

SHEP on Historic Battlefields
Historic Scotland
Room 2.9
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Edinburgh
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Please ask for Kirsty Cameron
Direct Dial: 01463 702250
Your Ref: -
Our Ref:
Date 01 August 2008

Dear Sir/Madam

SHEP CONSULTATION – HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS

The Highland Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the above. The following specific comments are offered in response to the consultation questions:-

The legal and administrative context

Qu 1. A clear policy for the protection and sustainable management of historic battlefields and fields of conflict is necessary.

Proposals for policy

Qu 2. The scope is very limited. It is recognised that there will be significant problems with defining the extent of lesser conflicts such as skirmishes and clan warfare, but these could be included in a register where known. It is thought the exclusion of such sites from a proposed register may lead to an unfavourable comparison with regard to their significance and a subsequent increase in the risk of potential development impacts.

Qu 3. Highland Council agrees with the reasons laid out for recognising the value of battlefields.

Qu 4. Highland Council welcomes the proposed recognition of nationally important battlefields.

Qu 5. As the criteria for the inclusion of sites within the proposed inventory will be strict and the sites will be defined as nationally important, it is not clear why the register is only proposed to be non-statutory. Better protection would be offered (for both Battlefields and for Designed Gardens and Landscapes) with a statutory designation.

The proposed Inventory

Qu 6. Highland Council agrees that the purpose of the proposed Inventory should be to identify sites of national importance. However, the Inventory should not just aim to raise awareness of battlefields – and other fields of conflict - and the need for protection; it should also seek to provide that protection in statutory form.

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- Qu 7. The criteria set out for determining inclusion in the proposed Inventory must be clearly defined. The proposed criteria are considered to be restrictive but the overriding criterion that a battlefield must be capable of definition on a map is welcomed.
- Qu 8. The proposed definition of the area of interest – to include a battlefield core within a wider and possibly more dispersed battlefield landscape – is welcomed. However it is not clear whether the criterion for defining the area of a battlefield (as per 5.4d) refers to the battlefield core or to the battlefield landscape. The reference to a degree of flexibility in the definition of a battlefield core (and ‘equally valid alternative options’) seems to conflict with the strict criterion laid out in Annex A, 4, iv.
- Qu 9. Effective policies must be developed to ensure that nationally important battlefields are given protection and fully considered in the process of development and land-use management. I agree that policies are required for both the overall area of the battlefield and for specific areas within it.
- Qu 10. Historic Scotland should lead on the development of best practice guidance.

Roles, responsibilities and implementation

- Qu 11. The Council would prefer to see Historic Scotland take a clear lead in the development of best practice guidance. It also wishes to see sites of more local importance being identified during the creation of the Inventory by Historic Scotland and that the information is subsequently passed on to planning authorities for consideration within their strategic planning.

I trust that these comments are helpful. Please get in touch if you wish to discuss any of them.

Yours sincerely

GEORGE HAMILTON
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