Case information

Case ID	300009971
File Reference	AMH/10131/2/1
Name of Site	Loch Coille-Bharr crannog, Knapdale

Local Authority	Argyll & Bute
National Grid Reference	NR 7788 8949
Designation No. (if any)	SM 10131
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	20/05/2014
Decision Date	19/09/2016

1. Decision

The monument was first scheduled in 2001, however, it was described and mapped in the wrong location. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the schedule.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 2001 and it is contained within the Knapdale Woods biological SSSI (designation reference 8391). A condition survey of the monument was undertaken in 2009 as part of a wider project to reintroduce beavers to the area. This survey noted that the crannog had been described and mapped incorrectly in the schedule.

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 as part of Schedule Enhancement Project. The present assessment is desk-based, using available information and has included reference to recent photographs.

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 on the determination of national importance for scheduling.

The 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
Loch Coille-Bharr crannog, Knapdale

1 Description

The monument comprises the submerged remains of a crannog, an artificial island structure which may date to between 500 BC and AD 400. The crannog is approximately 9m in diameter and it is located at the southern end of Loch Coille-Bharr, approximately 30m above sea level. None of the site is visible above the water level.

It survives as a submerged stony platform with evidence of a surrounding revetment wall. It is likely to contain and overlie significant structural, artefactual and ecofactual materials. The character and extent of the monument has been verified by archaeological investigation.

The scheduled area is circular on plan measuring 20m 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 may survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map.

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

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

Archaeological investigation of this submerged structure has confirmed the substantial survival of the underlying mound and sections of revetment walling. Such walling is a relatively uncommon component of crannog construction. Investigations in 1867 demonstrated that the site was entirely constructed of stone and walling. The investigations also recovered a wooden paddle, bone tools and fragments of wooden beams. The beams were possibly from a rampart or building on the island rather than relating to the construction of the island itself. The investigations were limited and the platform appears relatively undisturbed and is surrounded by thick lake silts. Therefore there is significant potential for the survival of other organic material from the occupation of the site.

The site is constructed on a bedrock reef, itself an extension of a promontory extending from the loch side. This example can therefore help us understand more about the siting, construction and occupation of these structures.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

This monument is part of a Scotland-wide distribution of nearly 400 known crannog or crannog-related structures. There are significant concentrations of crannogs and island settlements in southwest Scotland, Argyll and the inner Hebridean islands, and they are to be found on many freshwater lochs. This example is part of a local clustering of approximately 10 monuments recorded as crannogs in and around Knapdale. It is located in an area of dense prehistoric activity represented by the remains of ceremonial and domestic structures and it represents a specific from and function of later prehistoric and or early historic settlement.

When this crannog was constructed, the level of the loch must have been significantly lower than now, perhaps as much as 1.5m. Such a reduction in the water level would have left the reef almost connected to the loch shore, so the site may have been a dry island that was adapted and enlarged or even a promontory site. Sites such as Loch Coille-Bharr highlight the blurred distinction between crannogs, island duns and promontory sites (Cavers 2009, 6).

2.3 Associative Characteristics

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

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

Survey work has confirmed that the monument is in a relatively stable condition with few identified threats. Designation as a scheduled monument remains 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 of its inherent potential to make a significant addition to our understanding of the past, in particular the construction and use of island or promontory structures from the later prehistoric and early historic periods. The site survives in good condition with the submerged platform intact with surviving revetment walling. It is likely that the platform and surrounding silt seals important structural, artefactual and ecofactual material, possibly including fragile organic remains which do not normally survive non-waterlogged sites. The loss of the monument could affect our ability to understand the development of island settlements and their significance for communities inhabiting Argyll and western Scotland from later prehistory onwards.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland, https://canmore.org.uk, Canmore ID 39078 (accessed 29/6/16).

West of Scotland Archaeology Service Historic Environment Record reference: WOSAS PIN 3669 (accessed 29/6/16).

Campbell and Sandeman, M and M, 1964, *Mid Argyll: an archaeological survey, Proc Soc Antiq Scot, 95,* 61.

Mapleton, R J. 1870 Notice of an artificial Island in Loch Kielziebar, in a letter to Mr Stuart, secretary', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot, 7*, 322-4.

Cavers, G, 2009, *Loch Coille Bharr Crannog, Argyll and Bute (North Knapdale parish), survey, Discovery Excav Scot, 10.* Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire.

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