Understanding the Outstanding Universal Value of mining sites: evolving international approaches and their implications for reconsidering the World Heritage potential of the Victorian Goldfields

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Abstract

A review of World Heritage properties associated with mining activities has implications for any future World Heritage nomination for the Victorian Goldfields and in particular, previous proposals for inclusion of the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park on Australia’s Tentative List of World Heritage nominations. Recent inscriptions of mining sites are serial properties in which the components have been selected to reflect specific attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. These emphasise technical and social innovation, industrialisation and global economic changes that are associated with, or an outcome of mining. We argue that any future nomination for the Victorian Goldfields must consider both the strategies used by other successful industrial heritage nominations and a more robust evaluation of the international heritage values expressed by Victorian fabric.

Introduction

An analysis of recent World Heritage listings of mining sites demonstrates the changing nature of international approaches to industrial heritage. Understanding how the recognition and justification of Outstanding Universal Value is shaping the evaluation of World Heritage nominations provides a context for considering the future nomination of sites associated with Australia’s mining heritage. This is particularly the case when considering the relative international significance of places associated with Victoria’s gold rush heritage and specifically the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park (CDNHP) (Figure 1). Revisiting the potential for the Victorian Goldfields to meet the threshold for inscription on the World Heritage List is timely because the Australian Government has been updating Australia’s Tentative List and concurrently local councils and interested parties in the Central Goldfields region are generating public momentum for a World Heritage nomination (Meddows-Taylor n.d.).

In this paper we argue that recent approaches to the development of successful World Heritage nominations for mining sites have been influenced by the 2006 inscription of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape (United Kingdom 2006) which presented an innovative case for World Heritage nomination based on a serial listing of components explicitly selected to demonstrate a set of integrated attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. Since the mid-1990s an increasing number of World Heritage nominations for mining sites have taken a thematic approach in justifying the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. These nominations move beyond a focus on a specific site or technology, to consider mining landscapes and the social, cultural and technological systems or processes associated with mining or which mining activities initiated and/or sustained. The inscription of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape heralded a new stage in this evolution towards serial properties.
This has relevance for a future nomination of the Victorian Goldfields in several ways. The move away from a focus on technological achievements expressed at a single site more closely reflects the nature of the significance of the gold rush, which lies in its social and cultural consequences as much or more than in its technological advances. It also more closely reflects the dispersed, fragmentary and often ephemeral character of the surviving physical evidence of the early gold rush, much of which consists of the ruins of domestic sites, machinery footings, and land pockmarked by mine shafts surviving in the CDNHP. This archaeological evidence is best understood as elements of the gold rush landscape, the significance of which is more strongly evident when it can be explicitly connected with contemporary evidence in the nearby towns and infrastructure to more fully demonstrate the gold rush phenomenon. However as Lennon (1997) has argued, the Victorian Goldfields comprise many cultural landscapes that evidence the history of sequential occupation of the land and the evolution of social, cultural and technical systems associated with gold mining. A serial nomination for the Victorian Goldfields reflecting this history would make connections between these cultural landscapes and offers considerable potential for a revised and expanded nomination that would include several gold rush sites.

In the paper that follows we discuss previous work on World Heritage nomination for the CDNHP and then review recent inscriptions of mining sites on the World Heritage List before evaluating the new approaches taken in these nominations for a successful Victorian nomination in future.

**Background: the Castlemaine diggings National Heritage Park (CDNHP) values and previous proposals for World Heritage status**

