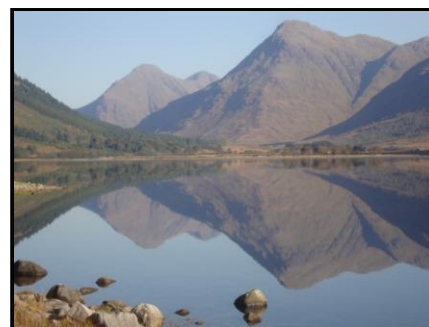


POLICY ZONE F: ARDMADDY BAY TO GLEN ETIVE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Policy Zone F comprises the narrow, uppermost section of the loch which is bounded by steep hill slopes on both sides. This narrow, fjord-like environment, extending far inland, is relatively sheltered with an enclosed feel, although southwesterly winds can funnel up the loch. The western shore is well wooded, with commercial forest present at the southern end and in Glen Etive immediately north of the head of the loch. However, semi-natural woodland clothes most of the western shore in the northern part of this policy zone. The eastern shore is largely bare of tree cover, with only isolated fragments of native woodland. The landscape is rugged with substantial rocky peaks on both sides. The graceful Ben Starav to the east has some of the highest, continuously steep slopes on Scotland's western seaboard. Beinn Trilleachan is more rounded, but particularly notable for its extensive areas of rocky slabs. The area is virtually uninhabited, with a strong sense of isolation and wildness, and this adds to the area's appeal for climbers, walkers, and canoeists. This policy zone lies within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area and partly within an SNH search area for wild land.



Steep slopes of upper Loch Etive
Image courtesy of Isaac Forster



Sheltered and enclosed upper Loch
Image courtesy of Isaac Forster

SEASCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

This policy zone is enclosed and sheltered, and its maritime character is generally calm with a limited intertidal reach. The rocky coastal edge rises steeply from the water directly to high mountains creating a strong sense of enclosure. The shoreline is more regular, with subtly defined bays.

ACCESS

Access to the head of the loch is possible by road from Glencoe, though it is single-track for the whole length of Glen Etive. The rest of the policy zone is only accessible by rough coastal footpaths on either side of the loch or by boat. There are two small piers at Barrs, both in a state of disrepair and one at Ardmaddy Bay. The old wooden pier at the head of the loch has recently been redeveloped to allow timber from Glen Etive estate to be extracted by barge. As part of this development, the existing car park and ground between this area and the river edge has been re-graded to allow direct access to the loch for canoeists, kayakers and other members of the public. In addition, a footpath through this area is to be completed.



Glen Etive single-track road
Image courtesy of Isaac Forster



Barrs disused pier
Image courtesy of Lorraine Holdstock



Views from the lochside track
Image courtesy of Isaac Forster

VISUAL AMENITY

Overall, the scenic quality is high, emphasised by simple contrasting elements of rugged, vertical mountains and the horizontal loch surface with a sense of wildness and semi-natural features. Views focus along the length of loch with close views from the lochside track and occasional elevated views from mountain peaks.

Marine litter (general litter and aquaculture debris) can accumulate by wind and tide at the north end of Ardmaddy Bay.

SETTLEMENTS

The area is quiet and tranquil with minor settlement limited to the head of the loch.

CURRENT USES

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

Aquaculture

There are no aquaculture operations within this policy zone.

Fishing

Prawn creeling ground occurs across the breadth of this policy zone, north from Rubha Bharr and Ardmaddy Bay up to Aird Trilleachan.

Recreation

Angling

Sea angling by boat occasionally occurs in the southern part of this policy zone, south-west of Inverghiusachan Point.

Sailing

Limited sailing and boating occurs in the upper loch, however charter boats such as Loch Etive Cruises do take visitors on scenic trips to the head of the loch. There is an anchorage located close to the western shore at the head of the loch.

Diving

There are no listed dive sites within this policy zone.

