



Proposed Fish Farm: Dounie, Knapdale, Sound of Jura

Initial Review of Landscape and Visual Issues

On behalf of Kames Fish Farming

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Proposed fish farm: Dounie

Initial Landscape and Visual Review

Introduction

1. Kames Fish Farming (KFF) commissioned this initial review of Landscape and Visual (L&V) issues relating to a proposed fish farm, located within the Sound of Jura off the Knapdale shore, south of Crinan (fig 1). The proposal is at an early stage and KFF are undertaking survey and consultation to establish feasibility. This assessment has been carried out by David Graham CMLI, chartered landscape architect, and is based on site visits by land and sea in May 2016.

Purpose

2. This Review is to be used pre-application discussion with consultees where appropriate, and also to be submitted with Screening and Scoping applications.

Scope

3. The study brief is to:
 - Review the proposed site in terms of the L&V resource;
 - Review alternative sites between Crinan and Carsaig.
 - Review the outline design in respect to L&V integration;
 - Review the policy context as relevant to L&V issues;
4. This is not a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) but does the ground work for a future detailed assessment should KFF decide to proceed to apply for planning consent.

Proposal

LOCATION

5. The proposed site is just north east of a Salen Mor, a small bay approximately 3.5km south of Ardnoe Point at GR 175307, 692023. The FF would be located below the small dwelling at Dounie (fig 2).

INSTALLATION

6. The proposal consists of: 12nr x 100m circumference (16m diameter) circular cages in a two rows of 6 cages. The installation would be located close inshore, with a submerged mooring grid running parallel to the shore. A feed barge would be located on the shoreward side of the fish farm. No new infrastructure on land is proposed.

DESIGN

7. The installation would be typical of modern fin-fish sites (photo 1 & 2):
 - Black PVC cages, with a 1m handrail and bird nets over the cage;
 - Submerged grid, with a number of marker buoys on the surface;
 - Feed barge, type not confirmed but assumed to be a purpose made unit, connected to the cages by floating pipes.



Photo 1: Loch Melfort: Typical cages design.

OPERATION

8. The farm would be for the production of fin-fish. The site would be serviced by workboats working out of Loch Melfort and / or Loch Craignish, operating from existing shore bases. The fish-feeders would operate automatically. Sound baffles would be fitted to contain noise. Under-water lighting is not proposed.



Photo 2: Loch Ainort, Skye: Typical fish farm arrangement of two rows of six pens within a submerged mooring grid and a feed-barge.

LIFESPAN

9. The installation is assumed to effectively be permanent. Were the site to be decommissioned all equipment would be removed with no residual L&V impacts.

Location selection

CRITERIA

10. KFF are based in Loch Melfort, Mid-Argyll, with shore bases at Kames Pier in Loch Melfort and below Poltalloch in Loch Craignish. KFF wish to expand their fin-fish sites in the area to strengthen the company's economic sustainability and to operate a new site from existing shore bases at Kames Pier or Poltalloch. This restricts the search area to c.20km from Kames Pier.
11. There are a number of existing fish farm sites already in Loch Melfort and an additional site would be affected by the restrictions production. In order to achieve continuity of production a site is required that is out-with the Loch Melfort Production Area¹ but within the Loch Craignish Production Area. These are both defined within the Lower Lorn Farm Partnership Agreement (FPA).
12. There are also already fish farms within Loch Craignish itself and it is unlikely that additional sites of the size required would be consented. Loch Crinan was considered by KFF to be too sensitive due to visual impact and intensity of recreational use and proximity to settlements.
13. A site within the Loch Craignish Production Area but outwith Loch Craignish itself and Loch Crinan was required.

¹ Code of Good Practice Management Areas (CoGP) M-40, is the area referred to in the Lower Lorn Farm Partnership Agreement (FMA), to which all operators are signatories. Within this area there are two production areas known as – Loch Melfort and Loch Craignish. KFF is seeking a site outwith the Loch Melfort Production area (ie within the Loch Craignish production area). These two areas are divided by a line running from Craignish Point (NR754 990) and Rubha' a' Bhacain (NR 702 961).

WIDER SEARCH AREA

14. Areas considered by KFF are summarised below:

Table 1: Locations considered: Accessible from Loch Melfort / Craignish (20km)	
Location	Comment
Garvellachs	Technically viable site(s) but high sensitivity (landscape, cultural & habitat) plus distance from shore bases (>20km) has deterred KFF from further consideration. Designations include: NSA, SPA, SSSI, WLA, Archaeology.
East Jura Coast	Serviceable distance (18km from Kames Pier; 12km from Craignish) but rejected due to excessive tidal currents. Designations: SAC & WLA.
Coast Ardnoe Point to Carsaig	Serviceable distance (18-25km from Kames Pier; 7-15km L. Craignish); out-with habitat restrictions. Constraints include: a) currents and exposure; b) NSA; c) Isolated Coast. KFF preference to pursue further due to being out-with Loch Melfort production area but within the Loch Craignish production area and workable distance.
South of Carsaig	Sites were considered by KFF but distance would be too great to service from Loch Melfort / Craignish.

15. Carsaig Bay offers shelter and reduced currents, but was rejected due to constraints. These include:

- Restricted depths;
- Distance from Loch Melfort (27km);
- Proximity to and overlooked by settlement;
- Recreational and tourism focus
- Recreational anchorage;
- Valued views from accessible shoreline;
- Within the Knapdale National Scenic Area (NSA).

16. KFF therefore have focussed on the coast **Ardnoe Point to Carsaig**, but excluding Carsaig Bay itself.

ARDNOE TO CARSAIG

17. Locations considered are outline below:

Table 2: Locations considered Ardnoe to Carsaig	
Location	Comment
Ardnoe Pt to Dounie	A relatively straight coast with steep forested and inaccessible shoreline allowing few publicly accessible viewpoints, except for Castle Dounie and the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) viewpoint above Ardnoe Point; no dwellings; no anchorages. Restricted by: a) strong tidal currents; b) exposure to the SW-W. The coast lacks bays sufficiently large and deep to provide reduced currents/shelter. In addition landscape capacity sensitivity due to: a) NSA; b) Isolated Coast; c) viewpoints at Castle Dounie SM d) cycle route viewpoint above Ardnoe Pt. Rejected by KFF for technical constraints.
Dounie to Salen Mor	Advantages include: a) currents slightly reduced inshore by indentation in the coast below Dounie and by the bay and headland at Salen Mor; b) water depths are suitable close inshore at Dounie; c) some shelter from headland to the south-west; d) largely screened from view from landward by steep shore and forestry; e) out-with Isolated Coast; f) remote from settlement; g) limited visibility from adjacent two remote dwellings; h) limited visibility from recreational access; i) forested foreshore & hinterland giving a managed setting and potential for cages to merge with foreshore seen from offshore. Restricted by: a) currents remain significant; b) shoal water & shoreline restricts flexibility for location; c) within NSA; d) proximity to residential property; e) visible from cycle route passing Salen Mor; f) recreational anchorage at Salen Mor; f) visible from Castle Dounie (SM). Sensitivity is high due to value (designation) & lack of development / activity; remoteness tranquillity and visual exposure from sea-ward. Preferred location due to relative technical advantage over

