

# **PLANNING FOR THE GREATEST GOOD**

## **William Light's City and District of Adelaide, South Australia, and potential World Heritage Values**

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**Key words:** Bentham, colonisation, co-ordinated cadastre, ideal city, regional planning

### **SUMMARY**

Adelaide, South Australia's capital and seat of government, was established as the 19<sup>th</sup> century antipodean Ideal City of the English Philosophical Radicals, following extensive analysis of the causes of successes and failures of human settlements spanning the history of western colonisation, including the Greek City States, Spain's colonization of the New World, the development of the United States of America and Canada, penal colonisation of Australia, and the failure of Western Australia's Swan River colony.

In facing future challenges, Adelaide provides an inspirational model representing the culmination of an important interchange of human values on town-planning, public health, governance, surveying, and cadastre and land management. Planned and surveyed by Colonel William Light, South Australia's first Surveyor-General, in accordance with Jeremy Bentham's principles 'for the greatest good' and 'vicinity-maximizing-dispersion-preventing', the survey of the district of Adelaide is also expected to be the world's first implementation of a co-ordinated cadastre.

Light's plan for the City and District of Adelaide exemplifies key principles and methodologies for successful implementation of a sustainable, environmentally sensitive urban and regional spatial plan. Light's masterpiece offers guidance for current and future generations, sets an aspirational benchmark for surveyors and planners and contrasts with poor modern spatial and land use planning.

Light's sensitive response to philosophical dictums and the physical opportunities and constraints arising from climate, topography, and practical requirements has engendered a plan which has been enjoyed, revered, and stoutly defended for generations, with a pervading sense of significance which remains attributable to Light's intuitive act of creative genius. Set betwixt hills-face and harbour, spanning a river valley, laced with a unique figure-eight of open space, Adelaide demonstrates a rare rapport between the genius of place and plan.

Today Light's city remains a permanent testimony to a surveyor who had the sense to recognise, and the ability to respect, the genius of the place, and is expected to have the potential to meet at least four of UNESCO's World Heritage criteria.

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### 1. SURVEYING AN IDEAL SOCIETY

“...[without a map to point to] surely to a vast proportion of the landed property in this kingdom will the title remain floating in the ocean of uncertainty...” [Jeremy Bentham]

Ideal cities have figured in human imagination and in literature for centuries, but few have ever been constructed. A rare instance, the City of Adelaide, exemplifies principles for establishment of a permanent city amidst its own inalienable open space, reminiscent of the biblical cities of Palestine (Numbers 35, v1-5; Leviticus 25, v34) and of Amaurote, Thomas More's utopian riverside city (1516). Unlike other ideal cities Adelaide's topographically sensitive plan reserved a unique figure-eight of 'Park grounds' dedicated as public walks in perpetuity, for the beauty and salubrity of the town and the health and recreation of its inhabitants. Created after publication of philosopher Jeremy Bentham's views on the importance of a *Charte Trigonometrique*, the outer boundaries of Adelaide's Park were set out in the trigonometrical survey of the District of Adelaide Country Sections (Porter, 2010).

In founding South Australia, 'the Great Experiment in the Art of Colonization', William Light (1786–1839) was entrusted with sole responsibility for selecting the site of the capital (the seat of government) and for the city's design and the survey of Town and Country sections. Light devised, coordinated and carried out a trigonometrical survey for the District of Adelaide, establishing the world's first co-ordinated cadastre (Porter, 2007).

According to Light the only means by which the country should 'be measured at first' was 'by trigonometry'. Sophisticated techniques were beyond the comprehension of Deputy-Surveyor G S Kingston (sometimes erroneously credited for Adelaide's plan) who condemned the intangible nature of Light's survey as unworkable and reported that 'the boundary lines are wholly imaginary'. Knowing Kingston could not establish a meridian line, find his latitude or longitude, determine the variation of the compass or conduct a survey trigonometrically, Light refuted his criticism – just as parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude were 'imaginary lines' with which 'ships can pick off their positions on the globe, and shape their course ... with great accuracy', 'so could we give over the country sections' (Light, 1838).

