



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018781		
Scheduled Monument	Stirling Castle		
Index no	SM90291	Grid ref	NS 78800 94100
Date application validated	29 November 2016		
Summary of proposed works	Installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the garden to the casemates		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates be granted with conditions.

2. Background

The historic environment asset and its cultural significance

The monument comprises Stirling Castle and its immediate setting. Stirling Castle is a strongly-fortified royal castle occupying a volcanic outcrop which commands the upper Forth valley. The defences define three main enclosures: the outer defences (on the main line of approach), the main enclosure (at the summit of the rock) and the nether bailey (to the N). The principal buildings for royal occupation at the summit of the rock form a square enclosed by the King's Old Building, the Great Hall, the Chapel Royal and the Palace. The natural approach to the castle is along the gentle slope to the SE, so it was along this side that the chief defences were constructed.

The Queen Anne Gardens are located at the SW corner of the castle complex. This area, between the James IV forework and the outer defences, may have been transformed into a garden as early as the 15th century, creating an elegant outdoor space which is still appreciated by visitors. A terraced walk from the Palace overlooking the W end of the garden was created against the forework in the mid-16th century. References to the maintenance of the castle's gardens begin in the

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

15th century and continue into the 17th century when an English gardener was appointed to provide plants for Charles I. The Queen Anne Gardens were transformed into a bowling green in the 1620s.

The cultural significance of the Queen Anne Gardens lies in their survival as a long-established and curated outdoor space designed for the benefit and enjoyment of those who occupied the castle.

The applicant

The application is for the installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates, and it is designed to address health and safety issues associated with unprotected drops. The application has been submitted by HES Conservation Group, who manage Stirling Castle as one of the top paid-for visitor attractions in Scotland. The application is accompanied by a detailed drawing showing the layout of the railings and the minimal level of intervention to previously undisturbed historic fabric, and an archaeological assessment.

Pre-application discussions

The applicant has discussed the proposed works with HES Heritage Directorate, and the current application accords with the outcome of these discussions. It is worth noting that the steps are currently being partially dismantled and rebuilt as part of a previously consented scheme of works (ref:201103720) to address severe frost damage.

3. Proposals

- Installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates

Consented works – the works comprise the installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates.

Aims – the purpose of the works is to address health and safety issues associated with unprotected drops and public access to wall walks.

Timetable – the applicant hopes to undertake the work within the next year so as to address the health and safety issues in a timely manner.

Personnel – the works will be undertaken by the in-house HES Monument Conservation Unit, who are suitably qualified and locally based, using components manufactured and supplied by a specialist company. Excavation for the railing



footings will be monitored by Kirkdale Archaeology, who are suitably qualified and experienced with working at Stirling Castle.

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.

3.17. 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.

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

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 railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates, so as to address health and safety issues associated with unprotected drops and public access to wall walks.

The physical impact of the installation of railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates on the monument and its cultural significance will be negligible, as the works have been designed to minimise impact on previously undisturbed historic fabric. Whilst fixings will go into masonry joints, this is masonry that is currently being dismantled and rebuilt due to frost damage, so will in effect be previously disturbed. The foundation for the railing support stay at the base of the stairs has the potential for impact on previously undisturbed archaeological deposits; whilst the foundation has been designed as small as possible, excavation of this will still require archaeological monitoring. The works do comprise an addition to the monument, although one that would not appear incongruous given other railings protecting steep drops elsewhere on the monument. The legibility of the railings is such that they will not impact on the way that the

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

architectural form of the wall walk and stairs is understood. As such, the works are not considered to impact on the cultural significance of the monument.

The installation of the railing is designed to address health and safety issues associated with unprotected drops and public access to wall walks. Currently closed off to the public, reopened and safer access to this wall walk should improve the physical and intellectual access that visitors have to the site. As such, the works should enable an enhanced appreciation of the monument and the historic environment in general.

Although an archaeological assessment has been provided as part of the application, it recognises that an archaeological WSI will be required in advance of excavating for the support stay foundation. Given the nature of the works and the monument, a watching brief 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 railings to the wall walk stairs leading from the Queen Anne Gardens to the casemates, 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 have a clear public benefit, as they will enable renewed and safer access to the wall walk and help foster an appreciation for the monument. As such, the works meet with paragraph 3.17 of the policy statement.

The works have been designed to have a low impact on the scheduled monument and its cultural significance. An archaeological WSI is required to cover the ground breaking works, so a condition to control the production of the WSI is necessary.

Condition 1 is to allow for the submission of a suitable WSI to cover archaeological monitoring of ground breaking works, to ensure that 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 condition 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. This scheme of works shall be fully implemented during the course of the approved development.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological information is recovered and recorded to a satisfactory standard.

8. Approval

Case officer	Oliver Lewis	Date	20 January 2017
Approved by	John Raven	Date	20 January 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location plan – 333/291/U/98
- Drawing showing detail of new railings at steps to wall walk – 333/291/U/91
- Assessment of archaeological response – report dated 16 Nov 2016