

UNITED KINGDOM

Maritime Greenwich

Brief description

The ensemble of buildings at Greenwich, an outlying district of London, and the park in which they are set, symbolize English artistic and scientific endeavour in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Queen's House (by Inigo Jones) was the first Palladian building in England, while the complex that was until recently the Royal Naval College was designed by Christopher Wren. The park, laid out on the basis of an original design by André Le Nôtre, contains the Old Royal Observatory, the work of Wren and the scientist Robert Hooke.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1997

Agency responsible for site management

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2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (i) (ii) (iv) (vi)

Justification as provided by the State Party

a) General

Maritime Greenwich is put forward for inclusion in the World Heritage List because it is considered that it meets several of the criteria for 'outstanding universal value'. It is argued that the Renaissance and Baroque compositions of the Queen's House and the Royal Naval College represent masterpieces of human creative genius, that these buildings and their park setting had a seminal impact on developments in architecture and landscape design in Britain, and that the cultural, architectural, maritime, and scientific developments embodied in these buildings together form an ensemble of outstanding universal significance. The whole site is in a good state of preservation, having suffered little from demolition, rebuilding or reconstruction. Its authenticity in design, material,

workmanship, and setting is well documented. There are firm legislative and policy controls in place to ensure that its fabric and character and setting will be preserved in the future.

b) The Queen's House by Inigo Jones and plans for the Royal Naval College and key buildings by Sir Christopher Wren as masterpieces of creative genius (Criterion i)

Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren are acknowledged to be among the greatest architectural talents of the Renaissance and Baroque periods in Europe. Their buildings at Greenwich represent high points in their individual architectural oeuvres and, taken as an ensemble, the Queen's House and Royal Naval College complex is widely recognised as Britain's outstanding Baroque set piece.

Inigo Jones was one of the first and the most skilled proponents of the new classical architectural style in England. On his return to England after having travelled extensively in Italy in 1613-14 he was appointed by Anne, consort of James I, to provide a new building at Greenwich. The history and development of this are discussed in greater detail above. The Queen's House represents a striking departure from the medieval and Tudor architectural forms which preceded it, and this building exerted sustained influence over the development of classical architecture in this country over at least two centuries.

Jones was influenced strongly by Palladio's use of classical proportion and by the simplicity of his buildings. In Jones's designs for the Queen's House, these ideas were refined over 20 years to produce a restrained Renaissance villa which demonstrated for the first time in Britain the use of proportion and classical decoration. The impact of the building at the time cannot be underestimated. Compared to contemporary medieval and Tudor buildings, the Queen's House, with its cubic form, rusticated ground floor, loggia, roof hidden behind a balustrade, and carefully positioned and proportioned windows, was revolutionary. Only two other buildings by Jones now survive: the Banqueting House, Whitehall, and the Queen's Chapel, St James's Palace. The Queen's House stands out as Jones's earliest surviving design and the direct inspiration for classical villas and houses for the next two centuries.

Sir Christopher Wren's contribution at Greenwich was to produce a master plan and designs for the Royal Naval College complex. The history and development of these buildings is set out above. Wren's contribution to English Baroque architecture

through his buildings at Greenwich, St Paul's Cathedral, the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, Hampton Court Palace, and the City Churches marks him as one of England's most gifted and influential architects and certainly its best known. Greenwich stands out in Wren's work because of the scale and grandeur of the complex, and because of his skilful response to the unique topography of the site and to the constraints of the existing buildings. His task was to create a Royal Naval Hospital on the pattern of Les Invalides at Paris which would incorporate John Webb's King Charles building, and provide an appropriate setting for the Queen's House. The resulting complex is regarded as the most important Baroque ensemble in Britain.

c) be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history (Criterion iv)

Maritime Greenwich stands out from other sites of its kind in Britain for several reasons. No other site contains so many outstanding Baroque buildings by the foremost architects of their day; the whole ensemble demonstrates in built form the impact of two centuries of royal patronage; the town which grew up at the gates of the royal palace is an authentic illustration of three centuries of growth and adaptation, and still retains rare survivals from the seventeenth century; and the area can demonstrate tangible links with three centuries of scientific and maritime developments of national and international importance (see below).

