



<b>Case reference</b>	SMC-PAK-009
<b>Application details</b>	Retention of polytunnels
<b>Site address</b>	unenclosed settlement 120m E of Wester Denhead, Coupar Angus (SM 7328)
<b>Applicant</b>	James Neil & Sons, Easter Denhead Farm
<b>Determining Authority</b>	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
<b>Local Authority Area</b>	Perth & Kinross Council
<b>Reason(s) for notification</b>	Notification Direction 2015 – works to be granted Scheduled Monument Consent by <b>Historic Environment Scotland</b> go beyond the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument
<b>Representations</b>	Nil
<b>Date notified to Ministers</b>	20 January 2020
<b>Date of recommendation</b>	28 January 2020
<b>Decision / recommendation</b>	Clear

### Description of Proposal and Site:

- Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is sought retrospectively for the retention of polytunnels which have been erected across the entire scheduled area (see Figure 2). The monument comprises the archaeological remains of an unenclosed later prehistoric farming settlement, visible as cropmarks on oblique aerial photographs. Remains include a large ring ditch (where a timber roundhouse would have been), subterranean souterrain and other related settlement features. The monument is of national importance due to its potential to contribute to our understanding of a small prehistoric settlement and economy and its links to other scheduled monuments nearby.

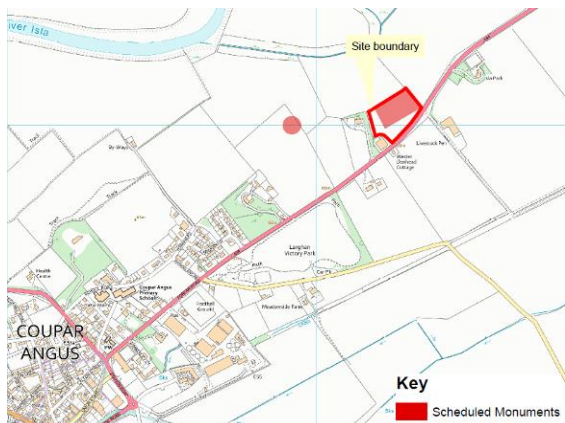


Figure 1 – site boundary in bold red line with scheduled area in red shading.

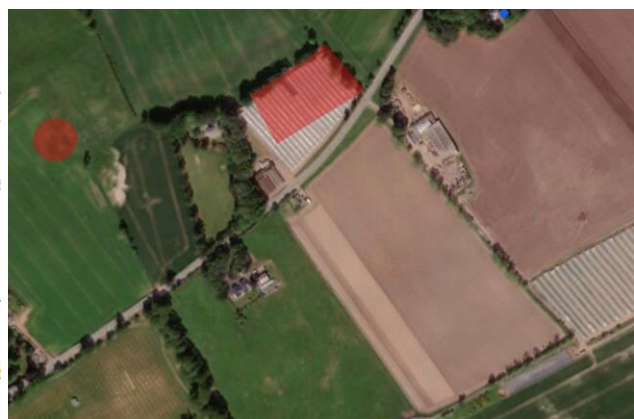


Figure 2 – scheduled area overlaid with extent of polytunnels.

## **Consultations and Representations:**

- No representations were made during consideration of the application.
- PAD consulted Scottish Government's Culture and Historic Environment Division following notification and they are content and have no further comment to make.

## **Assessment:**

1. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are minded to grant scheduled monument consent (SMC) for the retention of polytunnels which impact on the Scheduled Monument as the works are not considered the minimum level of intervention consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument.
2. The polytunnels were installed, without consent, in a field during 2010/2011. They consist of plastic sheeting over a steel frame structure with metal legs inserted into the ground, approx. 25-30cm deep, with a number of concrete posts and associated infrastructure/drainage. The precise details of the posts and drainage are not known.
3. HES consider that there has been a negative physical impact on archaeological features and a consequential impact on its cultural significance. However the damage (primarily from the metal legs) may have caused localised disturbance to deposits and the surface of features up to a depth of 27cm. An assessment of topsoil depth has been undertaken (just outside the scheduled area) and HES consider that this shows archaeological features are likely to survive beneath the topsoil at around this depth.
4. The polytunnel structures have already been in place for around 8 years preventing ploughing of the land. The structure is to remain in situ to allow for soft fruit growing/ cropping as long as this continues to be economically viable. After a cessation of 10 years, ploughing is not lawfully allowed to take place within a scheduled area unless a SMC application is granted.
5. HES believe the removal of the polytunnels and reversion to active arable cultivation/ploughing rotation would cause long term damage/erosion of the monument. Therefore they conclude that retrospective SMC is appropriate in this case and, by preventing further impacts on the cultural significance of the monument, the application would be consistent with HES' Scheduled Monument Consents Policies 1 and 3.
6. In summary and for the reasons set out above, this retrospective SMC application does not raise any issues of national importance that would merit intervention by Ministers.

## **Decision/Recommendation:**

- The application should be cleared back to Historic Environment Scotland to issue Scheduled Monument Consent without conditions.