



## Case Information

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<b>Reference/Case ID</b>	300018656		
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Crossraguel Abbey		
<b>Index no</b>	SM90087	<b>Grid ref</b>	NS 27500 8300
<b>Date application validated</b>	31 October 2016		
<b>Summary of proposed works</b>	Reinstatement of Bellcote Cross masonry		

## 1. Summary recommendation

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This report recommends that approval for reinstatement of the Bellcote Cross, temporarily removed during inspection works, be granted.

## 2. Background

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The monument comprises the extensive remains of the 13th-century Cluniac Abbey of Crossraguel, surviving as substantial stone structures, as earthworks, and as buried archaeology, together with an area likely to contain part of the outer precinct. .

The scheduled area comprises the remains described and an area around them within which related material may be expected to be found. The area proposed for scheduling is larger than that of the property currently in the care of Historic Scotland. The area is irregular in plan with maximum dimensions of 237m NE-SW by 292m WNW-ESE, as marked in red on the accompanying map extract. The modern fences are excluded from the scheduling, as are the upper 300mm of all surfaced paths, roads and the car park. .

The monument is of national importance as one of the most complete large monastic complexes to have survived, giving a clear impression of the extent and range of buildings and functions required within such an establishment.

The cross and socket sits at the apex of the bellcote roof, are integral parts of the bellcote, and are original features dating from at least the 14th century (although perhaps more likely to be of 15th century date). They are contemporary with the

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flowering of Crossraguel as a centre of significant secular and ecclesiastical power in that period, and the finial cross marked a clear demonstration of that power from the highest part of the abbey church. As such, they constitute part of the cultural significance of the site, and thus contribute to its national importance.

This application relates to the Bellcote Cross, its socket stone, and the tympanum or bellcote masonry supporting these. The application is for reinstatement of masonry including the dowelling of both the cross and its socket, which was removed for urgent health and safety reasons during a recent high level inspection. It follows a previous application for consolidation of the south wall and chapter house of the abbey complex. It has been submitted by HES Conservation & Maintenance.

The application is accompanied by drawings of the proposals, and a supporting statement. A supplementary email clarifying details of the scheme has been accepted as supporting information and is included in the application documents.

HES Heritage Management Directorate has undertaken pre-application discussions with the applicant regarding the scope and timing of works, and this application accords with the outcome of those discussions.

## 3. Proposals

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- drilling 20mm cores into the base of the cross and the coping of the socket stone, to a total depth of 160mm
- drilling a 20mm core into the masonry of the bellcote
- inserting a 680mm long stainless steel rod of 16mm diameter into the drilled holes, so that the cross, socket stone and bellcote are secured
- related pointing works

*Consented works* –reinstatement of the Bellcote Cross temporarily removed during inspection works. The three elements of drilling (into the base of the cross shaft, through the full height of the socket stone, and then into the bellcote) will be undertaken to ensure that the stones align and are plumb, and that the finished work leaves the stone at the angle it held (ie, vertical and true) before its removal. Following drilling of the 20mm hole, a stainless steel round tube of 16mm diameter will be inserted into the hole and resin fixed

*Aims* –The cross and socket weigh approximately 31kg and 69kg respectively. They were both removed earlier this year, when high-level inspection revealed that the socket and cross were both retained by thin slastered mortar layers which had failed. The work is being proposed because Conservation & Maintenance Directorate of HES have identified that the existing method of securing the socket and cross is unsuitable for such a vulnerable stone, and for one that is in a location that is generally difficult to access without expensive scaffolding. Erosion means that the socket stone no longer

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provides a perfect fit for the cross, which is slightly loose as a result, resulting in an increased likelihood that the cross could work loose in the near future. It is estimated that a simple slaister of mortar could not be guaranteed for more than 5-10 years. Consequently, it is believed that replacement mortar would not provide a sufficient long term method of fixing. Dowelling is believed to be the best method of fixing the cross whilst enabling it remain in place.

*Timescale* - The work will be undertaken before the end of this financial year, while the scaffolding is in place.

