

Case information

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| Reference/Case ID | 201507733 | | |
| Scheduled Monument | Inchcolm, Abbey, hog-backed stone, hermit's cell, WWI & WWII defences | | |
| Index no | M90166 | Grid Ref | NT189826 318900.0000 682600.0000 |
| Date of Application | 08 March 2016 | Application Received | 09 March 2016 |
| Summary of proposed works | Provision of wall-mounted display unit for Mass dial stone. | | |

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval of the application.

2. Background

Inchcolm Abbey is considered to be the best preserved group of monastic buildings in Scotland. While a 10th century hog-backed tombstone from the island points to a religious function in the earlier medieval period, the site appears to have become a formal ecclesiastical centre in the early 12th century with the establishment of an Augustinian priory. The priory became an abbey in 1235. After the Reformation, the strategic location of the island at the mouth of the Forth came to the fore, with military remains dating from the Napoleonic Wars, World War I and World War II.

The Mass Dial Stone featured in this application is a rare Scottish example of a sundial used to calculate the times of religious observances. It was part of a collection of carved masonry fragments from the site stored in the chapel vault and was not identified until a cataloguing exercise in 2009. It was subsequently removed from the island for conservation and is now ready to be returned for display.

3. Proposals

Consented Works: Installation of a wall mounted display unit for a Mass dial stone.

The works will result in the addition of a substantial carved stone and its display unit to the structure of the Visitor Centre at Inchcolm. The display unit will be fixed to the masonry wall using screw fixings inserted into masonry joints. Elements of the

internal wall covering of the visitor centre will be removed and replaced during the works. The exact location of the fixings cannot be determined until the masonry of the wall can be examined once the internal wall coverings have been removed.

4. Representations received

None.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979: Part 1 2 Control of works affecting scheduled monuments.

(1) If any person executes or causes or permits to be executed any works to which this section applies he shall be guilty of an offence unless the works are authorised under this Part of the Act.

(2) This section applies to any of the following works, that is to say –

- (a) any works resulting in the demolition or destruction of or any damage to a scheduled monument;
- (b) any works for the purpose of removing or repairing a scheduled monument or any part of it or of making any alterations or additions thereto;
- (c) any flooding or tipping operations on land in, on or under which there is a scheduled monument.

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)

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.

3.14. 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.

3.16. 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.

b) Assessment

The insertion of fixing screws into mortar joints in one wall of a post-medieval building will have a very small physical impact on the monument and a minimal impact on its cultural significance.

This contrasts with the significant beneficial impact which the return and safe display of the Mass Dial Stone will have on the cultural significance of the monument. Although relatively common on English ecclesiastical sites, mass dial stones are rare in Scotland. The return of this element of the monument to the site will enhance the understanding and appreciation of the site.

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

None.

d) Conclusion

These works represent additions and alterations to the monument under Part 1.2.2.b. of the Act and as such scheduled monument consent is required.

The works involve a very minor alteration to a small section of the wall of a post-monastic building. I consider this to represent a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument and to therefore accord with 3.16 of SHEP.

The Mass Dial Stone forms an unusual and distinct element of the cultural significance of the monument, and I consider its return to the site, and its display in a secure environment, to be consistent with conserving that cultural significance, again complying with SHEP 3.16.

I am content that the detailed description of the works provided in the application complies with SHEP 3.20. While the applicant is not able to detail the exact location

of the proposed fixing points due to the nature of the case, I am content that the procedures to be followed are acceptable and that further detail of the fixing points is not required for the purposes of the consent. I am therefore content that no conditions are necessary.

6. Recommended decision

I recommend consent is **granted**.

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

None.

8. Approval

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| Officer | Deirdre Cameron | Date | 28/04/2016 |
| Approved by | George Findlater | Date | 28/04/2016 |

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- 1) Location Plan – 360/166/269
- 2) Plans and Sections – 360/166/270
- 3) Display Details – 360/166/271