Canoeing/Kayaking

Sea kayaks visit the head of the loch, having travelled from the lower loch. Canoeists visiting the river Etive use the car park at by the redeveloped pier and may also utilise this part of the loch.

Walking/Climbing

The Argyll and Bute Council/Highland Council proposed core path from Bonawe to Glen Etive runs along the western shore of this policy zone. A coastal path from Taynult to the head of the Loch is also present on the eastern shore. Three hill walks start from the head of the loch which all have views of Loch Etive. On the east flank of Beinn Trilleachan down Glen Etive lie unique pink granite slabs set at about 40 degrees providing exciting and serious friction climbing.

Commercial Forestry

Cadderlie forest, owned and managed by Forest Enterprise (Scotland) is located along much of the north shore of this policy zone. At the head of the loch, Glen Etive Estate own and manage private commercial forestry.

Commercial Shipping

During periods of forest harvesting, timber transshipment vessels operated by Scottish Woodlands Ltd will collect timber at the head of the loch and transport it out of Loch Etive.

Infrastructure and Discharges

Piers and jetties within this policy zone are all privately owned. There are no known discharges via sea outfalls within this policy zone.



Timber pier, Glen Etive Estate
Image courtesy of Isaac Forster

DESIGNATIONS

Refer to policy zone F map for areas covered.

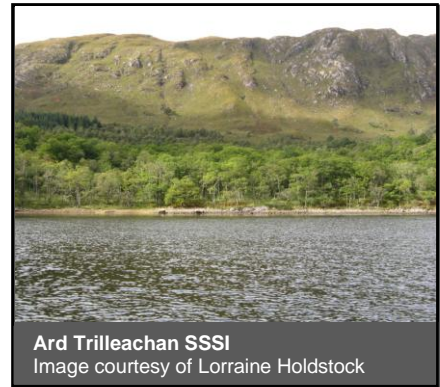
- **Argyll & Bute Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) Designations**
- The majority of coastline within the Argyll and Bute region of this zone is classified as Very Sensitive Countryside.
- The remaining coastline, south of Barrs and Rubha Aird Rainich is classified as Sensitive Countryside.

Highland Coastal Development Strategy

- The entire coastline in the Highland region of this zone, north of Rubha Doire Larach to Rubha Aird Rainich is classified as 'Isolated'.

Other Designations

- The entire coastline of this policy zone lies within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA.
- The coastal strip, Rubha Bharr to Barrs and from Rubha na h-oisinne stretching to the head of the loch is part of the Loch Etive Woods SAC, designated for its broad-leaved, mixed and Yew woodland and Otters.
- Ard Trilleachan is a SSSI, notified for its Caledonian Pinewood forest and upland Oak wood.
- The Loch Etive Marine Consultation Area extends as far as Rubha Doire Làrach.
- The Glen Etive and Glen Fyne SPA for Golden Eagles covers most of the land bordering the coast of Loch Etive in this policy zone (Refer to Figure 5.1 for the SPA boundary area, it is not shown on the Policy Zone Designation 1 map due to visual restrictions).
- The 'Loch Etive Coastal Strip' Shellfish Growing Water extends across the whole of the marine area of this policy zone.
- The Loch Etive Shellfish Production Area extends into the policy zone, only as far as Rubha Áird Rainich.



