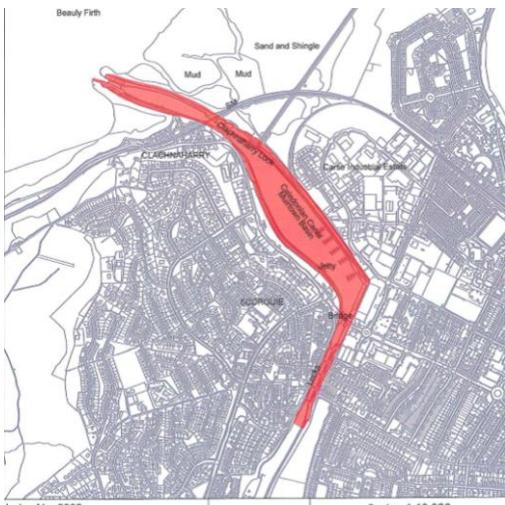




<b>Case reference</b>	SMC-HLD-005
<b>Application details</b>	Erection of new build community hub – the Carse Hub
<b>Site address</b>	Caledonian Canal, Clachnaharry sea lock to Muirtown Quay, Inverness (SM 5292)
<b>Applicant</b>	Scottish Canals
<b>Determining Authority</b>	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
<b>Local Authority Area</b>	The Highland Council
<b>Reason(s) for notification</b>	Notification Direction 2015 – works to be granted Scheduled Monument Consent by <b>Historic Environment Scotland</b> go beyond the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument
<b>Representations</b>	Nil
<b>Date notified to Ministers</b>	30 January 2020
<b>Date of recommendation</b>	26 February 2020
<b>Decision / recommendation</b>	Clear

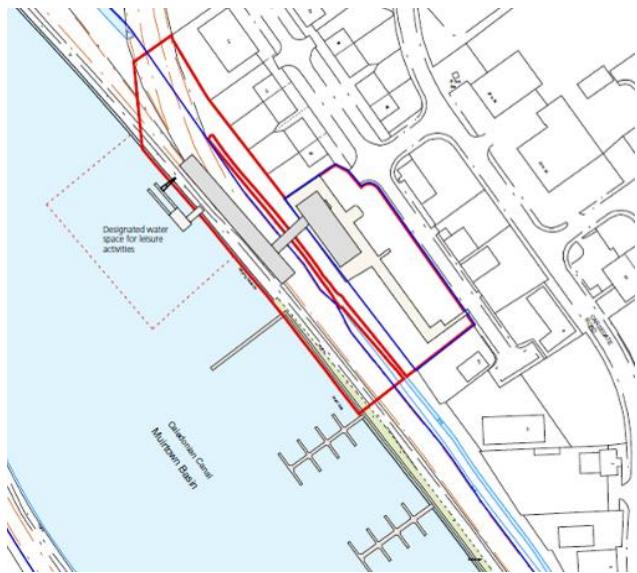
### Description of Proposal and Site:

- Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is sought for the erection of a new build community hub on the eastern embankment of the Muirtown Basin at Clachnaharry, Inverness. The application forms part of a wider regeneration scheme, part of which has already received SMC in October 2019. The related planning application was submitted in January 2020 and is still under consideration by The Highland Council – 20/00232/FUL.
- The monument comprises a stretch of the Caledonian Canal running from Clachnaharry entrance lock to the south end of Muirtown Quay. The scheduled area includes the aforementioned lock and quay in addition to the Muirtown basin, four Muirtown locks, towpath and working areas associated with the operation of the canal. The eastern embankment was widened in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when a branch of the Highland railway was constructed up against it to provide a link to the quayside. (See following images)
- The cultural significance of the monument is vested in its form and survival as a major component of the Caledonian Canal, built between 1803 and 1822. The canal was designed by Thomas Telford, the renowned Scottish civil engineer and financed directly by the Government of the day. The sea lock at Clachnaharry was one of the most difficult parts to build and its continued use reinforces its importance and helps safeguard its long term survival.

