

## POLICY ZONE O: BALLIMORE TO GLENAN BAY

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The landscape adjacent to the most northerly part of this policy zone is uniformly woodland that is commercially managed, but has a coastal fringe of semi natural woodland. From Eilean Ardgaddan to Port Leathan Gentle gradients characterise the hinterland, with long west facing slopes of fields, grazing on alluvial plains and policy woods with shelterbelts extending to the shore. Further south between Port Leathan to Portavadie Oak and semi natural woodland, some commercial forest and estate policies create a diverse pattern of woods across the hinterland, often extending down to the foreshore.

### SEASCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Set against a backdrop of the widest part of the loch, the coastline in the northern part of this policy zone is characterised by the simple sweeping curves of long bays. The expansive sea and distant horizon emphasise the sense of space and openness, as well as the simplicity of the landscape character. The coast is characterised by stone and shingle beaches changing to rocky foreshores where steep headlands extend down to the coast. Overlooking a wide expanse of the loch the coast from Eilean Ardgaddan to Port Leathan is perceived as relatively open and large-scale.

Sand and shingle bars, particularly at Kilfinan, add diversity and complexity to the coastline and a sense of dynamism which relates to their shifting gravel banks. Further south between Port Leathan to Portavadie the more expansive lower loch continues to provide a backdrop to this coast, even although there is a slight narrowing of the water channel. Sandy gravel deposits in small shallow bays with a moderate tidal reach alternate with the rocky outcrops of rounded headlands or narrow promontories. The irregular coastline is dominated by organic shapes, with scattered off shore islands and in land lagoons enhancing the degree of interlock between land and sea. The coastal land form is small-scale and contains the bays while retaining a rugged character.



View over Eilean Ardgaddan from  
MacEwen Monument



Kilfinan Bay



South Kilfinan Bay



View south from Black Harbour  
towards Arran



View north along rugged bedrock  
shore at Gob a' Bharra



Auchalick Bay

### ACCESS

The bays of Kilfinan, Achalick and Ardmarnock, and the coastlines north and south of these points can be easily accessed by foot along various tracks and paths. However, shore access by car along this coastal stretch is limited. Indeed, the area is mostly accessible on 'dead end' tracks along which vehicles are discouraged, which heightens the sense of privacy and seclusion. There are no public boat launching facilities, and those slips which exist, are generally linked with boathouses that are part of the various estates along the coast, such as Otter House at Kilfinan, Ardmarnock House and Crispie.

## VISUAL AMENITY

The road is set well back from the coastline, offering the opportunity for elevated, occasional views of wider sea. The coast is easily accessible, with paths and access tracks extending down to the shore and allowing access along the foreshore, from which open views are low level and focus on the extensive sea and distant coast and horizon. Views from the top of the knolls and headlands are elevated and expansive, while from within the bays, there is a sense of intimacy and views tend to focus on the detail of the coastline.



View onto Auchalick Bay with Gob a' Bharra finfish farm to the north



Ardmarnock Bay



Black Harbour



View from Crispie across Eilean a' Bhuic to Arran



Glenan Bay

## SETTLEMENTS

Settlement along this coastline is limited to the odd boathouse and very few residential and holiday homes, generally located on the small, sheltered bays, or tucked in against rocky knolls. Most development is set well back from the coast along the B8000.

## CURRENT USES

*Refer to policy zone O map for locations of current activities.*

### Recreation

**Coastal Paths** - Kilfinan, Auchalick and Glenan Bays are all of high recreational value for walking, picnicking and sightseeing. There are managed coastal paths at Glenan Bay and Kilfinan Bay, the latter leading to a monument at the site where Mac Ewen Castle once stood.

**Boating** - All of these bays are also visited from the water, and this coastline has numerous charted anchorages at Kilfinan, Ardmarnock, Black Harbour, Crispie and Glenan Bay. Additionally, there are a number of private slipways and a jetty along this stretch of coastline.

**Angling** - Shore, charter, and private small boat angling occurs from Eilean Ardgaddan to Eilean na Beithe.

**Diving** - There are two shallow scenic dive sites in this policy zone. These include: Bagh Buic (shore dive) and Eilean a' Bhuic (shore dive). These are popular dive sites, as opportunities exist to spot seals.

