



Case information

Reference/Case ID	201600636		
Scheduled Monument	Spynie Palace		
Index no	M90282	Grid Ref	NJ228658 322800.0000 865800.0000
Date of Application	06 May 2016	Application Received	06 May 2016
Summary of proposed works	Selective masonry consolidation of a small freestanding wall tusk		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for selective masonry consolidation of a small freestanding wall tusk at Spynie Palace be granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises the remains of the palace of the bishops of Moray at Spynie. The earliest surviving parts of the palace date to the 14th century, and include a first-floor chapel and entrance gateway on the S and what may have been a hall range with tall traceried windows on the W. These would have enclosed two sides of a roughly rectangular area, protected apparently by a rounded tower on the SW and defined on the N and E by the natural fall of the land down to the edge of Spynie Loch.

In the 15th century, a large rectangular tower replaced the earlier corner-tower and it is one of the largest tower-houses in Scotland, containing a first-floor hall below three floors of chambers and an additional attic storey. To the N of the tower, the earlier hall range was demolished and replaced by a service range. Around 1500, a great hall was built on the N side of the site, with bakehouse and kitchens to the W of it. At about the same time, the old S entry was replaced by a new gate on the E, and rectangular towers were added to the NW and SE corners.

The freestanding wall tusk that is the subject of this application lies to the courtyard side of the S side of the palace complex in the vicinity of the 14th century gate, and would have formed one of the gable or cross walls of a building that formed this southern boundary of the palace. The core of this wall is exposed, and the mortar is a mixture of surviving original mortar and later conservation mortars.

The monument is cared for by HES Conservation Directorate and is operated as a visitor attraction. The purpose of the work is to check the integrity of the pinnings, core stones, and mortar, and to undertake remedial repairs where required. This work is being undertaken to ensure that this part of the monument is safe for visitor access in its vicinity.

3. Proposals

Consented works – Selective masonry consolidation of a small freestanding wall tusk

The proposals comprise:

- Selective removal of cracked or failing mortar where this has been leading to issues with unstable masonry, and the subsequent replacement with a suitable lime mortar. All pinnings will be retained, and local matching stone is available should additional pinnings be required to support poorly located stones.

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:

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Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2 - Control of works affecting an ancient monument.

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.

Part 1 Section 2 (4) – allows consent to be granted with conditions.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016 (the policy statement)

3.14. A monument is included 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 this policy statement, which 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. (Annex 1 sets out guidance as to how cultural significance and national importance should be determined).

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.

3.22. Where consent for the range of works set out in paragraph 3.4 is granted, conditions are normally applied to ensure the works are undertaken in an appropriate manner. Common requirements are:

- f. that an appropriate level of record is made before, during and after any work and deposited in local and national archives, and, where appropriate, published;
- h. that any archaeological excavation or other intrusive investigation should be based upon a detailed research strategy, with adequate resources, using appropriately skilled and experienced archaeologists with a satisfactory record of the completion and publication of projects (see Note 3.10); and,
- i. that the design, planning and execution of works on scheduled monuments are undertaken by people with appropriate professional and craft qualifications, skills and experience.

b) Assessment

The works involve the selective removal of cracked or failing mortar where this has been leading to issues with unstable masonry, and the subsequent replacement with a suitable lime mortar.

The physical impact of these works on the monument and its cultural significance will be comparatively minor, but the benefits to the long term preservation of the

monument will be significant. The work will involve undertaking conservation works to the wall core to mitigate health and safety risks to the public and to maintain the structural integrity of the masonry and historic mortar. These works are those that go beyond the scope of routine maintenance works.

The repointing and pinning works are all considered sound conservation work as they aim to retain historic fabric in situ using techniques previously employed across this part of the monument, and in such a way that should stabilise any loose masonry whilst retaining original and previous conservation mortars. This work is reversible if required. The applicant has confirmed the mortar mix to be used, and this is considered suitable. All pinnings will be retained, and if additional stone is needed in order to reduce the amount of mortar required or to support poorly located stones then local matching stone is available.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see PP&S assessment.

d) Conclusion

The application should be viewed as works as set out in both Part 1 Section 2 of the AMAA Act 1979 and paragraph 3.4 of the policy statement

The application, comprising selective removal of cracked or failing mortar where this has been leading to issues with unstable masonry, is the minimum necessary to conserve what is culturally significant in this scheduled monument. The works are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that their impact on the cultural significance of the monument is minor, and as such the application is compliant with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The application meets paragraph 3.20 which demonstrates that the works are carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned.

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.

8. Approval

Officer	Oliver Lewis	Date	27/06/2016
Approved by	George Findlater	Date	1/07/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location drawing – 463/282/229
- Illustrated supporting paper
- Email from Mike Pendery to Oliver Lewis dated 01 June 2016 providing details of mortar mix and approach to works.