William Light was preeminently qualified for the appointment as South Australia's first Surveyor-General. Born in Kuala Kedah (Malaysia), he was the son of Penang's first Superintendent, Englishman Francis Light. After being sent to school in England William entered the British Navy as a volunteer boy and became a midshipman. Subsequently entering the British army, he served with distinction in the Peninsular War as a cavalry and

reconnaissance officer and as a Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General on Wellington's staff. Experienced in strategic assessment of the topography of Spain and Portugal for movement and accommodation of infantry, cavalry and artillery, Light was credited with providing clear reports and being capable in all his duties, whether in the field or in the office. He reached the rank of Major before leaving the Army and after brief service in the Spanish constitutional cause (where he became a Lieutenant-Colonel) Light travelled extensively through Europe, Egypt, and the Mediterranean, including to cities in Greece and Turkey. He observed great art and architecture, painted landscapes, seascapes, townscapes, peoples, and antiquities with accuracy and sensitivity, including Sicily and Pompeii (Light, 1823, 1828), and was employed in the Navy of the Pasha of Egypt.

### **1.1 Jeremy Bentham and the South Australian cadastre**

English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) believed 'the aim of government should be the greatest happiness for the greatest number'. He opposed penal colonisation of New South Wales (Bentham, 1802), and worked on his constitutional code for decades aiming to become the 'Newton of legislation'. Bentham offered a constitution to the United States' President Madison and took long walks in the park with John Quincy Adams whilst Adams was in London in 1815. Bentham's manuscripts were translated into French by Etienne Dumont (*Traité de législation civile et pénale*, 3 vols) and widely read by Mohammedans, Greeks, Russians, by Bolivar in Venezuela, and by Livingstone in Louisiana, and retranslated into Spanish, Polish, Italian, Hungarian, Portuguese, Russian, and German (Everett, 1966).

As early as 1828 Bentham communicated his *Outline of a Plan of a General Register of Real Property* and proposed 'an appropriate all-comprehensive map' to assist land registration. Bentham wanted 'a map to point to' to 'give rest and quiet to "all that inherit" this our portion of the earth's surface' (Bentham, 1831). Without 'such an anchor as this to be fastened to, - surely to a vast proportion of the landed property in this kingdom will the title remain floating in the ocean of uncertainty'. Bentham looked to Cassini's work in France where a *Charte Trigonométrique* was 'an appendage to a correspondingly all-comprehensive cadastre.'

Bentham is known to have based his 'Proposal for the Colonization Society' (1831) for founding a settlement on southern Australia's Gulf (St.) Vincent on a principle discerned in the writings of political economist Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Bentham referred to this as 'vicinity-maximising-dispersion-preventing', and along with the requirement for survey prior to settlement and Land/Emigration Fund it underpinned the establishment of a colony. Unlike other settlements, South Australia was to be a practical test of real reforms, later described as the 'only truly Benthamite democracy'. Extension of the principle of systematic colonization defined by Wakefield, first tested in South Australia, was recognised by English philosopher John Stuart Mill as the basis for the career of prosperity for all the 'Australian Colonies'.

### **1.2 Planning for success**

Bentham's rigorous methods of analysis were applied to the planning of South Australia. The history of western civilisation was ransacked, seeking causes for successes and failures.

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Richard Davies Hanson sought the Charters for Maryland, Virginia and Georgia, George Grote’s research on the history of Greece served along with Spain’s colonisation of the Americas, the land sales of the United States, Britain’s settlement of Canada, penal colonisation of Australia, and the failure of Western Australia’s Swan River colony.

Distilling lessons from centuries of human history into comprehensive guidelines, South Australia’s Colonization Commissioners prepared Light’s ‘Instructions’. Determined to secure the best possible result they deliberately entrusted Light with sole responsibility, authorised him to deviate from their Instructions if necessary, and required him to establish a permanent capital on the *best* site. Light was directed to acquaint himself with ‘the circumstances which have determined the sites of new towns in the United States of America, in Canada, &c, and more especially in the Australian colonies’ and to pay attention to causes that ‘in the latter colonies, have led to an actual change, or to the desire for change, in the sites of certain towns after their first establishment’ (Elder, 1984).