For more than twenty years, the rich gold mining heritage of Central Victoria has been considered to be of international significance and worthy of World Heritage nomination (Lennon 2000; Reeves & McConville 2011). In 2007, the then Australia Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) agreed that the Central Victorian Goldfields should be considered for inclusion on Australia’s Tentative List (EPHC 2007), the inventory of places that Commonwealth Government intends to nominate for inscription on the World Heritage List. In response, 2008 the State Government of Victoria formally proposed the CDNHP for inclusion on Australia’s Tentative List, drafting a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Park and compiling supporting evidence and arguments (State Government of Victoria 2008). Despite the CDNHP having been included on Australia’s National Heritage List in 2005, for its rich collection of gold mining sites and landscapes, the Australian Government was not convinced by the arguments and evidence presented in the Victorian Government’s Tentative List proposal that CDNHP would meet the criteria and threshold of inscription on the World Heritage List and declined to include CDNHP on Australia’s Tentative List¹. Subsequently in 2009 we, the authors (with David Bannear), were asked by the Victorian Government to review the Tentative List proposal, evaluate the arguments put forward for the potential Outstanding Universal Value of CDNHP and recommend ways in which the proposal could be strengthened.
The CDNHP encompasses the regrowth box-ironbark forest of the former Mt Alexander Diggings south of Castlemaine. The rich shallow alluvial gold deposits at Mt Alexander, discovered in 1851, helped to establish the wealth of the gold rush for an international audience (Annear 1999). Within the next few years, tens of thousands of people crossed the globe and made the 120 km journey inland from Melbourne. This mass migration radically recast the Indigenous and pastoral landscape into a mosaic of mining activities and settlements. Within less than a decade the densely populated community on the Mount Alexander Diggings dissipated as the easily won gold deposits were exhausted and gold was discovered in other parts of Victoria, leaving behind extensive evidence of mining and the lives of the community in the early gold rushes (Figure 2).

The rushes to Mt Alexander were typical of the Victorian gold rush more generally and also of contemporary and later Australasian rushes in New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand and Western Australia (Blainey 1963). Within the space of the decade following the discovery of gold in 1851, Victoria’s population had increased from 77000 to 521000 and included a significant non-British component of migrants from China, the Pacific, the United States and continental Europe (Serle 1963: 382, 369). The gold rush was the catalyst for major cultural change in a number of dimensions. Some of the changes included manhood suffrage which was introduced following the Eureka rebellion in 1854, unprecedented levels of home ownership that flowed from the system of land tenure inaugurated under the Miners’ Right system, the adoption of the gold standard in Britain, and the rapid advance in transport and communication networks motivated by the desire to move people, goods and information quickly (Bate 1988; Bernstein 2000; Davison 2000; Lawrence 2005).

In Victoria, the mining industry evolved from the gold rush in the 1870s and 1880s. The exhaustion of surface alluvial deposits necessitated greater capital investment in technology to extract gold from underground and hard rock deposits. Major towns grew on all the large goldfields and Ballarat and Bendigo became the largest inland centres in Australia (Frost 1999). In most places, new technologies that enabled old diggings to be reworked and the growth of towns contributed to the destruction of physical evidence related to the earliest years of the rush. At Mt Alexander however, the absence of rich quartz deposits limited the extent of industrialised mining and urban expansion. Large blocks of land in the region remained Crown reserves for forestry purposes that further protected archaeological sites. It was this coincidence of well-preserved mining remains on public land that facilitated the declaration of the CDNHP in 2002.

The CDNHP was initially designated as a National Park under the National Parks Act 1975 (Vic.) and was proclaimed on 30 October 2002. The Park was subsequently included on Australia’s National Heritage List in 2005 for its historic values, rarity and archaeological potential, and for its aesthetic values and sense of place. In summary

The Castlemaine goldfield has one of the richest and largest collections of mining sites and landscapes in Australia … which reflect the whole period of gold mining in Australia and has particularly important large areas [that] retain rare evidence of the earliest phases of alluvial mining … The site also contains many habitation sites, cemeteries and other sites reflecting life on the goldfields in the 19th century … The landscape as a whole reflects the land use of mining … situated within regenerating box-ironbark forest, the mining remains and habitation sites immediately convey to the visitor a feeling of past? ways of working and living. (Commonwealth of Australia 2005)
The heritage values of the Park reflect its being the site of one of the major gold rushes of Victoria and Australia. The wealth generated by the gold rush through population increase, transport and the development of regional centres along with the democratisation of political institutions shaped the modern Australian nation.

The CDNHP Tentative List proposal (2008)

It is a requirement of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (Operational Guidelines) that prior to a place being nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List it must be included on the nominating state party’s national Tentative List. The Tentative List details and provides evidence to support the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the place and the World Heritage criteria under which it will be nominated as well as mechanisms for the legal protection and management of the place (UNESCO 2015: Paragraph 76).

