

Location of the Stone of Destiny

**Public Engagement Exercise initiated by the
Commissioners for the Safeguarding of the
Regalia**

Analysis of Responses

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**Protocol and Honours Team,
Constitution and External Affairs Analysis Team**

**Scottish Government
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Stone of Destiny is currently displayed within the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle, alongside the Honours of Scotland. Responsibility for the care, custody and preservation of the Regalia of Scotland, including the Stone, is vested in the Commissioners for the Safeguarding of the Regalia. They advise The Queen on all matters relating to the Stone.

A public engagement exercise was initiated by the Commissioners to gather views from the public and organisations on factors relevant to the future location of the Stone. This followed the submission of a proposal by Perth & Kinross Council, and its delivery partner, Culture Perth & Kinross, for the Stone to be relocated to Perth to form the centre-piece of a refurbished Perth City Hall. Historic Environment Scotland have also developed plans for a major redevelopment of the display of both the Stone and the Honours at Edinburgh Castle.

The final decision on any proposal to relocate the Stone lies with The Queen, acting on the advice of the Commissioners.

The public engagement exercise

The Scottish Government, on behalf of the Commissioners, published the information submitted by Perth and Kinross Council and Historic Environment Scotland on its [consultation hub](#), and sought responses to the question: “What factors do you consider the Commissioners should take into account in reaching their decision?”.

The public engagement exercise ran from 15 August 2019 until 19 September 2019, and received 1,825 valid responses (i.e. excluding blanks and duplicates). Of these, 1,788 (98%) were from individuals, and 37 (2%) were from organisations.

Analysis of the responses

The analysis of the responses to the exercise was undertaken, on behalf of the Commissioners, by the Scottish Government’s Protocol and Honours, and Constitution and External Affairs Analysis teams.

It is important to note that the views of those who have responded, as summarised below, cannot be assumed to be representative of public opinion in Scotland due to the self-selecting nature of the response.

Respondents were not asked to state their location preferences. However, in order to provide some context for the findings presented, it is noted that a large majority of respondents (around 9 in 10) did state their location preference. Around three quarters of respondents favoured Perth, around 1 in 10 favoured another location than Edinburgh or Perth, and fewer than one in ten favoured the Stone continuing to be located in Edinburgh Castle.

Of the one in ten who favoured another location, a large majority favoured relocating the Stone to Scone.

The factors and issues raised by respondents to the exercise can be categorised into two broad themes:

- 1) those that related to the Stone itself (its historical connections, accessibility, security and display)(three quarters of respondents raised one or more of these factors); and,
- 2) those that related to the spread of attractions / artefacts across Scotland and the potential impacts on tourism and the economy of the proposal to relocate the Stone to Perth (6 in 10 respondents raised one or more points on this theme either in addition to or instead of points raised about the Stone itself).

Factors / issues related to the Stone of Destiny

The factor most frequently mentioned by respondents as relevant to the future location of the Stone, was its historical connections. Of the two thirds of respondents who mentioned the Stone's historical connections, a very large majority did so in the context of highlighting its connection to Perthshire.

Around a third of respondents mentioned issues around accessibility of the Stone, in terms of cost, location and access for those with disabilities. One in five respondents to the exercise mentioned the importance (in their view) of the Stone being free to visit (visitors currently need to pay entry to Edinburgh Castle to see the Stone. Under the Perth proposal, the Stone would be free to visit). Several respondents noted the travel time figures to Perth from across Scotland. The Perth proposal was perceived by a number of respondents to provide better access for people with disabilities.

Just under one in ten respondents mentioned the security / safety of the Stone as a factor that the Commissioners should take into account. Most of these respondents raised it as a factor regardless of the future location of the Stone, while a smaller number felt that Edinburgh Castle would be the safest location.

Smaller numbers of respondents provided detailed comments relating to the conservation of the Stone, its interpretation/display, and cost / stewardship implications that may arise from relocating the Stone.

Factors related to the spread of attractions / artefacts across Scotland and impacts on tourism and the economy

A third of respondents mentioned the importance of increasing tourism / visitors / footfall, and the overwhelming majority of these were in relation to the tourism benefits to Perth / Perthshire of the Stone being relocated to that area. On a related theme, three in ten respondents stated that relocating the Stone to Perth would bring economic / employment / commercial / regeneration benefits to the surrounding area.

Three in ten respondents made comments on the theme of the geographical spread of attractions around Scotland, stating that too much is centralised in Edinburgh / the Central Belt and that attractions should be better spread around the country.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The Stone of Destiny is currently displayed within the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle, alongside the Honours of Scotland. Under the terms of their Royal Warrant, responsibility for the care, custody and preservation of the Regalia of Scotland, including the Stone, is vested in the Commissioners for the Safeguarding of the Regalia. They advise The Queen on all matters relating to the Stone.

Perth & Kinross Council, and its delivery partner, Culture Perth & Kinross, submitted a proposal to the Commissioners for the Stone to be relocated to Perth to form the centre-piece of a refurbished Perth City Hall (see Annex 1). Historic Environment Scotland have also developed plans for a major redevelopment of the display of both the Stone and the Honours at Edinburgh Castle (see Annex 2).

