

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201600270		
Scheduled Monument	Bearsden Station, Roman bath-house 400m NE of		
Index no	M90334	Grid Ref	NS546720 254600.0000 672000.0000
Date of Application	13 April 2016	Application Received	13 April 2016
Summary of proposed works	Installation of new interpretation signage to replace existing weathered signage with the installation of one new board and lectern. Remove one existing signage pole.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval of the proposed works on provision and agreement of detail on the methodology for the removal of the existing sign pole and the installation of the new lectern and board. This methodology will require agreement from HES Heritage Management Directorate in writing ahead of the works commencing.

2. Background

The Bearsden Bathhouse is located within a Roman fort immediately south of the line of the Antonine Wall, which is also included in the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site (WHS). Much of the interior of the fort had been built over by the latter part of the nineteenth century. Parts of the fort and annexe were subsequently investigated as part of mitigation measures associated with residential development from 1973 - 1981. The excavation revealed detail of the internal structures of the fort and annexe and represents the only major post-War excavation of an Antonine Wall fort.

Within the fort's interior were found two stone granaries (horrea), and at least five timber barracks or storage buildings. There was no evidence for a commanding officer's house (praetorium). It is probable that the unit based here outposted men to Castlehill or Balmuildy. While it is uncertain which military unit garrisoned the fort, a building inscription records work here by the Twentieth Legion. The analysis of pottery has suggested that Bearsden was one of several Antonine Wall forts with recognisable African cooking practices, and it is possible that at least some of the

soldiers stationed here were either from north Africa or had been previously stationed there. Two other stone buildings were located within the north-east corner of the annexe, a bathhouse and a latrine. The bath-house was only partly constructed of stone, with a timber changing room (apodyterium), part-timber cold room (frigidarium) with a stone paved floor, and then fully stone cold plunge bath, warm rooms (tepidaria), hot room (caldarium) with a hot immersion bath, and a hot dry room or sauna (laconicum or sudatorium). Adjacent to this structure is the unfinished stone foundations of another room or building, part of an original, but never completed, design for the bath-house. The water from the bathhouse was drained to the south, where 10m away from the bath-house is a latrine block.

The latrines, in turn, drained out through the annexe's east rampart into the two ditches. Scientific analysis of sewage deposits within the outer ditch indicate that at least some of the soldiers suffered from roundworm and whipworm, and that the diet was primarily vegetarian: including barley and wheat, figs and raspberries, coriander and opium poppy seeds, celery, and bramble. Animal bones uncovered in excavations elsewhere at the site, however, indicate that there was at least some minimal consumption of meat.

The positions of the existing pole and new lectern and plinth are both in an area that was previously excavated by D. Breeze sometime between 1973 and 1981. A plan showing the excavation areas and structures within the fort was supplied with the application.

The most recent installation on the site was in 2009 for the World Heritage signage (AMH/90334/1/1). The response from HS to the PIC Clearance application in that case had stated that where the sign was proposed within the excavation area was considered as archaeologically sterile.

3. Proposals

The proposed works are as follows:

- Removal of existing pole and concrete pad for WHS sign.
- Replacement of two exterior entrance signs on wall either side of gate.
- Replacement of signage on existing cairn plinth.
- Installation of a new interpretation board and lectern.

The pole and concrete for the existing WHS sign within the monument area will be removed by hand excavation and in-filled with topsoil and returfed.

The two weathered exterior signs will be replaced on the non-historic wall flanking the entrance to the site. The left hand sign will be replaced by the WHS sign currently attached to a metal pole within the monument area. The right hand sign will be replaced with a new sign.

The signage on the existing non-historic cairn plinth within the monument area will be replaced with a new sign which will include reference to the WHS status of the monument.

The installation of the new board and lectern will involve the hand excavation of a new 400 mm deep, archaeological supervised excavation measuring 600 mm x 1000 mm on plan. On completion of any recording, the excavation will be in-filled by sand and cement up to ground level, with the insertion of two square-section poles to support the new information board. The new low-level lectern signage will provide new information on the latrine feature within the fort.

4. Representations received

No representations were received.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2 - Control of works affecting an ancient monument.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy 2011

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.

