Case information

Reference/Case ID	201508143

Scheduled Monument	Huntly Burn,earthworks		
Index no	M2528	**Grid Ref**	NT523323 352300.0000 632300.0000

Date of Application	29 March 2016	**Application Received**	30 March 2016
Summary of proposed works	Felling and extraction of standing trees.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval of the application.

2. Background

The monument is an earthwork enclosure defined by a single rampart which survives up to 1.5m high in places. This C-shaped rampart encloses an area approximately 75m NE-SW by 45m; the eastern side of the enclosure is formed by a steep slope leading down to one of the many tributaries of the Huntly Burn. There is no obvious sign of internal features and the exact nature of the enclosure is not clear although its general form and location imply a later prehistoric settlement or defensive site.

The area around the enclosure is planted with commercial conifer forestry and the application relates to harvesting work within the forest. A pre-application meeting was undertaken with the applicant on 3 March 2015 to discuss the extent of works and techniques to be used. The current application reflects these discussions.

3. Proposals

Consented Works: The works comprise the felling and removal of trees from within the scheduled area.

4. Representations received

No representations were received.

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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.

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.

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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 felling works represent alterations to the monument under part 1.2.1.b of the Act and as such scheduled monument consent is required.

The felling and removal of trees represents a small risk of contact damage to the upstanding elements of the monument, but the methods proposed minimise that risk. Trees on the northern and western sides of the monument can be extracted through normal felling methods working from outside the scheduled area. Due to the steepness of the cleuch on the eastern side of the monument, trees will be felled by hand and winched out. As felled trees are likely to fall or roll to the bottom of the valley and into the stream, the removal of whole trees by winching is preferable for safety reasons; cutting the felled timber into smaller sections before removal could expose workers to unnecessary risk if they have to work in or near water. No heavy machinery or vehicles will be used within the scheduled area.

The removal of trees from the scheduled area will benefit the monument both by removing the threat of direct damage from root penetration and by improving the visibility of the field characteristics of the site.

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

None

d) Conclusion

The works should have a negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument, while acting to preserve its long term survival. I am therefore content that the application complies with SHEP 3.16.

The felling scheme has been drawn up by a suitably qualified forester in consultation with HES, and has been designed to minimise the impact on the monument. I therefore consider the works comply with SHEP 3.20.

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.

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7. Conditions

None

8. Approval

Officer	**Deirdre Cameron**	**Date**	**10/05/2016**
Approved by	**George Findlater**	**Date**	11/05/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Ashkirtown, Burnfoot & Hareseat Forest Plan: Constraints and Opportunities map

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