Scheduled Monument Consent:
Report on Handling

Case information

Reference/Case ID	201602116

Scheduled Monument	Union Canal, River Almond to River Avon		
Index no	M8954	**Grid Ref**	NS968757 296800.0000 675700.0000

Date of Application	18 July 2016	**Application Received**	19 July 2016
Summary of proposed works	The installation of two historic timber safety gates on the Union Canal.		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for the installation of two historic timber safety gates on the Union Canal be granted without conditions.

2. Background

The monument is of national importance because, as an integral part of the Union Canal, and an important piece of Georgian civil engineering. Designed by a noted Scots Engineer, Hugh Baird, and built 1818-23, its continuous watercourse was without need of a single lock, and was graced by three major aqueducts inspired by another great Scots civil engineer, Thomas Telford.

This application relates to the stretch of Canal at Linlithgow.

The works are to reinstate two historic timber safety gates. 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.

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.

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 canal was scheduled in 2003 and these works will now require scheduled monument consent.

3. Proposals

Consented works – The installation of two timber safety gates on the Union Canal.

Description of works:

- 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 its modern modifications.
- The dewatering of the canal will provide the opportunity to undertake minor masonry repairs on a like for like basis.
- 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. The applicant proposes to the reverse these modifications in order to fit timber gates based on the historic design
- The installation of two timber safety gates, resembling original ones, on the Union Canal.

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:

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

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

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016 (the policy statement)

3.14. A monument in 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, which 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. (Annex 1 sets out guidance as to how cultural significance and national importance should be determined).

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.

3.19. Extensive intervention will only be allowed where it is clearly necessary to secure the longer-term preservation of the monument, or where it will clearly generate public benefits of national importance which outweigh the impact on the national cultural significance of the monument. Such public benefits could come from, for example, interventions which make public access to scheduled monuments easier, or assist public understanding, or will produce economic benefits once the works are completed.

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 addition of the two historic timber safety gates will have a very small physical impact on the monument and a minimal impact on its cultural significance. The works are a reinstatement of an original feature that was lost during the ongoing use of the canal. The applicant provides a detailed plan of the works. The works will require minor masonry alterations to reverse later modifications to the timber gate fixing points. A photographic survey will be undertake before these works are carried out. I am content that the method statement covers the procedures which will be followed and these are acceptable and conform to industry standards.

The works will add a significant safety benefit as they will manage risk associated with leaking canal embankments.

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

None

d) Conclusion

These works represent additions and alterations to the monument under Part 1.2.2.b. of the Act and as such scheduled monument consent is required.

The works involve a very minor alteration to the canal reversing later alterations and reinstating the original timber safety gate. I consider this to represent a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument and to therefore accord with 3.16 of the policy statement.

The method statement indicates that the addition of these timber safety gates has been carefully considered and is sensitively designed. The timber gates are reusing original locations. I am content that the detailed description of the works and photographic survey provided in the application complies with 3.20 of the policy statement. I am therefore content that no conditions are necessary.

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

None

8. Approval

Officer	**James Bruhn**	**Date**	**09/09/2016**
Approved by	**George Findlater**	**Date**	**12/09/2016**

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Timber safety gate drawing WSG3 190716
- Gates iron work items WSG2 July 1999
- Woodcockdale Br No 48 Location Plan 1 to 2500
- Safety Gate Photos
- Photos Woodockdale br no48
- Photos Wilcoxholm br no42
- Location plan Wilcoxholm br no 42 1 to 2500
- Location plan 1 to 20000
- Greenbank Gates Location Plan 1 to 2500
- Supplementary Information for New Safety Gates Union Canal