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Welsh Government

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Strata Florida Trust
Y Beudy
Mynachlog Fawr
Abbey Road
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Ceredigion
SY25 6ES

Eich cyfeirnod
Your reference

CD001

Ein cyfeirnod
Our reference

DH

Dyddiad
Date

9 June 2021

Llinell uniongyrchol
Direct line

0300 0256004

Ebost
Email:

scheduledmonuments@gov.wales

Dear Ms Aldous-Hughes,

**ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS ACT 1979
APPLICATION FOR SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT
STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY (CD001)**

1. Introduction

1.1 Thank you for your application of 8 January 2021 to Cadw for scheduled monument consent to dismantle a section of dry stone walling at the northeast end of Ty Pair, remove material from a 1m x 15m trench along the rear (eastern elevation) of Ty Pair and the Cart House, construction of a dry stone wall against the newly exposed section at the above scheduled monument.

1.2 Cadw is a Department within the Welsh Government that undertakes the statutory functions of the Welsh Ministers in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

1.3 Each application for scheduled monument consent is considered on its own merits in accordance with *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* ([Conservation Principles](#)) and Annex A of *Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* ([TAN 24](#)). In particular, TAN 24 explains that the main purpose of scheduling is to ensure the preservation of ancient monuments and, when considering an application for scheduled monument consent, there is a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage or which would have a significant impact on the setting of remains.

2 Assessment

Mae Gwasanaeth Amgylchedd Hanesyddol Llywodraeth Cymru (Cadw) yn hyrwyddo gwaith cadwraeth ar gyfer amgylchedd hanesyddol Cymru a gwerthfawrogiad ohono.

The Welsh Government Historic Environment Service (Cadw) promotes the conservation and appreciation of Wales's historic environment.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh.



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



2.1. Your application and supporting documentation has been assessed by our Regional Inspector of Ancient Monuments who has recommended that conditional scheduled monument consent should be approved for:

- remove material from a 1m x 15m trench along the rear (eastern elevation) of Ty Pair and the Cart House
- construct a dry stone wall against the newly exposed section, starting at 1.2m high x 300m wide x at the north end and diminishing to zero height x width at the southern end

The reasons for the Inspector's conclusions are set out in **Annex A** of this letter.

2.2. I have carefully considered the impact of the proposed development on the scheduled monument and its setting in light of the advice that I have received from our Regional Inspector of Ancient Monuments. I have no reason to disagree with the advice of our Regional Inspector and am satisfied that his recommendation is consistent with the objectives of Conservation Principles and TAN 24.

3. Decision

3.1. Accordingly, I hereby approve conditional scheduled monument consent for the proposed works as outlined in section 1.1.

3.2. In reaching this decision, I have taken into account the requirement of sections 3 and 5 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objective of *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language*.

3.3. Any development control issues associated with wider development will be a matter for any application for planning permission. It is the responsibility of the applicant to establish whether any further approval or consents are required for the proposed development.

4. Proposed Conditions

4.1. The following proposed conditions are intended to protect the monument from damage or significant alteration as set out in TAN 24: *The Historic Environment* and to ensure that details of the project are archived.

- a) The applicant shall provide Cadw with reasonable advance notice of commencement of works on site and shall afford access at all reasonable times to any Cadw official or archaeologist nominated by Cadw to monitor progress of the works;
- b) The approved works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the application form, plans and documents as listed below. No variations are permitted unless they have been authorised in advance, in writing by Cadw;

Number	Document / plan	Reference Number (if applicable)	Date
1	SMC application form signed by Lowri Goss on behalf of the Strata Florida Trust		08/01/2021
2	HRSW Method Statement		11/01/2021
3	Myachlog Fawr Ty Pair SMC Appraisal of archaeological deposits. David Austin.		14/01/2021
4	Supporting document for the SMC, Nathan Goss		14/01/2021

- c) A digital copy of the approved watching brief report shall be submitted to the Regional Historic Environment Record and National Monuments Record of Wales to be incorporated into these public records¹, and the applicant shall inform Cadw when this has been completed;
- d) Any historic or archaeological features, including demolition layers, not previously identified which are revealed when carrying out the works shall be retained in-situ and reported to Cadw within two working days. Works shall be halted in the area/part of the site affected until provision has been made for retention and/or recording of the feature by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing in advance by Cadw.

5. Compliance

5.1. Where a condition requires approval or any contact with Cadw you are advised to contact Louise Mees by email scheduledmonuments@gov.wales.

5.2. When all work has been completed and the conditions have been discharged, please complete and return the 'completion notice' at **Annex B** to Cadw. Section 2(6) of the 1979 Act provides that non-compliance with a condition attached to a grant of scheduled monument consent shall be an offence.

5.3. By virtue of Section 4 of the 1979 Act, if no works to which this consent relates are executed or started within 5 years from the date of this letter, the consent shall cease to have effect at the end of that period (unless it is revoked in the meantime).

¹ Cadw requires formal confirmation of report deposit to discharge condition.

