

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



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Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018675		
Scheduled Monument	Dryburgh Abbey		
Index no	SM90103	Grid ref	NT 59100 31600
Date application validated	04 November 2016		
Summary of proposed works	Remedial works to stabilise 10 memorials which have been fenced off for health & safety reasons		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for remedial works to stabilise 10 memorials be granted.

2. Background

The monument comprises the remains of Dryburgh Abbey, founded in 1150 as the first Scottish House of the Canons Regular of the Premonstratensian Order. The buildings stand on three prepared, stepped levels on sloping land above the River Tweed with the abbey church, dedicated to St Mary, on the highest ground, the cloister on the middle level and the chapter house, principal day apartments, cellars and kitchens occupying the lowest part of the site. Within the precincts, which extended as far as the banks of the river to the S, lay the infirmary, abbot's lodging, guest house, bakehouse, brew-house, mill, barns, orchards and yards. Of these, only the lade and tunnel associated with the lade, and brewhouse survive.

This monument is of national importance because it is the well preserved ruins of a large monastery. The upstanding remains are some of the finest medieval architecture in Scotland while the survival of footings of the other buildings makes the scale of the abbey clear. As a major monastery Dryburgh played a role in border politics and hosted royalty from both sides of the border.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan and measures a maximum of 600m N-S by 490m E-W to include the remains of the abbey church and associated buildings and an area of ground which formed part of the monastic precincts. The latter includes the burial ground, remains of the brewhouse and the lade and tunnel associated with the former corn mill. Excluded from scheduling are all inhabited dwelling houses, all structures post-dating 1820, the top 30cm of all paths and roadways (to allow for maintenance), and all fences and boundary walls.



It is the later burial ground that this application relates to. The application is for remedial works to stabilise 10 memorials which have been fenced off for health & safety reasons and the cleaning of Walter Scott's tomb. The cleaning of the tomb will not require SMC. It follows a previous conservation appraisal which identified stability issues with these ten memorials. The application has been submitted by HES conservation directorate.

The application is accompanied by a detailed methods statement which contains a description of the proposed works, photographs of the headstones and a map of the headstone locations. The application follows a methodology that is well established and has been used at other scheduled cemetery sites in the Scottish Borders.

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

- Lay flat the memorial stones
- Excavate and lay new foundations
- Lift the memorial stones and re-pin in original positions
- Clean the headstones

Consented Works- Re-erection of 10 memorial headstones on new foundations

Aims – The stones are being stabilised for health and safety reasons.

Personnel – All works are to be carried out to National Association of Memorials code of working practice by trained and registrar masons employed by Thomas Brown & Sons Ltd.

4. Representations received

No third party representations were received.

5. Report

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

3.14. 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 that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

3.15. Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

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 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 involve the re-erection of 10 memorial headstones on new foundations. This is intended to address health and safety concerns relating to the stability of the headstones.

The physical impact of the proposed works would be negligible, they involve restoring part of the monument to its original condition. The 10 headstones would be temporarily removed from their foundations, the existing foundations would be removed and new foundations laid. The headstones will then be re-erected on these new foundation in the same location that they originally occupied. The works would not affect the cultural significance of the monument.

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The physical impact of these works on the monument and its cultural significance would be comparatively minor, but the benefits to the long term preservation of the monument would be significant.

The work would involve undertaking remedial and conservation works to mitigate health and safety risks to the public and to maintain the structural integrity of the masonry.

The application has been accompanied by a detailed Project Design that sets out a well-considered, appropriate and careful methodology.

The Project Design sets out a suitable method and timetable for carrying out the repairs. The project team are highly experienced and have an established track record of successful delivery of these types of projects. Accordingly, the specified method of the work is appropriate to ensure it is undertaken to a professional standard.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see PP&S 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 proposed works, comprising re-erection of 10 memorial headstones on new foundations, are the minimum necessary to conserve what is culturally significant in this scheduled monument and so are compliant 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 so are 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.

Consequently, 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.

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I recommend consent is **granted without conditions**.

7. Conditions

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	James Bruhn	Date	21 December 2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	21 December 2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Method Statement
- Photographs
- Plan of locations of works