

Scotland Rural Development Programme - Agri-environment Climate Scheme (AECS) : Management of Scheduled Monuments: Annual recurrent options and capital items

1. Background

There are around 8200 scheduled monuments in Scotland, recognised as being of national importance. Over 80% are located on agricultural land and are affected by land management practices. There is no specific funding for management works on scheduled monuments via the SRDP scheme. However, a number of the AECS annual recurrent options and capital items have the potential to offer dual benefits to both the environment and the long-term management of scheduled monuments. where proposed works meet environmental criteria, but also include a scheduled monument for which the works will be beneficial, additional points may be gained in recognition of the multiple benefits offered.



2. Scheduled monuments

Scheduled monuments are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979). Historic Environment Scotland (HES) encourages positive management of scheduled monuments to ensure these nationally important sites are preserved for future generations to enjoy. Most works on scheduled monuments do however require scheduled monument consent (SMC) and it is an offence to undertake works without consent. This includes any ground-breaking works, fencing, drainage, tree removal, paths, steps and flooding works.

3. Determining the location and extent of the scheduled area

You can obtain information on the location and extent of scheduled monuments, with a link to relevant documentation, via the PASTMAP website (www.pastmap.org). PASTMAP is a free interactive website which shows the location of all scheduled monuments and other heritage features. The legal document for each scheduled monument, which can be downloaded via PASTMAP, identifies the area which is protected and subject to restrictions on works. It is important to identify the scheduled area on the ground as it may extend beyond any visible features in order to protect buried remains. HES is happy to help identify the extent of the scheduled area and mark it out on the ground.

4. Incorporating management of scheduled monuments within your application

There are a number of annual recurrent options and capital items which may benefit the management of scheduled monuments. These are detailed in the sections below, together with information on the types of options and capital items that are not appropriate. If you wish to incorporate management of a scheduled monument, you should include a letter of support from HES with your AECS application. To request a letter of support, or find out more information about the scheduled monuments within your farm boundary, please email HES: hmenquiries@hes.scot or telephone 0131 668 8716. Please include details of your farm unit, and the scheduled monuments you are interested in managing together with the options you intend to take forward. HES aims to respond to your request within 10 working days.

5. Management Options

5.1 Beneficial Options There are a number of annual recurrent options which may be beneficial to scheduled monuments on your land. Where dual benefit can be shown, applications which include such options will gain additional points. These options can broadly be defined in three groups as below (please note that you can only apply for an option if it is listed under your holding in the AECS Targeting Tool and if you meet the eligibility requirements for the option):

(i) Options which remove land from arable cultivation

Around 25% of scheduled monuments are currently on land which is in arable cultivation. In general, the best land management regime for a scheduled monument is for it to be laid down to pasture and grazed lightly. Ploughing within or around a scheduled monument can cause erosion and damage to archaeological features. Areas of a monument which are located on a slope are particularly prone to erosion. Bare soil in winter months can also increase erosion. For this reason, monuments are better left in stubble for spring ploughing, or put in winter cereals.

The options below may be beneficial to scheduled monuments currently subject to erosion through ploughing:

- [Wild bird seed for farmland birds](#)
- [Forage brassica crops for farmland birds](#)
- [Unharvested conservation headlands for wildlife](#)
- [Retention of winter stubbles for wildlife and water quality](#)
- [Stubbles followed by green manure in an arable rotation](#)
- [Grass strips in arable fields](#)
- [Beetlebanks](#)
- [Converting arable at risk of erosion or flooding to low-input grassland](#)

Soil erosion across a scheduled cropmark monument





Sheep rubbing on a monument

(ii) Options which include an element of livestock management

Livestock poaching and rubbing can cause damage to scheduled monuments. Management or exclusion of livestock will help to reduce future erosion, and allow currently exposed soils to heal. Beneficial options include:

- [Water margins and grass strips in arable fields](#)
- [Management of buffer areas for fens and lowland bogs](#)
- [Heath management \(coastal, serpentine, lowland and special interest\)](#)
- [Away wintering sheep](#)
- [Hen harrier grassland management](#)
- [Water margins in grassland fields](#)
- [Species-rich grassland management](#)
- [Moorland Management](#)

(iii) Public Access Options

- Where carefully planned to avoid damage to underlying archaeological deposits, managed paths can have a positive benefit on the long term management of a scheduled monument. Some elements of access works may require SMC, where the works cross a scheduled area. The [Improving public access](#) option (IPA) and associated capital items will be suitable for most scheduled monuments. However, the IPA option is **not** available in the 2024 AECS application round.

5.2 Detrimental Options

There are a number of Annual Recurrent Options where elements of the option would not be appropriate on a scheduled monument due to the potential for damage to the monument. The table below sets out exclusions with a further explanation:

Option	Element	Impact on Scheduled Monument
Wetland Management	Creation of new wetland –raising water levels	For most scheduled monuments, flooding of any kind will not be appropriate. Changes in water levels can significantly affect preservation levels of buried remains. It is an offence to flood a scheduled monument without scheduled monument consent.
Managing Scrub of Conservation Value	Extension of areas of native scrub	Scrub should not be allowed to encroach within a scheduled area due to the detrimental impact of root damage on buried archaeology.
Ancient Wood Pasture	Replacement of single trees	Replacement of trees within a scheduled area may not be appropriate. It is an offence to plant trees within a scheduled area without scheduled monument consent.
Management, Restoration or Creation of Hedgerows	Hedgerow Creation	Hedgerow should not be planted within a scheduled area. It is an offence to plant hedgerow, undertake ground penetrating works, such as any preparatory work or fencing within a scheduled area without consent.