Control of land was the most crucial reform, therefore the Governor was to have no control over land, and no power to overturn the Surveyor-General decisions. According to Robert Gouger, South Australia’s first Colonial Secretary, its constitution set the Province apart in two crucial ways: disposal of land, and principles of governance. South Australia had the ‘very best system of disposing of public land rendered permanent by Act of Parliament’, ‘a circumstance that prevails in no other colony belonging to Britain’ (Gouger, 1837) and ‘the mode of disposing of land ... deprives a bad government of one means of corruption.’

**1.3 John Arthur Roebuck’s public trust of open space**

Colonial reformer John Arthur Roebuck deplored London’s smog and advocated public green and open spaces for towns – encircling ‘large tracts of common lands ... maintained by the town authorities’. ‘We must create a public trust and prevent by law if necessary the rights of the common people from being swept away’ (Hyde, 1947). Roebuck’s ideas foreshadowed Adelaide’s great municipal Park, and J. C. Loudon’s (1829) proposal for concentric rings of country within a metropolis (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Proposal for concentric belts of country for London. In Hints for Breathing Places for the Metropolis, and for Country Towns and Villages, on fixed Principles. J. C. Loudon, 1829. Colour added.**

Observing Nature's delineation of low-lying inundation-prone land Light laced his city and its riverbank with a signature figure-eight of more than 2332 acres of Park Lands. To protect these lands from alienations and private speculations the Commissioners authorised and required their purchase in fee simple. This purchase was effected in the name of, and upon trust for, the citizens of Adelaide.

#### 1.4 Topographical genius

Light arrived in South Australian waters on 17 August 1836, and chose the specific site for the city on 29 December. On 3 January, 1837, Light moved to the site and was employed until 11 January 'looking repeatedly over the ground' 'devising in [his] own mind the best method of laying out the town according to the course of the river, and the nature of the ground'. The city survey of 1042 one-acre sections was completed by 10 March – in less than two months, aided by assistant surveyors B. T. Finniss, G. Ormsby, and draughtsman W. Jacob.

According to Light the obstructions for his work 'were greater on this particular spot than any other part of the plain'. Despite this, he chose the site because 'it was on a beautiful and gently rising ground, and formed altogether a better connection with the river than any other place' (Light, 1839). In designing a city of 1000 saleable acres Light observed the Para plateau and River Torrens valley, avoided areas subject to inundation, and placed his City to the north and south of the River, on rising ground. Reunifying these bifurcated nascent urban forms with his 'Adelaide Park' Light interwove a unique figure-eight of open space – through and around the City (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. City of Adelaide detail from the Plan of the Preliminary Country Sections in the District of Adelaide. Image reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives of the UK. CO700/SOUTH AUSTRALIA-2Pt1 (4).**

Light had wisely realised the ‘almost ideal geographical conditions for the site of a city’ and sought ‘to make the best use of the geographical advantages’ (Historical Memorials Committee, 1937). According to Fenner (1931:239) there is ‘no other city in the world, of similar importance, where the various geographical factors determining the site can be more easily recognized.’ Despite obvious natural advantages, the site’s difficulties aided concerted efforts to usurp Light’s selected site. The Governor, Captain John Hindmarsh, ‘clung to the idea of moving the capital’, dragging the Surveyor-General and the settlement into a controversy which raged for years, and informing Lord Glenelg ‘no earthly power can bolster Adelaide up to a higher rank than that of a pretty village’ (Hindmarsh, 1838).

It could be said that the trouble lay in William Light’s own genius. In choosing the *best* site for a permanent capital, from 1500 miles of coastline, Light had perceived ‘in a country perfectly in a state of nature’ what others proved incapable of comprehending – the ideal site for his intended beautiful and healthy city. Gruffydd’s description of Frederick Law Olmstead may be equally applicable to Light, ‘He had the poet’s understanding and the painter’s perception of the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque in landscape. He was master of the *genius loci*, a man instinctively attuned to the subtleties of a particular place, its geology, topography, and plant life. These were the materials of his design.’

Light’s letter to George Jones, RA, in September 1836, praised the landscape, ‘Nature has done so much that very little human labour and [art] is requisite to make this one of the finest settlements in the whole world.’ Writing to the Resident Commissioner, James Hurtle Fisher, in February 1837, Light also detailed his observations of the country he considered so superior. The good soil, extensive neighbouring plains and sheep walks, proximity of a plentiful year round supply of excellent fresh water, easy communication with its harbour, a likely connection with the Murray River, and also the beauty of the country were objects which in Light’s mind ‘could admit of no doubt of its capabilities for a capital’.

