



## Case information

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<b>Case ID</b>	300016771
<b>File Reference</b>	AMH/1678/2/1
<b>Name of Site</b>	Edderton Old Churchyard, cross slab

<b>Local Authority</b>	Highland
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NH 71911 84204
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	SM 1678
<b>Case Type</b>	Amendment

<b>Received/Start Date</b>	29/04/2015
<b>Decision Date</b>	19/09/2016

## 1. Decision

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The monument was first scheduled in 1925 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the Schedule as **Edderton cross slab, 25m SSW of Edderton Free Church**.

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

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### 2.1 Designation Background

Edderton cross slab was first designated on 18/05/1925. There have been no amendments to the designation since this date.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

## 3. Assessment

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### 3.1 Assessment information

The site was visited on 04/05/2015.

### 3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

*The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.*

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

An assessment of the cultural significance of the site has been carried out following the criteria set out in Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016 (Annex 1 paras 3-6). Having assessed cultural significance, the site was found to continue to meet the criteria for national importance as set out in Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016 (Annex 1 para 10). Having considered the purpose and implications of designating, it has been concluded that scheduling is the most appropriate mechanism to protect the site. Please see Annex A of this document for further information of this assessment.

### 3.3 Other considerations

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# **ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria**

## **Edderton cross slab, 25m SSW of Edderton Free Church**

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### **1 Description**

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The monument comprises a single Pictish cross slab, or symbol stone, dating to the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century AD. Formed of red sandstone, the stone measures around 2.3m high, 0.65m wide, and 0.2m thick, tapering slightly towards the top. There is an incised Celtic-style cross on the west face, and a Latin-style cross above a horseman in relief, with two further incised horsemen below, on the east face. The monument is located within the kirkyard of the former Edderton Free Church, at around 15m above sea level.

The scheduled area is circular on plan, measuring 2m in diameter and centred on the stone, to include the remains described above and an area around them to allow for the support and preservation of the monument, as shown in red on the accompanying map.

### **2 Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria** (Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016 pp 48-50)

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#### **2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics**

The monument is a single Pictish symbol stone surviving within the kirkyard of the former Edderton Free Church. Until relatively recently, the lower section of the stone was below ground level, obscuring almost all of the lower two horsemen, however conservation work in 2004 has raised the stone to display the complete extent.

Pictish symbol stones predominantly date to the 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Examples displaying Christian symbols, such as Edderton, generally date to the latter half of this period, following the widespread conversion of the Picts to Christianity. The Edderton stone is unusually simplistic in its overall design, with no evidence of any additional symbols or decoration beyond the two crosses and three horsemen. The stone has the potential to add to our understanding of the designs, carving techniques and the function of Pictish symbol stones, and their place within wider Pictish society.

#### **2.2 Contextual Characteristics**

Pictish symbol stones are found across much of Scotland, although they are predominantly located in the Pictish heartlands in the northeast of the country. Around 350 stones or recovered fragments of stones are currently known, with a reasonable concentration of stones found along the coastal strip of this part of the northeast Highlands. Although we cannot be certain if the stone stands in its precise original location, it is highly unlikely to have moved a great distance and we do know

that it has not been moved in recent times, other than for the resetting of the stone at its existing location in 2004.

The unusually simple design of the Edderton carving is in stark contrast to the majority of Pictish stones, and yet also appears to have been a conscious choice by the carver, rather than a reflection of their ability. The reason for this decision is currently unclear but comparison of the Edderton stone to other examples may provide more information.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a classification system based around the use of symbols categorised all Pictish symbol stones into one of three classes, which although now seen as an outdated interpretation of the works, is still sometimes used to distinguish between groups. Edderton is identified within this system as a Class III stone, which is now considered the most problematic of the three classes to define.

Cross slabs are often found located near to churches, reflecting their status as early Christian monuments, and in the case of Edderton there is evidence for an early Christian chapel on the same site as the former Free Church in the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries, and potentially contemporary with the cross slab. The Edderton cross slab is also located around 1400m SE of Clach Chairidh, another Pictish symbol stone, in this case a Class I type bearing the incised symbol of a salmon above a double disc and Z-rod symbol.

### 2.3 Associative Characteristics

There are no known associative characteristics which significantly contribute to the site's cultural significance

## 3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

The monument survives in good condition. Scheduling is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the future of this monument, which survives within a modern graveyard. The scheduling excludes the above ground elements of the surrounding gravestones, to allow for their maintenance. The scheduling also excludes any active burial lairs within the area, to allow for their use.

## 4 Assessment of national importance

The monument is of national importance because it has an inherent potential to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the past, in particular Pictish society and early medieval Scotland. The monument is one of a large collection of Pictish symbol stones within Scotland, yet despite the number of these monuments, there remain many unanswered questions regarding their original form and function. The simple design style of this particular stone, along with the absence of any additional common Pictish symbols, differs from many of the other examples known, and the reasons for this differentiation is unclear. The loss of the monument would significantly diminish our future ability to attempt to answer these questions, and our

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ability to appreciate and understand the Picts and their impact and influence in Early Medieval Scotland.

## 5 References

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Historic Environment Scotland <https://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 14743  
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Highland HER reference MHG8649

Henderson and Henderson, G and I, (2004). The Art of the Picts: Sculpture and Metalwork in Early Medieval Scotland. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd. Page(s): 73.

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