Beyond the individual contributions of gifted architects like Jones and Wren, the place of Greenwich in the architectural heritage of Europe is assured because of the presence of buildings by the most notable Baroque architects and artists in Britain. Individual building histories are set out in greater detail above. No other site in Britain can claim works by John Webb, Sir Christopher Wren, Nicholas Hawksmoor, Colen Campbell, Thomas Ripley, Sir John Vanbrugh, and Sir James Thornhill. The main concentration of their work is in the Queen's House and Royal Naval College complex, but important works are also to be found in and around the Park (the Observatory, Vanbrugh Castle) and in the town (St Afegge's Church).

Many of these buildings can be directly attributed to the very active royal patronage which Greenwich has enjoyed since the Tudor period. No other site can demonstrate so effectively the impact of royal patronage on the development of architecture in this country from 1600 onwards. The role of the Stuarts as patrons of architecture is well

documented above. The development of the Royal Naval College is intimately connected with the reigns of William and Mary and the Hanoverians.

George I landed at Greenwich for his accession to the throne in 1714 and was given a reception in the Queen's House. In 1736 the marriage of the Prince of Wales, father of George III, to Augusta, Princess of Saxe Gotha, great-grandmother of Queen Victoria, was celebrated here. In 1806 the house became the Naval Asylum School, subsequently incorporated into the Royal Hospital School. It now forms part of the National Maritime Museum, housing some of the best of the Museum's rich collection of seascapes, topographical views, and royal portraits. Nearby is Nixon's statue of William IV, and in the court of the former Royal Naval Hospital, between the Ring Charles and Queen Anne buildings, is Rysbrack's statue of George II.

Despite the fact that it is no longer in direct royal ownership, the royal connection with Greenwich has continued strongly up to the present day. King George VI opened the National Maritime Museum in 1937. As Patron of the Hospital Trust, Queen Elizabeth II attended the reopening of the Queen's House in 1990, following its restoration. The naval connections of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and HRH The Duke of York have ensured a continuing royal involvement with the Royal Naval College and the Royal Hospital School.

d) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas or with beliefs, with artistic or literary works of outstanding universal significance (Criterion vi)

Before the building of the Royal Observatory, the Greenwich area had been the location for a number of technical and manufacturing endeavours. King Henry VIII built his dockyards nearby at Deptford to the west and Woolwich to the east, and at Greenwich itself he established the Royal Armouries. Here also, in the seventeenth century, was an ordnance laboratory and testing ground, as well as a 'fireworks house', the latter set appropriately at the furthestmost point of the royal park, to store explosives for use in courtly displays.

It is, however, for its role in the development of navigation - crucial for a maritime nation and for the establishment of the sea power necessary to sustain a global empire - that Greenwich is best known. It was here, in the Royal Observatory founded by King Charles II in 1675, that the mapping of the stars, the basis of positional astronomy, was begun in a building designed by a former Professor of Astronomy, Sir Christopher Wren. The first Astronomer Royal, John Flamsteed,

is depicted in Thornhill's work in the Painted Hall of the Royal Naval College. He established, within the limits of the technology then available, that the Earth rotated at an even rate, and thereafter fixed the precise positions of stars. This knowledge permitted the accurate measurement of the earth and helped to find the solution to the 'longitude problem' which, it was recognised internationally, would be a great boon to navigation and sea power, capable of bringing immense wealth and empire to the nation which found the solution. Flamsteed House was the residence of all the Astronomers Royal from 1675-1948. Other great names such as Edmond Halley, famous for accurately predicting the return in 1758 of the comet which now bears his name, and Nevil Maskelyne, who in the eighteenth century calculated the weight of the earth, have lived here. The house is now part of the Old Royal Observatory branch of the National Maritime Museum; it contains one of the finest collections of scientific instruments in the world, including telescopes, astrolabes, sundials, and clocks, some dating from the seventeenth century.

From Flamsteed's pioneering work, the Observatory at Greenwich established and maintained a prominent role in astronomy and time reckoning. The Observatory became the home of the Prime Meridian (the north-south line upon which sighting instruments or telescopes are set) and of Greenwich Mean Time, the basis for the International Time Zone system. All time and space is measured in relation to longitude zero, defined by the transit circle telescope in the Meridian Building of the Greenwich Observatory.

