

BETWEEN OIKOS AND HERITAGE

Embodied Reading and Progressive Ecologies for World Heritage

ARC8050 - Architectural Design Research 1
ARC8052 - Architectural Design Practice 1
ARC8085 - Architectural Design Research 2

MArch Design Studio, Newcastle University, 2023-24
Studio Tutors: Neil Burford & Juliet Odgers

AGE

Age Sites



Image: Robert, Hubert - Ancient Ruins Used as Public Baths - 1798,
Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert,_Hubert





Image: Beezantium, The Newt, Sommeset, UK, Invisible Studio, 2021:

Availible at: <https://www.dezeen.com/2021/10/05/beezantium-invisible-studio-bee-house-the-newt-in-somerset/>

INTRODUCTION

If the recent crisis in public health has taught us anything, it is that physical proximity to others is necessary for human flourishing. It cannot be compensated for by any digital surrogate. In our current situation of globalisation and digital 'community', this studio addresses our need for physically situated living-together through the notion of Oikos (pronounced ee-kos). Oikos is an ancient Greek word which primarily means the family/ household, the family's property, or the house. It is the root of both the words 'economy' and 'ecology'. Taken in a metaphorical sense, Oikos can denote social entities much larger than a simple 'family' – the community, the region, the nation, and so on. You will work on design propositions that address Oikos in both its societal and spatial senses, delineating a user 'community' of common endeavour and reimagining their situated 'house' - a house fit for the current global age.

Convent:

A Christian community of nuns living together under monastic vows

A community of persons devoted to religious life under a superior



Image: Nuns learning to make lace patterns - Scanned Engraving.

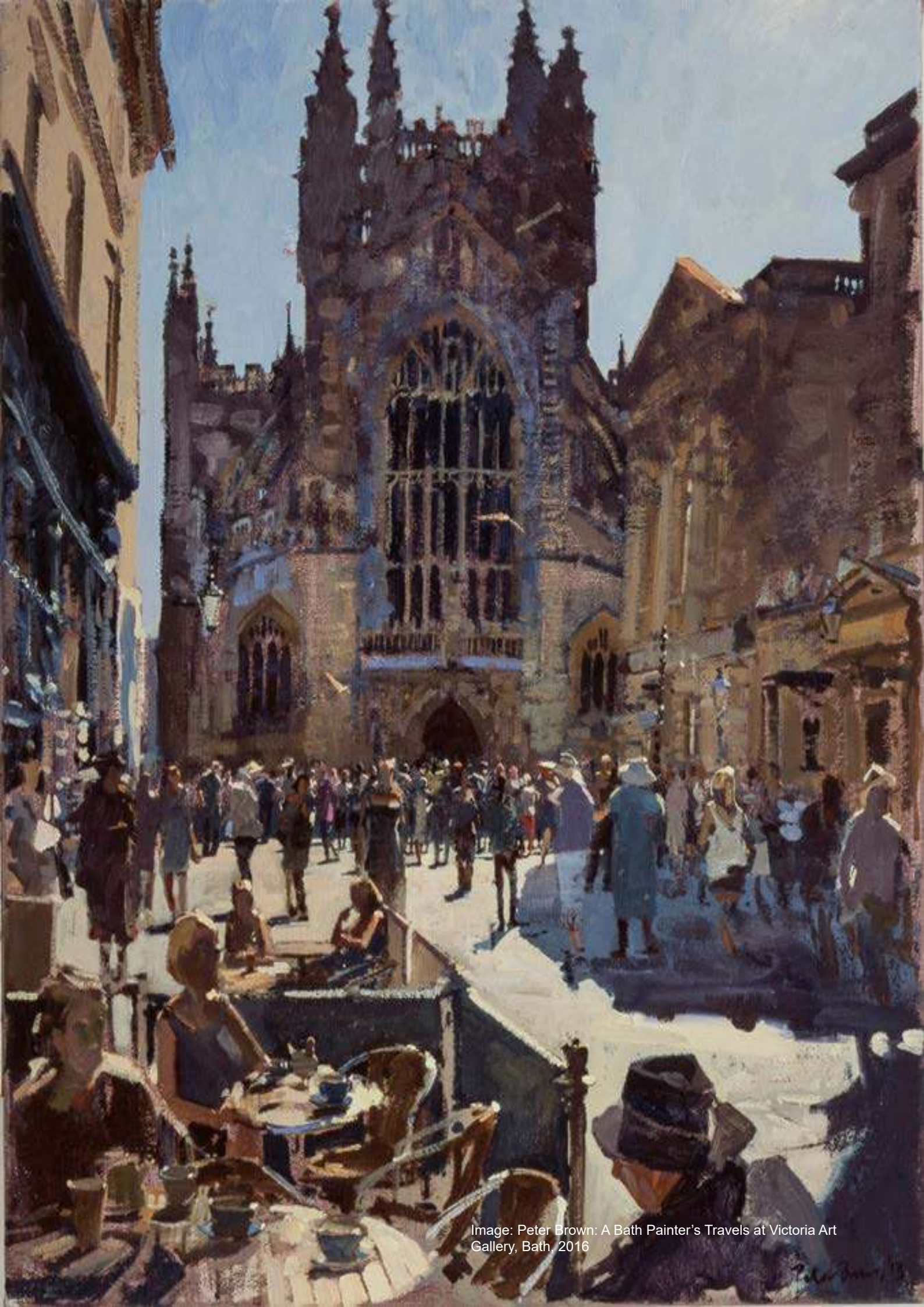


Image: Peter Brown: A Bath Painter's Travels at Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, 2016

To add another dimension to the project, we will all be working on UNESCO World Heritage Sites, places that engage with two peculiarly contemporary global phenomena, 'Cultural Heritage' and its co-dependent – tourism.

For Stage 6, you will be free to choose from any World Heritage Site from across the world, so long as the site is reasonably accessible for you to visit. A little initial research will show you the diversity of these contexts, which include both landscape or urban terrains.

Stage 5 students' projects will be sited in Bath, a city of 100,000 people and a site of a truly extraordinary architectural and cultural heritage (Stage 6 may or may not site their project in Bath – your choice).

Bath earns its UNESCO World Heritage listing for its Roman archaeology and the coherent and extensive Georgian architectural fabric developed during the 18th Century to support a growing tourist scene. Both are underpinned by the City's extraordinary geology – its hot springs, which were used for medical cures during these periods and the mellow local stone from which the city is largely constructed.