### Fishing

This part of Loch Fyne's coast is of particular importance to commercial fishermen. Scallop dredging occurs throughout most of the policy zone, with prawn trawling in the deeper water adjacent to the scallop grounds. Diving for scallops and razor shells occurs around Kilfinan Bay, and razor shells are also targeted at Glenan Bay.

## Discharges

There are no discharges via sea outfalls within this policy zone.

## Aquaculture

There is an oyster lease at Ardmarnock Bay and a scallop lease south of Black Harbour. Two finfish sites are located north and south of Kilfinan Bay.

Current Aquaculture Sites						
Location	Species	Consented Equipment	Maximum Biomass	Operator	Shore-base Location	Development Status
Ardgaddan	Salmon	10 x 100m circular cages	1696 tonnes	Lighthouse Caledonia Ltd.	Strondoir Bay	Developed/Active
Gob á Bharra	Salmon	10 x 100m circular cages	1405 tonnes	Lighthouse Caledonia Ltd.	Strondoir Bay	Developed/Active
Black Harbour	Scallop	8 x 220m longlines	-	Loch Fyne Seafarms Ltd.	Tarbert	Developed/Active
Ardmarnock Bay	Oyster	100 trays	-	Loch Fyne Seafarms Ltd.	-	Developed/Active

## LOCAL PLAN & OTHER DESIGNATIONS

Refer to policy zone O map for areas covered.

### Argyll & Bute Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) Designations

- The entire coastal fringe of this policy zone is designated as an area of 'Undeveloped Coast' (a coastal area of Sensitive Countryside), except a 1 km stretch of coast at south Kilfinan Bay, which along with other large tracts of land each side of the B8000 is designated as a Rural Opportunity Area.
- Land around Ballimore Estate is a Designated Garden & Designed Landscape.
- The very north of the policy zone is within the East Loch Fyne Coast Area of Panoramic Quality and from Ardmarnock Bay south, part of the Bute & South Cowal Area of Panoramic Quality.

### Other Designations

- The Ardmarnock Woods, adjacent to Glenan Bay is a coastal Oak and Birch Forest Nature Reserve managed by the Forestry Commission.
- The 'Loch Fyne Coastal Strip' Shellfish Growing Water extends throughout the length of the policy zone.

## WILDLIFE

Sites of nature conservation interest include Kilfinan Bay and Auchalick Bay for ornithological and other wildlife interests, and Ardmarnock Woods being an excellent example of an Oak and Birch woodland and one of the northern most breeding sites for the Nightjar. Behind the prominent beach ridge at Auchalick Bay there are a series of pools thought to be remnant of former channels of the River Auchalick. This marsh area is a focal point for a high diversity of wildlife. Over a hundred species of birds are listed as resident or regular visitors to the wetland and surrounding area. The pools also provide habitat for numerous juvenile fish. The rivers Kilfinan and Auchalick are both rivers included in a loch wide wildfish restoration project.



