



Case information

Case ID	300016705
File Reference	AMH/422/2/1
Name of Site	Berriedale Water, cairn at junction with Allt Ard-achaidh

Local Authority	Highland Council		
National Grid Reference	ND 1083 2561		
Designation No. (if any)	SM422		
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument	Current Category of Listing	N/A
Case Type	Amendment		

Received/Start Date	29/04/2015
Decision Date	26/10/2016

1. Decision

The monument was first scheduled in 1939 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment against the scheduling criteria (Scottish Historic Environment Policy, Annex 1) demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is to amend the entry in the Schedule as Berriedale Water, cairn 250m NW of Millery.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Monument first scheduled in 1939; no subsequent amendment.

2.2 Development Proposals

N/A

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was visited on 29/04/2015.

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3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria has been carried out (see Annex A).

The monument was found to meet the criteria for scheduling.

The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

3.3 Other considerations

NA

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria*

Berriedale Water, cairn 250m NNW of Millery

1. Description

The monument is a burial cairn dating from the Late Neolithic to Bronze Age (the fourth and third millennia BC). The cairn is visible as a roughly circular mound of earth and stone standing up to 1.4m high. The monument is situated in a prominent location on the west side of a valley above Berriedale Water, at around 115m above sea level.

The cairn is approximately 14m in diameter overall and there are two depressions on the southwest and east sides of the cairn which may indicate collapsed chambers within the cairn. Adjacent to the cairn, only a few metres to the northwest, lie the remains of a hut circle measuring 4m in diameter. The monument is located on moorland with open views, mainly across the Berriedale Water and is in close proximity to other prehistoric remains.

The scheduled area is circular on plan, measuring 34m in diameter, centred on the monument. The scheduling includes the remains described above including the hut circle and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The monument was first scheduled in 1939, but the documentation did not meet current standards: the present amendment rectifies this.

2. Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.)

* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge. It will form the basis of any new or updated scheduled monument record.

** A monument may be found to meet the scheduling criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the Schedule. The purpose and implications of scheduling are issues that require to be taken into account when assessing monuments for scheduling. Scheduling may not be the only, or the most appropriate mechanism, to secure the future of all sites, even those that may otherwise meet the criteria.

Cultural significance

Characteristic	Assessment
Intrinsic	
Condition in which monument survives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The monument is a burial cairn visible as a mound.• Overall the site survives in good condition with no record of an excavation at the site.• The cairn is well-preserved. The two depressions on the south west and east could indicate the presence of one or more chambers.
Archaeological, scientific, technological or other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The cairn retains some structural integrity in its plan form, in the surviving stratigraphy and in

<p>interest or research potential of the monument</p>	<p>its architectural elements. These elements can help us understand more about ritual and funerary practice, the architecture of prehistoric burial and the construction, use and abandonment of these monuments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still good potential for the survival of other archaeological deposits, including burial remains, artefacts such as pottery, and environmental remains such as charcoal or pollen, within, beneath and around the intact elements of the monument. These elements can help us understand more about ritual and funerary practice, and the significance of materials, technology and craft in a burial context. The monument is also important for the potential of exploring the relationship between the main cairn and the adjacent hut circle.
<p>Apparent developmental sequence of monument (either long or short may provide insights of importance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cairn probably dates from the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age (the fourth and third millennia BC). • The nearby hut circles remains could provide evidence of site development or changes in site use. • Scientific excavation of the site would allow us to develop a better understanding of the chronology of the site, including its date of origin, state of completeness and any possible development sequence.
<p>Original or subsequent functions of the monument and its parts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original function of the monument was as a burial or funerary site. The site may also have had other ceremonial or ritual uses for the local community.
<p>Contextual</p>	
<p>Present rarity or representativeness of all or any part of the monument, assessed against knowledge of the archaeology of Scotland and of the region in which the monument occurs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are ten confirmed and possible prehistoric burial cairns within a 10km radius of the monument. This monument is important as an upstanding and well-preserved example. • There may have been links between neighbouring burial cairns or they may indicate community catchments. This cairn has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of prehistoric burial practices.
<p>Relationship of the monument to other monuments of the same or related classes or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are numerous broadly contemporary monuments in the landscape surrounding the monument including hut circles, enclosure and field system located 250m to the northwest (SM3476). The close proximity of Dun Burn

period, or to features or monuments in the vicinity. (Particularly important for monuments forming part of a widespread but varied class)	<p>cairn (SM447) is also notable. There is potential to study these sites together to understand their functions within the local communities and possible chronological development in the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The monument is within a small group of cairns in the Berriedale and Langwell area and offers potential to study burial and ritual practices and draw comparisons with evidence from other cairns around the locality and more widely in Caithness.
Relationship of the monument and its parts with its wider landscape and setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cairn sits on the westside of the valley, overlooking the Berriedale Water. It is very close to the Allt Ard-Achaidh burn which feeds the Berriedale Water. There are open views across the adjacent landscape and beyond to the surrounding hills. The focus appears to be over the valley and river below.
Associative	
Historical, cultural and social influences that have affected the form and fabric of the monument, and vice versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Aesthetic attributes of the monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Significance in the national consciousness or to people who use or have used the monument, or descendants of such people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Associations the monument has with historical, traditional or artistic characters or events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

Assessment of national importance

Criteria	Assessment
Its inherent capability or potential to make a significant addition to the understanding or appreciation of the past	The monument is of national importance because of its potential to make a significant addition to knowledge and understanding of the past, particularly the design and construction of burial monuments, and the nature of belief systems and burial practices during the Bronze Age in Caithness. The cairn has good field characteristics that show its form and its place in the landscape, and demonstrate the potential for the
Its retention of the structural, decorative or field characteristics of	

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its kind to a marked degree	<p>presence of buried archaeological remains, including burials, artefacts and palaeoenvironmental evidence. There are numerous other prehistoric remains in the vicinity of the cairn, which together contribute to our understanding of the form of the pre-historic landscape. This is important for enhancing our understanding of Bronze Age society, its organisation, economy, religion and demography. The loss of the monument would significantly diminish our future ability to appreciate and understand funerary practice, death and burial in prehistoric times, and the placing of such monuments within the landscape.</p>
Its contribution, or the contribution of its class, to today's landscape and/or the historic landscape	
The quality and extent of any documentation or association that adds to the understanding of the monument or its context	
The diminution of the potential of a particular class or classes of monument to contribute to an understanding of the past, should the monument be lost or damaged	
Its place in the national consciousness [a factor that may be considered in support of other factors]	

References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 8061 (accessed on 01/09/16).

Highland Council HER Reference: MHG 1092.
