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Scheduled Monument Consent Application for Installation of New Pontoon at Banavie

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is supporting documentation for the Scheduled Monument Application for the installation of a new pontoon at Banavie.

Banavie is a popular mooring location and there is currently a five year waiting list for '*Long Term Annual Leisure Users*'. In order to service this demand Scottish Canals would like to provide extra moorings.

The new pontoon will be located east of and near adjacent to an existing wooden jetty, see Fig 1-2.

2.0 TECHNICAL DETAILS AND INSTALLATION METHODOLOGY

The new pontoon is 54.5m long and will berth four boats. The pontoon is anchored to the canal bank with three concrete blocks of dimensions 2m x 1.5m x 1m deep. The receiving pits will be marginally bigger than the anchor blocks to allow for the wooden shuttering (circa100mm thick). The concrete will be poured in situ. The pontoon is attached to the anchor blocks by jointed movable arms.

In order to service the pontoon new services contained in ducting will be provided. This will require a service trench to be excavated with dimensions of 33m long, by 400mm wide by 650mm deep, see Fig 2.

The majority of the excavations will be undertaken by a small mechanical excavator. Some hand digging will be involved.

3.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impact on the historic fabric of the canal will be negligible. The canal embankment is a soft embankment with no evidence of historical canal walls, or previous jetties and moorings. Directly behind the towpath lie a series of ponds which also appear on the 1st Ed OS Map of ---. This boggy area is likely to preclude the historic construction of any structures. Further the excavations for the pontoon are limited to small areas on the canal-side of the towpath.

The impact on the setting of the canal is also negligible. There are already existing pontoons and a wooden jetty at this location, and these structures are an integral part of the canal water-space, see figs 2-3. Further the addition of a new pontoon will not hinder a viewer's '*reading*' of the canal, as a linear and historic monument as the pontoon will not impeded these views, or obstruct views of historic elements such as the towpath.

Fig 2. Site Location Viewed from Off-side

Fig 3. Site Location Looking West

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A desktop study of the area has been conducted. The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) database was checked and no records of otter on the Caledonian Canal at Banavie were found. The local canal supervisor and local residents are not aware of any otters being present on the canal at this location.

Fig 3. shows the location of the proposed pontoons. The area where the pontoons are to be erected is regularly mown resulting in a lack of suitable sites for otter resting places adjacent to the canal. The area is also a popular area for dog walkers which will deter otter from utilising the section of canal.

The Caledonian Canal at Banavie lies within 200m of the River Lochy which provides suitable habitat for otters. Tributaries of the river, such as the Allt Mor, run under the canal and may be used by otter for transiting along.

The work involved in erecting the pontoons is very localised to less than 55 metres of embankment. By limiting the work to daylight operation the impact on any otters transiting the area will be minimised. Any excavation left open overnight will be covered to protect nocturnal animals.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The installation of a new pontoon at Banavie will have negligible effects on the historic fabric and setting of the canal. Similarly, there will be minimal impact on the natural environment. Scottish Canals feel that the necessary interventions in the historic fabric and setting of the canal are offset by the positive impact on the boating community.

Yours sincerely

Chris O'Connell