

## HISTORIC MONUMENTS COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE 132<sup>nd</sup> MEETING HELD IN HILLSBOROUGH COURT HOUSE, HILLSBOROUGH ON WEDNESDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2006 AT 1.30PM

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#### PRESENT:

Mr Richard Black – Chairman  
Mrs Rosemary Evans  
Mr Ian Hill  
Mr Conor Mallon  
Ms Amanda Moreno  
Mr John Moore  
Dr Kay Muir  
Dr Elizabeth McShane  
Mr John O'Neill  
Mr Paul Walsh

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr M Coulter, EHS  
Dr C Lynn, EHS  
  
Mr C Francey, Secretariat

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Helen Lanigan Wood, Dr Finbar McCormick, Mr Brian Black, Mr Tony Canavan and Mr David Flynn.

#### 2. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

##### 2.1 Derry's Walls Conservation Plan

As part of Derry City Council's Public Realm Plan for the Walled City the Chairman reported that he attended a meeting in January with Derry City Council representatives and the consultant commissioned to draw up proposals on a conservation plan for Derry's Walls. Following Council's visit to Londonderry last year, members had expressed a desire to be involved in the consultation process and this meeting was part of this exercise. A further meeting is to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the conservation of the historic features and the plans for Ebrington Barracks. Manus Deery, EHS had drawn up a report on the protection of buildings and structures within the Barracks and this had been passed to the OFMDFM. The Chairman commented that it was encouraging to note that a coherent approach was being used in conservation and tourism. Michael Coulter had attended a public meeting in December 2005 about Derry City Council's plans and during the course of that meeting Derry Council officials had commended EHS for its conservation work on Derry's Walls. Chris Lynn informed members that he had just received the consultant's document seeking permission from EHS for its proposals for the Walls. Michael pointed out that as EHS was only the guardians of the Walls, the



Advertisements in The News Letter of 1784/85 showed that John Edwards (son of Benjamin) had built a clay pipe factory on the site. Two clay pipe kilns were found and many 'wasters'. The factory used at least 7 different moulds for its pipes.

The Chairman thanked Mr McCooley for his interesting presentation.

## **7. BUILT HERITAGE RESTRUCTURING – UPDATE**

Michael Coulter explained that as a result of the discussions on resources and staffing at the HMC Induction on the 10<sup>th</sup> February, he felt that it might be useful to give the new Council some of the history on the Built Heritage restructuring proposals and the progress made to date. He outlined the key areas and major issues and some of the reasons which had brought about change such as, (a) a lack of succession planning, which has resulted in a loss of key players and their expertise and experience in archaeology and conservation of monuments and (b) the impact on staff dealing with a backlog of planning consultations and the resultant suspension of scheduling. He indicated that he would welcome Council's comments on how with limited resources EHS could deal with the pressures.

Mr Coulter outlined the details of the restructuring within EHS:PHM and PHB and the associated administrative backup. He highlighted the challenges and problems connected with integrating both teams and the filling of singleton posts. He emphasised the need for improved efficiencies within the service and felt that the structures within Historic Scotland offered a good model on which to base the EHS changes.

Mr Coulter gave a synopsis of the meetings he has had with the archaeological staff since December last year and following the most recent meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> January, he is to write to the trade unions about final proposals.

Members were concerned that the new restructuring would be rigorous enough to meet the requirements of any new arrangements likely to be implemented under the Review of Public Administration. Michael expressed the view that this might necessitate a review of the new structures within EHS.

The Chairman took the view that the main thrust of the staffing proposals seemed to focus on the geographical spread and it was therefore important that the lead person should have sufficient knowledge to expedite the responsibilities. There is perhaps a difficulty for EHS in finding suitable cover for all functional groups and this seems to have been the problem for some time.

Members expressed the view that there had been a diminution of the archaeological workforce in recent years. Michael responded that he has sought to reverse this situation and when considering

the overall staffing levels of the Built Heritage there has been a substantial increase with more new posts to be delivered. He believed that when these structures have been put in place this will provide a better service. He undertook to send members a copy of the new structures.

**ACTION: Send members copy of new structures**

**Mr Coulter**

## **8. DORSEY ASAI – Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan**

John O’Keefe, EHS tabled a paper on the proposals for the Dorsey ASAI, which had been inspected on the ground on 31<sup>st</sup> January by Council members, Connor Mallon, John Moore and Tony Canavan accompanied by John O’Keefe and Dr Chris Lynn. He emphasised the importance of this ASAI in the context of the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan which is due for publication this spring. Although there was provision in Planning Policy Statement 6, “Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage” (PPS6) for the protection of archaeological remains and monuments, this would not prevent development near the monument.

John highlighted the reasons for designating the Dorsey as an ASAI and circulated a map showing the proposed boundary. Members recognised the significance of an ASAI in the control of development and in planning appeals.

It was noted that there was limited access to the Dorsey monument because of the overgrowth of vegetation and a difficulty for the public in identifying its location. Members suggested that the local Council could play a role in the provision of signage for the Dorsey. Chris informed members that EHS had approached the local Council to carry out work, but the private owners of the land were unenthusiastic.

Council endorsed the proposed boundary of the Dorsey ASAI and agreed that the Danes Castle and Black Pigs Dyke should be included in the description of the ASAI.

