



Case information

Reference/Case ID	201600893		
Scheduled Monument	Old Scatness, broch and settlement SE of the Cletts		
Index no	M3813	Grid Ref	HU389106 438900.0000 1110600.0000
Date of Application	19 May 2016	Application Received	19 May 2016
Summary of proposed works	To carry out minor repairs (pinnings) and to insert tell tales to monitor stability		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends consent is granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises the remains of an extensive and very well-preserved Iron Age settlement. It includes a broch, built around 400-200 BC, and surrounding domestic buildings.

The monument is nationally important because it is an exceptionally preserved settlement with considerable potential to contribute to our knowledge of the later prehistoric period. This importance is enhanced because of its proximity to other settlements of similar date and because of associated information generated by major archaeological excavations.

The applicant is the Shetland Amenity Trust, who own and manage the site. The site is opened to visitors over the summer and in order for this to continue there is a need to balance conservation with safe access. Many of the structures on the site are of drystone construction and their exposure through excavations has led to issues with their long-term stability.

The proposal is for works aimed at ensuring the stability and conservation of the monument while allowing safe access for visitors to continue. The proposed works have been described in a Condition Survey supplied with the application and comprise minor repairs and the insertion of tell tales. The application does not include long term actions set out in the Condition Survey, extensive rebuilding or consolidation. The application is for consent that would last for 5 years. The proposals have been discussed in advance with HMD, who have also been given an opportunity to comment on a draft of the Condition Survey.

3. Proposals

The proposed works are primarily those stated to be of immediate, short or medium priority in the Condition Survey, but excluding some works that may have involved more extensive intervention (as clarified by email from Shetland Amenity Trust 6 June 2016), the proposed works are as follows:

- Replacement of fallen pinnings
- Replacement of some fallen stones and realignment of some others
- Introduction of tell tales
- Removal, replacement and additions of turf capping and geotextiles
- Temporary removal of sandbags in order to assess structural stability

Where it is proposed to remove sandbags this would be undertaken only to rapidly photograph and assess stability. It would be undertaken only where it would not cause issues with regard to structural stability; sandbags would be replaced without any intervention.

The works are designed as a minimal intervention to conserve the monument in the short to medium term by addressing recent erosion, providing further protection from erosion and creating means of monitoring stability. It also includes for removal of sandbags to allow for assessment of stability in several areas as set out in the Condition Survey.

It is envisaged that the results of structural assessments would inform plans for more extensive interventions in the future. Any such would be set out in a detailed scheme of work and subject to a subsequent SMC application.

The replacement of pinnings/small stone and tell tales would be inspected weekly during the visitor season and before out of season visits. Where tell tales are noted to have moved a dry stone advisor would be consulted. The monument is in the stewardship of Shetland Amenity Trust and the work would be managed by them.

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.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement, June 2016

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. A monument is included 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 this policy statement, 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.

3.18. 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.

3.20. 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 objective of the proposed works is, as far as possible, to conserve the monument. The works would consist of relatively minor repairs and additions designed to combat the effects of weather-related erosion. The repairs would be like-for-like replacement of stones and pinnings. Some turf and geotextile may be removed, replaced or added to where it may be beneficial.

Tell tales would be used to provide information on stability in order to inform future conservation works.

Some sandbags would be removed to allow an assessment of structural stability. These would be replaced immediately and there would be no further intervention without further discussions with HES.

The proposed works have been set out in detail in a Conservation Plan.

It can be concluded that the works have been carefully planned. They would involve repairs that are 'like for like' in nature and so should not adversely affect the visual appearance of the monument. They should be beneficial for the monument's conservation and may result in some improvements to its appearance.

The proposed works also include for the temporary removal of sandbags to allow an assessment of the stability of some parts of the structures. This would not lead to extensive interventions. It would allow further stages of work to be appropriately designed. Hence this should also contribute to the conservation of the monument while not adversely affecting it.

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

The application sites do not lie close to any SSSI, SPA or SAC designations. There has been recorded evidence for Protected Species (otters) in the vicinity but this was located on the coast and the related 100m grid square does not extend over the scheduled monument.

d) Conclusion

The proposals would involve minor works aimed at repairing or preventing weather-related erosion of the monument. They would also allow a better informed assessment of its long term stability. They would have a beneficial effect on the preservation of the monument and would not adversely affect its cultural significance.

The proposed works should cause negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument, which accords with the policy statement, para 3.18. The proposals appear to be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned and should accord with the policy statement, para 3.20. The proposed works would conserve the cultural significance of the monuments so accord with the policy statement, paras 3.14 and 3.16.

6. Recommended decision

The works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of the policy statement for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

7. Conditions

Granted without conditions.

8. Approval

Officer	Simon Stronach	Date	06/06/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	06/06/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Shetland Amenity Trust Old Scatness Condition Survey May 2016 (including images)

Location and site plans

Emails from Shetland Amenity Trust; 11 March 2016 and 6 June 2016