



# Commission

## Open minutes of the 241st meeting held at 9.00am on 11 July 2007 at the Vermont Hotel, Castle Garth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 IRQ

**Commissioners present:** Sir Neil Cossons – Chairman  
Ms Maria Adebawale  
Mrs Joyce Bridges CBE  
Mr Bill Bryson (for part)  
Mr Michael Cairns  
Professor David Cannadine CBE  
Mr Manish Chande  
Mrs Gilly Drummond  
Dr Jane Grenville  
Mr Michael Jolly CBE  
Ms Jane Kennedy  
Lord Leicester CBE  
Mr Les Sparks OBE

**Also present:** Lord Bruce-Lockhart – Chairman designate

**Staff present for meeting:** Dr Simon Thurley – Chief Executive  
Mr David Batchelor – Head of Local Authority Historic Environment Liaison (for part)  
Mrs Magdalen Fisher – Development Director (for part)  
Ms Adina Gleeson – Policy Advisor (Local Government) (for part)  
Mr Mike Harlow – Legal Director (for part)  
Dr Edward Impey – Director of Research and Standards  
Ms Deborah Lamb – Director of Policy and Communications  
Mr Mark Pemberton – Director of Properties and Outreach  
Mr David Burgh – Commission Secretariat Manager

### Item 1 – Apologies, Announcements and Declarations of Interest

#### Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe, Lord Douro, Ms Elizabeth Williamson and Mr Steve Bee.

## Announcements

- 1.2 Commissioners welcomed Lord Bruce-Lockhart, Chairman designate, to the meeting. Lord Bruce-Lockhart said he was privileged to take on the role as Chairman of the organisation.
- 1.3 The Chairman reported on the following changes to Commission membership:
- a) Maria Adebawale, Joyce Bridges, Manish Chande and Elizabeth Williamson had recently been reappointed as Commissioners for a second, four year term;
  - b) Bill Bryson and Lord Douro had asked to stand down as Commissioners now that their first term was coming to an end; and
  - c) Michael Cairns' second term as a Commissioner was coming to an end and this was his last meeting.

The Chairman thanked these Commissioners for their commitment and contribution to the work of English Heritage.

- 1.4 Commissioners noted the appointment of a new Commissioner, Mr Chris Wilkinson, who would offer architectural expertise to Commission. Mr Wilkinson was unable to attend this meeting but hoped to attend the next meeting in October.

## Declarations of interest

- 1.5 Declarations of interest were received from:
- Mrs Gilly Drummond and Lord Leicester in respect of their friendships with the owner of Arley Hall (item 9, 13 June EHAC minutes); and
  - Mr Les Sparks in respect of his role as Chairman of an advisory panel set up by Bath and NE Somerset (BANES) Council on the Western Riverside project and as newly appointed Chairman of the Plymouth Design Panel.

## Item 2 – Criteria for prioritising objectives and resources (CP 2007/60/E)

- 2.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36: prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs.*
- 2.2 Commission considered a report on developing criteria for prioritising objectives and resources for the English Heritage Business Plan for 2008-2011. As a consequence of the delayed announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) it had not been possible to make preparations in the current financial year for what might be considerable changes to EH Grant in Aid from April 2008, although Commission had considered the basis for budget setting at three meetings.

**Item 3 – Open Minutes of the 238<sup>th</sup> Meeting: 22 May 2007 (CP 2007/61)**

- 3.1 The Commission agreed the open minutes of the 238<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 22 May 2007, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Item 4 – Exempt Minutes of the 238<sup>th</sup> Meeting: 22 May 2007 (CP 2007/62/E)**

- 4.1 The Commission agreed the exempt minutes of the 238<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on 22 May 2007, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Item 5 – Exempt Notes of a Special Meeting: 1 June 2007 (CP 2007/63/E)**

- 5.1 The Commission agreed the exempt notes of an inquorate meeting held on 1 June 2007.

**Item 6 – Exempt Minutes of a Special Meeting: 28 June 2007 (CP 2007/64/E)**

- 6.1 The Commission agreed the exempt minutes of a special meeting held on 28 June 2007.

**Item 7 – Matters Arising**

- 7.1 There were no matters arising.

**Item 8 – Committee Minutes**

**a) EHAC (Open) – 9 May 2007 (CP 2007/65)**

- 8.1 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the EHAC meeting held on 9 May 2007.

**b) Business Committee (Exempt) – 16 May 2007 (CP 2007/66/E)**

- 8.2 Commission congratulated the Director of Properties and Outreach for the positive steps taken with the implementation of the Property Development Programme. Commission also noted that although English Heritage had been managing the property at Wrest Park for a while, 2007/08 was the first full financial year in which it had ownership of the full site. Initial budget provision had been revised in the light of experience. The recruitment of a full complement of Heads of Estates in all territories would address difficulties in delivering all conservation and maintenance projects.

