

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201505830		
Scheduled Monument	Balvaird Castle		
Index no	M90027	Grid Ref	NO169115 316900.0000 711500.0000
Date of Application	09 December 2015	Application Received	09 December 2015
Summary of proposed works	Removal and replacement of 2 severely eroded stone armorial panels and sills. Consolidation of remaining panel and surrounds.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted.

2. Background

This monument comprises the remains of Balvaird Castle, is a 16th century towerhouse with ruinous ancillary ranges. It is set within open undulating pasture and is likely to have had gardens and orchards to the S and E. While the ancillary ranges are ruinous, the tower is still roofed and its partly gutted interior retains much of the timber and plasterwork which is generally missing from many ruinous towers.

Heritage Management have had pre-application discussions with Conservation Group with regard to these works and this application accords with the outcome of these discussions.

3. Proposals

Consented Works:

- Removal and replacement of two severely eroded stone armorial panels and sills
- Consolidation of the remaining panel and surrounds

4. Representations received

HES received a letter from the legal owners of the monument stating that they were happy that the proposed works should go ahead.

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. This is what you will have used to decide if SMC is required for the works described.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy

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.

3.16. 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.

3.17. As each monument will require treatment specific to its individual nature, characteristics, significance and needs, any proposed change to it must be fully and explicitly justified.

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.

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. Common requirements are:

- c. that where change is necessary, strategies should be adopted to mitigate its impact and limit intervention;

- d. that the management and execution of alteration, including remedial work, is sympathetic to the historic character;
- e. that appropriate skills and techniques, materials and construction techniques are specified where appropriate;
- f. that an appropriate level of record is made before, during and after any work and deposited in local and national archives, and, where appropriate, published;
- i. that the design, planning and execution of works on scheduled monuments are undertaken by people with appropriate professional and craft qualifications, skills and experience.

b) Assessment

A stone conservators report which was first produced in 2012 and updated in 2015 shows that there has been deterioration of the stone armorial panels in the three years since the original report. The panels have been subject to *in situ* consolidation, however, the report suggest that the past interventions have been unsuccessful and that the stones “are in such a poor conditions that no currently available treatment has the hope of being effective.” The report goes on to state that that retention of the panels *in situ* will lead to further deterioration of the stone and that the only way to conserve them long term is to remove them and carry out conservation work indoors. In addition it is suggested that the stone panels should be laser scanned to pick up detail that cannot be seen by the naked eye. Blank panels would be fitted in their place.

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

There are no other material considerations.

d) Conclusion

It is clear that this intervention should be viewed as works as set out in both Part 1 Section 2 of the AMAAA 1979 and under section 3.4 of SHEP.

I am content that removal and conservation can therefore be considered as the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument, and thus compliant with SHEP 3.16. The application contains sufficiently detailed information explaining both the reasoning behind the application and the methodology to be used to be considered to be consistent with SHEP 3.17, 3.20 and 3.22.

The proposed works will be of benefit to the long term preservation of the armorial panels at Balvaird Castle. Their removal will halt their deterioration and whilst the panels will no longer be visible they will be retained on site which will maintain the key link between the panels and the castle. The methodology for removal is such that the operation will not cause additional damage to the panels. Blanks are proposed as replacements which will give the impression of armorial panels.

I am content that the application contains sufficiently detailed methodologies and justification that a consent may be granted without the requirement for conditions.

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	Rory McDonald	Date	25/01/2016
Approved by	George Findlater	Date	28/01/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Site and Location Plan (ref SMC-01)

Proposed Works (ref SMC-02)

Survey of Entrance Panels – 2012

Balvaird Castle – Armorial Panels – updated report 2015