

**Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979**

It is important that you read the accompanying guidance notes as incorrect completion will delay the processing of your application. You can complete and submit this form by email ([scheduledmonumentconsent@hes.scot](mailto:scheduledmonumentconsent@hes.scot)) or by post to Heritage Management Business Support, Historic Environment Scotland, Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH.

**1 Applicant name and address**

<b>Title</b>	Ms	<b>First Name</b>	Julia	<b>Surname</b>	Muir Watt
<b>Company / Organisation</b>	Whithorn Trust				
<b>Building No / Name</b>	45-7				
<b>Street</b>	George Street				
<b>Town / City</b>	Whithorn				
<b>County / Region</b>	Wigtownshire				
<b>Postcode</b>	DG8 8NS				

**2 Monument to which application applies**

<b>Index no</b>	12922	<b>Name</b>	Whithorn Priory		
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dumfries and Galloway	<b>Grid Ref</b>	NX 444403		
<b>Description of location of land</b>	Enclosed field, formerly wasteground, immediately adjacent to the former Hill excavations of the 1980's, with access off Bruce Street, Whithorn				

**3 Pre-application discussions**

<b>Have you undertaken pre-application discussions with Historic Environment Scotland? (If yes, please give details below)</b>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>

**4 Summary of proposed works (max 20 words)**

**A complete replica Iron Age roundhouse will be erected, based on roundhouses uncovered at Black Loch of Myrton in 2015.**

**5 Description of proposed works**

The Trust proposes to build a replica Iron Age roundhouse, of just over 13 metres in diameter; this will be floated on a concrete raft which will protect the archaeological layers underneath. The roundhouse is part of an archaeological experiment conducted in conjunction with AOC Archaeology, university archaeological departments, and accompanied by associated public engagement activities. The roundhouse will be thatched with reed and walls will be woven from wattle and daubed with clay. It will form a prominent part of the Whithorn Trust's visitor attraction. The works are being undertaken as part of a sustained programme to bring back live archaeology and

archaeological experiment to the Whithorn Trust, which in the last two years has survived financial crisis and embarked on a new development plan, which aims to foster public participation in archaeology. The experiment with this approach began in 2015, with a series of Iron Age activities on this area of ground, which has been cleared by Whithorn Trust volunteers; the activities accompanied the excavations at Black Loch and were designed to give maximum exposure to the dig and to the Trust's role as ambassador for archaeology in the area. The public engagement activities of 2015, including Iron Age planting and cookery, dry stone construction and archaeology workshops, proved that visitor numbers rose and media interest could be drawn to Whithorn through a programme of activities. The Whithorn Trust is seeking to reduce its dependency on public grants, which are already diminishing, by increasing footfall to the site, to its main exhibition and the Museum in Bruce Street.

The new project is a much higher profile project, which has already gained significant financial support from HLF and private funds, such as SSE. The new construction aims at a rejuvenation of the visitor offering at the Trust and in particular a redevelopment of the Whithorn Trust outdoor site, which has largely become irrelevant to the visitor experience. The Trust expects to attract new audiences, more school visits and family groups, as a result of its reconstruction project.

The decision has been taken to develop an Iron Age building, a style of building obliquely referred to in Bede's description of Candida Casa, which was built, he says, in a manner unfamiliar to the native Britons. The roundhouse will allow us to set a native context for the arrival of Christian practices and buildings, for which Whithorn is best known. There has of late been increasing research interest in the very earliest layers of Whithorn's foundation and the interface between Roman culture, native Celtic culture and Christian ideas and practices.

The site selected, once a market garden, was until recently an overgrown space, annexed to the main excavation site of the 1980's. It had been used for dumping of spoil from the Hill trenches and contains one large spoil heap and a small additional spoil heap. It is largely shielded from the main site of the early mediaeval excavations by the largest spoil heap and by a field dyke and is shielded from the back gardens of George Street on the east by mature trees, most of which are growing on the perimeter of the garden walls. Just adjacent to the proposed construction site, the trees are mostly growing on a raised bank which runs the length of the rear gardens, part of which once formed a rear access route for horses and carts. This means that the trees are rooted on a level significantly higher than the roundhouse, even despite its height.

The elevations show that the roundhouse will therefore be masked from the main - now grassed over - excavation site by the prominent spoil heap, which will assist in diminishing its scale, and will be lower than the mature trees on the east. The roundhouse is to be sited at the lowest end of the site, which slopes significantly down towards the raised bank, and therefore its height is once again visually least intrusive at this point. As it will be roofed in reed, the expectation is that, as a completely organic structure, it will mature and naturally darken in colour to blend with the background of trees and shrubs which are growing thickest in this area.

