

ROADS TO RUINS?

Transport and the Historic Environment

Can England's future transport needs ensure the protection of our heritage?
Or will new rail and road schemes inevitably destroy the historic environment?

A new policy paper from English Heritage - 'Transport and the Historic Environment' sets out key principles to inform transport decisions at local, regional and national level and secure the richness of England's past for the future.

From prehistoric trackways and Roman roads to the great age of steam, transport has played a vital role in creating the historic environment of England. Today's transport system can make equally important contributions to our environment. But, if badly planned, it can also have a serious impact on our heritage.

Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage said: "Transport infrastructure can do serious and sometimes irreversible damage to the historic environment, not only as a result of major new construction projects, but also through incremental changes such as the piecemeal dualling of trunk roads, intrusive traffic calming, and the proliferation of poorly designed and confusing road-signs.

“We are calling on everyone concerned with the future of England’s transport infrastructure to ensure the precious historic environment is taken into account. English Heritage wants to work with its partners to champion quality design that respects and enhances the unique historic character of our towns, cities and countryside.”

The paper sets out English Heritage’s vision for the future of transport policy. This is to:

- encourage a switch to less damaging forms of transport and promote planning policies that help to reduce the need to travel;
- seek imaginative solutions to transport problems;
- ensure that transport appraisals properly assess the impacts of development on the historic environment;
- take account of the wider historic environment;
- continue to promote good design and push hard for proposals that recognise local and regional distinctiveness;
- encourage innovative transport management strategies; and
- minimise the impact of air travel on the historic environment.

Copies of Transport and the Historic Environment can be ordered by contacting English Heritage Customer Services Department 0870 333 1181 or e-mail customers@english-heritage.org.uk or please visit our website at www.english-heritage.org.uk/transport

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For further information, contact: Tim Read, English Heritage on 020 7973 3251/07909 871 758 or e-mail tim.read@english-heritage.org.uk