

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



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Case Information

Reference/Case ID		300018965	
Scheduled Monument	Caledonian Canal, Corpach Locks and Basin		
Index no	SM5297	Grid ref	NN 00000 0
Date application validated		23 December 2016	
Summary of proposed works		Installation of Electric car charging point, ducting and associated signage at Corpach Car park	

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the installation of an electric car charging point, ducting and associated signage at Corpach Car park, on the Caledonian Canal be granted.

2. Background

The monument consists of the sea lock, basin and two locks at the western end of the Caledonian Canal, together with associated working areas. The scheduled area includes the canal and locks, the towpaths on each bank, and an area of car parking and hardstanding north of the basin.

The monument is of national importance because it is part of the much larger Caledonian Canal, which runs from Corpach, by Fort William, to Clachnaharry, Inverness. It links the east and west coasts of the Highlands using both natural lochs and purpose-built stretches of canal. It was designed by famous Scots engineer Thomas Telford and built between 1803 and 1822. It remains the largest single construction in the Highlands.

The fabric of the canal and its associated features such as embankments, coping stones, locks, bollards, and weirs are integral to its significance. In terms of setting, views along the canal (both from the towpath and from the water) are important as they give an appreciation of its function, character, and scale. Views which clearly link the canal to associated structures such as bridges or lock-keepers' cottages are also significant as they aid in understanding and appreciating the function of the canal and its wider context.

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The application is for the installation of an electric car charger and associated ducting and cabling. It has been submitted by Scottish Canals. The application is accompanied by a Site plan, specifications for the proposed structures, and images suggesting the final appearance.

HES Heritage Management Directorate has undertaken pre-application discussions with the applicant regarding the scope and timing of works, and this application accords with the outcome of those discussions.

3. Proposals

- Installing an electric car charging unit and associated concrete foundations.
- Installing a feeder pillar next to the car charging unit and associated founds.
- Excavating a trench and installing ducting to take an electricity cable from an existing supply which runs under the existing car park.

Consented Works - Installation of Electric car charging point, ducting and associated signage at Corpach Car Park.

The proposed work will include the installation of a car charging unit. The foundation of this unit will measure 1100mm x 700mm for the concrete base. There will be a feeder pillar next to the charging unit with the following dimensions 1194mm (h) x 350mm (d) x 800mm (w). The power supply for the charging unit will be taken from an existing power cable that runs east-west across the car park. The new cable will be installed in ducting which will be placed in a 15m long excavated trench with a depth of circa 550mm and a width of 300mm.

Scottish Canals are trialing a number of electric car charging units on their estate and the car park at Corpach is one of the trial locations.

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:

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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.

3.16. 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.

b) Assessment

The proposed works involve the installation of an electric car charging unit in the car park at Corpach. This site is one of a number of trial sites for such charging units across Scottish Canals' estate.

The physical impacts of the proposed works would be the installations of a car charging unit with foundations which will measure 1100 x 700mm, upon which would be mounted a feeder pillar for use in car charging. A 15m long trench 550mm deep will be dug east-west across the car park from an existing power cable in order to supply the charger with power.

The area in which the works are to take place has seen extensive disturbance, as a large modern culvert underlies the modern car park. As all ground disturbance will be into modern material there will be no impact upon historic fabric or sensitive underlying archaeology.

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The majority of the work will not be visible on the surface after completion of the works. The upstanding charging unit and signage is in keeping with the use of the area as a modern car park. It will not impede key views of or along the east-west axis of the canal and will not interrupt or obscure views of historic canal-side features in this area such as the locks, lighthouse, or canal entrance. The proposals therefore have little potential to negatively impact the setting of the canal.

The proposed works may have a positive environmental benefit as they may encourage a greener alternative to fossil-fuel vehicles.

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

An Environmental Impact Assessment was provided by Scottish Canals as part of the application. 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 works have little potential to disturb or damage the historic fabric of the canal and should have no potential to impact upon the canal's setting. They therefore should not be detrimental to the canal's cultural significance. The application does not therefore conflict with paragraph 3.16 of the policy statement.

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	Kevin Grant	Date	06 January 2017
Approved by	John Raven	Date	09 January 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Proposed Plan of works
- Site photographs
- Indicative images of intended result of works
- Specification for trench required to take power supply.