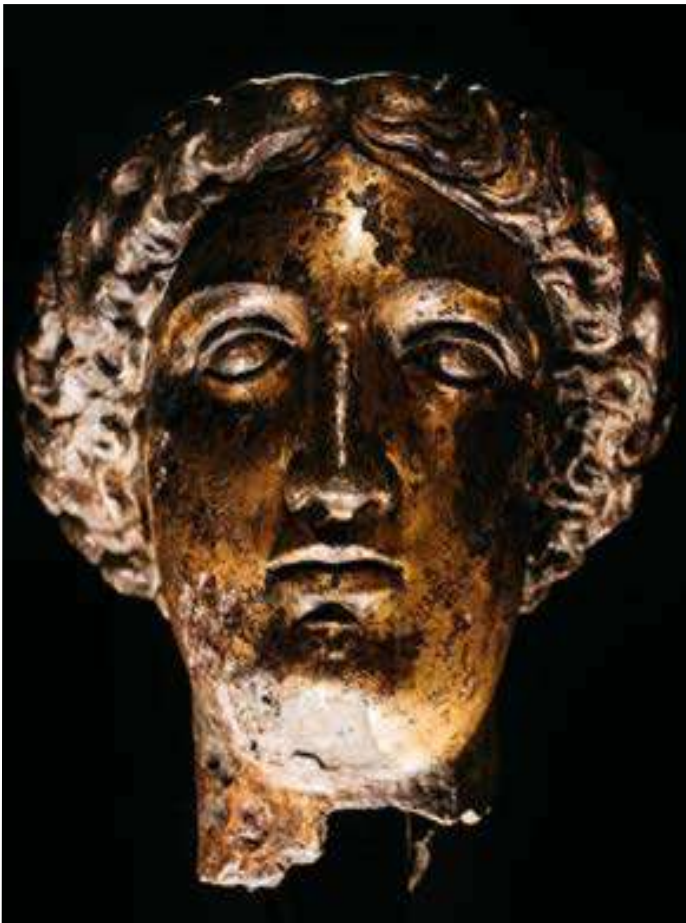


Image: The Roman God Minerva and the Roman baths, Bath



Image: Camden Crescent, Bath



Image: Georgian buildings in Bath's upper town

One could describe many of the residents [of Bath] as living in a museum and simultaneously surrounded by museums. The city is almost definitive of good taste and a setting in which part of the cultural capital possessed by its residents is the knowledge of such housing and the skills necessary to improve it, while at the same time appearing to conserve it. The renaissance of Bath is just as important an icon of the postmodern (in the return to the premodern sense) as the latest jokey theme park or shopping mall.

John Urry, The Tourist Gaze



Image: Poultney Bridge, an C18th iconic landmark

Taking Bath as exemplary of the many issues that influence tourist sites, on the one hand we have an intense and peculiar site, where the physical remains of past cultures are carefully preserved/ restored/ interpreted and served up to the tourist gaze. On the other hand, we have communities of people who live and work in Bath – the inhabitants of this ‘museum’ we might say. The latter may or may not service the tourists, and they may, on occasion, find themselves the subject of the tourist gaze. For ‘Gaze’ is what tourists principally do, however hungry they are to get behind the scenes and sample an authentic ‘experience’ of the place. The degree to which each student engages with issues of Heritage and tourism will vary. All will be expected to develop a project that builds an Oikos.

Designated sites of cultural and historical significance face challenges to their long-term viability and sustainability, not least through the impact of significant tourist activity. We are asking you to challenge current preconceived positions and approaches to tourism (visuality), conservation (memory) and human/natural infrastructures (ecology). Our task, within the studio, is to develop a way of curating the site through perceptive studies, our architectural instruments and a certain theorized agenda that addresses these major concerns. The creative ideas that you generate through your research will manifest in appropriate architectural interventions – your design for an Oikos.

Bath was dusty and a little shabby when we moved here {...} It did look its age and you felt its history in its streets and buildings and little alleyways. The sense of the past was palpable. There were some bad modern buildings but there was a patina of age.

The problem now is that it has been sharpened up for the tourists. It's too clean. It's like an old person with Botox. You don't get the same sense of the past. It's too clean, too sharp.

Ken Loach, film director, Guardian

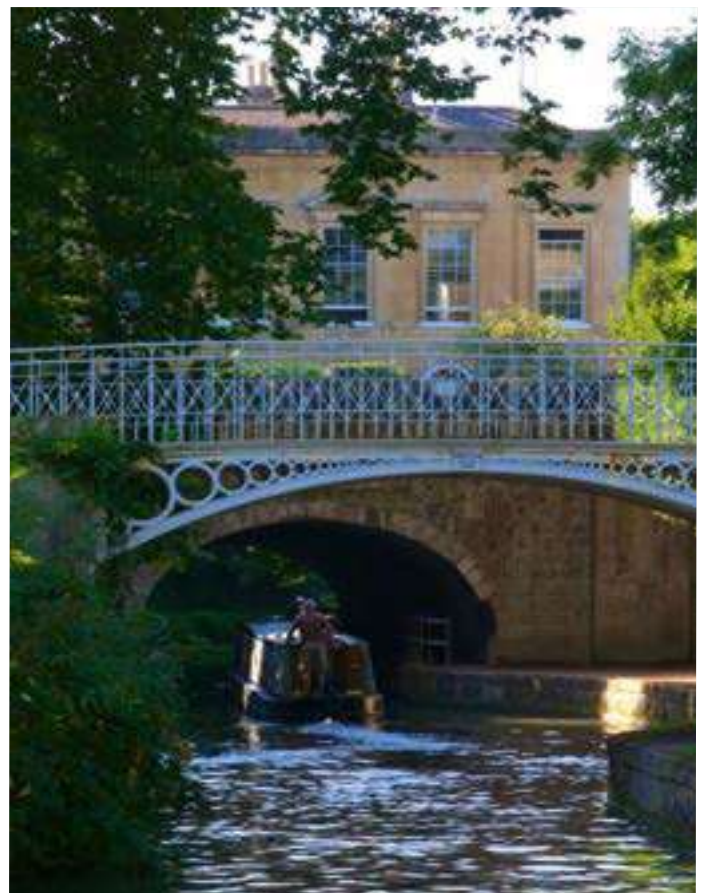


Image: The canal and bridge in Sydney Gardens

Who is in and who is out? How does the porous boundary between Oikos, city and world operate? Who gets what from whom? We encourage you to engage with ideas of ecology, and with beyond-human beings. Your proposal will relate closely to the local economy of your site, possibly in a challenging way.

In addition, we ask you to investigate the issues of technology, society and environment through their interrelated co-creative dynamics as a framework to situate proposals for reconstructing the city ecologically, socially and historically.

Tectonically, we will creatively explore the ideas of 'memory' and 'invention' by examining:

- + the nature of materials and their forms (making processes), old and new and how these may be combined in new aesthetic relationships;
- + the joint or connection and its symbolic expression within the context of the 'whole'.



Image: Women and quarrying, quarry pop driller, Source: <https://discoverbuxton.co.uk/women-and-quarrying/>



Image: Ham and Doulling Stone, Bath Quarry, Somerset

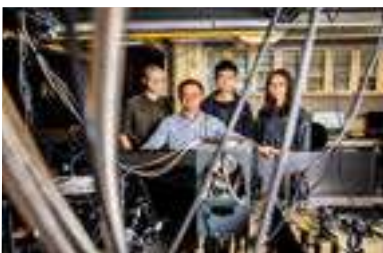


Image: Various examples of 'Oikos'.

Each of you has a unique creativity and we expect you will develop ideas of Oikos that we could not possibly anticipate. But to illustrate the idea, examples of Oikos might include the following: - the staff of a research laboratory and their experimental subjects; a rewilding club and associated non-human beings; an apiarist with her bees and the flowers they graze; a hotel staff (and guests?); a group of antique restorers/ fakers (and the beetles whose shells are harvested to make the shellac?); a theatre with actors, directors, management, promotions, front of house and back of house staff... (and audience?) ; a poetry club; an association of alternative health practitioners; a design centre for biotechnological building products.

