



UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:
UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

(1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

MERTON PRIORY

(2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

LONDON UNITED KINGDOM

Grid reference to centre of site

TQ 2650 6990

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

(3) Type of Site

Please indicate category:

Natural Cultural Mixed Cultural Landscape

(4) Description

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

The site lies on the western side of the valley of the River Wandle. The present course of the Wandle probably represents a post Dissolution (ie mid 16th century) re-routing. Numerous branches of the Wandle crossed the site. The natural gravel lay at 12.50m OD.

The site was cleared for redevelopment in the 1980s and is now occupied by a supermarket and associated carpark, a trunk road, an electricity pylon and fast food outlets. Partial remains of Merton Priory are preserved and displayed under the trunk road.

The site is ugly.

(5) History

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

Merton Priory, a House of Augustinian Canons, was founded on the site in 1117. The Priory was dissolved in 1538. In 1236 King Henry III and his nobles, senior clerics and others held the first English Parliament at Merton Priory. At the Parliament the Statute of Merton was passed. This was England's first Statute Law.

In the 19th century the site was an industrial base, housing factories for William Morris and Liberty's. The site was the centre of the Arts and Crafts movement which influenced design in fabrics, ceramics, glass and metalwork across the world.

(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?
Give reasons. 200 words

It is the stated aim of the Global Strategy to produce a World Heritage List which is balanced. Merton Priory was the site of the first English Parliament where the first English Statute Law was passed. This form of government and the subsequent legislation has spread worldwide as a result of the British Empire and the USA.

The physical remains of Merton Priory are the locus of origin for one of the most significant developments in the evolution of global organisational systems. The process of Inscription would enable World Heritage Status to embrace the intangible global, cultural significance of the origin of modern state governance and the freedom of peoples. By Inscription as a World Heritage Site these tangible remains provide a point of focus to highlight the significance of this evolution.

(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words

From the first Parliament and first Statute Law sprang the systems of government and lawmaking which formed the basis of English government and legislature. These in turn form the basis of law within the Commonwealth and USA. More than 3 billion people live under systems born at Merton Priory. Other peoples have emulated these systems so this is of truly global importance.

The cultural significance of this site is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and is of importance for present and future generations of all humanity.

(8) Outstanding Universal Value

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The first Parliament of England was the beginning of a masterpiece of human creative genius: democracy. This creative and dynamic process took centuries to evolve, developing and moulding worldwide governance. In due course this would produce the Bill of Rights (UK 1689), the

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
		US Constitution (1787), the Indian Constitution (1949) and many others. That first Parliament at Merton initiated an extraordinary change in the process of government, transferring power from kings to the people. This powerful idea of just rule has been adopted widely across the world and emulated elsewhere, demonstrating the relentless need for governments to legitimise the power to rule.
(ii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Merton generated parliamentary and bi-cameral systems which have had a profound effect on the architecture of governance across the globe. This width of influence is clear. From the designs of the Palace of Westminster, the architecture of the US Capitol, the parliament in Hungary this is manifest and recognised. Furthermore the effect on architectural designs on other States outside the orbit of Britain and the USA has been profound. This has had a radical effect on architectural design and development.
(iii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The meeting of the first English Parliament and the passing of the first English Statute law is the core of legal and governmental systems which cover the globe. No other enlisted WHS can truly equal the importance of this site.
(iv)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(v)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(vi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In legal and governmental terms this site is the most important in the world. This site is truly global in importance. The first English Parliament and the passing of the first English Statute law formed the basis of an intangible structure which has provided world governance to the present day. No other site in the world can claim to have a superior right to Inscription.
(vii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(viii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ix)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

Elements of the structure of Merton Priory have survived in a damaged but recognisable form. The attributes (OG 82) most relevant to this site are the worldwide survival of the traditions established there with the intangible heritage of democratic governance and the rule of law.

(10) Integrity

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

The physical remains of Merton Priory have undergone considerable attrition since 1538. The integrity of the site is however not to be judged by mere stones in a wall but by the universal achievement of representative government and the rule of law initiated at Merton Priory.

(11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?

Yes No

If yes, please list. 100 words

As the origin of representative government and the rule of law there are no similar sites – Merton Priory is unique in the world.

Notably, however, Independence Hall, Philadelphia (USA), the Citadel of Sans Souci (Haiti) and the jail at Robben Island (South Africa) have all been designated as World Heritage Sites on the basis of intangible heritage and symbolism associated with freedom and the rule of just laws being inextricably associated with those sites.

(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?

150 words

This site is unique.

(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO's priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?

200 words

This site will provide essential balance to the World Heritage List by proposing a category of property which is under-represented. This intangible heritage affects virtually every person on the planet. The striking absence from the World Heritage List is the invisible structures and abstract ideas which regulate our lives – government and law. The inclusion of sites on the List noted above is a tacit acceptance that some sites are important because of what happened there not what is there now. Merton Priory is a vital addition to these sites of intangible heritage.

(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe. 100 words.

The Inscription is envisaged as a major component of a regeneration programme for a swathe of land around Merton Priory. It is proposed that following the clearance of modern intrusions a new university, workshops, cultural venues and recreational parkland will be created.

(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?

Yes No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please describe. 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed development will involve site clearance of modern structures, removal of a trunk road, an electricity pylon, construction of cultural and educational facilities
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	Decontamination of the site. Removal of modern overburden and extensive reinstatement of parkland within the Priory precinct.
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed upgrading and regeneration of the site will transform a dismal and threatening area into a haven of culture, grace and beauty.

(16) Legal Protection

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument lying within an Archaeological Priority Zone.

(17) Ownership

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

The site is in multiple ownership and the owners have not been identified at this stage.

Do the owners support the application? Yes No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

(18) Local Authority support for the site

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

London Borough of Merton: funded this applicant to prepare the submission. Due to political changes the current administration has withdrawn support for the application.

Greater London Authority: the Mayor's office is currently examining the proposals.

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes No Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

The site within the Colliers Wood Area of Opportunity as defined in the Unitary Development Plan adopted by LB Merton 2003 and Wandle Valley Conservation Area

The following policies are currently included in LB Merton Local Development Framework: Core Planning Strategy:

Policy CS1 (f)

Raise awareness of heritage assets including Merton Priory and Wandle Valley Conservation Area, protect archaeological sites and recognise their positive contribution to regeneration and new development.

Policy CS5 (g)

Protect archaeological sites and enhance conservation areas in the Wandle Valley and raise awareness of heritage including Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills

(19) Stakeholders

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

Residents of LB Merton / Merton Priory Trust / Merton Abbey Mills / Marks & Spencers / Sainsbury's / KFC / Pizzahut

(20) How will the Site be managed?

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

In line with the Management Plan (2003) adopted by LB Merton

(21) Funding: the nomination

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.
100 words

Potential benefactors have been identified for funding when the site has been nominated.

(22) Funding: management

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

Financial arrangements will be set in place following Inscription.

Name and Contact Details of Applicant

Name	Mills Whipp Projects Ltd
Status	Archaeological Consultancy
Address	40, Bowling Green Lane, London EC1R 0NE
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Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.