## **9. HMC REPORT**

It was agreed that a sub-group of Council be set up to determine the best format for the HMC Report.

**ACTION: Set up sub-group Chairman/  
Secretariat**

## **10. PLANNING - The Ice-house, Portballintrae**

John O’Keefe reported that EHS was currently awaiting the outcome of the planning appeal.

## **11. CONSULTATIONS**

Members noted the current list of consultations.

## **12. MOURNE NATIONAL PARK WORKING PARTY - UPDATE**

Brigid O'Neill, EHS outlined the background to the proposal for a National Park in Northern Ireland. The current legislation for designating AONBs allows for the setting up of NPs but has no provision for management regimes. New primary legislation would be needed dealing with key aspects, aims and objectives and secondary legislation for management plans. In October 2004 the Department issued a consultation document on NPs and Other Protected Landscapes and currently an interdepartmental group is considering policy issues. It is hoped that draft proposals for the designation of the Mourne NP will be out to consultation by the end of the year.

A Mourne National Park Working Party was set up and consists of 22 members and 12 observers. This group is to consider boundary issues and management structures. The MNPWP has commissioned a number of research projects i.e a boundary study, the impact of NPs in other comparable areas and an economic profile. In the case of boundary recommendations the MNPWP has been considering 3 different options and has recommended one of them. There are a number of controversial aspects about the boundary proposals and a consultation process is to be launched in March 2006. A range of groups, stakeholders, organisations, local communities and individuals will be consulted.

Brigid tabled an EHS booklet ' introduction to the role of the MNPWP'.

Members noted that there was some opposition to the proposed NP mainly from the farming community focusing on their misgivings on access and planning issues. EHS has sent out more information on these 2 areas in order to dispel myths. The core area for the NP will be subject to consultation and the boundary proposal will be used as a basis for this process.

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that a sub-group be set up when the consultation document is available. Brigid informed members that she could arrange for the sub-group to meet with the Chairman of the MNPWP, Mr Harvey Bicker, if it would help clarify some of the issues.

## **13. RATHLIN ISLAND - Briefing on excavation**

Chris reported that there had been a recent archaeological find of a Bronze Age interment in a cist on Rathlin Island. This had been discovered as a result of unauthorised work within a scheduled area by the owner of the land. The police were called in because of the mistaken belief that it was a potential scene of crime. EHS is to

carry out an evaluation of the site to see if it can be secured or if a rescue excavation will be necessary.

#### **14. JOINT COMMITTEE FOR INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE**

Members noted the draft minutes of the JCIH meeting of the 17 January 2006.

#### **15. MEMBERS REPORTS**

There were no members reports.

#### **16. MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT - (HM)**

Members noted the media report and thanked Justin Boyle for his work in the preparation of the press cuttings.

#### **17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **17.1 Charlemont Fort, County Armagh**

John O'Keeffe, EHS tabled a paper on a proposal to extend the scheduled area of Charlemont Fort. This is the result of an outline planning application for housing development of part of the site and would include the demolition of existing 'Napoleonic period' military buildings. Although there is an argument that PPS6 BH1 could be used as a basis for refusing planning permission for the proposed development, this would not necessarily prevent demolition of the buildings. There was therefore a strong case for scheduling the archaeological remains identified at the site. PS could also use the argument of development within the setting of a scheduled monument as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Members felt that the scheduled area should be extended subject to the appropriate fieldwork, but were concerned that there could be problems in the process because the area was the subject of a planning application. Council would have to be advised by EHS on the legalities of such a proposal. Michael advised Council that an option for EHS could involve the spot listing of the buildings. However, if the scheduling was to be carried forward members believed it would be reasonable to extend the line of the scheduled area to include the adjacent part of the Ulster Canal.

In the meantime, Council accepted the proposal to extend the scheduling and agreed that in-house discussions on the best form of protection should continue. It was also suggested that Council should have the opportunity to visit the site in March 2006 and this could be arranged with John O'Keeffe.

**ACTION: Arrange visit to Charlemont site in March  
Secretariat/John O'Keeffe**

## **17.2 Derrygonnelly**

John informed members that there had been a recent discovery by geographical survey of the site of a Plantation Castle near Derrygonnelly, County Fermanagh and EHS was currently discussing its protection with the developer.

## **17.3 Archaeology Ireland**

The Chairman tabled the copy of an article in the current *Archaeology Ireland* by Chris Lynn about Settlement and Disease; a speculative look at why ringforts may have become the most popular type of settlement site in the Early Christian period.

## **17.4 HMS Caroline**

The Chairman informed members that he had attended a meeting of a working group to discuss the future of the HMS Caroline which has been berthed in Belfast since 1923. The ship is number 2 (after HMS Victory) in the Historic Ships Register and remains the second oldest ship to remain commissioned as a naval vessel. It is the only survivor of the ships that took part in the Battle of Jutland. The debate on its future is only just beginning and he will keep members informed of discussions.

**ACTION: Update as necessary Chairman**

## **17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND REMAINDER OF THE YEAR**

The next meeting is to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

Dates for the remainder of the year are:

- Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006
- Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006
- Friday, 23 June 2006
- Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2006
- Friday, 24 November 2006.