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The instillation of two Union Canal Timber Safety Gates at Historic Gate Locations

1. Introduction

This document is supporting material for an SMC application for the installation of Timber Safety Gates based on a historic design.

2. Proposal

The proposal is to replace the current modern stop plank grooves with traditional timber safety gates at bridge locations (Bridge 42 and 48) near Linlithgow. Timber safety gates are part of the historic fabric of the Union Canal and date to circa 1820.

During the Millennium link project in 2001 two degraded timber safety gates were removed from Bridges 42 and 48 with the intention of replacing them on a like for like basis. Due to budget constraints at that time the gates were not fitted. Scottish Canals are now in a position to replace these gates.

The proposed bridge holes Wilcoxholm bridge no. 42 and Woodckdale bridge no. 48 have been selected based on their geographical location to manage risk associated with leaking canal embankments. Both these proposed bridges had

as an original feature timber safety gates, which were removed some years ago and modern stop plank grooves installed.

3. Mitigation Strategy for the Replacement of the Historic Fabric

At both locations, Bridge 42 and 48, there has been modifications to the original fabric of the bridge holes for the addition of stop plank grooves. We intend the reverse these modifications in order to fit timber gates based on the historic design

The majority of the bridge hole is below normal canal operating level and will only become visible when the canal is locally dewatered in order to fit the gates. This will provide an opportunity to photograph the bridge hole and the its modern modifications.

The dewatering of the canal will provide the opportunity to undertake minor masonry repairs on a like for like basis.

4. Summary

Scottish Canals are proposing to replace original canal features, timber safety gates, that will allow the closure of the canal at strategic locations during times of emergency. A photographic survey will be undertaken whilst the canal is dewatered, thus preserving by record the modifications made for the previous stop planks, as well as providing material for future canal-side interpretation