## 1.5 Prosperity and progress

According to Norberg-Schulz (1980), ‘through building, manmade places are created which possess their individual *genius loci* ... determined by what is visualized, complemented, symbolized or gathered.’ Light visualised a beautiful and healthy capital, between hills-face and sea, on rising ground amidst a spacious park. On a site pre-eminently adapted for his purposes he looked to the future, consciously designing an urban form melded with Nature’s landscape. As an unprecedented experiment in the Art of Colonization, Adelaide would represent a radical reform in urban planning – the combined works of man and nature would elevate the rectangular plan to a remarkable exemplar of a ‘Garden City’ (Henderson, 2008).

Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Justice, Sir Samuel Way (1905), recognised Light’s topographical instinct had ‘preserved the infant community of South Australia from being strangled almost at its birth’. ‘After 70 years no better site can be found. A mile or two either way would have spoilt the whole thing. It is situated on one of the finest plains in the world, under the shelter of the beautiful hills which have moderated the climate. They have secured us from drought, and have furnished us with a beautiful water supply and a glorious picture.’

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Hour by hour and day by day throughout the year the hills make a beautiful landscape that eludes the skill of the best possible landscape painter ... The verdict of posterity has been given ... generations to come ... will bear in remembrance the honoured name of Col. Light, the founder of the City of Adelaide ... the saviour of the State of South Australia.'

## 1.6 After Light

Light had certainly 'let Nature never be forgot' and may have been the greatest exponent of the design theory based upon the 'genius of the place' extolled in verse by Pope (1731). With Light's death in 1839 the art of natural design was lost – the *genius loci* and South Australia were deprived of their greatest ally, Light's good sense. A proliferation of little Adelaides (Williams, 1974:356) were senselessly stamped out across South Australia, ignoring the genius of each place, and drawing inevitable and bitter criticism. With heavy sarcasm the editor of Jamestown's *Review* derided the surveyors who set that town across Belalie Creek:

'Avoid all sites that are naturally high and dry and possess natural facilities for easy drainage. If there be a gentle slope, sheltered by friendly upland, avoid that also; eschew any elements of the picturesque, and select rather the flattest, most uninteresting site possible; if a flat with a creek running through it and subject to overflow, by all means get on the lower bank of the creek and peg away. If a running creek be not available get in the way of a storm channel. A mangrove swamp with sinuous cozy channel is a combination of favorable conditions too good to be often hoped for, and if subject in addition to direct tidal overflow, consider it perfection.'

Street layout was characterized as a 'wanton exhibition of cussedness'.

Despite the inability to replicate Light's successes his plan still inspires Adelaide's citizens to protect their city's layout and Park Lands, with the notable exception of its harbour. Today it is strangely divorced from its crucial place in Light's Plan for the City, Port and District of Adelaide. Despite the fact that 29 of Adelaide's Town Sections were chosen at the harbour, 'Light's Plan' is often mistakenly considered to be limited to the City of Adelaide (North and South of the River Torrens) set within its Park Lands. As a mandatory prerequisite the harbour (Port Adelaide River) had figured largely in Light's design: 'one of the finest little harbours I ever saw ... as beautiful and safe a harbour as the world can produce'.

Although the Adelaide Park Lands and City Layout (with some notable and unjustified exclusions) was gazetted on Australia's National Heritage List on 7 November 2008 (Garrett, 2008), Australia's Environment and Heritage Minister previously rejected an application for heritage protection, concluding 'there was insufficient evidence ... to form a belief that the role the Wakefield Scheme played in the history of [Port Adelaide] was in itself of outstanding significance to the nation' (Campbell 2005).

Given the plethora of publications on the South Australian experiment, 'insufficient evidence' seems hardly credible, with a wealth of evidence of the harbour's importance in Light's Plan and for the success of the experiment defined by Bentham, Grote, Mill, Molesworth, Wakefield and others. In addition to prohibiting use of convict (slave) labour, the experiment sought to revolutionise Britain's management of Crown Lands well in advance of Lord

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Durham's Report on British Canada, and was emulated in Australind (WA), Wellington, Christchurch and elsewhere in New Zealand.