BIODIVERSITY

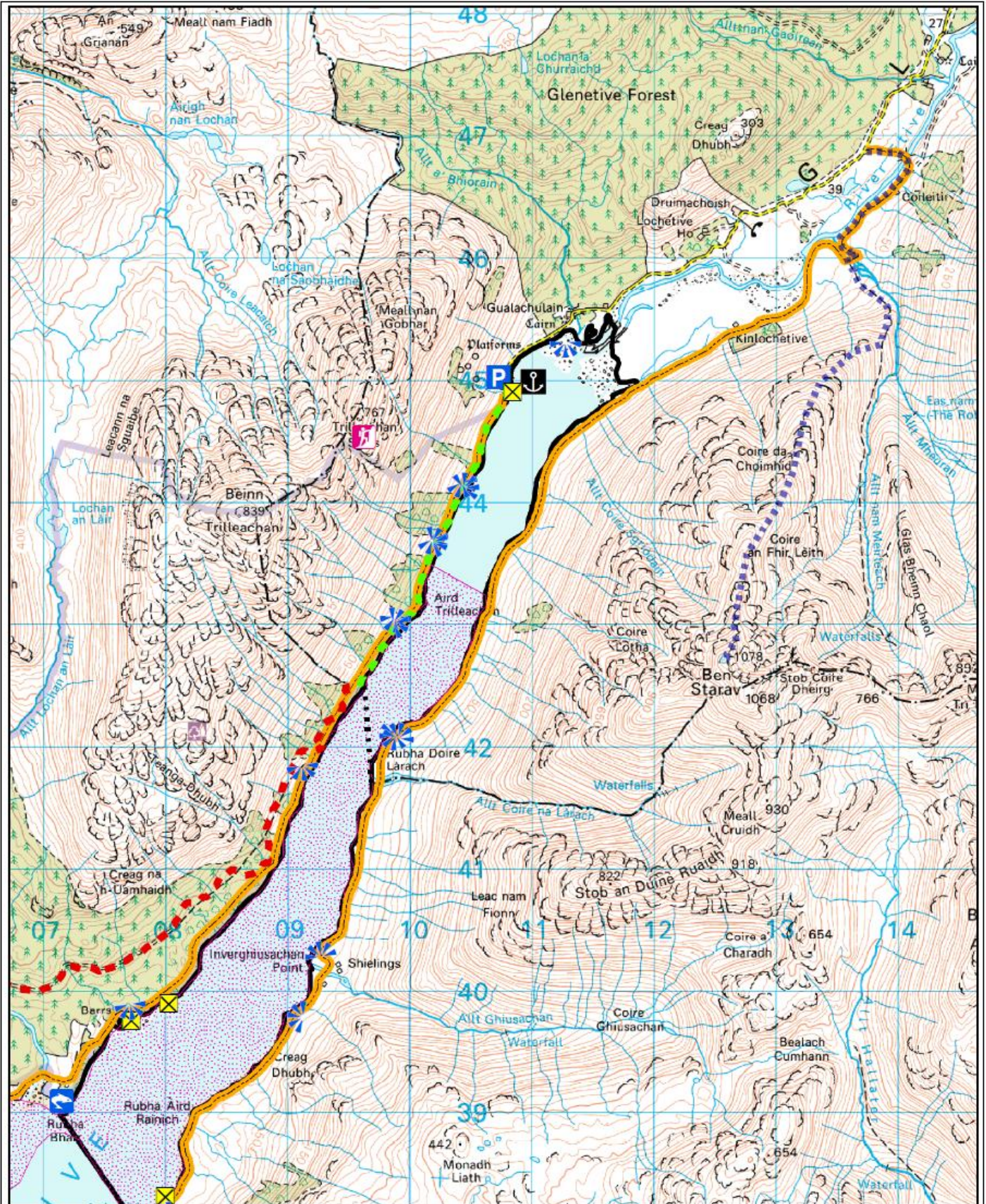
- The focal point for wildlife in this policy zone is the mouth of River Etive, which is known to be a good spawning burn for Sea Trout and Salmon.
- The head of the loch is considered to be an important nursery area for these species and the benthic marine communities in this area are particularly influenced by reduced salinity conditions.
- Small numbers of the deep water Fireworks Anemone (*Pachycerianthus multiplicatus*) have been recorded on soft mud in the deeper water of this policy zone.
- The coastal area at the head of the loch is attractive for wildlife because of the varied terrestrial habitats, including montane, woodland and salt marsh.
- *Rhododendron ponticum* can be found spreading at Craig on the west shore of this policy zone.