The final decision on any proposal to relocate the Stone lies with The Queen, acting on the advice of the Commissioners. In order to inform their advice, the Commissioners initiated a public engagement exercise to gather views from the public and organisations on factors relevant to the future location of the Stone.

This report presents analysis of the responses to the public engagement exercise.

2.2 The public engagement exercise

The Scottish Government, on behalf of the Commissioners, published the information submitted by Perth and Kinross Council and Historic Environment Scotland on its [consultation hub](#).

The public engagement exercise sought responses to the question:

“What factors do you consider the Commissioners should take into account in reaching their decision?”.

The exercise ran from 15 August 2019 until 19 September 2019.

2.3 The respondents and responses

The public engagement exercise received 1,941 responses. One hundred and two of these responses were blank, and a further fourteen responses were duplicates where the same individual had responded twice. The final number of valid responses, excluding blanks and duplicates, was therefore **1,825**.

One thousand seven hundred and eighty eight responses (98%) were from individuals. Of these, thirteen respondents identified themselves as elected representatives (councillors, MSPs or MPs), all representing constituencies in and around Perthshire¹.

Thirty seven responses (2%) were from organisations (see Annex 3 for a list of responding organisations).

The exercise generated strong interest in those geographic areas closest to the proposed Perth site, with over 7 in 10 responses received from respondents providing postcode addresses in Perth (PH), Kirkcaldy (KY), Dundee (DD), and Falkirk (FK). Just under one in ten responses were from respondents providing Edinburgh (EH) postcodes, one in twenty from Glasgow postcodes, and fewer than 2% of responses from each of Scotland's other postcode areas. Eighty two responses (4%) were received from individuals providing postcodes outside Scotland.

Respondents' postcodes cannot be assumed to represent strength of attachment to the proposal local to that area. However, for the purposes of this exercise, it is useful to note the localities that generated high levels of response.

Almost all responses were submitted via the SG's consultation hub. Ten responses were submitted via email, and were then uploaded to the consultation hub.

2.4 Approach to analysing the responses

The exercise posed a single open question, and the analysis was therefore primarily qualitative in nature. All responses were downloaded from Citizen Space and reviewed to identify the themes and factors raised. Responses were coded and frequency analysis undertaken to identify the most frequently raised points (although, as noted in the section below, this was not a quantitative exercise due to the non-representative nature of the response).

A large number of respondents took the opportunity to express their preference for Perth or Edinburgh as a location for the Stone, without directly addressing the question posed in the public engagement exercise. All responses were included in the analysis, and the numbers of respondents stating a preference for Perth, Edinburgh or another location are noted in the introduction to Chapter 2, to provide context for the range of factors and issues then identified by respondents.

It should be noted that this analysis presents views as provided by respondents, and does not comment on the accuracy or otherwise of the points they raise. A range of views were submitted, some challenging the historical accuracy of other views that have been publicly expressed. This reflects the range of understanding prevalent in the long running debate on the Stone itself.

¹ Responses may have been received from elected representatives from other areas who did not identify themselves as such in their respondent information forms.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the range of responses received to the public engagement exercise, drawing out the themes that emerged and the detail of specific factors raised by respondents.

2.5 Interpretation of the findings

It is important to note that the views of those who have responded cannot be assumed to be representative of the views of the wider population due to the self-selecting nature of the response. This analysis therefore seeks to draw out the range of factors and issues raised by respondents for consideration by the Commissioners; providing some indication of how widespread the view was among respondents, but intentionally avoiding a quantitative assessment of the response as being to any extent 'representative' of all views.

3. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

3.1 Introduction

The public engagement exercise posed the following question:

“What factors do you consider the Commissioners should take into account in reaching their decision?”.

Respondents were not invited to state their location preferences. However, in order to provide some context for the findings presented in this chapter, it is noted at the outset that a large majority of respondents (around 9 in 10) did state their location preference. Around three quarters of respondents favoured Perth, around 1 in 10 favoured another location than Edinburgh or Perth, and fewer than one in ten favoured the Stone continuing to be located in Edinburgh Castle.

Of the one in ten who favoured another location, a large majority favoured relocating the Stone to Scone (see ‘Alternatives’ section later in this chapter).

It is noted again that the above cannot be interpreted as representative of public opinion in Scotland due to the self-selecting nature of the response.

3.2 Themes and main factors/issues raised

The most frequently cited factors or issues raised by respondents for consideration by the Commissioners were as follows²:

Two thirds of respondents mentioned:

- the importance of the historical connections of the Stone (over 9 in 10 of these respondents raised this in the context of support for the Stone’s relocation to Perthshire)

Around a third of respondents mentioned (in each case mostly in the context of support for the Stone’s relocation to Perthshire):

- the importance of accessibility / cost to visit
- the importance / benefits of spreading attractions across Scotland
- tourism / footfall / visitor numbers
- economy / jobs / commercial / regeneration benefits

Around one in ten or fewer respondents mentioned:

- security / safety issues
- conservation matters relating to the care of the Stone
- the appropriate interpretation / display of the Stone
- the cost of moving the Stone

The factors and issues raised by respondents to the exercise can be categorised into two broad themes:

² Note that the factors/issues raised do not sum to 100% as respondents could raise more than one point.

