

# Heritage Partnership Agreements

**New-style management agreements could offer owners the chance to manage their heritage sites more efficiently.**

## PILOTING A NEW APPROACH

There has been an increasing appreciation in the heritage sector of the potential of management agreements that set out guidelines for the management of a historic site or monument over a given period. The forerunner of these is the agreement brokered in 1992 by Ipswich Borough Council, in conjunction with English Heritage, for the Willis Corroon building in Ipswich. There have been others since, notably a recent agreement for the Barbican in London. For the archaeological environment, management agreements are well established. Under Section 17 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979, financial and non-financial management agreements can be agreed. In Yorkshire, for example, English Heritage has more than 200 non-financial agreements with the Forestry Commission. Generic scheduled monument consents can also be agreed with owners to cover things like maintenance or damage caused by vandalism. In 2003 English Heritage and the ODPM published *Streamlining Listed Building Consent*, which in part assessed the use of management agreements for the historic built environment (Paul Drury Partnership 2003).

The government was not breaking entirely new ground, therefore, when it set out in *The Way Forward* the view that in future 'statutory management agreements could be employed wherever that approach would work better than the system of individual specific consents' (DCMS 2004). These would go one step further than the current regime by being legally enforceable under the proposed new heritage protection legislation. Specifically, it is suggested that the law might allow LPAs to grant consent or to waive the need for consent via the agreement.

To test the proposals set out in *The Way Forward* the government asked English Heritage

to undertake a number of pilot studies. These began in 2003 and where appropriate have explored the potential of statutory management agreements – currently named Heritage Partnership Agreements. As the pilots progressed, ideas and questions developed about how HPAs might work in practice, their form and when they might be used.

Part of the assessment of HPAs involves understanding what benefits they might bring. This is the crucial question for potential signatories to agreements: can HPAs help them more efficiently to manage the heritage environment? The pilot projects show that the communication involved in setting up a partnership helps to develop a beneficial relationship that will stand all in good stead. HPAs should bring clarity, so that all parties understand how the site will be managed over the period of the agreement. For sites that have a number of owners, or which come under more than one planning authority, an agreement can also bring greater consistency to management decisions.

Furthermore, the pilot projects show that these benefits of management agreements can be significantly enhanced if, in addition, the HPA is used as the vehicle for granting consent or waiving the need for repeated applications. The corollary is that there may also be financial advantages if the time and cost of setting up the agreement is less than that needed for the consent applications that the HPA replaces.

It will be for the LPA (and English Heritage where appropriate) to determine the extent of the works given consent via the HPA. It is unlikely that HPAs would be used for consenting to significant works, but would instead be reserved for those of a straightforward or repetitive nature to be undertaken within the lifetime of the agreement (three or five years perhaps). LPAs have obligations to undertake consultation on applications for consent, and the same is likely to be true for HPAs.

There has never been an expectation that

Higher New Bridge, St Stephen's by Launceston Rural, Cornwall. This late medieval bridge, depicted in full on page 13, is listed Grade I as well as being protected as a scheduled monument. Meanwhile, the early 19th-century milestone in one its refuges is separately listed as a Grade II structure.



© English Heritage

HPAs could be widely applied, rather it was thought that they could benefit particular sites. The pilot project at RAF Scampton, for example, showed that an urgent need to expand and refurbish the base made an HPA an inappropriate option. By their nature HPAs are not suited to situations of immediate, rapid change. At Scampton it also transpired that the low number of designations made management guidelines a more sensible option than an HPA.

In theory HPAs can be applied to sites of any size but the biggest benefits will be found on large and complex sites and estates, or sites in dispersed locations with monuments of the same type, perhaps under a single ownership. The pilot project on Cornish bridges is an example of the latter, where the form of works to scheduled and listed bridges, often needed as a consequence of damage by vehicles, has been agreed via a pilot HPA.

If the sites to which an HPA might be applied can vary, then the complexity of the HPA might be able to vary too. The ambition is that an HPA should not be an onerous document to put together. The precise form that HPAs will take cannot be confirmed until the new legislation is finalised, but they are likely to have two essential parts. The first part, signed by the partners, will specify the works permitted by the HPA, while an appendix and accompanying maps will explain the historic importance of the site, its present condition, the principles for its conservation and the programme of proposed works.

