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Dear Kishore

**LIVERPOOL MARITIME MERCANTILE CITY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (C1150)**

In accordance with Decision 38 COM 7A.19 of the 38<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee, I am submitting the State of Conservation Report for Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City. We have used the format stipulated as far as is possible. The text of Decision 38 COM 7A.19 is shown below in italic print to distinguish it from the State Party response which forms the body of the report.

I can confirm that I am content for the report to be posted on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website.

Yours Sincerely

Hannah Jones  
World Heritage Site and Underwater Policy Officer

cc  
HE Matthew Sudders, UK Permanent Delegate to UNESCO  
UK National Commission for UNESCO  
English Heritage



## LIVERPOOL MARITIME MERCANTILE CITY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (C1150)

### Executive Summary

The report addresses the issues raised by the World Heritage Committee in relation to the Liverpool Waters development and summarizes the measures set out in the draft Desired State of Conservation statement, which aims to secure the removal of Liverpool from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The report also summarizes the very positive progress that has been made in improving the state of conservation of the World Heritage property through the repair and re-use of a number of outstanding historic buildings that were previously at risk. Reference is also made to the ongoing revision of the Local Plan which will review and update as necessary the policies for the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property.

The last year has seen significant progress in the promoting wider understanding and appreciation of the World Heritage Site, through the publication of a book, the printing of explanatory leaflets and the ongoing development of digital media.

At present there are no new developments that have the potential to impact adversely on the property. It is anticipated that initial discussion on the detailed development of the first stages of the Liverpool Waters scheme will commence shortly and that the State Party will notify UNESCO at an early stage of this process.

### **1 Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision 38 COM 7A.19**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7A,*
2. *Recalling Decisions 36 COM 7B.93 and 37 COM 7A.35 adopted at its 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012) and 37<sup>th</sup> (Phnom Penh, 2013) sessions respectively,*
3. *Also recalling the results of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission of November 2011,*
4. *Reiterates its serious concern over the potential threat of the Liverpool Waters development scheme on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and notes that the implementation of the development, as currently planned, would irreversibly damage the attributes and conditions of integrity that warranted inscription, and could lead to the potential*

*deletion of the property from the World Heritage List;*

5. Also notes the information provided by the State Party, and requests it to:

- a) *Submit comprehensive documentation for any proposed detailed master plans and detailed planning proposals, before they are adopted, together with an overall vision for the property over-arching such master plans, as well as details of the draft legal obligations and draft planning conditions for granting permission for any future development proposals,*
- b) *For the Liverpool Waters scheme, when developed, takes into consideration the concerns of the World Heritage Committee;*

The State Party recognises the serious concern expressed by the Committee about the potential impact of the Liverpool Waters development on the OUV of the property and, together with the Chair of the World Heritage Site Steering Group, Liverpool City Council and the developer, Peel Holdings, has put in place the measures described below and in the draft Desired State of Conservation statement (DSoC), to address this concern so far as is practicable. A revised version of the DSoC will be submitted following a seminar with representatives of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in February 2015 for consideration by the Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> Session.

Detailed documentation has not yet been submitted by Peel Holdings, but the master plan for the Princes Dock area is in preparation (see section 3 below). The State Party will be pleased to submit detailed master plans and detailed planning proposals to the World Heritage Centre as they become available and in advance of their adoption. If further legal obligations and planning conditions, in addition to those which already apply to the outline planning consent, are proposed for attachment to the approvals of reserved matters applications, the State Party will submit these in draft form to the Centre.

The overall vision for Liverpool Waters is embodied in the outline planning consent, while the Desired State of Conservation statement sets out the process by which this vision will be tempered in the light of heritage and other considerations that emerge over the 30 year period identified for the delivery of the scheme. In addition the revision of the Management Plan, which is currently underway, offers the opportunity to refresh the vision for the World Heritage property as a whole.

