



Iona



Argyll and Bute Council
Development Services

LANGUAGE TRANSLATION GUIDE

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Cantonese

本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。

Gaelic

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh an sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan no riochd eile, no ma tha sibh a' feumachdainn seirbheis eadar, feuch gun leig sibh fios thugainn.

Hindi

यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

Mandarin

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Punjabi

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਚਿੱਠੀਪੱਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Urdu

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو براۓ مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

Polish

Jezeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymaO ten dokument w innym języku lub w innym formacie albo jeeli potrzebna jest pomoc Uumacza, to prosimy o kontakt z nami.

Angus J Gilmour
Planning Services, Kilmory PA31 8RT



Purpose

The objective of this study is to provide Argyll and Bute Council with a robust set of guidelines that clearly identify the opportunities and constraints, in landscape terms, for future development on the Island of Iona.

The policy stance within Argyll and Bute Local Plan is positive towards many small scale development types, and in particular positive towards small scale housing development (subject to design, siting, development pattern etc).

Much of Argyll and Bute is covered by National Scenic Areas (NSA) and Areas of Panoramic Quality (APQ - former Regional Scenic Area) designations, which are detailed within the Local Plan. Iona is covered, entirely, by an APQ. Development within these designated areas often raises potential conflict and the Council has taken the view that this potential conflict should be addressed through the production of landscape capacity studies (such as this) that look closely at how new development could be assimilated into such valued landscapes.

This Landscape Capacity Study has been carried out by appropriately qualified consultants and the document is consistent with all current national and local planning policy and will help support, and be consistent with, the Corporate Strategy and the Development Plan for Argyll and Bute (i.e. both Structure and Local Plan) in meeting their aims of strengthening the economy, creating sustainable and vibrant communities in the area, and protecting and enhancing the environment.

Methodology

To ensure a consistent and robust approach to the collation and presentation of the study, the methodology of assessing and recording the landscape qualities, sensitivities and capacity to accommodate development has been based upon the accepted industry standards for landscape character assessment and has been prepared with reference to the following documents:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, 2nd Edition 2002;
- SNH Landscape Character Assessment (Guidance for England and Scotland), 2002;
- PAN 44: Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape

The GLVIA relies on an appreciation of the existing landscape, its sensitivity to change, a thorough understanding of the development proposals and the magnitude of change that would result from these changes.

The SNH Landscape Character Assessment documents set out the principles and processes of describing the character and characteristics of the landscape and the elements and features that make up the landscape.

Methodology and Landscape Character

PAN 44 offers suggestions to help planners, developers and local communities achieve residential developments which are in harmony with their landscape setting.

Assessment

The format for the assessment has involved the following:

- Review of the SNH landscape types as defined in the Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Character Assessment (Scottish Natural Heritage Review No. 78, Environmental Resources Management 1996);
- Site appraisal identifying key landscape features, characteristics and views to and from Iona;
- Defining the opportunities and constraints to development and providing recommendations for specific locations for development; and
- Identifying locations where development would not be advisable due to potential adverse effects on the landscape quality, character, setting, and/or views due to inappropriate scale of development, visual prominence, additional development resulting in over development or insertion of development in currently undeveloped areas.

The assessment of capacity to absorb development has concentrated on those areas out with the established settlement boundaries, on Iona, taking into account topography, natural vegetation and landscape character.

Findings

The assessment results will report on the ability of the various areas on Iona and their ability, or otherwise, to absorb development.

The report should be used as part of a series of tools to guide Argyll and Bute Council, in considering specific applications and in conjunction with the recommended guidelines will allow the Council to determine whether it would be appropriate to consider new development and prioritise locations for new development.

On Iona, the issue of perceived development coalescence is particularly important - the general recommendation would be that new development is not advisable where:

- none currently exists;
- it would extend development unnecessarily along the shoreline;
- clusters would potentially link together visually to appear as one or more larger groups.

Iona

Iona is a small island in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland, renowned for its tranquility and natural beauty. Its modern Gaelic name means "Iona of Saint Columba".

The island lies approximately 1.6km (1 mile) from the southwest coast of Mull and is 1.6km wide (1 mile) and 5.6 km (3.5 miles) long with a resident population of 125.

The main settlement, located at St. Ronan's Bay on the eastern side of the island, is called Baile Mòr and is also known locally as "The Village", with the Abbey just a short distance to the north.

Iona is a relatively flat, open and exposed island with an undulating and uneven landform and an indented, rocky coastline with small sandy bays. There are numerous offshore islets and skerries of which Eilean Annraidh (Island of Storm) and Eilean Chalbha (Calf Island) to the north, Rèidh Eilean and Stac MhicMhurchaidh to the west and Eilean Mùsimul (Mouse Molm Island) and Soa Island to the south are amongst the largest.