The pilot project at Holkham Hall in Norfolk demonstrated how HPAs might be based on existing management documentation rather than needing to be developed entirely from scratch. This material needs to be relevant, complementary to any other material drawn upon for the HPA, and sufficiently detailed. A conservation plan is one example, but others might be documents drawn up for Countryside Stewardship Schemes or the

Inland Revenue's Heritage Relief (Conditional Exemption) Scheme. It may also be relevant to refer to natural-environment designations where they need to be taken into account.

The form of the appendix that has emerged from the pilots is not unlike a conservation plan. Unlike a conservation plan, however, it will probably contain a works programme or development strategy, as a means of moving from an understanding of the historic interest of the site to agreed consents for specific works. Negotiations regarding a new HPA would ideally coincide with a review of the statutory protection of the site, undertaken by English Heritage. This would ensure that the understanding of the registered area and its historic assets, as translated into designation, is up to date for purposes of the HPA. The designation documentation and mapping should be included in the agreement. In cases where this did not happen, the HPA would need to address any discrepancies between the existing designation statements of importance and the current understanding of the site's significance.

The pilot projects have demonstrated that there could be a role for HPAs in managing the historic environment but more discussion is needed before the government can decide how they might be included in the new legislation. If they are introduced, the sector will determine whether or not they are a useful addition to the palette of options that is available to those who own and manage the historic environment.

#### Tony Calladine

*Heritage Protection Department, English Heritage*

#### REFERENCES

- Paul Drury Partnership 2003. *Streamlining Listed Building Consent: Lessons from the Use of Management Agreements. A Research Report*. London: English Heritage and ODPM
- DCMS 2004. *Review of Heritage Protection: The Way Forward*. London: DCMS

### Creating and using a conservation development strategy: the UEA experience

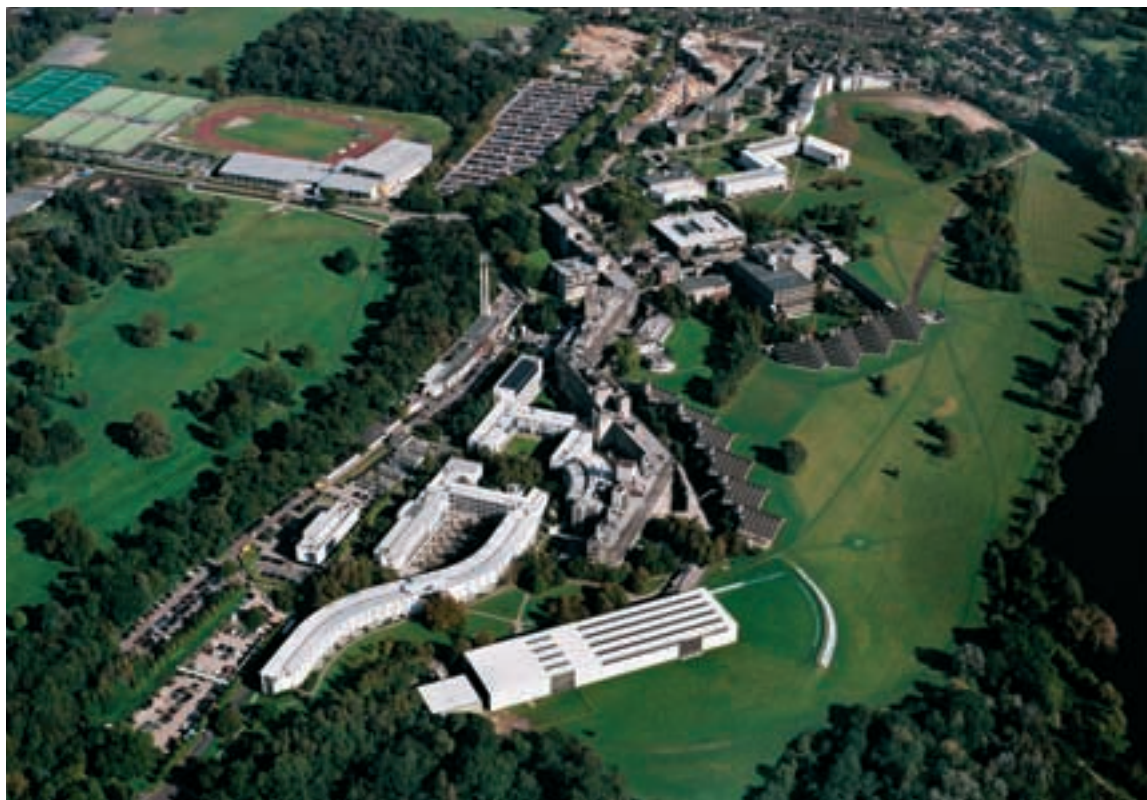
Since its foundation 45 years ago, the University of East Anglia (UEA) has enjoyed a unique campus – one that has contributed to its international reputation and well-being. Sir Denys Lasdun's outstanding architecture is set in an exceptional, albeit incomplete Master Plan, so it was inevitable that parts of UEA would be listed when they came of age in October 2003. It may come as a surprise, therefore, to learn that the university resisted listing and the protection it offers. It argued that no such protection was necessary – it had always valued and maintained its buildings and could point to ongoing consultations with English Heritage as a demonstration of the quality of its care. It felt listing was an encumbrance rather than an aid to a successful and growing institution. The university is still of this view and is keen to see the proposed changes to the legislation planned for 2008. As Professor Andrew Saint observed, one cannot apply the same rules as for traditional listed buildings to the management of modern buildings, due to the implications of modern materials, and the need to renew or replace any that fail.

