



Case information

Reference/Case ID	201602910		
Scheduled Monument	Antonine Wall and fortlet, 430m E to 850m WSW of Kinneil House		
Index no	M2210	Grid Ref	NS986806 298600.0000 680600.0000
Date of Application	29 August 2016	Application Received	29 August 2016
Summary of proposed works	Archaeological investigation (three hand-dug test trenches)		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval is granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises a stretch of the Antonine Wall, approximately 1.2km in length, surviving as a combination of buried deposits and visible earthworks.

This stretch of the Wall includes sections within the grounds of Kinneil House and the consolidated remains of Kinneil fortlet. West of the fortlet, the projected line of the Wall runs through woodland to a field boundary. It is the most westerly section of the monument, to the immediate north of this field boundary, that would be affected by the application.

The Antonine Wall was constructed in the mid-2nd century AD. It comprised five elements, from north to south: an outer mound (or counterscarp bank), a substantial ditch, an open area of ground (or berm), a turf or earth rampart on a stone base and a road to the rear known as the Military Way.

In the vicinity of the proposed works the precise line of the Wall is uncertain. The scheduled area comprises the top and upper slopes of a steep natural incline and the Wall's relationship to this incline is not fully understood. The application has been accompanied by a desk based synopsis of our current understanding (RA16026 Kinneil Woods, Bo'ness – Timeline). There has been some archaeological testing of the line of the Wall in 1915 and 1961, and it has been postulated that the ditch may have run mid-way down the incline in the vicinity of a pronounced step. However, it is also possible that the Wall was located to the south of the top of the incline and within the adjacent agricultural field.

The field boundary that forms the southern extent of the scheduled area at the top of the incline is a post and wire fence beside an older bank with mature trees. The bank may be the remnants of a post-medieval boundary, or alternatively, may be an upstanding remnant of the Wall's rampart or counter-scarp bank.

To the immediate north of the field boundary is an access path into the Kinneil House estate, now a public park. It is proposed to make improvements to this access to facilitate public access, in particular by cycles. In order to design any such improvements without adversely affecting the Wall it has been proposed to undertake archaeological testing to establish whether remains of the Antonine Wall survive above or below ground in the vicinity of the path.

The scheduling specifically excludes the above-ground elements of post-and-wire fences, stone and drystone walls and the upper 30cm of paths, to allow for their maintenance.

The application is accompanied by the synopsis noted above and a Risk Assessment Method Statement, which forms a Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological testing. The application has been discussed in detail with Heritage Management and the methodology amended as a result.

3. Proposals

It is proposed to archaeologically hand excavate three test pits (two 1m broad and 4m long, one 1m broad and 3m long). They would be positioned at specific parts of the proposed footpath access improvement works where there is potential for impacts on remains associated with the Antonine Wall.

The test pits would be excavated until either naturally occurring subsoil or Roman period deposits were identified or the excavation could no longer be safely advanced due to depth.

The process is designed to establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits and characterise them, while avoiding adverse impacts on known Roman strata in keeping with the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) Supplementary Planning Guidance.

On completion of excavation and recording the test pits would be backfilled, compacted and then the former turf or gravel footpath surface reinstated.

Should there be a requirement to expand any test pit to either (i) cope with ground conditions or (ii) to ensure sufficient archaeological information is recovered to meet the aims of the testing, this would be agreed in advance with Historic Environment Scotland.

A suitable and detailed methodology for archaeological excavation, sampling, recording and reporting has been set out in the Method Statement. The work would

be undertaken to professional standards and in accordance with Guidance and Codes of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. Lead members of staff have been identified and have a suitable level of archaeological experience.

The timetable for the works would be confirmed to Historic Environment Scotland with 2 weeks' notice of works within the Scheduled Monument. Reports would be supplied within 4 weeks of the completion of site work.

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 (the policy statement)

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 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).

3.17. 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.

3.20. 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 proposed works are designed to archaeologically test part of a Scheduled Monument where the nature and location of remains associated with the Antonine Wall are poorly understood. This information would be used to inform the design of access improvements into a public park.

The work would be the minimum necessary required to provide the necessary information and would be halted when, or if, Roman remains are confirmed to be present. Any exposed deposits would be cleaned and recorded but not excavated. Therefore the test pits should result in the cultural significance of the monument being preserved and better understood.

The work would allow for the design of improvements to public access while avoiding any adverse impacts on the monument. The work has been formulated in consultation with Heritage Management and a detailed methodology for it has been submitted. The work would be done to an appropriate professional standard.

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

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

The works are within the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site. They are consistent with the WHS Supplementary Planning Guidance.

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 proposed works, comprising archaeological hand excavation, are being done in such a way that they will have no impact on Roman archaeological deposits or the cultural significance of the monument. Consequently, there is no conflict with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The objectives of the proposed work have been clearly set out, they are intended to allow design of improved public access while avoiding adverse impacts on the monument. Hence the works have been justified in accordance with paragraph 3.17 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.

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 recommend consent is **granted without conditions**.

7. Conditions

None.

8. Approval

Officer	Simon Stronach	Date	02/09/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	20/09/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Risk Assessment Method Statement (RA16026_RAMs)
- Timeline providing archaeological and historical background of location (RA16026_Timeline)