

## Case information

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<b>Reference/Case ID</b>	201505773		
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Falkland Palace		
<b>Index no</b>	M854	<b>Grid Ref</b>	NO253074 325300.0000 707400.0000
<b>Date of Application</b>	08 December 2015	<b>Application Received</b>	08 December 2015
<b>Summary of proposed works</b>	Dendrochronological sampling of roof timbers in Falkland Palace Stables		

### 1. Summary recommendation

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This report recommends approval of the proposed works

### 2. Background

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Originally a 12<sup>th</sup> century hunting lodge, Falkland became a castle of the Macduffs before being acquired by the Crown in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1501 and 1541, James IV and James V undertook significant building works, transforming the site into a Renaissance palace in the style of their French allies. Occupation by Cromwell's forces in 1654 left the Palace severely damaged by fire and it was left as a ruin until the Marquis of Bute bought the site in 1887 and undertook the partial restoration of the buildings.

The cultural significance of the monument lies in its long history, the excellent preservation of many of its architectural features and its importance as a residence of the Stewart dynasty. Falkland is regarded as one of the most important examples of renaissance architecture in Scotland. Its significance is further enhanced by the outstanding early 20<sup>th</sup> century garden surrounding the Palace.

The National Trust for Scotland is undertaking an extensive programme of research and analysis at Falkland, of which this proposed sampling exercise is one of the initial elements. Geophysical survey and historic building recording have already been undertaken in some areas and further work is proposed over the coming years. Historic Environment Scotland is being kept informed of proposals and results.

### **3. Proposals**

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Consented works - Dendrochronological sampling of roof timbers in Falkland Palace Stables

The works comprise the removal of up to 12 samples from roof timbers in the Stables block at Falkland palace. The samples will be 10mm diameter cores obtained by drilling into the timbers. The length of the cores will be dependent on the nature of individual timbers but they will be of a sufficient size to obtain a good cross-section of tree rings from bark to heartwood to allow for dendrochronological dating. The exact locations of the core samples will be decided on site at the time of sampling.

Access to the timbers will be obtained using a self-supporting scissor lift.

The application does not contain information on the reporting of the results of the work.

### **4. Representations received**

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One representation was received.

### **5. Report**

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#### **a) Policy considerations**

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

#### Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2 - Control of works affecting an ancient monument.

#### The Scottish Historic Environment Policy

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.

3.15. Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly

modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

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.

3.19. Extensive intervention will only be allowed where it is clearly necessary to secure the longer-term preservation of the monument, or where it will clearly generate public benefits of national importance which outweigh the impact on the national cultural significance of the monument. Such public benefits could come from, for example, interventions which make public access to scheduled monuments easier, or assist public understanding, or will produce economic benefits once the works are completed.

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 works will result in the permanent removal of up to twelve 10mm core samples from the roof timbers of the Stables. No other impact on the monument should result from the works. The areas that will be affected by the sampling work are not otherwise at risk from natural decay or other threat.

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

None.

**d) Conclusion**

The proposed works will result in a minor loss of fabric from a small section of the monument which is not otherwise under threat. The information gained from the sampling exercise should enhance our knowledge and understanding of the history of the monument and actively inform its future management. I am content that the application provides sufficient information to show that the results sought through the proposed sampling process could not be obtained through other means. I am therefore content that the works represent a minimum level of intervention consistent with conserving the cultural significance of the monument, complying with SHEP 3.16.

The programme of works has been designed by and will be undertaken by an acknowledged authority in the field of dendrochronological dating. A report of the works will be submitted to NTS, HES and the local authority historic environment record. I am content therefore that the standard of works described in the application accords with SHEP 3.20.

I am content the application is sufficiently detailed and complete to allow consent to be granted without the need for additional conditions.

## 6. Recommended decision

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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

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None

## 8. Approval

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<b>Officer</b>	<b>Deirdre Cameron</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>28/01/2016</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>George Findlater</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>28/01/2016</b>

### Annex A – list of supporting documents

1. Falkland Royal Tennis Court and Stables: elevations
2. Falkland Royal Tennis Court and Stables: floor plan
3. Photograph of Stables roof structure
4. Falkland Royal Tennis Court and Stables: location plan
5. Extracts from NTS Project Outline for Falkland Palace Historic Building Survey
6. Falkland Palace dendrochronological assessment
7. E-mail of 28 January 2016 from Dr Shannon Fraser to Deirdre Cameron confirming details of reporting of results of works covered by the application.