



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018614
--------------------------	-----------

Scheduled Monument	Union Canal, Fountainbridge to River Almond; Union Canal, River Almond to River Avon		
Index no	SM11097 SM8954	Grid ref	NT 20500 70200 NS 96800 75700

Date application validated	19 October 2016
Summary of proposed works	Union Canal - Water Control Structures Upgrade and Repair (5 sites)

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the erection of an operating platform at Sighthill Sluice and the removal of the sluice at Woodcockdale on the Union Canal be granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument is the Union Canal and the scheduled area includes the canal and the adjacent towpath.

The monument is of national importance because, as an integral part of the Union Canal, and an important piece of Georgian civil engineering. Designed by a noted Scots Engineer, Hugh Baird, and built 1818-23, its continuous watercourse was without need of a single lock, and was graced by three major aqueducts inspired by another great Scots civil engineer, Thomas Telford.

The proposed works only relate to a small part of the overall monument, as the application relates to repairs and replacement to five sluices along the Union Canal:

- F. Leamington Sluice, Union Canal – Replacement of the existing sluice.
- G. Slateford Aqueduct Sluices, Union Canal – Repair of the existing sluices.
- H. Sighthill Sluice, Union Canal – Replacement of the existing sluice and provision of an operating platform.



- I. Almond Aqueduct Sluices, Union Canal – Stabilising of the existing sluices.
- J. Woodcockdale Sluice, Union Canal – Removal of the existing sluice (bed valve).

Some of these works fall under Class III of The Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) (Scotland) Order and therefore do not require consent. The works described as F, G and I in the application document can be carried out under Class III, while the addition of an operating platform at Sighthill Sluice (H) and the removal of the existing sluice at Woodcockdale (J) would require SMC.

It follows a conservation appraisal, carried out by Scottish Canals that led to the creation of a water control and water management project. The goal of which was to address current water control concerns on the Crinan, Caledonian and Lowlands Canals and include the repair and replacement programme of 46no. water control structures (sluices & bed valves). The project includes the findings and recommendations of the Assets at Risk of Climate Change Study to ensure resilience of the canal network into the future. The application has been submitted by Scottish Canals.

The application is accompanied by location plans, a summary of the works and two associated sketches of the proposed works at section H and I.

HES Heritage Management Directorate has not undertaken pre-application discussions with the applicant regarding the scope and timing of works.

3. Proposals

The Proposed Works Include:

- **H. Sighthill Sluice, Union Canal** – Provision of an operating platform.

This sluice is currently inoperable. The head of the sluice spindle is below the normal operating water level of the Union Canal. Access to the sluice is across the downstream apron of a canal overflow weir.

The works therefore comprise the following;

- i) Supply and install a proprietary temporary dam around the sluice.
- ii) Remove the existing sluice and guides.
- iii) Supply and install a new sluice and guides.



- iv) Remove the temporary dam.
- vi) Supply and install a raised walkway and operating platform for the sluice.
- **J. Woodcockdale Sluice, Union Canal** – Removal of the remains of existing sluice (bed valve).

The Woodcockdale sluice has been removed and replaced with a modern 300mm dia. gate valve on the discharge pipe outlet at the bottom of a flight of timber steps on the outer face of the canal embankment. The volume of discharge from the new valve is being restricted due to blockage of the intake on the canal bed.

The works shall therefore comprise the following;

- i) Supply and install a temporary portable dam around the pipe intake.
- ii) Clear the intake of all obstructions, including the old sluice plate and spindle.
- iii) Remove the temporary dam.

Consented works – Construction of an operating platform at Sighthill Sluice and the removal of the existing sluice at Woodcockdale

Aims – The works are being undertaken to address current water control concerns.

Timetable – The works will be undertaken as soon as the consent is in place.

Personnel – The works will be undertaken by a private contractor on behalf of Scottish Canals.

4. Representations received

No third party representations were received.

5. Report

a) Policy considerations

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



Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2: Control of works affecting scheduled monuments.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016

3.14. A monument is included 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 this policy statement that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

3.15. Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

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.

3.17. As each monument will require treatment specific to its individual nature, characteristics, significance and needs, any proposed change to it must be fully and explicitly justified.

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 proposed works involve the construction of an operating platform at Sighthill Sluice and the removal of the existing sluice at Woodcockdale. The works are part of a larger project of work that is being undertaken to address current water control concerns.

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

The physical impact of the proposed works would be the addition of a small operating platform to allow safe access to the sluice at Sighthill. The platform will address health and safety concerns when operating and maintaining the sluice. The works also include the removal of obsolete elements of the sluice at Woodcockdale, the sluice has been replaced in the past with a discharge pipe but not all of the elements of the old sluice were removed. These old elements are causing issue with the current water control system. The removal of these elements will address these concerns.

The works are relatively minor and will not affect the cultural significance of the monument.

If the works as set out in the application are not undertaken then there is a likelihood that the structural integrity of the canal will continue to deteriorate, with the likely outcome that historic fabric and architectural detailing will be lost, and there would be a risk to public safety. It is therefore to the benefit of the long term preservation of the monument that the works are undertaken now.

No WSI has been provided as part of this application, as no archaeological mitigation is required. The works will have no impact on the original fabric of the monument.

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

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see PP&S assessment

d) Conclusion

The application should be viewed as works as set out in both Part 1 Section 2 of the AMAA Act 1979 and paragraph 3.4 of the policy statement.

The proposed works, comprising the construction of an operating platform at Sighthill Sluice and the removal of the existing sluice at Woodcockdale, are the minimum necessary to conserve what is culturally significant in this scheduled monument and so are compliant with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The works have been proposed in order to ensure the long term preservation of the monument and so are justified in accordance with paragraph 3.17 of the policy statement.

The application meets paragraph 3.20 because it has demonstrated that the works have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned.



Consequently, no conditions are considered necessary.

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.

I recommend consent is **granted without conditions**.

7. Conditions

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	James Bruhn	Date	13 December 2016
Approved by	George Findlater	Date	13 December 2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- SMC Application supporting info
- Location Plan – Leamington Sluice Drg. A01047(14)-06
- Location Plan – Slateford Aqueduct Drg. A01047(14)-07
- Location Plan – Sighthill Sluice Drg. A01047(14)-08
- Location Plan – Almond Aqueduct Drg. A01047(14)-09
- Location Plan – Woodcockdale Sluice Drg. A01047(14)-10
- Proposed Operating Platform – Sighthill SI Drg. A01047(14)-16
- Proposed strengthening - Almond Sluices Drg. A01047(14)-17