



# METAL AND MINERAL DETECTING CONSENT APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

OCTOBER 2023



HISTORIC  
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SCOTLAND

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## INTRODUCTION

Metal and Mineral Detecting Consent (MMDC) is required for the use of any equipment capable of detecting metal or minerals in a protected place (a scheduled monument or monument in the ownership or guardianship of Scottish Ministers). This includes metal detectors, magnetometry/gradiometer surveys and ground penetrating radar.

## HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS ON MMDC APPLICATIONS

All applications for MMDC are decided in line with the Metal and Mineral Detecting Consent Policies contained within our [Scheduled Monument Consents Policy](#).

MMDC will normally be granted for geophysical surveys.

For metal detecting surveys, consent will normally only be granted where the survey forms part of a wider research strategy, and provision is made for the conservation and reporting of finds. In all cases, the applicant should include evidence that the site owner is aware of the proposed survey and is content for the works to proceed.

### METAL AND MINERAL DETECTING CONSENT POLICY AIM

Detecting metals or minerals in protected places should only be undertaken in an appropriate manner. The methods should ensure information gained increases our understanding of the cultural significance of the monument and does not place the preservation of the monument, its cultural significance or associated artefacts at risk.

### METAL AND MINERAL DETECTING CONSENT POLICIES (MMDCP)

**MMDCP1: Proposals for detecting metals or minerals in protected places should be carefully considered, based on good authority, and properly planned and executed.**

Where the use of devices for detecting metals or minerals is proposed, it should:

- be supported by an appropriate research design, methodology and reporting strategy, and
- be undertaken by appropriately skilled and competent personnel with a satisfactory record of the completion, archiving and publication of projects.

**MMDCP2: The information gained from metal and mineral detecting should not place the preservation of the monument, its cultural significance or artefacts at risk.**

Recovery of objects of archaeological or historical interest will only be permitted where the work forms part of a wider research strategy and provision is made for the conservation and reporting of finds.

All applications for the removal of objects will be assessed in line with the policies outlined above for Scheduled Monument Consent.

Metal detecting should not place archaeological deposits or artefacts at risk (for example, risks might come from revealing the locations of artefacts that may have high monetary or cultural value).

## **YOUR APPLICATION**

Please follow the instructions below when completing your application.

### **1. Applicant name and address**

Please enter your name, address and contact details. If you are an agent, enter the name and address of the person you are making the application on behalf of.

### **2. Applicant's legal interest in monument**

Please indicate your legal interest, if any in the monument.

### **3. Monument to which application applies**

Please enter information sufficient to identify the monument. You can find the monument Index No and Name on our public portal ([portal.historicenvironment.scot](https://portal.historicenvironment.scot)), or by calling 0131 668 8716. Alternatively, please enter a grid reference for the monument.

### **4. Survey method**

Please indicate which survey method(s) you intend to employ.

### **5. Indicative timescale for proposed works**

Please enter an indicative timescale for the proposed works. If you have not yet set an exact date for your works, please give an indication of the approximate time period.

## **6. Enclosed documents**

You must provide:

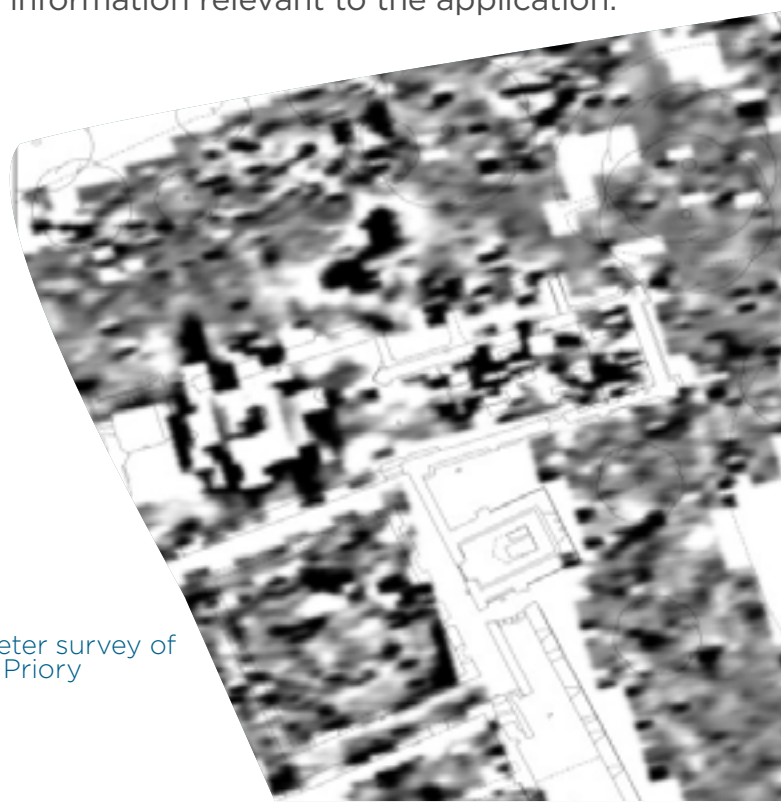
- a research design which sets out the aims of your project. You should include details of the aims of your project, the research questions you hope to answer, your survey methodology, how you intend to report the results of your survey and archive your report and survey data.
- a plan showing your proposed survey area
- confirmation that you have permission from the landowner to conduct the survey

Applications for metal detecting should also include:

- an outline of how you will conserve and analyse any finds and how these will be reported
- confirmation that you will declare all finds to the [Treasure Trove Unit](#).

## **7. Other information relevant to the application**

Please provide details of any other information relevant to the application.





## **8. Nature Conservation-Protected Species and Places**

We have a duty to assess the impact of any proposed works on protected species and places. Further information on protected species and places, together with standing advice is available from NatureScot's website:

[www.nature.scot](http://www.nature.scot)

Before applying for MMDC, you must identify whether the works you are planning are within a protected place, and consider what (if any) protected species might be present on the site, or close by, and the effect the proposed works might have on them.

You should, where necessary, provide information on the likely impact of your proposed works on the protected species or place, as the determination of your application for MMDC may be delayed or the application refused without this information.

If your planned work is within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), you may require SSSI consent in addition to consent for metal and mineral detecting. With your permission, we will pass your personal details, along with the details of your application, to NatureScot. A separate application for SSSI consent will not be required. If you do not consent to your details being passed to NatureScot, you will need to apply directly to them for any SSSI consent required.


## **9. Declaration**

Please tick all relevant statements and sign the declaration. You should be aware that it is an offence to provide false information. If you are an agent, please give your contact details.

## **YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION**

When you have completed your application please send it together with any supporting information to:  
[scheduledmonumentconsent@hes.scot](mailto:scheduledmonumentconsent@hes.scot)

or post to:  
Heritage Directorate Business Support  
Historic Environment Scotland  
Longmoure House  
Salisbury Place  
Edinburgh  
EH9 1SH



A nest of oystercatcher eggs with Lochleven Castle in the background - nesting birds are protected by law. You must not disturb them while carrying out your metal and mineral detecting survey

## PRIVACY NOTICE

We believe you should always know what data we collect from you, why we need it and how we look after it. This privacy notice, along with our overarching HES privacy notice, explain your rights and our role in protecting the information that you share with us.

We will process your Personal Data in strict accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#).

The data you submit to us as part of your application for consent will be used for this purpose and to confirm and update Historic Environment Scotland's Owner-Occupier records. This allows us to monitor the condition of scheduled monuments and notify you of any potential designation changes.

If your application affects any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) we will, with your permission, pass the personal information contained in your application form, along with the form itself, to NatureScot for the purpose of processing an application for SSSI consent, should this be required.

We publish applications and decisions on our portal <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot>. We will publish your application and relevant supplementary information including the name and address that you have submitted as part of the application. However, we will not publish signatures, personal email addresses or telephone numbers.



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Historic Environment Scotland –  
SCO45925

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House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh  
EH9 1SH

Contact the Planning, Consents and  
Advice Team:

0131 668 8716

[hmenquiries@hes.scot](mailto:hmenquiries@hes.scot)

[www.historicenvironment.scot/smc](http://www.historicenvironment.scot/smc)