

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201506926		
Scheduled Monument	Forth and Clyde Canal: Glasgow Branch		
Index no	M6771	Grid Ref	NS571689 257100.0000 668900.0000
Date of Application	03 February 2016	Application Received	03 February 2016
Summary of proposed works	Environmental Improvements including construction of a new section of 'cycle-friendly' path at Bairds Brae.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends approval without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises a length of inland waterway forming part of the Forth and Clyde Canal. The length of the monument is approximately 5km and runs from Stockingfield on the north to Speir's Wharf on the south. The monument also includes several aqueducts and other canal structures.

The monument is of national importance because it is an integral part of the Forth and Clyde Canal, which is an excellent example of Georgian civil engineering. It was the first of Scotland's great inland waterways to be constructed (between 1768 and 1790).

The proposals have been subject to pre-application discussions with Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

3. Proposals

Environmental Improvements including construction of a new section of 'cycle-friendly' path at Bairds Brae.

The elements of the proposed work that fall within the scheduled monument are:

- A new section of 2m wide 'cycle-friendly' path that runs east to west from the canal towpath across what is now a grassy knoll. The path would be surfaced with whinstone setts.
- The installation of wooden benches (no ground-breaking work would be involved).
- The connection of the new cycle path where it joins the existing towpath.

Other elements of the works (NE-SW and NW-SE paths and re-positioned signage) extend outside the scheduled monument.

The grassy knoll would be reduced in level to achieve the desired level for the new section of path, which would be at the same level as the existing historic setts of the towpath. Previous ground investigations of the grassy area outside the monument indicated that there were no historic setts preserved beneath the current ground surface. This is likely to be a consequence of previous ground disturbance occasioned by removal of a former electricity pylon. The ground under the grassed area comprised disturbed material.

The existing towpath and historic stone walls in the vicinity would be retained.

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:

Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 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.

3.17. 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 proposals would involve works to create a section of new cycle-friendly path surfaced with whinstone setts and linked into the existing towpath alongside the Forth & Clyde Canal. They would involve ground reduction in an area that has been subject to modern disturbance. They have been designed to retain historic surfaces and walls.

The works would also include the installation of wooden benches alongside the new path.

The works would not be likely to affect any archaeologically significant remains and would not materially alter the appearance of the monument. Therefore, the proposal would have a negligible effect on the monument's cultural significance. The works may improve public access along the monument and create additional public seating.

The proposed works 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 does not lie in a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area. National Biodiversity

Network GIS data sets indicate no evidence for Protected Species in the relevant 100m grid squares.

d) Conclusion

The proposals concern works in part of the Forth and Clyde Canal scheduled monument. There should be negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monument. The proposals therefore accord with SHEP 3.16 and 3.18.

The proposal appears to be carefully considered and planned, according with SHEP 3.20. The proposal should improve public access along the monument and provide additional seating, and hence may be regarded as justified (SHEP 3.17).

6. Recommended decision

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

- I recommend consent is **granted with no conditions**.

7. Approval

Officer	Simon Stronach	Date	18/02/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	18/02/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Bairds Brae Environmental Improvements – LUC Drawings