



Case information

Case ID	300017436
File Reference	AMH/6402/2/1
Name of Site	Inverness, site of Dominican friary and burial ground, Friars' Street

Local Authority	Highland Council
National Grid Reference	NH 664 445
Designation No. (if any)	SM6402
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	29/07/2013
Decision Date	23/11/2016

1. Decision

This designation was assessed because the effigy of a knight set in the south wall of the burial ground was not included when the scheduling was amended in 2006. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance and should include the effigy. However, the boundary walls and other memorials are not of national importance. The decision is to amend the entry in the Schedule as **Inverness, site of Dominican friary and effigy of a knight, Friars' Street**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1996 and the designation was amended in 2006.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The present assessment is desk-based, using available information and has included reference to recent photographs.

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

N/A

Elizabeth McCrone

Head of Designations
Heritage Management
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact	Dr Kirsty Millican, Designations Officer kirsty.millican@hes.scot, 0131 668 5103
----------------	---

ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

Inverness, site of Dominican friary and effigy of a knight, Friars' Street

1 Description

The monument is part of the site of a Dominican Friary, now occupied by a later burial ground. The friary dates from the 13th century and is represented by buried archaeological remains, an upstanding octagonal stone pillar, and the effigy of a knight that is now built into the southeast wall of the burial ground. The monument is also expected to contain buried archaeological remains related to the friary. The friary remains lie adjacent to Friars' Street in Inverness, on the east bank of the River Ness.

The octagonal pillar supports a bell-shaped capital and the springing of a pair of arcade arches. The form, quality and orientation of the pillar suggests it was one of the piers of an arcade between the nave and aisle of the friary church. The effigy of a knight is carved in high relief and although it is now set vertically, it is probable that it originally formed part of a chest or canopied tomb within the church. The church foundations and associated medieval burials are expected to survive as buried archaeological remains. Post-Reformation burials also exist on the site.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan to include the remains described above as shown in red on the accompanying map. The scheduling includes the upstanding pillar and the effigy of a knight, but excludes the boundary walls and gates of the burial ground, the above ground elements of all other memorials and burial enclosures, and burial lairs where rights of burial still exist. The scheduling also excludes the wall of the British Telecom building to the southeast and the pedestrian bridge that crosses above the site.

2 Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

(Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.)

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

Although only a single fragment of the church survives as an upstanding structure, that fragment is informative for its demonstration that the church was at least partly flanked by aisles. It is expected that further evidence survives below ground level in the form of foundations and robber trenches that can reveal the plan of the church and the layout of parts of the associated conventual buildings. There is also high potential for the survival of associated archaeological deposits including human burials, floor and levelling deposits, and artefacts and environmental remains such as charcoal and animal bone. The archaeological remains have the potential to provide information about the construction and form of the church and associated buildings, their date and development sequence and the location and character of

human burials in and around the church. Artefacts and ecofacts would enhance our understanding of burial practices and of contemporary economy and trade.

The friary is traditionally said to have been founded by Alexander II at a date between the presumed first introduction of the order into Scotland in 1230 and the king's death in 1249. In 1436 it was said the buildings were ruinous, though that was perhaps an exaggeration in the hope of attracting funding for repairs. In the immediate prelude to the Reformation, in 1559, the friary's property was placed in magisterial custody for safekeeping, at which time the community may have numbered no more than four brethren with the prior. It is likely to have been abandoned at the Reformation in the following year, although it was recorded as being still intact in 1562. It is said that much of the masonry of the friary was re-used in the construction of Cromwell's Citadel in Inverness in the 1650s. The site was subsequently put to use as a burial ground and there is potential to compare burials made during the life of the friary and later, post-reformation burials. The site therefore has a long development sequence spanning at least 600 years. Scientific study of the form and character of the friary and associated buildings would enhance our understanding of the date and development sequence of this site and of medieval religious houses in general, while the church, burials and related archaeological deposits offer high potential to study changes in belief and culture.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

Since the principal mission of mendicant orders such as the Dominicans was to the poor of the burghs, most of their houses were on urban sites which were quickly re-developed after abandonment at the Reformation, and have therefore survived very poorly. Of the 16 Dominican houses known to have been founded in Scotland, there are now upstanding remains of only those at Inverness, St Andrews (scheduled monument ref SM13321, Canmore ID 34336) and St Monans (A-Listed LB15558, Canmore ID 34204). While there has been some archaeological investigation of other sites, the sum of architectural knowledge of the Dominican houses is therefore very small, and the few fragments we have are particularly significant. The remains of this friary therefore have the potential to broaden our understanding of the nature, organisation and spread of the mendicant orders in Scotland and their place within the wider society and economy.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

The friary has some associative significance as a foundation of Alexander II, who was perhaps the most generous founder of houses for the religious orders after David I. He is thought to have shown particular favour to the Dominicans, being apparently also involved in the foundation of houses for them at Aberdeen, Ayr, Berwick, Edinburgh, Elgin, Perth and Stirling. Alexander was also a patron of the Valliscaulians, at Pluscarden. The high esteem with which the Dominican order was regarded by layfolk, particularly in providing burial places and prayers for the dead, is suggested by the surviving knightly effigy, which was presumably one of a larger number of high status tombs.

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

Designation as a scheduled monument is an appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument, and ensure the recognition of its national importance.

4 Assessment of national importance

The monument is of national importance because it has an inherent potential to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the past, in particular of medieval religious houses in Scotland. It is of particular significance because it contains one of the few upstanding fragments of a Scottish Dominican friary. There is high potential for the survival of archaeological remains that can make a significant contribution to our understanding of friary churches and burials in and around them. The loss of this monument would diminish our ability to appreciate and understand medieval friaries, particularly those of the Dominicans, the role they played in the urban life of medieval Scotland, and the destruction and later use of these sites after the Reformation.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 13333 (accessed on 20/05/2016).

The Highland Council Historic Environment Record reference is MHG3870 (accessed on 20/05/2016).

Cowan I B and Easson D E (1976) *Medieval religious houses in Scotland*. London and New York, 2nd ed., 116 & 119.

Easson, D E. (1957) *Medieval religious houses in Scotland: with an appendix on the houses in the Isle of Man*. London.

Macdonald, W R. (1902) 'The heraldry in some of the old churchyards between Tain and Inverness', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 36, 1901-2.

Macleod, F T. (1911) 'Notes on the Chapel Yard, Inverness, and some of its old monuments, with a notice of heraldic devices on tombstones at Kilmun', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 45, 1910-11.

Pollitt A G 1981, *Historic Inverness*, Inverness, 18-23.
