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SCOTLAND'S TRANSPORT PROPOSALS FOR A NEW APPROACH TO DELIVERING PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on these proposals. Historic Scotland has very few meaningful comments to offer on the range of questions raised in this consultation paper. We are generally content with what is proposed and very much welcome this proposal to replace the current Parliamentary Private Works Bills procedures with a Scottish Transport and Works Act. This support is based on Historic Scotland's detailed knowledge and involvement with the current procedures where, to date, we have been involved in pre-application discussion and have provided comments and evidence on issues arising from the Environmental Impact Assessment of all projects promoted by the Private Bills process. We consider that what you propose will be a major improvement in the way consent is currently sought and obtained for major transport proposals.

Looking in turn at each of the specific questions raised, we offer the following views.

Q1 Are there any other transport works beyond rail, tram, guided busways and inland waterway developments that should be within scope and if so why? Historic Scotland has no specific views on this. We are not aware of any further transport works which should be within the scope of the proposed Bill.

Q2 What reasons exist for lengthening or indeed shortening the 6 month designated statutory pre-application period between the promoter publicising initial proposals and presenting an application for an Order to the Scottish Ministers? From our perspective as a potential consultee in the pre-application process for our statutory historic environment interests, we consider that 6 months is a reasonable period and see no need to lengthen this period.

Q3 What process should apply to enable a promoter, without a statutory right, to enter land to conduct preliminary investigations? Historic Scotland has no expertise in this area and has no specific comments to offer.

Q4 What documentation should be supplied by the promoter in support of the application? Is there sufficient information contained within the proposals? For our historic environment interests we are content that the list provided covers the documents we would wish to see included. We have no further comments to offer.

Q5 What are the implications of reducing the time period for objections from 60 to 42 days? Given the expected level of pre-application consultation and discussion and the expectation that the submitted application will be well-prepared we do not see any particular problem in reducing the objection period as suggested.

Q6 Are there any reasons why, once the Scottish Ministers have determined that the application meets the procedural conditions and the specified criteria conditions, that the application should be considered by the Scottish Parliament prior to a public examination of the objections? We are content that your analysis in para 4.39 has weighted up the key issues and on that basis do not see any reason for the application to be considered by the Scottish Parliament at this stage.

Q7 Are there any reasons for extending Parliamentary consideration and approval of projects beyond those contained within the NPF? Do you agree that it should also be possible for the Scottish Ministers to designate other transport related projects not in the NPF for Parliamentary consideration, should they see fit? We have no problem with this proposition.

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