

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201504117		
Scheduled Monument	Bunavoneadar, whaling station, Harris		
Index no	M5362	Grid Ref	NB131039 113100.0000 903900.0000
Date of Application	2 October 2015	Application Received	2 October 2015
Summary of proposed works	Clearance of existing blocked drains and debris.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval for the clearance of existing blocked drains and debris at the site.

2. Background

This is the best preserved example in Scotland of a whaling shore station. The monument which was scheduled in 1992, dates from about 1900 and was abandoned at around 1939. It is located on the seashore and adjacent land at the head of Loch Bun Abhainn-eadar.

HS has been involved since at least 1994 with other interested parties in trying to get a consolidation and visitor attraction scheme together. This has stalled for various reasons, including the lack of funding. A project design report was commissioned in 2002 and our District Architect produced an advisory report in 2004. A Conservation and Management Plan was produced by The North Harris Trust in 2007.

The North Harris Trust have been involved in recent discussions with HES about how to take these proposals forward. These are based on the 2007 conservation and management plan. The most urgent works are the reinstatement of the sea wall and ground surfaces at the base of the boiler house chimney stack and HES and NHT are currently trying to get quotes for this work. This SMC application represents the other key aim which is to bring the existing drainage back into working order. It also includes the removal of debris at the site.

3. Proposals

The proposals are the clearance of existing blocked drains and debris at the site.

4. Representations received

None

5. Report

a. Policy considerations

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

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011)

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.

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.

b. Assessment

The proposed works involve the clearing of existing drains on site in the locations shown on the site plan (Fig 2). The site is presently very boggy and the standing water is helping to encourage plant growth. Sheep presently graze the land and while this helps in keeping this vegetation growth down, our architects' report of 2004 identified the clearance of the drainage channels as being an important aim.

The proposed works will help to secure the long-term protection of the monument. Furthermore, the potential impact on the fabric of the monument is minimal because the proposal is to clear out existing drains; no new excavation to create drains is proposed. The application is therefore in line with section 3.14 of the SHEP: i.e. the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument. This will be undertaken under archaeological supervision to ensure any archaeological remains uncovered are appropriately dealt with, in line with Section 3.22 of the SHEP.

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

None

d. Conclusion

The proposed works will benefit the long term preservation of the site and require a minimum level of intervention. They are therefore justified against national policy and the consent is conditioned so that any unexpected archaeological discoveries are adequately recorded and treated in any post-excavation work.

6. Recommended decision

Subject to compliance with the scheduled of conditions, the proposed works are considered to be acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material conditions.

7. Conditions

1. Two weeks before any works begin on site, the applicant shall provide a written timetable of works to Historic Environment Scotland and the local authority archaeologist. Any changes to that timetable shall also be notified to both bodies.

Reason: to enable a representative of Historic Environment Scotland to have the opportunity to visit the site and monitor the works in progress, and to inform the local authority archaeological service of the proposed works.

2. The applicant will undertake the works under appropriate archaeological supervision to be agreed in writing by Historic Environment Scotland at least two weeks prior to the works commencing.

Reason: to ensure that the works are monitored and so that any unexpected archaeological discoveries made are correctly identified

3. Should any unexpected archaeological deposits which were not anticipated in the project design be discovered, the applicant shall not disturb them without the prior written consultation and prior written agreement from Historic Environment Scotland.

Reason: to ensure that any unexpected archaeological discoveries made during excavation are preserved, where appropriate, or adequately recorded and treated in any post-excavation work.

4. Two weeks after completion of the works, the applicant will provide photographs of the works area, prior to, during and after the works, to Historic Environment Scotland.

Reason: To ensure that a record of works to the monument is maintained.

8. Approval

Officer	Nicola Hall	Date	28/10/2015
Approved by	John Raven	Date	02/11/15

Annex A – list of supporting documents

1. Location and SAM Boundary (Fig 1)
2. Site Plan Showing Drainage Channels (Fig 2)