Table 2: Locations considered Ardnoe to Carsaig

<i>adjacent areas and reduced sensitivity compared with coast north and south.</i>	
Salen Mor to Carsaig	<p>Advantages include: a) lack of visibility from shoreward until Carsaig; b) lack of any overlooking property; c) out-with Isolated Coast.</p> <p>Restrictions include: a) distance from Melfort/Craignish shore-bases; b) no sites out of the tidal current until the islands north of Carsaig, but here restricted by depths & potential obstruction of small boat passage north of Carsaig; d) NSA.</p> <p>Sensitivity is high due to value (designation) & lack of development / activity; tranquillity and visual exposure from sea-ward.</p> <p><i>Rejected due to technically unsuitable by KFF, primarily due to currents.</i></p>

18. For the reasons outlined above the site at Dounie (Fig 1 & 2) is being considered by KFF for the proposed development as having the least technical restrictions and sensitivity slightly less than to north and south. It is noted that in L&V terms sensitivity remains high.

DESIGNATIONS

19. The site is within the Knapdale National Scenic Area (NSA), designated of national importance for the scenic quality of the landscape (fig 6). Knapdale is a Tourism Development Area as defined by the Local Development Plan (LDP). The proposed site lies off land that is designated as Countryside within the LDP.

20. The coast is out-with Isolated Coast as identified in the LDP. The proposed site is out-with designated habitat and remote from impacts upon settlement. The area is out-with Wild Land as defined and mapped by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Although the site is theoretically visible from within the Jura, Scarba Lunga and Garvellachs Wild Land Area, at over 6.5km distance the site is unlikely to be appreciable (fig 7).

21. A cycle route passes the proposed site and is a Core Path. Salen Mor is a recreational anchorage. The Sound of Jura is a popular recreational marine route for pleasure craft and kayaks (fig 8).

Micro-siting

POSITIONING

22. The proposed micro-siting is shown in Fig 2 and Fig 4. Micro siting opportunities are restricted by a number of technical issues including:

- Tidal current: tidal currents are less inshore and toward Salen Mor bay but remain appreciable;
- Shelter: ideally some shelter from the SW is desirable for operational safety.

23. As can be seen from the nautical chart (fig 3 & 4), the selected location allows the cages to be as close to the shore as possible while giving sufficient depth.

24. In addition the location has other advantages which are reviewed in a later section and include:

- Out-with Salen Mor bay and would not physically obstruct access to this recreational anchorage;
- Screened from view from Dounie cottage;
- Screened from view from most publicly accessible promoted viewpoints;
- Location off a forested foreshore, a managed landscape.

While the site would be visible from the cycle route passing Salen Mor (photo 3), the cages would be part screened by woodland on the foreshore and visible for only a short section of track.

25. From the residential dwelling at Ardnakraig the site would be visible but viewed 'end-on' and foreshortened, seen as lying close to the shore and at some distance (photo 4).

ORIENTATION

26. The orientation of the cages would be parallel to the shore as close in as depth would allow reducing tidal flows at the cages and

maximising shelter from the headland at Salen Mor. In addition landward visibility is minimised and integration with the coastline maximised.

27. Economic and operational considerations require 12nr cages. Constraints of depth plus operational considerations dictate two rows of cages parallel to the shore. In addition this orientation achieves 'best-fit' in terms of L&V considerations and best practice guidance (reviewed below).
28. The feed-barge would probably be located inshore of the cages, central to the grid. This minimises exposure to current while also reducing potential visual impact. A location mid-way along the grid is optimum for operational uses, although does put the barge close to Dounie Cottage.

ALTERNATIVE MICRO-SITING CONSIDERED

29. Given the foregoing constraints there are not obvious alternatives to the micro-siting of the development that would have L&V benefit. Further south would increase impact on the bay at Salen Mor and increase visibility from the cycle route and on recreational use of the bay. Further north the cages would leave the indentation in the coastline below Dounie, making it subject to stronger tidal currents and moving onto Isolated Coast off Sensitive Countryside as defined by the LDP.

DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

30. The modern cage design of black plastic circular cages is acknowledged the best technical solution to a site such as this and, in terms of L&V integration, provides a low-profile, coordinated and recessive solution. This is with the proviso that consideration is given to appropriate feed-barge design and avoiding ad-hoc and intrusive ancillary structures; intrusive bird-net colour, feed-pipes and marker buoys;
31. A reduction in cage numbers could in principle reduce impacts, especially if the outer row could be omitted, but would affect

commercial viability. A single row of larger cages could have L&V advantage, however a proposal would need to be tabled before this could be assessed.



Photo 3: Salen Mor: View north toward proposed site. Dashed line= approx. extent of submerged mooring grid.



Photo 4 : Ardnakraig: View north toward proposed site. Dashed line= approx. extent of submerged mooring grid.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTING

HINTERLAND

32. Knapdale is a rough landscape of steep craggy ridges running northeast-southwest parallel to the coast. Local high-points include Cnoc Readmar (265m AOD) and Castle Dounie and these are steep sided craggy peaks overlooking the Sound of Jura (photo 5).
33. The area is extensively forested, predominantly with conifer plantations. Settlement is limited, with a few scattered dwellings and a number of small villages, including Tayvallich and Carsaig. There is a rich pre-historic heritage of standing stones, cup and ring markings and Duns, including Castle Dounie.



Photo 5: Knapdale: a diverse landscape of steep, ridged topography, largely cloaked in woodland and forestry.

34. The area is currently being promoted for outdoor recreation, largely by Forest Commission Scotland (FCS), with the way-marked Ardnoe and Faery Isles Cycle Route running from above Crinan southwards along the coast to Carsaig. In addition there are a number of minor waymarked woodland footpaths and a viewpoint on the cycle route above Ardnoe Point. In the LDP it is a Tourism Development Area.

35. There are two dwellings in an otherwise un-inhabited coastline: Dounie, a small traditional cottage set to landward of a steep ridge and within conifers; and Ardnakraig, a two-storey house set back from the head of Salen Mor. There is evidence of previous farmsteads in the area, now abandoned and blanketed by forestry.

COAST

36. The coastline south of Crinan runs northeast-southwest with shallow indentations. Between Ardnoe and Salen Mor the coast rises very steeply in wooded slopes from a rocky boulder shore-line. Conifers are hidden above the coastal ridge for much of this section of coast and the shore is attractive and remote feeling (photo 6)
37. Salen Mor is a bay open to the north with an extensive sand/mud beach, contained to the west by a low rocky headland at Rubha nam Barr, part wooded. There are a couple of small boat moorings in the bay, but shoal water reduces the shelter available (photo 7).
38. South of Salen Mor the coast is less steep and more indented and with greater presence of broadleaf woodland. The shore fragments into small skerries and an island at the north side of Carsaig Bay (photo 8).



Photo 6: Coast between Ardnoe and Dounie: an inaccessible coastline.



