



## Case Information

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<b>Reference/Case ID</b>	300018522		
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Holyrood Park		
<b>Index no</b>	SM13032	<b>Grid ref</b>	NT 27500 74100
<b>Date application validated</b>	26 September 2016		
<b>Summary of proposed works</b>	Holyrood Park: Dry Dam path erosion works		

## 1. Summary recommendation

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This report recommends that consent be granted without conditions.

## 2. Background

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Holyrood Park is a unique geological and historic landscape within the city of Edinburgh, incorporating known remains from the Bronze Age to the present day. It owes its preservation to its status as a royal park from the medieval period onwards.

The section of the monument affected by this application occupies a saddle between the summits of Arthur's Seat to the south and Whinny Hill to the north. Known archaeology in the vicinity includes the later prehistoric fort complex on Arthurs Seat/Crow Hill, and cultivation terraces to the east and south-east towards Dunsapie Loch. The area is the meeting point of several routes leading through the park and up to the summit, some of which are likely to have their origins in the prehistoric period. The application site and the area around are vulnerable to natural and man-made erosion; excavations and monitoring of similar works in the vicinity have shown that the area has been subject to considerable erosion through hillwash. While the likelihood of *in situ* remains within the proposed development area surviving this erosion process is small, it is possible that material from higher slopes could have washed out and settled in the application area.

The applicant has undertaken pre-application discussions with Heritage Directorate and the application reflects those talks.



## 3. Proposals

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Erosion control works to footpath

- Removal of existing failing stone steps
- Cutting back of soil to establish sound base level for new steps
- Installation of new stone steps (reusing materials where possible)
- Cutting back soil and turf where necessary to install new pitched stone path edging.
- Deposition of gravel/chipped stone to form or reinforce path surface where required.
- Gorse planting in areas deemed vulnerable to erosion. ;
- Installation and removal of temporary fencing to close off route during works
- Archaeological monitoring of ground breaking works

## 4. Representations received

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None

## 5. Report

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### a) Policy considerations

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

#### Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2: Control of works affecting scheduled monuments.

#### 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.



3.15. Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

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.

3.17. As each monument will require treatment specific to its individual nature, characteristics, significance and needs, any proposed change to it must be fully and explicitly justified.

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 will result in the removal, repair and addition of elements of path infrastructure within Holyrood Park. While much of the material to be removed and replaced is modern, there will be a requirement for limited disturbance to ground levels within the monument to allow for the installation of pathworks. While this disturbance has the potential to disturb archaeological areas and artefacts, the areas involved have been subject to heavy erosion in the past. ; Previous work in the vicinity indicates that the potential to impact on the cultural significance of the monument is extremely low.

The works incorporate a scheme of archaeological monitoring to ensure that any potential disturbance to archaeological deposits can be identified and dealt with appropriately.

The works should also result in benefits for the monument and the visiting public, ensuring access to the monument is maintained for visitors. Holyrood Park is an extremely popular attraction within Edinburgh and as such is a victim of its own success; erosion caused and exacerbated by visitor footfall is one of the main threats to the archaeological sites within the Park. ; Installation of formal paths within the Park helps to limit this damage, by focussing footfall in specific areas that have already been impacted by previous erosion or path works. This acts to preserve the cultural



significance of the monument while ensuring it can be enjoyed and appreciated by visitors.

The works are a repair and replacement of the existing scheme of path networks within the park which has been shown to limit the risk of erosion to the monument while ensuring widespread visitor access to the monument.

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

The area involved in this proposal is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Scottish Natural Heritage have granted consent for the works under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 – letter dated 8 September 2016 from Ewan Campbell, SNH Operations Officer, Lothians.

### **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 archaeological deposits and will not significantly alter the appearance or setting of the monument. As such I consider they 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 consider the application provides specific justification for the works, in accordance with section 3.17 of the Policy Statement.

I am content that the documentation supporting the application, including the Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological monitoring and recording, 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.

## **6. Recommended decision**

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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 without conditions**.



## 7. Conditions

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No conditions have been attached to this decision.

## 8. Approval

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<b>Case officer</b>	Deirdre Cameron	<b>Date</b>	14 November 2016
<b>Approved by</b>	George Findlater	<b>Date</b>	17 November 2016

### Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Dry Dam Path Reconstruction – plan and section (ref 2015-30-(9)-001)
- Letter from SNH dated 8 September 2016
- Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological works, Kirkdale Archaeology