Scheduled Monument Consent:
Report on Handling

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201601924

Scheduled Monument	Fortrose Cathedral		
Index no	M90147	**Grid Ref**	NH727565 272700.0000 856500.0000

Date of Application	11 July 2016	**Application Received**	11 July 2016
Summary of proposed works	Repair of cresting stone to the Bishop's Tomb canopy at Fortrose Cathedral.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval for the repair of the cresting stone to the Bishop's Tomb canopy at Fortrose Cathedral.

2. Background

The monument

Comprising the remains of Fortrose Cathedral, seat of the diocese of Ross from the 13th Century until the Reformation together with its surrounding burial ground, the cathedral is one of Scotland's 13 medieval dioceses and displays architectural details of both early and late medieval date of the highest quality.

At the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, an aisle and quasi-transeptal chapel were added to the S side of the nave, work which is traditionally ascribed to the patronage of Euphemia Countess of Ross. The canopied Bishop's tomb where the proposed works are situated is located in the south aisle chapel, within an arcade that originally divided the south aisle and chapel from the nave of the cathedral.

Given that the tomb is associated with a significant figure in the history of the cathedral, the quality of the masonry is outstanding and the tomb is the only one which is contemporary with the construction of the building, this part of it of the monument is of high cultural significance.

Background to the current proposal

As well as being scheduled, the monument is a Property in the Care of Scottish Ministers and is operated as a visitor attraction. The applicant engaged in pre-application discussions with Heritage Management prior to the submission of the SMC while on-site in May 2016 and the proposal accords with that meeting.

The proposed works form part of a comprehensive scheme to consolidate and repair the cathedral, and to update/improve interpretation. Recent works to the monument have included the replacement of highly weathered (and previously extensively mortar repaired) tracery stones in the West Gable Window. These works were have ensured their stability and therefore have helped to secure the long-term preservation of the monument.

3. Proposals

Consented works: Repair of cresting stone to the Bishop's Tomb canopy at Fortrose Cathedral.

The consented works are located in the canopied Bishop's tomb. They entail the replacement of carved stonework from the apex of the canopy which has become eroded due to natural weathering. Specifically, the finial and apex of the gable on the north elevation, parts of the stones that run along the ridge on top of the canopy. The conseted works comprise the following:

- all affected stones will be photographed before, during and after the proposed works, and this photographic record will be provided to Heritage Management. All original stones will be labelled and stored for future display.

- the eroded carved stone work associated with this feature of the monument will be removed by hand (i.e. the front elevation of the apex stone, the central stone damaged trefoil tip, all faces of the central stone, the rear elevation of the central stone damaged trefoil and the rear elevation of the damaged apex stone trefoil).

- the surfaces will be prepared for the introduction of the new stones

- the new stone (St Bees) will be fixed into place using natural hydraulic lime mortar (fennex), and in some instances by using bronze pins.

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 Monument and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)

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

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (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 (see Note 3.2). A consent under section 42 of the 1979 Act is also required to use a metal detector within a scheduled monument (see Note 3.3). It is a criminal offence to carry out any of these works without consent.

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, that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

3.15 Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

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.)

3.17 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.

3.19 Extensive intervention will only be allowed where it is clearly necessary to secure the longer-term preservation of the monument, or where it will clearly generate public benefits of national importance which outweigh the impact on the national cultural significance of the monument. Such public benefits could come from, for example, interventions which make public access to scheduled monuments easier, or assist public understanding, or will produce economic benefits once the works are completed.

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

This section of the monument has been subject to natural weathering, meaning that the condition of the stones is poor. In addition, the tomb is of high cultural significance because it is associated with a significant figure in the history of the cathedral, the quality of the masonry is outstanding and the tomb is the only one which is contemporary with the construction of the building.

Although original historic fabric will be removed from the monument, all of the eroded stones will be recorded, labelled and stored for display. In addition, a photographic records of the works will be carried out and a copy of this will be sent to Heritage Management.

The stonework will be removed carefully by hand, and new stonework put into place using lime mortar and in some places bronze pins.

As the proposed new St Bees stone is similar in type and colour to the original masonry, it will be sympathetic the character of the monument and will restore the original profile of the canopy.

The works represents new elements based on good evidence of stone profile and deisgn. The proposed works, therefore, will not adversely impact on its cultural significance. In addition, I consider the documents included with the application demonstrate that the works have been carefully considered and will use sympathetic and approved techniques.

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

None

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 works, comprising stone replacement are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that they will have minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument and hence they are consistent with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The application meets paragraph 3.20 because it has demonstrated that the works have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned.

Consequently, no conditions are considered necessary.

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 therefore recommend consent is **granted without conditions.**

7. Conditions

None.

8. Approval

Officer	**Nicola Hall**	**Date**	**02/09/2016**
Approved by	**George Findlater**	**Date**	02/09/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Drawing: scheduled area plan
- Drawing: Location plan, photos and construction details
- Document: methodology and specification