- 8.3 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 16 May 2007.

c) Remuneration Committee (Open) – 16 May 2007 (CP 2007/67)

**8.4 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 16 May 2007.**

d) Remuneration Committee (Exempt) – 16 May 2007 (CP 2007/68/E)

**8.5 The Remuneration Committee Chairman highlighted the extensive work being undertaken to make the remuneration structure more fit for purpose. It was important to note that the impact of relocation continued to be a factor.**

**8.6 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 16 May 2007.**

e) LAC (Open) – 1 June 2007 (CP 2007/69)

**8.7 Commission welcomed the development of the English Heritage work on qualitative views analysis which would be referred to in the Mayor's London View Management Framework. English Heritage had also made a major contribution in completing the World Heritage Site Management Plans for the Westminster and Tower of London World Heritage Sites and follow up work to ensure these two London World Heritage Sites (WHS) were not on the UNESCO In Danger list.**

**8.8 Proposals to convert the Granary, a particularly important industrial building standing within the Kings Cross Eastern Goods Yard, into a new campus for the University of the Arts London had been warmly welcomed by LAC. English Heritage had been closely involved in extensive pre-application discussions and this had made a significant contribution to the development of a successful scheme. A Commissioner suggested that it would be helpful to meet other developers to demonstrate how English Heritage could work with them at an early stage of projects leading to a successful conclusion. The Mayor of London might also be invited to attend.**

**8.9 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the LAC meeting held on 1 June 2007.**

f) LAC (Exempt) – 1 June 2007 (CP 2007/70/E)

**8.10 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the LAC meeting held on 1 June 2007.**

g) EHAC (Open) – 13 June 2007 (CP 2007/71)

**8.11 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the EHAC meeting held on 13 June 2007.**

h) EHAC (Exempt) – 13 June 2007 (CP 2007/72/E)

**8.12 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the EHAC meeting held on 13 June 2007.**

i) Finance Committee (Exempt) – 27 June 2007 (CP 2007/73/E)

8.13 Commission noted that the presentation on the review of the Finance function had been well received and staff would be moving forward to implement the recommendations. The development of the profit and loss accounting systems would be assisted by changes to the financial functions.

**8.14 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 27 June 2007.**

j) Business Committee (Exempt) – 27 June 2007 (CP 2007/74/E)

8.15 The initiative to provide more locally sourced and organic food was welcomed. Local products would also be featured in shops.

**8.16 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 27 June 2007.**

k) EH Trading Ltd (Exempt) – 27 June 2007 (CP 2007/75/E)

**8.17 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the EH Trading Ltd board meeting held on 27 June 2007.**

l) Audit Committee (Exempt) – 28 June 2007 (CP 2007/76/E)

8.18 The accounts had been produced with timeliness and accuracy and reflected well on the organisation. The Director of Research and Standards was taking forward work on emergency planning.

**8.19 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 28 June 2007.**

### **Item 9 – Chairman’s Report (Oral)**

9.1 The Chairman reported on a meeting he had attended with the chairmen of all DCMS sponsored bodies. The meeting had been valuable and demonstrated the need for DCMS to adopt more flexibility of approach to the very diverse range of organisations under its wing.

**9.2 Commission noted the Chairman’s report.**

## **Item 10 – Chief Executive’s Report: Open (CP 2007/77)**

10.1 The Chief Executive reported on a number of matters including his meeting, with the Chairman designate, with the new Secretary of State, James Purnell and Minister for Culture, Margaret Hodge. Other key points included the following;

- Following concerns expressed by ICOMOS the UK government decided to withdraw the Darwin at Down nomination for World Heritage Status. In part this proposal has fallen as ICOMOS have considered it in terms of architectural merit rather than the scientific value embodied in Darwin, his theories and his way of working. This has raised a number of issues in the way scientific sites are evaluated and the UK government has offered to host an international scientific expert meeting to develop guidelines to be considered at next year's World Heritage Committee.
- The revised Enabling Development Guidance should be circulated to Commissioners;
- English Heritage had been dealing with local concerns in Plymouth arising from the DCMS decision to list the city's Civic Centre, which English Heritage had recommended for listing as a civic building of special architectural interest and one of the best buildings of its age and type in the country. The possibility of listing had been an issue for some time: a report commissioned by the Council itself in 2000 had advised that listing the Civic Centre was appropriate. While the council were concerned that repair and conservation of the building was expensive, Commission were confident that appropriate design could see it brought into productive use, with a comparison being the Rotunda in Birmingham. There were possibly lessons to be learnt for English Heritage communications in terms of flagging up sensitive cases.

10.2 Commission noted that Lord Douro had asked for the paragraph on Apsley House (paragraph 4.32 of the Chief Executive’s open report) to be included within the exempt report. However all the information provided had already been in the public domain and Commission requested the classification of this paragraph within the open Chief Executive’s report.

