HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

Scheduled Monument Consent
Report on Handling

Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300027768

Scheduled Monument	Dunnottar Castle		
Index no	SM986	**Grid ref**	NO 88108 83875

Date application validated	18 April 2018
Summary of proposed works	Sumps to West Range 1 & 2

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for sumps to West Range rooms 1 and 2 be granted with one condition.

2. Background

The monument is a medieval castle that stands on a dramatic coastal promontory potentially used in the prehistoric and Early Historic periods. There are extensive upstanding buildings that date from several periods. The oldest standing part is the early 15th century keep. A range of buildings extending east of the keep contains stables and storehouses. The buildings to the northeast of the site are grouped around a courtyard and include a mansion house, lodgings and chapel. They date from the late 16th or early 17th centuries. A huge water tank lies within the courtyard and there is also a bowling green to the west of this range. The gatehouse, on the west side, is approached by a steep path defended by three tiers of splayed gun-loops.

The scheduled area is the whole headland and an area to the west that includes the access to the castle. There are no exclusions.

The monument is of national importance because it is a substantial medieval castle with later components in a very dramatic setting on a high promontory ringed by cliffs. It can make a significant addition to the understanding and appreciation of the past and retains its structural characteristics to a marked degree. It makes a very significant contribution

to both the historical and modern landscapes, and its importance is enhanced by documentary references that shed light on its use from the reign of William the Lion (1165-1214) until it was finally forfeited in 1716.

This application relates to two rooms at the south of the west range that adjoins the courtyard towards the northeast of the site. It is for shallow sumps that would allow standing water to be pumped out of these rooms. It has been submitted by the owner.

The application is accompanied by an overall site map showing the location of the rooms (marked 'page 1'), a plan showing the proposed location of the sumps within the rooms (marked 'page 4), a section drawing showing the proposed sump depth (marked 'page 7'), and photographs of the two proposed areas.

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

3. Proposals

- Excavate two small pits to house sumps, one in each room
- Line pits with geotextile membrane and place gravel at base
- Insert PCV pipe vertically into pits
- Fit cover to pipe for when sump is not in use
- Backfill around pipe

Consented works – Install sumps to West Range rooms 1 and 2

It is proposed to install one sump in each room, at the low point in the floor. The proposed sumps would have a maximum depth of 375mm. The pits to accommodate the sumps would be no wider than necessary to accommodate a length of PVC pipe with diameter 250mm.

The pits would be excavated then gravel placed in the base. A length of PVC pipe would be installed in an upright position, and provided with a lid to be used when the sump is not in use. The area around the exterior of the pipe would then be backfilled with the excavated material.

Aims – At present rainwater accumulates after heavy rain and remains standing in the rooms. The aim of the sumps is to allow the standing water to be pumped away, without the disturbance of installing gravity drainage, so that the stonework is not exposed to standing water and visitors can access these areas.

Timetable – the work is likely to be undertaken in 2018.

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:

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.

3.18. 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.

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 proposed works involve excavation of two small pits to create sumps, one in each of two rooms at the south end of the West Range. This is intended to allow standing water to be pumped away after heavy rainfall.

The physical impact of the proposed works would be minimal. The pits would be about 375mm deep and just over 250mm wide. The present floor surfaces are considered unlikely to be of archaeological significance. However, a condition to consent is proposed to ensure that the sump pits are dug by an archaeologist and that if any archaeological remains are encountered during excavation that appear to be significant, they would be identified and left undisturbed. This would ensure the proposals have no impact on the cultural significance of the monument.

The proposed works have been carefully considered and sensitively designed. The applicant has considered whether the standing water could be dealt with by building up the floors and installing gravity drainage. However, the floors in these two rooms lie significantly below surrounding ground levels, and gravity drainage would require a very intrusive network of drains. We therefore regard the proposed solution as less intrusive and are content that provision of sumps represents the minimum level of intervention to deal with the potentially harmful standing water.

The proposed works are very small scale and are not assessed as extensive. However, they would have benefits for the large number of visitors to the castle by improving access and reducing the number of areas that cannot be accessed due to standing water. They would also allow water to be pumped out so that it does not pool for long periods at the base of historic masonry.

No WSI has been provided as part of this application, although the applicant has acknowledged that archaeological mitigation would be required. The details of this mitigation would need to be agreed and controlled through a WSI. The provision of a WSI would enable the application to be considered compliant with paragraphs 3.16, 3.18, 3.20

and 3.22 of the policy statement. To ensure this it is recommended that a condition requiring provision of a WSI is applied.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places 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.

If accompanied by a WSI for appropriate archaeological excavation and recording, the proposed works could be done to elements of the monument in such a way that they would have no impact on the cultural significance of the monument.

Therefore, in order to ensure the works comply with the policy statement paragraphs 3.16, 3.18, 3.20 and 3.22, a condition is considered necessary.

Condition 1 is to ensure that a WSI for archaeological works is agreed in advance with HES, to ensure the excavation of sump pits is conducted by an archaeologist and that any significant archaeological remains are not excavated but left in situ.

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 Investigation (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 and that any significant archaeological remains are not disturbed but are preserved in situ.

8. Approval

Case officer	Richard Heawood	**Date**	05 June 2018
Approved by	Iona Murray	**Date**	06 June 2018

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- An overall site map showing the location of the rooms (marked 'page 1')
- A plan showing the proposed location of the sumps within the rooms (marked 'page 4)
- A section drawing showing the proposed sump depth (marked 'page 7')
- Photographs of the two proposed areas.