Wetlands at Auchalick Bay

## HISTORICAL FEATURES

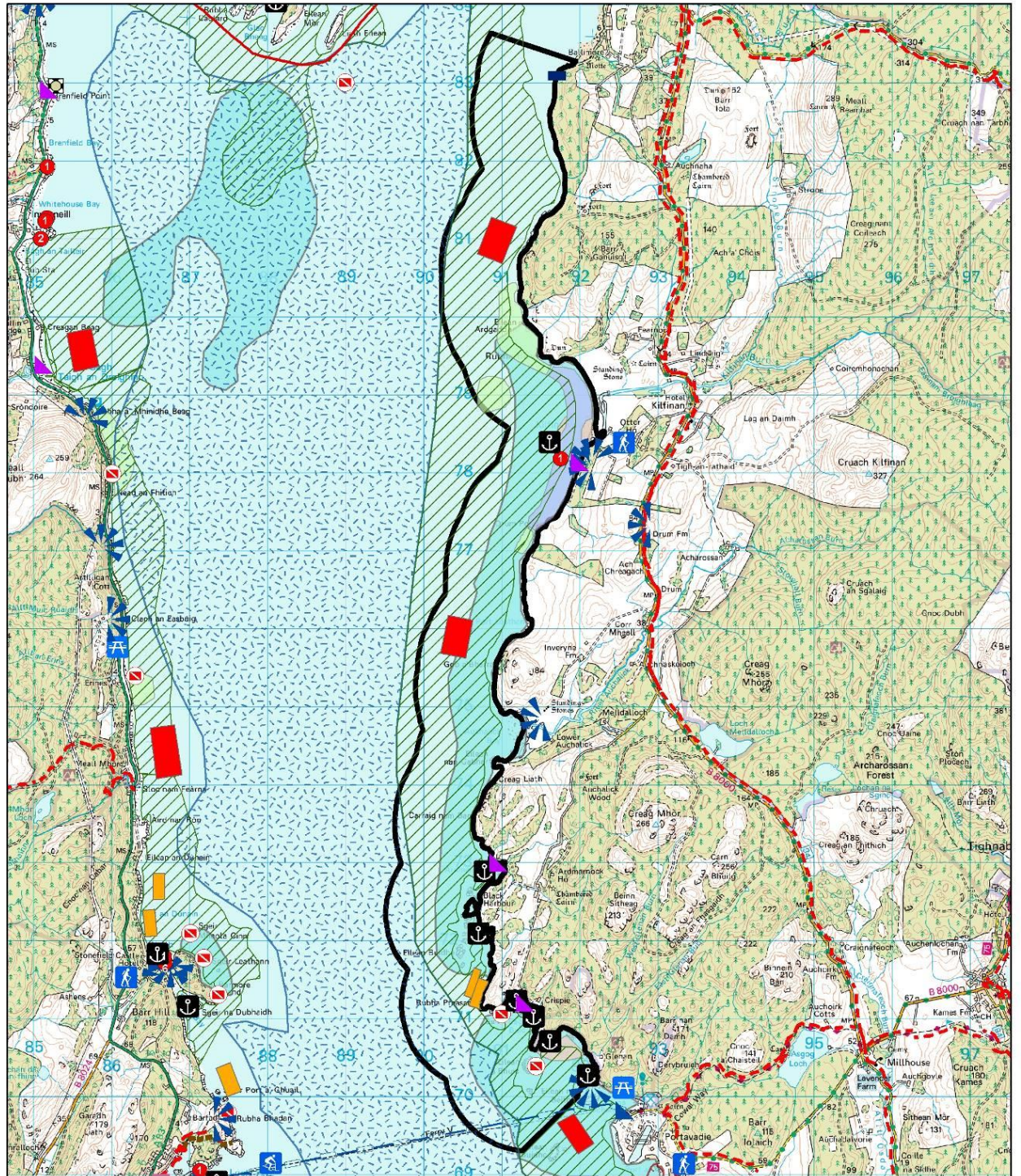
- Set on the headland north of Kilfinan Bay is a monument located on the site where Castle MacEwen once stood. The site was extensively excavated in the late 1960s uncovering the bases of a number of buildings and ramparts.
- Ardmarnock House, a category B listed building built in 1820 is set well back from the coast, situated approximately ½ mile south of Auchalick Wood and ½ mile east from Ardmarnock Bay.
- Standing stones are present near Auchalick Bay and Kilfinan Bay.
- Ballimore Designated Garden and Designed Landscape.
- Scheduled ancient monument Caisteal Aoidhe, Fort, Ardmarnock, at Rubha Preasach.



Kilfinan Bay and  
MacEwen Monument



## POLICY ZONE O MAP – Current Uses & Activities



### Legend

#### Commercial Fishing

- Scallop dredging
- Nephrops creeling
- Nephrops trawling/creeling
- Razorshell diving
- Scallop diving
- Scallop/razor diving

#### Aquaculture

- Finfish lease
- Scallop lease
- Subsea telephone cable
- Private outfall

#### Infrastructure & Discharges

- Subsea telephone cable
- Private outfall

#### Loch Access

- Pier
- Pontoon
- Private jetty
- Private slipway
- Public slipway
- Berthing facilities
- Anchorage
- Moorings
- Ferries

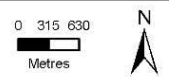
#### Recreation & Tourism

- Preferred angling areas
- Proposed core path
- Coastal forest path
- Coastal path location
- Dive sites