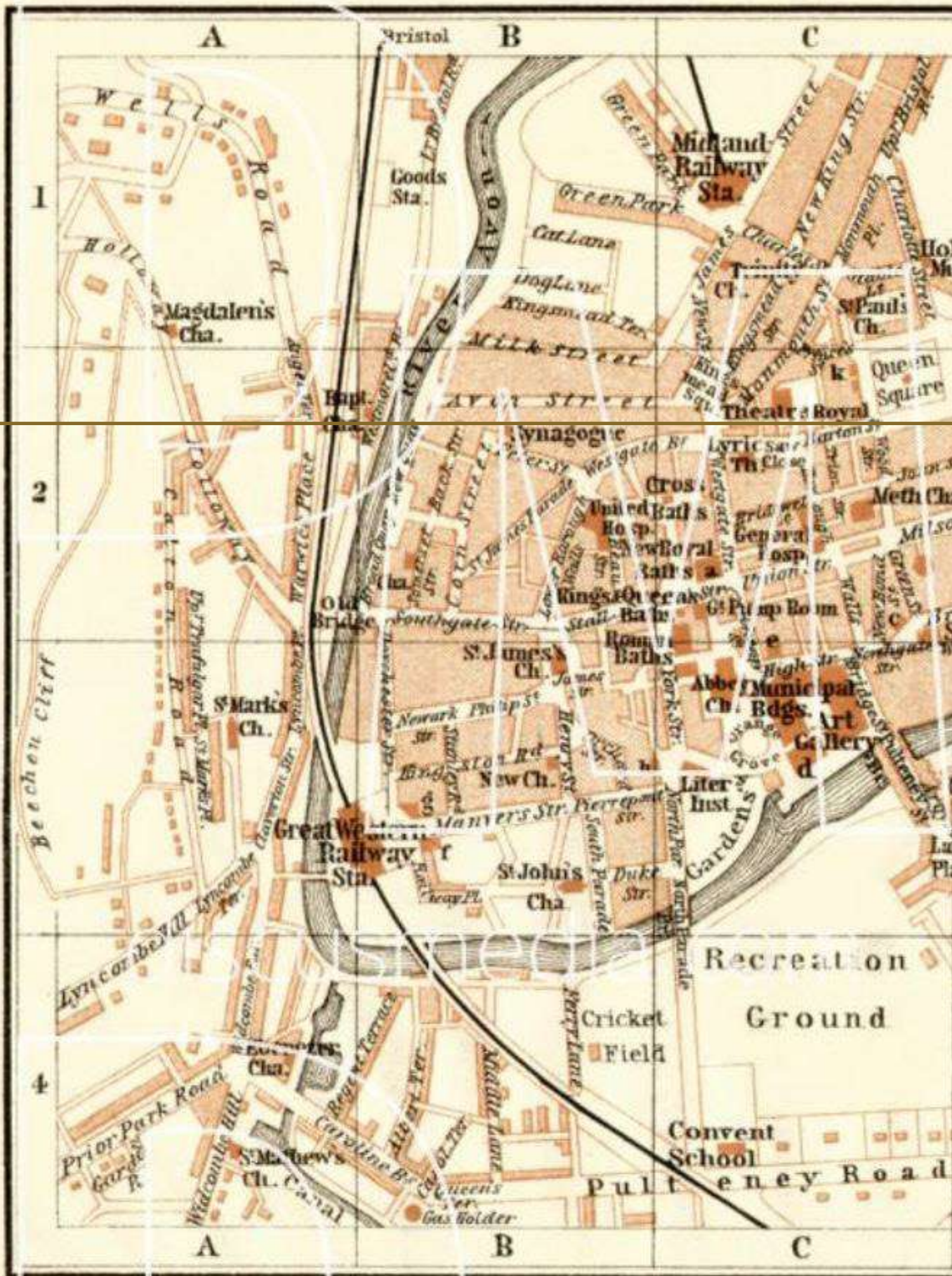
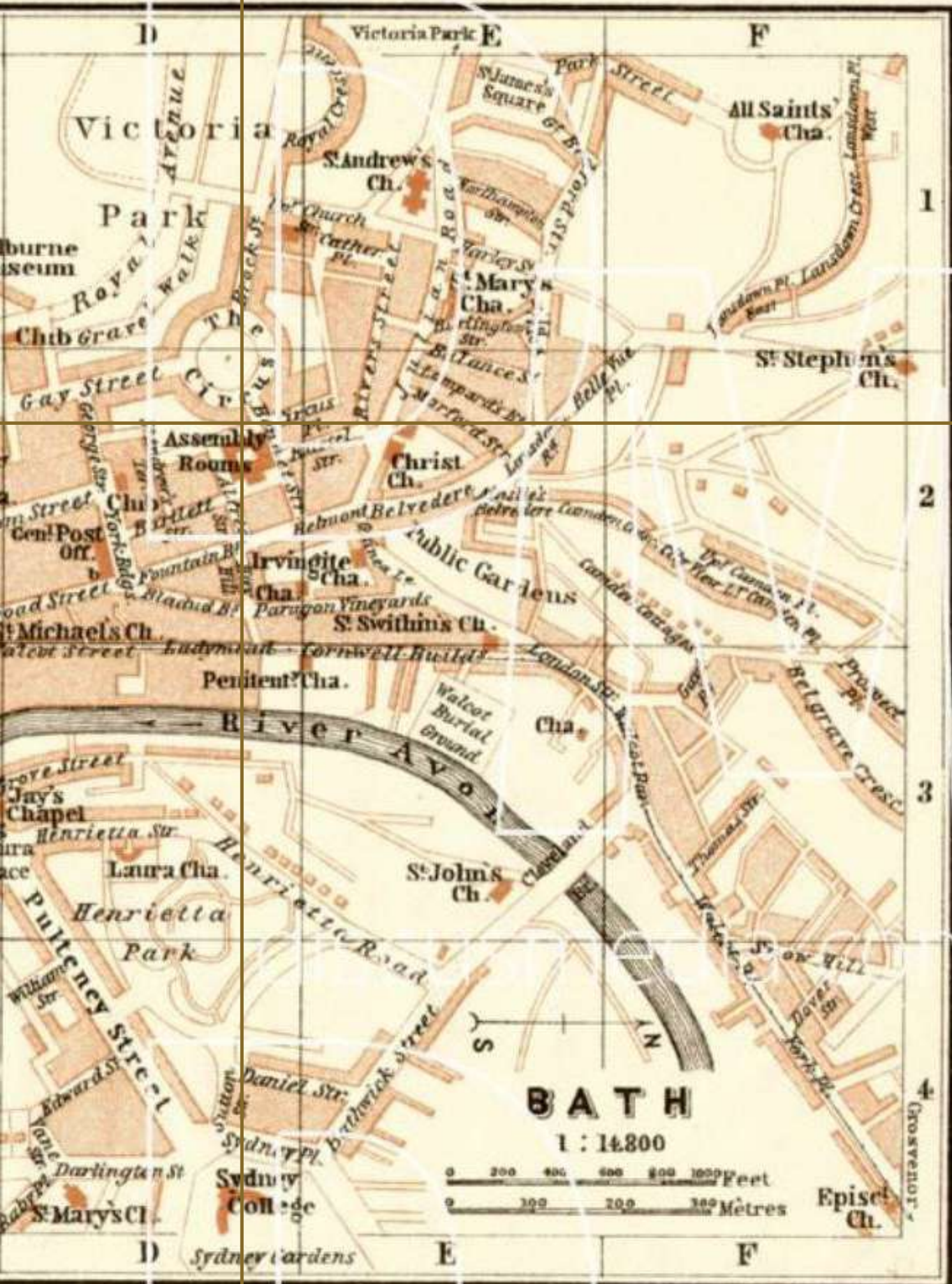


Image: Old map of Bath in Great Britain by Wagner & Debes, Leipzig - Original scale 1:14,800. Image size (in mm): 155x104 - Original scale



STUDIO DESCRIPTION

Our studio can be described with the following key specifications:

- + a research-led design exercise

- + a mixture of collective and individual work – where in Stage 5 individual sites and designs contribute to new understandings of the shared overall site (Bath WHS), Stage 6 students may choose to work in a similarly collaborative spirit.