Photo 7: Salen Mor: a sheltered bay but with extensive intertidal beach.



Photo 8: Coast south of Salen Mor: fragments into islands and skerries.

Landscape Character

REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

39. The SNH Regional Landscape Character Assessment for Argyll and the Clyde² describes the hinterland here as part of the broad landscape character area “7: Knapdale”. The site is transitional between the Landscape Character Types: “10: Upland Parallel Ridges” to the north and “22: Coastal Parallel Ridges” to the south. A detailed assessment of local landscape and coastal character has not been undertaken and this would be part of a full LVIA.
40. Key Issues for the Regional LCA includes Fish Farming, described as a “significant industrial development” and a principal Force for Change associated with Coastal Development.
41. Guidance includes: siting to “minimise visibility from important viewpoints, particularly along coastal and loch-side roads...” and use of dark and matt colours with cages of simple, unobtrusive design and low profile.
42. *Upland Parallel Ridges* LCA runs south from Moine Mhor as far as Salen Mor. The LCA description focusses on an upland character of the hinterland and issues related to forestry and loss of archaeological sites, with no mention of the coastal landscape or aquaculture.
43. *Coastal Parallel Ridges* LCA runs south from Salen Mor over the Knapdale peninsular to Keils. The LCA description and issues focus on tourism pressure and forestry, also with no mention of aquaculture.
44. As far as we are aware there is no Seascape or Coastal Character Assessment available for this area.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER

45. The Regional LCA is large in scale and an LVIA would require a detailed assessment of Local Landscape Character and Seascape Character. The LVIA would identify Local Landscape and Seascape

² SNH 1996: “Landscape Character Assessment: Argyll and the Firth of Clyde”

Character Areas and sensitivity and impacts there-on. The LVIA would assess the Scenic Quality, Condition, Value, Accessibility, Tranquillity, Wildness and Cultural Associations of the landscape and seascape.

46. It is out-with the scope of this review to undertake a LLCA, however, it is likely that the following would apply:

Scenic Quality

47. The area is of high scenic quality, the result of the diverse ridged landscape and the panoramic views over the Sound of Mull to Jura and Scarba and Loch Craignish with distant hills of Mull visible. This is reflected by NSA designation. There is very little built development along the shore and lack of access and habitation creates a landscape with a feeling of relative remoteness and high tranquillity.
48. In relative terms the dominance of conifers can be said to erode the scenic quality of some of the coast south of Crinan, and this is certainly the case with recent forest harvesting. The Forest Design Plan for re-planting has not been.
49. South of Salen Mor the effect of conifer forestry on the coastal fringe is less pronounced and, with greater diversity in the shore line and predominance of broadleaf woodland, scenic quality increases.
50. Sensitivity of scenic quality to the potential impacts of the type of development would be, high, subject to visibility and detail.

Condition

51. The coastline is undeveloped and 'natural' in character. The hinterland also lacks built development and settlement, but is affected by forestry, including the aftermath of harvesting and forest tracks. Nonetheless the area is scenically attractive, has aspects of remoteness and is tranquil.

Value

52. The coastline is valued by society by dint not only of the NSA designation, but for the associations with undeveloped coastline, iconic views, tranquillity and rich cultural heritage. Forestry has

eroded the traditional un-developed landscape that would have predated the commercial forestry.

Accessibility

53. The coastline is relatively inaccessible other than the cycle trail and by sea. Forestry and topography prevents access off this corridor and much of the coast is effectively inaccessible. At Salen Mor the track comes to the foreshore and the coast is briefly accessible. Below Dounie there are minor paths to the shore and a semi-private small-boat slipway. West of Ardnakraig there is a similar private path and small boat landing.

Tranquillity & Remoteness

54. The area has a high level of tranquillity; there is usually no activity and a high level of peace. Forest harvesting is a transient disturbance, as are passing vessels in the Sound of Jura. Although the development would not physically affect accessibility to the area, the development could reduce the impression of remoteness through introduction of structures and activity.

Wildness

55. The site is out-with the SNH mapped Wild Land Area (WLA) and as such would not trigger a Wild Land Assessment. Comparison with the SNH analysis maps of Wildness³ shows a narrow coastal fringe to be high in attributes of wildness, whereas inland wildness is reduced, presumably by forestry and access tracks, although remains mid-range in the SNH criteria.

Cultural Associations

56. There is a rich pre-history to the landscape as well as traditions of Gaelic culture through place names and lost settlement. Inland the Historic Landscape is largely masked by trees with just the Scheduled Monument (SM) hillfort at Castle Dounie on Creag Mhor present as a

³ <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1323310.pdf>

prominent coastal feature 1.5km to the north east and within the visual envelop or the proposed development.

57. There are no designated sites on the coast at Dounie itself, but in the locality is a former township at Tigh an-t Sluichd and a possible burial ground adjacent, both at the head of Salen Mor; on the hillside to the east is the site of a farmstead at Dounie Barbea; and around Dounie are various shelters and enclosures. There are rock shelters, bait holes and cup and ring marks on the coast and inland⁴.

SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE

58. The Sound of Jura at this location is a distinctive and scenic landscape and seascape with potential local sensitivity to change of the nature proposed. Sensitivity is magnified by the NSA designation. There is a relatively undeveloped and remote quality to the Sound of Jura and coastline here. This relative remoteness is heightened in this location by distance from a tarmac road and lack of development along the coast. In this context the local landscape and coastal character would be potentially highly sensitive to the proposed development.

Visual envelop

ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV)

59. To assist in scoping potential impacts the theoretical visual envelop has been mapped (Fig 05). At this initial review stage the ZTV has been derived by manual review of the Ordnance Survey (OS) map, disregarding tree-cover. The ZTV was checked on site and by 360-degree photography from the four corners of the proposed grid.

⁴ <http://pastmap.org.uk/>

LANDWARD VISUAL ENVELOP

Viewpoints and recreational access

60. The visual envelop is contained to landward by steep and rough topography and the site is discrete. Publicly accessible view-points are limited to:

- Cycle Route in the immediate vicinity of the bay at Salen Mor, filtered by broadleaf trees along the track edge and approach from the south, descending toward Salen Mor;
- Castle Dounie hill fort: 1.5km to the north east with the outer cages visible from the summit;

61. The shoreline here is not readily accessible and the proposed development would not be visible from well-used and promoted 'viewpoints' nor from settlements or historic sites, other than as noted above.

62. The site would be visible from west facing slopes above Salen Mor, including the local high-point of Cnoc Readmar (265m AOD). However, the hinterland above the site is very rough, steep and much of it under conifer plantation with no mapped access paths and must be rarely accessed.

Dounie

63. The cottage at Dounie would be within c.160m of the shoreward cages. The cottage appears to be in a discrete location, within mature conifers and set to landward of a craggy ridge, Suidhe Bhaird. The dwelling was not accessed during the site visit but it seems unlikely that there are views to the proposed fish farm site due to woodland, landform and orientation of the house (photo 9). This was confirmed from the sea where the cottage is not visible from the proposed cage site (photo 10). This would need to be verified by a visit to the property and gardens.