## **2. ADELAIDE IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT**

Entirely original in its form, Light's plan of Adelaide symbolises a wide gathering of human endeavour, evocatively suggesting more than a nodding acquaintance with Gother Mann's 1788 'Plan for Toronto Harbour'. From a surveyor's perspective, the square one-acre town sections common to Mann's model and Adelaide are not predicated upon convenience (Porter 2007). Although never implemented, Mann's urban design seems nonetheless memorialised in Adelaide's inscrutably 'square' Town Acres.

Despite despoliations and alienations Adelaide's vast Park provides tangible evidence of Roebuck's campaign to secure public walks, and of Loudon's (1829: 686-689) '*beau ideal* of a capital for an Australian or European union'. The ideal Australian city design of Thomas John Maslen (1830), likewise never implemented, also seems partly memorialised in miniature in the hierarchy of Adelaide's street widths, undoubtedly assisting the city to avert the tiresome insipidity attributed to regular plans by the planner of the City of Washington, Major Charles Pierre L'Enfant (1791).

### **2.1 L'Enfant and the City of Washington D.C., USA**

U.S. President George Washington had the Federal Territory proclaimed on 24 January 1791, having seen the ground in October 1790. In March 1791 L'Enfant was requested to proceed to the area and begin preparations for the federal capital ground plan, which he worked on during April, May and June, and showed to the President on 28 June 1791. Lots were first sold on 17 October 1791, and the second sale was held on 8 October 1792 (Stephenson).

L'Enfant considered the ground 'admirably adapted for the purpose'. L'Enfant's plan for the City of Washington is an important document in the world's history of city planning, remarkable for its combination of enormous scale, integration of grid and radial street patterns, civic spaces, and for the speed of its creation, with the main elements determined within the first five months (Reps, 1991).

In comparison, Light sailed his survey ship from England to Australia in less time than this, selected a city site, then prepared his city design onsite in one week and with his survey team completed the city survey within two months and a district survey of more than 60,000 acres within another year (Figures 3, 4, 5). On Light's arrival, apart from whalers and sealers huts on Kangaroo Island, there were no European settlements, and for aid or supplies Light had to resort to Launceston (Tasmania) or Sydney (New South Wales) through the infamously treacherous Bass Strait, whereas L'Enfant had ready access to the port and town of Alexandria and Georgetown in the sheltered Potomac River, and the surrounding landscape was already occupied and improved by farmers and settlers and known to surveyors.



**Figure 3** Detail of the Dotted line map of Washington, D.C., 1791, before Aug. 19<sup>th</sup>. Showing at right the rise to be occupied by the Capitol and upper left the site for the President's House. Courtesy of the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.



**Figure 4** Plan of the City of Washington, 1791. Thackara and Vallance, Philadelphia. Courtesy of the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.



**Figure 5.** Detail from 'Plan of the Preliminary Country Sections in the District of Adelaide, South Australia. From the Surveys of Wm Light Esqr Survr Genl. and Assistant Surveyors, drawn by Henry Nixon late Lieutenant 96th Regiment. c.1838.' Image reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives of the UK. CO700/SOUTH AUSTRALIA-2Pt1 (4).

