

Case reference	NA-FLK-035
Application details	Distributor road and associated earth works
Site address	Milnquarter Farm, Roman Road, Bonnybridge
Applicant	Manor Forest Limited
Planning authority	Falkirk Council
Reason(s) for notification	Para 2
Objectors	Historic Scotland
Date notified to Ministers	17 February 2015
Date of recommendation	4 March 2015
Decision / recommendation	Call-in

Description of Proposal and Site:

- The application seeks Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) for a distributor Road and associated earthworks between Milnquarter Road and Broomhill Road in Bonnybridge. The proposed development is entirely within the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site (WHS) buffer zone, between the remains of a scheduled Roman construction camp and the line of the Antonine Wall, both of which are part of the WHS.
- The road is proposed in order to facilitate housing development which is the subject of a separate and undetermined planning application by Falkirk Council.

EIA Development:

- N/A.

Consultations and Representations:

- Historic Scotland (HS) maintains its objection to the proposal, as the potential impacts of the development and associated infrastructure would in their opinion adversely impact on the setting of the Antonine Wall and Roman temporary camp scheduled monuments and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Antonine Wall WHS.
- 12 letters of public representation. 3 in objection and 9 in support.

Assessment:

1. The application was refused by Falkirk Council as not being in accordance with the adopted Falkirk Local Plan or Proposed Falkirk Local Development Plan 2013 as the

applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the setting of the WHS and Milnquarter Roman camp and medieval motte scheduled monuments or that the impacts of the proposal on the road network have been properly defined or that suitable mitigation measures have been identified.

2. The delegated decision was reviewed and Falkirk Council's Planning Review Committee are minded to grant PPIp. The Planning Review Committee considered that the proposed road would improve the infrastructure of the area, would alleviate existing traffic problems, congestion and road safety concerns, provide benefit to the immediate and wider community and provide safer routes to nearby primary schools. The Review Committee has concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its design and layout, impacts on the surrounding area, including those relating to traffic impact and cultural heritage and is considered to be in accordance with the development plan.
3. The application has been notified as HS have objected on the basis of adverse impacts on the OUV and setting of the WHS, and the setting of the scheduled monuments. HS consider that the creation of a distributor road and associated infrastructure would be sufficiently adverse in its own right to raise issues of national importance. This road is proposed in order to facilitate housing development which is the subject of a separate and undetermined planning application to which Historic Scotland has also objected, on the basis of adverse impacts on the historic environment. Further, HS consider that PPIp is not an appropriate means for taking this proposal forward, given the lack of detail submitted and the interrelated nature of the applications for this site. HS have previously indicated to Falkirk Council that they do not object to the principle of development in the Buffer Zone of the WHS, but that the nature of the applications made to date does not provide adequate protection for the important historic environment assets at Milnquarter. HS have provided Planning and Architecture Division (PAD) with a detailed assessment of the assets and the potential impacts of the proposed road development to assist in the consideration of this notified application.
4. In summary, HS consider that the development would divorce the line of the Antonine Wall from its immediate topographic setting on the ridge, set against the higher ground to the south where the Roman Camp is positioned and which forms part of the WHS. HS consider the proposal would have a significant adverse impact on the setting of scheduled monuments and on the OUV of the Antonine Wall WHS and that the potential impacts raise issues of national importance.
5. The principle of the development does not have development plan support. The proposal raises issues of national significance in terms of protection for WHSs and scheduled monuments as set out in NPF, SPP and SHEP. There is potential for the proposal to have significant adverse effects on the WHS and its setting and on scheduled monuments and their setting. Securing appropriate protection for WHSs and scheduled monuments is a primary principle of national planning policy. It is therefore considered that this application merits scrutiny of the issues involved and determination at the national level.

Decision/Recommendation:

- Call-in.