6. Strongly urges the State Party to consider all measures that would allow changes to the extent and scope of the proposed Liverpool Waters scheme to ensure the continued coherence of the architectural and town-planning attributes, and the continued safeguarding of the OUV of the property including the conditions of authenticity and integrity;

The State Party, Liverpool City Council, Peel Holdings and English Heritage remain committed to safeguarding the OUV of the property, including the conditions of authenticity and integrity. In

determining detailed proposals that come forward for individual phases of development, attention will be given by Liverpool City Council (taking advice from its Liverpool Waters Conservation and Design Panels, English Heritage and others) to the impact of the proposals on the legibility of the architectural and town planning attributes of the city in so far as these attributes relate to the OUV of the property. In seeking to protect authenticity and integrity, account will be taken of the condition of the property at the time of inscription, the fact that part of the 60ha Liverpool Waters lies within the WHS, and that all of the remainder falls within in the Buffer Zone. In addition the draft DSoC details a number of measures that will be undertaken including:

- as required by the outline planning consent for Liverpool Waters, the preparation of a series of detailed and related masterplans for the five neighbourhoods within the site to inform the protection of OUV in decision making on successive phases of development;
- the review and amendment if necessary by the end of 2016 of relevant policies in the emerging Local Plan to maintain the protection of the World Heritage property;
- following the completion of the revision of the Local Plan, the production of an updated World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document;
- the production of a guidance document aimed at developers to explain the attributes and the cultural and intangible heritage values of the OUV of the World Heritage property;
- raising awareness of developers, building professionals and the wider public about the OUV of the property and its conservation and management requirements under the World Heritage Convention.

The draft DSoC has an Annex which summarises the control measures that apply to the outline planning consent for Liverpool Waters that aim to safeguard the World Heritage property.

*7) Further notes with appreciation that the State Party submitted a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger along with a set of corrective measures, and expressed its willingness to pursue consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in view of its finalisation for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> session in 2015;*

Liverpool City Council has organised a seminar to discuss the DSoC with representatives of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS, English Heritage, Peel Holdings and the Chair of the WHS Steering group, prior to finalising the DSoC for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> Session in 2015.

*8) Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Committee by **1 February 2015**, an updated report, including a 1 page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 39<sup>th</sup> session in 2015;*

This letter sets out the UK government's report of the State of Conservation of the Liverpool

Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site together with its executive summary.

**9) Decides to retain Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) on the World Heritage List in Danger.**

The State Party believes that the DSoC, once agreed by the World Heritage Committee, will provide the mechanism for the removal, in due course, of the Liverpool WHS from the List of World Heritage in Danger

**2. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party**

In line with the previous State of Conservation report dated January 2014, there have been a number of significant achievements in protecting, conserving and presenting the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

**Repair and Re-Use of Buildings at Risk**

The grade II\* listed North Warehouse at Stanley Dock within the World Heritage Site has been fully repaired and restored and is now successfully trading as a hotel and conference centre. The venue was recently used for a press launch for the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk' campaign as an example of how buildings at risk can be brought back into use while retaining their historic and architectural significance. Permissions and consents are in place for the neighbouring South Warehouse and the Tobacco warehouse that together complete the Stanley Dock complex, and work has started on the repair and restoration of the two buildings.

The grade II\* listed Royal Insurance building on Dale Street/North John Street has also been removed from the Buildings at Risk list, and has now opened as a hotel. Funding for the restoration was in part provided by Liverpool City Council and English Heritage.

Albion House on the corner of Strand and James Street, which was the office of the White Star shipping line is now fully opened as a hotel. The grade II\* building was vacant for many years, and the hotel use has assured its sustainable, long-term future.

The New Bridewell prison on Cheapside has also been restored and now has a new use as student accommodation. Largely redundant for many years, the grade II\* building was suffering from lack of maintenance and investment. The developer responsible for the restoration of the New Bridewell has now commenced work on bringing back into use the adjacent grade II terrace of Georgian period shops on Dale Street, an unusual and significant residual element of early 1800's Liverpool.

Liverpool City Council has recently acquired the grade II\* Cunard building at Pier Head, previously

underused and in danger of long-term redundancy. This pro-active response to ensuring one of the famous 'Three Graces' does not fall into disuse demonstrates that the City Council will take decisive and costly action to conserve key heritage attributes. The building has now been fitted-out as office space for City Council staff, and a base for the Mayor and Chief Executive. One proposal that is being appraised for the ground floor of the building is to provide a public use that will open up part of the ground floor of the building to visitors.

