



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Commission

Minutes of the 233rd meeting held at 8.30am on 20 September 2006 at Priory Bay Hotel, Ryde, Isle of Wight

Commissioners present: Sir Neil Cossons – Chairman
Mrs Joyce Bridges CBE
Mr Michael Cairns
Professor David Cannadine
Mr Manish Chande
Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe
Mrs Gilly Drummond
Mr Piers Gough CBE
Dr Jane Grenville
Mr Michael Jolly CBE
Ms Jane Kennedy
Lord Leicester CBE
Mr Les Sparks OBE
Mrs Elizabeth Williamson

Staff present for meeting: Dr Simon Thurley – Chief Executive
Mr Steve Bee – Director of Planning and Development
Mr Michael Crich – Director of Resources
Ms Deborah Lamb – Director of Policy and Communications
Mr Mark Pemberton – Director of Properties and Outreach
Dr Christopher Young – Head of World Heritage and International Policy (item 12)
Mr David Burgh – Commission Secretariat Manager

Item 1 – Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from: Ms Maria Adebowale; Mr Bill Bryson and Lord Douro, and also Dr Edward Impey, Director of Research and Standards.

Declarations of interest

- 1.2 A declaration of interest was received from Ms Jane Kennedy in relation to Apsley House, as a partner at her practice had been involved in the Review.

Item 2 – Towards a tall buildings policy for London (CP 2006/74/E)

- 2.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act Section 22: information intended for future publication.*
- 2.2 Commission considered a report which sought to provide an evidence base for the development of a policy on tall buildings in London. The report included appendices setting out the history of tall buildings in London, an initial attempt at characterisation and an example of a values based analysis of an established historic view. Commissioners made a number of suggestions for improving the historical analysis and the values based analysis and commented upon the characterisation work. After amendment the papers would be taken to the English Heritage Advisory Committee and London Advisory Committee before returning to Commission in 2007.

Item 3 – Announcements

- 3.1 Commissioners thanked the staff of Osborne House for a very successful visit and dinner the day before.

Item 4 – Open Minutes of the 232nd Meeting: 19 July 2006 (CP 2006/75)

- 4.1 **The Commission agreed the open minutes of the 232nd Commission meeting held on 19 July 2006, subject to some minor amendments, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

Item 5 – Exempt Minutes of the 232nd Meeting: 19 July 2006 (CP 2006/76/E)

- 5.1 **The Commission agreed the exempt minutes of the 232nd Commission meeting held on 19 July 2006, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

Item 6 – Matters Arising

Apsley House Review

- 6.1 Commission noted that a draft of the Review had been submitted to DCMS.

Item 7 – Committee Minutes

a) EHAC minutes (open) – 20 July 2006 (CP 2006/77)

7.1 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the EHAC meeting held on 20 July 2006.

b) LAC minutes (open) – 28 July 2006 (CP 2006/78)

7.2 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the LAC meeting held on 28 July 2006.

c) LAC minutes (exempt) – 28 July 2006 (CP 2006/79/E)

7.3 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the LAC meeting held on 28 July 2006.

Item 8 – Chairman’s Report (Oral)

8.1 The Chairman reported on his engagements since the last full Commission meeting. These included very positive meetings with Baroness Andrews, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government on 20 July and Ruth Kelly MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 12 September. The Chairman and the Chief Executive had also joined Tessa Jowell MP, the Secretary of State and Gillian Merron MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport) on a visit to Stonehenge on 18 September.

Item 9 – Chief Executive’s Report (Oral)

9.1 The Chief Executive said that his main points were covered under items 10 and 11.

Item 10 – Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (Oral)

10.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 22: information intended for future publication.*

10.2 The Chief Executive gave a presentation on English Heritage preparations for the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2007 in the light of DCMS requests for an English Heritage response to possible reductions in funding levels for the three year period from April 2008. Further work was being undertaken and the results would be reported to the Commission meeting on 13 December.

Item 11 – Peer Review (CP 2006/80/E)

- 11.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 22: information intended for future publication.*
- 11.2 The Chief Executive introduced the final report of the Peer Review. The presentation of their outline findings had been made to Commission in July and English Heritage management had now had an opportunity to formulate a response to the recommendations. An action plan had been developed to take the recommendations of the report forward.
- 11.3 This item would be discussed again at the November meeting.

Item 12 – A World Heritage Strategy for English Heritage (CP 2006/81)

- 12.1 Commission considered a report on English Heritage's policy on World Heritage Sites, which had not been reviewed since 1998. This is an area where English Heritage is seeking to integrate the UK's international responsibilities with a national statutory remit. English Heritage is recognised by DCMS as their principal advisor on World Heritage issues.
- 12.2 It was proposed that English Heritage should help DCMS, working with the devolved administrations, to formulate the terms of reference for a full review of World Heritage policy, including future nominations, implications for the tentative list review, and future protection of World Heritage Sites (WHS).
- 12.3 Commissioners expressed concern that the public realm around World Heritage sites was not being given sufficient attention by local authorities and there were serious concerns about presentation, litter and general appearance of these areas. Having worked to achieve inscription on the list, it was important to cherish such sites. Designation should lead to a clear statement of local obligations, but unlike other countries, there was no legal basis requiring local action to maintain these sites. It was likely that the All Party Parliamentary World Heritage Group would be advocating strengthened legislation as a part of the Heritage Protection Review.
- 12.4 English Heritage needed to work with Natural England to encourage good practice for WHS. As Natural England was a new organisation, it was important that DCMS should work with DEFRA to encourage partnership working in areas such as the Cornish mining landscape. There needed to be a financial dimension to management plans and English Heritage did work with local authorities and heritage bodies in the development of such plans, seeking to raise funding for them. A Commissioner raised the issue of how the European Landscape Convention (ELC) would relate to the World Heritage Convention, now that the UK had agreed to ratify the ELC. It was reported that English Heritage was currently assessing the likely impact of the ELC.

