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Our ref: AMN/16/GA
Our Case ID: 201605392
Your ref: 170021/DPP
27 February 2017

Dear Mr Prentice

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011
Aberdeen City - Proposed Stadium Site, Kingsford

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 16 January. We have considered it and its accompanying Environmental Statement (ES) for our role as a consultee under the terms of the above regulations and for our historic environment remit as set out under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013. Our remit is for world heritage sites, scheduled monuments and their setting, category A-listed buildings and their setting, and gardens and designed landscapes (GDLs) and battlefields in their respective Inventories.

You should also seek advice from your archaeology and conservation service for matters including unscheduled archaeology and category B and C-listed buildings.

Planning authorities are expected to treat our comments as a material consideration, and this advice should be taken into account in your decision making. Our view is that the proposals do not raise historic environment issues of national significance and therefore we do not object. Our decision not to object should not be taken as our support for the proposals. This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy on development affecting the historic environment, together with related policy guidance.

Further Information

This response applies to the application currently proposed. An amended scheme may require another consultation with us

Guidance about national policy can be found in our 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series available online at www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes. Technical advice is available on our Technical Conservation website at <http://conservation.historic-scotland.gov.uk/>.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this response. The officer managing this case is Anna Gaffney, who can be contacted by phone on 0131 668 8653 or by email on Anna.Gaffney@hes.scot.

Yours sincerely

Historic Environment Scotland

ANNEX

Our detailed comments

Proposed Development

We understand the development proposals to comprise of a 20,000 seated capacity stadium, a retail store, café and museum. The proposals also include three grass pitches for training use, two training areas, accommodation for grounds staff, an irrigation tank and community facilities which include two floodlit pitch synthetic pitches and a community pavilion containing a gymnasium, changing facilities, offices and multipurpose space. We note the development proposals also include car and bus parking, a memorial garden, three site accesses, landscaping and planting. The proposals would be delivered over two phases, with the community and team training facilities being constructed in phase one and the stadium and associated parking in phase two.

We note the proposed development site is located to the east of the settlements of Westhill and Skene, and to the west of the city of Aberdeen. The site area extends to 24ha and is currently in agricultural use.

Background

We were consulted at the EIA Scoping Stage with regard to the proposals. In our scoping response (07 September 2016), we set out that the principle of the proposed development does not appear to raise issues of national significance for historic environment assets within our remit.

However we did note that we expected any submitted assessment to consider the potential for indirect impacts upon the setting of West Hatton Croft, long cairn 155m WNW of (Scheduled Monument, Index no. 53) and recommended that the assessment include a viewpoint from or across the long cairn towards the proposed development.

As we previously identified in our response to the Scoping Opinion request, there are no heritage assets within our remit within the proposed development site, therefore no direct impacts on our interests. We also note that an assessment of the impacts on the scheduled monument, West Hatton Croft (Index No.53) has been provided, including viewpoints from the cairn towards the development as requested in our previous consultation response.

Our interest

The proposed development site is located approximately 480m south west of West Hatton Croft (Scheduled Monument, Index no. 53).

West Hatton Croft is a well-preserved long burial cairn of the Neolithic period, which survives as an upstanding monument within the farmed landscape. It is approximately 56m long, running from east to west and tapers in along the same direction. The cairn is visually prominent, situated on a small ridge on the south west slope of Cloghill and overlooks lower lying land to the south and south west. It is approximately 56m long and tapers in width from east to west. It is located in the south western corner of a field which is used for grazing. Modern field walls are located along the west and south edges of the field and

cairn, although the cairn itself is situated within an uncultivated area of ground. On the north and east sides there appears to be a stony bank at the base of the cairn.

The cairn appears to comprise of a two phase construction with a round cairn at the west end and a cairn with horns to the east. It is at this point the cairn is at its highest at approximately 2m.

The surrounding landscape is rural in nature however contains residential dwellings and settlements to the south west, agricultural land, major roads, and commercial forestry.

The prominence of the cairn's location and the relationship between the cairn and wider landscape and setting can still be read, despite of the changes to the nature of the landscape, therefore contributing to our understanding and appreciation of the asset.

Environmental Statement

We are content that there is sufficient information within the ES and associated application materials to come to a view on the proposals for our interests.

We agree with the conclusions within the Historic Environment chapter (7) of the ES that the proposed development would constitute a prominent new feature in the setting of the cairn and therefore have an adverse effect on its setting.

However it is acknowledged the proposed development would also be located in low lying land, with the stadium being located as close to the established settlement to the south west as possible. We also agree that the location of the development would continue to allow the cairn's position overlooking these areas to be evident.

We do not consider that the proposed development raises any issues of national significance therefore we do not object to the planning application for the proposed development.

Mitigation

We do not consider that there is any further mitigation for the proposed development which would realistically reduce the impacts on the setting of the above monument.

We note that planting is proposed along the perimeter of the development site and will screen elements of the car parking associated with the proposals, it would not diminish views of the stadium from the monument. The stadium would continue to remain a principal feature in some views from the monument. Therefore, while we consider that there will be a significant impact to the setting of the West Hatton Croft cairn, we do recommend any further mitigation.

Our position

We consider that the proposed development would have a significant impact on the setting of one scheduled monument; West Hatton Croft, long cairn 155m WNW of (Scheduled Monument, Index no. 53), referred to above as West Hatton Croft . However, whilst the

presence of the stadium and associated development of the proposal would be a principle component of the landscape setting of the cairn to the south west, and result in a moderate impact on its setting. However this would not impact on views of the cairn itself. Overall we would not consider the impact sufficient to raise issues of national significance as such to warrant an objection in this particular case.

Historic Environment Scotland

27 February 2017