Just one month after listing, English Heritage persuaded the university to participate in its listing reform study, by undertaking one of the pilot studies for the proposed conservation

management plans. The university saw this as an opportunity to influence prevailing opinion. Suitable though a straightforward conservation plan may be for many historic sites, it does not match the needs of a dynamic institution that is ever changing. Accordingly, after discussion with English Heritage, the university developed the concept of the Conservation Development Strategy (CDS).

The university's CDS describes itself as 'a novel approach to conservation planning ... more ambitious than a typical conservation plan [because] by adding opportunities for change, it mitigates the planning uncertainty faced by UEA due to the significance of its existing building stock'. It 'sets out principles and policies for the care of the university estate, and identifies opportunities for development'. It 'deals with conservation issues' but as 'only one factor that must be taken into account' when it 'identifies opportunities for change'. It 'gathers together principles of good practice' and aims to 'be a practical guide for action' reflecting 'a range of present-day informed opinion on conservation-related issues at UEA'.

By January 2004, the university had appointed Cambridge Architectural Research (CAR) to generate its strategy. CAR has considerable experience in creating such guidance and the university has its own Estate and Buildings Division, where in-house architectural and management skills are available to take forward a project of this kind. As a



The University of East Anglia's internationally admired campus is now supported by a Conservation Development Strategy drawn up with the help of English Heritage and other interested organisations.

© English Heritage

consequence, UEA was fortunate to be able to take ownership of the process of creating the guidance from the outset.

Following thorough archival research, including records held by Lady Lasdun, interviews were conducted with many who were involved with the creation of the campus – including Ted Cullinan, the project architect for the ziggurats. Current expert opinion was sought and the university's own community was surveyed through a questionnaire. As a consequence, CAR built an authoritative picture of the campus and how it should be maintained in the context of change and development. Through a number of drafting stages, the university and CAR sought comment from the Norwich City Council (NCC), the Norwich City Design Quality Panel, the Twentieth-Century Society, the Norwich Society, the Yare Valley Society and, of course English Heritage itself. Having consulted widely and made adjustments to the CDS, the university expects to put it before the Local Planning Committee for its formal approval in June 2006.