HISTORICAL FEATURES

Coastal and marine historic features identified within and adjacent to this policy zone are:

- Scheduled ancient monument, Gualachulain, cairn at the head of the loch. The remains of a church at Inverghiusachan are an unscheduled ancient monument dating from the mid-19th century, although a church was established at this location before 1793.
- Evidence of several post-medieval charcoal-burning platforms has been recorded between Barrs Point and Glen Etive. The surrounding area has not however been comprehensively surveyed.

POLICY ZONE F MAP – Current Uses & Activities



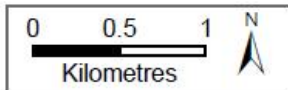
Legend

Commercial Fishing Infrastructure & Discharges Recreation

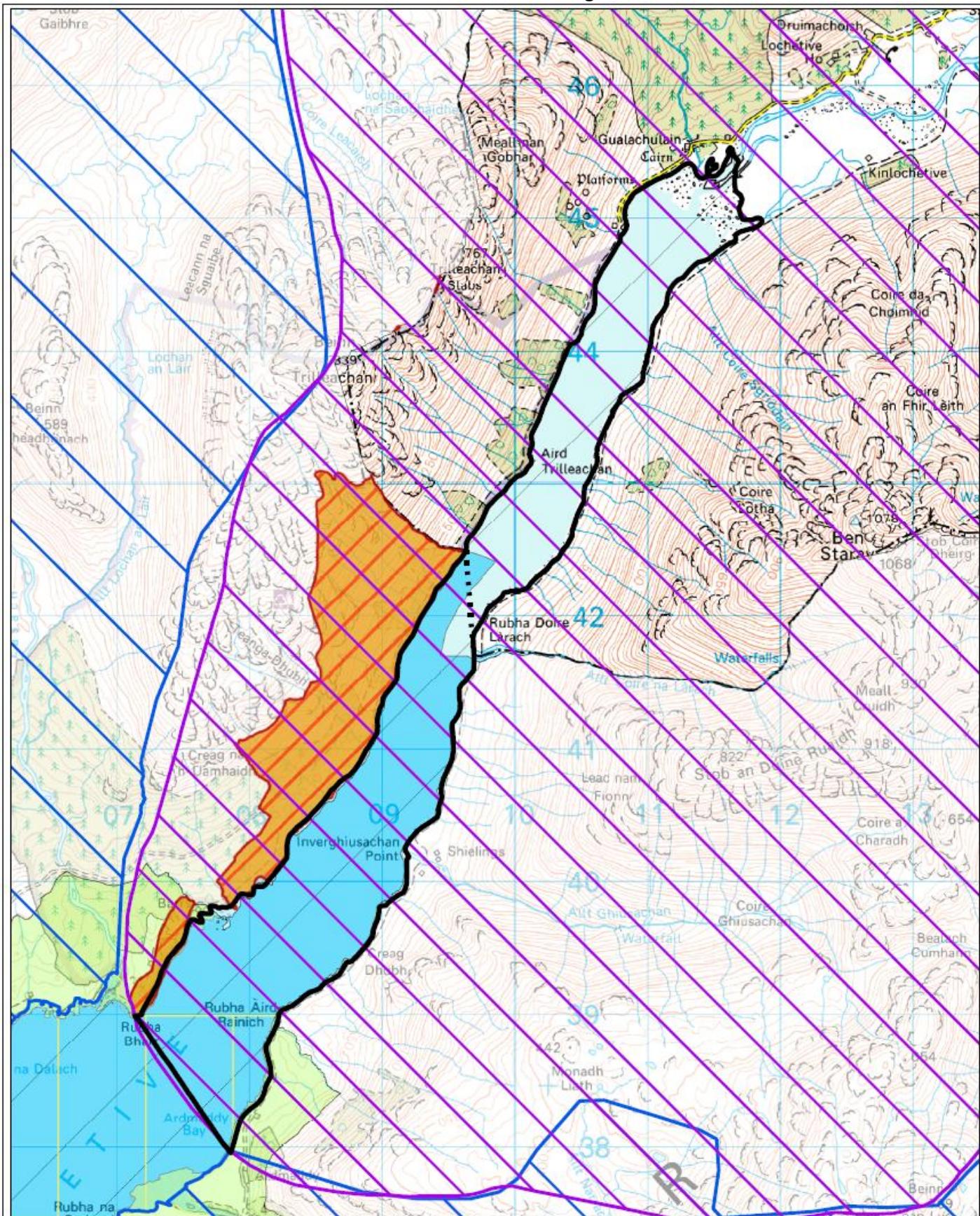
- | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| Creeling | Pier/Jetty | Proposed Core Path | Highland Core Path | Climbing | Popular hillwalking route: Ben Starav |
| Anchorage | Shore fishing | Proposed Core Path | Highland Core Path | Anchorage | Coastal walking route |
| Shore fishing | Proposed Core Path | Parking | Viewpoint | Parking | |
| Proposed Core Path | Highland Core Path | Viewpoint | | | |



