

IN CONFIDENCE

HISTORIC MONUMENTS COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE 143rd MEETING HELD IN
HILLSBOROUGH COURT HOUSE**

ON

WEDNESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY 2008 AT 1.30PM

PRESENT:

Mr R Black, OBE– Chairman
Mr B Black
Mrs R Evans
Mr D Flinn
Mr I Hill
Mrs H Lanigan Wood
Mr C Mallon
Mr J Moore, OBE
Dr K Muhr
Dr E McShane

IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr B Williams, EHS

Ms R Lightbody, NI Tourist Board

Mr C Francey, Secretariat

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr T Canavan, Mr P Walsh, Ms A Moreno, Mr J O'Neill and Dr F McCormick.

The Chairman welcomed Ms R Lightbody, Cultural Tourism Manager of the NI Tourist Board.

2. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

2.1 Freshwater Archaeology

The Chairman commended EHS on its paper on Freshwater Archaeology and undertook to write to Mr Coulter expressing Council's appreciation of a well developed paper.

3. MINUTES OF 142ND MEETING of 12TH DECEMBER 2007

The minutes of the meeting of the 12th December were agreed.

**4. MATTERS ARISING REPORT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE
142ND MEETING.**

4.1 Donaghmore Cross

Mr Mallon reported that there was to be a meeting of the local community

tonight to discuss the options for protecting Donaghmore Cross. He informed members that both he and Ms M Gormley, EHS would be attending this meeting and he would update Council on the outcome of the meeting.

ACTION: Report on outcomes of meeting Mr Mallon

It was noted that in the report from Ms Foley she mentioned that Mr R Pierce, EHS Conservation Architect was to prepare some design concepts for sheltering the cross but he is due to leave the Department soon. Dr Williams undertook to ensure that the request to the conservation architects for design concepts would be followed through.

ACTION: Follow up Dr Williams

Members felt that the local community cherished the cross and believed that they were looking for leadership from the Department in finding a solution for the best arrangement for its protection. Members pointed out that the cross at Ardboe presented a similar scenario. Dr Williams responded that EHS would continue to work with local communities in resolving the issues.

4.2 Archaeological Research

Dr Williams reported that EHS was currently considering the best way to feed in Council's paper on Archaeological research to Government. He informed members that the Heritage Council in the ROI has just been awarded a 1M euros a year for archaeological research.

5. ANY OTHER MATTERS ARISING NOT ON MAIN AGENDA

There were no other matters arising and not on the main agenda.

6. PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF THE NI TOURIST BOARD IN THE PROMOTION AND RAISING AWARENESS OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Ms R. Lightbody, Cultural Tourism Manager of the NI Tourist Board gave a presentation on the role of the NI Tourist Board in the promotion of cultural tourism and its contribution to the development of product strands which embrace the built heritage. She outlined some of the key areas such as the objectives of cultural tourism, visitor numbers, market share, key targets for 2010, the purpose of trails and interpretation issues. Ms Lightbody highlighted the five signature projects for Northern Ireland i.e. the Walled City of Derry, Causeway Coastal Route, St Patrick's and Christian Heritage, the Mournes and Titanic Belfast. She pointed out the role of Cultural Tourism and its network of activity including heritage and living culture. Ms Lightbody suggested it would be helpful to have Council's feedback from a tourist perspective on accessibility to monuments throughout Northern Ireland.

Council raised a number of points as follows:

- Members expressed concern about the lack of any signature project for the South West of Northern Ireland. Ms Lightbody pointed out that the lack of a signature project did not mean that the Tourist Board did not promote the development of other activities in this area such as cruising in Lough Erne, craft sites and Christian heritage.

