



INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION

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9 December 2004

Dear Sir

NHBC Standards for Conversions and Renovations (Draft)

I refer to the above consultation document dated 23 November 2004 for which consultation responses are required by 10 December 2004.

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation is the professional body representing conservation specialists and practitioners in the public and private sectors in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. It has around fourteen hundred members divided between fourteen branches. 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.

The IHBC considers that the approach taken in the draft document fails to take account of the existing legislation regarding historic buildings and is unnecessarily prescriptive. For instance, the requirement to have guarantees and insurance for damp proofing and timber rot treatment is onerous. Where buildings are "listed" this is likely to lead to unnecessary conflict with the government's historic building legislation and advice as detailed in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, PPG 15 Planning and the historic Environment and BS 7913 Guide to the principles of the conservation of historic buildings. A number of historic buildings are also scheduled ancient monuments and the proposals are also likely to conflict with this legislation.

I would express concern over the very short period for responding to this document. The above comments are therefore through necessity general in nature. The Institute would welcome the opportunity to work with the NHBC and other conservation organisations to produce amendments to the document which would satisfy both NHBC and historic buildings requirements.

Yours faithfully

INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Chetwyn', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Dave Chetwyn
Vice Chair