

I'm emailing in response to the above notice of review, which was sent through to us earlier today. The letter from the applicant indicates that she is requesting a review of two of the conditions attached to planning consent 16/02183/PP, these being condition 3 and condition 5. Of these, condition 5 relates to archaeology. We advised that this condition should be attached because the access route running to the site of the proposed new house passed immediately to the west of the site of a standing stone, recorded from immediately adjacent to the bridge across the Badden Burn. This is discussed in greater detail in my original letter of response, so it's probably not necessary to reiterate it in this email.

In her letter, the applicant asks for some clarification on the need for this condition, and asks on what evidence this condition was imposed; as was noted above, we advised that a condition should be attached because of the proximity of the proposed access track to the recorded site of a standing stone. The applicant's appeal letter goes on to state that *'the requirement for a method statement for the archaeological watching brief is specifically associated with the access road close to some marker stones and not to the proposed house site'*, and I would agree that this is correct - as was discussed in my original response, I can confirm that I did not consider archaeological work to be required in relation to ground disturbance at the house site itself. I can also confirm that the applicant is correct in her interpretation of original response, in that I would only consider monitoring to be required during works to upgrade the section of track in the vicinity of the standing stone. However, it is also the case that the application area, as defined by the red-line boundary on the various maps and plans, is not restricted solely to the house site itself; instead, it also includes the access track running from the house plot back to the western bank of the Crinan Canal. My understanding is that the application area is considered to encompass all ground within the red line boundary, which in this instance would include the access track, meaning that the use of a condition to secure monitoring during works to upgrade the access track (or any subset thereof) would seem to be appropriate.

While I would therefore consider that the use of a condition can be justified, given the proximity of the access track (and therefore the application area) to the recorded site of a standing stone, the applicant also raises the question of whether the condition would be necessary given that development in this area would be restricted to improving the surface of the existing track. This aspect was again covered in my original response, in which I said that it was not clear on the basis of the information that had been supplied in support of the original application what would be involved in this process, i.e., whether it would simply be a matter of depositing gravel on the existing track in order to improve the running surface, or whether ground disturbance would also be required to widen or re-align the track. This is still not entirely clear from the appeal letter supplied by the applicant, which simply states that *'no work will be done to the access track at the noted area, other than the improving of the surface'*, without specifying in any detail what would be involved in *'improving the surface'* – it could, for example, involve the construction of a fully metalled track, with associated foundations etc. As I said in my original response, if it is the case that the existing track can be upgraded by simply depositing gravel on the current route, without any alteration or ground disturbance, then I would accept that there would be no need for monitoring on this element. If the Council has received more detailed information from the applicant confirming that the track will be upgraded using this approach, and is confident that this is likely to be credible and realistic in terms of producing a permanent access route to the proposed new house, then I would agree that it would probably be safe to remove condition 5. However, if is

the case that precise methodology by which the track would be upgraded has yet to be determined, meaning that it is possible that excavations may still be required in the vicinity of the standing stone, then I would advise that the condition should remain in place. Ultimately, it would be a decision for the Planning Authority as to whether you consider that it would be possible to create a new permanent access track to the new house plot without the need for any excavations or ground disturbance in the vicinity of the stone.

I hope this information is useful to you.

Regards,

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