5.4. This letter does not convey any approval or consent required under any enactment, bylaw, order or regulation other than Section 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any such approval or consent where necessary.

6. Mechanism for Challenge

6.1 Section 55 of the 1979 Act explains that if you are aggrieved by the decision given in this letter, you may challenge its validity by applying to the High Court within six weeks from the date of my decision. Furthermore, the legislation explains that the grounds on which an application may be made to the Court are;

- a) that my decision is not within the powers of the Act (i.e. that I have exceeded the powers available under the Act); and
- b) that any of the relevant requirements set out in the Act have not been complied with and that your interest has been substantially prejudiced by the failure to comply.

The 'relevant requirements' mentioned above are defined in Section 55 of the 1979 Act and it is advisable to seek legal advice before taking any action.

6.2. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

6.3 Finally, please note that your personal data is managed in compliance with the [General Data Protection Regulations](#).

Yours sincerely,

Denise Harris
Casework Manager
under authority of the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, one of the Welsh Ministers

**ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS ACT 1979
APPLICATION FOR SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT
STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY, CD001**

INSPECTOR'S ADVICE

1. Policy Context

- 1.1 An application for scheduled monument consent (SMC) is considered on its own merits in accordance with *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* ([Conservation Principles](#)) and Annex A of *Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (TAN 24)*. [In particular, TAN 24 explains that the main purpose of scheduling is to ensure the preservation of ancient monuments and,](#) when considering an application for SMC there is a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or which would have a significant impact on the setting of remains. Therefore, applicants are expected to demonstrate that no practicable alternative route or location, avoiding the scheduled area, exists and that the need to undertake works outweighs the presumption in favour of the protection of the scheduled monument.
- 1.2 The Welsh Government's six principles for sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales are also used as a guide when considering applications for scheduled monument consent. These are:
- Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values.
 - Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital.
 - The historic environment is a shared resource.
 - Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.
 - Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.
 - Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

2. Strata Florida Abbey, CD001

- 2.1 This monument comprises the remains of a medieval Cistercian abbey. Founded around 1184, Strata Florida is situated in an area of generally flat meadowland bordering the banks of the river Teifi.

The site housed a church; monk's choir; presbytery; cloister; chapter house; vestry; book store and dormitories. The church was by far the most important and the most used building within the entire monastery. In design, Strata Florida followed the classic Cistercian (white monks) 'Bernardine' plan, which had become fully developed by the mid-twelfth century. It was a cruciform, or cross-shaped, building aligned east to west. And, apart from the proportions and mass, the particularly distinctive White Monk features included the square-ended presbytery at the east, and the side-arm transepts with virtually square

eastern chapels. At Strata Florida there were three chapels to each transept, when frequently – at abbeys in both Britain and France – there were two. Overall, the church measured some 65m east to west by 35.7m across the transepts north to south.

As with Cistercian churches in general, Strata Florida was built to serve two almost entirely separate communities: the lay brothers (*conversi*) who used the nave or western half and the choir monks – who followed a much stricter regime – and whose lives were regulated around long hours spent in their choir stalls towards the east end of the building. The area to the east of the choir is referred to as the presbytery. This was the site of the high altar at which the daily community Mass was celebrated.

The monastic buildings – those structures where the community slept, where meals were prepared and eaten, where business was conducted and where the brothers took some relaxation – were situated to the south of the abbey church. They were grouped around three sides of a square or court known as the cloister. The greater part of the cloister can still be seen, though the southern end lies buried within the confines of the seventeenth-century Stedman house. The central court would have been surrounded on all four sides by walkways each covered with a lean-to roof. On the east side of the cloister, a long two-storey range of buildings ran southwards projecting from the line of the south transept. The upper floor of this range was occupied by the choir monks' dormitory.

On the ground floor, the space immediately beside the south transept housed the abbey's book store (*armarium*) and vestry. The Rule of St Benedict stressed the importance of divine reading in the life of a monk, and time was set aside during the Cistercian day for this purpose. The larger room to the east, with a doorway directly into the church, served as the vestry (*vestiarium*) or sacristy, the place where the vestments and liturgical vessels used in the services were stored in safety. There is the base of a lancet window in the east wall, and the pit nearby represents part of the burial vault for the tomb in the south transept chapel. Outside the three main ranges of the cloister, probably lie the sub-surface remains of the infirmary (which was ruinous by the dissolution) and the abbot's lodgings.

The fortunes of the abbey dwindled as time passed, so much so, that by the dissolution the community was reduced to just seven monks and their abbot. Strata Florida was finally closed in February 1539.

This application for SMC is made in relation to the southern part of the scheduled area, which potentially contains remains of buildings associated with the abbey, such as the refectory, infirmary, guesthouses, kitchens etc. Recent archaeological work undertaken within and adjacent to Ty Pair and the Cart House (beyond the scheduled area) appears to locate the west wall of the refectory and suggests that the east wall of the refectory may be located 2-3m east of the rear wall of Ty Pair. It is possible that the southern wall of the refectory lies to the south of Ty Pair or within the area to the rear of Ty Pair that is the subject of this application (HRSW – Method Statement – Revised V2,

2021, and Myachlog Fawr Ty Pair SMC Appraisal of archaeological deposits, David Austin, 2021).

