

Scheduled Monument Consent: Report on Handling



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Case information

Reference/Case ID	201601358		
Scheduled Monument	Forth and Clyde Canal: Glasgow Branch		
Index no	M6771	Grid Ref	NS571689 257100.0000 668900.0000
Date of Application	09 June 2016	Application Received	10 June 2016
Summary of proposed works	Installation of a pontoon.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that consent be granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument comprises part of the Forth and Clyde Canal known as the Glasgow Branch. It is 5 km long and runs from Stockingfield in the north to Speir's Wharf in the south. The monument includes the canal, banks and towing path. It also includes the basins at Firhill.

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 area affected by these works lies on the north side of the canal to the north of the western Firhill basin. It lies to the east of a road bridge that carries Firhill Road over the canal. It is flanked to the north by relatively recent, high density residential development. There is further flatted development to the south of Firhill basin.

Scottish Canals obtained Scheduled Monument Consent for a new jetty at this location in 2014 (Case 201402387). The jetty was a timber and steel construction 160m long and 1.5m wide accessed by steel stairway.

Scottish Canals contacted HES HMD about the proposed new application in March 2016. This confirmed that, as the embankment had been essentially re-formed in 2008, physical impacts on the monument's fabric were not likely to be a concern. We noted that maintaining as much of the original canal width as possible was important.

3. Proposals

The proposals involve the installation of a pontoon for residential use. This would be connected to the bottom of the embankment by concrete moorings. Access would be provided by stairs.

The pontoon would be 12m long by 1.8m wide. The total projection into the waterway of the new pontoon and any boat alongside it would be around 4.2m.

A Heritage Impact Statement has been supplied with the application. It states that an important element of the setting of the Firhill Basin is the canal channel. It assesses that the installation of the proposed pontoon would not hinder views from the east or west along the canal because of the substantially greater width of the unobstructed channel (some 18m).

A Heritage Impact Assessment for the 2014 jetty application noted that the Firhill Basin was historically an industrial hub, with many more canal-side structures than exist now. It proposed that the addition of a 160m linear jetty would not be inconsistent with this historical background and so would be an acceptable addition to the canal's setting.

The assessment also suggested that pontoons were a historically common feature of the canal and would be a visual cue that would help an understanding of the relationship between canals and boat traffic.

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:

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

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- Part 1 Section 2 - Control of works affecting an ancient monument.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (2016)

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. 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.

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 work would introduce a new pontoon and related infrastructure on the north side of the canal. The proposed pontoon is in the same location as a jetty, which was granted consent in 2014.

The pontoon would be substantially shorter than the jetty, some 12m compared to 160m. It would project a further 0.9m into the canal than the jetty; this would not adversely affect navigation along the waterway.

The proposal would have some physical impacts on the north canal bank. However, because this was reformed in 2008 there are not likely to be sensitive remains related to the canal at this location. Consequently, construction work for the pontoon's moorings and access are not likely to adversely affect the canal's cultural significance.

The new pontoon would introduce a new structure into the canal. This would be sympathetic to its historic use for boat traffic. The new pontoon would not materially obstruct views east and west along the canal, for example from the bridge that carries Firhill Road over it.

The canal is within an urban setting in this section, with modern residential development on its north bank. The new pontoon would not alter the character of the canal's setting.

A new pontoon on the north bank of the canal would not materially affect an appreciation of the canal's relationship to the neighbouring basin to the south.

Views of the canal from the towpath and views when travelling along the canal itself would be slightly altered, but this is not likely to have a significant effect on an understanding or appreciation of the canal's historic form or the relationship between the canal and towpath.

It is concluded that effects on the character, visual appreciation and amenity of the canal would not be likely to significantly alter its cultural significance.

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 should have a relatively minimal effect on the setting and physical remains of the canal. Hence the cultural significance of the monument would be materially unaffected and the proposals are not inconsistent with paragraph 3.14 and 3.18.

6. Recommended decision

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

7. Conditions

Granted without conditions.

8. Approval

Officer	Simon Stronach	Date	27/06/2016
Approved by	John Raven	Date	27/06/2016

Annex A – list of supporting documents

Heritage Impact Statement for proposed pontoon
Proposed detail for residential mooring at Firhill
Heritage Impact Assessment (2014)

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