

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201507441		
Scheduled Monument	Caledonian Canal, Loch Oich to Cullochry Lock Caledonian Canal, Laggan Locks to Loch Oich Caledonian Canal, Corpach to Banavie		
Index no	M6495 M6494 M6491	Grid Ref	NH 33846 03515 NN 30000 98317 NN 11260 76831
Date of Application	23 February 2016	Application Received	26 February 2016
Summary of proposed works	Excavation of trenches for new power cables to run from canal swing bridge switchrooms to CCTV cameras (positioned outside the scheduled areas).		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted.

2. Background

The three scheduled monuments affected by this proposal are:

- M6495 Caledonian Canal, Loch Oich to Cullochry Lock: a stretch of the Caledonian Canal running from Loch Oich north-eastward to Cullochry Lock.
- M6494 Caledonian Canal, Laggan Locks to Loch Oich: a stretch of the Caledonian Canal running north-east from the Laggan Locks to Loch Oich.
- M6491 Caledonian Canal, Corpach to Banavie: a stretch of the Caledonian Canal running east and north-east from the locks and basin at Corpach, on Loch Linnhe, to the south (or bottom) end of the flight of locks at Banavie (otherwise known as Neptune's Staircase).

The scheduled areas include the canal and ground extending either side and containing the towpaths and embankments and any associated capstans, bollards, mooring hooks, mile posts, weirs and overflows.

The affected monuments are of national importance because they are major components of the Caledonian Canal, built between 1803 and 1822. The canal was designed by the famous Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford. At the opening ceremony it was described as 'one of the most stupendous undertakings of that nature which Europe had seen'.

The proposed works are adjacent to three swing bridges carrying the A82 or A830 over the canal. They are proposed to provide an electric connection from an existing switchroom to CCTV cameras installed for traffic management purposes outside of the scheduled areas. Pre-application discussions regarding the proposed works have been undertaken with HES Heritage Management.

3. Proposals

Consented works

Excavation of a trench for a new power cable.

Description of works

CCTV cameras are to be installed by BEAR Scotland at three swing bridges in order to monitor road traffic movement. It is proposed to power the cameras (all of which are located outside the scheduled areas) by connecting to existing canal bridge switchrooms. This would involve the machine excavation of a cable track (400mm width by 550mm depth). Once the cable is laid the tracks will be backfilled and reinstated as existing; any excess spoil material would be removed.

The relationship of the proposed track to the affected scheduled monuments is set out in more detail below:

- M6495 – Aberchalder Swing Bridge. The switchroom is located to the south of the swingbridge and outside the scheduled area. The proposed trench would run north and northeast from the switchroom to a CCTV camera located around 5m to the east of the scheduled area on the verge of the A82. For some 18m the proposed cable trench would run along the edge of the scheduled area and in an area where a grass verge meets the gravel or tarmac surfaces of an access track to the switchroom.
- M6494 – Laggan Swing Bridge. The switchroom is located within the scheduled area on the south side of the canal. The proposed trench would run south then southwest to meet the verge of the A82, which it would follow to a CCTV camera located around 25m to the south of the scheduled area. The cable would run across an area of gravel and grass around the switchroom and across a tarmac access providing access to it. Around 6m of the proposed trench would be within the scheduled area.
- M6491 – Banavie Swing Bridge. The switchroom is located partially within the scheduled area on the southwest side of the canal. The proposed trench would run south to the verge of the A830 then southeast to a CCTV camera

located around 60m from the scheduled area. The proposed trench would be near the edge of the scheduled area for some 3m in an area at the verge of the A830 surfaced with gravel and tarmac.

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.

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 the machine excavation of relatively small lengths of cable trench within scheduled areas at three locations on the Caledonian Canal. In all cases the trench would run from modern switchrooms to modern road verges.

Where the proposed trenches intersect with the scheduled monuments the trenches are at the fringes of the monuments and would not affect the canal structure itself, the towpath or any associated structures. They would affect areas of modern surfacing or grass verges. 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 trenches would be backfilled, resurfaced to match existing and any excess spoil removed from the monument. The proposed works would therefore not visually 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 improve traffic management at the relevant swing bridges.

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

The application sites do not lie close to any SSSI, SPA or SAC designations. There has been recorded evidence for Protected Species (otters) in the vicinity of all swing bridges. Consequently ecological surveys would be undertaken at all locations in the first week of March to assess any impacts on Protected Species. Details of these surveys and any licences required from SNH would be forwarded to HES.

d) Conclusion

The proposals would involve excavations of limited extent that are not likely to have an adverse impact on any elements of the scheduled monuments (including sub-surface remains) that contribute to their significance.

There would be no visual changes to the monuments once works have been completed and surfaces reinstated.

Therefore, the proposed works should cause negligible impact on the cultural significance of the monuments, which accords with SHEP para 3.18. The proposals appear to be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned and should accord with SHEP para 3.20. The proposed works would conserve the cultural significance of the monuments so there is no conflict with SHEP 3.14 or policy at SHEP para 3.16.

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	09/03/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	9/3/16

Annex A – list of supporting documents

General Arrangement A82 Laggan Swing Bridge CCTV Installation (BEAR Scotland)

General Arrangement A82 Aberchalder Swing Bridge CCTV Installation (BEAR Scotland)

General Arrangement A830 Banavie Swing Bridge CCTV Installation