Even before its formal adoption, the university and NCC are using the CDS. It is providing guidance for those engaged in day-to-day maintenance. It is constantly proving its worth in relation to defining the legitimacy of refurbishment projects in relation to listing. Its usefulness has been demonstrated in supporting an application for listed building consent for a major multi-million-pound refurbishment of the famous ziggurats, where both consultation time and administrative activities were reduced. Future development opportunities are defined in the context of conservation. And it provides the strategic context for approaching the ultimate goal of eventually completing the maestro's Master Plan.

Although initially reluctant about listing, the university believes that the CDS is working well and would recommend the approach to other similar institutions. The document is more informative and accessible than the old-style listing statement and of much more practical use to those responsible for the care of the campus. The university intends to publish it as a guide for those working on the campus and as a book for wider enjoyment. The university expects the CDS to be sewn into an HPA and now looks to the DCMS to provide the legal framework.

**Joseph N Saunders**

*Estate Development Director, University of East Anglia*

## **Holkham Hall: managing change on a country estate**

Holkham Hall was selected by English Heritage as the subject of an HPR pilot project at the start of the review process. The Holkham Hall estate was happy to be involved. The pilot offered the opportunity to examine whether an HPA could address the circumstances of a country estate, and to explore the idea of interoperability: that existing analytical or management material might form the basis of an HPA that would in turn grant consents given on the basis of its statutory force under the proposed legislation.

Holkham, home of the Coke family and the Earls of Leicester, was built between 1734 and 1764 by Thomas Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester. The estate is situated on the north Norfolk coast near Wells-next-the-Sea, and covers an area of approximately 1210 hectares. It is, as the entry in the Register of Parks and Gardens puts it, 'one of the principal landscape parks in England', the design of the Grade I house emerging from a collaboration between Thomas Coke, Lord Burlington and William Kent.

Holkham estate includes a number of listed buildings, a registered landscape, several scheduled ancient monuments, and a conservation area (the Model Village of Holkham). They co-exist with other, non-heritage, national and local designations. There are some 56 entries in the present statutory list in the Holkham area. Thirty-two of these have been gathered into the 18 HARs for the purposes of the new Register Entry, which includes a separate HAR for the registered landscape.

Holkham is a modern country estate, and has a staff that runs its affairs. As well as being a major visitor attraction, Holkham is a 10,000-hectare agricultural business and a major local landlord, and in recent years has diversified into other activities. The estate's heritage assets, at any point in time, will be undergoing some kind of physical change.

Holkham Hall benefits from the Inland Revenue's Heritage Relief scheme, which gave rise to a Heritage Landscape Management Plan that was prepared in 1995, and is due to be revised and updated. This plan, it was thought, might form the basis for an HPA but would need to be modified to provide a more detailed analysis of the historic structures of the estate, and more concise objectives.

At first sight, Holkham Hall would seem to be an ideal candidate for an HPA. Its estate contains a variety of heritage assets in the same ownership that experience ongoing adaptation



Holkham Hall, Norfolk,  
in its landscape setting.

© Crown copyright, NMR

in response to the changing needs of an estate run as a business. This change involves regular interaction with the statutory authorities, and could be assessed and codified in an agreement regarding permitted works. It would seem equally possible to add to this a list of objectives for future work, along with an agreed approach to the conservation of the estate's listed buildings. Such an HPA would sit alongside and be linked to an enhanced Heritage Landscape Management Plan, giving force to its objectives and strategies.

However, the estate is content with the Heritage Landscape Management Plan as it stands and feels that it provides an adequate framework for the management of its heritage assets. The estate's experience of the statutory planning and listed building processes is a positive one and it has good relations with English Heritage and its local authorities. The estate is familiar with the policy and legislation relating to planning and listed buildings, and is used to developing projects that require statutory consent. Pre-application discussions have usually resulted in schemes being successfully negotiated prior to submission.

It is not clear, therefore, that the estate would at present benefit from an HPA. While there are clear financial benefits from a Heritage Landscape Management Plan – in that it brings with it the tax relief provided by the Conditional Exemption – Holkham does not believe that there is any significant problem in the present system of statutory control that might be addressed by an HPA. For the estate, the system works.

