

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201507499		
Scheduled Monument	Caledonian Canal, Banavie to Moy Bridge		
Index no	M6492	Grid Ref	212739 778509
Date of Application	22 February 2016	Application Received	22 February 2016
Summary of proposed works	Replacement of an existing corroded culvert		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted.

2. Background

This scheduled monument forms a stretch of the inland waterway known as the Caledonian Canal, running north-east from the north (or top) end of the flight of locks at Banavie (otherwise known as Neptune's Staircase) to the swing bridge at Moy. The monument includes the canal itself and the strip of ground extending up to 20m on either side.

The affected monument is of national importance because it is a major component of the Caledonian Canal, built between 1803 and 1822. The canal was designed by the famous Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford and is an outstanding example of civil engineering.

The need for obtaining SMC was discussed with HES prior to submission of the application. Supplementary information has been supplied during the application process.

3. Proposals

The work is intended to replace a severely corroded steel culvert that runs beneath the towpath and feeds into the Caledonian Canal. It is suggested that the work is

required because the culvert may no longer take sufficient loading to allow a tractor to cut scrub along the canal embankments.

It is proposed to replace the existing culvert (c.6.2m long) with a precast concrete pipe of similar diameter and length (c.7.5m long). At the same time it is proposed to provide protection from scour and wash-out at the upstream end of the culvert by the placement of stone ('rip-rap') placed around the culvert pipe and within a wider cut. The full extent of the works would be within the Scheduled Monument.

The works would include the following:

- Excavations to replace the culvert would be undertaken by a mechanical excavator.
- The existing culvert would be disposed off-site.
- The replacement pipe would be on the same line and level as the existing culvert.
- The cut would be backfilled with excavated material and made-up to the existing towpath level with well-compacted and selected fill material.
- The stone 'rip-rap' would be quarried local rock.
- The site would be cleared and tidied (including the access route).

4. Representations received

No representations were 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):

1.28. Scottish Ministers are committed to protecting and managing Scotland's rich and diverse historic environment in a sustainable way so that current and future generations can understand, appreciate and benefit from it. Scottish Ministers have put in place, and will continue to support, a range of actions to achieve this.

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.

3.20. Where change is proposed, it should be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed, properly planned and executed, and where appropriate in the context of an individual monument, reversible.

b) Assessment

The proposals are intended to replace an existing corroded culvert and hence allow ongoing maintenance of the canal.

The proposals would involve the machine excavation of a relatively small length of trench centered on an existing culvert and therefore in ground very likely to have been previously disturbed. The proposed works are therefore very unlikely to cause any damage to the fabric of the monument or related sub-surface remains.

On completion the cut would be backfilled, resurfaced in a similar way to the surrounding towpath, and the area tidied. The proposed works would therefore not materially alter the appearance of the scheduled monument.

It is concluded that the proposed works are unlikely to have an appreciable impact on the cultural significance of the monument. The proposals appear to have been carefully considered and are intended to allow ongoing maintenance of the canal.

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

The works are not within or adjacent to a SSSI, SPA or SAC. National Biodiversity Network GIS data sets indicate no evidence for Protected Species in the relevant 100m grid squares.

.

Scottish Canals have completed an Environmental Appraisal during the planning phase of the project and the resulting required actions have been set out in the relevant contract documents. As a result of the recorded presence of otters in the wider area, Scottish Canals' Senior Environmental Specialist has also carried out an otter survey, which did not record any evidence for otters in the vicinity of the works.

d) Conclusion

The work would allow routine maintenance of the canal to continue and hence contribute to the ongoing use of the canal, which may be considered to accord with SHEP 1.28.

The proposals would involve relatively limited disturbance around an existing culvert and are not likely to affect the fabric of the monument or uncover archaeological remains. Once completed the works should not have a material visual impact on the canal.

The works should not, therefore, have an adverse effect on the overall cultural significance of the monument and accord with SHEP para 3.18 and are not contrary to SHEP 3.14. and 3.16.

The works appear to have been carefully designed in accord with SHEP 3.20.

With regard to other material considerations, planning for the proposed works has included an Ecological Appraisal and otter survey, which have considered potential impacts and proposed mitigation where appropriate.

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	Simon Stronach	Date	31/03/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	31/03/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Drawing A00999/01-3 (Site Location)

Email from Scottish Canals (22 March 2016)

A00999-07-01: Contract Data

Drawing A00999/04 (Proposed Culvert Plan)