- Boat/Yacht club
- Jet skiing
- Viewpoint
- Picnic sites

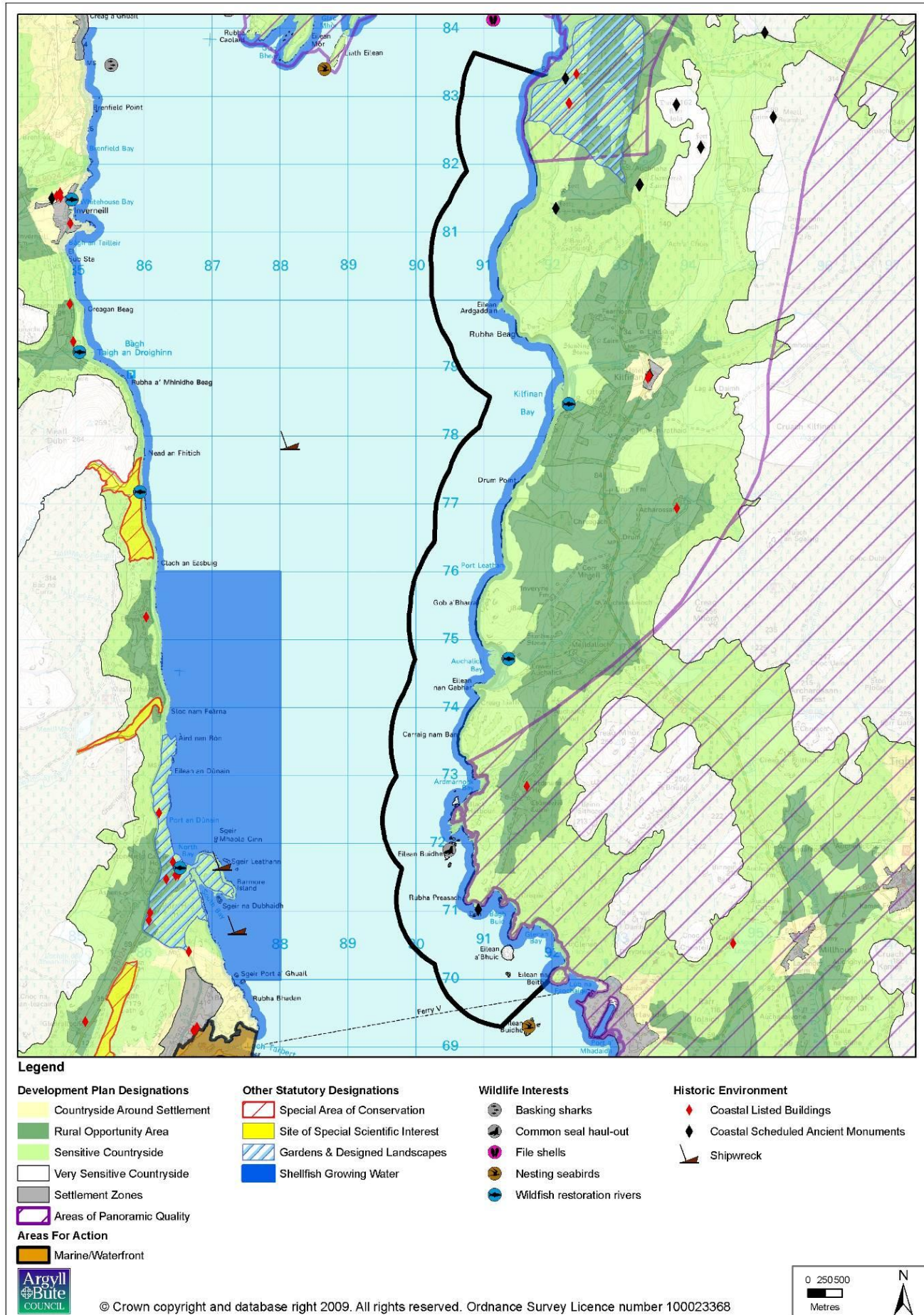


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# POLICY ZONE O MAP – Designations, Wildlife Interests & Historic Features



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

### Constraints

#### *Future use*

<b>Areas sensitive to disturbance</b>	High speed motorised water-sports and other water craft should avoid disturbance to islands/skerries that are important for seals, particularly during sensitive periods such as breeding seasons (see SMWWC – Appendix VII).
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#### *Development*

