

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201507934		
Scheduled Monument	Wilsontown Ironworks		
Index no	M2654	Grid Ref	NS947549 295200.0000 655200.0000
Date of Application	17 March 2016	Application Received	17 March 2016
Summary of proposed works	Replacement of existing waymarkers and installation of additional waymarkers		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises the remains of Wilsontown Ironworks and ancillary outworks, limekilns, coal mines, tramways and workers' accommodation, surviving as upstanding and buried features. The monuments are situated in rough pasture which was mostly afforested until clearance from 2004 to 2010.

No pre-application discussions took place with the applicant. However, it has been known from regular contacts with FCS' interpretation specialist that the signage would need to be replaced in 2016 or 2017 due to its deteriorating condition.

SMC has previously been granted in 2004 for the existing waypoint markers, which were erected on areas where no visible remains were apparent. The felling works were given SMC on three occasions between 2003 and 2008, with each consent referring to different parts of the scheduled monument. More recently, SMC was granted in September 2015 (Case ID 201503547) for permanent fencing of stock enclosures. Again, the fenceposts were located in areas where no visible remains were directly affected.

3. Proposals

The proposed works are to remove the existing waymarkers and install 19 new waymarkers, each 1100mm high above ground level. 15 of these are replacements of existing waymarkers, and 4 are waymarkers in new locations. The posts are hand dug by 600mm into the ground and shored up with excavated material, and set in locations which would avoid visible archaeological remains.

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. This is what you will have used to decide if SMC is required for the works described.
- Part 1 Section 2 (3) – authorises works where Scottish Ministers or Historic Environment Scotland have granted consent (scheduled monument consent) for the execution of the works where the works are executed in accordance with the terms of the consent and of any conditions attached to the consent.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy

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.

3.18. 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.

b) Assessment

1. The impact of the proposed works

Out of a total of 19 markers within the SM, 4 are in locations which have no previous intervention, while the majority are straight replacements of existing markers. The 4 additional ones have been chosen to better guide visitors at junctions between paths which do not have existing markers, the lack of which has led to navigation issues.

The direct impact of the 15 replacement signs is minimal. Each existing waymarker will be cross-drilled and pulled out vertically, and the replacement heeled into the existing hole. The intended depth of penetration matches that of the existing signs, and the method of removal would absolutely minimise horizontal movement. This would avoid the need to make a new hole, if the existing signs were cut off at ground level.

The 4 new waymarkers would involve the insertion of new holes into the ground, each of which would be hand dug to 500mm by 500mm square, and up to 600mm in depth. Comparing the proposed locations of these with a hi-res version of the Lidar survey, it is apparent that while these are in close proximity to the ironstone pits (the large mounds around the bell-pits), they would not be located on any of these, or on any of the former rail lines that facilitated access when the site was in use.

Therefore, the only impact would be on buried remains that are not visible at site level. These remains potentially include industrial waste material spread away from the ironstone pits, and possibly also pre-industrial ground surfaces.

2. The impact on the cultural significance of the monument

The cultural significance of the monument is determined by the presence of the ironworks, limekilns, coal mines, tramways and workers' accommodation, as well as the other upstanding features visible on site. In terms of the remains affected, this would be limited to material that appears of lesser importance to this cultural significance. The replacement of existing waymarkers would have a very slight impact on this material, while the 4 new waymarkers would have a slight impact on this material. No archaeological mitigation is proposed for this impact. The potential loss of material such as ironstone extraction waste would not have an adverse impact on the cultural significance of the monument, as it does not make up a primary feature in that cultural significance.

3. Potential public benefit of the works

The replacement and new markers would further facilitate access by the public to an important industrial site in State care, and reinforce the direction of access to areas that are not subject to erosion (thus preventing erosion of sensitive remains adjacent to the pathways). This would have a positive benefit for the continued preservation and perceived heritage value of the monument.

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

None predicted.

d) Conclusion

The 15 replacement markers would have a perceptible but very slight impact on buried remains which are not primary to the cultural significance of the monument. The 4 new markers would have a slight impact on any buried remains present, but again these remains are not primary to the cultural significance of the monument. While archaeological mitigation would be possible, it is not appropriate in this case as any remains found would not be of primary cultural significance.

Therefore, the proposed works appear to be consistent with the principle of being the minimum necessary to conserve the cultural significance of the monument (as per SHEP 3.16, cited above). As the method of removal of the existing waymarkers would have a lesser degree of impact than other possible methods, the works can also be seen to be consistent with SHEP 3.18, as cited above.

There would also be a public benefit from the proposed works, and which would also help to ensure that erosion of sensitive nationally-important remains would be minimised through directing visitors away from traversing key parts of the monument. While SHEP 3.16 represents the key policy test in this assessment, the public benefit of the work can also be seen to be consistent with SHEP 3.19, as set out above.

No timescale is presently available for the proposed work. A condition directing notification to HES of a works timescale might be reasonable. However, the issue here is that inspection of the works would not elicit useful or relevant information to monitoring this consent, and the impact on the scheduled remains would be slight. Therefore, a monitoring/notification condition would not be necessary or relevant to the proposal, and thus not a reasonable imposition.

On that basis, it is recommended that no conditions are attached to a grant of consent.

6. Recommended decision

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 without conditions**.

7. Conditions

None proposed.

8. Approval

Officer	John Malcolm	Date	09/05/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	10/05/2016

Appendix 1

Method Statement
Section from FCS signs handbook
Map Showing Location of Waymakers
LIDAR Survey