

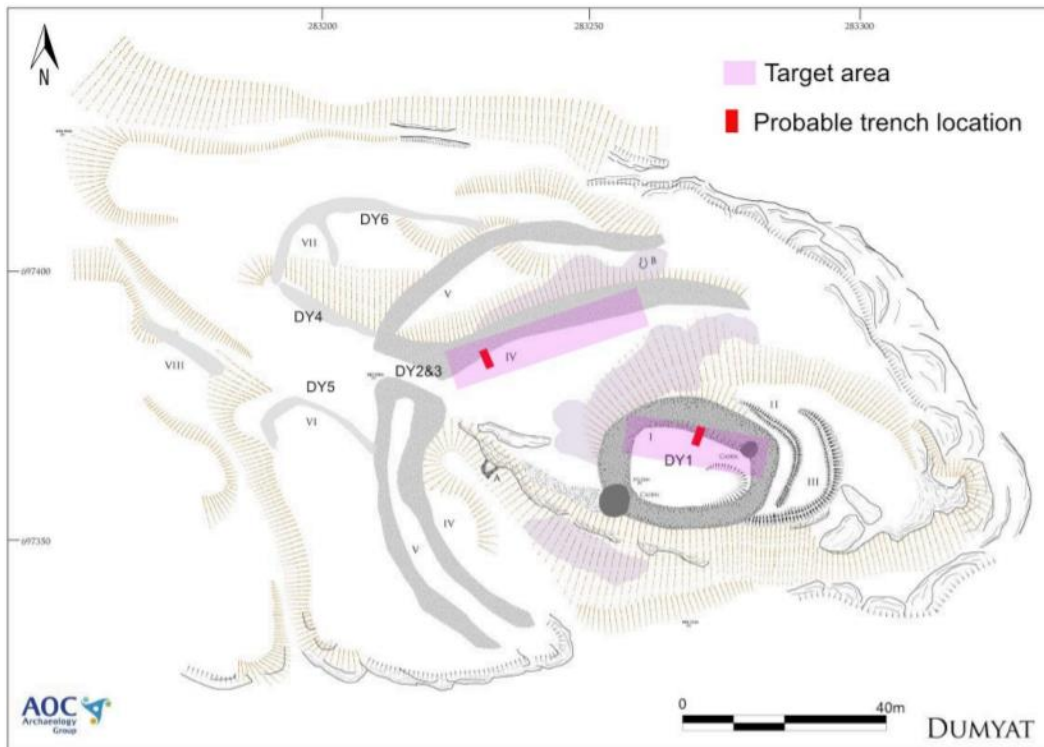


<b>Case reference</b>	SMC-STG-002
<b>Application details</b>	Evaluative excavation as part of Comparative Kingship project
<b>Site address</b>	Castle Law Fort, 400m SW of summit of Dumyat, Blairlogie near Stirling (SM 2182)
<b>Applicant</b>	University of Aberdeen
<b>Determining Authority</b>	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
<b>Local Authority Area</b>	Stirling 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>	2 October 2020 but not fully documented until 7 October 2020
<b>Date of recommendation</b>	29 October 2020
<b>Decision / recommendation</b>	Clear

### Description of Proposal and Site:

- Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is sought for the excavation of two small trenches on the summit of Dumyat Hill near Stirling.
- The monument comprises the remains of a fort situated on a knoll approximately 400m southwest of the summit of Dumyat. The fort occupies a strong defensive position with steep slopes to the north, south and east, and an extensive view over the Forth Valley. It comprises an oval enclosure with massive rubble walls at the summit surrounded by outer defences. The scheduled area is oval and measures 95m north-south by 150m east-west, including the fort and an area where remains associated with its construction and use may survive.
- The monument is of national importance because of its potential to contribute to our understanding of prehistoric defensive architecture and its social and economic organisation.





*Plan of Dumyat (Trenches labeled) (AOC 2019)*

### Consultations and Representations:

- No representations were made during HES's consideration of the application.
- PAD consulted Scottish Government's Culture and Historic Environment Division (CHED) following notification. They consider the proposed SMC does not appear to raise any issues of national importance. The proposed excavation would have minimal impact and could offer additional intelligence in terms of understanding the monument, especially as a part of the wider 'Comparative Kingship' project and there are opportunities for increased community engagement and education.

### Assessment:

1. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are minded to grant SMC for the excavation of two trenches which impacts on the Scheduled Monument as the removal of material goes beyond the minimum level of intervention which is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument.
2. The application has been submitted by the University of Aberdeen and forms part of a wider research project that is being undertaken as part of their Comparative Kingship Project and aims to investigate seven important hillforts in Stirling, Perth and Kinross, Fife, Edinburgh, and Scottish Borders. The project is funded through a Leverhulme Trust research grant for 2017–2022 and through University of Aberdeen funding streams. Small excavations at the six other sites are being proposed in order to determine whether 'nuclear hillforts' are a distinct monument type. This application also follows a new survey of the site undertaken for Stirling Council by AOC Archaeology in 2019 and the Council are also providing support for the proposed excavation.

3. The proposed works include the archaeological excavation and backfilling/reinstatement by hand of two trenches. Trench 1 would measure c. 4m x 2m, and would be placed against the inner face of the central citadel. Trench 2 would measure c. 4m x 2m and would be placed against the inner face of one of the outer ramparts to the northwest. The aim for the trenches is to provide an outline chronology for deposits associated with the enclosure walls of the fort which would help understand its date and occupation history. Any major features, such as hearths, would be left in situ with no more than 50% of any feature or deposits being excavated, whenever possible.
4. HES consider the proposed works would have minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument as a very small proportion of the archaeological resource would be affected, and that the works are therefore ~~is~~ compliant with their Scheduled Monument Consent Policy 1. The works are not in conflict with their Scheduled Monument Policy 2 as they are for research purposes and are at the lowest level of intervention to achieve the project's objective. HES believe the application has been clearly justified, will increase public understanding of hillforts in Southeast Scotland, has been carefully considered, is based on good authority, is sensitively designed and properly planned and is compliant with their Scheduled Monument Consent Policy 4, therefore no conditions are considered necessary.
5. HES consider the proposal is broadly consistent with relevant policy. In summary, and for the reasons set out above, this 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.