Key values include physical remains of buried structures, features and deposits of national importance directly related to the medieval abbey (evidential), evidence of use associated with the abbey (historical), clear views and freedom to move across the field of and from the abbey (aesthetic) and religious / spiritual value (communal).

The area is currently maintained as permanent pasture and is in a stable condition.

3. The Application

- 3.1 This application for scheduled monument consent involves (i) dismantling section of dry stone walling at the northeast end of Ty Pair (ii) removing material from a 1m x 15m trench along the rear (eastern elevation) of Ty Pair and the Cart House (iii) construction of a dry stone wall against the newly exposed section, starting at 1.2m high x 300m wide x at the north end and diminishing to zero height x width at the southern end. The applicant requires the area to be cleared and section stabilised in order to prevent water ingress into the restored building and to enable raking out and repointing of masonry.

4. Assessment

- 4.1 The application has potential to have a detrimental impact on nationally important archaeological remains located within the scheduled area.

At the time of submission of the application for SMC it was unclear whether Ty Pair and the Cart House were cut into and directly abutted against nationally important in-situ archaeological deposits, features or deposits within the scheduled area or whether their construction included creation of an open area around the rear of the buildings, into which material has subsequently fallen. Therefore, it was unknown whether excavation of a 1m wide x 15m long trench and construction of a dry stone wall would damage in-situ nationally important archaeological remains.

Following consultation between the applicant and Cadw's Inspector of Ancient Monuments the applicant included within their application for SMC proposals to undertake an archaeological evaluation to inform determination of the SMC. Class 7 Consent for an archaeological evaluation of the entire 1m x 15m trench was granted on 8th March 2021.

The archaeological evaluation was restricted to the northernmost end of the trench, where a post medieval wall was removed and section cleaned (report submitted to Cadw on 6th April 2021). The evaluation revealed a 1m deep rubble overburden deposit lying against the rear of Ty Pair and the cart shed. This overlies a deposit of irregular stones, which appears to be a laid surface contemporary with the 17th century cart shed or 18th century Ty Pair.

The report refers to the 1843 tithe map for Caron Parish (this was not referred to in the SMC application), which shows Ty Pair within an enclosure, the boundary of which is some distance to the east of the building. The OS 1886 edition map does not show the 1843 tithe boundary and the gap between the building and the tithe boundary appears to have been infilled, corroborated by the deposits exposed at the northern end of the trench.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Although only the northern end of the trench has been evaluated the section revealed and retrogressive map analysis indicates that the area to the rear of Ty Pair and the cart house includes a rubble deposit over a laid ground surface of 17th / 18th century date. Therefore, excavation of the proposed 1m wide x 15m long trench is unlikely to have a negative impact on medieval archaeological features or deposits associated with Strata Florida Abbey.

In my opinion, SMC for the proposed works to:

- remove material from a 1m x 15m trench along the rear (eastern elevation) of Ty Pair and the Cart House
- construct a dry stone wall against the newly exposed section, starting at 1.2m high x 300m wide x at the north end and diminishing to zero height x width at the southern end

should be granted to the applicant subject to the following conditions:

6. Proposed Conditions

- 6.1 The applicant shall provide Cadw with reasonable advance notice of commencement of works on site and will afford access at all reasonable times to any Cadw official or archaeologist nominated by Cadw to monitor progress of the works.
- 6.2 The approved works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the application form, plans and documents as listed below. No variations are permitted unless they have been authorised in advance in writing by Cadw.

Number	Document / plan	Reference Number (if applicable)	Date
1	SMC application form signed by Lowri Goss on behalf of the Strata Florida Trust		08/01/2021
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4	Supporting document for the SMC, Nathan Goss		14/01/2021

- 6.3 A digital copy of the approved watching brief report shall be submitted to the regional Historic Environment Record and National Monuments Record of Wales to be incorporated into these public records², and the applicant shall inform Cadw when this has been completed.
- 6.4 Any historic or archaeological features, including demolition layers, not previously identified which are revealed when carrying out the works shall be retained *in-situ* and reported to Cadw within two working days. Works shall be halted in the area/part of the site affected until provision has been made for retention and/or recording of the feature by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing in advance by Cadw.

Name of Inspector: Louise Mees

Date: 12/05/2021

² Cadw requires formal confirmation of report deposit to discharge condition.

COMPLETION NOTICE

Name of Monument: Strata Florida Abbey

Monument Number: CD001

Conditions	Date	Signature
Completion of works on site		
A digital copy of the approved watching brief report shall be submitted to the regional Historic Environment Record and National Monuments Record of Wales to be incorporated into these public records, and the applicant shall inform Cadw when this has been completed.		

Applicant Name:

Signature:

When all work has been completed and the conditions have been discharged, please complete and return this completion notice to Cadw at scheduledmonuments@gov.wales