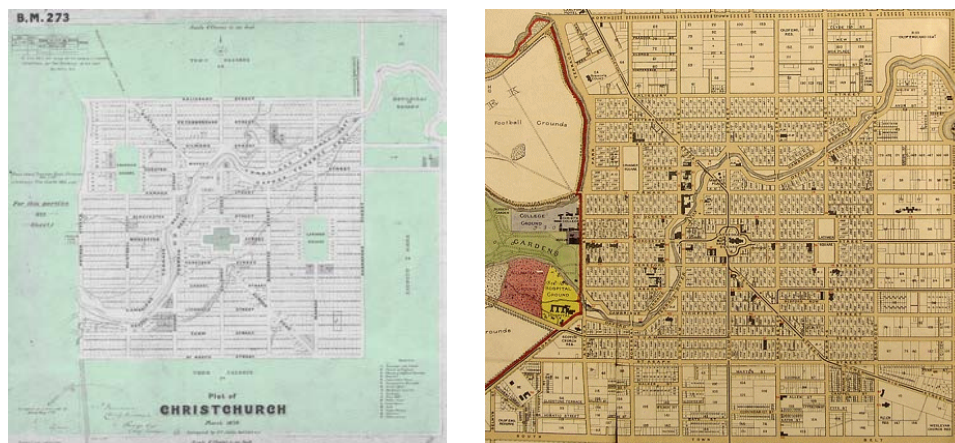
Nevertheless, lacking Light's autonomy, L'Enfant was at a distinct disadvantage. Light was appointed as Leader of South Australia's Colonization Commissioners' First Expedition with sole power for selecting a site from 1500 miles of coastline and for city design. The general locality for the City of Washington was initially determined by George Washington, its extent limited by an Act of Congress, and placed under Federal Territory Commissioners, and the District's boundaries set and surveyed by Andrew Ellicott, Benjamin Banneker and others.

Details of L'Enfant's plan were subject to influence and amendment by others including Washington, Jefferson and Ellicott, whereas William Light's plan and survey was at his sole discretion and remains largely intact to this day. Its high degree of integrity, in comparison with other cities' departures from their designer's intentions, demonstrates the remarkable resilience of Light's Plan. Even other Wakefieldian settlements, such as Christchurch, New Zealand do not seem to have fared as well as Adelaide.

## 2.2 City of Christchurch, Canterbury Province, New Zealand

Christchurch, initially intended to be a subordinate town named 'Stratford', became the province's capital because of expectations that it would become the main population centre (Wigram). Edward Jollie, Assistant Surveyor and Christchurch's planner, was not given sole authority with deleterious results. Jollie sought to keep the town on higher ground and was directed to move it downstream, rendering it more liable to flooding, and Chief Surveyor Captain Joseph Thomas insisted Jollie give up the wide streets proposed to allow tree plantings as well as the 'little ornamentation such as crescents' which he had indulged in.

Like Adelaide, Christchurch's urban core was originally provided with surrounding open space, but the Provincial Council's second session in October 1855, passed the Canterbury Association Reserves Ordinance to authorise sale of the town reserves (about 400 acres on three sides) and the first sales (of 107 acres) took place on 7 February 1856 (Wigram).



**Figure 6** Loss of greenbelt Town Reserves, Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand (right) compared with the original survey B.M. 273 Plot of the City of Christchurch, March 1850. Surveyed by Edward Jollie Assistant Surveyor, CA (left), colour added.

### 3. SURVEYING WORLD HERITAGE

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value. ‘Universal value’ is defined as cultural and/or natural significance ‘so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity’. Nominations for UNESCO’s World Heritage List need to address criteria, requirements for integrity and/or authenticity, adequate protection, and management (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2005).

As a signatory to the 1972 *Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* the Australian Government undertakes to identify, protect and conserve natural and cultural heritage, however this does not necessarily bind Australia’s State Governments, and the World Heritage List does not yet have a site inscribed that encompasses the same universal values as Adelaide and its Park Lands. Examples of World Heritage inscribed sites that may inform aspects of a nomination of the plan and survey of Adelaide include

- Struve Geodetic Arc (various, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1187>)
- Aapravasi Ghat (Mauritius, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1127>)
- New Lanark (Scotland, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/429>)

#### 3.1 Struve Geodetic Arc

The Struve Geodetic Arc is a chain of survey triangulations stretching from Hammerfest, Norway, to the Black Sea, through 10 countries, over 2,280 km (UNESCO, 2005). World Heritage listing of the Arc set a precedent for securing international recognition and conservation of surveying heritage.

At the 1994 International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Congress in Melbourne, Australia, resolution 1/2 1994 was passed recommending that FIG should present a request to the United Nations that the remains of the arc be added to the World Heritage List of Historic Monuments (Smith, 2005). Subsequently the FIG’s International Institution for the History of Surveying and Measurement (IIH&M) worked with other organizations and with the respective nations to achieve preservation of the Struve points, and World Heritage Listing.

