



Case information

Case ID	300038787
File Reference	AMH/142/2/1
Name of Site	Turin Hill Fort

Local Authority	Angus Council
National Grid Reference	NO 51419 53534
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument
Designation No. (if any)	SM142
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	15/07/2019
Decision Date	16/12/2019

1. Decision

Scheduled monument name (including designation number)	Action
Turin Hill Fort SM142	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Amend the entry in the schedule of monuments as Turin Hill, forts and cup-and-ring marked rock

The monument was first scheduled on 14/02/1958 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment using the selection guidance shows that the monument continued to meet the criterion of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the schedule as **Turin Hill, forts and cup-and-ring marked rock**. This entry supersedes the existing entry in the schedule.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled on 14/02/1958 and there has been no subsequent amendments.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was visited on 24/10/2019.

3.2 Assessment of national importance

An assessment using the selection guidance for scheduling has been carried out (see Annex A). The monument continues to meet the criterion of national importance.

The designation selection guidance are published in the Historic Environment Scotland Designations Policy and Selection Guidance 2019, Annex 1, pp 9-10, <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

3.3 Policy considerations

Scheduling continues to be the most appropriate designation to recognise the cultural significance of **Turin Hill, forts and cup-and-ring marked rock**.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 18/11/2019 to 09/12/2019.

We consult with the owner, occupier and/or tenant and the planning authority.

The consultation report of handling is published on our portal for comment from interested parties.

4.2 Consultation summary

We received two comments during the consultation period. These do not raise issues that affect the assessment of national importance

Elizabeth McCrone

Head of Designations
Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact

Kyle Armstrong, Designations Officer.
Kyle.armstrong@hes.scot 0131 651 8740.

ANNEX A – Assessment of national importance

Turin Hill, forts and cup-and-ring marked rock

1 Description

The monument consists of the remains of a complex, multi-phase series of forts and other associated remains, probably dating from the Late Bronze Age (between about 1200 BC and 800BC), through the Iron Age (between about 800 BC and AD 500) and into the Early Historic period (between about 500AD and 1000AD). At least five distinct enclosures, some overlying earlier examples, occupy Turin Hill. The forts are mostly visible as turf-covered banks and walls and the ditches as depressions. A cup-and-ring marked rock panel as well as roundhouse platforms, are also visible. The monument lies around 250m above sea level, occupying the summit of Turin Hill and is bounded by steep crags on the south.

The largest fort is also the earliest phase of enclosure. It is an oval area measuring around 274m by 122m and is visible as two lines of earth and stone ramparts, together around 4m to 5m wide and 0.2m to 2.5m high. Within the central area of this fort are the recorded remains of two, possibly up to five, roundhouses - these may be contemporary with the fort or represent later occupation of the site. A substantial earthen bank lies around 90m east of the largest fort and is around 5m wide and 1m high. This bank may be an outwork related to the fort or could be associated with later agriculture or stock management. The second fort is oblong comprising a single walled enclosure measuring around 153m by 40m internally. The enclosure wall is around 4m wide and up to 0.5m high.

A probable third phase of occupation is evidenced by three small, circular forts - referred to as ring forts or duns. The central ring fort, partly overlying the wall of the secondary fort, internally measures around 27m in diameter. The stone wall here is around 3.5m wide and almost 1m high. At the east end of the site, within the largest and earliest fort, lies another ring fort. This consists of two concentric banks of earth and stone. The outer circular bank measures around 30m in diameter and 0.3m to 1.3m high and the inner circular bank measures around 17m in diameter and 0.3m high. Immediately southeast of this fort is a cup-and-ring marked rock, measuring 1.05m by 0.37m. The exposed panel bears at least eight individual cup marks, five of which are encircled with carved rings. The extreme west end of the site is occupied by a third ring fort that lies outside the earlier forts. It measures 30m east-west by 26m transversely within a single, turf covered bank of earth and stones up to 6m wide and 1.7m high. Depressions in the interior may represent the remains of roundhouses.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan, extending 20 metres from the outer edges of fort ramparts on the west, north and east of the site and extends along the foot of the crags to the south. It includes the remains described above and an area around within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The schedule specifically excludes all post-and-wire fencing; electrified fences; gates; stiles; the above-ground elements of all stone dykes; the above-ground elements of

a concrete triangulation point; an above-ground water storage tank and; the above-ground elements of the 1940s memorial cairn.

2 Statement of National Importance

2.1 National Importance

The national importance of the monument is demonstrated in the following way(s) (see Designations Policy and Selection Guidance, Annex 1, para 17):

- a. The monument is of national importance because it makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the past as a multi-phase complex of forts dating from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age and into the Early Historic period. In particular, it adds to our understanding of Later Prehistoric and Early Historic society in Scotland and the function, use and development of forts and other defended sites. The presence of an inscribed natural rock panel bearing prehistoric cup and ring motifs adds to the significance of the site.
- b. The monument retains structural and other physical attributes which makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the past. The overall plan of the monument is clear and understandable with many features surviving as upstanding remains. There is also significant potential for the survival of buried archaeological deposits within and beneath surviving structural elements. The monument can significantly add to our understanding of domestic settlement, agriculture and economy during the Later Prehistoric and Early Historic periods.
- c. The monument is a very rare example of a complex series of forts surviving as a group. There are very few comparable sites in Scotland that demonstrate visible remains of several distinct forts, across at least three occupation phases. In addition, the cup-and-ring marked panel with the site is an unusual feature and increases the time-depth for activity at this site.
- d. The monument is an impressive example of a series of five forts dating to the Later Prehistoric and Early Historic periods, with a complex circuit of defences. Each fort is a good, representative example of its type, form and construction. As a group, they are an important and rare example of this monument type.
- e. The monument has research potential which could significantly contribute to our understanding of the past. It can tell us about the character, development and use of forts, and the nature of Later Prehistoric and Early Historic society, economy and social hierarchy in this area of Scotland and further afield. Further research and investigation of the surviving remains have the potential to explain the precise chronology of this complex site. Such a chronological explanation may help to inform our understanding of the development of similar prehistoric sites across Scotland.