In the summer of 2014 there was considerable public concern about the proposed demolition of Heap's Rice Mill and the redevelopment of the site and adjacent areas. The mill, which served primarily as a warehouse, is located in the Baltic area of the city, which is in the buffer zone of the WHS. With the full support of the Mayor of Liverpool, the developers were asked to change their plans and an application to list the warehouse was made by members of the local community. This resulted in the building being protected through listing in grade II by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport. The developer put forward a revised scheme for the retention of Heap's Mill and its conversion to residential apartments and also for alterations to the adjacent development to make it more sympathetic to the historic context. The necessary permissions have been granted and work is due to commence.

Liverpool City Council has committed further substantial funding to continue the highly effective Buildings at Risk project. This continues to be the most successful project of its type in England, with the numbers of buildings at risk reduced from 12% of stock to less than 4% over the past 10 years. In addition, the Council has committed significant funds to repair the grade II\* St Luke's church in the buffer zone, with further funding for this project being considered by English Heritage. Similarly, the future of the grade II\* Wellington Rooms is the subject of joint action between Liverpool City Council and English Heritage. Further high levels of funding have also been committed to continue the Ropewalks Townscape Heritage Initiative, and the boundary of this has been extended to bring in 'Chinatown' which is at the heart of the oldest established Chinese community in Europe and a direct result of the historic, global maritime activity of the city. Part of the Ropewalks area is within the World Heritage property, with the remainder in the buffer zone.

### **Education and guidance**

As noted in Section One above the Local Plan that will provide a strengthened and clearer framework for the sustainable use and protection of the Property remains on course for a final consultation in the third quarter of 2016, followed by an updated World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document. Work is also progressing on implementing the City Centre Strategic Investment Framework, which includes the World Heritage Site and its buffer zone within its boundary. A movement appraisal has been commissioned and completed that examines how vehicular movement around the city disrupts the connectivity between the different character areas of the World Heritage Site, and the next stage is to design and implement works to the public realm and highways to ensure that it is easier for pedestrians to navigate the Property.

A book on the World Heritage Site that helps to explain the OUV of the World Heritage Site, describes its attributes and integrity and examines the recent work undertaken in the property book was published in November 2014. Aimed at raising public awareness the book also identifies what more needs to be done to safeguard and promote the value of the WHS. The publication was funded primarily by Peel Holdings with additional support from private and public sector organizations including Liverpool City Council and English Heritage.

A World Heritage Site leaflet has also been produced, 10,000 copies of which have been distributed to hotels and other places where visitors are expected. In addition, Liverpool City Council is also in the course of producing a smart phone app for iOS and Android that will provide self-guided tours around the World Heritage Site. A video of the World Heritage Site was produced for the International Festival of Business held in Liverpool for 3 months in 2014, attended by over 75,000 national and international visitors.

Following the successful World Heritage Forum held in 2013, attended by over 80 businesses, another Forum is being arranged for 2015 to further raise awareness of the World Heritage Site, the opportunities it offers and to discuss its importance to the city. The membership of the World Heritage Site Steering Group has been refreshed and includes more business representatives, who act as ambassadors for the World heritage property with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce.

The information summarized above makes it clear that there is an increasing level of understanding of and appreciation of the World Heritage Site, and that actions by local communities, the City Council, private sector developers, English Heritage and others are resulting in significant improvements to the overall condition of the property.

**3. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area (core zone and buffer zone and/or corridors) that might be envisaged.**

At present there are no new applications for development that might impact adversely on the OUV of the World Heritage Property. Discussions are due to take place with Peel Holdings about Plots 1 and 2 in Princes Dock with potential schemes for office and residential use respectively. Princes Dock is in the buffer zone of the WHS and the plots concerned form part of the Liverpool Waters scheme. These proposals will form part of a more detailed master plan for the Princes Dock character area. The State Party will notify the World Heritage Centre of the master plan and proposals at an early stage and in advance of any decisions being taken.