- + focus on the past, the present and the future (history itself and our intervention with it)

- + exploring a network of ideas to address the above concerns using ‘curation’ as a key concept and method – curating our seeing, reading, knowing, interacting, contributing and promoting values of the Site

- + thinking beyond abundance - addressing scarcity through the facilitation of new sustainable ecologies

- + an emphasis on landscape and cityscape as an assemblage of human and natural infrastructures – place, folk, work, identity + resources

We encourage students to start from any one or a few ideas in our three central themes (Visuality, Memory, Ecology) to develop a focus for your thinking, bearing in mind we value:

- 1, Visual, spatial and cultural attention to the WHS and its primary landmarks and landscape(s).

- 2, Clear conceptual framing (theorizing) and communication (verbal, graphic, tectonic), for the agenda of curating the WHS towards a progressive conservation, embodied reading, and human and natural ecology (Oikos).



Image: Cruickshank Ball Room, Bath

BASICS

STAGE 5		STAGE 6	
Site	<p><i>Sites in/around the World Heritage Site (WHS) area of Bath will be identified through the course of the initial analysis work.</i></p> <p><i>Sites may be located within or adjacent to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. WHS Core Area</i> <i>2. WHS Boundary Area</i> <p><i>You will be encouraged to identify sites/briefs that respond to the intersections between the three main themes outlined below.</i></p>	Site	<p><i>Either, selected areas/sites within the Bath World Heritage Site (WHS) Boundary Area and Buffer Zone or an alternative Heritage Site of international significance.</i></p> <p><i>You are encouraged to identify sites/briefs that respond to the intersections between the three main themes outlined below.</i></p>
Programme	<p><i>Your research into the physical and cultural aspects of your site will inform the development of an individual programme that engages with some, or all, of the themes outlined below. From this, over the course of the year, you will craft spatial propositions, initially as urban interventions; later as technically realised architecture.</i></p>	Programme	<p><i>Your research into the physical and cultural aspects of your site will inform the development of a programme that engages with some, or all, of the themes outlined below. This will be further developed from urban strategy to architectural manifestation of Oikos over the course of the year.</i></p>
Agenda	<p><i>Developing and realising a vision of situated Oikos coupled to Progressive Ecology through skilful and imaginative analytical and architectural tools, supported by a theoretical agenda developed through studio themes outlined below.</i></p>	Agenda	<p><i>Developing and realising a vision of situated Oikos coupled to Progressive Ecology through skilful and imaginative analytical and architectural tools, supported by a theoretical agenda developed through studio themes outlined below.</i></p>

THEMES

1. Oikos

+ Ecology - Human and Natural Ecologies - Scarcity and Thinking Beyond Abundance
– Companion Species - Justice.

+ Economy - Assemblage of Life-Work and City-Landscape

2. Heritage and Tourism

+ Visuality (Seeing) - City as an Open Gallery (.... of Vision on the Move, for a reformed Tourist Gaze) Embodied Seeing, Felt Knowledge & Engaged Tourism

+ Memory (Understanding)- Progressive Conservation and Critical Heritage Studies - History as Live; Constructive Memory



Image: Reconstruction, Roman Museum, Bath

STUDY VISIT

All stage 5 students will be accompanying us on a visit to Bath. Stage 6 students are welcome to join this or, alternatively, may choose to take the opportunity to visit your own site of choice or a building or Oikos that you find particularly interesting.

To give a brief introduction to Bath, the City has been a destination for travellers for centuries, though typical motivations for visiting have varied over time, with 'tourist' activity emerging in the late 17th century. Initially, during the Roman occupation of Britain, the settlement was associated with the healing cult of Sulis Minerva, which gathered around the thermal springs. The tradition probably predated the Romans and certainly survived their occupation, with Bath continuing as a significant medical centre throughout the medieval period and into the 18th century. Then things changed. Bath rapidly developed as a fashionable resort for the rural elite, who would gather there for weeks or months at a time to 'take the waters' (i.e. participate in various watery healing regimes), socialise and network (vide the novels of Jane Austen)¹. A significant national economic boom supported the expansion of the city. 'Georgian Bath', with its ranges of terraced houses, the King's Circus, the Royal Crescent, the Pump Rooms, Assembly Rooms and so on are the fruit of this period.

This outlines the phenomena responsible for the city's 'World Heritage' status - the partial survival of the Roman baths and temple complex; and the buildings associated with the 18th- century fashionable 'spa' resort. The flourishing of both cultures depended on the geological conditions of the City – the hot springs and the mellow 'Bath stone' from which it is largely built. This is a honey-coloured, oolitic limestone extracted from the local quarries in Coombe Down and Bathampton. ² These conditions may become important influences in the technical design responses you develop as the year progresses. And Contemporary Bath? There is more to it than tourism and heritage – two universities, a vast hospital, schools, theatres, etc.. - the specific qualities and cultures that you want to engage with will emerge through your own research.

This section has offered a short introduction to the City of Bath. Stage Six student who choose to work in a different location might start thinking about the conditions that make their chosen Heritage Site particular and worthy of preservation and what sparks their interest in that particular site.

Reference to the UNESCO 'World Heritage' listing for Bath will help you understand the reasons why it is an extraordinary place, seen as worthy of preservation.



Images: The source of the hot springs and the original baths



Image: It is still possible to bathe in the thermal waters at the 'Thermae Bath Spa', architect Grimshaw and Partners.

The circular Medieval core of the city is easily discernible. It is to the south, between the two bridges. Practically everything beyond this boundary was created during the 18th century.