<b>Landscape</b>	<p>The sense of remoteness and seclusion experienced in this area would be diminished by development.</p> <p>Where there are more dynamic and complex systems of sand bars and shingle banks, for example at Kilfinan Bay and Auchalick Bay, it is harder to associate the geometric and static forms of fish farm structures with the organic shapes and diversity.</p> <p>To the south of the policy zone, the irregular pattern of inlets, promontories and islands create a small-scale coastal landscape of intricate shapes against which it is difficult to accommodate even small-scale and medium-scaled offshore aquaculture development.</p> <p>From Eilean Ardgadden to Port Leathan, the expanse of visible water and relatively large-scale of space could absorb larger structures without being dominated by them. However, the existing salmon farm which is well located in visual terms, limits the potential for new development.</p>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	With little settlement in which shore-base development can be absorbed, and the lack of road infrastructure close to the coast presents no opportunities for on-shore development within existing settled areas along this stretch of coast.
<b>Recreation</b>	<p>While the coast is not overlooked by housing, it is popular for recreation, particularly around Kilfinan Bay.</p> <p>The scenic indented coastline provides safe anchorage for sailing vessels.</p>
<b>Commercial Fishing</b>	This area is important for scallop dredging and commercial shellfish diving.
<b>Wild migratory salmonids</b>	<p>Significant expansion of either of the two salmon farms in this policy zone has the potential to increase the chances of adverse impacts on the rivers Kilfinan and Auchalik. These two strongly developing burns are included in the loch wide wildfish restoration project.</p> <p>Any increase in tonnage at existing sites may present a greater risk to the health and survival of wild migratory salmonids, due to an increase in the number of hosts, which in-turn may increase infection levels on wild fish.</p>
<b>Historic Interest</b>	The predominantly coastal setting of Caisteal Aoidhe, Fort, Ardarnock is sensitive to adjacent development.

### Opportunities<sup>1</sup>

#### *Development*

<b>Aquaculture</b>	There is potential for expansion of both existing salmon farms in this policy zone without adversely affecting the landscape character.
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<sup>1</sup> Opportunities identified are indicative, subject to obtaining the required consents, and do not preclude development applications and activities elsewhere.

	Small-scaled scallop farm development could be absorbed along the coastline from Eilean Ardgaddan to Port Leathan.
<b>On-shore Aquaculture</b>	Marine activity, and possibly even lighting, could be absorbed adjacent to the more developed stretches of coastline, and on-shore development could be located within existing settlements.

## DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR AQUACULTURE<sup>2</sup>

Where the following development policies indicate presumption in favour of development, this will be subject to any development proposal being consistent with relevant policies within the Argyll and Bute Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan).

### MARINE FINFISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

#### Marine Finfish Development Policy PZO-1

There will be a general presumption against any scale of new finfish development within this policy zone.

##### Justification

- No locations for additional finfish development were identified in this policy zone largely due to the existing level of development and the diversity and scenic quality of the coastline south of Port Leathan (Grant 2007).

#### Marine Finfish Development Policy PZO-2

There will be a general presumption in favour of expansion to the cage surface area of both the Ardgadden and Gob a'Bharra fish farms, or any proposed change of use from salmon to mussel, scallop or other fin fish species, subject to no significant adverse impacts.

*See Table PZO for additional guidance*

##### Justification

- The landscape/seascape capacity study indicates that both the Ardgadden and Gob a'Bharra fish farms, could be expanded by 20%, and not significantly increase their impact on the landscape character or visual amenity (Grant 2007).

### MARINE SHELLFISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

#### Marine Shellfish Development Policy PZO-3

There will be a general presumption against any scale of new mussel or oyster farm development in this policy zone, but general presumption in favour of scallop farm development between Eilean Ardgadden and Port Leathan, subject to no significant adverse impacts.

*See Table PZO for additional guidance*

##### Justification

- No potential to accommodate mussel line development in this local coastal character area was identified, largely due to the diversity and scenic quality of the coastline (Grant 2007).
- New oyster farm development would quickly 'fill up' the accessible bays which would conflict with the relatively remote character, and the scenic qualities related to the dynamic organic shapes of the lagoons, or diminish the enclosed intimacy of the smaller bays (Grant 2007).  
From Eilean Ardgaddan to Port Leathan the buoys associated with scallop farming can be relatively easily absorbed into this busy seascape as long as new development is located away from northern half of Kilfinan Bay and where it could avoid adding visual clutter to the existing fish farm site (Grant 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Policies do not preclude the submission of applications for shellfish or finfish development in areas where presumption against development has been identified.