1. those that related to the Stone itself (its historical connections, accessibility, security and display)(three quarters of respondents raised one or more of these factors); and
2. those that related to the spread of attractions / artefacts across Scotland and the potential impacts on tourism and the economy of the proposal to relocate the Stone to Perth (6 in 10 respondents raised one or more points on this theme either in addition to or instead of points raised about the Stone itself).

The following sections detail the range of views expressed under the two main themes set out above.

3.3 Factors / issues related to the Stone of Destiny

Historical connections

As noted above, the factor most frequently mentioned by respondents as relevant to the future location of the Stone, was its historical connections. Of the two thirds of respondents who mentioned the Stone's historical connections, a very large majority did so in the context of highlighting its connection to Perthshire (and/or lack of historical connection to Edinburgh) as a factor in favour of relocating the Stone to Perth Town Hall. A further one in ten also cited historical connections in suggesting the alternative location of Scone.

A large number of individual respondents stated that the Stone should be 'returned' to its 'symbolic'/'spiritual'/'historical' home in Perthshire, with some noting that it is believed to be made from Perthshire stone.

"The stone began its recorded life in Perthshire. It should return there to its historical home" [individual respondent]

A third sector respondent commented that, while the original home of the Stone was not known, since records have been kept it has had a profound link with Scone, which is 'very nearby' the Perth proposal. They noted that they would draw the Commissioners' attention to the Burra Charter, 'which highlights the importance of place in establishing and maintaining cultural significance and identity'.

A smaller number of respondents mentioned in their response that the Stone should be kept with the Honours of Scotland at Edinburgh Castle. One person commented:

"The Stone of Destiny is emphatically not a museum piece; the Stone is an inalienable part of the Regalia of Scotland. As such, it is entirely inappropriate to separate the Stone from the rest of the Regalia. Public access to the Stone is important, but it is important within the context of understanding the historical, ceremonial, and once-political role of coronations. That is achieved with the Stone alongside the rest of the Regalia; it is not achieved in separating articles of the Regalia" [individual respondent]

An opposing argument was, however, put forward by an academic respondent, who made the following comment:

"It may also be worth considering the factors which should not be taken into account; these include the pressure exerted by local politicians and local

media. It is striking how ill-informed or simplistic many such comments have been, on both sides. One Edinburgh MSP is reported to have suggested that 'the Stone of Destiny belongs with the Honours of Scotland'. Historically this is not so, as each represents a quite different concept of kingship and this was one of the key points made by academic historians (including myself) in 1996 in arguing against the housing of the two sets of regalia together, side by side, in Edinburgh Castle. On the other side, however, the frequent iteration by local Perth and Perthshire MSPs that the Stone was 'used for the coronation of kings of Scotland' betrays a worrying ignorance of Scottish history or poor briefing. What are also misleading are the comments from the same quarter which conflate Scone and Perth, reflected in the claim made by one local MSP that 'the Stone of Destiny should return to Perth'" [Professor Michael Lynch (Sir William Fraser Professor of Scottish History and Palaeography, University of Edinburgh (1992-2005))]

Accessibility / cost to visit

Around a third of respondents mentioned issues around accessibility of the Stone, in terms of cost, location and access for those with disabilities.

One in five respondents to the exercise mentioned their view of the importance of the Stone being free to visit. This view is encapsulated in the following comment:

"It would be a significant demonstration of Scotland's commitment to making the country's heritage assets more open and freely accessible to people who live in Scotland as well as to those visiting the country"
[individual respondent]

An academic respondent further noted that the Stone should be freely available to be visited regardless of income and mobility. They commented that the Perth proposal meets this criterion, while the Historic Environment Scotland proposal does not, noting that 'At present, by their own figures, about 98% of visitors have had to pay full price of entry to Edinburgh castle, at £19 per head' and that 'The castle on top of its steep hill can also be awkward for people with mobility problems'.

Several respondents noted the travel time figures to Perth from across Scotland. For example, the MSP for Perthshire North noted,

"The arguments for returning the Stone to Perthshire are not just historical, but also logistical. Perth is within 90 minutes of travel time of over 70% of Scotland's population. Perth is an ideal and accessible location for a very wide cross-section of the population to understand more about the historic significance of the Stone". [John Swinney MSP]

The Perth proposal was perceived by a number of respondents to provide better access for people with disabilities. For example one respondent noted:

"Accessibility: The Stone of Destiny display should be widely accessible to the people of Scotland including for people with a disability (without the

need of assistance, but also from a financial point of view. Perth's proposal is the only proposal fully meeting that criteria as the display would be on ground floor and free of charge. Perth is also centrally located with easy access to public transport from all over Scotland. On the contrary, you need to pay £17.50 to access Edinburgh Castle and accessibility to the Castle and in the Castle is difficult: Extract from website: A limited number of accessible spaces on Castle Esplanade are available to Blue Badge holders on a first come, first served basis. A mobility vehicle can take visitors unable to manage the steep slopes from the esplanade to Crown Square (and back again later). The service runs on a first come, first served basis so there may be a wait before the car is available. There may be a restricted service operating in peak summer months and very occasionally we are unable to provide the service at short notice due to factors outwith our control. All areas of the castle are accessed from a steep and curved central route that is about 350m long. Access to the vaults is down numerous short flights of steps, with handrails on both sides. The Royal Palace and apartments have no wheelchair access. Access to the Honours of Scotland is via a ramp and then a lift to the first floor" [individual respondent]