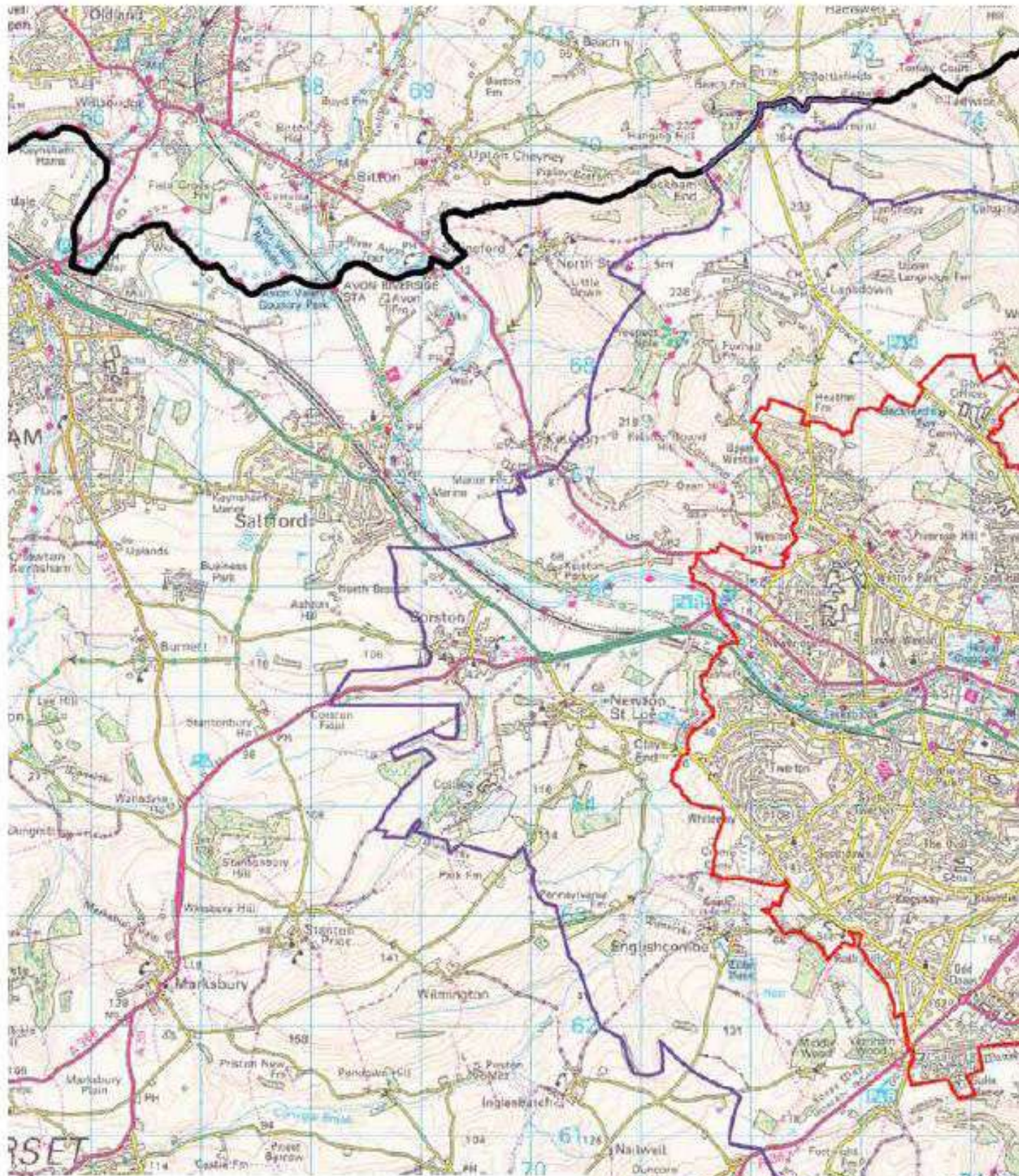
Image: Bath. Hancock (R.), 'A New and Accurate Plan of the City of Bath'..., 1795.

The task and dilemma we are facing is how to reconcile the inventions and achievements of modern technology, which have already established their autonomy, with conditions of human life, our inherited culture and the natural world. We will find no answer in a naive belief that the difficulty can be resolved by subordinating all knowledge and different ways of making to instrumental rationality and technology. While areas of reality are not amenable to such treatment, and perpetuating the belief that they are merely deepens the dilemma.

Dalibor Vesely, Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation (Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2004), u.p. Introduction.

Semester 1 Programme

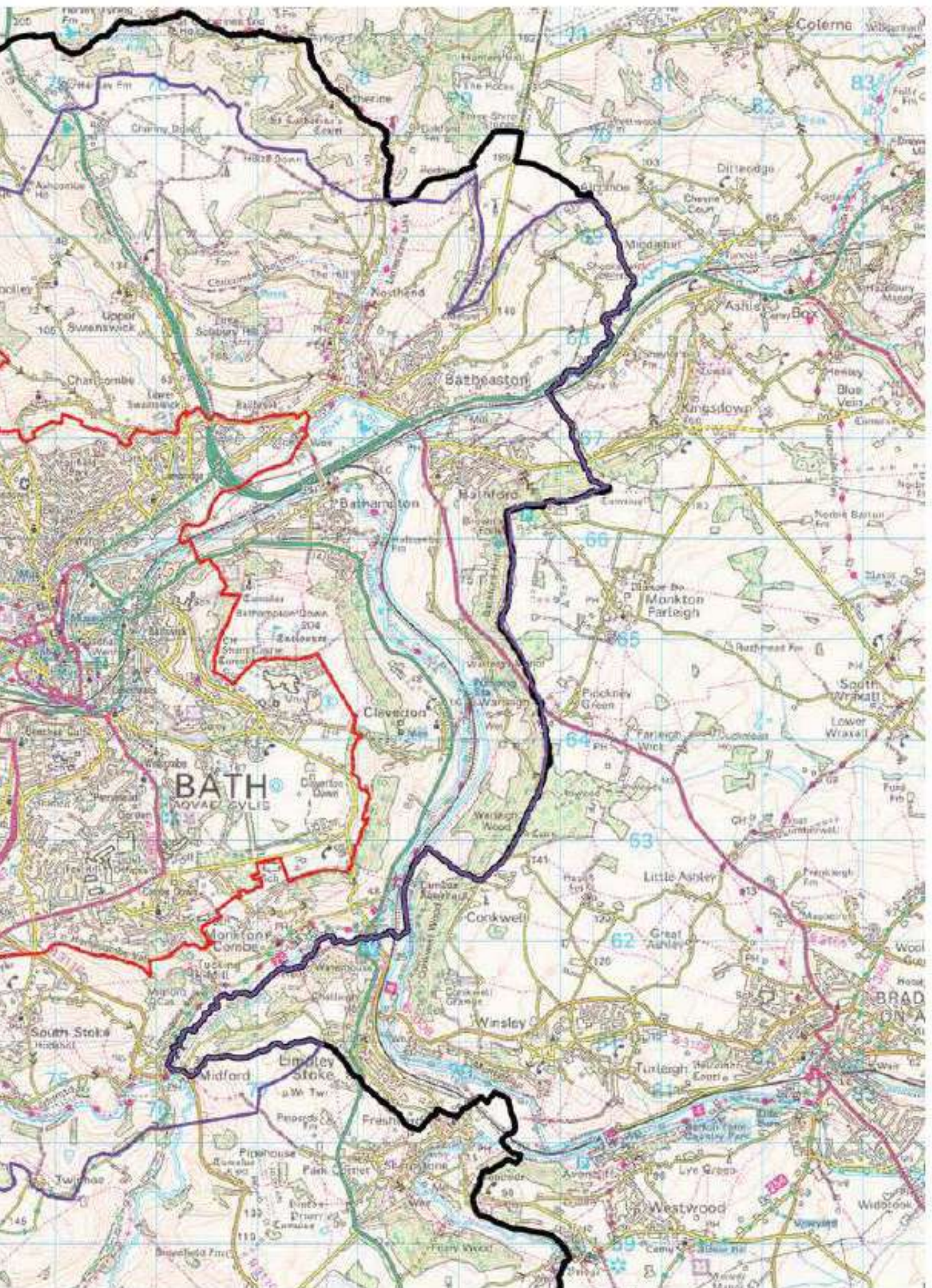
Weeks 1-3		
<p>Stage 5</p> <p>Backyard Dreams Shed – a provocation (Oikos small space, (surreal) vision of ecology and living with other-than-human being – an artisanal micro-industry)</p> <p>Bath context research, production of itinerary, bookings</p> <p>Reading and developing a theoretical agenda</p>	<p>Stage 6</p> <p>Backyard Dreams Shed- a provocation (Oikos small space, (surreal) vision of ecology and living with other-than-human being – an artisanal micro-industry)</p> <p>Individual (or Bath) WHS context research, production of itinerary, bookings</p> <p>Reading and developing a theoretical agenda</p>	<p><i>Readings:</i></p> <p>+ <i>Urry reading - Urry's agenda for the tourist gaze.</i></p> <p>+ <i>Donna Haraway – oikos/ ecology.</i></p> <p>+ <i>critical heritage papers</i></p> <p><i>Prepare itinerary. Must include an 'activity', and a 'museum', a 'view'.</i></p> <p><i>Preparation for field trip</i></p> <p><i>Desk top research on Bath.</i></p>
Week 4 - FIELD TRIP		<p><i>Introduction to WHS</i></p> <p><i>Drawing matter archive</i></p> <p><i>ways of mapping.</i></p> <p><i>1 day as a tourist.</i></p>
<p>Stage 5 students all required to go to Bath</p>	<p>Stage 6 may join us. We hope you do, but you may choose an alternative destination that relates to your proposal</p>	<p><i>3D mapping looking at the site through time. 3 time frames, 3 issues...tourism, heritage , ecology. Look at sites within the wider boundary rather than in the core Heritage area.</i></p>
Weeks 5,6		
<p>To be confirmed</p>	<p>Continued reading and context research</p> <p>Firm identification of a site and wider context</p>	
INTERIM REVIEW (at the end of week 6)		
ENRICHMENT WEEK – no teaching		
Weeks 7-11 (Juliet away week 7?)		
<p>Stage 5 students will develop urban design strategies.</p>	<p>Stage 6 students further develop theoretical framework. Undertake mappings and context studies related to your site.</p>	
FINAL REVIEWS		
CHRISTMAS BREAK		