*Personnel* - The work will be carried out by the Glenluce Monument Conservation Unit and by Gyle Conservation Centre staff, both of HES Conservation Directorate. The stone is presently in the care of the latter.

## 4. Representations received

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No third party representations were received.

## 5. Report

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### a) Policy considerations

The application should be considered with the following legislative and policy considerations in mind:

#### Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2: Control of works affecting scheduled monuments.

#### Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016

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.

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

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monument are to its cultural significance, the greater will be the case against interventions which modify these features.

## **b) Assessment**

The proposed works involve the reinstatement of the Bellcote Cross temporarily removed during inspection works. This is intended to return the monument to its pre-existing appearance, i.e. prior to the removal of the cross and its socket for health and safety reasons.

The physical impact of the proposed works would be:

- The drilling of the cross, socket and bellcote as described above

This drilling work would remove a 20mm core of masonry from medieval carved stonework and the underlying rough stonework of the bellcote on which the cross and socket sit. This would involve the loss of some 2% of the overall masonry elements, all in areas that are hidden from view even at close ranges.

The finial cross arrangement at Crossraguel makes a significant contribution to the national importance of the scheduled monument. Therefore, given the high physical impacts, the proposed works have the potential to adversely impact on this nationally important cultural significance.

However, the work has been proposed because the applicant considers that:

- A thin slaster of mortar is likely to fail within 5-10 years of its being laid down, leaving approximately 100kg of masonry located on a sloping bellcote tympanum located on a gable directly above the nave and choir. This therefore raises health and safety concerns for visitors.
- The masonry of the cross and socket has been examined by Gyle Conservation Centre staff, who consider that the drilling and dowelling can be undertaken without threatening the integrity of the stone
- The scaffolding that is presently in place is not likely to be required once the overall consolidation programme is completed at the abbey. The cost of removing the cross and socket and relaying mortar within 5-10 years of the present works is likely to prove most substantial, and could be avoided through the use of a dowel
- The form of dowelling means that the socket and cross can be safely and securely removed for future works.

The removal of the masonry core from the cross, socket and bellcote would constitute a loss of medieval fabric and must be viewed as an adverse impact. However, this loss would avoid damage to any of the carved surfaces of the worked stone would allow the cross's visual contribution to monument's cultural significance to be retained. The



drilling will not disturb the stability of the stone matrix, so the overall integrity of the stone would be maintained. The dowelled stones would also be secure, and would not be at risk of permanent loss in the event of sudden failure of a mortar slaister in adverse weather conditions – which would represent a total loss of the cultural significance inherent in the stone.

The alternative would have been to remove the cross, which would preserve the stone but diminish its contribution to the overall monument's cultural significance.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see Protected Species and Places assessment.

### **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 reinstatement of the Bellcote Cross temporarily removed during inspection works, are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that they will have a physical impact on the cross but minimal impact on the wider cultural significance of the monument. They do not, therefore, conflict with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The works have been proposed in order to ensure the long term preservation of the monument and public access to it, so are justified in accordance with paragraph 3.17 of the policy statement.

The applicant intends to proceed with these works before the end of this financial year, while scaffolding is in place. HES Heritage Directorate will be inspecting the overall programme of works during this period, in order to assess further works on the site. On that basis, it is not necessary or appropriate to impose suspensive conditions for notification or reporting of the works timetable. No other conditions are deemed necessary.

## **6. Recommended decision**

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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

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No conditions have been attached to this decision.

## 8. Approval

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<b>Case officer</b>	John Malcolm	<b>Date</b>	19 December 2016
<b>Approved by</b>	John Raven	<b>Date</b>	20 December 2016

### Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Drawing (A4) 1:2500 Location Plan
- Drawing Reinstallation Proposals 189-160909-001 A
- Drawing Record and conservation works to stones 189-160909-002 B
- Drawing Coring Details to Cross and Socket Stone 189-160909-003 C
- Annex A supporting Statement dated 31/10/2016
- Email from P. Beaton to J. Malcolm, dated 19 December 2016, 1627