POLICY ZONE D: ACHNACLOICH TO BONAWE QUARRY

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The landscape on the south side of the policy zone is for the most part a mixture of dense shoreline woodland at Muckairn and Airds Park, semi-natural vegetation and the occasional small pasture field. Airds Park and Coille Nathais form one of the most extensive areas of Oak and Birch dominated semi-natural woodland in Argyll, extending inland over a series of low hills to an altitude of 100 metres. Development is concentrated around Airds Bay. On the north side of the policy zone the landscape is mostly developed pasture between Ardachy and Balrcreen, and beyond this is dominated by ancient Oak, Birch and Scots Pine woodland as far as Bonawe. Scattered development, concentrated in some locations provides a settled feel.

Mixed pasture and woodland
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

SEASCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Policy Zone D is characterised by a series of sweeping, pronounced bays along both shores, occasionally further defined by scattered small islands. The shoreline is a mix of mud, sand and pebble with occasional rocky inlets. With no views present of the open sea, maritime influence is limited to a moderate tidal reach and occasional marine based activity. There are several existing fin and shell fish farms occupying the bays in Policy Zone D, with onshore development concentrated around Taynuilt and Bonawe.

ACCESS

Foot access to the shoreline in this policy zone is possible from the B845 and from the North Connel – Bonawe Road. Coastal infrastructure in this policy zone is privately owned, although many of the facilities can be used with prior permission. The most important access sites are as follows:

- Achnacloich – Extensively used by kayakers as is a safe and sheltered area.
- Taynuilt – Both the Taynuilt Pier (north pier next to River Awe mouth) and Kelly's Pier (at B845 road end) are important sites for kayakers, divers and anglers. Boats can be launched from the shoreline at Kelly's Pier.
- Airds Bay House – Used by anglers and kayakers as boats can be launched from the shore and a number of piers are also present.

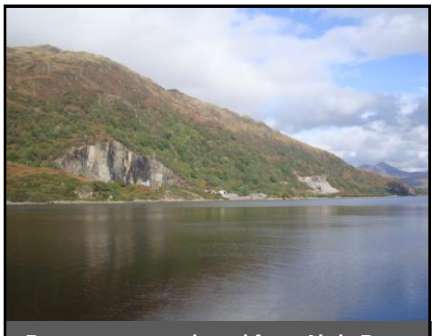
Kelly's Pier, Taynuilt
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

View east from Kelly's Pier
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

Taynuilt Pier
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

VISUAL AMENITY

Low level views of the loch are present from the North Connel to Bonawe road although in places these are screened by shoreline trees. Elevated views of the east end of the policy zone are available from the B845 descending from Gleann Salach. Scattered housing and settlement at Bonawe and Airds Bay also has views down the loch, and of the opposite shoreline. Views of Bonawe quarry are prominent from Taynuilt, in particular Taynuilt Pier.



Bonawe quarry, viewed from Airds Bay
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

SETTLEMENTS

Settlement along the north shore is focussed around Bonawe, with Airds Bay and Taynuilt situated along the south shore. Scattered housing outside of these areas is also present, mostly on the north side of the loch.

CURRENT USES

Refer to policy zone D map for locations of current activities.

Aquaculture

A large number of aquaculture sites are present in this policy zone, see table below for details. On shore developments include shore base and depuration facilities at Achnacloich (Muckairn Mussels) and Taynuilt Pier (Celtic Sea), and a small shore base at Ardchattan, utilised by Dawnfresh Farming Ltd.

Current Aquaculture Sites

Location/Site Name	Species	Consented Equipment	Maximum Biomass	Operator	Shore-base Location	Development Status
Rubha a Chairn Bhig	Mussels	12 x10 msq mussel rafts		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
SE of Rubha a Chairn Bhig	Mussels	10 x10 msq mussel rafts		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
West of Rubha nan Carn	Mussels	5 x10 msq mussel rafts + 4 longlines at 800 m length in total		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
Rubha nan Carn	Mussels	10 x 10 msq mussel rafts + total of 700 m longline length		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
Muckairn	Mussels	Site 2 – 3 x 220 m longlines		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
West of Airds Point headland	Mussels	3 x 200 m longlines		Muckairn Mussels	Achnacloich	Fallowed/ not active
East of Airds Park	Mussels	4 x 400 m longlines		Celtic Sea Ltd.	Taynuilt Pier	Fallowed/ not active
Airds Point	Trout	10 x 80 m circumference cages	966 tonnes	Dawnfresh Farming Ltd.	Inverawe (Port na Mine)	Active
Ardchattan Priory	Trout	8 x (15 m x 15 m) + 2 x (8.5 m x 8.5 m) cages	350 tonnes	Dawnfresh Farming Ltd.	Ardchattan	Active

Muckarin Mussel - longlines and rafts
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock

Muckairn Mussles depuration facilities
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock

Trout farm at Ardchattan Priory
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

Fishing
Creeling activities occur in the central part of the loch, extending from north of Muckairn to Airds Bay.

