Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling

Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300019082

Scheduled Monument	Abbey Craig, fort		
Index no	SM2542	**Grid ref**	NS 80900 95600

Date application validated	19 January 2017
Summary of proposed works	Upgrading existing path from the visitor centre, up to the Wallace Monument

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for upgrading existing path from the visitor centre, up to the Wallace Monument be **granted without conditions**

2. Background

The monument is 'Abbey Craig, fort', a defended site atop the steep knoll known as Abbey Craig. It survives as a crescent-shaped low earthen bank enclosing a central space and part of this is now occupied by the Wallace monument. The scheduled area is crescent-shaped polygon covering the visible remains of the bank of the fort. The monument is important because it reflects a type of defended site that was used from later prehistory through to the early centuries of the first millennium AD.

It is a very small section of the northwest area of the scheduled monument that this application relates to. The application is for improvements to an existing footpath including the overlaying of a new surface and the installation of water run-off berms lying across the footpath. The footpath runs between the adjacent visitor centre and the Wallace monument, with only a small section of it entering the scheduled area. The application has been submitted by Stirling Council.

The application is accompanied by a written description of the works, a plan of the areas affected by the works, a sketch showing the sectional detail of the path material and copy correspondence regarding ownership and between the applicant and Scottish Natural Heritage regarding works within the SSSI.

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

- Create hardcore sub-base atop the existing whindust surface
- Apply a bituminous surface (known as 'black top') over this sub-base
- Install small, raised berms across the path to facilitate runoff.

Consented works – Abbey Craig, fort - Upgrading existing path from the visitor centre, up to the Wallace Monument.

Aims – To improve visitor access between the visitor centre and The Wallace monument.

4. Representations received

A representation from Scottish Natural Heritage was received by the applicant and forwarded as part of the SMC application. This representation confirms that if the works are simply resurfacing, then no consent [for works within a SSSI] is required.

A representation from the owner's agent was recieved by the applicant and forwarded as part of the SMC application. This representation confirms *'that it would be in order for the path to be upgraded as you suggest'*.

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.

b) Assessment

The proposed works involve upgrading existing path from the visitor centre, up to the Wallace Monument. This is intended to enable easier access to the adjacent Wallace Monument and associated visitor centre on foot.

The physical impact of the proposed works would be the superimposition of a new surface over an existing footpath, with improvements to control runoff.

The works would not affect the cultural significance of the monument.

The works proposed would affect a relatively small proportion of the scheduled monument. They are therefore not assessed as extensive.

The application has been accompanied by a works description and accompanying plans and sections that set out an appropriate methodology.

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.

The works would be within in the Abbey Craig biologoical SSSI and the applicant has contacted SNH regarding the works. SNH have confirmed that the works should not impact the SSSI.

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 Abbey Craig, fort - Upgrading existing path from the visitor centre, up to the Wallace Monument are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that they will have no 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 works have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and are 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.

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

7. Conditions

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	Andrew Fulton	**Date**	21 February 2017
Approved by	Iona Murray	**Date**	21 February 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location plan (coincident with natural heritage designation).
- Path surface specification.
- Copy correspondence with Owner's agent.
- Copy correspondence with Scottish Natural Heritage.