

## Case information

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<b>Reference/Case ID</b>	201505658		
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Urquhart Castle		
<b>Index no</b>	M90309	<b>Grid Ref</b>	NH530286 253000.0000 828600.0000
<b>Date of Application</b>	3 December 2015	<b>Application Received</b>	3 December 2015
<b>Summary of proposed works</b>	Works to the west elevation of the Grant Tower to include the replacement of modern corroded steel beams, and the consolidation of masonry		

### 1. Summary recommendation

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This report recommends approval for works to the west elevation of the Grant Tower to include the replacement of modern corroded steel beams, and the consolidation of masonry.

### 2. Background

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The monument comprises the remains of a complex Medieval castle which are on a promontory on the shore of Loch Ness. It includes a well preserved 16th-century tower in its north end (the Grant Tower), the great hall and kitchens, a chapel, gatehouse, smithy, dovecot and other buildings and structures.

As well as being scheduled, the monument is a Property in the Care of Scottish Ministers. During the Annual Monument Audit of April 2015, it became apparent that there were significant issues at the Grant Tower. Following this, the applicant engaged in pre-application discussions regarding the proposals.

### 3. Proposals

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The proposals are to the west elevation of the Grant Tower. They comprise the replacement of two corroded steel beams in the second floor intra-mural chamber, the consolidation of masonry (above the chamber and in a lower level area) and the replacement of weather lead linings to wallhead water channels and spouts - as specified in the methodology accompanying the application.

### 4. Representations received

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No representations were received.

## **5. Report**

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### **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 issues at the Grant Tower, and the potential impact is considered to be justified as it will help to ensure its long-term preservation.

A robust methodology for the proposed works accompanies the application. The corroded stainless steel beams which are modern will be replaced like for like with stainless steel. This will require a small removal of mortar, but no dountaking of historic fabric. The consolidation to the masonry involves removing plant growth and using hand tools to repair the lime mortar. Any historic lime based mortar and traces of stone harl on stone faces will be retained.

Because the monument is operated as a visitor attraction, the proposed works will also have wider public benefits as they will address health and safety concerns and restore access to this part of the castle.

### **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.

The monument is a Property in the Care of Scottish Ministers which is 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 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 once the works have been completed.

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

## 6. Recommended decision

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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 (Heritage Management Directorate).

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

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## 8. Approval

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

### Annex A – list of supporting documents

Works location and scheduled area

Methodology and specification

Preliminary roost assessment survey report