James Bradley, the third Astronomer Royal, built a new Observatory at Greenwich in 1749. He made two very important astronomical discoveries. He explained that the position of some stars appeared to change throughout the year because the Earth itself was moving around the sun. He also noticed that the Earth wobbled on its own axis due to the gravitational pull of the Moon, and that this 'nutration' went through a nineteen-year cycle. The meridian defined by Bradley's new telescope was used by cartographers as longitude 0° and remained the official Prime Meridian of Britain until 1850, when the seventh Astronomer Royal, Sir George Biddell Airy, built a new Transit Circle in the room adjoining Bradley's instrument. In 1766 Maskelyne published The nautical almanac with tables to allow navigators to calculate the time at Greenwich from the position of stars over their heads, an essential step towards finding longitude, a problem finally resolved through John Harrison's highly accurate timepieces.

On the roof above the Octagon Room of Flamsteed House the world-famous time-ball is a distinctive sight on the horizon. This ball rises half-way up its mast at five minutes to 13.00 hours Greenwich Mean Time, rises to the top three minutes later, then drops at the start of the time signal, to the sound of a cannon being fired. It was first erected in 1833 as a signal to navigators in the Thames. The present aluminium ball dates from 1919. On the wall adjacent to the gates of the Old Royal Observatory is the Shepherd Gate Clock, which has kept Greenwich Mean Time since its installation in 1851. It is one of the earliest examples of an electrically driven public clock. In 1880 Greenwich Mean Time formally became British Standard Time.

International agreement on the siting of longitude 0° and the timing of the Mean Solar Day from midnight at Greenwich was achieved at the International Meridian Conference held in 1884 in Washington DC, USA.

In recent years the advancement of navigational and positional aids as well as technical developments in means of propulsion, including nuclear, have been greatly forwarded by the professional, scientific, and technical staff of the Royal Naval College, the University of the Navy. Through their contribution, Greenwich has remained at the forefront of research and its practical application to seamanship. The College occupies the buildings founded in 1694 as the Royal Naval Hospital, a refuge for former seafaring men. The grandeur of the complex is itself an expression of maritime power and magnificence. British sea power in succeeding centuries was also served by the Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital, where important work was carried out on tropical diseases, and by the Royal Hospital School, where children were introduced to the Navy in the buildings that since 1937 have formed the National Maritime Museum, itself an affirmation of the central place which Greenwich occupies in British maritime history. Finally, there is the *Cutty Sark*, a restored tea clipper, the only one to survive, preserved in permanent dry dock near Greenwich Pier as an acknowledgement of the importance of the merchant navy in the maritime history of London and the Thames.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

Qualities: Maritime Greenwich is a unique ensemble of buildings and landscape of exceptional artistic value, the work of a number of outstanding architects and designers. The unquestioned value of the major architectural works is supported and enhanced by a series of smaller buildings that give

the ensemble a special character, and this, too, is heightened by the site itself, which reflects a understanding of the relationship between culture and nature over several centuries. At the same time, it is of considerable scientific significance by virtue of the contributions to astronomy and to navigation made by the Royal Observatory and by the Royal Naval College. The buildings in the town and around the Park reflect the domestic side of the society that produced the public masterpieces.

Recommendation: That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criteria i, ii, iv, and vi:**

The public and private buildings and the Royal Park at Greenwich form an exceptional ensemble that bears witness to human artistic and scientific endeavour of the highest quality, to European architecture at an important stage of its evolution, and to the creation of a landscape that integrates nature and culture in a harmonious whole.

Committee Decision

Bureau (June 1997): the Bureau recommended the Committee to inscribe this site on the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural criteria (i), (ii), (iv) and (vi). The public and private buildings and the Royal Park at Greenwich form an exceptional ensemble that bears witness to human artistic and scientific endeavour of the highest quality, to European architecture at an important stage of its evolution, and to the creation of a landscape that integrates nature and culture in a harmonious whole.

Session (1997): the Committee decided to inscribe this property on the basis of cultural criteria (i), (ii), (iv) and (vi), considering that the public and private buildings and the Royal Park at Greenwich form an exceptional ensemble that bears witness to human artistic and scientific endeavour of the highest quality, to European architecture at an important stage of its evolution, and to the creation of a landscape that integrates nature and culture in a harmonious whole. The Delegate of Morocco informed the Committee that he felt that the site did not justify criterion (i), and requested that it should not be mentioned

- The Statement of Significance is included in the management plan. The State Party will discuss and agree to a revised statement of outstanding universal value which will be submitted in due course for consideration by the World Heritage Committee

- Additional change proposed by State Party: UNESCO's official description of the site is inadequate

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: adequate (buffer zone redefined December 2004)

