



HISTORIC MONUMENTS COUNCIL

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

1. Constitution of the Council

The Historic Monuments Council (the Council) was first established in 1971 under the provisions of the Historic Monuments (Northern Ireland) Act 1971. Its current authority is derived from the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (the Order).

Appointments to the Council, which consists of a Chairman and 15 Members, are subject to the approval of the Minister of the Environment. The term of appointment is for a period of five years however Members may be eligible for reappointment for a second term, subject to satisfactory service.

The Council is serviced by a Secretariat, which operates from Waterman House, 5-33 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LA.

2. The Role of the Council

The Department of the Environment (the Department) is obliged to consult the Council on matters relating to the exercise of its powers under the Order.

Specifically it advises on –

- advice on acquisition of monuments & other lands;
- guardianship;
- agreements;
- miscellaneous powers;
- offences;
- archaeological objects;
- scheduling of historic monuments;
- designating of areas of special archaeological interest;
- the general state of preservation and conservation of historic monuments and archaeological objects;
- planning and development issues affecting historic monuments, their settings, and historic landscapes;

- such other matters relating to the preservation of historic monuments as may be referred to it; and
- such other functions as may be conferred on it by any statutory provision.

3. Council Business

The council normally meets bi-monthly with additional ad hoc meetings to consider specific policy issues and additions to scheduled lists. In addition to Council's main meetings, the Council uses a number of sub-groups who meet on an ad hoc basis to deal with consultation papers from Government. A number of Council members also contribute to the Joint Committee for Industrial Heritage (JCIH) which is 'joint' with the Historic Buildings Council.

From time to time, the three Statutory Advisory Councils to the Department of the Environment i.e. the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC), the Historic Buildings Council (HBC) and the Historic Monuments Council (HMC) have joint meetings to consider areas of mutual interest.