



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

Making Heritage Work

Road Safety Consultation
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14 July 2009

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Dear Sirs

A SAFER WAY: CONSULTATION ON MAKING BRITAIN'S ROADS THE SAFEST IN WORLD

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 Institute supports the Government's objective of improving the safety of Britain's roads. We agree with the three-pronged approach of dealing with the issue by influencing vehicle design, driver behaviour and highway engineering and management. But it is in this latter area where we have concerns about where the Strategy might lead.

There is very little in the document about the possible impacts of the Strategy other than those it attempts to influence. We feel that the statement at paragraph 1.15 to the effect that environmental issues have already been considered is scarcely adequate.

What we fear is that a Strategy driven wholly or mainly by targets for lower casualty rates will be implemented through ever-increasing amounts of ill-considered and poorly designed traffic calming measures, pedestrian barriers, road signage and other visual clutter. We think that this would be detrimental to other Government objectives aimed at protecting historic environments and improving the quality and design of public spaces.

We would therefore like to see the Strategy specifically mention the many initiatives that have had, and are continuing to have, beneficial effects in increasing safety whilst reducing street clutter. In particular we commend the work in this area of the Historic Towns Forum, the Naked Streets campaign, various highway authorities including

Wiltshire and RB Kensington and Chelsea and your own Local Transport Note 1/08 *Traffic Management and Streetscape*. Perhaps this could be done in the context of a general statement of the Strategy's intention of integrating road safety into the wider sphere of Government social, environmental and cultural policy.

We support the Strategy's proposal for a more strategic approach to safety issues. The general trend to lower speed limits of rural roads is giving rise to an enormous increase in speed related signage. We would like the Government to consider whether a more strategic approach could be devised for the reduction of general speed limits on rural roads that would obviate the need for such signage.

Yours faithfully

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