12.5 Commission agreed that:

- a) English Heritage should help DCMS to formulate the terms of reference for a full review of World Heritage policy, including future nominations, implications for the tentative list review, and future protection of World Heritage Sites, and should work closely with DCMS and other partners on this review. Emphasis should be given to the qualitative issues of management and a new policy should be developed to ensure that current and proposed WHS should take their obligations seriously;**
- b) Commissioners and EHAC should consider English Heritage's response to the review once its terms of reference are established;**
- c) English Heritage should ensure that English sites on the current tentative lists approaching nomination achieve a consistently high standard of UK nomination;**
- d) English Heritage should continue to act as DCMS's principal advisor on the application of the World Heritage Convention focussing on agreed priority issues including:
 - (i) development of guidance for the referral of cases to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with the requirements of the UNESCO *Operational Guidelines* with DCMS, the devolved administrations, and other stakeholders;**
 - (ii) the impact of contemporary development on World Heritage Sites with particular regard to UNESCO reactive monitoring requirements;**
 - (iii) the development of future guidance on tall buildings which will contain specific consideration of World Heritage issues;**
 - (iv) the Stonehenge Roads Review of Options****
- e) English Heritage, where required, should continue to advise stakeholders on the management of individual World Heritage and candidate sites, including the development and revision of World Heritage Site Management Plans; and**
- f) English Heritage should continue to improve the efficiency of its delivery of advice and support on World Heritage issues. A further report should be made to Commission in April.**

Item 13 – London issues

a) The Mayor's Powers – response to consultation (CP 2006/82/E)

13.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36: prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs.*

13.2 Commission considered a report on proposals by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to give the Mayor of London extra planning powers. A consultation exercise was underway on categories of application the Mayor would be able to take over and approve, and the criteria he will apply in reaching such decisions. These categories include planning application where English Heritage has a locus and parallel applications for listed building consent.

b) Tall buildings in London (CP 2006/83/E)

13.6 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*

13.7 Commission considered the advice of the London Advisory Committee (LAC) on three proposals for very tall buildings in central London. It noted that in each case, LAC had received detailed presentations from the applicants and that the proposals were illustrated by drawings, photographs and views studies. Commission considered a number of the views studies for each case. Whilst the proposals raised similar issues for English Heritage, each was considered in isolation and strictly on its own merits.

Item 14 – Financial Overview: August 2006 (CP 2006/84/E)

14.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*

Item 15 – Operational Overview Reports

a) Policy and Communications Operational Overview (CP 2006/85)

Commissioners' remuneration

15.1 Commission noted that DCMS had authorised a 2% increase in Commissioners' remuneration with effect from 1 April 2006.

15.2 Commission approved the cost of living increase for Commissioners' remuneration.

Research Advisory Panel

15.3 Commission noted that an increase in the membership of the Research Advisory Panel was proposed to increase the expertise available.

15.4 Commission approved the increase in the maximum Research Advisory Panel membership from 16 to 18.

15.5 Commission received a copy of the latest draft of the executive summary of Heritage Counts. The Director of Policy and Communications invited Commissioners comments on the paper.

15.6 Commission noted the report.

b) Properties and Outreach Operational Overview (CP 2006/86/E)

15.7 Commission noted that following the decision to call in the planning application for the Stonehenge Visitor centre, Executive Board had decided to withdraw the recent application and revert to the previous one.

15.8 Commission noted the report.

c) Research and Standards Operational Overview (CP2006/87)

15.9 Commission noted the report.

d) Resources Operational Overview (CP 2006/88)

15.10 The Director of Resources reported that a strong candidate had been appointed to the post of Legal Director but it was not yet possible to announce the outcome.

15.11 Commission noted the report.

e) Planning & Development Operational Overview – Open (CP 2006/89)

15.12 Commission noted the report.

f) Planning and Development Operational Overview – Exempt (CP 2006/90)

15.13 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Sections 42; Legal professional privilege and 43: commercial interests.*

15.15 Commission noted the report.

Item 16 – Any Other Business

- 16.1 Commission noted that English Heritage had been well represented at a craft skills event at Highgrove, demonstrating the strength of working in partnership and our work in capacity building.
- 16.2 A Commissioner suggested that the benefits of consideration of planning applications at a regional level provided by the London Advisory Committee might be extended to other regions of English Heritage.
- 16.3 The meeting closed at 13.30.

Next meetings

- 16.4 Commissioners noted three dates for meetings before the end of the year as follows:
- 1 November for a special Commission meeting to be held in London
 - 8 November for a joint meeting in conjunction with the CABE Commission. This would be a one day meeting, to be held in Bedford.
 - 13 December for the Commission meeting in London, venue to be arranged, followed by a Christmas meal.

David Burgh
Commission Secretariat Manager

September 2006

Signed (Chairman).....

Date