The 2008 Victorian State Government Tentative List submission to the Commonwealth Government titled ‘Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Site: Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park’ (State Government of Victoria 2008) that outlined the case for the CDNHP to be considered for Australia’s Tentative List and a future World Heritage nomination. The submission included a description of the site, a statement of values to justify inscription on the World Heritage List and supporting documentary and photographic evidence of the tangible heritage of the gold mining in the CDNHP. The submission proposed that the CDNHP be nominated as a cultural landscape under World Heritage criterion iv, that is as an ‘outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history’. The proposed statement of significance described the CDNHP as internationally significant as an exemplar of:

the mining technology and lifestyle that characterised the migration-based gold rushes of the mid-nineteenth century [and the] crucial role of the Mt Alexander gold rush in the adoption of gold as the international monetary standard. (State Government of Victoria 2008: 3).

The submission put forward an argument for the landscape of the CDNHP being the most intact and outstanding example of an alluvial (or shallow) goldfield in the world:

The landscape and the substantial remains of gold rush mining are an extraordinary testimony to a stage in world history unique for the influence of gold over the affairs of human beings, a time in which all levels of society participated directly in digging for gold, as equals mixing and working together, resulting in the establishment of a new political and social system. (2008: 3).

Findings of the 2009 review of the CDNHP Tentative List proposal

The aim of our 2009 review of the CDNHP Tentative List submission for the Victorian State Government was to evaluate the claims for the international significance of gold rushes and alluvial gold mining as a basis for strengthening the arguments for CDNHP having World Heritage potential (Smith, Lawrence & Bannear n.d.). The review was not exhaustive but provided an indication of the characteristics and values of gold rushes in general, the attributes of these values and their tangible expression in the landscape and provided sufficient evidence to revise and clarify the draft statement of Outstanding Universal Value. It should be noted this was a desktop review and did not include comparative analysis of the integrity or authenticity of the surviving evidence of gold rushes in Australia or elsewhere. Comparative analysis of this evidence will be necessary in the development of any future World Heritage nomination for the Victorian goldfields.

The Victorian Government submission, while referring to the Victorian Goldfields in general, emphasised the significance of CDNHP as a landscape reflecting the early phase of gold mining in Victoria—the ‘gold rush’ and the alluvial mining of shallow, easily won gold deposits by individuals or small groups of miners in the first decade following the discovery of gold in 1851. The claim for the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the CDNHP relied on arguments...
for the significance of gold rushes as a significant stage in human history (State Government of Victoria 2008: 3). Our literature review led us to support this claim, concluding that there is sufficient historical documentation to demonstrate that gold rushes of the 19th and early 20th centuries were an unprecedented and global phenomenon that ‘commenced in 1848 at Sutters Mill in California, and continued throughout the Pacific Rim during the second half of the nineteenth century, facilitating the peopling of key areas such as Victoria and California and also lesser known regions of New Zealand, the Caribou in British Columbia, the Yukon, Chile, Peru and later South Africa’(Reeves 2008: 65). This mass movement very rapidly created localised societies characterised initially by anarchy and subsequently by efforts to build civil societies. Further, it was only by the mid-nineteenth century that technological, economic and political advances of the industrial revolution and European colonial (global) expansion created the conditions that gave rise to and enabled gold rushes. These conditions included the opening of new frontiers of European settler colonisation, the emergence of a comparatively free, prosperous and literate class of settlers willing and able to travel in pursuit of individual wealth, and the growth of newspapers as a means of spreading information (see Smith, Lawrence & Bannear n.d. for a more extensive discussion of the gold rush phenomenon). The first generation of gold rushes in the mid-19th century in California and Australia most fully characterise the ‘rush’ phenomenon because they established the pattern for the rushes that followed, including the rushes to the Klondike and South Africa at the end of the nineteenth century (Fetherling 1988). The global spread and influence of the gold rushes underpins arguments for 19th century goldrushes to be considered of universal value. This understanding led us to our first recommendation, that a more persuasive argument for the significance of the Castlemaine Diggings is that it is representative of the gold rush phenomenon.