64. Privately owned mature conifers enclose Dounie at present. Even if removed it is estimated that the proposed site would remain screened from view by landform.

Ardnackaig

65. The dwelling at Ardnackaig is c.1.3km to the south-west of the proposed site and has views from elevated ground around the house north-east over the site, seen over mixed young and semi mature woodland. The dwelling itself was not visited but the proposed development would potentially from adjacent ground and gardens, visible over developing woodland and seen end-on and foreshortened (photo 4).



Photo 9: Dounie Cottage: a discrete location, contained by private woodland and steep, ridged landform.



Photo 10: Coast below Dounie: dense conifer currently cloaks much of the slopes above the steep coastal scarp.

Cycle Track

66. Approaching Dounie from the north there would be no views to the proposed site until passing Salen Mor (photo 3), where the site would be behind the direction of travel. Approaching from the south the site would be visible at c.1.6km as the track descends toward Salen Mor (photo 11). From the south the proposed cages would be seen end-on and foreshortened seen over and through a filter of shore and trackside trees. At Salen Mor the cages would be some 500m distant and it is likely that only the southern cages would be appreciable with the feed barge likely to be part or fully screened by trees on the shore line.
67. Respondents would however be highly sensitive to intrusive development and local visual impact on a short section of track would be high, affecting a short section of track and primarily north-bound cyclists and walkers.



Photo 11: Cycle track approach from the south: the proposed fish farm would be visible close inshore, seen over developing woodland.

Access to the foreshore

68. There are small unmarked paths around Dounie and these include access to the foreshore below Dounie. From these locations the proposed cages would be fully visible at close proximity, probably <50m from the feed-barge. These paths are on private land, out-with the FCS ownership, and are not promoted for public access. There

would be high visual impact on sections of these paths and probable noise and disturbance from activity on occasions (photo 12).

69. From the beach at Salen Mor the proposed development would be visible at c.500m to the north, seen 'end-on' at low elevation. Access to the foreshore is not easy due to rough, boggy ground. Visual impact would be high although further analysis using montages and the final design would be required (photo 13).

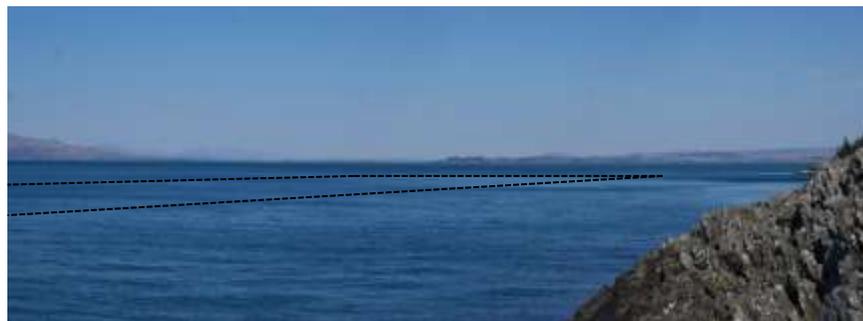


Photo 12: Foreshore below Dounie, view north: submerged grid shown by dashed line. Feed barge would be in foreground of view.



Photo 13: Beach at Salen Mor: south extent of submerged grid shown by dashed line.

70. The foreshore northwards from Salen Mor is very difficult to access due to woodland and steep, rough ground with no access paths other than a few forest harvesting tracks to the ridge above the shore.

Similarly to the south of Salen Mor there is limited access to the shore and the proposed site would be screened from view by the headland at Rubha nam Barr.

Castle Dounie

71. Castle Dounie is a prominent hill fort on a steep sided hill north of Dounie. A beautifully constructed path climbs the north side of the hill to Castle Dounie and from the hilltop views are panoramic and of the highest quality. The hill fort is a Scheduled Monument and its location would have been selected for the defensive advantages of the panoramic views.
72. From the approach path the proposed development would be screened by topography and forest. From the summit the cages and feed barge would be visible, seen from above, at 1.5km. The key feature of the view is the panorama over the Sound of Jura, from the Paps of Jura to the south, through west to Corryvreckan, Scarba, Mull, Craignish. In a view of this expansive nature, the cages, seen at a distance, close inshore beyond a fringe of conifers, while incongruous in a setting otherwise lacking built development, would be unlikely to substantially detract from the value of the view (photo 14). The elevated location will be the only location where the full scale and layout can be appreciated.



Photo 14: View SW from Castle Dounie: dashed line is the approximate extents of the submerged grid within which the 12-cages would be located. The view is part of a 180-degree panorama over the Sound of Jura.

SEAWARD VISUAL ENVELOP

Sound of Jura

73. To seaward the site would be theoretically visible over an extensive area of open water. However, observation of other similar sites in the area indicates that cages of this nature are unlikely to be realistically appreciable from the deck of a small craft at distances over 3-4km, especially when seen against foreshore. The feed barge could be visible over greater distances with prominence of the barge depending on scale and colour. Weather and light, direction of sun and viewer all greatly affect visibility of cages at sea.

Jura and Scarba

74. High-ground on Jura and Scarba and Craignish Peninsular whilst within the ZTV is all >7km distant and it is unlikely that the proposed site would be appreciable.

Marine Recreation

75. As described above, the visual envelop of the site from inland is limited and the site is most likely to be seen from the sea. Vessels coming to and from Crinan tend to pass along the coast close in-shore, as would kayaks. The proposed development would be prominent from vessels passing the site (photo 15). The route is popular for recreational craft, although less busy than the route to and from Crinan from the north. The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) classify the Sound of Jura here as a 'heavily used' route. The site does not affect the promoted Argyll Kayak Trail that runs north from Crinan.

76. By definition vessels passing are moving and visual effect of the proposed development would be transient and part of an unfolding coastal panorama. However, respondents are likely to be highly sensitive to built development and activity in this location.

77. Coming from the south, the headland at Rubha nam Barr should block views to the site until within c. 1km. Coming from the north the site would be theoretically visible for some 7km although would be seen against the foreshore and unlikely to be noticeable until within 2-3km (photo 16).

Anchorage

78. The bay at Salen Mor is listed in the local Clyde Cruising Club pilot⁵ as an anchorage. It is assumed that the bay is relatively rarely used as an anchorage, restricted by shoal water within the bay and remote, however, there is no there is no information to corroborate this.

⁵ Clyde Cruising Club (1995): "Sailing Directions & Anchorages: Mull of Kintyre to Ardnamurchan"

79. The proposed fish farm would not restrict use of the bay but the development would be prominent from within the bay, viewed from c. 3-400m distant. The proposed development would be seen 'end-on' with the feed-barge close inshore.
80. The cages would be a prominent new feature and incongruous in a location currently lacking built development and activity (photos 13,14,15). Vessels using the bay are likely to be doing so due to its tranquillity and lack of development and would be highly sensitive to development of this nature.

Kayaks

81. Kayaks would tend to pass close along this shore and would be highly aware of the proposed development for a short section of coast. Kayaking is a growing leisure activity, although the coast here is not on the promoted Argyll Coast Kayak Trail.

