

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201505456		
Scheduled Monument	Arnol, blackhouses no. 39 and no. 42 and associated croft houses		
Index no	M90022	Grid Ref	NB310492 131000.0000 949200.0000
Date of Application	24 November 2015	Application Received	24 November 2015
Summary of proposed works	The repair of the rotted timber roof structure and consolidation of the south east byre wall of blackhouse no. 42.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval for the repair of the rotted timber roof structure and consolidation of the south east byre wall of blackhouse no. 42.

2. Background

The monument comprises a group of domestic buildings and ancillary enclosures. The buildings include two blackhouses, one roofed and one unroofed, and two stone-and-mortar-built croft houses. The proposed works are to the blackhouse No. 42 which was built around 1880.

As well as being scheduled, the monument is a Property in the Care of Scottish Ministers. During a site visit on May 2015, it became apparent that there were significant issues at this blackhouse due to water ingress affecting the roof and the south east byre wall. Following this, the applicant engaged in pre-application discussions regarding the proposals.

3. Proposals

In summary, the proposed works comprise the consolidation of the weakened south east byre wall, and the repair/replacement of any rotted timber slats, perkins or trusses that are revealed (see the detailed methodology and specification).

4. Representations received

No representations were received.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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

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.

3.20. 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.

b) Assessment

The proposals are needed to address significant water ingress issues at the monument and the potential impact is considered to be justified as it will help to ensure its long-term preservation.

The methodology accompanying the application includes a robust strategy for undertaking the proposed works. The first phase will be the replacement of the rotted elements of the timber roof structure, while the second phase of the works comprise the consolidation of the south section of the east wall where the internal packing that is essential for the water proofing and structural integrity of the wall has washed out.

While there will be an impact on the monument from the proposed works, this is minimal as the blackhouse was restored after being taken into care in 1962. The byre roof was rebuilt in 1990 for instance, and many of the timbers in the roof structure are replacements. However, given that there are still likely to be some historic timbers in the roof structure, the methodology supplied with the application specifies that these will be retained *in situ*. The proposed works to the wall are to a section which has previously been the focus of restoration, and only comprise the replacement of washed-out like for like blue clay. The works are necessary in order for the house to remain a functioning building.

Because the monument is operated as a visitor attraction, the proposed works will also have wider public benefits, including the addressing of any associated health and safety issues and enabling access to the site. In addition, while the issues appear to only be in one location, the proposed works provides an opportunity to inspect the whole structure.

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

There will not be any significant impacts on Protected Species and Places. The application includes a bat survey and this confirms no evidence of past or current use by bats at the blackhouse.

The monument is a Property in the Care of Scottish Ministers and is part of group of domestic buildings and ancillary enclosures which are operated by Historic Environment Scotland as a visitor attraction.

d) Conclusion

The proposed works are compliant with Section 3.16 of the SHEP in that they are the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument. As the works have been carefully considered in order to mitigate any

impacts, they are also equally compliant with Section 3.20 of SHEP. While this is not considered to be an extensive intervention as per Section 3.19 of the SHEP, the proposals will nevertheless have an additional public benefit

However, there are no proposals to provide photographs to Heritage Management, a related condition has therefore been recommended.

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.

I therefore recommend that consent is **granted, subject to the conditions detailed below.**

7. Conditions

1. Two weeks after completion of the works on site, the applicant will provide photographs of the work area, before, during and after the works, to Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage Management Directorate.

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

8. Approval

Officer	Nicola Hall	Date	16/12/2015
Approved by	John Raven	Date	18/12/2015

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Works location and scheduled area drawing

Methodology and specification document

Preliminary bat roost assessment survey report