



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

Making Heritage Work

Cyril Kearney
Planning Directorate
DCLG
Floor 1/J3
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

James Caird
Consultant Consultations Co-ordinator
IHBC Business Office
Jubilee House
High Street
Tisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 6HA

28 March 2012

Tel (01584) 876141
Web site www.ihbc.org.uk
E-mail consultations@ihbc.org.uk

Dear Mr Kearney

LIBERALISING THE REGIME FOR FLYING FLAGS

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) is the professional body of the United Kingdom representing conservation specialists and historic environment practitioners in the public and private sectors. The Institute exists to establish the highest standards of conservation practice, to support the effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and to promote heritage-led regeneration and access to the historic environment for all.

Thank you for inviting us to participate in this consultation. We have to say we have some reservations about the proposals contained in the Discussion Paper.

The starting point for our concerns are founded in the Core Planning Principle set out in the 4th bullet point of paragraph 17 the NPPF, published this week, to promote good standards of design and amenity and the statement of policy at paragraph 56: "It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes".

The problem with the proposals, while modest in concept, is that they are somewhat open-ended and may well lead to lessening in visual amenity, particularly in commercial streets. Some categories of deemed consent do not apply Areas of Special Control, National Parks, AONBs, World Heritage Sites, conservation areas and the curtilages of listed buildings. Flag advertisements have no such limitations and, in our view, these should be introduced to protect amenity in our most sensitive urban and rural settings.

Our comments refer to the paragraphs in the Discussion Paper.

15/16. We have no objection to the proposal to widen the range of territorial flags.

17. We think the expression "official environmental award schemes" is too open-ended. There should be an approved list. We feel that while the club flag proposal may

have merit we think that it does contain potential for community tension in some locations; perhaps even the ones where take-up is most likely.

18. We agree with the proposed qualification.

19. It is not clear whether this aspect forms part of the proposals. It should not be the responsibility of LPAs to regulate the entitlement to fly particular designs. The Regulations should exclude the flying of non-standard designs created by club supporters themselves.

20. We have no objection to this.

21. It is this paragraph that gives us most concern. Class 5 advertisements on business premises are carefully controlled as to their height, size and siting. We think that the proposals will be seen by businesses as a way of achieving prominent advertising in commercial streets where it otherwise would not be permitted for reasons of public amenity. Unless the surface areas of flags and the height of projecting poles is controlled there is a risk of detriment to the visual amenity of streets and to the residential amenity of residents and other occupants whose windows look into the street. Under the present Regulations in which applications are needed, such parties have rights of representation to the LPA. The angle of non-vertical poles is also an issue. In streets where multiple flag advertisements have been successfully introduced (e.g. Bond Street in London) the angles of the masts have been carefully considered and regulated. The proposals do not provide for this.

21. We also have concerns about the sizes of lettering or devices. By removing the size limit the proposals would, assuming maintenance of designed proportions, effectively be inviting larger flags than would otherwise be the case and, often in our view, necessary.

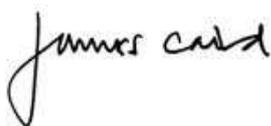
As stated earlier, we think that our most sensitive urban environments should be protected from the possibility of being affected as we have described and that the revised provisions should not apply to Areas of Special Control, National Parks, AONBs, World Heritage Sites, conservation areas and the curtilages of listed buildings.

Guidance should point out that works to listed buildings, such as mounting flagstaffs, will continue to require listed building consent and that (per s72 TCP(LB&CA)Act) any such application will also introduce the requirement that the character or appearance of any conservation area be given special attention.

22/23. We have no objection to the contracting of workload but decisions under the planning acts will still need to be made by the LPA.

We hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Caird". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James Caird
Consultant Consultations Co-ordinator