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POLICY ZONE F MAP – Designations

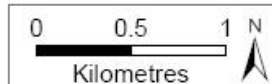


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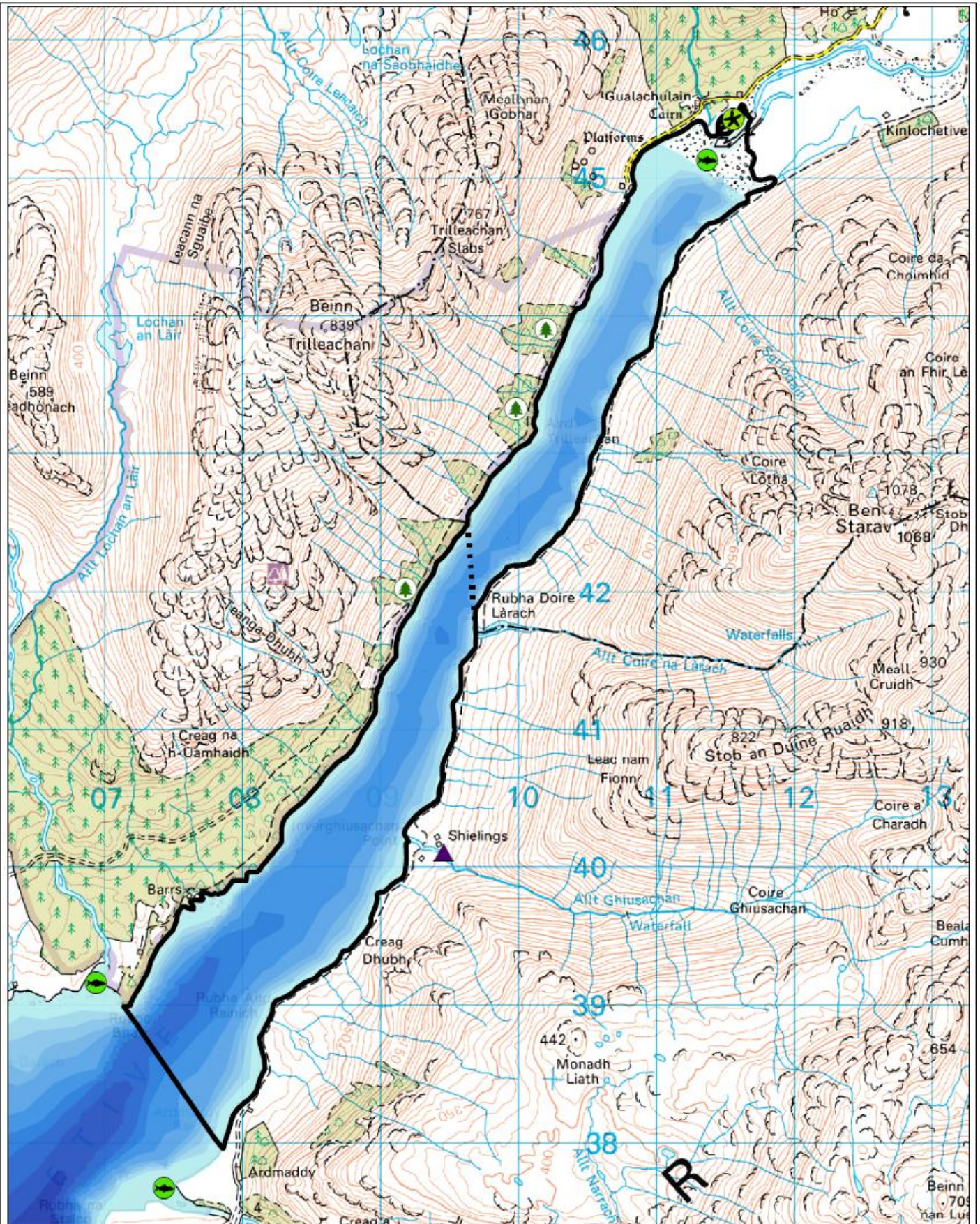
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Development Plan Designations | Sensitive Countryside | Other Designations | Marine Consultation Area |
| Countryside Around Settlement | Very Sensitive Countryside | Loch Etive Woods SAC | Shellfish Growing Area |
| Rural Opportunity Area | Settlement Zones | Ard Trilleachan SSSI | Shellfish Production Area |
| Areas of Panoramic Quality | National Scenic Area | | |