10.3 The Commission noted the Chief Executive’s open report.

## **Item 11 – Chief Executive’s Report: Exempt (CP 2007/78/E)**

11.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36: prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; and Section 43: commercial interests.*

11.2 The Commission noted the Chief Executive’s exempt report.

## Item 12 – Strategic Relationships with Local Authorities (CP 2007/79)

12.1 The Commission considered a report on how English Heritage proposes to respond to changes taking place within local government over the next five years, as set out in three White Papers published in recent months. The three White Papers cover:

- Local authorities being given increased flexibility in decision-making spelling out the importance of place and partnership and improving services and strategic leadership;
- heritage protection reforms, as reported to previous Commission meetings featuring streamlining of service provision, management of heritage assets and new roles and service delivery for local authorities; and
- planning for a sustainable future with a new system responsive to climate change and sustainability issues, providing more transparency and bringing better consultation and public engagement

12.2 These initiatives are all due for 2010 implementation but may not all need primary legislation before they can be brought in. They all offer opportunities for English Heritage to work with local authorities and have an increasing influence in the sector, but there was uncertainty about implementation of some of the developments, with bids for proposed unitary authorities being considered by Communities and Local Government (CLG).

12.3 In considering the issues Commission made the following points:

- Local authority capacity and competence was very varied, as was the number and status of conservation staff within those organisations. Many conservation staff were in very peripheral positions and often quite junior. The role of Historic Environment Champions in raising the status of the conservation officers was valued, and the relationship also worked by offering mutual support. It was important to undertake research to establish how effective this initiative was proving in terms of local authority decision-making;
- Proposals in the Heritage Protection White paper and particularly training for local authority historic environment staff and Historic Environment Champions were key to the English Heritage strategy. EH should work with both conservation staff and planners and develop training with the aid of the Planning Advisory Service as it had in the past;
- Local Area Agreements were another important area where EH could have an impact, for example through the Local Strategic Partnership thematic boards. It was hoped these would bring the public sector together around specific targets; and
- The rationalisation of local authority performance indicators was also an opportunity, and efforts should be made to align their targets with EH ones.

#### 12.4 Commission:

- a) noted the proposed changes to the local authority environment and their possible impact on relationships with English Heritage;
- b) noted the resource and financial implications of the proposed English Heritage strategy and the need for prioritisation of work with local authorities; and
- c) endorsed the approach being taken.

#### Item 13 – Smithfield (CP 2007/80/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 The Commission considered a report on proposals for significant demolition and development within the Smithfield Conservation Area. The issues had been considered in detail by the London Advisory Committee (LAC) and an informal meeting of the Commission on 1 June 2007. Commission was being asked to endorse the advice from those meetings which had already been approved by means of English Heritage Chairman's action procedure. This process had been adopted as at one stage it had seemed likely that English Heritage would be required to play a key role in a Public Inquiry starting on 19 June 2007.

#### Item 14 – Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (CP 2007/81/E)

- 14.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 22: information intended for future publication.*
- 14.2 Commission considered a report on the key issues to have emerged from the consultation on *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*. Over 1,000 copies of the draft had been circulated to respondents to the first phase of the consultation and most replies had been supportive. In addition, there had been six seminars held across England which had also been a useful opportunity to obtain feedback.
- 14.3 The Director of Research and Standards outlined some themes to have emerged from the consultation, as follows:
  - There needed to be more reference to instrumental values, flowing from heritage values;
  - The relationship between conservation principles and designation and the need to address items which were not designated;
  - The role of climate change in accelerating processes, though the approach in conservation principles would remain the same;
  - Consistency of terminology, particularly with the Heritage Protection Bill;

- The need for a remodelled introduction and a separate concise summary to make the conservation principles more accessible;
- 14.4 It was important to assess how these proposals fitted with new government priorities and also to seek the views of key players in the sector who had not responded to this stage of the consultation.
- 14.5 **Commission:**
- a) noted the progress in developing *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*; and
  - b) agreed that a full report should be considered at the October Commission meeting.

#### **Item 15 – Public Sector Fundraising Strategy (CP 2007/82/E)**

- 15.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36: prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs.*
- 15.2 Commission considered a report on proposals for the development of English Heritage's public sector fundraising strategy. The first year's activity would serve as a pilot in order to assess the risks and opportunities prior to setting targets for obtaining funding in future years.

#### **Item 16 – Financial Overview: May 2007 (CP 2007/83/E)**

- 16.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*
- 16.2 Commission considered English Heritage's financial results for the two months to the end of May 2007.

#### **Item 17 – Any Other Business**

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

##### Farewells

- 17.4 This was the Chairman's last Commission meeting and Commissioners congratulated him on an extremely successful Chairmanship of English Heritage and wished him well for the future.
- 17.5 Commissioners noted that this was also David Burgh's last meeting as Commission Secretariat Manager as he would be leaving English Heritage shortly. They thanked him for his work and wished him well in his new post.

Next meeting

17.6 The next Commission meeting would be on Wednesday 3 October at Battle in East Sussex, venue to be confirmed.

17.7 The meeting concluded at 12.55pm

**David Burgh**  
**Commission Secretariat Manager**

**July 2007**