- f. The monument makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the historic landscape by its association with other prehistoric sites in the area, its highly prominent hilltop location and relationship with the valley below.

3 Assessment of Cultural Significance

This statement of national importance has been informed by the following assessment of cultural significance:

3.1 Intrinsic characteristics (how the remains of a site or place contribute to our knowledge of the past)

The monument is a complex series of prehistoric forts, visible as upstanding remains on a hilltop location. It survives as both buried remains below the soil and the upstanding remains of a series of walls, banks and ditches. Although all the features do not survive above ground across the entire site, the plan of the monument is very clear and understandable. A Bronze Age cup-and-ring marked stone along with prehistoric roundhouse platforms also survive on the site, providing further variety of identifiable remains. This well-preserved collection of forts and other domestic and possible ritual (the fine example of prehistoric rock art) remains is a unique example of a complex defended site with a great time depth of occupation remains, potentially spanning over two millennia.

The visible remains at Turin Hill testify to a longer period of occupation, before, during and after the Iron Age. The cup-and-ring marked rock, and possibly the earliest fort, suggest Bronze Age occupation. The phasing and overlay of the smaller ring forts suggest possible occupation at the end of the Iron Age and possibly into the Early Historic period. However, it is likely that the majority of occupation on Turin Hill dates to the Iron Age period. Excavations of comparable monuments elsewhere, for example Castle O'er, Dumfries and Galloway (scheduled monument SM651; Canmore ID 67376), Craigmarloch Wood, Inverclyde (scheduled monument SM4379; Canmore ID 42453), Dun Knock, Perth and Kinross (scheduled monument SM9434; Canmore ID 26688) and Finavon, Angus (scheduled monument SM139; Canmore ID 34813) demonstrate that such forts were typically built and used between around 800 BC and 400 AD. They represent defended settlements that could have accommodated an extended family or small community.

There is excellent potential for the survival of archaeological features and deposits, including occupation and abandonment debris, artefacts and environmental remains such as charcoal or pollen within the monument. It has the potential to add to our understanding of settlement, land-use and environment during the later Prehistoric and Early Historic periods. It has the potential to provide information about the economy, diet and social status of the occupants, as well as the structure of contemporary society and economy. Study of the monument's form and construction techniques compared with other forts would enhance our understanding of the development sequence of this site and of prehistoric forts in general.

Further scientific study of this site would allow us to develop a better understanding of the nature and chronology of the fort, including its date of origin, the character of

the remains and the overall development sequence. This would also help us to understand the relationship between each of the forts – if any were contemporary and the order in which they were constructed, occupied, altered, abandoned or possibly even re-occupied.

3.2 Contextual characteristics (how a site or place relates to its surroundings and/or to our existing knowledge of the past)

Forts and defended settlements are found throughout Scotland. This example is of particular significance because it is one of the most complex multi-phase, defended settlement sites in Scotland with five distinct forts – all with clearly visible remains.

It is likely related to the nearby later prehistoric defended settlement Of Finavon, fort NE of Hill of Finavon (scheduled monument SM139; Canmore ID 34813) 2.3km north-northwest of Turin Hill. Finavon is a well-preserved example of an Iron Age fort, oblong in plan and was constructed using timber laced walls. These are similarities to the second phase fort at Turin Hill. The two forts are also inter-visible which lends itself to the suggestion they were contemporary and may have shared lines of communication. Other broadly contemporary remains in the area include; the later prehistoric settlement of Balbinny, enclosure 400m E of (scheduled monument SM6357; Canmore ID 34793) 3.4km north-northeast and the later prehistoric settlement remains and Roman camp of Battledykes, Roman Camp (scheduled monument SM2308; Canmore IDs 33667 and 85855) 6km northwest.

As much of the surrounding area is arable farmland, many of the other later prehistoric sites survive only as cropmarks, making this one of only a small number of examples where upstanding remains are visible. There is potential to study these sites together to better understand their functions within the local communities, settlement hierarchy and possible chronological development in the area. The monument has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of prehistoric society and community as well as social organisation, land division and land use. In particular, this monument offers a rare opportunity and the potential to help inform our understanding of possible interaction and relationship between enclosed, defended settlements and nearby Roman camps.

The forts occupy a highly prominent landscape position on top of a hill, bounded by steep crags on the south. The monument has extensive views in all directions as a result of its position in the landscape. The monument may have been positioned here to observe or control movement along the valleys below. The prominent siting of the forts would have also been a highly visible statement of presence and power to those living nearby or travelling through the area.

3.3 Associative characteristics (how a site or place relates to people, events, and/or historic and social movements)

There are no known associative characteristics that contribute to this site's cultural significance.

4 References

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