- There was a need to exploit our archaeological heritage which has been neglected. Although Northern Ireland has a wealth of this type of material it has not really been recognised nor promoted. There was a need for cohesion in developing interpretations and promotion with a view to addressing cultural value and its economic significance.
- Members expressed the view that Glenarm, gateway to the Northern Coastal Route, and its industrial archaeology was in a state of dereliction. The local council appears to have ignored the significance of the tourist potential for the area. Ms Lightbody informed Council that the Tourist Board was currently developing an interpretation plan for the north coast with appropriate stakeholders. Members emphasised the need for the Tourist Board to co-ordinate investment opportunities and heritage in its plans.
- It was suggested that the Tourist Board should consider the development of better transportation linkages so that options were available for the public in accessing many of Northern Ireland's monuments and archaeological sites.
- Members suggested that the Tourist Board needed to address a higher profile for archaeology, specifically Christian cultural heritage and our Edwardian /Victorian heritage. It also needed to maximise the contribution of the economic assets of the built heritage.
- It was noted that the Tourist Board produced audit reports on its tourist sites. Members felt that the Tourist Board could use these to highlight any deficiencies by local stakeholders.
- Members pointed out that care should be taken by the Tourist Board not to over expose or develop tourist sites. It should be more selective so that it develops key sites.
- Members suggested that it would be useful for the Tourist Board to discuss all their heritage issues with EHS. Dr Williams agreed and believed that it would be pertinent for EHS and the Tourist Board to discuss the linkages of product arising from the NI Programme for Government. He highlighted the information held by EHS and some of the work in progress being used to develop specific heritage areas such as historic gardens and a north coast maritime survey. Members felt that on the back of the discussions between EHS and the Tourist Board it might be useful for Council to have a meeting with the Tourist Board to discuss the strategic issues.

The Chairman thanked Ms Lightbody for a very enthusiastic and interesting presentation.

Members suggested that EHS should revisit the outcome of the EHS Visionary exercise undertaken a few years ago to assist in identifying some of the issues for debate.

It was agreed that if members wish to make further comments on the Tourist Board's presentation that they should forward them to the Secretariat.

7. ADJUSTMENT OF SCHEDULED AREA (HM448)

Dr Williams tabled a report about another cist which had been discovered to the north of the existing scheduled site at Monea. Given the rarity of individual cists in the area, EHS proposed to deschedule the existing site and schedule a larger site.

Members noted that the cist was close to a housing development and were concerned that it should be properly protected.

Council endorsed the de-scheduling and scheduling of the site at Monea.

8. SCHEDULING OF GUARDIANSHIP MONUMENTS

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

9. VISITOR INFORMATION FOR STATE CARE MONUMENTS - NEW DIRECTION

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

10. HMC WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman tabled a draft work programme for Council which was based on a number of themes relating to its remit. Dr Williams suggested that work on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) should be included. It was also agreed to include outreach as part of its programme.

Members noted that the themes were in accordance with the EHS Operational Plan. Dr Williams undertook to send the Chairman a copy of the existing Plan and present the new Plan to Council at its meeting in April.

**ACTION: Send Plan to Chairman – Present new Plan to Council
Dr Williams**

11. HMC REPORT

The Chairman informed members that some areas of the Report had still to be completed and photographs selected. It was agreed that the Chairman, Mrs Evans and the Secretariat meet to finalise the outstanding issues.

ACTION: arrange meeting to finalise Report Secretariat

12. HMC FIELD VISIT IN MAY 2008

Council discussed some of the options for its field visit in May. Members agreed that the visit should focus on conservation and archaeological issues along the north coast. It was further agreed that the date of the visit should be the 6th May.

Members considered a suitable theme and location for its 3-day end of term visit. It was agreed that Council should consider a visit to Historic Scotland to study issues around scheduling, archaeological research and conservation of monuments. It was suggested that this visit should take place from the 22nd until the 24th September 2008.

ACTION: Arrange programme for visits EHS

13. MEMBERS REPORTS

There were no members reports

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 Devenish Island

Dr Williams informed members that EHS had failed to pay the rent due for use of the land on Devenish Island. Despite efforts to reimburse the owner with all the rent she has so far refused to accept a cheque. EHS has no other option but to suspend access to Devenish from the 18th February until the issue is resolved.

14.2 Book Launch

The Chairman reported that Council had been invited to the launch of the IPMAG book on the 20th February in the Black Box, Hill Street, Belfast.

14.3 Ulster Museum

Council asked that EHS updates members about the refurbishment work affecting the Ulster Museum.

**ACTION: Update Council on work being carried out to Museum
EHS**

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is due to be held on Wednesday, 23rd April 2008

(meeting finished at 4.00pm)