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POLICY ZONE F MAP – Biodiversity Interests & Historic Features

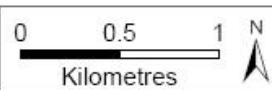


Legend

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Biodiversity Interests | | Caledonian pinewood forest | Historic Environment | Depth (m) |
| Wild salmonid river | Salt marsh | Unscheduled interest | | |



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OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities¹

| <i>Future Use</i> | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Forestry management | There are significant opportunities for restructuring the extensive commercial forest near the head of Loch Etive, which dates from the 1970's. Opportunities exist for improvements in landscape and biodiversity, resulting from harvesting and restructuring of this conifer plantation in line with the Forest Design Plan developed by Glen Etive Estate. |
| Timber Transhipment | Continuation of planned timber transhipment from Glen Etive Estate from the pier at the head of the loch and potential for further timber transport by sea from Barrs/Cadderlie Forest. |
| | The sense of wildness, isolated nature, scenic quality and wildlife, including golden eagles, otters and native woodland, has the potential to attract additional local and visiting charter boats to this part of the Loch. |
| | Better promotion of established coastal paths and walking routes in the area. 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. |
| Access | Retain redeveloped pier for recreational access, following completion of timber operations. |
| | Collection and drop off of visitors by boat wishing to walk or cycle part of the area. |
| Scientific Research | Loch Etive has unique marine communities influenced by the brackish nature of the loch and as such is of interest to scientific researchers. |

Constraints

| <i>Future Use</i> | |
|---|---|
| Access | The existing single track road at Glen Etive is not suitable for transporting timber by lorry and therefore timber extraction in this policy zone is restricted to transport by sea. |
| | Taynuilt is the nearest easily accessible boat access point with services and amenities in close proximity. Boat access is also possible from Gualachulain at the head of the loch. The distance and relative isolation of the main access points limits the recreational boat use of this policy zone. |
| Landscape/ remote character | Remote and tranquil character makes this area inappropriate for motorised water sports such as power boating and jet skiing. |
| Wildlife (Habitats and species) | Recreational and commercial activities need to ensure they do not adversely affect the important features of the Loch Etive Woods SAC and Ard Trilleachan SSSI, and sensitive wildlife such as otters. The protection and preservation of existing flora and fauna may be enhanced by the level of inaccessibility. |
| Height restriction (Boat access) | Air draught restriction at Connel Bridge and at Bonawe Narrows limits the size and design of commercial vessels which can visit the head of the loch for timber extraction. |

