

CHAPTER 14

Historic Scotland's Assessment of the Proposals against Policy

The Reconstruction Proposals

14.1 Mr Bridgland stated that the proposals are based upon a partial understanding of the historical, social and aesthetic value of the monument. It is therefore not surprising that the *Statement of Cultural Significance* is a flawed document. In making this overwhelming change to Castle Tioram, the proposals ignore its role as a relic appreciated for its antiquity, as a witness to its remarkable history and as a social resource enjoyed by many. As a result the proposals run counter to:

- Section 17 of *NPPG 5*
- Articles 3 and 19 of the *Venice Charter*
- Articles 2, 5, 11, and 17 of the *Burra Charter*
- Paragraphs 6.3.1, 7.1.2 and 7.3.2.1 of *BS 7913:1998*
- Paragraphs 2.1, 2.3, 2.7 and 16.3 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotland*
- Sustainability and the Historic Environment, paragraph 3 in *Historic Scotland Draft Statement on Sustainability*

Work in excess of conservation requirements

14.2 Mr Bridgland stated that the proposals represent more than is required for the purposes of conservation. In taking this approach they run counter to:

- The principle of minimum intervention which underlies most international conservation charters as set out in the *Historic Scotland Guide to International Conservation Charters*
- Articles 3 and 18 of the *Burra Charter*
- Paragraph 7.3.2.1 of *BS7193:1998*
- Paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotlan*
- Capacity for use in *Historic Scotland Draft Statement on Sustainability*

Conjecture

14.3 The proposals, while going to great lengths to avoid disturbance to pre-19th century fabric, involve considerable conjecture. The interior fittings and decoration will be either entirely conjectural in character or clearly modern. In both cases, the authenticity of the building will be severely compromised. In damaging this integrity the proposals run counter to:

- Section 17 of *NPPG 5*
- Article 9 of the *Venice Charter*
- Articles 1.8 and 11 of the *Burra Charter*
- Paragraph 7.3.2.1 of *BS7913:1998*
- Paragraphs 2.13 and 16.2 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotland*

Reversibility

14.4 In addition to the permanent disturbance of historic fabric which the proposals will require, any works of this scale are not, in any practical sense, reversible. As a result they conflict with:

- The principle of reversibility which underlies most international conservation charters as set out in the *Historic Scotland Guide to International Conservation Charters*

Modern Services

14.5 Mr Bridgland stated that the fitting out of the building to modern standards of servicing and comfort is clearly not an act of conservation. While the applicant's insistence that re-roofing of the building is necessary has been called into question, it is accepted that for some monuments this is a valid conservation action. The insertion of modern must be seen as a development and comes into conflict with:

- Section 17 of *NPPG 5*
- The principle of minimum intervention which underlies most international conservation charters as set out in the *Historic Scotland Guide to International Conservation Charters*
- Article 3 of the *Burra Charter*
- Paragraph 7.1.2 of *BS7913:1998*
- Paragraph 2.1, 2.2, 2.5 and 16.2 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotland*
- The Introduction to the *Stirling Charter*

Archaeology

14.6 Mr Bridgland stated that the archaeological proposals can be judged against policy as research excavations or as development-led excavations. The result of fully excavating all archaeology on the island places the proposals counter to:

- Section 17 of *NPPG 5*
- Article 5 of the *Lausanne Charter*
- Paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 14.5 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monuments in Scotland*

14.7 The proposals for excavation, in particular on the island beyond the castle walls, are greatly in excess of what is required for the construction phase. As a result the proposals come into conflict with:

- Section 17 of *NPPG 5*
- The principle of minimum intervention which underlies most international conservation charters as set out in the *Historic Scotland Guide to International Conservation Charters*
- Article 3 of the *Burra Charter*
- Article 5 of the *Lausanne Charter*
- Paragraph 7.1.2 of *BS7913:1998*
- Paragraph 14.5 of the *Conservation of Architectural Ancient Monument in Scotland*

Assessment against the applicant's own objectives

14.8 Mr Bridgland stated that the proposals would create a building with significant conjectural elements which would give a garbled picture of Castle Tioram in 1650:

- The retention of 19th century repairs which conflict with the earlier function of the building, the introduction of modern services, the conjecture required of significant elements mean that the building cannot be an accurate reconstruction of Castle Tioram c.1650
- The lack of information about how the various spaces in the castle interrelate, the conjecture needed to detail and furnish the building and the provision of modern services would distract from an understanding of the living conditions and social circumstances of the middle of the 17th century.
- By selecting a primacy date in the middle of the 17th century, the proposals cannot hope to shed light on what has been described as a high point of Gaelic culture, since this was a world which was already in serious decline by this time.
- By reconstructing a building which, in its ruinous state, has been appreciated and renowned by generations for over 200 years, the proposals fail to give due credit to a substantial part of the building's history and place an undue importance on a single phase of Castle Tioram's life.

14.9 Mr Bridgland concluded that:

- The proposals to reconstruct Castle Tioram would transform an inspiring ruin into a modern dwelling, closing it off to public appreciation. This transformation would diminish the monument's cultural significance and have an irreversible impact on its integrity.
- The large number of failings of the proposals in terms of international and national guidance on conservation and in terms of the applicant's own stated aspirations, make it clear that this should be seen as a development project.
- The use to which some excellent research has been put strongly suggests that the aim of reconstruction as a dwelling has always been the specific goal of Anta Estates.
- The use of the *Burra Charter* has been carried out inadequately. The preparation of the *Statement of Cultural Significance* has failed to give status to the obvious values for which Castle Tioram is currently admired.
- The preparation of the *Conservation Strategy* has sought to overplay the fragility of what is a surprisingly robust structure. Techniques relating to the preservation of ruins, which have been developed and proven in the field over decades, if not centuries, have been dismissed as not being capable of application to Tioram.
- Any proposals which affect the monument in such a way as to damage its national importance should be able to prove an overriding requirement for the development in the national interest. It is unlikely that the provision of a single dwelling house, however remarkable, can ever be justified as being of national interest.
- In order to preserve the national significance of this site any conservation solution for Castle Tioram must take full account of the cultural significance of the monument and the technical requirements of conserving the fabric. Castle Tioram's national importance derives from its cultural significance. This significance is made up of:
 - (a) Its great archaeological value: both below ground and in the evidence contained in the masonry.

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(b) Its historic value: as a major centre of power in the middle ages the need for which waned as the social order which built it waned: as the most visible of relics of a the period which created the nation of Scotland as we know it: and as evidence of the sacrifices which the Jacobite cause was prepared to make for what it believed.

(c) Its aesthetic value: as a high status building constructed between the 13th and 17th centuries: and as a dramatic ruin with an profound air of authenticity.

(d) Its social value: as a place for recreation, contemplation and inspiration: as a visible marker allowing connections to be made with our past: as the symbolic seat of the Clan Ranald.

14.10 Consolidation in its current form would achieve this and is the most appropriate conservation strategy for Castle Tioram. The applicant's proposals would greatly damage values for which Castle Tioram is prized.