Recreation

Angling

Airds Bay is a popular shore angling mark, and shore angling is also common on the north side of the loch at points accessible from the North Connel – Bonawe Road. Taynuilt Pier is also frequently used. Taynuilt and Airds Bay are important sites for launching sea angling vessels that use other areas of the loch.

Recreational anglers, Taynuilt Pier
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

Sailing

Dinghy sailing and motorised water sports occur in the area of Ardchattan, with general yacht sailing and boating north east of Rubha nan Carn and in Airds Bay. There are a number of private moorings throughout this policy zone, with the highest concentration just east of Bonawe. In addition, there are 40 association moorings in Airds Bay.

Kayaking

Sea kayaking occurs throughout this zone either passing through the area or having launched from Achnacloich or Airds Bay.

RV Mara, Loch Etive Cruises
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock

Charter Boats

The 'Laura Dawn' operates half day angling trips from Airds Bay. The MV Claudia is built for sea angling and works out of Oban and from Taynuilt for general fishing on Loch Etive. The Mara (Loch Etive Cruises) provides scenic wildlife cruises from Kelly's Pier, Airds Bay to Glen Etive.

Diving

There are three scenic dive sites and one wreck site in this policy zone: Ardchattan Priory, Bonawe Slip, Eilean nam Meann and Bonawe Harbour (collapsed creel boat wreck). Ardchattan Priory and Bonawe Slip are accessed from the pier and the right-hand side of the slipway respectively. Access permission must be sought for Ardchattan Priory and Eilean nam Meann sites. It is currently difficult to launch hard boats from Taynuilt Pier due to permissions and depth restrictions; an alternative launch point is across the shore, adjacent to the pier.

Coastal Paths

A number of proposed core paths intersect at Taynuilt. These routes include:

- Kilchrenan to Taynuilt
- Achlonan to Taynuilt Jetty
- Taynuilt - Airds circular
- Shore Cottage, Brochroy to Inverawe
- Taynuilt to Oban

In addition, a proposed core path/coastal path commences at Bonawe and finishes at Glen Etive, National Cycle Route 78 (Oban to Campbeltown) passes through Taynuilt village, and a number of signed mountain biking trails routes are present in Fearnoch Forest.

Glen Etive Right of Way, through Bonawe Quarry
Image courtesy ofArgyll and Bute Council

Commercial Shipping
Aggregate vessels also transit the policy zone, berthing at Bonawe Quarry. Timber transhipment vessels pass through Policy Zone D, whilst en-route to the trans-shipment pier Glen Etive.

Coastal Industry
The quarry at Bonawe produces quarried granite products and a specialised plant produces asphalt, giving an industrial look to this part of the coast. Recreational anglers fish from the edge of the quarry.

Bonawe quarry
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

Infrastructure and Discharges
There are a number of piers, jetties and slipways spread throughout this policy zone, all of which are privately owned. Commercial, private and association moorings are also present multiple locations, with the greatest concentration in Airds Bay.

Two subsea power cables are present at Eilean Duirinnis, and within the River Etive. An out of service submarine telecommunications cables runs between Taynuilt and Bonawe.

Private and public waste water treatment discharge points are present at Airds Bay, Bonawe, Eilean Duirinnis and Taynuilt.

DESIGNATIONS

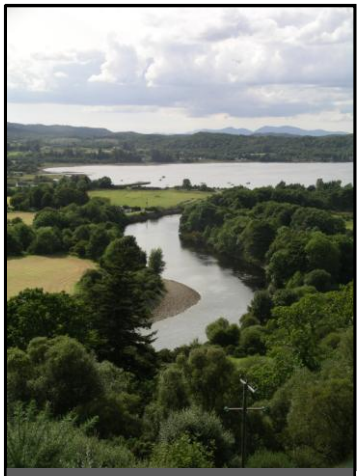
Refer to policy zone D map for areas covered.

