

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON SHEP I

1. HEACS welcomes the publication of the first papers in the SHEPS series, which will set out the policy framework for the Historic Environment for the next few years. We also welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft papers. The 2003 Review of Historic Scotland identified the need for a clearer policy statement from Government on the historic environment, and the need for a more open approach by Historic Scotland. We see the SHEPS series, and the consultation process, as part of the response to those review requirements.

2. HEACS has noted the debate on the SHEPS in the Scottish Parliament, and the reports from the consultation seminars convened by BEFS. The BEFS seminars confirmed the high levels of interest in the SHEPS, and a general consensus around particular issues. HEACS is broadly supportive of the main points raised in the seminar reports, and submissions to the consultation.

3. HEACS supports the broad vision for the historic environment set out in SHEP 1, and the confirmation of its place in the wider vision for Scotland's future. The broad thrust of the strategic policies outlined in the paper is also to be welcomed.

4. Section 3 of the paper would be strengthened by a clearer acknowledgement that the historic environment is not only what we inherit, but also what we create, and of the need to ensure high quality design and construction today. The point is made in section 8, but could usefully be reflected in the opening section also. The importance of some key industrial landscapes, sites and museums should also be included in the description of the historic environment.

5. We welcome the recognition of the wide range of partners engaged in delivering the vision. Local authorities in particular are recognised as key agents, of whom Ministers have clear expectations. HEACS' report on the role of local authorities will set out what it sees as essential requirements to enable the local authorities to carry out their role efficiently and effectively, and hopes that these will be taken into account as policies are implemented.

6. Sections 4 and 5 on Identification and Protection should make clear and specific reference to continuing to ensure that the legislative framework is sufficiently robust and fit for purpose. HEACS' assessment of the need for a review of the legislation will be relevant.

7. Key outcome 3 identifies the need to recognise and harness the historic environment's importance as a key asset in Scotland's economic, social and cultural success. Section 8, however, deals only with realising economic potential. HEACS would welcome a clearer commitment in this section to

policies to strengthen recognition of the place of the historic environment in the cultural life of Scotland and to see it recognised in cultural policy also.

HEACS
June 2006