Cumulative impacts

AQUACULTURE SITES

82. There is an expired lease for an aquaculture site immediately south west of Rubha nam Barr, but no information on any proposal to reinstate a site here. We are not aware of other proposed aquaculture developments within 10km. The nearest established fin-fish sites are in Loch Craignish and these are located in discrete locations. Loch Melfort has a number of existing sites and aquaculture is a prominent feature (fig 9).
83. Combined additional impacts from experiencing two or more aquaculture sites simultaneously or in sequence are therefore unlikely.



Photo 15: Coastal approach from the N: dashed line shows northward and seaward extent of the submerged mooring grid.



Photo 16: Coastal approach from S, off Rubha nam Barr: cages would be screened from the south until approaching the headland; dashed line is seaward extent of the submerged mooring grid.

Policy Context

SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY

84. Aquaculture is supported by National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and at the local scale, by the Local Development Plan (LDP). The Scottish Government has set targets for increasing food production including aquaculture⁶. This subject to specific sensitivities including landscape and visual considerations.

ADOPTED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MARCH 2015)

85. The Local Development Plan (LDP) supports aquaculture as a potential growth area where Argyll has a locational advantage. The proposal would be judged against **LDP policies** that include the following relevant to L&V issues:

LDP 3: Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment

86. Development would **not** be supported when it does **not**: i) protect / conserve / enhance a range of features including: the marine environment; the established character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and seascape in terms of its location, scale, form and design, and ii) where it does not avoid adverse effects, including cumulative effects, on the integrity or special qualities of international or nationally designated natural and built environment sites (including NSA).

LDP 9: Development Setting, Layout and Design:

87. Development must: i) pay regard to the context within which it is located; ii) take into account the location or sensitivity of the area; iii) be compatible with the surroundings. Particular attention shall be given to massing, form and design details within sensitive locations

such as National Scenic Areas, Sensitive Countryside, the settings of listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments (SM).

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE 2: COASTAL DEVELOPMENT (FEB 2016)

88. This Supplementary Guidance (SG) includes additional policy for coastal development and aquaculture. At present the SG is in draft form until approved by the Scottish Government, but is considered material consideration by ABC.

89. LDP CST1 Coastal Development refers primarily to conservation of special environmental / cultural qualities of the coast. Landscape/ seascape/ visual amenity consideration for aquaculture are dealt with through LDP Policy and specifically **LDP SG Aqua 1**.

SG LDP Aqua 1: Aquaculture Development

90. Aqua 1 requires ABC, in determining proposals, to take account of positive and negative effects on "**locational and operational characteristics on Development Criteria (DC)**".

91. Proposals **will be supported** where:

- Direct, Indirect or Cumulative **significant adverse effects** on the DC **are avoided** in relation to locational characteristics of the development"; and
- Operational impacts can be demonstrated to be **effectively minimised or mitigated**.

92. Aqua 1 requires LVIA and Cumulative LVIA to assess and to prove, if that is the case, that L&V effects are not significant adverse.

93. Aqua 1 expands on the DC, summarised below:

DC1 Landscape and seascape and visual amenity

94. Criteria includes:

- NSA: identifies importance of the NSA, but does not preclude aquaculture, referring to LDP Policy 9 and 12, as above and special qualities (see below);
- Landscape Character: proposals should not undermine the characteristics which most strongly contribute to local character.

⁶ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish>

95. Aqua 1 refers to SNH Guidance⁷ and identifies generic types of coast **likely to have capacity for aquaculture**, and therefore are **preferred**, including:

- Long, regular, straight coast against a backdrop of open sea;
- Expansive stretches of sea along the horizon;
- Dark vegetation and/ or steep landform;
- Stable backdrop, not subject to dramatic changes in light;
- Managed conifer hinterland, creates a 'worked landscape';
- Inhabited / developed coast;
- Areas with existing marine activity;

96. Aqua 1 recommends:

- Avoidance of effect on iconic landmarks and features;
- Avoidance of isolated coast and wild land;
- Avoidance of cumulative impacts.

97. Aqua 1 requires the developer to demonstrate consideration has been given to: scale, placement, layout and orientation, related to SNH Guidance, to achieve integration.

DC2 Isolated coast and wild land

98. Aqua 1 states development within Isolated Coast / Wild Land Area will **not** normally be permitted. The proposed development does not directly affect either designation.

DC3 Historic or archaeological sites and their settings

99. Aqua 1 identifies the need to protect the coastal setting of protected sites and their setting. Castle Dounie is within the ZTV of the proposed development and impact will need to be assessed for compliance.

DC4-5

100. Refer to habitat and have not been reviewed.

⁷ SNH 2011: "The siting and design of aquaculture in the landscape: visual and landscape considerations"

DC6 Commercial and recreational activity

101. Aqua 1:

- supports multi-use; tourism and aquaculture are not considered, per-se, to be incompatible but aquaculture will be resisted where development would have significant adverse impact on accessibility and amenity.

102. Aqua 1: makes reference to:

- "Welcome Anchorages" web site for identification of relevant anchorages (Salen Mor is not included);
- Royal Yachting Association (RYA) mapping of recreational routes (Sound of Jura is referred to as a 'heavily-used').

DC9 Operational impact (waste, noise, light and odour)

103. Aqua 1, amongst other criteria, requires loss of amenity from light, noise, odour (components of landscape character and visual amenity) to be minimised. Specific note is made of generator noise close to shore.

LDP SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE (ADOPTED MARCH 2016)

104. In addition to the above, relevant SG includes:

SG LDP ENV 12 - Development Impact on National Scenic Areas (NSAs):

105. Provides additional detail to policy LDP 3. ABC will resist any development in, or affecting, National Scenic Areas that would have an **adverse effect** on a) the **integrity of the area**, or b) **undermine the Special Qualities** of the NSA, unless "*adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance*".

106. In all cases the highest standards, in terms of location, siting, design, landscaping, boundary treatment, materials and detailing will be required. Developments will be expected to be consistent with Policy LDP 9 – Development Setting, Layout and Design.

107. **Sustainable Siting and Design Principles** contained within the SG include the following related to the NSA, paraphrased below:

- Planning authorities have a duty to protect NSAs from developments that would seriously detract from their landscape value.
- Conservation and enhancement of the landscape will be given prime consideration in the determination of development proposals. Any proposal that would harm the landscape will be refused or amended. Development permitted within the NSA must therefore not damage the landscape. This can be achieved through good design and sensitive siting.

SG LDP ENV 19 Development Impact on Scheduled Monuments(SM)

108. Provides additional detail to policy LDP 3. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining, protecting and preserving SM and the **integrity of their settings**. Developments that have an adverse impact on SM and their settings will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Castle Dounie is a Scheduled Monument within the Visual Envelop and impacts will need to be assessed.

SG LDP TOUR 3 – Promoting Tourism Development Areas

109. Provides additional detail to policy LDP 5 “Supporting the Sustainable Growth of the Economy”. Knapdale is a Tourism Development Area identified in the LDP, containing opportunities for the sustainable growth of the tourism industry and promoted to encourage the further development of new high quality tourism.