On the basis of historical evidence it can be argued that ‘gold rushes’ are of international significance and (assuming the conditions of authenticity and integrity are met) the surviving evidence of the gold rushes can be argued to be ‘a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates significant stage(s) in human history’ (World Heritage Criterion iv). To investigate this further, using published material we developed a framework of indicative attributes of gold rush landscapes as a basis for comparing the surviving evidence of the gold rushes in CDNHP with that of gold rush landscapes elsewhere. Lennon’s 1997 study of the cultural landscape of Victoria’s goldfields provided a very useful starting point for the development of an international comparative framework of attributes of the gold rushes. In her study, Lennon identifies a series of themes in the history of the Central Victorian goldfields to provide an understanding of the sequential occupation of the Goldfields and the remaining layers of evidence of that occupation that create the cultural landscape (Lennon 1997: 10-12). We were specifically interested in identifying signature attributes and evidence common to the initial phase of gold exploitation and associated with the mass movement of people to Victoria in the first decade following the discovery of gold. We found that while the landscape of the CDNHP could be argued to reflect many of these attributes, a number of key characteristics of the gold rushes are not represented in the CDNHP. The most obvious of these is evidence of new settlements, services and infrastructure that supported mining and miners and the institutions of civil society, colonial government and law that appear within months of the opening up of new gold fields in Australia, New Zealand and the Americas.

Evidence of these characteristics on the Mt Alexander Diggings is found outside the CDNHP, notably in the adjacent towns of Castlemaine and Chewton that were established during the gold rush and were integral to the social, economic and political lives of miners and the creation of communities on the gold fields. Chewton was home to miners from the initial months of the gold rush and continues to reflect the haphazard layout of the miners’ camps and huts. Nearby Castlemaine became the centre of government administration when a large colonial government military camp was established at the site in late 1851. The grand formal grid of the town was laid out by the government surveyor in 1852 with reserves for the government buildings, churches, botanic gardens and a market square that were constructed over the following decade. The two towns are linked by a road established in the first months of the rush when it was marked by a continuous line of tents, timber slab stores and public houses. Significant and extensive fabric dating to the 1850s survives in both towns leading us to our second recommendation, that to
fully demonstrate the significance of the Mount Alexander gold rush, the boundaries of a future World Heritage should be extended beyond the CDNHP to include Chewton and Castlemaine with an associated change of name for the nominated place to the ‘Cultural Landscape of the Mt Alexander Diggings’ (Smith, Lawrence & Bannear n.d.)

**Recent World Heritage inscriptions of ‘mining’ sites**

Since 2009 there have been a number of new and revised inscriptions of mining sites on the World Heritage List. An analysis of these inscriptions reveals considerable change in the ways in which the universal values of mining sites can be understood and this provides a context for developing strategies for the future nomination of Australian mining sites, including the Victorian goldfields. Of greatest influence has been the inscription of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape on the World Heritage List. This serial property, inscribed as a cultural landscape in 2006, includes ten discrete components ‘representing the heartlands of former mining districts’ (ICOMOS 2006: 125). Together the components illustrate the development of industrialised mining in Cornwall and West Devon between 1700 and 1914 that is argued in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value to have had a profound impact on the growth of industrialisation in the United Kingdom, and consequently on industrialised mining around the world (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (a)). Although the World Heritage values emphasise the impact of technological innovation in mining, it is the expression of this impact in associated transformations in the urban and rural landscapes of Cornwall and West Devon that demonstrate and justify the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. These transformations include the creation of smallholdings, railways, canals, docks and ports, and the creation or re-modelling of towns and villages and in turn they illustrate the social, political and economic changes that accompanied industrialisation.

