HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

Scheduled Monument Consent
Report on Handling

Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300034221

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

Date application validated	07 January 2019
Summary of proposed works	Repairs to coat of arms in Marischal Suite

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent for repairs to coat of arms in Marischal Suite be granted.

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 the Marischal Suite, situated northeast of the courtyard at the east end of the site. It is for repairs to a coat of arms, sited over the fireplace on the east facing internal wall of the room. This feature dates from 1645 and bears the initials of William, the seventh Earl, and Countess Elizabeth Seton, his wife. The application has been submitted by the owner.

The application is accompanied by a site map showing the location of the coat of arms and Marischal Suite, two aerial photographs of the site, a photograph of the coat of arms, six photographs showing details of the coat of arms, and a method statement for the repair.

3. Proposals

- Flush out open delaminations
- Inject acrylic resin
- Cap with acrylic resin mixed with fine sand textured/pigmented to match surrounding stone

Consented works – Dunnottar Castle – Repair of coat of arms in Marischal Suite

It is proposed to repair a stone bearing a coat of arms sited above the fireplace in the Marischal suite. The stone would be dry prior to works being conducted.

Open delaminations would be thoroughly flushed out with acetone to remove dust/debris prior to injection of Paraloid B72 acrylic resin (6% in acetone).

All delaminations would then be then capped/filled with Paraloid B72 resin (10% in acetone) mixed with fine sand which would be textured and pigmented (with natural pigments) to match the surrounding stone.

Aims – the aim is to repair the coat of arms promptly to prevent further deterioration which seems inevitable either through exposure to the elements or by visitors being tempted to remove delaminating sections.

Timetable – the works would be conducted in 2019.

Personnel – the work would be undertaken by a specialist stone conservator from Graciela Ainsworth Sculpture Conservation 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 repairing a 17th century carved stone sited above the fireplace inside the Marischal Suite. In 2009 remedial work was undertaken to the coat of arms to stabilise and repair delaminations to the stone. A recent inspection has identified the early stages of further localised delamination.

The physical impact of these works on the monument would be very minor, but the benefits to the long term preservation of the carved stone would be significant.

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

The work would involve undertaking remedial conservation works to maintain the structural integrity of the carved stone.

If the works as set out in the application are not undertaken with some urgency then there is a likelihood that the stone will continue to deteriorate, with the likely outcome that historic fabric and architectural detailing will be lost. It is therefore to the benefit of the long term preservation of the monument that the works are undertaken now.

The repairs, using acrylic resin and sand, are considered sound conservation work as they aim to retain historic fabric in situ using techniques previously employed on this part of the monument, and in such a way that should stabilise localised laminations.

The application has been accompanied by a statement that sets out a well-considered and appropriate and methodology. The work would be undertaken by a specialist sculpture conservation company.

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.

The proposed works are the minimum necessary to conserve what is culturally significant in this part of the 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, 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.

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

7. Conditions

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	Richard Heawood	**Date**	20 February 2019
Approved by	Simon Stronach	**Date**	22 February 2019

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- site map showing the location of the coat of arms and Marischal Suite;
- two aerial photographs of the site;
- photograph of the coat of arms;
- six photographs showing details of the coat of arms;
- method statement for the repair.