Case information

Case ID	300016751
File Reference	AMH/519/2/1
Name of Site	Appnag Tulloch, broch 550m N of Forse House

Local Authority	Highland Council
National Grid Reference	ND 212 359
Designation No. (if any)	SM519
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	25/04/2015
Decision Date	10/05/2016

1. Decision

The monument was first scheduled in 1939 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the Schedule as **Appnag Tulloch, broch.**

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1939 and has not been amended since.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was considered for amendment as part of the 2015 Highland project and visited on 25/04/2015.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment of the cultural significance of the site has been carried out following the criteria set out in Scottish Historic Environment Policy (Annex 1 paras 3-6). Having assessed cultural significance, the site continues to meet the criteria for national importance as set out in Scottish Historic Environment Policy (Annex 1 para 10). Having considered the purpose and implications of designating, it has been concluded that scheduling is the most appropriate mechanism to protect the site. Please see Annex A of this document for further information of this assessment.

3.3 Other considerations

N/A

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

Appnag Tulloch, broch

1 Description

The monument is a broch, a complex stone-built substantial roundhouse, dating from the Iron Age (between 600BC and AD 400). The broch is visible as a substantial grass covered stony mound, with traces of surviving walling, an entrance and associated banks. The broch is located in an elevated position, on a natural ridge about 110m above sea level.

The broch mound measures about 18m in overall diameter, while the broch tower has an internal diameter of around 10.7m and stands to about 2.5m in height. An entrance with a lintel is visible on the west side of the mound, while exposed boulders indicate the presence of stonework. The broch is naturally defended by a steep cliff on the east and enclosed by a series of banks on the north, south and west. The broch mound lies in the southern part of the area enclosed by the banks, and scooped areas and depressions to the south and west of the broch mound suggest the presence of outbuildings. The remains of a later wall overlies the outer works to the north of the mound.

The scheduled area is irregular in 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, and adjoining land essential for the monument's support and preservation, as shown in red on the accompanying map.

2 **Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria** (Scottish Historic Environment Policy, 2011 pp71-73)

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

The monument is a broch, visible as a grass-covered stony mound with associated outer works. It is naturally defended by a steep cliff on the east and enclosed by a series of banks on the north, south and west. Visible features include stonework and an entrance with a lintel, while scooped areas and depressions to the south and west of the broch mound suggest the presence of outbuildings. Although some excavation was noted in 1910, the broch survives in good condition and has very high potential to support future archaeological research. By analogy with a number of excavated brochs there is potential for buried remains of intramural cells and stairs, scarcement ledges, internal stone partitions, hearths, water tanks and possibly a well. Additionally, the broch, outer-works and any associated structures are expected to contain deposits rich in occupation debris, artefacts and palaeoenvironmental evidence that can tell us about how people lived, their trade and exchange contacts,

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and their social status, as well as provide information about broch architecture and construction methods.

Brochs in Sutherland and Caithness are typically thought to date from the mid first millennium BC through to the early part of the first millennium AD, though there are few precise scientific dates and their dating has traditionally been based on typological studies of artefacts recovered from broch sites. The presence of outer-works and outbuildings at Appnag Tulloch indicates this site may have had a complex development sequence. Scientific study of the site would allow us to develop a better understanding of the chronology of the site, including its date of origin, state of completeness and any possible development sequence.

Broch towers are primarily seen as a specific specialised development of complex Atlantic roundhouses. They were large complex structures that could have accommodated either an extended family or a small community. While there would have been a social hierarchy within this community, the construction of these elaborate towers is often understood in terms of elite settlement. Other interpretations have stressed their likely role as fortified or defensive sites, possibly serving a community across a wider area. Brochs are complex structures likely to have had numerous purposes and a complex role in prehistoric society.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

Brochs are a widespread class of monument across northern Scotland with notable concentrations in Caithness, Sutherland, Orkney, Shetland, the Western Isles and the northwest Highlands. There are at least seven possible brochs within a 5km radius of the monument, including Usshilly Tulloch (Canmore ID 8636) about 600m southwest, Golsary (Canmore ID 7419) 1.7km north-northwest, Rhianrivach (Canmore ID 8630) 1.8km east-northeast and Smerral (Canmore ID 8158) 4km southwest. This monument is important as an upstanding and well-preserved example with associated outworks, located in close proximity to a number of other brochs. There may have been links between neighbouring brochs or they may indicate community catchments. Therefore this broch has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of prehistoric society and community. There is high potential for comparative study on a local and national scale to better understand the function of such monuments, their interrelationship and the significance of their placing within the landscape, in particular in relation to our understanding of Iron Age social hierarchy, changing settlement patterns and systems of inheritance.

There are also a number of other broadly contemporary monuments in the surrounding landscape, including the Wag of Forse (Canmore ID 8608) about 1km southwest and hut circles and a field system 1.1km southwest (Canmore ID 8659; 8611). There is potential to study these sites together to understand their functions within the local communities and possible chronological development in the area. The proximity of these monuments can give important insights into the nature of the Iron Age landscape and add to our understanding of settlement patterns, social organisation, land division and land-use.

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Many broch towers were deliberately sited to be focal points in the landscape, and Appnag Tulloch is such an example; it is sited in an elevated position on a north-south oriented natural ridge, which is protected by a steep cliff along one side.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

N/A

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

The field investigation concluded the site is in a stable condition and very well preserved. There are no immediate threats to the preservation of the monument. Designation as a scheduled monument therefore remains the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument, and ensure the recognition of its national importance.

4 Assessment of national importance

This monument is of national importance because it has an inherent potential to make a significant addition to our understanding of the past, in particular of Iron Age society in Caithness and the function, use and development of brochs. This is a well-preserved example of a broch with identifiable architectural features including an entrance. The broch adds to our understanding of settlement patterns and social structure during the Iron Age in Caithness and this potential is enhanced by the broadly contemporary monuments in the vicinity. The loss of the monument would significantly diminish our future ability to appreciate and understand the development, use and re-use of brochs, and the nature of Iron Age society, economy and social hierarchy in the north of Scotland.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland http://www.canmore.org.uk reference number CANMORE ID 8634 (accessed on 28/04/2016).

The Highland Council HER reference is MHG1842 (accessed on 28/04/2016).

MacKie, E. W. (2007) 'The Roundhouses, Brochs and Wheelhouses of Atlantic Scotland c. 700 BC - AD 500: architecture and material culture. Part 2 The Mainland and the Western Islands'. *BAR*, vol 444. Oxford.

RCAHMS (1911) *The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland. Second report and inventory of monuments and constructions in the county of Sutherland*. Edinburgh. Page(s): 59-60, No. 218.

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