

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing & Regeneration Services)**

**Planning Committee: 7 March 2007**

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**Subject : Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Nomination**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To inform the Committee of the nomination of the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** The Antonine Wall, connecting the Forth and the Clyde, is the furthest north-west boundary of the Roman Empire and one of the most important surviving Roman monuments in Scotland. At the beginning of 2003, Ministers announced that Scotland would be proposing the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site.
- 2.2** The course of the Antonine Wall in West Dunbartonshire runs eastwards from the Gavinburn Bus Depot, Old Kilpatrick, where a fort marked its western terminus, to north of the A82 and Clydebank Crematorium, along the line of Beeches Road, Duntocher through Golden Hill Park and south of the Clydebank and District Golf Course where it crosses the Council boundary into Glasgow. Today, only a very small section of the Antonine Wall at Golden Hill is visible above ground in West Dunbartonshire; however a significant proportion of the wall is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** Historic Scotland and the five local authorities along the line of the Wall – West Dunbartonshire, East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and Falkirk formed a Steering Group in 2004 to progress the nomination of the Antonine Wall and on 23 January 2007 the nomination, supported by maps and a management plan, was submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). UNESCO will now consider whether to designate the Antonine Wall as an extension to the trans-national *Frontiers of Roman Empire World Heritage Site* which includes Hadrian's Wall and the Upper German Raetian Limes. Their decision will be reported to the World Heritage Committee meeting in July 2008.

- 3.2** Prior to a decision being made, a field evaluator will visit the Wall to assess the outstanding universal values of the Site as well as its authenticity and integrity. They will also check that the necessary protection and management structures are in place during a week long visit. The Steering Group is currently developing a programme for the evaluation visit that will seek to provide a balanced view of the best sites plus areas for improvement with active examples of what is being done to make improvements. It will be necessary to show a longstanding commitment to protecting the Wall by all stakeholders. A preferred date of early September 2007 has been put forward for the field evaluation.
- 3.3** Now that the nomination has been submitted, a Working Group is to be set up in order to progress the 32 actions of the Management Plan for the Wall. The actions arise from twelve identified issues, including protection of the proposed World Heritage Site and developing links between the Site and local communities. Copies of the nomination documents, including the Management Plan have been sent to libraries at Clydebank, Duntocher and Gavinburn and two further copies are available at Council Offices at Garshake Road, Dumbarton and Rosebery Place, Clydebank. The Council is encouraged to raise the profile of the Wall and its nomination for World Heritage Site status.
- 3.4** A key aspect of the nomination is that adequate protection is given to the Wall. It is intended that the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan Finalised Draft will include uniform planning policies developed by the Steering Group. When adopted by the Councils along the line of the Wall, the policies will provide a consistent framework of protection across Scotland, befitting World Heritage Site status. Through the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan Finalised Draft the Council will thus seek to retain, protect, preserve and enhance the Antonine Wall. The policies have the intention of protecting the archaeological remains, the line and the setting of the Antonine Wall, including those sections which are not scheduled. Furthermore, as an action outlined in the Management Plan, the Steering Group will develop Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Wall.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The Council's financial contribution to the implementation of the management plan, specifically the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance, will be made from existing budgets.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** Nomination of the Antonine Wall as a World Heritage Site poses no risk to the Council.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1** The Antonine Wall is an important archaeological resource in West Dunbartonshire and has been nominated as a World Heritage Site. In recognition of this status, the Finalised Draft of the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan provides a high level of protection for the archaeological remains, the line and the setting of the Antonine Wall which should be an important consideration when determining future development proposals that may have an impact on the Wall. In addition to the responsibility the Council has in protecting and managing the Antonine Wall, designation of the Wall as a World Heritage Site potentially offers a number of opportunities which will be considered in due course.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1** The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report on the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site nomination.

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(Housing & Regeneration Services)**

**Date : 16 February 2007**

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**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** Antonine Wall Nomination Documents

**Wards Affected:** 9, 10, and 11

