

Case information

Case ID	300009802
File Reference	AMH/2994/2/1
Name of Site	Laigh Mains, homestead moat 300m W of
Local Authority	South Lanarkshire
National Grid Reference	NS 62784 56166
Designation No. (if any)	SM2994
Case Type	Amendment
Received/Start Date	15/05/2014
Decision Date	06/05/2016

1. Decision

The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is therefore to update the entry in the Schedule as **Laigh Mains, castle earthworks 125m North of Mains Castle**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1973. The documentation does not conform to current standards.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals affecting the monument.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was considered for amendment as part of the West 2014 rescheduling project. The site was visited on 15/05/2014.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria was carried out (see **Annex A**).

The monument was found to meet the criteria for scheduling.

The designation criteria are found in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), pp. 71-85. <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdf>

3.3 Other considerations

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

Laigh Mains, castle earthworks 125m North of Mains Castle

1 Description

The monument comprises the earthwork remains of a castle site likely to date to the 12th century AD. It is visible as an uneven mound surrounded by an intermittent double bank and ditch on its north, west and east sides. The monument is located on a gentle south-facing slope at around 180m above sea level and overlooks Mains Castle 125m to the south.

The approximate triangular form of the monument extends 90m north to south by 100m east to west. The interior platform is 65m north to south by 45m east to west. A break in the surrounding banks and built up ground in the ditches of the northeast corner indicate the likely position of the entrance. Archaeological surveys have indicated potential structures within the interior.

The area to be scheduled is polygonal on plan, to include the remains described above and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment are expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The scheduling specifically excludes the above-ground elements of transmission poles, post and wire fencing, gates and the modern surfaces of tracks, to allow for their maintenance. The monument was first scheduled in 1973, but the documentation did not meet current standards: the present rescheduling rectifies this.

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

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

The monument consists of the remains of a castle site likely to date to the 12th century. The site retains the evidence of the promontory that was altered to form a D-shaped mound surrounded by a double bank and ditch on which the timber defences and structures would have been built. Archaeological surveys have indicated the survival of buried features and possible phasing of the occupation of the site. The ditches are also likely to contain occupation debris and environmental remains. The castle is mentioned in a 12th-century documentary source, when it is recorded as the castle of Kilbride held by Roger de Valognes. However, the form of the enclosure and its double ditches is unusual and may suggest a potential pre-12th century origin to the earthworks. The site therefore has inherent potential to enhance our understanding of the defensive architecture of Scotland at a time when lowland

Scotland was undergoing a process of feudalisation with the settlement of Anglo-Norman families.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

This monument is part of a local group of broadly contemporary sites including two mottes 2km to the west southwest at Castle Hill at Rough Hill (CANMORE Refs: 44901 and 44902) and records suggest a third, unlocated, motte lies only 130m to the south. When seen in the context of medieval mottes this is one of 300 or so examples in Scotland (after Simpson and Webster 1985) and should be seen in the context of elite Anglo-Norman settlement in areas of Scotland during the 12th century. This and other castle sites of this date have the capacity to provide an insight into the feudalisation of this part of Scotland. Of particular interest is the potential to determine patterns of distribution, and duration and phases of use, as well as previous or subsequent functions and consequent changes in form. Such patterns can aid our understanding of large-scale social changes through time and geographical variation in social systems. To the south of the monument is Mains Castle, a later medieval tower which was a successor to the 12th-century castle. The close proximity of the two castle sites adds to our understanding of how manorial sites could develop over a number of centuries.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

Not applicable.

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

Although there are areas of localised impact (caused by tree roots, access tracks, fencing and quarrying) the monument survives in a good state of preservation. Scheduling continues to be seen as the most appropriate mechanism to secure the longer term future of this monument.

4 Assessment of national importance

The monument is of national importance because it has an inherent potential to make a significant addition to the understanding of the past, in particular the construction and function of medieval castles. It retains its field characteristics as a well-preserved example of an early castle site. Its twin ditch and bank arrangement and overall, triangular plan form is unusual, potentially indicating a pre-12th century origin, which adds to its significance. The associated documentary evidence also adds to our understanding of the monument, particularly how it and similar sites would have functioned as centres of lordship. This example can inform us about medieval settlement and the wider control of land in the southwest during the feudalisation of Scotland. The loss of this example would significantly diminish our

future ability to appreciate and understand settlement and land tenure in medieval Scotland.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 44915 (accessed 30/03/2016).

West of Scotland Archaeology Service. Unique historic environment record reference number: WOSAS PIN 9267.

Barrow, G W S, 1971, *Regesta Regum Scottorum, ii, The acts of William I, King of Scots 1165-1214*. Edinburgh

Brown, G and Coleman, R, 2001, *Gazetteer of moated sites in Strathclyde*. Circulated Typescript report. SUAT Ltd.

McNeil, P G B & MacQueen H L, 1996, *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Medievalists and the Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh.

Mitchell, M, 2006, *Laigh Mains Motte. Geophysical and topographical survey report*. Circulated typescript report. Glasgow University.