- **Argyll & Bute Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) Designations**
- The coastline of Rubha a' Chairn Bhig to Airds Bay (Eilean Duirinnis) is classified as Sensitive Countryside.
- The land stretching just north of the coastline (Ardachy to Blarcreen) and south east of Rubha a' Chairn Bhig are Rural Opportunity Area's.
- Airds Bay (Bonawe & Taynuilt) is classified as Countryside around Settlement.
- The coastal hinterland is part of the North West Loch Etive Coast Area of Panoramic Quality.

Other Designations
- Airds Park and the area directly north and south east of Inveresragan is part of the Loch Etive Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for its broad-leaved, western acidic Oak woodland, mixed and Yew woodland.
- Airds Park and Coille Nathais, Kennacraig and Esragan Burn, and Glen Nant are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), notified for their biological interest.
- Glen Nant is also designated as a National Nature Reserve.
- Ardchattan Priory and Achnacloich Garden are listed in the inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes.
- The 'Loch Etive Coastal Strip' Shellfish Growing Water commences from Achnacree Bay and extends to the upper loch.

BIODIVERSITY

- The mouth of the River Awe is known to be an important migratory river for Sea Trout and Atlantic Salmon. The catchment of the River Awe is arguably the most valuable fishery on the West coast of Scotland, and as a consequence the fishery and catchment area management is extremely important.
- Bonawe Furnace and Blarcreen are sensitive breeding sites in autumn and winter for Greylag Geese. Sand Martins are common north of Inveresragan. Osprey can be sighted along the Ardchattan coast.
- Airds Bay and the coastline from Muckairn to Airds Point are an important area for waders, Eider Duck, Oyster Catcher, Osprey, Mute Swan, Common and Arctic Tern, Common Gull, Black-headed Gull, and Grey Heron. Tern populations vary annually with an uncertain trend, however overall numbers appear to be increasing. Mink control is likely to have assisted in increasing numbers.
- Harbour Seal and European Otter can be sighted along the Muckairn to Airds Point coastline and seals occasionally haul-out on the south and south western tip of Eilean Duirinnis.
- Significant stands of saltmarsh at Brochroy and Blarcreen are an important habitat for wading birds.



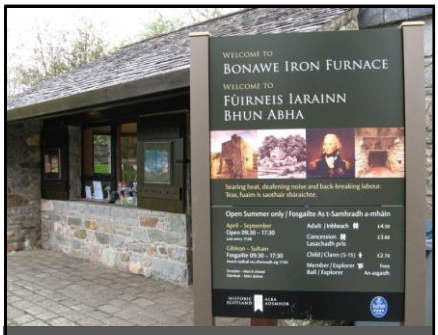
Mouth of the River Awe
Image courtesy of Argyll and Bute Council

HISTORICAL FEATURES

- Coastal and marine historic features identified within and adjacent to this policy zone are:
- Dun Chathach, dun 630 m East of Auchnacloich Railway Station - a scheduled ancient monument.
- Ardchattan House - category B listed building.
- Ardchattan Priory, priory, burial ground and cross slab - a scheduled ancient monument.

- Baile Mhaodain, church - a scheduled ancient monument.
- Ardchattan Manse - category C(S) listed building.
- Old Ardchattan Kirk (Kilmodan) Baile Mhaodan - category C(S) listed building.
- Dun Mor, dun, Inverawe - a scheduled ancient monument.
- Bonawe, Iron Furnace - a scheduled ancient monument comprises the extensive and well preserved remains of the Bonawe Iron Works. Also encompassing 11 Listed Buildings, the scheduled area is in four distinct parts including: Kelly's Pier, the furnace area and lade.
- Taynuilt Inn, Taynuilt - category B listed building.
- Muckairn Kirk, Taynuilt - category B listed building.
- Taynuilt, Old Parish Church of Muckairn, tombstones and burial ground - a scheduled ancient monument.
- Nelson Monument, Taynuilt - category B listed building.
- Nelson Monument, inscribed stone, Taynuilt - a scheduled ancient monument.
- Muckairn Manse Taynuilt - category B listed building.
- Taynuilt, standing stone - a scheduled ancient monument.