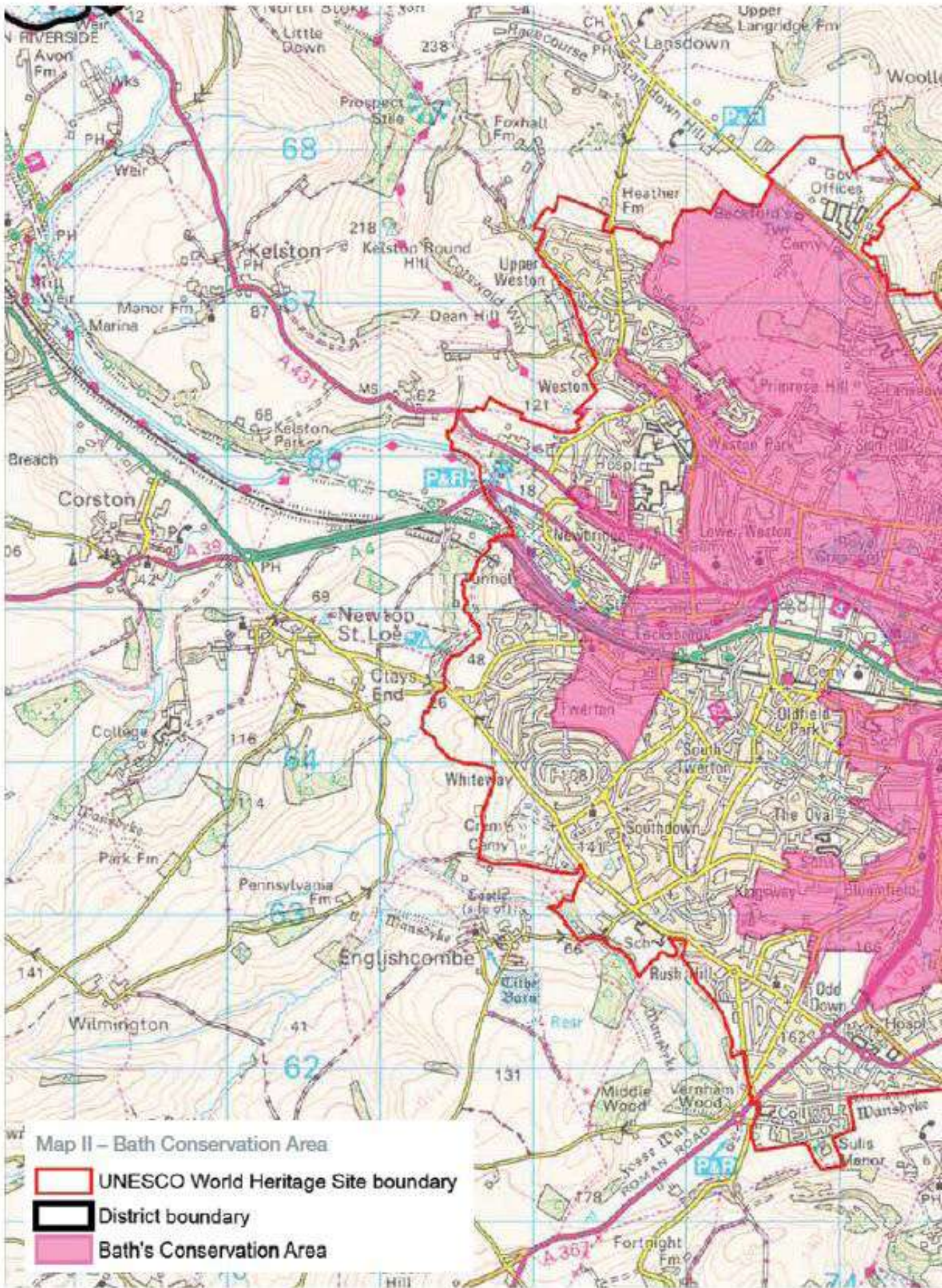


Map I – World Heritage Site Boundary and Setting

-  UNESCO World Heritage Site boundary
-  District boundary
-  Extent of the World Heritage Site's setting

