



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018673		
Scheduled Monument	Peel Ring of Lumphanan, castle, Peel Bog of Lumphanan		
Index no	SM90238	Grid ref	NJ 57600 3700
Date application validated	04 November 2016		
Summary of proposed works	Installation of replacement signage		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan be granted with conditions.

2. Background

The historic environment asset and its cultural significance

The monument comprises the Peel Ring of Lumphanan, a series of earthworks that was the site of a timber castle from the 13th century onwards. The monument comprises a large earthen mound, measuring some 46m by 37m and rising about 9m above the bottom of a now mostly dry ditch or moat, which is itself some 15m wide and which surrounds the mound. The ditch, which was evidently originally filled with water from the Lumphanan Burn, is bounded by an earthen bank standing 3m high and measuring 2.45m across the top, with a further shallow ditch 3m wide lying beyond it.

The earliest record of a castle on this site is of thirteenth-century date, when it was established by the de Lundins or Durwood family, the hereditary door-wards or ushers to the king. After a period of abandonment, the castle mound was reoccupied in 1487 when Thomas Charteris of Kinfauns, Perthshire, built the residence known as Ha'ton House on it. This was in ruins by the eighteenth century.

The monument is located within a relatively flat area of land in an otherwise hilly part of Aberdeenshire, and this has had an impact on the resultant form and development of the castle. Its scale means that it dominates the valley and is perceived as an artificial

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construction, rather than as part of the landscape, and its significance within the landscape was exploited through later phases of occupation.

It is replacement signage in the NE quadrant of the ditch that is the subject of this application.

The cultural significance of the monument lies in its survival as a well preserved series of substantial earthworks that went alongside an early timber castle, with the ditches designed to be water-filled. Its reoccupation in the 15th century suggested that the site continued to have importance within the landscape.

The applicant

The application is for the installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan, and it is designed to replace outdated/faded signage and to address gaps in the existing interpretation. The application has been submitted by HES Conservation Group, who manage the Peel Ring of Lumphanan as a free-to-access visitor attraction. The application is accompanied by an assessment of the existing signage setting out what broad changes are proposed.

Pre-application discussions

There have been no pre-application discussions regarding the proposed works.

Subsequent to the application being submitted, the applicant has confirmed that the existing foundation will be retained and reused, with turf removal and minor levelling/ground reduction to accommodate a slightly wider plinth that will be slightly cantilevered over the existing foundation. If the required cantilever is too great for the existing foundation then an additional 200mm wide strip of concrete will be added to the side of the existing foundation. The applicant has submitted a sketch to show this.

3. Proposals

- Installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan, specifically in the NE quadrant of the ditch where the existing plinth will be dismantled, followed by turf removal and minor levelling/ground reduction, and the rebuilding of a slightly wider plinth cantilevered off the existing foundation. If the existing foundation is not large enough to support the required cantilever for the plinth size then the existing foundation will be widened slightly by the addition of a 200mm wide strip of concrete.

Consented works – the works comprise the installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan.



Aims – the purpose of the works is to replace outdated/faded signage and to address gaps in the existing interpretation. This is part of a wider signage refresh project that aims to improve the intellectual access that visitors have to the site, and to better communicate the stories we have to tell. The aim is to orientate and guide visitors around the earthworks, encourage a full exploration of the site, and to foster an understanding of the different phases of its history. The aim is also to achieve uniformity in signage across the HES estate.

Timetable – the applicant hopes to undertake the work within the next year.

Personnel – the works will be undertaken by the in-house HES Monument Conservation Unit, who are suitably qualified and locally based.

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.

3.16. 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.



3.18. 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.

3.22. Where consent for the range of works set out in paragraph 3.4 is granted, conditions are normally applied to ensure the works are undertaken in an appropriate manner. Common requirements are:

- a. the use of appropriate assessment methodologies to determine the full impact of any proposed management, use or development;
- b. the avoidance of irreversible change particularly wherever its effects cannot be adequately assessed;
- c. that where change is necessary, strategies should be adopted to mitigate its impact and limit intervention;
- d. that the management and execution of alteration, including remedial work, is sympathetic to the historic character;
- e. that appropriate skills and techniques, materials and construction techniques are specified where appropriate;
- f. that an appropriate level of record is made before, during and after any work and deposited in local and national archives, and, where appropriate, published;
- g. that it is possible, on close inspection, to differentiate new work from old particularly on masonry structures;
- h. that any archaeological excavation or other intrusive investigation should be based upon a detailed research strategy, with adequate resources, using appropriately skilled and experienced archaeologists with a satisfactory record of the completion and publication of projects; and
- i. that the design, planning and execution of works on scheduled monuments are undertaken by people with appropriate professional and craft qualifications, skills and experience.

b) Assessment

The works involve the installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan, and it is designed to replace outdated/faded signage and to address gaps in the existing interpretation.

The physical impact of the installation of replacement signage on the monument and its cultural significance will be negligible, as the works have been designed to minimise impact on archaeological deposits by largely reusing the existing foundations. The initial installation of the existing foundations will likely have had a localised impact on surviving archaeological deposits, so the removal of turf and the proposed minor levelling/ground reduction is likely to be impacting on material that has previously been disturbed. Given that this removal of turf and minor is likely to be only 200mm or so on

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either side of the existing foundation, the extent of this disturbance relative to the monument as a whole is such that there is unlikely to be a material effect on the monument's overall archaeological value. As such, the works are not considered to impact on the cultural significance of the monument.

The replacement of the signage is designed to improve the intellectual access that visitors have to the site, and to better communicate the stories we have to tell. The signage will orientate and guide visitors around the earthworks, encourage a full exploration of the site, and will foster an understanding of the different phases of its history. As such, it should enhance an appreciation of the monument and the historic environment in general.

No archaeological WSI has been provided for the ground disturbance works as part of this application. Given the nature of the works, a watching brief on the turf removal and minor levelling/ground reduction and possible widening of the existing foundation is considered suitable.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places is considered likely.

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 the installation of replacement signage at the Peel Ring of Lumphanan, are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that they will have a negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument. They do not, therefore, conflict with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The objectives of the proposed work include clear public benefits as the replacement signage is designed to better engage with visitors to the monument, meet access requirements, and to foster an appreciation for the monument.

The works are part of wider signage replacement programme and have been designed to have a low impact on the scheduled monument.

Condition 1 is to allow for the submission of a suitable WSI to cover archaeological monitoring of ground breaking works, to ensure that any archaeological information is recorded.



6. Recommended decision

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, 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, subject to the conditions detailed below.**

7. Conditions

1. No work requiring scheduled monument consent shall take place within the scheduled area until the applicant has secured the initiation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigations (WSI)/project design and has had this WSI approved in writing by Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage Directorate. This scheme of works shall be fully implemented during the course of the approved development.

Reason: to ensure that any archaeological deposits are recovered and recorded to a satisfactory standard.

8. Approval

Case officer	Oliver Lewis	Date	17 January 2017
Approved by	Iona Murray	Date	18 January 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location plan – 436/238/023
- New interpretation panel info for SMC – dated 21 September 2016
- Email from Mike Pendery to Oliver Lewis dated 20 December 2016 clarifying scope of works and methodology.
- Methodology - dated 12 January 2017
- Sketch showing plinth - dated 12 January 2017