The nomination of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape was especially notable for its innovative approach to building a case for World Heritage significance. Rather than selecting a single, well-known and acknowledged heritage site as the basis for the nomination, the components of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape were selected through the investigation and elaboration of the international significance of the mining of copper in Cornwall and Devon and following this, the identification of a comprehensive and clearly articulated set of attributes or tangible evidence that express this significance (United Kingdom 2004). This established the framework within which features, settlements and areas of the landscape of Cornwall and West Devon could be identified and assessed for inclusion in the nomination, providing a full and representative range of evidence in the components of the serial nomination. The evidence included the remnants of the mines and industrial processing sites, water and transport infrastructure, associated planned towns, villages, small farm holdings and large estates that collectively ‘reflect the way prosperity derived from mining transformed the landscape both in urban and rural areas and encapsulate the extent of those changes (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (b)). In their evaluation of the nomination, ICOMOS (2006: 131) commended the inclusion of the many facets of the mining revolution and their social as well as economic and natural impacts.

There are now, in 2017, twenty-seven World Heritage properties that have Outstanding Universal Value associated with mining (listed in Table 1). Their inscriptions span the entire history of the World Heritage List, from the ‘Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines’ in Poland in 1978 to the ‘Sites of Japan’s Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining’ in 2015 and they include five new inscriptions since our 2009 review. Viewed from the perspective of the chronology of their inscription, the evidence and extent of these properties clearly reflect an evolution in the recognition and justification of Outstanding Universal Value that is evident in cultural properties in general over the life of the World Heritage Convention (see Cameron et al. 2013: 35; Jokilehto 2008; Labadi 2013; Smith 2015 for discussions of this general shift). The dominance of monumental and architectural values in early inscriptions has been replaced by more thematic or anthropological approaches that encompass a wider range of cultural values and evidence, a shift facilitated by the introduction of ‘cultural landscape’ as a category of World Heritage site in 1992. Between 1992 and the inscription of the Cornwall and
West Devon Mining Landscape in 2006 eleven mining properties were inscribed of which four were cultural landscapes. In each of these the nominations emphasized social and technological processes and their evolution over time that are evidenced in the landscape. The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape (United Kingdom) inscribed as a cultural landscape in 2000, describes the property as one of the prime areas in the world where the full social, economic and technological process of industrialisation through iron and coal production can be studied and understood. Despite the obvious potential of the cultural landscape category for nomination of mining heritage the majority of inscriptions continued to be sites rather than cultural landscapes. While this reflects the specific values and World Heritage criteria under which these properties were nominated, it is also the case that the nomination of mining heritage as a cultural landscape is ‘complicated in many instances [by the landscape] having been subject to continuous change, through phases of industrial expansion meaning that understanding of landscape as a concept is not always clear or complete, in terms of attributes and the demonstration of their Outstanding Universal Value’ (Douert 2014: 168). In other words, it is unlikely for the evidence demonstrating various phases or attributes in the history of mining area, and in particular early phases, to survive in a single location.

The nomination of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape also argued the Outstanding Universal Value of the cultural landscape in terms of the social and technological or industrial processes of mining but differed significantly from the preceding inscriptions of mining cultural landscapes in being a serial property in which the process of selection of components of the serial property. Several mining cultural landscapes inscribed prior to 2006 are comprised of more that one area but in each, the component sites of the series are contiguous, or separated by only a small distance, the components being portions of a single large mining complex. In Devon and West Cornwall, the components of the serial property are not contiguous and are spread over a very large area, having been individually selected as the best example to reflect particular attributes of the significance of copper mining across the region.

Since 2006 there have been five World Heritage inscriptions of mining properties and four existing World Heritage mining sites have been extended to incorporate further evidence of the mining process. There has not been an unsuccessful nomination of a mining site during this period. All five of the new inscriptions of mining properties after 2006 are serial properties. Four of these are cultural landscapes: Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine (Japan, 2007); Major Mining sites of Wallonia (Belgium, 2012); Nord-Pas de Calais Mining Basin (France, 2012); and Sites of Japan’s Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining, Japan (2015). Each of these four properties has also adopted and elaborated the Cornwall and West Devon approach in arguing for the international significance of the property and its attributes, and in the selection of evidence to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value. In each, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value emphasises technical and social innovation, industrialisation and local and global economic changes that led to, occurred alongside and/or took place as a consequence of mining. This is demonstrated through evidence of domestic and administrative activities and water management and transport systems as well as direct evidence of the extraction, processing and refinement of the mined resources.