Security

Just under one in ten respondents mentioned the security / safety of the Stone as a factor that the Commissioners should take into account. One respondent noted:

"The historical and symbolic importance of the Stone of Destiny has meant that through its long history there have been numerous attempts to steal the Stone, some of them successful. Furthermore, security around the Stone must be high in order to deter and prevent any possible attempt to vandalise it as a protest against the Royal Family or monarchy" [individual respondent]

A majority of these responses commented that security should be a factor given due consideration by the Commissioners no matter the future location of the Stone. One public sector organisation commented that the national significance of the Stone requires a level of security that may be beyond the normal standards of museum/heritage security. In their view this should include '24 hours, year-round staffed security presence on site'.

Several respondents noted the importance of security but expressed the view that both proposals would provide an adequate level of security for the Stone.

A smaller number felt that Edinburgh Castle would be the safest location, as encapsulated in the following comment:

"In terms of security, while Perth has fully addressed this the stone and honours of Scotland are undoubtedly safer in Edinburgh Castle with its existing security arrangements". [individual respondent]

Conservation

Some respondents mentioned the importance of the conservation of the Stone itself, with an academic respondent stating:

“The Perth and Kinross case outlines the role of a trained conservation officer, with a back-up role provided by Historic Environment Scotland. That is obviously a bare minimum requirement. Historic Environment Scotland itself details the multi-layered roles of its in-house professionals, including historians, conservators and interpreters. There seems to be very different sets of skills outlined in the two cases submitted to the Commissioners. If this was the only criterion (which it is not), the case for HES appears to be overwhelming” [Professor Michael Lynch (Sir William Fraser Professor of Scottish History and Palaeography, University of Edinburgh (1992-2005))]

An individual respondent also noted their support for the case set out by Historic Environment Scotland (for continuing to locate the Stone in Edinburgh Castle) in relation to this criterion, commenting:

“The Stone of Destiny is an object of incredible antiquity, and is far older than coronation objects in the rest of the UK, and the rest of Europe, and indeed the rest of the world. Already damaged, the Stone requires expert conservation, which is ably supplied by Historic Environment Scotland at Edinburgh Castle. The proposals around Perth's City Hall development have not persuaded me that the Stone would receive the necessary expert conservation attention that it merits and requires”. [individual respondent]

The view of another individual respondent, however, was that:

“Conservation is an important issue. Having worked in this field, I have no doubt that any reasonably competent local authority now possesses the skills to maintain a perfectly good regime in this respect”.

Cost / sustainability

A number of respondents mentioned in their response that they were opposed to moving the Stone due to the cost to the taxpayer, and that the money would be better spent on other priorities.

The importance of being able to afford the ongoing maintenance and security costs of the Stone over time was also raised by a small number of respondents. For example, one respondent noted:

“Ability to fund ongoing security costs- this is a concern and I am not entirely clear how CPK would manage this. I'd expect the Royal Family to subsidise this and cover cost of moving Stone for any future Coronations (alternatively they could be held in Perth)” [individual respondent]

One public sector organisation noted in their response that, while the location of the Stone of Destiny need not be considered permanent, any decision as to its location should take into account the long-term stewardship requirements of displaying an artefact of its status in the chosen display setting, and any risks across the projected life span of any loan activity.

They further commented that the host should have the ability to attract and manage visitors, support marketing, handle media and public interest, facilitate access to as wide an audience as possible and maintain required display standards (expertise, staff and budgets to deliver security, environment and interpretation needs).

Interpretation / display

Both academic and individual respondents made comments on the presentation and interpretation of the Stone, as a criterion that the Commissioners should take into account. One academic respondent commented:

“The interpretation of the Stone needs to strike a balance between accessibility and academic integrity. Accessibility, which should take into account the different expectations and knowledge of visitors, should not be confused with a populist or simplified approach.

The case made by Historic Environment Scotland is multi-layered and careful to underline the complexity of issues raised by the origins of the Stone, its role in early kingship, and its ongoing status. It is careful to avoid over-statement and displays appropriate caution in any speculation which goes beyond provable historical fact.

The case made by Perth and Kinross council is sweeping and, in places, contentious, such as the claim that ‘Scotland was born from the Perthshire landscape’.

... There is another feature of the Perth and Kinross Council document which gives cause for concern. Nowhere does it detail who will be involved in preparing the material for display, not only of the Stone itself but also of the other ingredients planned for the new museum. Is the expertise all to be in-house? My own first-hand experience of the planning and design for the Museum of Scotland carried out in the 1990s suggests that outside expertise is not only desirable but essential” [Professor Michael Lynch (Sir William Fraser Professor of Scottish History and Palaeography, University of Edinburgh (1992-2005))]

Another academic respondent (who did not want their name or response to be published), noted the importance of the Stone being properly interpreted, and commented that the Perth proposals were inadequate compared to the Historic Environment Scotland proposals in relation to the early history and archaeology of the stone. Their view was that, if the award were made to Perth, Historic Environment Scotland should be asked to take over the interpretation. They made further comments regarding the proposals for how the Stone would be displayed, commenting that the Perth proposal was not very clear about what the display would actually look like. They commended Historic Environment Scotland’s proposal to stop displaying the Stone alongside the Honours of Scotland, but expressed the view that their proposal to display the stone as though in mid-air is ‘disconcerting for an object that was surely intended to be seen and used on the ground’.

