



## Case Information

---

<b>Reference/Case ID</b>	300018552		
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Melrose Abbey and Precinct		
<b>Index no</b>	SM90214	<b>Grid ref</b>	NT 54300 34400
<b>Date application validated</b>	25 August 2016		
<b>Summary of proposed works</b>	Melrose Abbey - Alterations and extensions to existing cafe and alterations to existing dwelling		

## 1. Summary recommendation

---

This report recommends that consent be granted.

## 2. Background

---

Melrose Abbey was founded in 1163, the first and arguably the finest, Cistercian Abbey in Scotland. Following the Protestant Reformation, the Abbey and its precinct were redeveloped with the main Abbey Church building being reworked into a Parish Church and the precinct lands around subdivided into varied private uses.

The Abbey and precinct boundaries and the features within them have shaped the physical development of the town, with roads and boundaries following medieval routes. Despite the growth of the town and the inevitable ground disturbance which resulted, archaeological deposits relating to the medieval and later use of the site have been shown to survive on excavation. The scheduling designation reflects this partial survival with a number of exclusions of modern structures and the exclusion of the top 40cm of ground across a wide area of the monument. The current application lies within one of those areas with a 40cm depth exclusion.

The proposed development behind this application was submitted for planning consent in March 2016. Scottish Borders Council requested Historic Environment Scotland's comments on the proposal. We did not object to the application, but did highlight the need for scheduled monument consent. Planning consent was subsequently granted for the development in May 2016, subject to a condition requiring archaeological works and noting the need for scheduled monument consent.



## 3. Proposals

---

Excavation and installation of foundations, services and structures associated with alterations and extension to existing café and dwelling.

- Excavation and backfilling of trenches for services (water, gas, electricity, drainage/sewers) and their connections to existing infrastructure.
- Installation of service infrastructure.
- Excavation and construction of foundations for new build elements of café development: café extension, new gates and walls/railings, access ramp.
- Archaeological works associated with the supervision and monitoring of the works as necessary.

It should be noted that only those works which penetrate 40cm or more below the existing ground surface require scheduled monument consent.

## 4. Representations received

---

None

## 5. Report

---

### a) Policy considerations

The application should be considered with the following legislative and policy considerations in mind:

Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)

Part 1 Section 2: Control of works affecting an ancient monument.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016

3.14. A monument is included in the schedule to secure the long-term legal protection of the monument in the national interest, in situ and as far as possible in the state it has come down to us. Scheduled monuments have an intrinsic value as monuments, not related to any concept of active use. It is the value of the monument to the nation's heritage, in terms set out in the section on Scheduling in Chapter 2 of this policy statement that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.



3.16. Works on scheduled monuments should therefore normally be the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument.

3.18. Scheduled monument consent applications must be considered in terms of the cultural significance of the monument and the impact that the proposals would have upon this cultural significance. The more important particular features of the monument are to its cultural significance, the greater will be the case against interventions which modify these features.

3.20. Where change is proposed, it should be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed, properly planned and executed, and where appropriate in the context of an individual monument, reversible.

## **b) Assessment**

The works covered by this application are the below-ground elements of a wider scheme to redevelop and extend an existing café and flat. They include the removal of soil from the development area and the addition of a number of structural elements, including walls, cables, pipes and posts, to the monument. The overall percentage of the monument area affected will be extremely small. The works will be carried out in an area that has already been subject to disturbance through the original construction of the existing buildings and subsequent interventions to them.

The construction works will be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring which will allow for the recording of minor archaeological features. If more significant archaeological deposits are encountered and the development will not have a significant impact on the appearance of the monument overall or of the setting of key elements of the monument such as the Abbey buildings.

The nature of the archaeological resource in the area affected by the application is uncertain, but given the proximity of the site to the Abbey church, and its post-medieval use for industrial purposes, it is possible that archaeological deposits relating to the monastic and later use of the area could be encountered. The applicants are aware of the archaeological potential of the area and the application is supported by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief for the works. Given the nature of the area affected and the works involved, I am content that the scheme described in the WSI should be sufficient to record or safeguard any archaeological features or artefacts encountered.

I am content that given the nature and location of the works, away from the core area of the Abbey and focussed on an area of prior disturbance, the impact of the development on the cultural significance of the monument should be minimal.



## **c) Other material considerations, including impact of the works on Protected Species and Places**

Planning consent was granted for this development proposal on 18 May 2016 (Scottish Borders Council ref: 16/00314/FUL) subject to a number of conditions including the requirement for a programme of archaeological works.

## **d) Conclusion**

The works described in this application represent disturbance and additions to the monument under part 1: 2: 2(b) of the Act and as such, scheduled monument consent is required.

I am content that the works described in this application will result in a minimal amount of disturbance to the monument and will not significantly alter its appearance or setting. As such, I consider the works will have a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument, in accordance with sections 3.16 and 3.18 of the Policy Statement.

I am content that the documentation supporting the application is sufficiently detailed to show that the proposals have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned, in compliance with section 3.20 of the Policy Statement.

I consider that one condition relating to the provision of archaeological monitoring needs to be applied to the consent. While the fundamental scheme outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is acceptable, the document was originally drafted to satisfy a condition attached to the Planning Consent. The archaeological contractors have made some amendments to the text to incorporate consultation with and reporting to HES in addition to Scottish Borders Council but there are two areas where the requirement for HES involvement is not mentioned; a scenario where unexpectedly rich archaeological deposits are encountered and a scenario where human remains are discovered. I have therefore recommended a condition to cover this aspect of the case.

## **6. Recommended decision**

---

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, the works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

I recommend consent is **granted, subject to the conditions detailed below.**



## 7. Conditions

---

1. If unexpectedly rich, sensitive or extensive archaeological deposits are encountered within the scheduled area, these must not be disturbed without further consultation and the prior written agreement of Historic Environment Scotland.

*Reason: to ensure that any unexpected discoveries made during excavation can be preserved in situ or recorded adequately.*

## 8. Approval

---

<b>Case officer</b>	Deirdre Cameron	<b>Date</b>	14 October 2016
<b>Approved by</b>	George Findlater	<b>Date</b>	14 October 2016

### Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location plan 9248.0.01
- Existing site plan 9248.2.01
- Existing ground floor plan 9248.2.02
- Proposed site plan 9248.2.08B
- Typical location of services 9248.4.01
- Proposed foundation & basement plan & details 19330-01
- Structural detail sheet 19330-04
- SGN services proposal 1180714
- SP Networks service proposal 213329
- Abbey Coffee Shop, Melrose: Archaeological Watching Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation AOC 23511 (revised 12 October 2016)