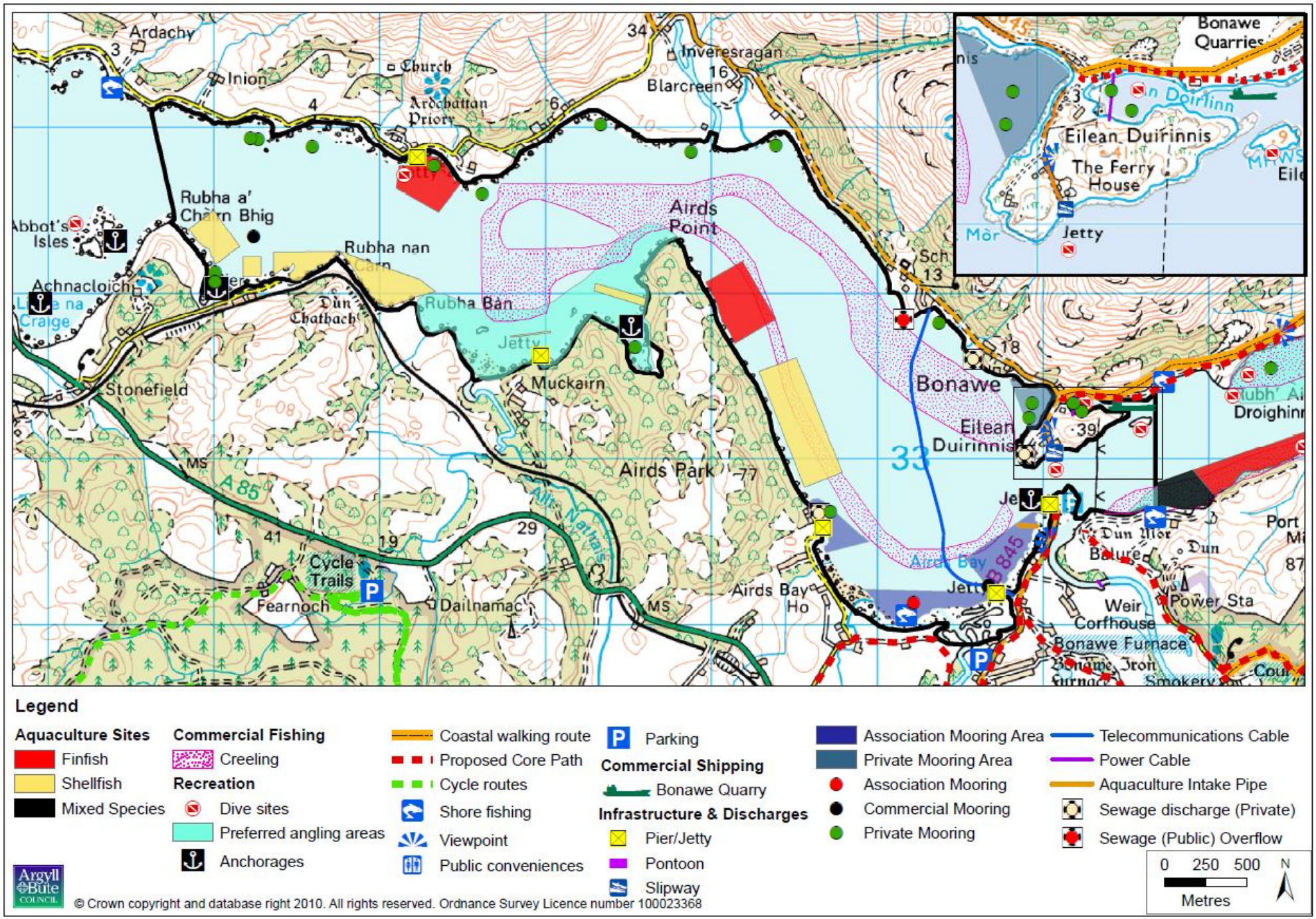
Ardchattan House
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock



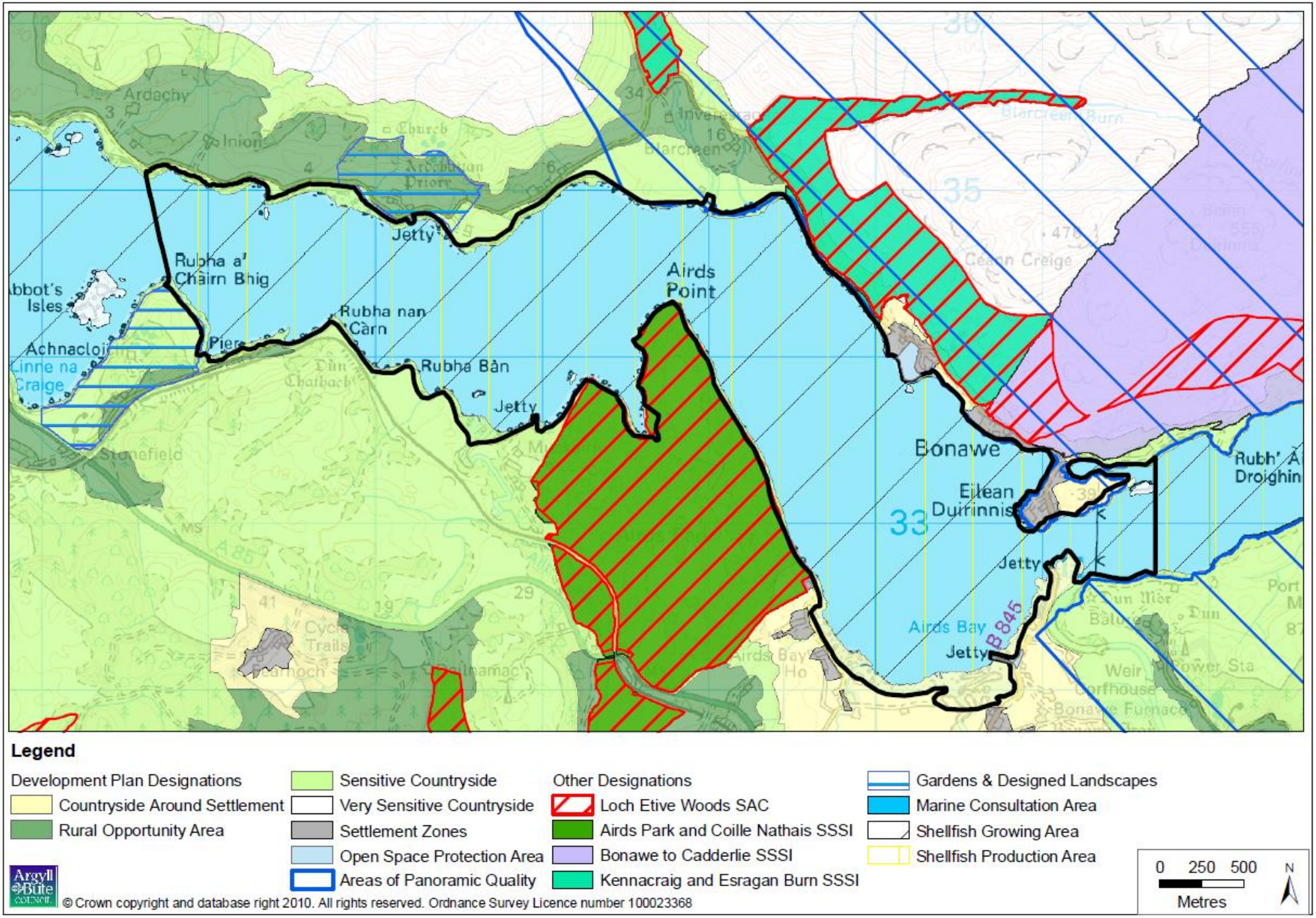
Bonawe Iron Furnace - entrance
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock

Bonawe Iron Furnace - Wheel Pit
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock

