Annex II: Cadw Inspection Report dated 8 April 2026

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2023 – Section 13(2)
APPLICATION FOR RETENTION OF WORKS ON A SCHEDULED MONUMENT
DE113 Offa's Dyke: Vron Farm Section

INSPECTOR'S ADVICE

1. Policy Context

1.1. There is no mechanism for issuing a retrospective consent for unauthorised works. Cadw may consider applications for consent to retain works under section 13(2) of the 2023 Act. Cadw's published policy is that such consent is only likely to be granted if the works can be shown to be beneficial to the monument.

1.2. Consent applies from the date it is granted; it cannot be backdated to be retrospective. Any potential criminal liability arising from the unauthorised works prior to the issue of consent remains and could be the basis for subsequent proceedings.

1.3. An application for the retention of works on a scheduled monument is considered on its own merits in accordance with Cadw's policy which states that the works are beneficial to the monument.

1.4. The Welsh Government's six principles for sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales are also used as a guide when considering applications for retention of works to a scheduled monument. These are:

- Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values.
- Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital.
- The historic environment is a shared resource.
- Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.
- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.
- Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

2. DE113 Offa's Dyke: Vron Farm Section

2.1. The following provides a description of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Offa's Dyke is a boundary earthwork, believed to be of Early Medieval date running, with some gaps, for roughly 120km through the border area between modern Wales and England from Sedbury near Chepstow to Treuddyn in Flintshire. It is traditionally thought to have been built by the Mercian King Offa in the later 8th century, but recent excavations on a section near Chirk suggest that some sections may incorporate earlier earthworks. Whilst its exact function and original form are still the subject of debate Offa's Dyke is significant as the longest and one of the earliest surviving boundary monuments in Europe marking a nominal frontier between Saxon Mercia and

Welsh kingdoms to the west. It represents one of the great engineering achievements of the pre-industrial age and the most dramatic built structure to survive from the early medieval (c410-1100) period in the Britain. Offa's Dyke is scheduled in multiple different sections on both sides of the present border. These display their own local physical characteristics but all share and contribute to the overall significance of the monument and have potential to enhance our knowledge of the monument as a whole. Approximately 80km of the monument coincides with the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail, which runs from Prestatyn to Sedbury.

The monument is of national importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of early medieval defensive organisation and settlement. It retains significant archaeological potential, with a strong probability of the presence of associated archaeological features and deposits. A dyke may be part of a larger cluster of monuments and their importance can be further enhanced by their group value.

The scheduled area comprises the remains described and the areas around them within which related evidence may be expected to survive.

The monument runs along the western boundary of multiple properties and owners but the overall condition in April 2024 was favourable and stable with medium vulnerability and risk from development.

The section under consideration forms the western boundary of a field in the ownership of the applicant, Katherine Pruen Director of Oak Court Enterprises. A breach in the earthwork provides access from the road to the historic Vron Farm complex, and there is an access to the applicant's field just inside, and to the south of, the main breach.

3. The Application

3.1. This application for retention of works to a scheduled monument involves limited and localised ground profiling to improve the gradient, drainage improvement and erosion mitigation across the field entrance within the eastern extent of the scheduled area.

3.2. The applicant has supplied documentation explaining that the previous access route involved a very sharp angle when approaching from the south end of Llewellyn Road. They experienced considerable flooding and land erosion during January 2025, so placed gravel bags to improve the gradient and drainage. The gradient improvements allow for a wider angle for turning into the access from the south end of Llewellyn Road as well as allowing vehicles to move off the boundary of Offa's Dyke more quickly to join the rest of the access track. The gravel bags provide a more solid surface dressing, which should help avoid the flooding and land erosion issues previously experienced. A thick layer of straw was applied over the gravel bags to further assist with drainage, and to provide generalised soil improvement to the area as it breaks down over time.

3.3. Top soil from a local supplier (Thorncliffe Building Supplies, Wrexham) was placed over the straw to raise the surface level and help further with easing the gradient.

3.4. A grid mesh was applied on top of the flat layer of soil and pegged down to hold it in place. This was then over sown with 'gateway' grass seed mix to create a grass sward capable of bearing vehicles.

4. Assessment

4.1. The documentation shows that all materials have been laid over the surface with no apparent sub-surface impact; there has therefore been no evidential impact or loss. I visited the site on 24/02/2026 and it was apparent that the improvement to the surface gradient has reduced vehicle impact although there was some very limited wheel rutting in the top 20cm of topsoil on the day of my visit. The works have improved the resilience of the monument in this area and there has therefore been a slight improvement in evidential value.

The applicant has taken trouble to reinforce the works with a mesh and then re-seed. The grass has established itself well and it was apparent on the day of the visit that there has been a neutral direct impact on the aesthetic value, although the improved resilience of this area to vehicle wear will produce a slight aesthetic improvement over time.

5. Recommendation

5.1. I recommend approval of this application.

6. Proposed Conditions

6.1. No further works may be undertaken under this consent.

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6.2. No variations are permitted unless they have been authorised in advance in writing by Cadw.

Number	Document / plan	Reference Number (if applicable)	Date
1	Oak Court Farm Letter to Cadw		
2	Oak Court Farm Annex VIII Access Drainage Improvement and Erosion Mitigation		

7. Justification for completed works

7.1 The applicant has provided a clear and comprehensive justification for the works, including a detailed description of the works carried out including materials methods and extent.

7.2 I have discussed the works with the applicant and I am satisfied that the works are beneficial to the monument (see section 4.1 above). The applicant has stated that they are not expert in the conservation and management of scheduled monuments, but they have requested further guidance in writing and are keen to continue to improve the condition of the monument in their ownership.

7.3 I am satisfied that the applicant's documentation demonstrates a beneficial impact on the monument and illustrates mitigation measures on the aesthetic values in the form of re-seeding.

Name of Inspector: Guy Salkeld

Signature of Inspector:

Date: 8/4/26