

RESPONSE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE
FREAGAIRT BHO SHEIRBHEIS AN LEASACHAIDH AGUS A' BHUN-STRUCTAIR

1. Reference No.

15/03725/PREAPP

2. Case Officer and Contact Details

Laura Stewart
Area Planning and Building Standards Office, Drummie, Golspie, KW10 6TA
01408 635372
laura.stewart2@highland.gov.uk

3. Site Address/Location

An Dun N Broch, Clachtoll, Lochinver,

4. Site Description

The site is located on the coast to the west of the settlement Clachtoll overlooking Bay of Stoer. The site currently comprises the remains of a broch which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The integrity of the site appears to be at risk – stones are loose and the remains are entirely accessible for walking over.

5. Site Visit

Was a site visit required?

Yes ☒ No ☐

6. Proposed Development

Erection of metal viewing platform

You are advised that the following consent(s) will be required for the proposed development:

Planning Permission	☒	Listed Building Consent	☐
Conservation Area Consent	☐	Advertisement Consent	☐
Prior Notification/Approval	☐	Other: Scheduled Monument Consent	☒

7. Planning History

No recent planning history on site.

8. Planning Policy

Highland-wide Local Development Plan (Adopted 2012)

Policy 28 - Sustainable Design Policy 29 - Design Quality & Place-making Policy 43 - Tourism Policy 57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage Policy 61 - Landscape Policy 64 - Flood Risk
<u>Sutherland Local Plan</u> (Adopted 2010)(as continued in force) No relevant site specific policies, refer to HwLDP NB. This local plan is relevant only insofar as it continues in force post-adoption of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. More information at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/90/made
<u>Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan</u> (Main Issues Stage)(2014) No relevant site specific policies, refer to HwLDP
<u>Highland Council Supplementary Guidance</u> Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013) Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013) Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012) Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
<u>Scottish Planning Policy and Guidance</u> Scottish Planning Policy (The Scottish Government, June 2014) Historic Scotland – Scheduled Monuments – A Guide for Owners, Occupiers and Managers
Further Information
Copies of our local plans and supplementary guidance documents can be found at: http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/183/development_plans Additional Development Advice Notes on other issues (e.g. Gaelic signage, replacement windows, badger policy notes) can be found at: http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/284/other_planning_guidance Copies of the Scottish Government's national planning policies and guidance can be found at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/planning

9. Principle of Development, Siting and Design

This proposal is to site a staircase/viewing platform on the Scheduled Monument Clachtoll Broch. A number of Design Options were worked up – with Option 7 being the preferred. This is considered to be the most appropriate as it is the least visually intrusive.

Policy of relevance to this proposal include Policy 28 – Sustainable Design which outlines a number of criteria against which all planning applications are assessed. Of particular relevance to this proposal is demonstration of sensitive siting and high quality design which is in keeping with local character and historic and natural environment and in making use of appropriate materials.

Policy 57 – Natural Built and Cultural Heritage states that for features of national importance developments are allowed where it can be shown that it will not compromise the amenity and heritage resource. Developments should take account of the historic environment and be of a design and quality which enhances the historic environment.

The Highland Historic Environment Strategy Supplementary Guidance Strategic Aim 16 states that scheduled monuments - and their setting - within Highland are protected from harmful developments which may affect their national importance. All developments which include works to a scheduled monument have to be referred to Scottish Ministers and Scheduled Monument Consent obtained. It is indicated that the applicant has been in contact with Historic Scotland previously which is encouraging. Historic Scotland have now been replaced by Historic Environment Scotland – they will be consulted on any formal planning application and where they object to an application, or impose conditions which the Planning Authority does not propose to attach to any permission - it will have to be referred to the Scottish Ministers.

Siting and Design

A number of design solutions have been worked up with regard to the finalised design. It appears that the least visually intrusive design is the preferred option which is encouraged.

The proposed viewing platform, stairs and stilts are to be stainless steel – this is to reduce the need for continual maintenance as it is highly unlikely to rust – this is particularly important given the exposed nature of the site. In terms of the colour it is likely that this will blend into the background against the sky reducing how visually prominent the new platform will be when viewed from the surrounding area. It will also minimise the visual impact upon the remains of the broch, and is therefore less likely to detract from the structure as it is viewed at present.

The platform will be most visible from the north east and east of the site from the public road. Stairs will lead from the ground level/ floor of the broch up to the viewing platform which will overlook the Bay of Stoer.

The addition of the platform is likely to lessen the physical impact upon the monument. This is due to walkers/visitors climbing over what remains of the walls.

Guidance on siting and design quality can be found at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/213/supplementary_guidance
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/AandP/AandPdgn>

10. Transportation and Access

There are no formal access arrangements included as part of this Pre Application and current access arrangements will be appropriate, that is by people out walking and exploring the area. The Access Officer had no comments to make regarding the application.

