



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·  
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

*Making Heritage Work*

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Dear Ms Miller

**PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A COMBINED AUTHORITY FOR THE AREA OF  
DURHAM, NORTHUMBERLAND AND TYNE AND WEAR**

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.

The IHBC has no objection to the proposals in principle or to the breakdown of functions as set out in the paper. However we do have a concern that is not referred to in the Consultation that we would like to see properly addressed. This is the future arrangements for Urban Design and care of the Public Realm. It relates to the third of the Consultation questions:

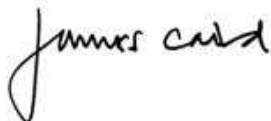
**On how establishing such an authority may impact on the identities and interests of local communities and on securing effective and convenient local government.**

In some Local Authorities Urban Design and Public Realm programmes are delivered by a team managed within the Regeneration function. No mention is made of this in the Consultation Paper, let alone what the arrangements will be for delivery of the service after the proposals take effect. The cities of the north are well known for their civic pride and their harnessing of this in physical improvements to the public realm which are an integral part of regeneration and tourism programmes. It is vital that such an important element of public interest should not be overlooked in an otherwise sensible pooling of resources.

The IHBC thinks that the arrangements for urban design and allied interests should be specifically addressed in the details for each of the participating Authorities; either as a unit in the Combined Authority or, preferably, in residual units in each Authority, perhaps optimally managed as part of their Planning and Heritage functions. In either case there would need to be formal arrangements for consultation between the Combined Authority and its partners where proposals at either level impinge on such issues.

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 style with a large initial 'J'.

James Caird  
Consultant Consultations Co-ordinator