These successful nominations provide models for how to move forward in recognising the wider significance of Victoria’s goldfields, that is, beyond the initial gold rush period and the boundaries of the CDNHP. For example, the four components of Belgium’s Major Mining sites of Wallonia (2012) represent the best preserved places of coal mining in Belgium from the early 19th to the second half of the 20th centuries and are a ‘highly integrated industrial and urban ensemble’ that provides ‘an eminent and complete example of the world of industrial mining in continental Europe, at various stages of the industrial revolution’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (c)). This evidence includes technical and industrial remains associated with surface and underground mining, industrial architecture and worker housing, schools, religious buildings, community facilities that reflect social and human values associated with mining and industrialization. In their evaluation, ICOMOS (2012:329) found the four components making up the Major Mining sites of the Wallonia nomination are complementary and exemplify Belgian mining history:
The first two illustrate the birth and development of this type of industry in the 19th century, within an overarching architectural and social vision of the paternalistic type. The other two are testimony to the technical developments and utilitarian architectural options of the early and mid-20th century. The ensemble therefore provides considerable analytical and typological consistency in coalmines during the various phases of contemporary industrial history.

Similarly the French coal mining landscape of Nord-Pas de Calais Mining Basin, inscribed in 2012, consists of numerous component sites selected for inclusion in the serial property for their capacity to demonstrate in tangible evidence key attributes of the outstanding universal value of the property. The property is described as a succession of landscapes including physical and geographic components, mining industrial heritage, vestiges of transport equipment, worker housing and characteristic urban planning, and monumental and architectural components testifying to community life. Collectively these provide exceptional testimony to the exchange of ideas and influences in the extraction methods for coal and associated worker housing and urban planning over two centuries and is an eminent example of the large-scale development of coal mining in the 19th and 20th centuries by large industrial companies and their considerable workforce (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (d)).

Since 2009 there have been extensions and re-inscriptions of four World Heritage mining sites each of which was initially inscribed prior to the early 1990s: Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines, Poland (1978, 2008, 2013); Roros Mining Town and the Circumference, Sweden (1980, 2010); From the Great Saltworks of Salins-les-Bains to the Royal Saltworks of Arc-et-Senans, the Production of Open-pan Salt, France (1982, 2009); and Mines of Rammelsberg and Historic Town of Goslar and the Upper-Hartz water management system, Germany (1992, 2008, 2010).

In each, the original extent of the property has been increased to incorporate a wider range of evidence by expanding the original boundary and/or the addition of new components to create a serial property. Associated with this there has been a shift in focus in the revised Statements of Outstanding Universal Value from primarily architectural values to the technological and/or social processes associated with mining and their reflection in the landscape. In 2010 the boundary of the property inscribed as Roros Mining Town in 1980 was significantly extended to include the landscape surrounding the town, the main mining fields and a transport route and a smelter and associated settlements, creating a serial property. Roros Town had initially been inscribed as an exemplar of the Norwegian tradition of wooden construction of the 18th and 19th centuries and urban town planning of the 16th and 17th centuries. In 2010 the re-inscription of the property as Roros Mining Town and the Circumference was accompanied by a revised Statement of Outstanding Universal Value describing the property as ‘an outstanding example of traditional settlement and land-use interlinked with a cultural landscape that shows in an outstanding and almost complete manner how mining operations, transportation, and the way of life had to be adapted to the requirements of the natural environment’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (e)). Similarly, in 2010 the German property of the Rammelsburg Ore Mine and Historic Town Centre of Goslar, inscribed in 1992, was extended to create a serial property through the addition of the Upper Hartz Water Management System. The vast system including artificial ponds, ditches and drains was constructed from the Middle Ages to the end of the 20th century for processing the non-ferrous metals from the Rammelsburg Mine. (UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (f))