110. Within LDP SG Aqua 1 tourism and aquaculture are acknowledged as not incompatible, subject to assessment of adverse impacts on values features / character.

KNAPDALE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

111. The NSA is “*an area is of outstanding scenic value in a national context*”⁸. The NSA is a statutory designation within which

development having an adverse environmental impact will be resisted. Impact will be judged against “**significant**” impact on :

- Integrity of the NSA; and
- Special Qualities of the NSA.

NSA Description

112. SNH publish NSA description⁹, paraphrased thus: “... *strongly grained topography of Knapdale, with long parallel ridges and glens aligned on a north-west south-east axis, presents a miniature ‘Appalachian’ type landscape. Heavily wooded now, the glacially over-deepened glens either have narrow ribbon lakes in their bottoms or else have been invaded by the sea... heavily wooded ridges makes up a series of narrow enclosed landscapes gradually opening out to the lower, more open, and mixed land uses...*” .

113. The description mentions a number of key locations, including: Loch Sween, Loch Caolisport, Loch Crinan, Moine Mhor and the River Add.

114. With regard to the proposed development:

- The visual envelop to landward is contained by landform (as described above). Therefore, the adverse impact on the NSA, as perceived from the land, would be limited in extent;
- There would be no direct impact on landscape features that make up the quality of the NSA, the proposed development being located off-shore;
- The area directly affected is dominated by commercial forestry and associated tracks, and currently by harvesting and the aftermath of harvesting. In terms of scenic quality the baseline is currently locally degraded and this could be argued to reduce sensitivity to development;
- The key locations mentioned do not include the coastline at Salen Mor.

115. Given the NSA covers an extensive area, impacts of the proposed development would be localised. Therefore, the impact on the

⁸ Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 - Part 10 Miscellaneous and general provisions

⁹ <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/B699722.pdf>

integrity of the NSA as a whole is unlikely to be affected significantly. However, it is also the case that:

- The character of the proposed development would erode local scenic quality at Salen Mor and this localised impact needs assessment;
- While the NSA does not consider the Seascape within the NSA description, the proposed development would affect views into the NSA from the sea. The cages and feed barge would be built structures on an otherwise undeveloped coast and visual impact requires assessment.

NSA Special Qualities

116. Special Qualities are summarised below. An initial assessment would suggest the direct impact on these Special Qualities should be localised and limited:

Table 3: NSA Special Qualities	
Special Qualities	Description
Distinctive ridges and loch-filled trenches	<p>Landscape of long, linear, narrow, steep-sided ridges sweeping down to the coast and plunge beneath the sea, reappearing as chains of rocky islands off-shore.</p> <p>The combination of the distinctive ridged landform and the loch-filled trenches of the deeply folded rocks epitomises the Knapdale landscape. The lochs form gateways and corridors to the sea. The tidal edge adds interest and diversity as well as a cyclical change to the shorelines.</p> <p>Review: <i>the proposed development would not affect the landform; the limited visual envelop means impact on the character of the setting is likely to be limited. The development would affect the local character or setting of the foreshore, but with no direct impact.</i></p>
Landscape of skylines	<p>An area dominated by skylines. In upper, forested Knapdale the skyline is of blunt or jagged lines of conifers at the top of parallel ridges; in middle, moorland Knapdale the ridges are often bare rock or grassy moorland where</p>

Table 3: NSA Special Qualities	
Special Qualities	Description
	<p>the variety of skylines are revealed as rounded, undulating, sweeping, crenulated or toothed moorland ... skylines provide strong linear features within the landscape, framing and enclosing views, particularly from the sea lochs ... shorelines provide strong horizontal lines ... a steep, rugged coast interspersed with sandy coves, and seaweed-strewn rocky shores.</p> <p>Review: <i>the proposed development would have no impact /effect.</i></p>
A clothing of oak woodland over the ridges and hollows	<p>Atlantic oak woodland is characteristic and adds a wild and natural dimension to many views throughout middle and lower, coastal Knapdale ...</p> <p>Conifer plantations are nowadays more common in the NSA than oakwoods, particularly in the central part of the NSA. The coniferous-covered ridges ... can be silent or still and can feel dominating and disorientating, an awareness increased by their height and imposing stature, exaggerated by the height of the trees ... plantations have destroyed or masked many of the archaeological field patterns and other evidence of previous human settlement...</p> <p>Review: <i>the proposed development would have no impact /effect.</i></p>
Profoundly evocative, ancient place	<p>Sense of place and history is profound, stretching from prehistory through the centuries to the ancient kingdom of Dalriada ... most evocative remains relate to the distant past ... many later elements of the landscape testify to the history of the area, for example castles, pre-improvement settlements, agricultural field patterns and designed landscapes.</p> <p>Review: <i>the proposed development would have no direct impacts. There would be distant visual impact on the SM at Castle Dounie.</i></p>
Ever-	<p>Ever-changing patterns of colour, sound and smell. The</p>

Table 3: NSA Special Qualities

Special Qualities	Description
changing patterns of colour, sound and smell	<p>hills and woods adopt an ever-changing, dynamic of patterns created by sunlight or cloud, rain or mist ...</p> <p>Along the coast ... contrast of the bright greens of pastures and iris beds with a backdrop of dark green or grey moorland. Birdsongs ... from woodland, moorland and bog are complemented by the cries of seabirds and waves gently lapping in the bays and coves ... Smells add considerably to the landscape, especially the smells of the sea, the shore, the dank coniferous woodlands, damp oak-woods ... add to the sense of place and naturalness of the scenery.</p> <p><i>Review: the proposed development would have no direct impacts on the perceptual experience of landscape over a wider area. Locally there would be potential for adverse impacts (noise, smell, activity, visual intrusion of structure), but effect is likely to be localised.</i></p>
Long, slow journeys to the sea	<p>Journeys to the sea are slow, along narrow winding roads through the trenches of Knapdale, with views ever-changing and unfolding. Often ... restricted by trees or slopes to the immediate surrounds ... suddenly open to present surprise vistas across the hills and sea.</p> <p>The reward at the end of the journey is views of the sea and remoteness, isolation and seclusion, a place to stay and contemplate... sea views are exhilarating, mysterious, sometimes dramatic yet enjoyed without effort, risk or exposure.</p> <p><i>Review: the visual impact of proposed development would be localised and no public roads would be affected. At a local level, the site would be have some limited visibility from the Cycle Route and would be prominent at Salen Mor and would affect views to the Sound of Jura and perceptual qualities of the setting, through the introduction of a large scale structure. However, a) the effect would be highly localised; b) key views to Jura, Corryvreckan and Scarba</i></p>

Table 3: NSA Special Qualities

Special Qualities	Description
	<p><i>would not be directly blocked or affected; c) the structures would be out-with the immediate bay and be 'off-shore' and perceived of as detached and remote; d) activity would be periodic and variable; e) the location is dominated at present by forest harvesting and would be affected by the incongruous dominance of commercial forestry.</i></p>

Location specific special qualities

117. The proposed development is located off what is referred to as the “centre of Knapdale”. Relevant location-specific qualities include: Upper, northern parts of the parallel ridges are almost entirely blanketed with coniferous plantations obscuring the landform and hiding the secret lochans within the afforested trenches of the deeply folded ridge. This is reflected in the low visual impact of the proposed development inland.

