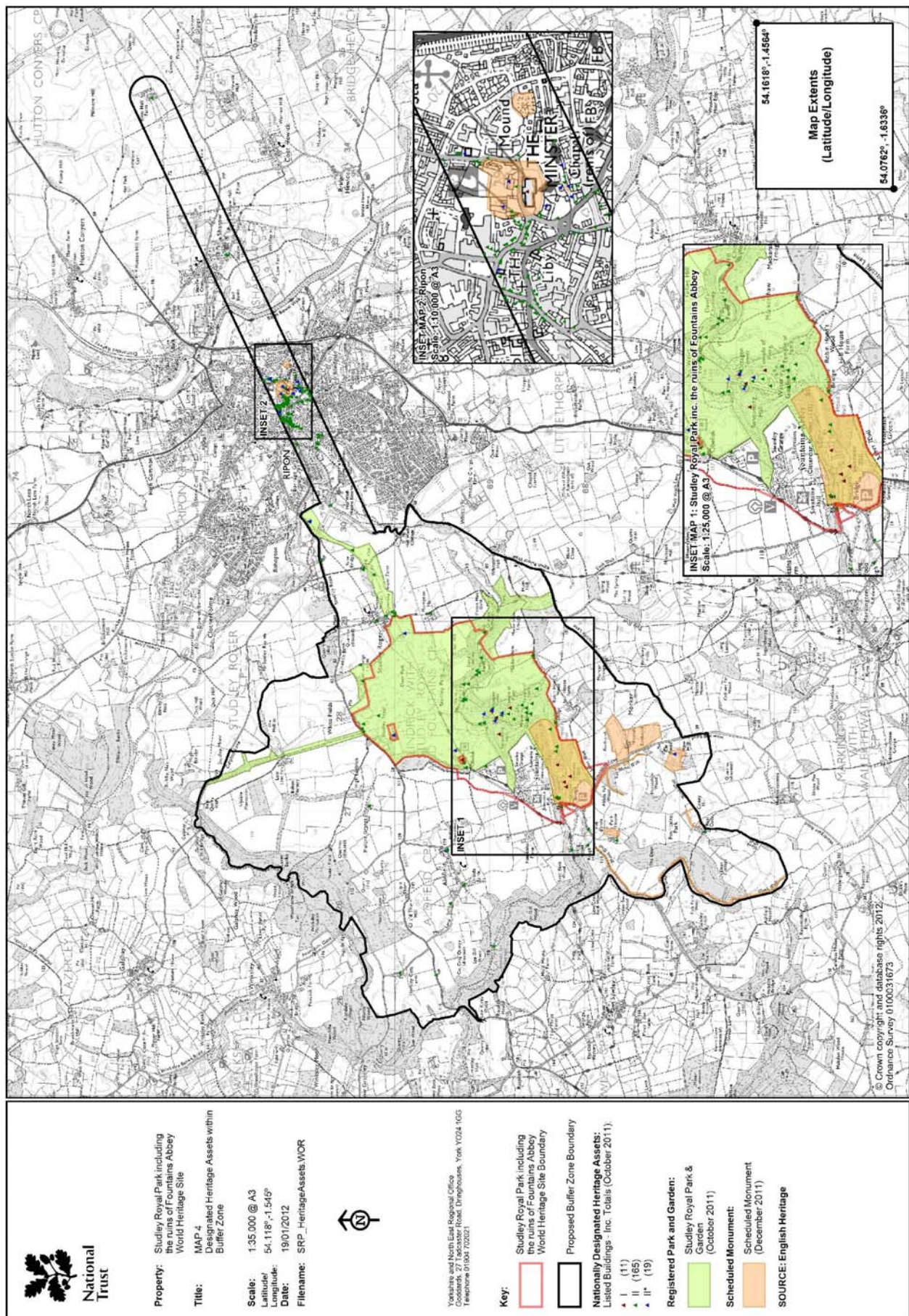
In conclusion, the current international and national policy framework and guidance support the requirement for buffer zones where they are necessary to ensure the conservation of the World Heritage Site. There is also a clear commitment to a buffer zone within the current World Heritage Site Management Plan. It is clear that developments outside the tightly drawn boundary of the World Heritage Site can impact adversely on the outstanding universal value of the site itself. The proposed buffer zone boundary is therefore primarily aimed at protecting the visual setting of the World Heritage Site and those components of the monastic precinct and Aislaby designed landscape that current research suggests should have been included in the World Heritage Site boundary. The buffer zone also seeks to protect the vista line from the main deer park avenue east to Ripon Cathedral and beyond to Blois Hill Farm. The buffer zone will be made effective because appropriate policies for its protection are included in the Harrogate Borough Local Development Framework.

7. Maps

MAP 1	World Heritage Site Boundary
MAP 2	Proposed Buffer Zone Boundary
MAP 3	Key Features referred to in the Proposed Buffer Zone Description
MAP 4	Designated Heritage Assets







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