On 15 July 2005 UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee inscribed the Struve Geodetic Arc (Ref: 1187) on its list of sites (UNESCO, 2005) citing Criteria (ii) (iii) and (vi). This was the first surveying site, and the first such scientific monument to be entered on the World Heritage List (Smith, 2005), and represented the culmination of more than a decade of effort.

#### 3.2 William Light’s plan and survey, City and District of Adelaide, South Australia

Proposals for World Heritage nomination of William Light’s plan and survey of Adelaide, South Australia, would benefit from the international surveying profession’s participation and support with establishing the universal significance of Light’s technical achievement as South

Australia's first Surveyor-General. Some progress has been made, achieving partial National Heritage Listing, however this does not recognise Light's surveying ability, and has not yet resulted in State Heritage listing nor inclusion on Australia's World Heritage Tentative List.

The Adelaide Park Lands Preservation Association sought World Heritage nomination of Adelaide's Park Lands as early as December 1996 with publication of the first in a series of articles calling for World Heritage listing (Penick, 1996). Independent heritage consultants and Adelaide City Council have since confirmed the potential for the Adelaide Park Lands and/or Light's Plan to meet several World Heritage criteria:

- February 1998, a report commissioned by Adelaide City Council identified the Adelaide Park Lands' potential to meet three World Heritage criteria, and six State Heritage criteria (Donovan & Associates)
- November 2000, the Honorary Secretary of Australia ICOMOS, stated 'The Park Lands, and its configuration within Light's Plan, itself would fall within the definition of a 'cultural landscape' under the [World Heritage] Convention and possesses ... potential eligibility for a world heritage nomination' (Jones, 2000)
- 2 October 2001, a Council committee resolved "Council would be supportive of a submission by the Government for World Heritage Listing of Colonel William Light's Plan for the City of Adelaide which includes the Park Lands" (Huang, 2002)
- Adelaide City Council's submission to a SA Parliamentary Select Committee on Adelaide Park Lands Protection gave unequivocal support for World Heritage Listing
- 7 November 2008, Adelaide's Park Lands and City Layout were included on Australia's National Heritage List (Garrett, 2008). During assessment Council reiterated strong support, 'Council believes that the City of Adelaide Historic Layout and Park Lands is of such significance to the nation and indeed the world, that it would warrant World Heritage Listing' (Harbison, 2005).

However, land between the River Torrens and North Terrace was excluded from the National Heritage gazettal, leaving these areas unprotected and subject to State Government proposals for constructions, and Australia's World Heritage Branch stated 'The Commonwealth ... would be unlikely to proceed to assess the outstanding universal value of a place unless it had the strong support of the relevant state and local government' (Maloney, 2001).

The City and District of Adelaide, planned and surveyed by William Light, would appear to have potential to meet four World Heritage criteria:

- as an inspirational spatial plan demonstrating the technical, topographical and artistic genius of Colonel William Light, master mariner, artist, surveyor and town-planner
- representing the culmination of an important interchange of human values on ideal cities and town-planning, public health, colonization, surveying and land management
- as the superlative exemplar of a 19<sup>th</sup> century Public Walk for the health and recreation of the inhabitants of a town, and for a Garden City
- having direct and tangible associations with South Australia's remarkable and unique foundation as the 'Great Experiment in the Art of Colonization' by the English Philosophical Radicals, connected with literary works of J. Bentham, J. S. Mill, J. A.

Roebuck, T. Malthus, R. Owen, G. Grote, W. Molesworth, Sir Thomas Fowell  
Buxton, E. G. Wakefield, Sir Charles Napier, Sir Robert Torrens, *et al.*

Inspired by Light, town planner Charles Reade (1919) asked, ‘What finer monument is there to the memory of genius than the logical continuation of its great and imperishable work?’

Adelaide provides an inspirational model for planners and surveyors, demonstrating key principles and methodologies for the successful implementation of a sustainable, environmentally sensitive urban and regional spatial plan, and offering guidance for current and future generations. The philosophical foundations of South Australia, as the first practical test of proposed reforms was inspired by principles and methodologies advocated by Jeremy Bentham. The physical manifestation of these in William Light’s plan and survey of the City and District of Adelaide, South Australia, is unique and of universal significance, and warrants inclusion on UNESCO’s World Heritage List.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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