An opposing view was expressed by another respondent:

“The Presentation illustrating its historical importance must be accessible, accurate and engaging for all. My impression of the language styles used in the submissions is that CPK are more adept at speaking to the people than HES” [individual respondent]

Comments were also made by respondents regarding presentation of information in Gaelic and using British Sign Language (BSL), with one respondent noting:

“All information and exhibitions should be bilingual with English and Gaelic. Where possible, Scots and BSL should also be integrated into the exhibition spaces. Gaelic is an important historical language in Scotland; modern Gaelic being the direct descendant of the language spoken by the people who unified and founded the Kingdom of Scotland, and those people being the namesake of the country, Scoti. Gaelic, Scots, and BSL need to be given more equal status to English as autochthonous languages” [individual respondent]

A similar point was made by another respondent, who commented:

“The Scottish Gaelic language featured in none of the options presented during this consultation. The Stone of Destiny, or An Liath Fàil, is predominantly a Gaelic cultural symbol, being born out of the Gaelic-speaking nation of Alba and used for the coronation of the Gaelic-speaking kings of Alba ... whichever location receives the Stone must include fully bilingual - or better trilingual (Scots, Gaelic, and English) interpretation - for this national treasure. It is no longer good enough to provide a public service solely in English” [individual respondent]

3.4 Factors related to the spread of attractions / artefacts across Scotland and impacts on tourism and the economy

Tourism / footfall / visitor gains

A third of respondents mentioned the importance of increasing tourism / visitors / footfall, and the overwhelming majority of these were in relation to the tourism benefits to Perth / Perthshire of the Stone being relocated to that area.

A third sector organisation respondent noted that ‘returning’ the Stone to Perth had the potential to significantly boost tourism to the City. They commented that the Stone would be the main attraction in a central location, and would not be ‘lost amongst an embarrassment of riches, as is the potential if it remains in Edinburgh’.

A large number of individual respondents also highlighted potential tourism benefits to Perthshire of the Stone being moved to Perth, for example:

“Perth currently has a very low tourist count compared to Edinburgh and is badly in need of government/national support to help reinvigorate the town centre. This is an excellent opportunity similar to the V&A in Dundee”.
[individual respondent]

Not all respondents agreed, however, that the Stone would be a significant tourist draw for Perth. One respondent noted:

“As a proud Scot and living only eight miles from Perth, I am afraid that I believe the Stone should remain in Edinburgh. I do not see it being a significant enough attraction to bring large numbers of people to Perth.”
[individual respondent]

Geographic spread of attractions

Three in ten respondents made comments on the theme of the geographical spread of attractions around Scotland, stating that too much is centralised in Edinburgh / the Central Belt and that attractions should be better spread around the country.

Among these responses, were the following comments encapsulating the view:

“With the V&A in Dundee and the stone in Perth it is likely to spread the income generation from tourism more equally throughout Scotland”
[individual respondent].

“Edinburgh already enjoys being one of the most tourist visited cities in the World, with Edinburgh Castle a top venue with or without the Stone of Scone” [individual respondent]

“Edinburgh has many attractions and I'm sure the relocation of the stone wont diminish the amount of visitors, even though all reports say that Edinburgh has too many visitors and would look to a tourist room rate levy”
[Councillor Roz McCall, Ward 6 - Strathearn, Perth & Kinross Council]

Economy / jobs / commercial / regeneration benefits

Three in ten respondents stated that relocating the Stone to Perth would bring economic / employment / commercial / regeneration benefits to the surrounding area. This was highlighted as a factor for consideration by the Commissioners by elected representatives of the surrounding area as well as a large number of individual respondents. The following comment captures the essence of much of the response on this issue:

“Perth needs more investment; one could argue that this is less important for Edinburgh which is able to sustain a strong tourist economy. The potential economic boost associated with the stone's return (increased spend in local businesses in Perth and surrounding area) should be a factor” [individual respondent]

3.5 Alternatives suggested by respondents

Around 1 in 10 respondents favoured another location or option than the two put forward in the public engagement exercise. These locations are listed below with the number of respondents who mentioned them in brackets:

- Scone / Scone Palace (163)
- Westminster Abbey / “Coronation Chairs as part of our United Kingdom” (7)
- Arbroath Abbey (2)
- National Museum of Scotland (2)
- Scottish Parliament (2)
- Dunfermline Abbey (1)
- Linlithgow Palace (1)
- Stirling (1)
- Touring exhibit (1)

Those who favoured Scone commented that this was the ‘true home’ of the Stone.

