

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201504242		
Scheduled Monument	Antonine Wall, Millhall Burn to River Avon		
Index no	M9728	Grid Ref	NS939792 293900.0000 679200.0000
Date of Application	07 October 2015	Application Received	07 October 2015
Summary of proposed works	Installation of a stone memorial bench at high point of woods with views out over Forth Estuary		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval of the application without conditions.

2. Background

The application site lies on top of a ridge high ground, 50m above sea level, aligned east-west. There are long views north across the Forth Estuary. The site of the proposed bench is on the line of a former field dyke and remnants of an old hedgerow, lying within an area of grassland. Polmont Woods lie 100m to the west, and a pumping station associated with a reservoir lies 15m to the east.

The Antonine Wall follows the top of the high ground, extending east-west. The proposed bench location lies just north of the probable line of the rampart, close to the south edge of the ditch. The rampart is not visible above the ground at this point, but the ditch is visible as a shallow depression about 12m wide.

Pre-application discussions were held between the applicant and Historic Scotland's Heritage Management Officer on site in February 2015.

3. Proposals

Installation of a stone bench. The bench would require excavation to a depth of 150mm to accommodate a concrete slab foundation. The bench would be installed on the foundation, on two vertical stone supports. Paving stones would be laid in front of the bench and turfs and soils removed from the footprint of the foundation would be relaid to blend the works into the surrounding grass area.

4. Representations received

No representations have been received.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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

The works are subject to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011) (SHEP).

SHEP explains that under the above act, scheduled monument consent is required for any works that would demolish, destroy, damage, remove, repair, alter or add to the monument or to carry out any flooding or tipping on the monument.

SHEP sets out the relevant considerations to be taken into account when assessing applications for change at scheduled monuments:

3.14. Scottish Ministers include a monument 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 SHEP, 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

It is proposed to locate the bench on the line of a former dyke and hedge, marked by occasional stones and intermittent hedge trees. No tree felling is included in this application. Because the proposed foundation for the bench is very shallow (150mm) and would be located in an area of previous disturbance, no impact on archaeological remains associated with the Antonine Wall is anticipated.

The shallow foundations of the proposed bench, its location on a former hedgeline, and the proximity of a pumping station about 15m to the east mean that installation of the bench should have a negligible effect on the cultural significance of the monument (SHEP 3.18). The proposed bench would be positioned overlooking the shallow depression marking the Antonine Wall ditch and it should facilitate public appreciation of the monument (SHEP 3.19). The shallow foundations of the proposed bench mean that it should be easily reversible. It would be possible to remove the bench in future and turf over its site without any impact on the fabric of the monument (SHEP 3.20).

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

N/A

d) Conclusion

The proposal should have a negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument and should facilitate its public appreciation.

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.

7. Conditions

N/A

8. Approval

Officer	Richard Heewood	Date	29/10/2015
Approved by	John Raven	Date	02/11/2015

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Location Plan (A4)
 Memorial Bench Location (A2), ref PW_MB 001
 Bench Details (A3), ref PW_MB 002