The old field dyke, which has an opening towards the eastern end, forms a natural division between the main early mediaeval site and this new prehistoric development, so that a clear distinction can be made between the Christian site and the roundhouse. Additional interpretation within the roundhouse and via a new app on portable devices will also inform the visitor about the change of era between the two areas of the site. The new interpretation will be installed as part of a celebration of the Year of Architecture, Innovation and Design, 2016, and the roundhouse will reach completion in time for the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017.

The design of the roundhouse has been planned so that the doorway and porch will be orientated towards the opening in the field dyke, thereby forming a natural focal point for the approach from Bruce Street.

The choice of building has been carefully considered in terms of the Trust's priorities for sustainability

in the future, and for its fostering of interest in archaeology, for its possibilities as a public engagement and training project. The site itself seems to represent by far the best choice, within the Whithorn Trust site. Other sites would either have intruded into the former excavation field, causing confusion over time periods and being visually dominant in the open grassy area, or would have been too close to the Priory nave itself; other sites further out into the fields are still within the Scheduled Monument area, so present no advantage over the current choice, and are too far from the Whithorn Trust visitor centre to be manageable and accessible.

**6 List of plans, drawings and other documents accompanying application (continue on separate sheet if necessary)**

No	Description	Reference	Document emailed	Document posted
1.	Roundhouse Drawing	089/01b	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Site sections as existing	089/03	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Site sections as proposed	089/04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Site plan	089/02	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Roundhouse elevations and design statement	089/05	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**7 Nature Conservation – Protected Places and Species**

Will the proposed works affect any of the following:

- | Yes                      | No                                  |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Site of Special Scientific Interest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Special Protection Areas            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Special Areas of Conservation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | European Protected Species          |

If Yes, please give details below

**8 Other information relevant to application**

The Trust has taken care that there will be no impact on the archaeological layers which lie beneath the site, by ensuring that the entire construction does not penetrate the ground; this objective has informed the entire project and explains why the roundhouse is not being built, as historically it would have been, by wooden posts dug deep into the earth. The whole building is to be constructed on top of a concrete raft in which the sockets for the timbers will be located; in turn the concrete raft will sit on a layer of imported soil. Some of this will be supplied from removal and relocation of the small spoil heap, which has already been examined and sifted by archaeologists. Other sterile material will be brought in to bring the base up to levels which are documented in the

attached plans. A breathable membrane will be inserted to differentiate between undisturbed ground and imported material.

The new structure will sit on a concrete raft, which has been designed to give a greater surface area than an alternative steel structure which were considered, and this will therefore ensure that pressure will be distributed evenly across the area, bridging any potentially soft spots. The project engineer, Andrew Morow, Finite Engineering, confirmed as follows when asked about potential for compaction of the layers beneath the structure :

*I can confirm that the structural design for the roundhouse would be such as to minimise the potential for any ground compaction. The building would be designed such that all of the loads would be evenly distributed so as to avoid any high point loads that may result in localised compaction. The structure would also be designed so that it spans across softer areas of the ground that would be more susceptible to ground compaction. The base of the structure would also rest directly onto the ground rather than the use of buried foundations.*

A detailed topographical survey, whose results are incorporated in the attached Sections, has been undertaken to ensure that original ground levels are recognised when removing the small spoil heap. The smallest size of mechanical excavator will be used to lift the spoil heap and redistribute in a confined area, coextensive with the roundhouse base, at the bottom of the slope.

It is not anticipated that any machinery heavier than a tractor and trailer will be used on site; in fact large machinery cannot in any case gain access owing to the height restrictions at The Pend, at the Bruce Street junction. Timber and materials will be brought in by tractor; this was already permitted in previous developments, such as the construction of dry stone beds on the site. The Trust would also ensure that the ground was dry and firm before delivery of materials or moving of the spoil heap, to minimise rutting of the ground surface. Much of the construction will be carried out experimentally by students, craftsmen and volunteers, so that the use of machinery is minimised. It is not anticipated that there will be any groundbreaking needed during the construction, but AOC Archaeology will be engaged throughout the project and can be called in to observe, should there be any need to monitor phases of the construction.

The external walls will be made of wattle and cladded with daub; the precise structure of the walls and internal divisions will be the subject of archaeological experimentation, with advice from the University of Edinburgh and AOC Archaeology. Some experts argue that the external walls may have consisted of a double row of stakes with turves or rammed earth in between. Internal divisions and panelled flooring will be woven of hazel rods by local craftsmen and volunteers, and covered with plant and leaf litter, as discovered at the Black Loch of Myrton roundhouse.

## 9 Declaration

I hereby apply for scheduled monument consent for the works described in this application and shown on the accompanying plans and drawings.

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true and accurate.

<b>Name</b>	Julia Muir Watt	<b>Date</b>	04/04/2016
<b>On behalf of</b>	The Whithorn Trust		
Where an application is being dealt with by an agent to whom correspondence should be sent, state the:-			
<b>Name of Agent</b>		<b>Tel No</b>	