Other relevant guidance

THE SITING AND DESIGN OF AQUACULTURE IN THE LANDSCAPE: VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS¹⁰

118. The SNH Guidance covers recommendations for assessing types of coast and guidance for location and design. The LVIA would address compliance with the Guidance in detail. In summary:
119. **Generic coast types:** are assessed as to likely appropriateness and this is replicated in LDP SG Aqua 1, as above. In most respects the proposed development site is favourable, except for degree of perceived isolation and lack of existing activity.

¹⁰ SNH 2011: “The siting and design of aquaculture in the landscape: visual and landscape considerations”

120. **Coast type:** the coast at Salen Mor most aligns to the Coast Type: ***“Indented coasts, bays and narrow straits”***. Implications for siting and layout, include:

- Scale: *“...decide whether or not the development should relate to the expansive sea, or the more intricate coast ... larger structures can be more easily accommodated where they can be set against a backdrop of the sea”*.
- Location: *“Aim to site development where the coastline is most regular and straight, away from the indented sections of coast. The simple, often relatively ordered pattern of the structures can reflect the more simple, regular coastline ... (if) sited close to where the bay meets the open sea, place ... (cages) to the sides of bays, away from the middle of the mouth of the bay – this avoids a development appearing to block the entrance to a bay, or separate a bay from the open sea”*.

121. **Land-use:**

- Settlement: the Guidance makes a preference for sites adjacent to existing activity. However: a) the Guidance is also considering land-based development associated with a new site, which does not apply here, and b) does not address the fact that communities often object to aquaculture that they can see. The proposed site has a no impact on settlements;
- Forestry: the Guidance advocates forested foreshore as potentially advantageous as a backdrop to aquaculture: *“Forestry, or other woodland, can offer a dark coloured backdrop to low cages or buoys, making them less visible. The busyness or activity associated with aquaculture would also be present in forestry and farming”*.

122. **Visual sensitivity:** the Guidance addresses different viewpoints and the potential impacts from these. Elevated viewpoints with sudden panoramic views over a development are likely to be highly sensitive, as may be the case at Castle Dounie. At viewpoints of low-elevation, as may be the case at viewed from the sea, low-profile structures seen against and dark backdrop may be absorbed and

impact mitigated. A detailed assessment would address the specific impacts at the proposed development.

123. **Design guidance:** considers layout, construction, colour etc. All of which the proposed development is likely to adhere to. The Guidance does make the point that appropriate design would not off-set an inappropriate location.

LANDSCAPE/SEASCAPE CARRYING CAPACITY FOR AQUACULTURE¹¹

124. The Guidance describes the process for Coastal Character Assessment and derivation of sensitivity to aquaculture. In effect this process has been followed in the earlier section of this review in addressing the locational options and justification of the selection of Dounie. Unlike the Guidance however, in reality, technical and operational considerations are highly influential in site selection.

125. The Guidance identifies constraints which are likely to make it difficult to accommodate aquaculture development and these include:

- *“Significant and defining characteristics of the landscape which will be compromised by aquaculture development, such as small scale indentations along a coast;*
- *Specific features valued because of their historic, cultural or aesthetic quality on which aquaculture development will have a negative impact;*
- *Aspects of the experience or appreciation of a place which will be adversely affected by the presence of aquaculture development, such as an area characterised by remoteness or lack of structures, or;*
- *Areas of visual sensitivity, such as key views or overlook by settlements and popular footpaths”*.

126. A detailed LVIA would address the site in respect to these considerations but, at this initial review stage, it could be said that

¹¹ SNH 2007. Commissioned Report No. 215. “Landscape/seascape carrying capacity for aquaculture”. (ROAME No. F04NC12)

the proposed development would have adverse effect on the local landscape character and local visual amenity through the introduction of a large built structure. However, the effects should be localised, with limited effect inland, and: the effect on specific and defining features of the local coastline should be limited; impact on historic and cultural sites should be low; and key views affected would be limited. The effect on perceived remoteness requires further consideration but the proposed development does not affect Wild Land, nor Isolated Coast.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY OF THE SCOTTISH SEASCAPE IN RELATION TO WINDFARMS¹²

127. This is guidance for windfarms but includes an overview of Seascape Areas around the Scottish Coast as a regional scale assessment. The site lies within “*Area 20: Sound Of Mull/Firth Of Lorn/Sound Of Jura*”. The seascape character is “*Type 9: Sounds, Narrows and Islands*”.

128. Key Characteristics include: “*narrow sounds, high containment; fragmented coastline and small islands; slotted views out to open sea. Small scale, contained seascapes. Narrow stretches of sea with small islands and fragmented coastline ... although this area has many natural characteristics it is generally accessible and relatively well settled*”.

129. Forces for Change include: pressure for ferry link between Jura and Keills in Knapdale “*may diminish wild coastline and associated road links. Aquaculture and construction of new water and shore based infrastructure such as marinas... Onshore wind farms*”.

130. The Guidance is too generalised to be of great value in assessing the development.

¹² SNH 2005: “ An assessment of the sensitivity and capacity of the Scottish seascape in relation to windfarms (ROAME No. F03AA06).

Potential Landscape & Visual Issues

KEY ISSUES

131. **Key L&V issues** are therefore:
- **Landscape and Seascape Character:** introduction of a structure into undeveloped coast. Requires detailed assessment through the LVIA process to identify qualities, sensitivity, impacts and effects to identify significance of impacts;
 - **Visual:** generally visual impacts are localised, but structures are incongruous and potentially intrusive. Requires detailed assessment of the VP identified through the LVIA process base on baseline and montages of the design proposal to identify significance of impacts;
 - **Dwellings:** assessment on the character and visual resource at each of the two dwellings;
 - **Recreational resources:**
 - a. Cycle Route: sequential impacts on the cycle route, specifically at Salen Mor and approach from the south;
 - b. Vessels passing;
 - c. Anchorage at Salen Mor.
 - **LDP Policy and Supplementary Guidance:** to identify compliance;
 - **NSA:** The development would have an adverse impact on the scenic quality of the setting and this would affect the NSA. The key issue is “significance of impact” and this would be assessed through the LVIA process to establish:
 - d. Would the impact significantly affect the overall integrity of the NSA?
 - e. Would the impact significantly affect the Special Features of the NSA?
 - **Wildness, Isolated Coast, Remoteness:** the development would erode a sense of wildness and tranquillity through the introduction of built structures and operational activity:
 - a. Would the development adversely and indirectly affect the designation of Isolated Coast to the north?

141. However, it is likely that **local** L&V impacts would be high as noted above. From inland these impacts should be highly localised and contained and, over the hinterland of Knapdale, impact would be largely negligible. The site would be more frequently appreciated from the sea and from the bay at Salen Mor and these local impacts require detailed assessment through the LVIA process.