#### Marine Shellfish Development Policy PZO-4

There will be a general presumption against expansion of the existing scallop farm south of Black Harbour, but presumption in favour of any proposed change of use from scallop to mussel lines, subject to no significant adverse impacts.

See Table PZO for additional guidance

#### Justification

- Existing scallop lines are well located in landscape terms, as they occupy only a relatively small stretch of this scenic coastline (Grant 2007). However, further expansion of this site is likely to affect safe navigation to the currently accessible anchorage at Black Harbour and may also affect existing scallop dredging ground (Marine & Coastal Development Unit 2009).

#### Marine Shellfish Development Policy PZO-5

There will be a general presumption against expansion of the existing oyster farm at Ardmarnock Bay.

#### Justification

- Existing oyster trestles are well located as they occupy only a relatively small stretch of this scenic coastline. However, the landscape/seascape analysis of the existing oyster development at Ardmarnock Bay recommends that expansion onto other bays within this area should be avoided (Grant 2007).

### **ON-SHORE AQUACULTURE-RELATED DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

#### On-shore Aquaculture-Related Development Policy PZO-6

There will be a presumption against aquaculture-related shoreline developments in this policy zone.

#### Justification

- There are no opportunities for on-shore development within existing settled areas along this stretch of coast (Grant 2007).

### **SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE ON POTENTIAL AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

**TABLE PZO - Guidance on location, scale and other considerations**

Development Type	Location	Suggested Maximum Scale	Comments
<b>Expansion of Existing Finfish Site</b>	Ardgadden	Up to 20% increase in cage surface area	Structures should be sited to extend the linear shape, aligned parallel with the regular coastline. Expansion should give particular consideration to existing fishing activities and wild fish interests.  *SEPA CAR consent would be required for any increase in production. Developers would need to demonstrate that lice management can be adequately controlled within levels dictated by best practice guidance prescribed in the Code of Good Practice for Scottish Finfish Aquaculture and on-going monitoring of wild fish health and survival.
<b>Expansion of Existing Finfish Site</b>	Gob a'Bharra	Up to 20% increase in cage surface area	Structures should be sited to extend the linear shape, aligned parallel with the regular coastline and avoid extending further south where it would encroach into a Local Coastal Character Area that is more sensitive to development. Expansion should give particular consideration to effects on navigation, existing fishing activities and wild fish interests.

			<i>see above *</i>
<b>Scallop Farm</b>	Eilean Ardgadden to Port Leathan	Small	Structures should be located away from northern half of Kilfinan Bay, and should avoid adding visual clutter with the existing fish farm site.  Particular consideration should be given to effects on navigation and existing fishing activities.
<b>Change of Use from Salmon to Mussel, Scallop or other Finfish</b>	Ardgadden or Gob a'Bharra salmon farms	Current surface & seabed area of existing salmon farm	For shellfish development, a larger surface area may be acceptable on landscape grounds, if it can be shown that the visual impacts are no greater than the existing salmon farm.  Any increase in surface area would need to give consideration to effects on navigation and commercial fishing grounds.
<b>Change of Use from Scallop to Mussel</b>	Black Harbour	Current surface & seabed area of existing scallop farms	For mussel line development, which is more visually intrusive than scallop lines, a smaller surface area may be necessary to avoid visual impacts.  Mussel lines should be aligned parallel to the coast.

#### Future relinquishment of existing developments

If either or both of the existing salmon farms were relinquished in the future, new finfish, mussel or scallop development may be appropriate in this policy zone. If the existing scallop farm was relinquished in the future, a new mussel farm development may be appropriate at the same location.

## CONSULTATION FOR AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENTS

As part of the development process, potential developers (during pre-application development scoping) and Argyll and Bute Council Planning Officers (during assessment of applications) are encouraged to consult with the following individuals and organisations in addition to the normal statutory consultees (see Appendix VI). Contact details for statutory and non-statutory consultees are provided in Appendix XI.

Consultees	Salmon Farm Expansion	New Scallop Farm	Change of Use (Salmon)	Change of Use (Scallop)
Clyde Area Management Group	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clyde Fishermen's Association	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clyde Inshore Fisheries Group	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kilfinan Community Council	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lighthouse Caledonia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loch Fyne Sea Farms	✓	✓	✓	✓
Royal Yachting Association	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Creelers and Divers Association	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers	✓	✓		
Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network	✓	✓		