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Dears Sir

### **Consultation on Draft PPS 15: Planning for the Historic Environment**

I am writing in response to the consultation on the draft PPG 15 and, in that connection, I am enclosing a paper setting out brief reactions to the twelve questions in Part 4 of the draft.

You may gather from this that we are far from convinced of any need for a non-statutory document of this nature at the present time. Indeed there is a compelling case against such a document, which is well put at the beginning of Table 1, on page 39 of the consultation draft itself. This reads: "Planning policy relating to the historic environment is well established and understood, and in many respects remains fundamentally sound".

Accordingly, **we strongly favour Option 1** and, moreover, we have very serious reservations about Option 2.

One particular matter of concern to an amenity organisation such as ours, is the general lack of recognition about the impact the proposals would have on the amenity movement, both locally and nationally. Paragraph 12 of section 4, on page 35 of the draft, lists only four groups as the "sectors and groups affected". These are said to be regional and local planning authorities, commercial developers, owners, and commercial historic environment services. In fact, our members in amenity societies around the County would be greatly affected, were this draft to be taken any further, which is why we have gone to the trouble of studying the document and responding.

Paragraph 3.6 on page 11 claims that our opinions "are valuable" to you, and we trust that our real concerns will be taken seriously. It would be very regrettable if this consultation came to be perceived as little more than window dressing, given the currently expressed preference of the powers-that-be for Option 2. Options must present a genuine opportunity to chose, and not risk simply being seen as a foregone conclusion in favour of the "preferred option".

Yours truly