Both an academic and a public body (who did not want their names or responses published) proposed the National Museum of Scotland as an alternative location for the Stone, commenting that it is ‘truly the national treasure house of Scotland, unlike the castle, which apart from the Honours contains only military matters’. They further noted that it would be free to visit at the National Museum of Scotland, and that its ‘display with the national collections would open up for visitors the full story of the Stone’s materiality and history, in a context that connects medieval and modern perceptions of material culture, sovereignty and identity in Scotland, and that communicates the power and aura of objects in our national story’

The Scottish Parliament was also proposed by two respondents, with an academic respondent commenting that it would be entirely appropriate for the Stone to sit in the centre of the debating chamber, where it would be secure and freely available to visit. They further stated that ‘here it would be a living symbol of Scotland in everyday celebration of devolved sovereignty, and when the sovereign addressed Parliament it would be entirely appropriate to do so over the stone itself’.

The National Trust for Scotland proposed a touring exhibit noting:

“The Trust would welcome the Stone to be displayed and presented at either site. However there is a third option that could be considered. The Stone, like with other historical and art pieces could travel around Scotland on loan and be presented at different locations. This would attract tourism throughout Scotland and take the story of the Stone and Scotland’s history to communities which may not have had access to it in the past. Like with other travelling collections, security would need to be considered to be appropriate at each location.

National Museums Scotland regularly have touring exhibits which they say “create inspiring and memorable visitor experiences.” Touring artefacts are able to be shown to a “... broader range of audiences, revealing the many fascinating stories these objects tell.” [National Trust for Scotland]

ANNEX 1: MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

Why Perth?

Perth is at the heart of Scotland's story. To tell this story Perth and Kinross Council and its partners are investing £23m in a spectacular new museum at the former Perth City Hall, opening early 2022.

In Perth the Stone of Destiny will be free to visit, in a city centre public building two miles from its original home at Scone.

Many myths surround the Stone of Destiny, but we do know it was probably quarried from Perthshire sandstone. It was used for early kingship ceremonies as Scotland emerged from the realms of the Picts, Gaels and Scots. In the 9th century Kenneth MacAlpin made Perth Scotland's first capital.

City Hall was Perth's 20th century civic heart. Now world class architects Mecanoo, known for projects in New York, Manchester and elsewhere are bringing it back to life. It will tell the story of how Scotland was shaped by people, places and events uniquely associated with Perth.

The new museum is part of the Council's ambitious vision to bring Perth's extraordinary culture alive for local people, for Scotland and UK and international visitors.



Transforming Access

In Perth the Stone of Destiny will be free of charge for everyone to visit, in a public building designed to be fully accessible for all visitors.

The Stone will be displayed at ground floor level.

Perth is within 90 minutes' travel time for over 70% of Scottish residents, around 3.7 million people.

City Hall has also received £10M from the Tay Cities Deal which is making the region into a culture and creative industries corridor spanning Pitlochry, Perth, Dundee, Arbroath and St

Andrews. Projects like V&A Dundee and City Hall are bringing new jobs and economic benefits to the region.

The experience



At City Hall the wider significance of the Stone can be revealed by displaying it alongside one of the UK's oldest and most important public collections. The Perth and Kinross collections have formal National Recognition Status.

From prehistoric and Neolithic stone carvings to huge enigmatic Pictish slabs, the displays will tell the story of how ancient Scotland was shaped. They set the scene for the Stone of Destiny before visitors enter the centrepiece display, the Stone Pavilion.



Visitors will be introduced to the Stone through a spectacular short film sweeping through time to witness how Scotland was born from the Perthshire landscape. Pictish power bases at nearby Forteviot, Abernethy and Dunkeld rose and fell before Scone became the centre of religious and political power and Scotland emerged with Perth as its first capital. The film will also tell the life story of the Stone from its mythic origins to its role in early kingship

ceremonies, and its creation as a powerful symbol of nationhood and monarchy which remains today.

After the film, visitors will see the Stone of Destiny.



Displayed in a custom-designed secure case the Stone will be animated with light and sound, recreating the 13th century crowning of Alexander III. This is the most fully documented of the early kingship ceremonies.

Using medieval accounts the City Hall team will bring to life the blessing of the young King in Scone Abbey, the ritual procession to nearby Moot Hill and the seating of the King on the Stone of Destiny. This single moment in the history of the Stone will bring its wider significance vividly to life.

Finally visitors will discover the later history of the Stone: its removal to Westminster Abbey by Edward I and its role in Coronations up to the present day.

From here the displays will take up the wider story of how Perth and Scotland were shaped and in which the Stone plays a part. Visitors will have an unrivalled insight into medieval Perth as a major Scottish Royal Burgh: a melting pot of trade, religion, culture and politics.

The Scottish Reformation was sparked in Perth at St John's Kirk, which sits opposite City Hall. And the Jacobite Risings and the Highland Clearances profoundly changed Perthshire people and places from the eighteenth century onwards.

Beyond City Hall

A short walk away is Perth Museum and Art Gallery. Where City Hall tells the story of ancient Scotland, Perth Museum will take up the story of modern Scotland through its stunning art and photography collections. Perth and Kinross holds the largest collection of John Duncan Fergusson, one of the few British artists who participated in the European Impressionist and Modernist movements. Visitors will also be encouraged to enjoy many other heritage attractions nearby. These include Scone Palace itself, the Black Watch Museum, the Loch Tay Iron Age Crannogs and other extraordinary archaeological sites.

