



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018852		
Scheduled Monument	Holyrood Abbey, precinct and associated remains		
Index no	SM13031	Grid ref	NT 26900 73900
Date application validated	13 December 2016		
Summary of proposed works	Path works by east elevation of Holyrood Abbey		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval be granted with conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises the remains of Holyrood Abbey and precinct, which also incorporates elements of the gardens and buildings surrounding the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Holyrood Abbey was founded in 1128 by the Augustinian order. As the importance of the Abbey grew, so did its royal patronage, with the guest accommodation for the Abbey developing into a royal palace under the aegis of James IV. By the mid-16th century, the Palace was the principle royal residence in Scotland, a status it enjoys to this day. At the same time, the Abbey was dissolved during the Reformation, although the Abbey church saw reuse as the parochial church for the Canongate burgh, then as the Chapel of the Order of the Thistle until the roof collapsed in 1768, after which it was abandoned.

The scheduled area is irregular in shape, covering the current enclosed area of the Palace grounds. The scheduling designation incorporates a large number of exclusions including the above ground elements of all buildings, sheds and their floors, except for the upstanding remains of Holyrood Abbey and Queen Mary's Bath. The above ground elements of all boundary walls, gates, railings, street furniture, statues, sundials, fountains and structures built after 1950 are also excluded, as are the top 500mm of North Carriage Drive and Abbey Strand roads and the top 300mm of all other surfaced roads.

The monument is of national importance for its inherent potential to make a significant addition to our understanding of the past, in particular of a prominent medieval abbey



and the origins and development of what became the principal royal palace in Scotland from the early 16th century onwards. The remains of Holyrood Abbey represent evidence for one of Scotland's foremost medieval monastic houses, adapted and modified at the Reformation. In the vicinity and beneath the present palace building are significant remains of early structures that have the potential to increase our understanding of the palace's construction, development and use, and its evolving relationship with adjacent structures, especially Holyrood Abbey. The existing garden and its archaeology have the potential to expand our knowledge of the post-Reformation use of Church lands and the post-union use of Crown lands. The site's varied and well-preserved buried archaeology can also provide information about the economy and trading contacts of the abbey and palace.

The application will affect an area of ground immediately to the east of the upstanding remains of Holyrood Abbey: this area lies within the transept of the Abbey building. The application is for the installation of a memorial bench and associated path and surfacing works to facilitate access to the bench. It has been submitted by Historic Environment Scotland's Conservation Directorate.

The application is accompanied by a location plan and specifications, and an assessment of archaeological sensitivity.

HES Heritage Management Directorate has undertaken pre-application discussions with the applicant regarding the scope and timing of works, and this application accords with the outcome of those discussions.

3. Proposals

Works at garden path at east elevation to Holyrood Abbey

Consented works

- Removal of turf and topsoil to a maximum depth of 300mm by hand excavation.
- Formation of path through the addition of imported materials to excavated area.
- Placing of memorial bench in newly prepared area.
- Archaeological monitoring of works

Aims

To provide a location for a memorial bench commemorating the 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The provision of an extended path will provide a suitable location for the bench where it can be accessed easily. The provision of a hard path surface will also protect the ground surface from erosion that could result from use of the bench.



Personnel

Historic Environment Scotland MCU staff will undertake the excavation and path construction work. The contractor for archaeological supervision of the works is not specified.

4. Representations received

No third party representations were received.

5. Report

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.

3.16. 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.

3.22. Where consent for the range of works set out in paragraph 3.4 is granted, conditions are normally applied to ensure the works are undertaken in an appropriate manner. Common requirements are:

- a. the use of appropriate assessment methodologies to determine the full impact of any proposed management, use or development;
- b. the avoidance of irreversible change particularly wherever its effects cannot be adequately assessed;
- c. that where change is necessary, strategies should be adopted to mitigate its impact and limit intervention;
- d. that the management and execution of alteration, including remedial work, is sympathetic to the historic character;
- e. that appropriate skills and techniques, materials and construction techniques are specified where appropriate;
- f. that an appropriate level of record is made before, during and after any work and deposited in local and national archives, and, where appropriate, published;
- g. that it is possible, on close inspection, to differentiate new work from old particularly on masonry structures;
- h. that any archaeological excavation or other intrusive investigation should be based upon a detailed research strategy, with adequate resources, using appropriately skilled and experienced archaeologists with a satisfactory record of the completion and publication of projects; and
- i. that the design, planning and execution of works on scheduled monuments are undertaken by people with appropriate professional and craft qualifications, skills and experience.

b) Assessment

The proposed works involve the creation of an extended area of footpath and the installation of a memorial bench. This is intended to enhance the visitor experience to the gardens and provide a memorial commemorating Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's ninetieth birthday on 2016.

The works will result in the physical disturbance of ground to a maximum depth of approximately 300mm within the gardens at Holyrood Palace. As the chosen location for works lies within the site of the interior of the Abbey transept, this disturbance has the potential to impact on archaeological features and artefacts relating to the development of the Abbey and the Palace and its gardens. The dimensions of the areas

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to be excavated and the design of the path construction are restricted to the minimum intervention possible to achieve the project aims. As such, the works should have a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument.

While the application is supported by an assessment of the archaeological sensitivity of the site, and notes the need for archaeological mitigation, it does not contain a detailed scheme for such works. This issue could be addressed through the application of a condition to any consent granted requiring the prior submission and approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological works before the consented scheme can be enacted.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see PP&S assessment.

d) Conclusion

The application should be viewed as works as set out in both Part 1 Section 2 of the AMAA Act 1979 and paragraph 3.4 of the policy statement.

I am content that the works described in this application will result in minimal 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 does not fully meet paragraph 3.20 of the Policy Statement because it has only partially demonstrated that the works have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned. While recognising that a detailed scheme for archaeological mitigation of the proposals is necessary, the application is not supported by such a scheme. The production of an archaeological scheme of works is required to enable the application to be fully compliant with paragraph 3.20 of the Policy Statement.

In order to ensure the works comply with the Policy Statement, conditions as outlined in paragraph 3.22 are considered necessary. Condition 1 is proposed to secure the provision of a suitable scheme of archaeological mitigation for the works

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.

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

7. Conditions

1. No work requiring scheduled monument consent shall take place within the scheduled area (indicated on the plan supplied with the scheduled monument consent application), until the applicant has secured the initiation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigations (WSI) or project design and has had this WSI approved in writing by Historic Environment Scotland. This scheme of works shall be fully implemented during the course of the approved development.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological information is recovered and recorded to a satisfactory standard.

8. Approval

Case officer	Deirdre Cameron	Date	23 January 2017
Approved by	Iona Murray	Date	24 January 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- 2016-39-(9)-001 Alterations to Path: location plan and specification
- Assessment of archaeological sensitivity - Holyrood Abbey, Abbey Crossing: Bench installation