

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201504681		
Scheduled Monument	Crinan Canal, Crinan to Cairnbaan		
Index no	M6500	Grid Ref	NR788944 178800.0000 694400.0000
Date of Application	23 October 2015	Application Received	23 October 2015
Summary of proposed works	Carry out exploratory excavations		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted.

2. Background

The monument is the north part of the Crinan Canal. It is of national importance as a significant feat of Georgian civil engineering, by the eminent Scots engineer, John Rennie. This application for consent relates to an area on the north-east bank of the canal at Ballanoch (NGR NR 80450 92365).

3. Proposals

Consented works

Excavate and expose disconnected power cable to check for water leakage in the canal bank.

Description of works

A small excavator will be used to dig trial holes. Hand excavation will also be conducted as appropriate. The disconnected power cable will be exposed and inspected. Following excavation, the hole will be reinstated.

4. Representations received

No representations have been received.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

The application should be viewed with the following legislative and policy considerations in mind:

AMAAA 1979, Part 1 Section 2:
control of works affecting an ancient monument.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011):

3.4. Scheduled monument consent is required for any works that would demolish, destroy, damage, remove, repair, alter or add to the monument or to carry out any flooding or tipping on the monument. It is a criminal offence to carry out any of these works without consent.

3.14. Scottish Ministers include a monument in the Schedule to secure the long-term legal protection of the monument in the national interest, in situ and as far as possible in the state it has come down to us. Scheduled monuments have an intrinsic value as monuments, not related to any concept of active use. It is the value of the monument to the nation's heritage, in terms set out in the section on Scheduling in Chapter 2 of SHEP, that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

3.16. Works on scheduled monuments should therefore normally be the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument.

3.18. Scheduled monument consent applications must be considered in terms of the cultural significance of the monument and the impact that the proposals would have upon this cultural significance. The more important particular features of the monument are to its cultural significance, the greater will be the case against interventions which modify these features.

b) Assessment

The proposals would involve small scale trial excavations on the north-east bank of the canal. The aim is to expose disconnected power cables and it is likely that much of the excavation would occur within existing backfilled cable trenches. The Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd edition maps (scale 1:2500) give no indication of any historic structures on the canal bank at this point, with the exception of the tow path. It is very unlikely that significant buried archaeological remains would be affected by the works, and following reinstatement, the visual impact should be negligible.

The purpose of the proposed works is to check for water leakage in the canal bank. As such, they would contribute to the maintenance of the canal. The works can be regarded as the minimum necessary for conserving what is culturally significant in the monument (SHEP para 3.16). The proposed works are very unlikely to have an appreciable impact on the cultural significance of the monument. They appear to have been carefully considered and properly planned.

c) Other material considerations, including impact of the works on Protected Species and Places

The application site lies at the boundary of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has written to Historic Environment Scotland confirming (1) that the proposal is not likely to damage the protected features of the SSSI and does not require consent from SNH; and (2) that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the qualifying interests of the SAC. National Biodiversity Network GIS data sets indicate no evidence for Protected Species in the relevant 100m grid squares.

d) Conclusion

The proposals would involve small scale excavation largely within existing cable trenches. There should be negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument. This accords with SHEP para 3.18. The work is designed to investigate potential leakage of the canal and can be regarded as the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument (SHEP 3.16). The proposal appears to be carefully considered and planned, according with SHEP 3.22a.

6. Recommended decision

The works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

7. Conditions

Granted without conditions.

8. Approval

Officer	Richard Heawood	Date	24/11/2015
Approved by	John Raven	Date	24/11/15

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Plan of Bellanoch
Method Statement