Care and conservation

City Hall is owned by Perth and Kinross Council. It will be managed by Culture Perth and Kinross, the charitable Trust which cares for the museum collections. The highly regarded curatorial team includes a specialist medieval archaeologist, expert in caring for objects as ancient as the Stone.

The Stone is fragile. Its condition will be closely monitored by a trained conservation officer in line with current UK best practice standards already used for the wider Perth and Kinross collections.

Any conservation work will be carried out by external specialists with further advice from Historic Environment Scotland, Scotland's national heritage body.

Security

City Hall and the Stone displays are being designed to standards advised by the UK Museums Security Adviser. Police Scotland has advised on wider security.

The Stone will be invigilated at all times during opening hours, with 24 hour security in place.

All City Hall staff will be appointed by Perth and Kinross Council or Culture Perth and Kinross, subject to full pre-employment checks.

The Commissioners for the Safeguarding of the Regalia will receive regular reports on care and condition. No changes to security, care and display arrangements will be made without their permission.

The Stone of Destiny will return to Westminster Abbey for Coronations. The design of City Hall takes this into account.

ANNEX 2: MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

Edinburgh Castle

The Royal Palace of Edinburgh Castle is the current home and can offer a permanent, secure home for the Stone of Destiny.

Here, the Stone can be accessibly presented in an appropriate Royal setting. Its story, representing the ancient roots of the kingdom of Scotland, as a symbol of Scottish nationhood and as a 'maker of majesty', can be inter-woven with that of the Crown Jewels; the other 'icons of Royal Scotland'. It can continue to be safeguarded by multi-layered security systems and the expertise of Historic Environment Scotland's collections conservators.

The world's oldest artefact still used to make monarchs, the Stone is an icon of national importance with associations across Scotland. Given its continuing use in Coronations, its care and presentation should be addressed in view of its role, and the associated responsibilities, as an active ceremonial object rather than as a passive historical artefact.



Image 1 – The clocktower and flagpole mark the Royal Palace within Edinburgh Castle.

Security

The physical protection of the Stone is a major consideration. Edinburgh Castle is a highly secured site with multiple layers of security. The area that would house a new Stone presentation is adjacent to the crown vault in which the Stone is currently displayed. The existing systems – staffing, physical and digital - would be extended and enhanced to ensure the Stone remains as fully protected as the Crown Jewels.

Care and Communications

Edinburgh Castle is managed by Historic Environment Scotland and, as such, draws on the expertise of a wide range of in-house professionals including historians, conservators, interpreters, learning managers, visitor operations teams, and communications experts. All those skills would be available to safeguard and care for the Stone in the long term including managing its transport to, and involvement in, future Coronations.

Access

About 75% of visitors to Edinburgh Castle visit the crown vault where the Stone is currently housed. More than 21 million people have seen the Stone in the last 23 years. Of those, about 42,000 enter free-of-charge and another 10,000 for £2 or less each year.

In 2018-19 the Castle attracted 2.19 million visitors including:

- 74,000 - residents in Scotland
- 412,000 - rest of the UK
- 1.5 million - overseas
- 30% from the Commonwealth (including UK)
- Scottish diaspora number unknown but significant.
- 43,069 learners

Guests of the First Minister or other Ministers at Castle receptions often visit the Crown Room.

Re-presenting the Stone

Work has been progressing since mid-2011 to update understanding of the Stone and Crown Jewels to improve their care and in preparation for re-presenting them.

A *Makers of Majesty* experience in first-floor apartments of the Royal Palace would address Scots and international visitors alike. The Crown Jewels would be re-presented in the purpose-built James VI vault and the Stone would be displayed in the adjacent chamber:

The Stone Room

The Stone would sit at the heart of a dignified, respectful space encircled by a single statement explaining its role as a sacred object and maker of majesty – the world's oldest artefact still used to make monarchs – presented in multiple languages. Focused atmospheric lighting would enhance the dignity alluding to the Stone's significance and national importance.

