



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

Making Heritage Work

Traffic Signs consultation
Traffic Division
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Dear Sirs

THE TRAFFIC SIGNS REGULATIONS AND GENERAL DIRECTIONS 2016

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) is the professional body for building conservation practitioners and historic environment experts working in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, with connections to the Republic of Ireland. The Institute exists to establish, develop and maintain 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 has no objection to any of the specific proposals.

We would like to make some suggestions in relation to Question 1B on the general topic of decluttering for the Decluttering Taskforce under the leadership of Sir Alan Duncan.

Our interest is the character and appearance of historic areas. We feel that these (and highway environments generally) are affected by increasing signage clutter some but not all related to highways and traffic.

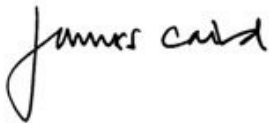
We think the following should be looked at:

- ◆ Decluttering, and the careful avoidance of clutter in the first place, should be an over-arching aim in the Traffic Signs Manual because:
 - ◆ It reduces visual intrusion.
 - ◆ It improves the impact of necessary signage.
 - ◆ It reduces costs.
- ◆ An inter-Departmental co-ordination (DfT, DCLG, HO) on a strategy to declutter more widely than just highway signage. Home Office signage (dog fouling, drinking

in public spaces, CCTV etc) often gives rise to as much casual visual intrusion as highway signage.

- ◆ A requirement for regular reviews of signage by highways authorities including:
 - ◆ assessment of continuing need (say in view of decreased speed limits).
 - ◆ making control areas (say parking controls and 20mph areas) coterminous so that structures can be shared.
 - ◆ The redesign of signage generally to reduce the number of supporting structures.
 - ◆ This might include relaxation of the requirements separating regulatory and directional signs (e.g. signs at crossroads showing destinations and any regulatory elements).
- ◆ An end to traffic sign inflation in which signs get larger and larger, way beyond necessity, and acquire enormous panels of yellow which are particularly unsuitable for historic areas and reduce the impact of signs not so treated.
- ◆ An end to knee-jerk-reaction signage in which a sign goes up because there has been a real or supposed incident regardless of any proper assessment of need or risk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Caird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'J'.

James Caird
Consultant Consultations Co-ordinator