Holkham demonstrates that HPAs are only appropriate in certain situations, and, perhaps, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. Much depends on the specific circumstances of the heritage asset and the context of control. In many instances, owners will need to be persuaded to invest time and effort in preparing an HPA.

But the virtuous circumstances described here do not exist everywhere. Even where

consensus exists, there may be a value in recording the basis of it by means of an agreement about, say, conservation method and what is acceptable by way of typical or repetitive change to assets. Circumstances and people change, and an HPA can help underpin clarity and continuity regarding conservation objectives. Nothing remains constant, even in a place as well run as Holkham.

**Kevin Murphy**  
*Director, KMHeritage*

### London Underground

London Underground (LU) is responsible for more than 50 listed buildings among the 253 stations that form part of the world's oldest Underground system. The network ranges from mid-Victorian train sheds, such as at Farringdon, through the familiar ox-blood-red terracotta façades of the Edwardian stations by Leslie Green to the buildings of the 1930s that were overseen by the Adams, Holden & Pearson partnership. These latter stations, designed under the aegis of Frank Pick, proved to be seminal examples of both station architecture and corporate identity and many are buildings of international importance.

They are, however, functioning, working Underground stations that continue to transport, and are thus 'visited', by tens of thousands of customers every day. As Pick and Holden intended, they are still our 'shop window' and form, for many, the entrance to London as a city. Listed or not, all our buildings are important to us as they not only form part of our unique built heritage but are also part of our 'brand' – a valuable asset worthy of care, attention and development. They are also buildings that are undergoing a vast amount of modernisation and refurbishment following decades of neglect. The Underground – the arteries of the world city that is London – also has to manage with, and plan for, the highest passenger figures in decades. All these varied demands highlight

The exterior of Oak Wood station on the Piccadilly Line.

© London Underground



the need for a close relationship between LU, its InfraCo partners (who manage the system for us), English Heritage and local authorities.

One of the things I have most often heard said about a 'Listed Building' was that we, as owners, no longer had any 'real say' in it as a building – as if we had abdicated or lost such responsibility. This never was the case, but HPAs are, in many ways, about owners feeling empowered to reassert their responsibility for buildings and to do so in an open and agreed way that benefits all stakeholders.

LU is privileged to have formed part of the HPA trial and we have been happy, as owners, to feed back our comments on the plans. It has also helped us to focus our thoughts on the needs of the buildings and thus in turn to articulate how we can best balance our requirements and responsibilities.

For LU the opportunity to be involved in the trial was another example of the increasingly harmonious working relationship we have with English Heritage. For us the agreements are a logical step forward from our regular liaison meetings with English Heritage. On many levels, these have helped both organisations. We can bring our knowledge of our buildings and operational requirements to a forum that gives us access to English Heritage's unique skills and assistance. Through this process we have been able jointly to articulate our vision for Underground stations to other stakeholders, such as local authorities. Knowledge also brings other benefits, such as a greater awareness of the context of a station. An agreed series of processes for similar groups of buildings thus mitigates against piecemeal or inconsistent

work or alteration – for example, a procedure negotiated with English Heritage for dealing with ceramic tiles will help to manage similar situations that arise on many stations. This highlights other possible advantages of HPAs that we are keen to foster, including a more consistent approach to the conservation and development of stations that form part of thematic groups but that fall within the boundaries of more than 33 different local authorities.

These agreements come at an interesting time for LU. We now have a better focus on our buildings and their long-term futures than for many years. At present works of this kind require numerous applications to different local authorities and to English Heritage. For us there are distinct advantages in being able to agree, in advance, methodologies for dealing with 'day-to-day' maintenance of our stations in a way that actually benefits the buildings as historic structures.

HPAs could also form part of a raft of processes that bring together existing knowledge, company standards and requirements and legal obligations. They may, for example, encourage us to draw up Station and Heritage Maintenance Plans to help us care for and develop our buildings, both as working stations and as historic structures in their own right. In the longer term I am hopeful that we, as a company and as an important owner of such structures, will be able to help move forward the debate about the use and maintenance of historic buildings.