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- There has been a change to the authenticity/integrity of the site: use of Old Royal Naval College buildings for Maritime Greenwich University Campus; proposed tall buildings (outside Site and Buffer Zone)

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Historic building status for many properties, and conservation area status
- Change in ownership: establishment of Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College (head lease), subleasing to Greenwich University, Trinity College of Music, Greenwich Community College
- The protection arrangements are considered sufficiently effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, urban centre, religious use, Royal park, University campus

Management/Administrative Body

- Steering group formally set up on 01 January 1998 to promote Greenwich as a World Heritage site and to oversee the management of the World Heritage site by in particular establishing administrative arrangements, an annual plan of action and working groups as required to further the aims and objectives of the management plan
- Site manager on full-time basis
- Management under traditional protective measures or customary law; consensual management
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national; regional; local
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- New terms of reference and administration being developed: since its inscription on the

World Heritage List, the site has been administered through the first management plan containing an extensive action programme. This programme has now been largely implemented. For the next stages of the management of the site a review of the plan has been prepared, following on from the basic aims and objectives of the first plan. The enlargement of the steering group is also envisaged

- Timeframe: complete

5. Management Plan

- First management plan is complete (October 1998)
- Second plan completed: December 2004
- A series of projects are being undertaken to achieve goals set out for the Site for 2004-2009, including promotion and awareness-raising, setting down guidelines for the management of the World Heritage site and the buildings and the land within it, establishing a programme of works and projects that will enhance the World Heritage site, identifying how the economic and cultural benefits of the Inscription of the World Heritage site can be used, suggesting how a sustainable and environmentally beneficial approach may be taken
- Effective
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Maritime Greenwich World Heritage site steering group.

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- Funding sources not provided
- World Heritage site executive partners and other local partners to fund the World heritage site marketing plan. Other sources include: UK Heritage lottery Fund, UK Single Regeneration Budget
- No funding drawn in through the World Heritage Fund
- Sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 1
- Help from English Heritage conservation architects

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Good: conservation, management, promotion
- Average: interpretation; education; visitor management
- Staff resources are adequate
- Volunteers from Friends of Greenwich Park, Greenwich Guides, tourist information centre, World Heritage site, visitor centre (Greenwich Foundation)

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Staff training: National Maritime Museum (artifact conservation and various) Greenwich University (Architecture and various) Greenwich Community College (Heritage management and various)
- Training on site management for stakeholders

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 6,800,000 in 2003. Trend: upward
- Visitor facilities: World Heritage site visitor centre, tourist information centre, Greenwich guides, WHS visitor maps, WHS visitor trail, entertainment guides. local attractions: Maritime Museum, Royal Observatory, fan museum, Town Centre facilities
- Visitor facilities are inadequate
- Visitor needs: improved visitor centre/interpretation, improved Intra-Site visitor management
- There is a tourism/visitor management plan for the site

10. Scientific Studies

- Is there an agreed research framework/strategy for the site? No answer provided
- Condition surveys; archaeological surveys; visitor management; transportation studies
- Conservation plans, conservation area appraisals, planning briefs for development sites, "MORI" survey, destination survey visitor projection study
- Studies used for management of site: MORI survey provided basis for WHS Marketing Group strategy-also brand image Visitor projection study assessing links with new visitor destination at Greenwich Peninsula

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- Not enough signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local authorities. Inadequate: local communities, businesses
- There is an education strategy for the site
- Need for awareness raising: a central information board or “marker” is needed giving details of the site along with more interpretation for visitors. These issues are currently being addressed as part of a wider scheme to improve communications
- Heritage days: “Green Fair Day” June 5- also World Environment Day
- Website available
- Local participation: local representation on WHS steering group

- Strengths of management: achievements are set out in the first review of the management plan, which will be submitted to the Centre shortly
- Weaknesses of management: traffic domination

Future actions:

- A range of actions in the revised management plan
- No WH Funding is sought. Timeframe: various

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

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Conservation interventions

- Repair of the Old Royal Naval College buildings to form university campus (Dreadnought building no longer an English Heritage “building at risk”).
- Present state of conservation: good

Threats and Risks to site

- Development pressure, visitor/tourism pressure
- Specific issues: visitor concentration/fabric damage at peak times, particularly Greenwich Park
- Emergency measures: management plan review (submitted along with Periodic Report for this site). Timeframe: various

13. Monitoring

- Formal monitoring programme
- Coordinator's quarterly report.

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic, management