Discussion

The recent inscriptions (and re-inscriptions) of World Heritage properties associated with mining demonstrate an increasing emphasis of states parties, the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS on the justification of their international significance in terms of the social, economic and technological systems in which mining activities take place and the evolution of, or change in these systems as reflected in mining landscapes. Associated with this there has been a shift from nominations of individual mining complexes or sites in which evidence of these systems is identified in a single area or contiguous components of a serial property to the systematic selection of a components of a serial property that are spread over a large area and as a whole, fully demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.
When viewed in the context of the recent inscriptions of mining sites, the values, attributes and extent described in the 2008 Tentative List proposal for the CDNHP are clearly aligned with the cultural landscape nominations for mining sites inscribed prior to that of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape. While the 2008 proposal argued for international significance on the basis of the gold rushes as a global historical and social phenomenon, the limited extent of the property meant that much of the evidence that would justify this significance was not found within the area proposed for inclusion on the tentative list. Like many places suggested as future World Heritage nominations, the CDNHP was put forward for inclusion in Australia’s Tentative List not only because it contains significant evidence of the early gold rushes but also because of the relative ease of nominating and managing land in public ownership and contained within a single boundary. As Reeves and McConville (2011: 197) have argued in relation to the CDNHP, ‘heritage listing always requires boundary definition but in practice, the prominence of the boundary may well overshadow other more significant elements’. Privately owned land or multiple forms of land tenure complicate the nomination process and the mechanisms for protection and management of the property should it be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Ideally these considerations should follow delineation of the extent of an area or areas that contain all the evidence necessary to demonstrate the potential Outstanding Universal Value of a place. In reality, World Heritage nominations are a compromise between the inclusion of essential evidence and practicalities of protecting and managing the property. However, in relation to the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park (CHNHP) we consider that a nomination of the Park alone has limited chance of success because significant attributes of the global phenomenon of the gold rushes are not demonstrated by tangible evidence within the Park boundaries.

We are not suggesting that a World Heritage nomination for the Castlemaine Diggings or the Victorian Goldfields in general should automatically follow the model of recent mining inscriptions. We are suggesting that a new approach to developing a future Tentative List proposal for the Victorian Goldfields is warranted and indeed essential to its success. Our 2009 review recommended further elaboration of the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the gold rushes. At the time we recognised this may lead to reconsideration of the international significance of the goldfields beyond the gold rush era to include the longer history of gold mining that is evident in the Central Victorian landscape. The CDNHP itself contains evidence of successive phases in the mining of gold in Central Victoria (Parks Victoria 2007: 13). Our review of recently inscribed World Heritage properties associated with mining supports our earlier findings that development of a robust World Heritage nomination (or Tentative List submission) may need to consider the potential World Heritage value of the Victorian goldfields in general. Investigation and critical evaluation of the social, political and technological processes associated with gold mining and their evolution over the 19th and 20th centuries is needed to determine whether these values may be considered ‘universal’ within the terms of the World Heritage Convention along with the shared attributes of these values. Systematic survey and assessment of the evidence of these attributes in the Victorian landscape should include industrial, administrative, domestic, infrastructure, transport, environmental and archaeological evidence, in an approach expanding that suggested by Lennon (1997) and should not be confined to a single land unit or area. This would provide the basis for determining an appropriate boundary or boundaries for a proposed nomination and the evidence to underpin comparative analysis with other goldfields to demonstrate that the Victorian Goldfields are an outstanding representative example.

A process that takes into account a wider approach will be difficult as it may potentially include a much broader geographical distribution of places and those that are privately owned as well as those on public land. However, as the recent inscriptions of mining sites demonstrate, World Heritage nominations of complex, serial, cultural landscapes that are successful include a wide range of evidence reflecting the social and technological systems that were created by or flourished alongside mining. Such an approach will provide a far more robust argument for Outstanding Universal Value to the international authorities who will ultimately make the decision.
Conclusion