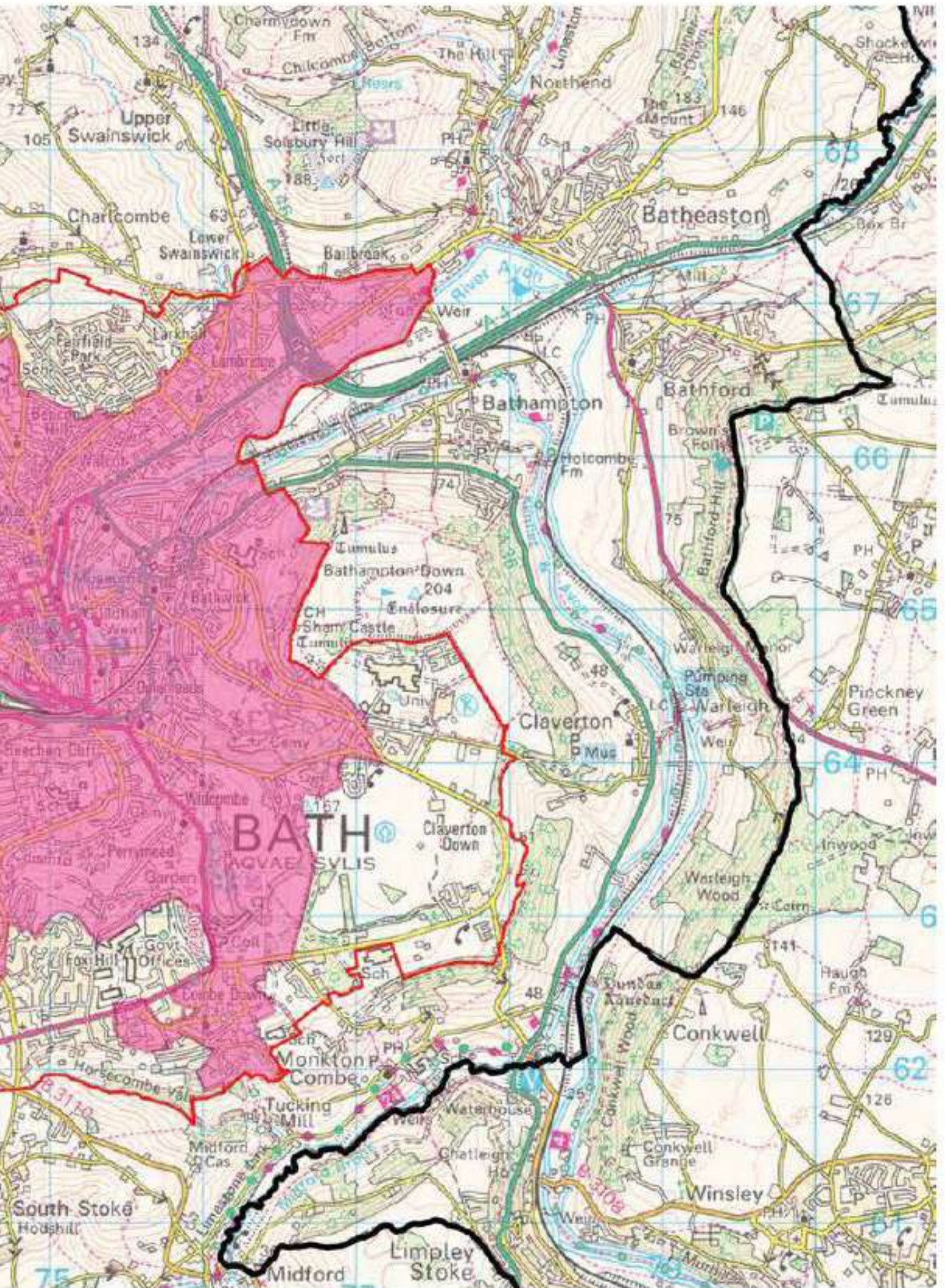


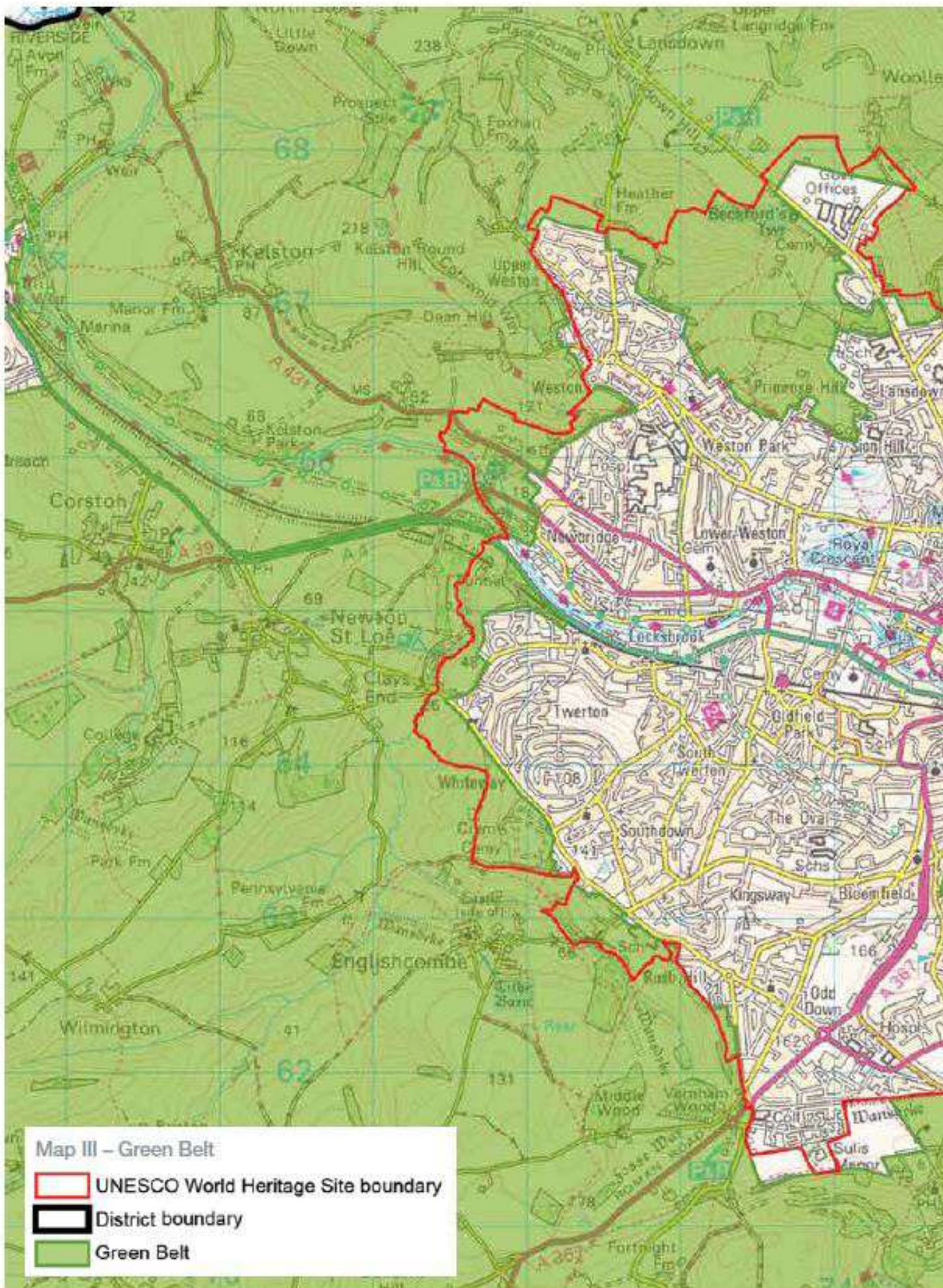




Map II - Bath Conservation Area

- UNESCO World Heritage Site boundary
- District boundary
- Bath's Conservation Area





