

THE HERITAGE WHITE PAPER.

Introduction.

This note summarizes the White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century*, focusing on the potential impact on the City Council's services. A number of the proposals in the document: devolving national designations from Secretary of State to English Heritage and measures to make the designation system more open, along with measures for protecting World Heritage Sites, sites of early human activity and marine heritage sites, do not impact upon this authority's services so are not considered below.

The Main Proposals:

1. The Merging of Statutory Definitions:

- The List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest, the Schedule of Monuments and Register of Parks & Gardens to be combined into a new Register of Historic Buildings and Sites of England.
- The existing grades of I, II* and II will be retained as is, with scheduled monuments given an automatic Grade I until individual re-assessments can be done.
- A new unified set of selection criteria for all heritage assets will be produced based on the Principles of Selection document (which we were consulted on in 2006)
- Ecclesiastical Exemption for the seven major denominations will continue as existing
- The production and updating of the new register will be carried out by English Heritage and will include a description, a statement of significance, the reasons for designation and a map. Complex sites where there is a number of existing listed buildings/scheduled monuments, will be included as one entry on the register rather than several individual descriptions as present.
- The register will be available online for heritage professionals and owners to access, as part of a new English Heritage site called the Heritage Gateway.
- Under the new system LPA's, national amenity societies and owners will be formally consulted on applications to add assets to the register
- An important aspect of the proposed regime is that a heritage asset will receive interim protection whilst it is under consideration for being added to the register. There will also be a right of appeal against a decision to add a site to the register
- The new register will also include a section for local designations which will include conservation areas, buildings of local interest and parks and gardens on the local list. These entries would be produced and managed by the LPA but will give greater weight to assets such as BoLI's which at the moment have no formal status.

2. A Reformed Consent Process:

- Historic Asset Consent will replace both Listed Building Consent (LBC) and Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC). This will be

administered by Local Planning Authorities in a similar way to the manner in which LBC is dealt with at present. Applications for assets owned by the City Council will still be referred to the Secretary of State for a final decision.

- No extra planning controls will be placed on existing registered parks or gardens, which at the moment are a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- Conservation Area Consent will be merged with Planning Permission and changes made to include partial demolition of buildings.
- There will also be more scope for protecting Buildings of Local Interest by making the demolition of all locally listed buildings on the register 'development'

3. Heritage Partnership Agreements:

- A new form of agreement for complex sites in single ownership which works as a long term management plan, giving planning permission or historic asset consent for many years rather than the standard 3 years and including all proposed works in the long term future (In our case, this could be used for the hospital and university sites)
- Owners and managers of the site plus the LPA and English Heritage would be involved in the preparation of the document
- The agreement would be processed formally in a similar way to Planning Applications including the statutory consultation period.
- Enforcement clauses would be built into the agreement to ensure that the works are carried out in accordance with the agreed document
- This part of the changes would involve substantial officer time in the early stages with subsequent monitoring at regular intervals, but would save time overall compared with dealing with numerous successive applications on the same site

4. Statutory Historic Environment Records (HER):

- Many County and Unitary Authorities maintain HERs both to inform the management of the historic environment and contribute to the understanding and enjoyment of it. The document proposes both that all local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a local HER and that HERs be made more accessible.
- Each HER will need a dedicated database with a linked GIS system and skilled curatorial staff to manage and operate the system
- English Heritage will be running new training courses and producing further guidance on HERs in due course

If you have any queries about the review please contact Judith Carstairs (29 7296) or Chris Wardle (29 7282). The white paper can be viewed at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Consultations/2007_current_consultations/hpr_whitepaper07.htm

The final date for consultation responses to DCMS is Friday 1st June. All comments on the proposals should be forwarded to Chris Wardle or Judith Carstairs for inclusion in our official response by no later than Friday 18th May.