POLICY ZONE D MAP – Current Uses & Activities



POLICY ZONE D MAP – Designations



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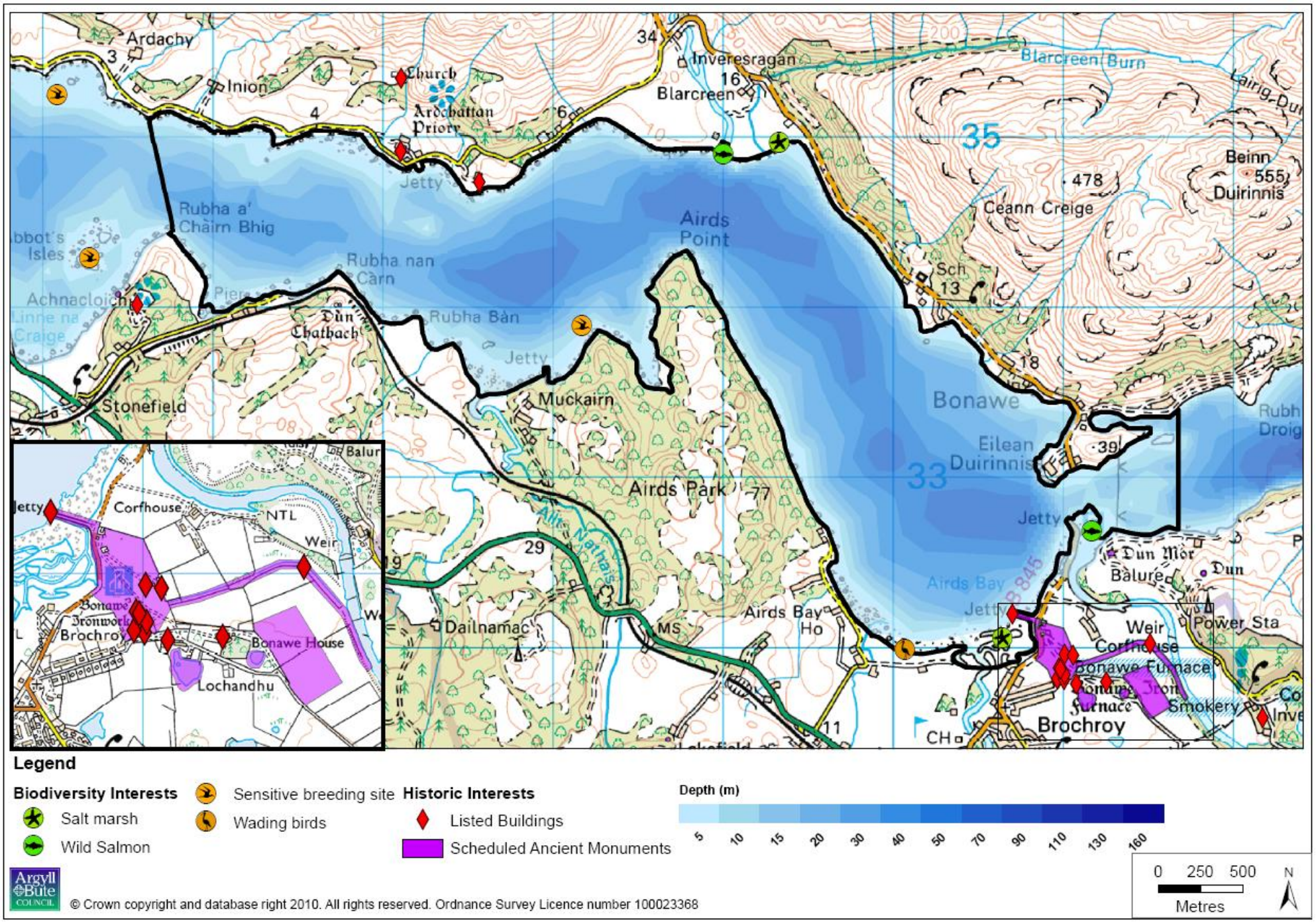
POLICY ZONE D MAP – Biodiversity Interests & Historic Features



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities[1]

Future Use	
Aquaculture	The 'Loch Etive Coastal Strip' Shellfish Growing Water extends throughout the length of the policy zone and coastal water quality should be maintained at an appropriate standard for shellfish growing or ranching.
Recreation	Scope for increased use of this policy zone for water-based recreation, particularly when weather limits access to open sea (kayaking, leisure boating, sailing, sea angling).
	Improve view from road and passing places to shore through management of Japanese Knotweed stands along the north shore of this policy zone.
	Better promotion of established coastal paths and walking routes in the area and potential to incorporate historic, cultural and wildlife interests into wildlife tours and boat trips.
	Linking the core path (Bonawe to Glen Etive) with the West Highland Way, National Cycle Route at Taynuilt and Oban to Fort William cycle route, as a circular off-road cycle route. This could be considered as a potential aspirational route in the Argyll and Bute Core Path Plan.
	Potential for small sign at Taynuilt Pier, alerting recreational anglers to the requirement for permission of the fishing rights owner, to catch and retain salmon and sea trout. Any signage should emphasise both salmon and sea trout as important LBAP species which are under threat and if caught they should be carefully returned to allow them to spawn.
Access	Access for recreational activities in this policy zone could be improved through: • Positive management of key access locations at Achnacloich which allows continued access to the area, subject to responsible behaviour by users; • Changing and toilet facilities at Achnacloich and Taynuilt; • Dedicated parking area at Taynuilt Pier and improved road access; • Small dedicated parking areas on the B845; • Slipway and small pontoon development at Taynuilt Pier; • Visitor moorings in Airds Bay; and • Maintenance to the existing Piers at Taynuilt.
Use of tidal energy	There may be potential for small scale tidal energy development at Bonawe Narrows that would not adversely affect the environment and social and economic activity.