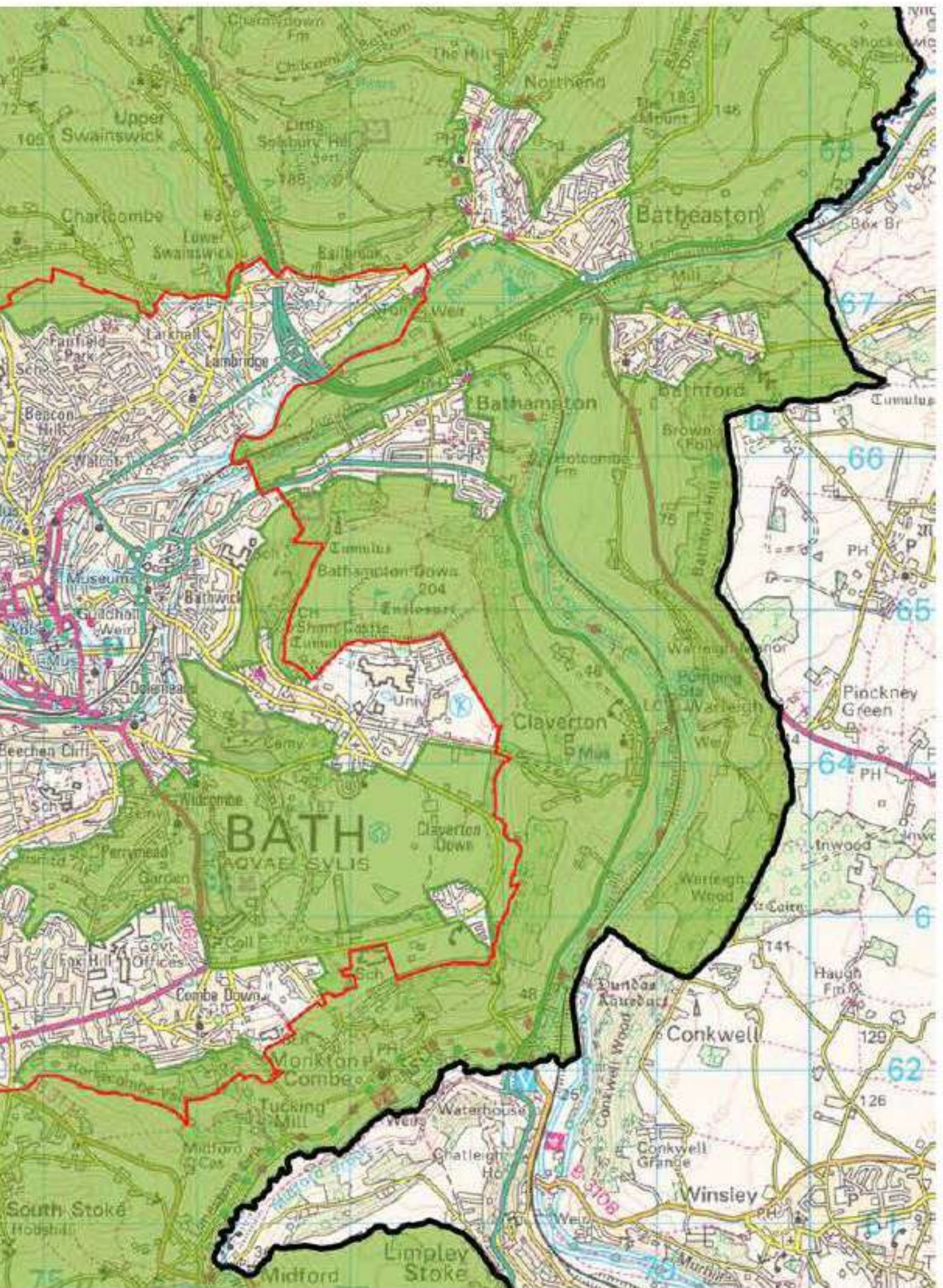




Image: Peter Brown: A Bath Painter's Travels at Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, 2016

WHS Listing and Management Plan

Links to the Bath WHS Management Plan and associated documents and other key organisations are available from the following websites:

+ *UNESCO World Heritage Centre: whc.unesco.org*

+ *Bath World Heritage: <https://www.bathworldheritage.org.uk/bath-world-heritage>.*

+ *Bath & North East Somerset Council - www.bathnes.gov.uk*

+ *Bath Preservation Trust: www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk*

+ *National Trust – Landscape Setting - <https://www.bathscape.co.uk/>*

+ *The Nelson Society: www.nelson-society.com*

Main Readings

1. VISUALITY: City as Gallery (Vision & Embodied Knowledge):

Urry, John and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, London: Sage, 2011; 'C1, Theories' and 'C7, Vision and Photography', pp 14-36 and 129-153. <PDF>

2. MEMORY: Critical Heritage Studies & City Curation:

Haraway, Donna J., Chapter 1 'Playing String Figures with Companion Species', in *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Duke University Press, 2016, pp. 9-29. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ncl/detail.action?docID=4649739>.

Winter, Tim & Emma Waterton, 'Editorial: Critical Heritage Studies', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol 19, No 6 (2013) 529-531. <PDF>

Heathcott, Joseph, 'Curating the City: Challenges for Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century', *Journal of Planning History*, Vol 5, No 1 (Feb 2006) 75-83. <PDF>

3, ECOLOGY: Eco-Assemblage

Wahl, Christian, 'Design and Planning for People in Place: Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) and the Emergence of Ecological Planning, Ecological Design and Bioregionalism', Medium <<https://medium.com/@designforsustainability/design-and-planning-for-people-in-place-sir-patrick-geddes-1854-1932-and-the-emergence-of-2efa4886317e>> (Accessed 2nd October 2020). <PDF>

DeLanda, Manuel, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*, London: Bloomsbury, 2006. 'Introduction' (pp 7-11) and 'Chapter 5, Cities & Nations' (pp 74-103). <PDF>

4, MAPPING: Analysis, Ideas and Skills

Corner, James, 'Chapter 1.12, The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention', in *The Map Reader: Theories of Mapping Practice and Cartographic Representation*, eds. Martin Dodge, Ron Kitchin & Chris Perkins, London: John Wiley & Sons, 2011, pp. 89-101. <PDF>

Way, Thaisa, 'Landscapes of Industrial Excess: A thick sections approach to Gas Works Park', *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, (Spring 2003) 6-17. <PDF>

MVRDV, *KM3: Excursions on Capacities*, Actar; Har/DVD edition (December 30, 2005), ISBN: 978-8495951854

Optional Readings

1. Visuality:

Moir, James, 'Seeing the Sites: Tourism as Perceptual Experience', in *Tourism and Visual Culture*, Vol 1, eds. P Burns, C Palmer and J-A Lester, Oxfordshire: CABI, 2010, pp 165-169.

Burns, Peter, Cathy Palmer & Jo-Anne Lester, 'Introduction', in *Tourism and Visual Culture*, Vol 1, eds. P Burns, C Palmer and J-A Lester, Oxfordshire: CABI, 2010, pp xv-xxi. <PDF>
+ Table of Contents x 2, *Tourism and Visual Culture*, Vol 1 and 2, Oxfordshire: CABI, 2010. <PDF>

Wells, Karen, 'The Material and Visual Cultures of Cities', *Space and Culture*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (May 2007) 136-144. <PDF>

Foster, Hal, ed. *Vision and Visuality*, Seattle: Bay Press, 1988. [Level 4; 700.1]

Jay, Martin, 'Scopic Regime of Modernity', *Vision and Visuality*, ed. Hal Foster, Seattle: Bay Press, 1988, pp. 3-23.

Urry, John, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, London: Sage Publications, 1990. [Level 3; 338.4791 URR]

2. Memory:

Winter, Tim, 'Clarifying the critical in critical heritage studies', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol 19, No 6 (2013) 532-545. <PDF>

Benesch, Henric, *Heritage as Common(s): Common(s) as Heritage*, Goteborg: Makadam Forlag, 2015. (1st volume in 'Curating the City' series). [Books Level 3 (306 HER)]

Veysel Apaydin, ed, *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage: Construction, Transformation and Destruction*, London: UCL Press, 2020.

Eugene Ch'ng, Vincent Gaffney, Henry Chapman, eds, *Visual Heritage in the Digital Age*, London: Springer, 2013.

3. Ecology:

Young, Robert, "'Free cities and regions"—Patrick Geddes's theory of planning', *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 166 (Sept 2017) 27-36, DOI: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.07.007 <PDF>

Amatia, Marco, Freestone, Robert, Robertson, Sarah: "'Learning the city": Patrick Geddes, exhibitions, and communicating planning ideas", *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 166 (Sept 2017) 27-36, DOI: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.07.007 <PDF>

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Steiner, Frederick & Laurel McSherry, 'Observation, reflection, action', *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 166 (Aug 2017) 55-56, DOI: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.07.007 <PDF>





Image: Bath aerial view

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Image: The Royal Crescent, Bath

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<https://ubi-my.com/2020/05/17/oikos-an-introduction-to-ecology/>

