Case information

Reference/Case ID	201506119

Scheduled Monument	Stanshielrig, homestead, enclosures, field systems & clearance cairns		
Index no	M4057	**Grid Ref**	305750 601900

Date of Application	22 December 2015	**Application Received**	22 December 2015
Summary of proposed works	Replacement of one electricity pole and one pole stay on an existing overhead power line.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted.

2. Background

The monument includes upstanding cairns, field-banks and settlement remains preserved in an area covering around 22 hectares on a low, rocky ridge on the southwest flank of Beattock Hill. The monument is of national importance because it is an impressive and rare example of a well-preserved later prehistoric landscape, which has the potential to contribute to our understanding of settlement and agriculture during this period.

The application for consent relates to the maintenance of an overhead power line that runs east to west across the north end of the scheduled area and near to a minor road that forms the northern boundary of the monument. A survey by RCAHMS (Eastern Dumfriesshire Survey 1997; Fig.58) indicates that the vicinity of the power line contains probable cultivation remains, namely clearance cairns and a short stretch of possible bank; settlement remains and enclosures are located further to the south.

3. Proposals

Consented works

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Replace one electricity pole and one pole stay at two separate locations along an existing power line.

Description of works
The existing pole will be lifted vertically by a mechanical excavator and a new pole erected in the same location; an area of excavation approximately 1.2m x 0.5m x 2.1m deep will be required. At another pole, the replacement of a stay will require the machine excavation of an area approximately 1.5m x 0.5m x 1.8m deep at the location of the existing stay. Excavations will be undertaken by a low pressure ground digger to minimise ground disturbance. On completion of the work the ground will be reinstated to its current form.

The works are planned for 19 January 2016 to coincide with a planned outage; they are expected to be completed on the same date.

An archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been produced that provides for:

- An archaeologist being on-site at the start of operations to advise the main contractor on the presence of any upstanding remains in the vicinity of the works. They will advise on the adoption of a working method that avoids damage to such remains and the marking out of any remains considered necessary (e.g. within 20m of working areas or routes of access).

- Archaeological advice to main contract staff on avoiding inadvertent damage to sub-surface remains through rutting.

- Archaeological monitoring of excavations with provision for recording, reporting and archiving.

4. Representations received

No representations have been received. The owner of the monument has indicated consent for the works by signed document.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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

AMAAA 1979, Part 1 Section 2:
control of works affecting an ancient monument.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011):

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3.4. 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. It is a criminal offence to carry out any of these works without consent.

3.6. The 1979 Act and the scheduled monument consent process also provide for the proper evaluation and investigation of scheduled monuments if damage or destruction is unavoidable.

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.

3.18. Scheduled monument consent applications must be considered in terms of the cultural significance of the monument and the impact that the proposals would have upon this cultural significance. The more important particular features of the monument are to its cultural significance, the greater will be the case against interventions which modify these features.

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 would involve small-scale excavations in the north of the scheduled area and in the vicinity of upstanding remains most likely to be related to later prehistoric cultivation. The aim is to maintain the operation of an existing power line by replacing one pole and one stay. The replacement pole and stay would be located in the same places as the existing pole and stay; hence it is likely that the excavations would occur within previously disturbed areas.

The works would be accompanied by archaeological mitigation that would avoid any inadvertent damage to upstanding or sub-surface remains in the surrounding monument. The excavations would be archaeologically monitored to ensure that any archaeological information revealed as a consequence of them would be adequately recorded, reported and archived. Following reinstatement, the visual impact on the monument should be negligible.

The purpose of the proposed works is to maintain the operation of an existing power line and they are the minimum necessary for that purpose. The proposed works are

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very unlikely to have an appreciable impact on the cultural significance of the monument. They appear to have been carefully considered and properly planned.

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

The application site does not lie in a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area. National Biodiversity Network GIS data sets indicate no evidence for Protected Species in the relevant 100m grid squares.

d) Conclusion

The proposals would involve small-scale excavations in locations that have been previously disturbed. They would be accompanied by archaeological mitigation that would avoid inadvertent damage to the surrounding monument. Archaeological monitoring would ensure that if any sub-surface archaeological remains are exposed during the excavations they would be dealt with in an appropriate manner. The ground would be reinstated to its current form following the works.

There should be negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument. This accords with SHEP para 3.18. The works are designed to maintain the operation of an existing power line. They can be regarded as the minimum level of intervention that is necessary to achieve that aim (SHEP 3.16). The works would be accompanied by an appropriate level of archaeological recording (SHEP 3.6). The proposal appears to be carefully considered and planned, according with SHEP 3.20.

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

Granted without conditions.

8. Approval

Officer	**Simon Stronach**	**Date**	**6/1/2016**
Approved by	**John Raven**	**Date**	6/1/16

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Annex A – list of supporting documents

Plan of pole locations

Stanshielrig – Homestead, enclosures, field systems & clearance cairns, Kirkpatrick-Juxta, Dumfries & Galloway: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

SPIE Owner & Occupier Polling Access Requirements/Information

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