Development	
Aquaculture	Opportunity to maximise operations and production in this part of the loch through consolidation or rationalisation of existing sites.
Taynuilt Pier	Redevelopment options for Taynuilt Pier and land adjacent could include, a dedicated parking area, slipway, small pontoon, toilet and changing facilities, small café and interpretation on local wildlife and historic interests.
Access point	Recreational users have identified a need for an access point for kayakers and scuba divers on the north shore of Loch Etive between Achnacree and Bonawe, which would require a small parking area or lay by and either a slipway or access across the foreshore to allow launching of small vessels. Note – although this opportunity is also identified in Policy Zone C, it relates to a single access point (between Achnacree and Bonawe).

[1] Opportunities identified are indicative, subject to obtaining the required consents, and do not preclude development applications and activities elsewhere.

Constraints

Future Use	
Access	Provision of parking spaces for recreational users is limited by the poor provision of road infrastructure in this zone. A lack of parking for vehicles and boat trailers, accessible piers and slipways and toilet and changing facilities restrict recreational use of the area.
Infrastructure	The overhead power cable crossing the Bonawe narrows limits vessels from entering the upper loch which have a clearance greater than 16 metres over the deep-water channel in the narrows. Clearance of 13 metres occurs at the low point, over shallow water.
	The out of service subsea telecommunication cable and in-service power cable could be damaged anchoring of commercial and recreational vessels.
Historic Interests	Options for maintenance/improvement of Kelly's Pier at Taynuilt may be affected by the listed building designation which may make improvements to its structure difficult.
Natural heritage	Coastal salt marsh is particularly sensitive to physical damage resulting from erosion by foot or vehicle access directly across these habitats.
Coastal flooding	Several parts of the North Connel to Bonawe road, particularly at Ardachy and Ardchattan are at risk of coastal flooding.

Development	
Landscape	The coastline around Airds Bay is and directly adjacent to Bonawe village is overlooked by settlement.
	Developing the majority of bays along the shoreline could lead to an impact on sequential experience when travelling either along the public road or on the water.
	The expanse of the open water can be quickly narrowed by development encroaching from each shore.
	The setting of Ardchattan Priory is sensitive to poorly located development.
Coastal Flooding	The shoreline adjacent to Airds Bay is at risk of coastal flooding and any development in this area would need to be designed and constructed to be operational during floods.
Navigation	To avoid navigational issues, marine development would need to be located away from recognised anchorages and moorings at Airds Bay and Bonawe narrows.
Hydrography	Current speeds are too fast to support aquaculture development around Bonawe narrows and may be too high for shellfish development along the shore from Airds Bay to Airds Point.
Loch Etive Woods SAC	Any coastal development within the Loch Etive Woods SAC would need to be consistent with the conservation objectives of this designated site.
Wild Migratory Salmonids	New salmon or trout farms in this policy zone would increase the risk of interactions between farmed and wild salmonids, from disease and escapes.
Infrastructure	Subsea cables could be damaged by new moorings or the anchoring/mooring of new finfish or shellfish farms. Aquaculture development or new moorings would not be permitted directly over or immediately adjacent to the in-service power cables at Eilean Duirnniss.
Commercial fishing	Access to creel fishing ground could be restricted by additional marine development.

POLICY GUIDANCE[2]

Where the following policy guidance indicates general support or a presumption in favour of development, this will be subject to any proposal being consistent with the general policies detailed in Section 4 of this plan.