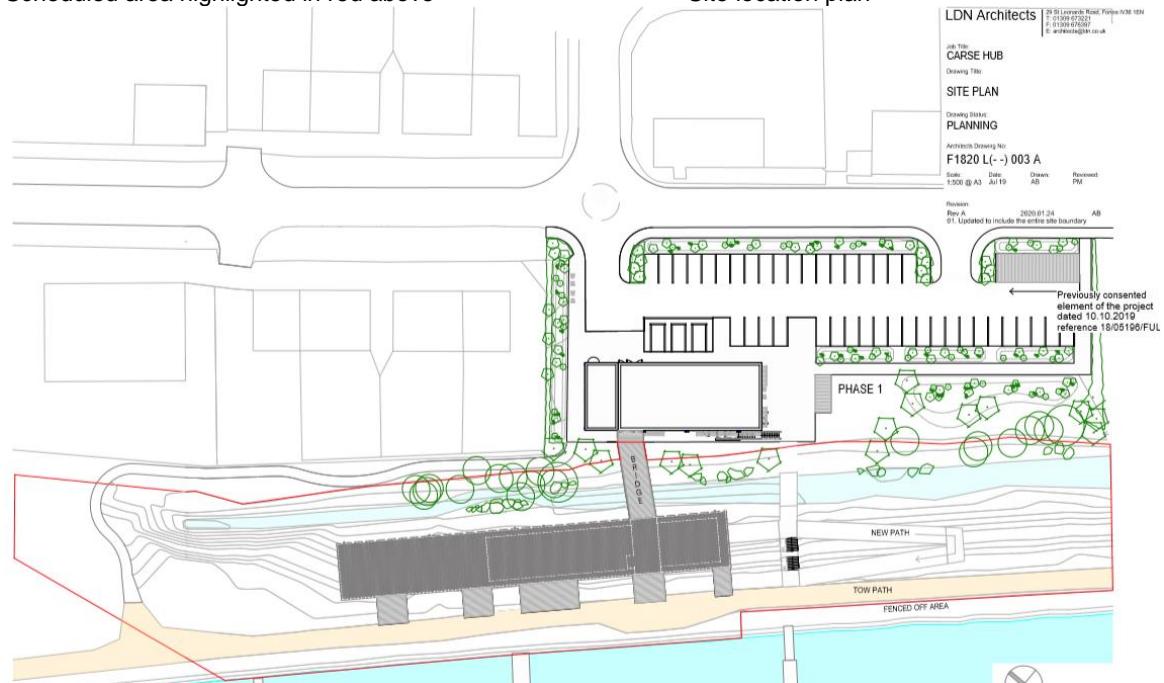


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Scheduled area highlighted in red above



Site location plan



Location of new community hub and bridge link above and 3D visualisation below – © LDN Architects



## **Consultations and Representations:**

- No representations were made during consideration of the application.
- PAD consulted Scottish Government's Culture and Historic Environment Division following notification and they raised no concerns given the project phasing and involvement of key stakeholders, as well as the unsuitability of the other options considered. They are aware of no particular sensitivities with the planned scheme.

## **Assessment:**

1. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are minded to grant scheduled monument consent (SMC) for the erection of a new build community hub which impacts on the Scheduled Monument as the works are not considered the minimum level of intervention consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument.
2. The proposed works include construction of the Carse Hub buildings utilising concrete piles into the embankment, the formation of five access ramps leading from canalside to tow path with concrete edge strip at path edge; and the formation of a cut and fill access ramp in lieu of previously consented elevated boardwalk to link the tow path with the footbridge. (See images above)
3. These proposals involve a significant number of physical interventions to the monument. The cumulative impact of these interventions when combined with the visual intervention means that the works are considered as extensive by HES. The buildings have been carefully designed to be located above the slope of the embankment which allows for the original structure of the canal still to be seen. Previous archaeological site investigations have also demonstrated there is limited archaeological potential in the areas to be affected, therefore HES consider each individual pile, foundation trench or cut and fill area would have a fairly minimal physical impact on the monument. HES also believe the overall physical impact on the cultural significance of the monument is likely to be negligible.
4. The key aim of the project is to deliver the hub building, which forms part of a wider regeneration scheme, to link communities to the canal that cuts through them. The 'Carse Hub' will provide a new space to cater for social, training and outdoor activities – community uses are to include a cycle hire and maintenance facility, a café and space for the Sea Scouts and Inverness Rowing Club. The application has been submitted by Scottish Canals as owner and operator of the canal. There have been extensive pre-application discussions between all parties during 2018-19 and the application accords with these discussions. The works will be undertaken by suitably qualified specialist contractors and sub-contractors working on behalf of Scottish Canals. The project is receiving funding from the Council's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund as well as regeneration funding from Scottish Government.
5. While the works are extensive, HES consider the proposal would clearly generate public benefits which outweigh the impact on the cultural significance and character of the monument and, consequently, is compliant with their

Scheduled Monument Consent Policies 1 and 3. They believe the application, on the whole, is carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned. However an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for ground works and further information on the timetabling of works is required by HES, before work commences, so two conditions of consent covering these aspects are to be imposed.

6. 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 with two conditions.