6. Capital Items

6.1 Beneficial capital items

There are a number of capital items which may have a positive impact on scheduled monuments. Where dual benefit can be shown, applications which include these items will receive additional points. For some capital items, SMC will be required prior to works commencing on site.

Capital Item	Advice	SMC
Creation of Beetlebanks	Positive impact on any scheduled monument currently in arable rotation.	No
Creation of Grass Strips and Water Margins in Arable Fields		
Creation of low-input grassland to convert arable land at risk of erosion or flooding		
Creation of Species Rich Grassland		
Control of Scrub/Woody vegetation - Primary treatment	Control of scrub within the scheduled area of a monument can have a positive long-term effect on the management of the monument, but must be done with care. Contact Historic Environment Scotland to establish whether scheduled monument consent is required for the activities you are planning, prior to submitting a scrub control plan.	Yes
Control of scrub/woody vegetation - Removal from site of the cut vegetation	All scrub and woody vegetation should be removed from the protected area of the scheduled monument.	No
Control of scrub - Follow up treatment		
Primary treatment of bracken - manual	Bracken growth causes damage to buried archaeological features. Control of bracken on a scheduled monument will have a long-term positive benefit on the condition of the monument. If considering mechanical means of control or pulling, please contact Historic Environment Scotland to establish whether the work planned requires scheduled monument consent.	Yes
Primary Treatment of Bracken - Mechanised		
Follow-Up Treatment of Bracken - Mechanised		



Bracken encroaching on the earthworks of a scheduled monument

Capital Item	Advice	SMC
Sand Blow Fencing	Scheduled monument consent is required for the erection of posts within the protected area of a scheduled monument. It is an offence to carry out works within a scheduled area without consent.	Yes
Planting of Dune Grasses	Scheduled monument consent is required for the erection of posts within the protected area of a scheduled monument, and may also be required for elements of dune grass planting. It is an offence to carry out works within a scheduled area without consent.	Yes
Manual eradication of rhododendron - Light, Medium or Difficult	Rhododendron growth can cause damage to buried and upstanding archaeological features. Control of Rhododendron within a scheduled area will have a positive impact on the long term management of the monument. However, it must be done with care to ensure the monument is not damaged in the process. Consult Historic Environment Scotland on the methods being proposed within the scheduled area to determine whether scheduled monument consent is required.	Yes – dependant on method
Mechanised eradication of rhododendron - Light, Medium or Difficult		
Foliar spray /treatment for rhododendron control		
Stem Injection Eradication of Rhododendron - Medium or Difficult		
Rabbit proofing existing or new stock / deer fence	Rabbits can cause significant damage to scheduled monuments and their eradication from the scheduled area should be encouraged. Rabbit proofing of fences may require scheduled monument consent. Contact Historic Environment Scotland to discuss your plans. It is an offence to carry out works on a scheduled monument without consent.	Yes
Diversiory feeding for hen harriers	Scheduled monument consent is required for the erection of posts within the protected area of a scheduled monument. It is an offence to carry out works within a scheduled area without consent.	Yes



Burrowing animals, scrub and other vegetation can cause damage to scheduled monuments

6.2 Detrimental capital items

Any capital item which involves ground-breaking works, including fencing, drainage, paths, flooding, hard-standing and the creation of ponds and ditches will require scheduled monument consent.

For many of these items, it is unlikely that scheduled monument consent would be granted, due to the damaging nature of the proposed works. As it is an offence to carry out works on a scheduled monument without consent, any scheduled area forming part of a proposal which involves ground breaking works should be specifically excluded. You will be unlikely to obtain scheduled monument consent for the following capital items (this list is not exhaustive):

- River Embankment Removal
- Wetland Creation - Field drain breaking
- Pond Creation for Wildlife
- Creation of Wader Scrapes
- Ditch Blocking - Plastic Piling Dams
- Ditch blocking - Peat Dams
- Restoration of River Banks
- Managing Steading Drainage and Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Hard Standing for Troughs and Gateways
- Livestock crossing and tracks
- Wetland Creation - Pipe Sluices
- Creation of buffer areas for fens & bogs
- Moving or realigning ditches
- Planting or Replanting of Hedges
- Small-scale tree and shrub planting
- Coastal Embankment
- Post and Rail Tree Guards
- Removal Replacement or planting of individual trees within Ancient Wood Pasture or Hedgerows
- Steading and Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems

Further advice on any options which involves ground-breaking works should be sought from Historic Environment Scotland.

7. Other sources of information from Historic Environment Scotland's website

- Scotland's Scheduled Monuments
- Scheduled Monument Condition Monitoring - A guide for owners, occupiers and managers
- Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Works on scheduled monuments

8. Other Sources of Funding

HES has a number of grant schemes which can assist with the cost of management works on scheduled monuments. These can provide funding for works not covered under annual recurrent options and capital items. Please contact HES for further information.