	Justification/comments
1. Support efforts of mussel farming companies in management of *Mytilus trossulus*.	The eradication and management of *Mytilus trossulus* is key to the future of a sustainable mussel farming industry in Loch Etive.
2. The culture of seaweed and use of polyculture is encouraged.	There is interest from some existing aquaculture companies in growing algae, either alongside existing production or as an alternative to mussel farming.
3. Future proposals to consolidate or reorganise existing development sites will be supported where proposals are consistent with Policy LE AQUA 1.	Future consolidation/rationalisation of existing developments may offer the greatest opportunity for maximising production of trout and mussel farming in Loch Etive.
4. Presumption against new aquaculture developments in addition to existing sites.	Potential to accommodate additional marine aquaculture development has not been identified in this policy zone, largely due to number of existing sites (developed & undeveloped). These sites largely occupy the most appropriate locations for development, and generally avoid the key landscape sensitivities in this part of the loch.
5. Continued transport of products from Bonawe Quarry by sea is supported.	Transport of goods by sea can reduce environmental impacts and damage to road infrastructure. Sea transport also has benefits where there is community resistance to intrusive lorry movements through residential areas or via inadequate public roads, where congestion is likely.
6. General support for improvements to access for recreational and commercial activities at appropriate locations.	The need for improved access and facilities at Taynuilt and Achnacloich has been identified by recreational user groups. Improving or adding to existing physical infrastructure is key to supporting and assisting the marine leisure industry and other commercial activities.
7. Maintain safe channel of navigation through Bonawe Narrows.	Marine development in this narrow part of Loch Etive could restrict navigational access.
8. Small scale tidal energy development that would not adversely affect the environment and social and economic activity is supported.	A detailed resource assessment for small scale tidal energy development would identify any opportunities available to local communities to benefit from marine renewable energy in Loch Etive.
9. Protect the settings of Ardchattan Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape and Dun Mor, dun, Inverawe from inappropriate marine development in order to maintain the integrity of their setting.	These important historic features are sensitive to development within their setting.

[2] Policies do not preclude the submission of development applications in areas where presumption against development has been identified.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TABLE PZD - Guidance on location, scale and other considerations

Development Type	Location	Suggested Maximum Scale	Comments
Aquaculture consolidation/ rationalisation	n/a	n/a	Proposals should be consistent with Policy LE AQUA 1. Particular consideration should be given to: • any available spatial guidance on areas that are most suitable for development; • potential environmental benefits, including landscape, habitats and species and wild migratory salmonids; • potential benefits in terms of site management, including disease control and escapes; • potential benefits to communities and commercial and recreational activities; and • increased economic viability and socio-economic benefits.
Taynuilt Pier	Taynuilt	-	Taynuilt Pier has been identified by sea anglers, kayakers and scuba divers as the most important access point in Loch Etive. Continued inappropriate use of this location could result in access restrictions. Development of a dedicated access point would improve access and management of this area. Any development would need to fit with local character; and be sensitive to the amenity of local residents and would need to allow continued commercial use. The pier and land around it are at risk from coastal flooding, as identified by the SEPA flood map (1:200 probability) and any development proposals would need to be consistent with the Argyll and Bute Development Plan Policy LP SERV 8 (see Appendix I). Opportunities for new facilities will need to be considered carefully in order that recreation does not result in unacceptable impacts on the environment and local communities. This area of land is designated as 'Countryside around Settlements' in the Argyll and Bute Development Plan and Local Plan Policy LP CST 1 would be a key consideration (see Appendix I).
Access Point	North shore (Achnaba to Ardachy)	Small	A small parking area is all that is needed for an access point for sea kayakers. For divers a small slipway is required, in addition to parking. Any development would need to fit with local character and be sensitive to the amenity of local residents. Opportunities for new facilities will need to be considered carefully in order that recreation does not result in unacceptable impacts on the environment and local communities.

CONSULTATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Prospective developers (during pre-application scoping) and Council planning officers (during assessment of applications) are encouraged to consult with the following individuals and organisations in addition to the normal statutory consultees. A list of statutory consultees for different development consents and licences is listed in Appendix VII. Contact details for statutory and non-statutory consultees are provided in Appendix VIII.

Consultees	Aquaculture	Taynuilt Pier	Access Point
Ardchattan Community Council	✓	✓	✓
Argyll District Salmon Fishery Board	✓		
Argyll Fisheries Trust	✓	✓	
Celtic Sea Ltd.	✓	✓	
Connel Community Council	✓		
Dalriada Diving	✓	✓	✓
Dawnfresh Farming Ltd.	✓		
Inverawe Estate	✓		
John and Ronnie Campbell (Marine Pilots)	✓	✓	
Kilmaronaig Estate	✓	✓	
Muckairn Mussels	✓		
Scottish Canoe Association	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Sub-Aqua Club	✓	✓	✓
Small Isles and Mull Inshore Fisheries Group	✓		
Taynuilt Community Council	✓	✓	