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

| Development | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Landscape | The entire coastline surrounding this policy zone is set within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe NSA, reflecting the high scenic quality of the landscape, and is therefore sensitive to marine and onshore development. |
| | The majority of the coastline is classified as an area of 'Isolated Coast' in the Argyll and Bute Development Plan and Highland Council Development Strategy where there is a presumption against development. |
| | The narrowness, steep hillsides and enclosed nature of this part of Loch Etive could be quickly dominated by aquaculture structures located on the water surface. |
| | The inaccessibility of this area from the land, and absence of onshore development, gives a sense of wildness which could be significantly affected by marine or onshore development. |
| | Views from the elevated coastal footpaths and popular nearby Munro summits make this zone sensitive to marine and coastal development. Although not seen by large numbers, this area is visited largely by those who value views of wild undeveloped land. |
| | The coastal setting of the scheduled ancient monument Gualachulain cairn is sensitive to inappropriately sited development. |
| Access | Lack of road access to much of this policy zone and distance from main population limits potential for commercial coastal development. |
| Navigation | This policy zone is narrow, with its width confined to 4-500m north of Inverghiusachan Point. Marine development in this stretch of coast is likely to affect commercial boat traffic to the head of the loch and potentially recreational boat traffic. |
| Commercial Fishing | New aquaculture development may restrict access to existing prawn creeling ground. |
| Water exchange | Limited water exchange in this policy zone may restrict aquaculture development in terms of availability of plankton for shellfish and flushing of excess waste/nutrients from finfish farming. |
| Salinity | This zone is most affected by fresh water input and therefore salinity is too low for farming shellfish. |
| Exposure | Other than the shoreline just north of Rubha Doire Larach, the coastline of this policy zone is very exposed to occasional prevailing south westerly winds and may not be suitable for aquaculture development. |

POLICY GUIDANCE²

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. Safeguard the high scenic quality of the Ben Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area and the wild and remote character of the upper loch. | Insensitive development could damage the scenic qualities and character of this area. |
| 2. Activities which diminish the tranquil character of this remote part of the loch are discouraged. | Motorised water sports such as jet skiing and power boating would impact on the tranquil and remote nature of this policy zone. |
| 3. Maintain safe channel of navigation through upper reaches of the loch. | Development in this narrow part of Loch Etive would potentially restrict navigational access |
| 4. Safeguard coastal wildlife interests, salt marsh habitat and populations of the fireworks anemone. | Recreational activity, if not undertaken responsibly and good practice not followed can affect sensitive wildlife interests. The nationally scarce fireworks anemone is a priority UKBAP species that is sensitive to physical disturbance of the seabed. Salt marsh is a priority UKBAP and LBAP habitat which can be damaged by vehicular access and access by foot across it. |
| 5. Retention of the pier structure at the head of the loch, following the conclusion of timber extraction is encouraged. | For the purposes of maintaining recreational use of this area. |
| 6. Support for continued timber transhipment from Glen Etive Estate and for additional timber transport by sea from Forestry Commission Forests. | Current road infrastructure is not suitable for timber transport by road and transhipment by sea reduces the pressure on the road network. |
| 7. General presumption against finfish and shellfish development. | <p>There are high sensitivities in this area associated with the character, relative wildness and high aesthetic quality of the landscape (Grant 2006). The introduction of offshore structures or large numbers of buoys visible on the loch surface would conflict with this special landscape quality.</p> <p>New finfish developments are likely to affect safe navigation of commercial boat traffic in this narrow section of the loch.</p> <p>Salinity is likely to be too low to grow shellfish (Marine and Coastal Development Unit 2010).</p> |
| 8. General presumption against on-shore aquaculture developments on land adjacent to policy zone F. | <p>The majority of land adjacent to this policy zone is classified as very sensitive countryside and is therefore considered inappropriate for commercial "land based" developments.</p> <p>There is no road access to the shore for much of the coastline to support any new aquaculture development.</p> |

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