**Mike Ashworth**

*Design & Heritage Manager, London Underground*

## RAF Scampton

RAF Scampton, located just a few miles north of Lincoln, opened in 1936 as a bomber station, and remains in military use to this day. Its association with the Dambuster Raids of 1943 makes it Bomber Command's most famous base of the Second World War. It also played an important role in the Strategic Bomber Offensive and the daylight raids in support of the Allied offensive in Europe. During the 1950s it was developed as a V-bomber base, and was one of only two bomber airfields that were adapted early in the 1960s to handle the Blue Steel missile (the other being RAF Wittering). RAF Scampton is thus one of the most historically significant airfield landscapes in England.

RAF Scampton was selected by English Heritage in April 2004 as one of 15 pilot sites where the new system of heritage protection would be tested. Although none of the buildings were then listed, four of the hangars were recommended for listing at Grade II. This was subsequently confirmed by the DCMS in December 2005. Scampton was chosen as a pilot because its significance was proving difficult to identify and protect through the existing tools, ie listing or scheduling of individual structures. The original RAF buildings were

built to standardised designs and are thus unexceptional in architectural terms. However, the site as a whole is one of the best-preserved 'expansion period' sites in England and its historical associations make it unique. Under the proposed new system, the whole site could be entered as a single entry in the RHSBE and different management regimes applied to the component areas.

In parallel to the pilot project, English Heritage commissioned two independent studies from external consultants: an operational history and gazetteer of surviving structures (Francis 2004) followed by a characterisation report (Atkins 2004). Drawing on these reports, English Heritage identified 14 component areas of the site and compiled documentation for these in the form of HARs. Ranging from a buried Roman villa to Cold War structures, these include all of the 1930s' airfield buildings.

The decision to adopt RAF Scampton as a pilot project coincided with an announcement by the MoD in 2004 that the base would be reactivated and that various operational units would be relocated there during the period to 2012. Several projects began in 2005 to adapt existing buildings for the use of some of the incoming units. However, a subsequent ministerial announcement in March 2006 confirmed that the development plans for the base had



Aerial view of RAF Scampton showing the dramatic imposition of the 20th-century airfield on the earlier agricultural landscape.

© English Heritage

The Officers' Mess at RAF Scampton, built to a standard Air Ministry design. Although not listed, this is subject to conservation management policies.



© English Heritage

been reviewed and were to be scaled back. As a result, previous plans for intensifying the use of the site and for various new buildings have been dropped. The RAF Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows, will continue to occupy one of the listed hangars.

Conservation management guidelines, setting out policies for managing change in each of the 14 historic asset areas, have been drafted by the Government Historic Estates Unit (GHEU). This guidance has been developed in consultation with the RAF, Defence Estates and West Lindsey District Council. The agreed approach allows the operational development of the base to continue, through selective demolition of those buildings that do not have a sustainable future, while adopting conservation-based policies for new development, alterations and landscaping. The next step is for the guidelines to be formally adopted by the RAF and Defence Estates. In due course, they could form the basis for a formal management agreement, subject to the necessary legislative changes and the agreement of all the organisations involved, including the LPA.

Agreeing how much of the site can be demolished or altered, in the absence of statutory

listing controls and in the context of the complex operational needs of the RAF, has been a great challenge. A series of site meetings, attended by all the stakeholders and chaired by GHEU, has been successful in resolving all contentious issues where development or financial pressures have been in conflict with conservation objectives. The agreement of a development framework is thus a considerable achievement, and sets a useful example for other complex sites. The lessons of the pilot project will be formally assessed by DCMS and fed back into the HPR during 2006. For Defence Estates, this pilot has demonstrated the potential of a conservation management approach, linked to the Integrated Land Management Plans that are being prepared for MoD sites.

#### **Will Holborow**

*Head of the Government Historic Estates Unit, English Heritage*

#### REFERENCES

- Atkins, W S 2004. *RAF Scampton Characterisation Report*. Report for English Heritage  
 Francis, Paul 2004. *RAF Scampton: An Operational History and Gazetteer of Surviving Structures*. Report for English Heritage. Airfield Research Publishing