It is unclear whether people will drive to the platform and where they will park. This should be assessed/indicated in any Supporting Design Statement submitted with the application.

More information on access and parking standards (incl. small housing developments) can be found at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport/roads>

The Council encourages applicants at pre-application stage to engage with the local Disability Access Panel to consider accessibility improvements for physically disabled and sensory impaired people. The Highland Council have published a [Planning Protocol for Effective Engagement with Access Panels](#), which you should take into consideration.

11. Drainage and Water

Not aware of any considerations.

Contact Scottish Water for guidance on connections to the public water/drainage network: 0845 601 8855

You can find more information on SUDS at: <http://www.ciria.com/suds>

You can view SEPA's small-scale developments guidance here: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/planning.aspx>

You can view SEPA's flood risk map here: http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flood_risk_maps.aspx

12. Historic Environment

As above this is a Scheduled Monument which is of national importance. Scheduled Monument Consent should be applied for. It appears that the applicant/agent has already been in contact with Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland) and received some positive comments regarding the proposal.

A Construction Method statement should be submitted which outlines specifically how the development is to be constructed. This is to ensure that new works are sensitive to, and, do not further deteriorate the broch.

The Highland Historic Environment Record (HER) contains detailed information about listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeological sites in the Highland area:

<http://her.highland.gov.uk>

General advice on development affecting historic designations can be found at:

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/heritage.htm>

13. Natural Environment

The site is located within the Assynt-Coigach National Scenic Area. It is considered that the proposal is unlikely to detrimentally impact upon the integrity of the NSA. It is considered that the siting of a viewing platform will allow greater access to and appreciation of the landscape within the NSA.

More information on Scotland's protected species and areas can be found at:

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species>

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas>

The Scottish Government's woodland strategy and associated policies can be found here:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/woodlandremoval>

The Council's guidance on tree/woodland issues can be found here:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1225/countryside_farming_and_wildlife/63/trees_and_forestry/

14. Other Considerations

The agent contacted Building Standards to confirm whether a Building Warrant was required for the platform (July 2014) an assessment at that time was made and decided that a building warrant would not be required – the applicant is encouraged to contact the Building Standards Officer to confirm that this is still the case. Details below.

15. Gaelic Signage

In line with the Council's on-going commitment to promote the increased use of Gaelic in developments within the Highlands, you are encouraged to consider the use of bilingual signs - both internal and external - as part of your proposal. Our Gaelic Translation Officers are able to provide additional advice and help with translations, if required.

For further information and guidance, please contact the Council's Gaelic Translation Officer on (01463) 703679 or visit <http://www.gaidhealtachd.gov.uk>

To download a copy of the Council's 'Gaelic Signage for Private Developments' advice note, please visit:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/284/other_planning_guidance

For details on grant funding for bilingual signage, please contact Comunn na Gàidhlig on (01463) 724287 or visit www.cnag.org.uk

16. Consultees for any future Application

The following will likely be consulted on any planning application submitted. You may wish to contact consultees for advice prior to the submission of an application. Contact details are provided in the appendix of this document. Please note that on occasion it may be necessary to involve consultees who are not listed below as an application progresses.

Internal Consultees (The Highland Council)

Historic Environment Team

External Consultees (Government Bodies, Agencies etc.)

Historic Environment Scotland

17. Additional Information Required for any future Application

Based on the information provided, you are advised to submit the following additional information with any future application for formal permission. If you choose not to follow our advice and do not submit one or more of the documents, then you should provide a clear justification for doing so.

Archaeology Assessment/Site Investigations

Conservation Statement
Design Statement
Construction Method Statement

18. Conclusions

The chosen option is considered to have the least visual impact in terms of the landscape and wider area. It is also the least likely to detract from the broch as viewed around Clachtoll at present.

The materials are considered appropriate as it is likely that they will blend into the sea/sky behind it. In addition stainless steel is likely to be the most appropriate material given the exposed nature of the site which is on the coast.

Given that the condition of the monument is being compromised by visitors climbing on it, it is considered that the formation of a viewing platform is likely to go some way towards protecting what remains of the structure. Subject to obtaining support and Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic Environment Scotland, it is likely that a formal planning application would receive Officer support.

Case Officer:	Laura Stewart
Designation:	Graduate Planner
Date:	07.10.2015

Making a Formal Application

Should you wish to submit a formal application in due course, you can do so online or by downloading forms and guidance notes from: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/eplanning>

Application forms and guidance notes are also available from your local planning office.

Disclaimer

This advice is based on the information submitted and is given without prejudice to the future consideration of and decision on any application received by The Highland Council.

Pre-application case files are not publicly available but can be the subject of Freedom of Information requests.