LIMITATIONS

142. This review has been as thorough as the scope allowed. A more detailed assessment, based on detailed design proposals and use of, for example, photomontages is necessary if proceeding to a planning application.

143. In terms of L&V sensitivities, the other sites considered by KFF in the wider area have only been considered as a brief desktop review of designations and not in any detail.

End

Abbreviations	
ABC	Argyll & Bute Council
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland
FPA	(Fish) Farm Partnership Agreement
HLA	Historic Land-use Assessment
KFF	Kames Fish Farm Ltd
L&V	Landscape and Visual
LCA	Landscape Character Areas
LCT	Landscape Character Types
LDP	Local Development Plan
LLCA	Local Landscape Character Areas
LLCT	Local Landscape Character Types
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
NPF3	National Planning Framework 3
NSA	National Scenic Area
SM	Scheduled Monument
SG	Supplementary Guidance (to the Local Development Plan)
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPP	Scottish Planning Policy
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WLA	Wild Land Area
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility / Visual Envelop

Glossary	Definition
Accessibility (of landscape)	Refers to the general ease of public access across the landscape ¹⁴
Associations / cultural landscape	Historic and cultural events and/or art, poetry, literature that contribute to people's perception of a landscape or a view
Baseline	Existing conditions against which change is measured
Characterisation	Process of identifying areas of similar landscape character
Characteristics	Elements that contribute to distinctive landscape character
Core Path	Paths / means of crossing land to exercise of access rights under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, and identified core paths plans ¹⁵
Cumulative	Additional effects caused by the proposed development when considered in conjunction with other proposed development of the same or different type. Typically Cumulative Assessments take account of developments in: Combination: seen, in the same view; Succession: seen but not in the same arc of view; Sequence: seen in sequence, travelling through the landscape; Perceived: an awareness, even if not visible.
Direct effect	Effect directly attributable to the proposed development
Do-nothing-scenario	How the landscape would evolve in the absence of the proposed development
Effects	Consequence of change on character or visual amenity of a specified impact. EIA regulations require the assessment of 'effects'
Elements	Individual parts that make up the landscape (eg trees, buildings)
Environmental Impact Assessment	Process of gathering information; describing the development; identifying and describing likely significant effects; defining mitigation; presented to inform decision making
Environmental Statement	Document including the information required to allow assessment of the environmental effects of a development
Feature	Prominent or eye-catching element in the landscape
Force for Change	Factors that result in change to landscape and /or visual resource
Heritage	Historic environment, especially valued assets and qualities, such as historic buildings and cultural traditions
Historic Land-use Assessment	Identification & interpretation of the historic dimension of the present day landscape

¹⁴ Defined for use in this assessment

¹⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/Countryside/16328/5612/core-paths>

Glossary	Definition
Impacts	Action being taken that leads to an effect: e.g. the impact might be a new road visible from a house, the effect would be how that impact affects the character of the house
Indirect effects/secondary effects	Consequential effect resulting from the proposed development, often occurring away from the site, affecting for example the character of a neighbouring area or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships.
Key Characteristics	Combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place
Land cover	Cover of the surface of the land- e.g. vegetation type
Land use	Categories of function of a landscape – e.g. commercial forestry
Landform	Shape and form of the landscape, resulting from geology, erosion, slope, physical processes
Landscape	An area, perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Process to identify and assess the likely significance of effects of a proposed development on landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and visual amenity. Ideally a design tool used to avoid/reduce/compensate impacts and effects
Landscape Character	Distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one place different from another
Landscape Character Area	Single unique geographical area of a particular landscape type
Landscape Character Assessment	Process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape and using this information to inform decisions. Describes combinations of elements / features that make landscape distinctive
Landscape Character Types	Distinct types of relatively homogeneous landscape, generic in nature
Landscape Capacity	Degree to which a particular landscape is able to accommodate change. Capacity varies according to the type and nature of the change being proposed, so is not a constant.
Landscape effects	Consequence on character of the landscape resulting from an impact
Landscape condition/quality	Physical state of the landscape; intactness of the landscape; condition of the individual elements
Landscape receptors	Aspects of landscape that have potential to be affected by a proposal
Landscape value	Relative value attached to a landscape by society. Will vary with

Glossary	Definition
	different stakeholders.
Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA)	Subsets of the Regional LCA at a local level, often prepared for a specific project or development and draw out more clearly the key characteristics most relevant to a proposal
Magnitude (of effect)	Judgement about size and scale of effect, the extent over which it occurs, whether it is reversible and duration
Mitigation	Measures taken to avoid, reduce or remedy /compensate for impacts ¹⁶ Can include enhancement
Perceptual qualities/aspects	Judgement of value for intangible qualities such as wildness and /or tranquillity
Receptor/respondent	Landscape resource or visual resource affected by a development
Scoping	Identification of issues to be addressed in an EIA
Seascape	Area of sea, coastline and land, as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land with sea, by natural and/or human factors ¹⁷ .
Sensitivity	Judgement combining the susceptibility of landscape or view to change and the value placed on that landscape or view. Sensitivity varies according to the type and nature of the change being proposed, so is not a constant
Scenic quality	Judgement of the appeal of a view or landscape to the senses (primarily but not solely visual)
Screening	Statement from the planning authority confirming whether the proposal requires an EIA
Sense of Place	The essential character and spirit of an area ¹⁸
Significance	Measure of importance of the effect, defined by significance criteria within an EIA and a combination of magnitude of change, nature of change, sensitivity of the resource
Stakeholders	Individuals or groups with an interest in a subject or place
Time-depth	Historical layering of landscape
Tranquillity	Refers to ambient noise, particularly generated by man, and disruption by moving traffic and activity: “ a state of calm and quietude associated with peace”
Visual amenity	Judgement of the ‘pleasantness of a view’ or a backdrop to activity, includes associative judgements and perceptions
Visual effects	Consequence of an impact on a specific view or general visual

¹⁶ SNH 2002: A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment

¹⁷ Natural England (2010) Natural England’s Position on All Landscapes Matter

¹⁸ Natural England: An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment.

Glossary	Definition
	amenity
Visual receptors	Individuals/groups experience a view and may be affected by a proposal
Wild Land	Largely semi-natural landscapes that show minimal signs of human influence across an area sufficiently large to evoke a perceptual response ¹⁹ . Wild Land Areas are mapped by SNH as being defined areas of Wild Land. Wild Land is protected under NPF3 and SPP,
Wildness	Perception of lack of development based upon a judgement of a) Perceived naturalness b) Rugged Terrain c) Remoteness d) Lack of built features ²⁰
Zone of Theoretical Visibility	Area from which the development can be seen, usually not taking account of trees, walls, hedges, local landform features. A guideline.

Not all terms are used in this review.

Except where shown Glossary is based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment²¹

¹⁹ SNH 2007: Assessing the impacts on Wild Land

²⁰ Based on "Mapping Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land" www.SNH.gov.uk

²¹ Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013): Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment