Case information

Case ID	300017372		
File Reference	AMH/2837/2/1		
Name of Site	Oxton, Roman fort 130m SW of Annfield		
Proposed name of site	Oxton, Roman fortlet and annexes 230m NNE of Braefoot Cottage		
Local Authority	Scottish Borders		
National Grid Reference	NT 491 546		
Designation No. (if any)	SM 2837		
Designation Type	Scheduled monument	**Current Category of Listing**	N/A
Case Type	Amendment		

Received/Start Date	15/10/2010
Decision Date	29/01/2016

1. Decision

Amend: Update to entry in the Schedule

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was originally scheduled on 29/10/1969.

No subsequent amendments to the scheduling have taken place.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

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3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The monument was originally assessed for amendment as part of the Large Roman Monuments project.

It was last visited on 15/10/2010.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The designation criteria are found 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 (see **Annex A**).

The monument was found to continue to meet the criteria.

3.3 Other considerations

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

The existing 1969 legal documents are not adequate to support definition of the extent of the scheduled area or capture the full potential of the monument.

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 and shown on modern mapping. It will also ensure that an adequate area is designated to encompass the remains of all the Roman camps/annexes visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs.

The amendment will also ensure that modern features are excluded from the legal documentation to allow for their maintenance.

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria*

SM 2837 Oxton, Roman fortlet and annexes 230m NNE of Braefoot Cottage

1. Description

The monument is the remains of a Roman fortlet and associated annexes, dating to the late first or second century AD. The archaeological remains survive as buried features visible on oblique aerial photographs. The monument is located on a low ridge in the Lammermuir Hills. The monument was first scheduled in 1969, but the documents did not meet modern standards: the present amendment rectifies this.

The visible cropmarks identify the whole fortlet and a series of four annexes. The fortlet itself is approximately square and comprises a substantial rampart and two ditches. There is a single entrance facing the SW. Two annexes on the NE side indicate a development sequence; both are demarcated by single ditches, one broad and one narrow. A smaller ditched annex is visible on the NW side within a narrow ditch. The fourth and by far the largest annex is attached to the SE side and encloses an area of approximately 2ha. This unusual annex is an irregular elongated shape, aligned NW-SE and around 225m in length. It is delineated by a 3m wide ditch, pierced by several entrances to the SE and NW. It is aligned with Dere Street, a major Roman supply route that runs alongside the SE side of this annex and the fortlet.

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 scheduled area specifically excludes the above-ground elements of the post-and-wire boundary fences enclosing the monument and the above-ground elements of all telegraph poles to allow for their maintenance.

2. Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (SHEP 2011, 71-73)**

* 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 monument survives as a series of features buried beneath the plough soil, which are visible as cropmarks on RCAHMS oblique aerial photographs. The cropmarks demonstrate the presence of a plough-truncated Roman fortlet with at least four annexes. • With the exception of the NE side of the SE annex, which

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	has suffered from ploughing, the footprint of the structures is complete.
Archaeological, scientific, technological or other interest or research potential of the monument	• The fortlet was discovered from the air in 1956 (St Joseph 1958). Re-examination of the aerial photographs together with further aerial survey (RCAHMS 1983) revealed the existence of previously unidentified annexes. • The proximity of Dere Street, which ran from Bo'ness to York, and of further Roman camps only some 250m to the WNW, and the differing sizes of the annexes on this site, give an important opportunity to expand our understanding of the use of Roman temporary camps, annexes and roadside fortlets, and to assess the volume of traffic using Dere Street during the Roman occupation of Oxton. • In some cases - as at Inveresk, Cramond and Carryden - small settlements developed around Roman forts, and the same may be true here. The archaeological record of these settlements can provide information about the nature of Roman interaction with the native population and the domestic roles of soldiers' families and camp followers. • High potential exists for the presence of important evidence relating to Roman military expeditions in the S of Scotland. This includes archaeological remains or deposits, such as organic remains and artefacts, which (by analogy with similar sites) would be found especially in the ditch fills and entrances. Further evidence is likely to occur in the interior, including latrine pits, rubbish pits, bread ovens and the remains of structures such as granaries and barracks. These could provide important evidence of the date of the fortlet and annexes, the development sequence and the daily lives of those who used the.
Apparent developmental sequence of monument (either long or short may provide insights of importance)	• The fortlet is undated, but is thought to have been constructed during the late 1st century AD. Some 2nd century AD pottery has been found on the site (Hanson 1980, 18). • Two further Roman camps are located at Oxton, only some 250m to the WNW, but it is not known if some of the camps/annexes pre-date the fortlet or vice-versa. • It has been suggested (Maxwell & Wilson 1987, 25-6; Jones 2011, 79) that the annexes, particularly the largest annex on the SE side, may reflect use of the site by a high volume of traffic and that it may have been a resting place for wagon-teams.
Original or subsequent functions of the monument and its parts	• This fortlet would have formed part of the wider defensive system of the Roman army in southern Scotland. • Its strategic location on Dere Street suggests the fortlet played an active role in defending this transport and supply route.
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	• The SE annex is unusually shaped and unusually large, with its outer ditches running at least 225m to the SE of the fortlet.
Relationship of the monument	• Oxton Roman camp (SM 4378) lies only some 250m to the

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to other monuments of the same or related classes or period, or to features or monuments in the vicinity. (Particularly important for monuments forming part of a widespread but varied class)	WNW (nearest point). • The Oxton fortlet is situated roughly half-way between the major Roman forts at Inveresk and Elginhaugh to its N, and Newstead to its S. It is likely that the fortlet was garrisoned by a detachment from one of these forts. If the SE annex does represent a wagon-park, the fortlet would have been a key stopping point in the supply lines between the aforementioned forts.
Relationship of the monument and its parts with its wider landscape and setting	• The monument is strategically located on a low ridge in the Lammermuir Hills, immediately adjacent to Dere Street in Roman times. • To the N, Dere Street then continues over Turf Law, Dun Law and Soutra Hill. This is the main reason for the interpretation of the large annex at Oxton as a resting area for wagons.
Associative	
Historical, cultural and social influences that have affected the form and fabric of the monument, and vice versa	• The layout of Roman forts follows a set pattern and they often have a so-called 'playing card' shape that is widely recognised. Here, however, the shape and sizes of both the fortlet and the annexes are somewhat unusual, especially the SE annex.
Aesthetic attributes of the monument	•
Significance in the national consciousness or to people who use or have used the monument, or descendants of such people	• The Roman occupation of southern Scotland has a place in the national consciousness. • This site is aligned with and closely associated with the famous Roman road, Dere Street.
Associations the monument has with historical, traditional or artistic characters or events	NA

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 significant potential to contribute to our understanding of Roman fortlets, camps and annexes, as well as Roman military logistics and supply networks. Spatial analysis of Roman forts and camps can inform our understanding of Roman military strategy, the impact of the Romans on the local Iron Age landscape and peoples, the methods of construction of Roman forts, and the daily lives of those who served in or served the Roman army. If this monument was to be lost or damaged, our understanding of the Roman occupation of southern Scotland and of Roman military structure and logistics would be greatly diminished.
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	

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contribute to an understanding of the past, should the monument be lost or damaged	
Its place in the national consciousness [a factor that 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 54576.

J K St Joseph 1958, 'Air reconnaissance in Roman Britain 1977-84', *J Roman Stud* 48, 88, 92.

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Maxwell, G S and Wilson, D R 1987, 'Air reconnaissance in Roman Britain 1977-84', *Britannia* 18, 25-6.

Jones R 2011, *Roman Camps in Scotland*, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.