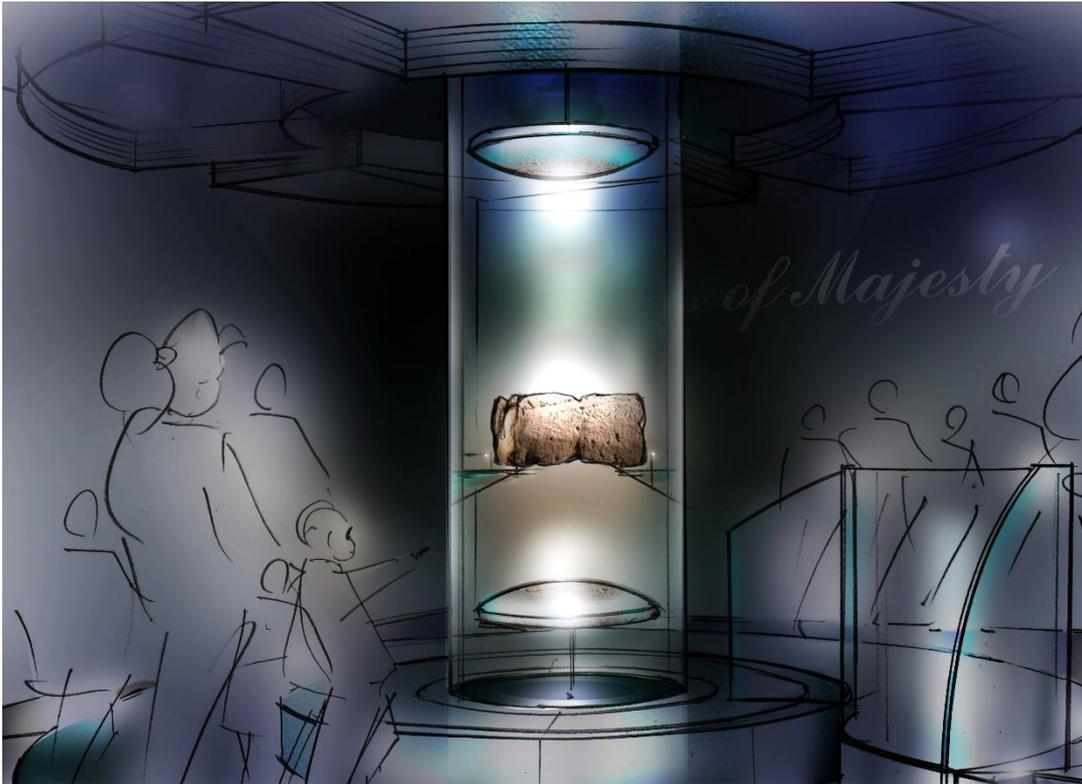


Image 2: The Stone of Destiny between convex mirrors extending visual access to all its features.

The 'Makers of Majesty' exhibition would continue to explore the ceremonies of power in which the objects, including the Stone, played or continue to play a central role. Using multi-sensory engagement it begins with the simple message: the icons of Royal Scotland are still in use - the Stone to enthrone monarchs and the Crown to represent the monarch at the opening of the Scottish Parliament every five years.

Perhaps beginning with a tantalising glimpse of an inauguration ceremony on Iona and progressing through ceremonies at Dunadd, Scone, Holyrood and Stirling. Seven types of ceremony would then be explained, including:

- Inauguration – using the rock-cut Dunadd footstep, the Stone as a step and then as a seat.
- Coronation – in Scotland and at Westminster incorporating the Stone.
- Opening/Closing of Scottish Parliament: the Crown Jewels at these events, historical and current.

In two further display areas – 'Crown, Sword & Sceptre and Deciphering the Stone' - the detail of the objects would be celebrated and explained, from the filigree engraving on the Sceptre to the scars wrought into the Stone. Writ large for visitors, and imbued with meaning, these details would deepen understanding and the sense of significance.



Image 3: Making majesty, the Stone enthrones monarchs including (from top left), Alexander III, Henry VII, Henry VIII, Richard II, George VI and Victoria.

Visitors would be able to forensically interrogate what seems a simple block of sandstone. Possible explanations of its scars, recently 'translated' would include:



Image 4: A reflectance transformation image of the Stone reveals its scars.

- 800s. Wear at right end at back: due to prolonged footfall on a step. The Stone was originally used as a threshold/step into an ancient, hallowed place in the Palace or church at Scone?

- Late 800s/900s. Two metal staples: perhaps inserted either to help fix it together with other slabs in a stone chair, or to prevent its removal when left outside?
- About 1300. Filed-down ends of the two metal staples: when the Stone was placed within the new Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey?
- 1657. Damage to bottom edges: possibly when carried from Westminster Abbey to Hall for the inauguration of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector?
- 1950. The crack: broken in two when pulled from the Coronation Chair by Scottish nationalists striving to return it to Scotland.

The great time-depth and unique significance of the Stone's primary function in the making of monarchs would be illustrated through the projection of an animated frieze of monarchs, that will envelop visitors, from Kenneth McAlpin to Her Majesty The Queen. This remarkable procession of about 60 kings and queens including Macbeth, Malcolm Canmore, David I, Richard III and Victoria, will emphasise the unrivalled pedigree of the Stone.

The story would continue as the Royal Palace moves centre stage in the Castle as 'The Nation's Treasure-House'.

ANNEX 3: LIST OF ORGANISATIONAL RESPONDENTS

Thirty seven respondents stated that they were responding as organisations³. The organisations that gave permission for their response to be published are listed alphabetically below:

Aberfeldy Community Council
BA Kerrigan
Ballathie House Hotel
Blackford Community Council
Blues Boys St. Johnstone Supporters Club
Clan Donnachaidh
Clan Donnachaidh Society
Councillor, Perth and Kinross Council
Crieff and District Tourist Association
Dunkeld and Birnam Community Council
Established Events Ltd
Fingask Castle
Giraffe
Glenalmond College
Glenturret Distillery
Green Tourism
Meigle and Ardler Community Council
Miconex Limited
National Trust for Scotland
Perth Racecourse
Perthshire Advertiser
Perthshire Chamber of Commerce
Small City, Big Personality
Smart & Co Property Consultants
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
The Glenturret Ltd
The Lindores Abbey Distillery
Volpa

³ Please note that, while respondents from each of the above organisations selected that their response was from an organisation in the respondent information form. It should not be assumed that in all cases, the views submitted represent the official view of the organisation.



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