3.19. Extensive intervention will only be allowed where it is clearly necessary to secure the longer-term preservation of the monument, or where it will clearly generate public benefits of national importance which outweigh the impact on the national cultural significance of the monument. Such public benefits could come from, for example, interventions which make public access to scheduled monuments easier, or assist public understanding, or will produce economic benefits once the works are completed.

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:

- a. the use of appropriate assessment methodologies to determine the full impact of any proposed management, use or development;
- b. the avoidance of irreversible change particularly wherever its effects cannot be adequately assessed;
- c. that where change is necessary, strategies should be adopted to mitigate its impact and limit intervention
- 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;
- h. that any archaeological excavation or other intrusive investigation should be based upon a detailed research strategy, with adequate resources, using appropriately skilled and experienced archaeologists with a satisfactory record of the completion and publication of projects (see Note 3.10); and,
- 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

The proposed works will involve: (1) the removal of an existing metal signage pole; (2) the replacement of two existing signs on non-historic walls at the entrance to the site; (3) the replacement of an existing sign on a non-historic cairn within the site, and; (4) the installation of a new signage board and lectern; all within the site.

Given that the areas where works (1) and (4) are proposed were fully excavated by D. Breeze in 1973-1981 it is not likely that either the removal of the existing pole or the installation of the new board and lectern will have an adverse impact on any sub-surface archaeological remains. As a precaution it has been proposed that both of these works should be archaeologically monitored. This will permit any archaeological artefacts or deposits of Roman date, should they survive, to be assessed and recorded where necessary. The proposed new signage should not have any adverse impact on the cultural significance of the monument and will enhance public understanding with new information on the latrine feature.

Both the replacement of the signage on the exterior, non-historic walls (2) and the replacement of the signage on the existing stone-built, non-historic cairn (3), would have no adverse impact on the cultural significance of the monument or the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the WHS and would enhance public understanding. This is a WHS and should significant remains survive in the areas of proposed works, these would require preservation in situ with alternative proposals for signage to follow.

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

The works are within the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site. They are designed to avoid adverse impacts on the OUV of the WHS, specifically by avoiding adverse physical impacts or adversely affecting its setting. In addition, the works are intended to conserve the cultural significance of the WHS and promote public benefit.

d) Conclusion

The works are limited to areas of prior archaeological excavation and are aimed at enhancing the presentation of the monument to the public. Although the proposals are not the minimum intervention necessary, the works are in areas that have been fully excavated and which are therefore perceived to be archaeologically sterile. The works should cause negligible impact to the cultural significance of the monument. There is, therefore, no conflict with SHEP para. 3.16. It should be noted that they would bring public benefits in the form of increased understanding SHEP para. 3.19 and the proposals appear to be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned and therefore accord with SHEP para. 3.20.

As a precautionary measure all ground works will be archaeologically monitored for the survival of any artefacts or deposits that may be related to the monument. In the unlikely event that significant remains relating to the monument do survive, provision will be made to record and preserve the remains in situ. These issues are covered by the condition below.

6. Recommended decision

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, the works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

I recommend consent is **granted**, subject to the condition detailed below.

7. Conditions

1. No works shall take place on site until a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), developed by a suitably qualified archaeologist/archaeological company, who will undertake the works, has been submitted and agreed in writing by Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage Management Directorate. The WSI should contain details of how the works for the removal of the existing pole and the installation of the new board and lectern will be monitored, recorded and reported on. Provision should be made for preserving any unexpected archaeological deposits in situ.

Reason: to ensure that any impacts on underlying deposits are minimised and any deposits are adequately monitored and the works carried out to current best practice.

8. Approval

Officer	Warren Bailie	Date	29/04/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	03/05/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- 1) Drawing (A3): Antonine Wall, Bearsden, New Interpretation Installation – Location Plan & Details: 90334-150803-001
- 2) Bearsden Interpretation Plan (Prepared by HES Interpretation Team) – Doc 2
- 3) Bearsden SMC Plan.docx (Prepared by HES Interpretation Team) – Doc 3
- 4) Plan showing record of areas archeologically excavated in 1970's – 3.2.1 jpg