Case information

Case ID	300017527
File Reference	AMH/102/2/1
Name of Site	Beattock Summit, Roman signal station 900m SE of Little Clyde

Local Authority	South Lanarkshire
National Grid Reference	NS 99897 15307
Designation No. (if any)	SM102
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	24/06/2015
Decision Date	19/09/2016

1. Decision

The monument was first scheduled in 1975 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The proposed decision is to update the entry in the Schedule as **Nap Hill, Roman signal station 900m SE of Little Clyde.**

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1975.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals affecting this monument.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was considered for amendment following a request by HES colleagues. It was visited on 20 January 2016.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria has been carried out (see Annex A).

The monument was found to meet the criteria for scheduling.

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/

3.3 Other considerations

N/A

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria
Nap Hill, Roman signal station 900m SE of Little Clyde.

1 Description

The monument comprises the remains of a Roman watch tower or signal station dating to the first or second century AD. The monument survives as the low earthwork remains of a circular ditch, buried tower structure and associated remains. The monument is located in a forestry clearing on a west facing slope between Nap Hill and Ring Hill at approximately 330m above sea level.

The ditch encloses a circular area approximately 7m in diameter and it has a break in its southwest quadrant where an entrance may have been located. Archaeological excavation has confirmed the nature of the ditch as well as the presence of a four-posted square structure in the centre of the interior which is likely to have been a watch tower.

The scheduled area is circular on plan, 22m in diameter, to include the remains described above and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The monument was first scheduled in 1975, but the documentation does not meet current standards: the present amendment rectifies this.

2 Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.)

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

The overall structural footprint of the monument is intact – an interrupted circular ditch encloses an area within which the buried remains of a tower and evidence of its construction, use and abandonment survives. Although the monument has been subject to limited excavation, this has not had a significant impact on the archaeological potential of the site. Limited archaeological investigation has demonstrated that a v-shaped ditch and external bank enclosed a wooden structure supported by four timber uprights, interpreted as a timber watch tower. There remains good potential for the survival of archaeological deposits, including occupation and abandonment debris, artefacts and environmental remains such as charcoal and pollen within, beneath and around the surviving remains. The monument therefore has potential to help us understand more about the function of Roman watch towers or signal stations and the specific form of this example. The deliberate dismantling of the tower has been postulated and this can help us define a more detailed development sequence.

Although no datable finds were uncovered during excavation, the signal station at Knap Hill is likely associated with the Antonine occupation of Scotland (AD 139 – 165). Apart from its foundations, the design and layout of the tower is unknown, however, researchers suggest that its function relates to the nearby Redshaw Burn fortlet (scheduled monument reference SM1141; Canmore ID 48503) and the corresponding watch tower to its southeast (scheduled monument reference SM3331; Canmore ID 48494). Its significance must also be seen as a component of a wider network.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

There are approximately 40 recorded watch towers or signal stations in Scotland, most of which are located on the Gask Ridge in Perthshire and along the Antonine Wall between the Firths of Clyde and Forth. This is one of only four examples in southern Scotland, and therefore represents a rare example of this type of military construction in the region. The watch tower is one component of the extensive Roman military network established in Scotland, and represents the exploitation of natural routeways and features in southwest Scotland and the ability these routes gave to military campaigns working their way northwards into central Scotland. The watch tower lies immediately northeast of the Roman road from Carlisle to the Forth (scheduled monument reference SM3348; Canmore ID 71647). It overlooks and commands extensive views along the line of the road to the northwest and southeast, and across the valley floor. It is likely to have been built here to better monitor and control movement along this section of the road.

The signal station is related to the Antonine fortlet at Redshaw Burn, which lies around 3.4km southeast, equidistant between Nap Hill and the signal station at White Type. Together both signal stations are likely to have provided early warning for the fortlet and signify the need for security along this sector of the Roman road. A Roman camp (scheduled monument reference SM2745; Canmore ID 47314), also associated with the Antonine campaign and positioned adjacent to the Roman road, lies about 815m northwest. The signal station therefore has the potential to enhance our understanding of the role and function of Roman military constructions in the south of Scotland and more widely, the relationship between the different components of the Roman military network and the nature of Roman control in the south of Scotland and further afield.

2.3 Associative Characteristics - N/A

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

Designation as a scheduled monument is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument, and ensure the recognition of its national importance.

4 Assessment of national importance

The monument is of national importance because it has an inherent potential to contribute to the understanding of the past, in particular Roman watch towers or signal stations and their place in the military campaigning that took place in Scotland during the first and second centuries AD. Future research into the monument can help us understand the construction, architecture and any patterns of development of these monuments. The monument's importance is enhanced by its association with the Roman road and wider military network. Its loss would inhibit our ability to understand the placing of such monuments within the landscape, the nature of activity at the monument and position in the network of Roman remains within this region, in Scotland and further afield across the Roman Empire.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland http://www.canmore.org.uk reference number CANMORE ID 47290 (Accessed on 30/05/2016).

West of Scotland Archaeology Service record reference number: WOSAS PIN 10376

Maxwell, G S, 1976, A Roman timber tower at Beattock Summit, Lanarkshire in, *Britannia, 7,* 33-8

RCAHMS, 1978, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Lanarkshire: an inventory of the prehistoric and Roman monuments. Edinburgh.

ScARF 2012 panel Hunter, F. and Carruthers, M. (eds) Scotland: the Roman presence. Scottish Archaeological Research Framework: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Available online at http://tinyurl.com/d24fbpr.