



Case reference	SMC-EDB-006
Application details	New pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Union Canal linking Edinburgh International Climbing Arena to the new Wavegarden development and the Craigpark housing development
Site address	Union Canal, Fountainbridge to River Almond section, Edinburgh (SM 11097)
Applicant	City of Edinburgh Council
Determining Authority	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
Local Authority Area	City of Edinburgh Council
Reason(s) for notification	Notification Direction 2015 – works to be granted Scheduled Monument Consent by Historic Environment Scotland go beyond the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument
Representations	Nil
Date notified to Ministers	2 September 2020
Date of recommendation	24 September 2020
Decision / recommendation	Clear

Description of Proposal and Site:

- Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is sought for the construction of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Union Canal (Fountainbridge to River Avon section) to provide an active travel link between the Union Canal towpath and Climbing Centre, on the north side of the canal and the proposed Wavegarden inland surfing lagoon and Craigpark housing development to the south of the canal.
- The monument comprises a stretch of the inland waterway, 9.6 miles (15km) long together with the banks on either side, the towing path running along the north side, all distance markers and kicking stones, forming part of the Union Canal falling within the boundary of the former county of Midlothian. (See Figure 1). The waterway runs from the site of the former Lochrin Basin in Edinburgh to the west end of Lin's Mill aqueduct over the River Almond. The application relates to the stretch of canal in a cutting, located between original canal bridges numbers 14 and 16.
- The monument is of national importance because, as an integral part of the Union Canal, it represents a superlative achievement of Georgian civil engineering. Designed by a noted Scots engineer, Hugh Baird, and built 1818-23, the continuous watercourse was without need of a single lock, and was graced by three major aqueducts inspired by the great Scots civil engineer, Thomas Telford.

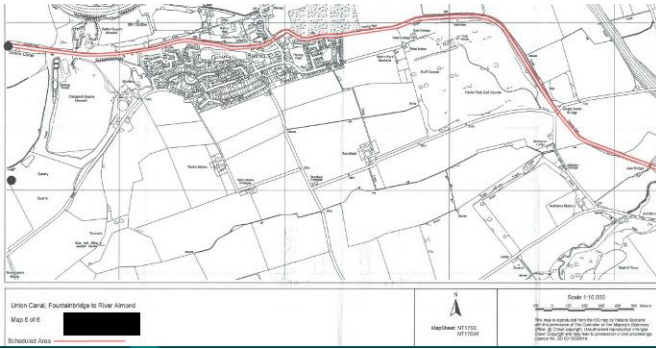


Figure 1 – Union Canal section - scheduled area in red.

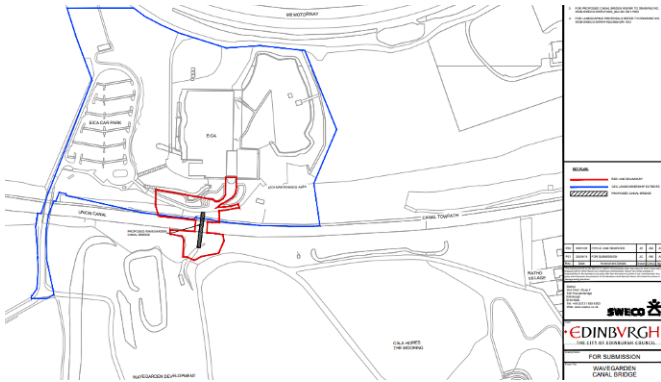


Figure 2 – Bridge location on canal



Viewpoint 3: Photomontage view looking south from the Union Canal access point adjacent to EICA

Baseline from site: 000 Date of photo: 04/05/2019

Bearing from site: North

Viewpoint grid reference: 6512781, 6627842

Viewpoint ground height: 82m AOD



Wavegarden Bridge, Ratho

Figure 3: Viewpoint 3 Photomontage

Figure 3 – before and after viewpoints from upper embankment



Viewpoint 2: View looking east from the Union Canal towpath		 Project: Wavegarden Bridge, Ratho Drawing No: Figure 3.2 Viewpoint 2 Photograph Date: 04/05/2019
Distance from site:	50m	
Bearing from site:	West	
Viewpoint grid reference:	E312004, N675028	
Viewpoint ground height:	75m AOD	



Viewpoint 2: Photomontage view looking east from the Union Canal towpath		 Project: Wavegarden Bridge, Ratho Drawing No: Figure 3.3 Viewpoint 2 Photomontage Date: 04/05/2019
Distance from site:	50m	
Bearing from site:	West	
Viewpoint grid reference:	E312004, N675028	
Viewpoint ground height:	75m AOD	

Figure 4 – before and after viewpoints at canal towpath level © SWECO

Consultations and Representations:

- No representations were made during the consideration of the application.
- PAD consulted Scottish Government’s Culture and Historic Environment Division (CHED) following notification. They consider granting SMC does not raise any issues of national importance, given that the pedestrian/ cycle bridge passes over the top of the scheduled monument and does not offer any permanent physical change to the monument itself, and offers considerable desirability and benefits to the public. The design will make it evident the bridge is a later addition to the canal's development and will not add detriment to the setting or understanding of the scheduled monument.

Assessment:

1. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are minded to grant SMC for the construction of the bridge which goes beyond the minimum level of intervention which is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument.
2. The application has been submitted by Sweco on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council. The works would be carried out by contractors. The application has been accompanied by a detailed project design that sets out a well-considered, appropriate and careful methodology which takes into account the pre-application discussions held.
3. The proposed works involve the construction of a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Union Canal. The majority of works relating to the construction of the bridge, including the north and south abutments and their foundations would be outwith the scheduled area, affecting the slopes of the cutting above the canal. The proposed bridge would be constructed using weathering steel girders supporting a recycled plastic deck and parapet moulded and coloured to a timber-effect finish. The wingwalls of the abutments would be clad in stone. Vegetation clearance works would be required to construct the bridge and its abutments, and the bridge structure would be highly visible to both users of the canal towpath and to users on the canal itself. (See Figures 3 and 4).
4. HES consider a pedestrian and cycle bridge would be consistent with the nature of the canal in the wider context of the canal on the outskirts of the city of Edinburgh. The design of the bridge has been carefully prepared to ensure that it is visually distinct from historic bridges on the canal and from features that are part of the functioning of the canal. The materials selected would be visually suitable for the canal, and would present a simply-engineered structure that would not detract from the amenity of this stretch of the canal, whilst allowing increased access to and from the canal to visitor and residential developments in the vicinity.
5. HES believe the physical impact of the proposed works on the monument and its cultural significance would be negligible - the bridge is being constructed over the scheduled area. The benefit from increased public access across and to the canal towpath would be significant. The works would comprise the addition of a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the canal. The physical impact would be limited to vegetation clearance below where the bridge would be constructed in order to allow for the construction of the bridge abutments which would be outwith the scheduled area.
6. HES conclude that the works would have a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument and therefore do not conflict with Scheduled Monument Policy 1 and they are also compliant with Scheduled Monument Consent Policy 1.
7. HES believe the application is carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed, and properly planned and so is compliant with Scheduled Monument Consent Policy 4, and no conditions are considered necessary.

8. HES considers the proposal is broadly consistent with relevant policy. However, the proposal is not considered the minimum necessary consistent with conserving the cultural significance of the monument, hence the requirement to notify Scottish Ministers.
9. In summary, and for the reasons set out above, this SMC application does not raise any issues of national importance that would merit intervention by Ministers.

Decision/Recommendation:

- The application should be cleared back to Historic Environment Scotland to issue Scheduled Monument Consent without conditions.