



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018717		
Scheduled Monument	St Drostan's, Old Aberdour Kirk and burial ground		
Index no	SM6155	Grid ref	NJ 88400 64400
Date application validated	18 January 2017		
Summary of proposed works	Erection of War Grave Commemoration		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the erection of a War Grave Commemoration be **granted without conditions**.

2. Background

The monument consists of the remains of St Drostan's, the old parish kirk of Aberdour (Index No. 6155) which dates from the 16th century and the surrounding burial ground. The building incorporates earlier fabric and is likely to be the last of a series of churches occupying the same site. The original chapel is thought to have been founded by St Drostan around AD 590.

The scheduled area includes the remains of the church and the extent of the old burial ground. It is an irregular hexagon in shape and has maximum dimensions of 60m north to northeast and 56m east to west. All modern burial lairs still in use and the boundary wall are excluded from the scheduling.

The monument is of national importance as an ecclesiastical site which is mentioned in the 12th century and has possibly been in use for the practice and dissemination of Christianity from the 6th century. The present structure provides valuable above ground evidence for the later stages of architectural development of an ecclesiastical building of 15th century date which may overlie a series of earlier structures and is likely to incorporate masonry from its immediate predecessor. The monument has the potential through both standing and buried archaeology to clarify the ground plan and the constructional history of this ecclesiastical site.



It is the installation of a commemorative granite headstone for Engineman AP Gibson, Royal Naval Reserve (d.1916) at lair 529 within the old grave yard of the kirk which this application relates to. It has been submitted by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). The application is accompanied by a plan of a standard CWGS headstone. 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

- Excavation of ground within the grave plot for foundations.
- Insertion of prefabricated concrete base for the grave slab in excavated area.
- Insertion of a standard CWGC granite headstone into the concrete base with the foundations refilled with topsoil up to turf-level.

The foundation for the headstone would require ground within lair 529 to be excavated up to 325mm in depth with a width of 1000mm. The bottom of the excavated area will be filled with Type 1 aggregate up to a depth of 100mm. An approved prefabricated concrete base made by the CWGC measuring approximately 200mm in height and approximately 1000mm in width will be inserted into the excavated area on top of the aggregate. A CWGC standard granite headstone will then be inserted into the prefabricated concrete foundation. The concrete foundation would then be buried within the excavated area using the topsoil for the infill to bring it up to turf level.

The works are to commemorate Engineman AP Gibson RNV, who lies within an unmarked grave recently identified by the Ministry of Defence. The works will be undertaken by professional CWGC construction staff.

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.

b) Assessment

The proposed works involve the erection of a War Grave Commemoration. This is intended to commemorate Engineman AP Gibson. The physical impact of the proposed works would relate to the excavation of the foundations, the insertion of aggregate, the insertion of the precast concrete foundation, the insertion of the grave slab and the backfilling of the excavation with topsoil.

As the works will be undertaken within the topsoil, up to a maximum depth of 325mm within an area of ground previously disturbed during the construction of the burial lair, it is considered unlikely that the works would disturb culturally significant archaeological deposits relating to the construction and use of the church.

The introduction of a CWGC standard granite headstone into a cemetery which includes modern burials would not alter the character of the monument. Therefore the works are not considered to raise issues of national significance. The works proposed would affect a relatively small proportion of the scheduled monument, approximately <1%. They are therefore not assessed as extensive.

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 proposed works, comprising the erection of the CWGC headstone for Engineman AP Gibson at plot 529, are the minimum necessary to conserve what is culturally

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significant in this scheduled monument and so are compliant with paragraph 3.16 of the policy statement.

6. Recommended decision

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

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	Sam Fox	Date	15 February 2017
Approved by	Iona Murray	Date	15 February 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Plans of CWGC standard headstone and proposed foundations.