HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

Case information

Case ID	300040503
File Reference	AMH/2730/2/1
Name of Site	Romanno Mains, barrow 910m SE of

Local Authority	Scottish Borders Council
National Grid Reference	NT 17854 47822
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument
Designation No. (if any)	SM2730
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	28/06/2019
Decision Date	29/01/2020

1. Decision

Scheduled monument name (including designation number)	**Action**
Romanno Mains, barrow 910m SE of SM2730	Amend the entry in the schedule of monuments.

The monument was first scheduled on 13 November 1968 and the documentation does not conform to current standards. The assessment using the selection guidance shows that the monument continues to meet the criterion of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the schedule.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was scheduled on 13/11/1968. There have been no amendments.

2.2 Development Proposals

The request to review this scheduled monument resulted from forest planning and heritage considerations as part of a woodland planting scheme proposal.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The monument was reviewed in response to an external request to review three adjacent scheduled monuments (including scheduled monument SM2728 and SM2729).

The site was visited on 30 August 2019.

3.2 Assessment of national importance

An assessment using the selection guidance for scheduling has been carried out (see Annex A).

The monument was found 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

Designation as a scheduled monument continues to provide the best mechanism for recognising the cultural significance of this nationally important monument.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 20/11/2019 to 11/12/2019.

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

Two consultation responses were received. One related to the accuracy of the representation of the scheduled areas, the other to potential indirect impacts from forestry proposals. These comments did not raise issues that affected the assessment of national importance of the monument.

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ANNEX A – Assessment of national importance
Romanno Mains, barrow 910m SE of

1 Description

The monument comprises a prehistoric burial mound or barrow, likely to date to the Bronze Age. The barrow is visible as a low, roughly circular mound surrounded by a ditch and in part, an outer bank. The monument is located in improved pasture on a northeast-southwest aligned ridge at approximately 370m above sea level.

The mound is up to 6m in diameter and survives to a height of approximately 0.4m. The very slight remains of a silted-up ditch approximately 1.4m wide by less than 0.1m deep are barely visible, surrounding the mound and beyond the ditch, there are the partial remains of an outer bank up to 2.1m wide by less than 0.1m high and most visible to the southeast of the mound.

The scheduled area is a circle, 24m in diameter. 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.

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 as a well-preserved prehistoric burial mound it makes a significant contribution to our understanding or the past.
b. The monument retains structural and other physical attributes which makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the past. It is a relatively intact earthen burial monument with visible remains of a ditch and associated outer bank. There is considerable archaeological potential for surviving deposits in the soil horizons within and below the mound, in the ditch fill and within and below the outer bank.
c. The monument is a part of a less common class of prehistoric burial monument - a ditched barrow with outer ditch and bank.. When compared with more robust stone-built funerary monuments, such as round cairns, earthen barrows are much more vulnerable, and many are only known through cropmark evidence. This example is therefore relatively rare as upstanding barrow.

f. The monument makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the historic landscape by its association with other similar prehistoric sites in the area.

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 barrow survives as a low earthen mound with encircling ditch and partial outer bank. It is not clear how much larger the earthen mound originally was since such monuments are prone to the impacts of agricultural land use such as ploughing. When compared with more robust stone-built funerary monuments, such as round cairns, earthen barrows such as this are much more vulnerable to erosion, and many are only known through cropmark evidence. The presence of an encircling ditch and partial bank around the mound suggest a more complex arrangement, function and significance here, than with simpler, mounded examples.

This barrow is an example of a form of burial practice where one or more burials, often with grave goods, was sealed over by an earthen mound. Excavation of similar monuments has shown that later burials can also be inserted into these monuments, displaying a degree of a re-use and development. The presence of a ditch and partial bank around the mound is of further interest; the fill of the ditch is likely to contain important information about the environment at the time of the construction on the monument.

The form of this barrow indicates a relatively good level of survival – its overall structural footprint is intact and there is good archaeological potential for the survival of structural features, burial goods, human remains and associated archaeological and environmental remains in the various archaeological layers within and below the mound, ditch and bank.

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

Earthen burial monuments such as this are part of a sub-class of more than 600 simple examples of barrows known of across Scotland – these upstanding field monuments generally survive on marginal land where there has been little or no agricultural improvement. Other examples survive on lower, fertile land such as in improved agricultural land, but these are generally known of through cropmark evidence, surviving in the ploughsoil. The presence of an encircling ditch and partial outer bank here suggest a modified form such as the ‘saucer’ type barrows recorded at Pisagah Hill, to the northwest of Hawick (scheduled monument SM2299) and as such a less common type. There are notable concentrations across the lowlands, eastern coasts and in the Western and Northern Isles. Locally, there are more than 70 examples recorded in the Scottish Borders area, from Biggar in the West and

along key routeways such as the River Tweed, towards an Eastern concentration around Duns and eastwards to the North Sea coast.

This type of monument is part of a much wider tradition of marking one or more burials in the landscape, with an overburden of soil or stone, so that they are more visible – in this case a smaller discrete form may suggest a different significance placed upon the site and those who were buried here. In this case the site is located on a northeast-southwest aligned ridge with predominant views westwards to the Pentland Hills and eastwards to the nearby Fingland Burn (and higher ground to it's east).

The barrow lies approximately 350m to the southeast of a pair of barrows, also recorded as having encircling ditches (SM 2728) but with no evidence of outer banks. This local grouping suggests that a form of cemetery involving multiple burials may exist or have existed here. The later remains of medieval agriculture in the immediate area has complicated the interpretation of a further four mounds to the north.

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

There are no significant associative characteristics known of for this monument.

4 References

Historic Environment Scotland http://www.canmore.org.uk reference number CANMORE ID 362654 (accessed on 30/10/2019).

RCAHMS, 1967, *Peeblesshire: an inventory of the ancient monuments.* The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. Edinburgh.