Australia’s mining heritage is diverse, extensive and reflected in landscapes that we consider to be of international significance. Our review of recent successful World Heritage nominations of mining landscapes clearly indicates that evolving approaches to demonstrating the significance of these places must be considered in, and indeed offer as models for, a way forward for future nominations of Australia’s mining heritage. The complexity of recent successful nominations of mining sites reflects an increasingly nuanced and sophisticated understanding of OUV and arguments for the expression of this value in tangible evidence in World Heritage nominations in general. Given this, any future nomination for the Victorian Goldfields, whether focused on the gold rushes as a global phenomenon or more generally on gold mining must consider evidence beyond the boundary of the CDNHP. A first step in this process is the elaboration and clarification of potential Outstanding Universal Value and its attributes prior to the selection of evidence and places for inclusion in the nomination. On this basis, the strongest case for World Heritage inscription is likely to be a serial property. Understanding the international significance of places associated with mining in terms of the cultural and social changes they express may be more challenging than valuing them for their technological or industrial evidence but it offers the opportunity to develop nominations and ultimately listings that more closely reflect significant moments in world history.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>YEAR INSCRIBED</th>
<th>MINED MATERIAL</th>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>WORLD HERITAGE CRITERIA</th>
<th>CULTURAL LANDSCAPE</th>
<th>SERIAL PROPERTY/ NO. COMPONENTS</th>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>17th – 19th</td>
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<td>1982, 2009***</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>Middle ages – 20th century</td>
<td>(i) (ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Silver</td>
<td>16th century</td>
<td>(i) (iv) (v)</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>16th – 18th century</td>
<td>(i) (ii) (iv) (vi)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Silver / Gold</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>(iv) (v)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kutná Hora: Historical Town Centre with the Church of St Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec, Czech Republic</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>14th – 18th centuries</td>
<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>YEAR INSCRIBED</th>
<th>MINED MATERIAL</th>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>WORLD HERITAGE CRITERIA</th>
<th>CULTURAL LANDSCAPE</th>
<th>SERIAL PROPERTY/ NO. COMPONENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Las Médulas, Spain</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>1st Century</td>
<td>(i) (ii) (iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hallstatt-Dachstein Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape, Austria</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>2nd mill BC - 20th C</td>
<td>(iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Centre of the town of Diamantina, Brazil</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Diamonds</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, United Kingdom</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Iron / coal</td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>(iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neolithic Flint Mines at Spiennes, Belgium</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Flint</td>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>(i) (ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex in Essen, Germany</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>19th – 20th century</td>
<td>(ii) (iii)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun, Sweden</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>13th – 17th centuries</td>
<td>(ii) (iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humberstone and Santa Laura Salt peter Works, Chile</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Salt peter</td>
<td>19th – 20th centuries</td>
<td>(ii) (iii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewell Mining Town, Chile</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>20th century</td>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, United Kingdom</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Copper and tin</td>
<td>18th -19th century</td>
<td>(ii) (iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10 components</td>
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<td>Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine, Japan</td>
<td>2007, 2010</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>16th – 20th centuries</td>
<td>(ii) (iii) (iv)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14 components</td>
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<td>Major Mining sites of Wallonia, Belgium</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>19th and 20th centuries</td>
<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 components</td>
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<td>Nord-Pas de Calais Mining Basin, France</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>1700s – 1900s</td>
<td>(ii) (iv) (vi)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>109 components</td>
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<td>Heritage of Mercury, Almaden and Idrija, Spain and Slovenia</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>Antiquity to present</td>
<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 components</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sites of Japan’s Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining, Japan</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>19th and early 20th century</td>
<td>(ii) (iv)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23 components</td>
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</table>


** Inscribed as ‘Roros Mining Town’ in 1980. Re-inscribed as a serial property with addition of two components in the ‘Circumference’ in 2010.

*** Inscribed as ‘Royal Saltworks of Arc et Senans’ in 1982 and extended to become ‘From the Great Saltworks of Salins-les-Bains to the Royal Saltworks of Arc-et-Senans, the Production of Open-pan Salt’ in 2009.

References


UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d. (a) Cornwall and West Devon mining Landscape, viewed 3 April 2018, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215>


UNESCO World Heritage Centre n.d (e) Røros Mining Town and the Circumference, viewed 3 April 2018 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/55>


**Endnote:**

1 In 2008 the Australian Government agreed to include the Australian Convict Sites and Ningaloo Reef and Cape Range Peninsula on the Tentative List. Both places were subsequently inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2010 and 2011 respectively. At the same time a submission to include the South Australian Cornish mining sites of Burra and Moonta on the Tentative List was rejected by the Commonwealth. These sites have also been suggested as potential addition of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape.