Case information

Case ID	300009896
File Reference	AMH/1706/2/1
Name of Site	Wildgoose Hill, fort 610m SW of Burnhead

Local Authority	Scottish Borders Council		
National Grid Reference	NT 8400 2525		
Designation No. (if any)	SM1706		
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument	**Current Category of Listing**	N/A
Case Type	Amendment		

Received/Start Date	24/09/2014
Decision Date	29/01/2016

1. Decision

The decision is to amend the existing entry in the Schedule of nationally important monuments.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1958; no subsequent amendment.

2.2 Development Proposals

N/A

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3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was visited on 24/09/2014.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The designation criteria are published in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), pp. 71-85. http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdf

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria was carried out on 01/07/2015 (see Annex A).

The monument was found to meet the criteria for scheduling.

3.3 Other considerations

The monument has been scheduled since 1958 and continues to meet the scheduling criteria.

Designation as a scheduled monument remains an appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument.

The existing legal documents are not adequate to support precise definition of the extent of the scheduled area.

There is a significant benefit in amending the existing scheduled monument designation. It will provide an updated legal document and map, allowing the monument to be defined accurately on the ground. It will also ensure that an adequate area is designated.

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria*
Wildgoose Hill, fort 610m SW of Burnhead

1. Description

The monument is the remains of a hillfort, dating probably to the Iron Age (between about 800 BC and AD 500). The fort ramparts are visible as low turf-covered banks and the ditches as shallow depressions. The monument lies 360m above sea level, on one of several summits on a long ridge that extends NNW from the Cheviot Hills towards Kirk Yetholm. There are very extensive views N towards the Tweed Valley.

The fort consists of an oval enclosure defined by a single continuous rampart, strengthened by an outer ditch and rampart to the NNW and SSE, and by an additional linear ditch that blocks the ridge to the NNW. The enclosed area measures 100m NNW-SSE by 53m transversely and at least two hut circles lie within the interior. Today the ramparts stand up to 0.7m high, and the outer ditch to the NNW measures about 80m long, 5m wide and 0.7m deep. Boulders noted in the outer edges of the ramparts in 1938 suggest they may have been curbed or revetted. There are three possible entrances to the fort, two on the SW side, one on the NE.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan, to include the remains described above and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The scheduling excludes the above-ground elements of a stone dyke and post-and-wire fences that cross the fort. The monument was first scheduled in 1958, but the documentation did not meet modern standards: the present amendment rectifies this.

2. Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (SHEP, 2011) pp71-73**

* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge. It will form the basis of any new or updated scheduled monument record.
** A monument may be found to meet the scheduling criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the Schedule. The purpose and implications of scheduling are issues that require to be taken into account when assessing monuments for scheduling. Scheduling may not be the only, or the most appropriate mechanism, to secure the future of all sites, even those that may otherwise meet the criteria.

Cultural significance

Characteristic	Assessment
Intrinsic	
Condition in which monument survives	• The defences survive as upstanding earthworks. The ramparts are visible as low, turf-covered banks, and the ditches as relatively shallow grassy depressions. Within the fort interior, there are traces of at least two hut circles, though evidence of quarrying has also been identified. • Overall the site survives in a good condition, though irregularities within the interior may indicate a degree of quarrying in the past.

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Archaeological, scientific, technological or other interest or research potential of the monument	• The fort's original form is clearly visible. There is good potential for the survival of further evidence of defences and gateways, as well as other important archaeological deposits and features relating to the construction and use of the site. • This fort is interesting for the way the single rampart has been augmented by outer defences where it traverses the crest of the ridge, and for the additional ditch that blocks the ridge downslope of the fort to the NNW. • Hut circles identified as low earthworks in 1967 suggest occupation of the interior of the fort and demonstrate that parts of the interior survive undisturbed. There is good potential for buried deposits alongside the earthworks that can reveal more information about the construction, form and use of buildings. There is good potential for the presence of artefacts and ecofacts, such as pottery, stone tools and charred plant remains or pollen that can enhance understanding of the daily lives of the inhabitants, their contacts and trade networks, the economic basis of the settlement and the contemporary environment. • Stones identified along the edges of the rampart represent possible evidence for a kerb or revetment. Buried remains should contain additional evidence for the construction of the ramparts, and the associated ditches may have accumulated artefacts and ecofacts within their fills.
Apparent developmental sequence of monument (either long or short may provide insights of importance)	• The monument dates probably to the Iron Age (between about 800 BC and AD 500), though sites such as this may have been established as early as the late Bronze Age, or may have remained in use into the early medieval period. • The additional defences across the ridgeline, and the ditch to the NNW, may represent a development sequence that saw the additional rampart augmented over time. • Scientific dating could allow us to develop a better understanding of the chronology of the site, including its date of origin, development sequence and abandonment.
Original or subsequent functions of the monument and its parts	• The site may have functioned as a defended settlement, housing several families or a small community and their livestock. However, there is as yet no evidence for how the fort was occupied: whether it was an occasional refuge or saw seasonal occupation, or had a specialist function within a pastoral economy.
Contextual	
Present rarity or representativeness of all or any part of the monument, assessed against knowledge of the archaeology of Scotland and of the region in which the monument occurs	• There are over 200 forts recorded in the Scottish Borders, most on hilltops or higher ground. However, this monument is important as an upstanding and relatively well-preserved example, with multiple banks and ditches on some sides. • We can expect that there were links between defended settlements, and this fort has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of the development of settlement and the nature of settlement patterns in the Scottish Borders during the Iron Age.
Relationship of the monument to other monuments of the same or related classes or period, or to features or	• There are numerous broadly contemporary monuments in the landscape surrounding the monument, including forts of different forms on Green Humbleton and Burnt Humbleton, 2.5km-3km to the NNW (SM 1694 and SM 4668

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monuments in the vicinity. (Particularly important for monuments forming part of a widespread but varied class)	respectively). There is the potential to study these sites together to better understand their functions and the significance of their placing in the landscape.
Relationship of the monument and its parts with its wider landscape and setting	• The fort occupies the S end of an elongated hilltop, set on a long ridge running out NNW from the Cheviot Hills. The site is prominent in the landscape and utilises the natural topography to enhance defence. • The fort has extensive views N over the Tweed Valley.
Associative	
Historical, cultural and social influences that have affected the form and fabric of the monument, and vice versa	• The form of hillforts was affected by cultural and social influences. Some are unlikely to have been purely practical and defensive in nature, and researchers suggest that the display of wealth and power may have been a function in some cases.
Aesthetic attributes of the monument	• The hill lies in a quiet, isolated location and the earthworks represent a tangible and evocative link with the past.
Significance in the national consciousness or to people who use or have used the monument, or descendants of such people	• Prehistoric hillforts have a place in the national consciousness.
Associations the monument has with historical, traditional or artistic characters or events	• N/A

Assessment of national importance

Criteria	Assessment
Its inherent capability or potential to make a significant addition to the understanding or appreciation of the past	The monument is of national importance because of its potential to add to our understanding of prehistoric settlement, society, economy and domestic life, particularly the design and development of defended settlement types in southern Scotland. In addition to the upstanding visible remains, there is good potential for the survival of important buried deposits and structures relating to the fort's construction and use. The multiple lines of defence suggest that the site may have been occupied and developed over an extended period of time. Overall the fort retains its field characteristics to a marked degree, with the banks and ditches clearly visible on approaching the fort along the ridge in either direction. The fort would have been a significant feature in the prehistoric landscape, especially if the ramparts were revetted with stone, and it remains an interesting and informative feature of the modern landscape. Our understanding of the distribution and character of later prehistoric settlements in the Scottish Borders would be diminished if this monument was to be lost or damaged.
Its retention of the structural, decorative or field characteristics of its kind to a marked degree	
Its contribution, or the contribution of its class, to today's landscape and/or the historic landscape	
The quality and extent of any documentation or association that adds to the understanding of the monument or its context	
The diminution of the potential of a particular class or classes of monument to contribute to an understanding of the past, should the monument be lost or damaged	
Its place in the national consciousness [a factor that	

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may be considered in support of other factors]	

References

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland: http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/canmore.html CANMORE ID 59305.

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