Iona Abbey is of particular historical and religious interest to pilgrims and visitors alike. It is the most elaborate and best-preserved ecclesiastical building surviving from the Middle Ages in the Western Isles of Scotland. Though modest in scale in comparison to medieval abbeys elsewhere in Western Europe, it has a wealth of fine architectural detail, and monuments of many periods. In front of the Abbey stands the 9th century St Martin's Cross, one of the best-preserved Celtic crosses in the British Isles, and a replica of the 8th century St John's Cross (original fragments in the Abbey museum).

Landscape Characteristics

The Argyll and the Firth of Clyde Landscape Character Assessment document provides a description of the specific characteristics and sensitivities relevant to each landscape type and outlines detailed aims, guidance notes and suggestions on how to conserve or enhance the landscape through appropriate sensitive land use, management or development.

Iona is represented by just one Landscape Character Type (LCT):

- Marginal Farmland Mosaic (LCT 16)

Marginal Farmland Mosaic LCT

The key characteristics of this landscape character type, relevant to the study, are:

- Undulating, uneven landform with rock outcrops on the lower margins of upland moorland;
- Indented rocky coastline with some small, sandy bays;
- Diverse patchy mix of moorland, grassland, peaty marsh and woodland;
- Typically geometric fields, divided by broken stone walls on upper slopes and wire fences;
- Conifer plantations and deciduous woodland associated with larger farms and estates on sheltered valley slopes;

- Many scattered small settlements and isolated farms and cottages;
- Archaeological sites.

The main landscape issues that need to be considered, with regards to the proposed type of development, within this landscape type are:

- Historic features such as stone walls and traditional farmsteads should be conserved;
- Built development should be in scale with the landscape;
- Development should be associated with any available small stands of native woodland in order to integrate it into the wider landscape. However, ornamental trees and shrub species are inappropriate on Iona;
- Development should be closely linked to the existing historic pattern of stone walls to help to 'anchor' the buildings within the landscape;
- Take up opportunities for sensitive restoration and conservation of derelict cottages and farm buildings;
- Relatively small and clusters of houses sited in sheltered locations and at an angle to roads should be considered in preference to large scale homogenous development.

Iona Assessment

The assessment has focused on the area identified by Argyll and Bute Council as 'Countryside around Settlement' and areas of 'Sensitive Countryside' (as defined by the Local Plan) beyond that, which from a landscape capacity point of view could accommodate additional development.

The area that is already defined by the settlement boundary was presumed to be generally acceptable for additional development. However, suggestions for this area, with the aim of ensuring that key views are not obscured and rigid, linear development does not occur have been included on the accompanying plans.

The existing settlement on Iona is principally located along its eastern shores, on relatively level and gentle slopes, back-dropped by undulating, uneven landform with rock outcrops, that characterises the majority of the island. The main settlement, at St. Ronan's Bay, is the most densely developed, with the settlement extending south in small clusters and extending north, past the Abbey in a significantly more loose and disparate arrangement. The settlement also extends west through a natural break between two major rock outcrops.

From Fionnphort, and especially at the ferry jetty, the settlement pattern along the east of Iona is particularly visible. However, the properties that extend westward are hardly perceived due to existing foreground development or the rising nature of the topography.

Future development, on Iona, will be determined to a large extent by the

Methodology and Landscape Character

prevailing landform, road access, the setting of the Abbey and key views to the neighbouring Treshnish Isles. The existing road network is located on the only relatively level areas free from rock outcrops. It would be physically, visually, environmentally and ecologically inappropriate to consider extending the principal road network further.

The abbey is located to the north of 'The Village' surrounded on three sides by simple, open fields of rough pasture for grazing sheep. To the west is the road and the landform rises immediately and steeply behind the road. Panoramic views back to Mull are afforded from all along the east coast of Iona, with both framed and panoramic views of the Treshnish Isles from the north end of the island, once past Dun I.

As such, new development would need to recognise the constraints surrounding the road network, views and setting of the Abbey, suggesting that the most appropriate locations for development are to the south of St Ronan's Bay and along the road, west through the centre of the island. Many issues regarding appropriate development have been identified from the guidelines within the SNH Landscape Character Assessment and are set out above, but additional, site specific, recommendations are as follows:

Southern Orange Areas

- The limit of development west should be the edge of the golf course to preserve coastal views;
- Preferably built elements of development should be close to the road edge (but with some variation in the set back) and irregular in orientation, where it passes through the centre of the island. This is particularly applicable on the south side of this road to ensure development follows the existing pattern and does not extend unnecessarily into the wider landscape;
- Development could be tucked successfully against the landform on the northern side of the road through the centre of the island, rather than next to the road edge to avoid a dense linear settlement developing on both sides of the road;
- The view that opens out, to the west, from the crest of the central road should not be obscured;
- Key views over and between existing properties on the east coast should be preserved by staggering properties, varying orientation and varying the set back from the road.
- Development could be considered to the rear of the Fire Station – visually there would be little, if any, implications on the views from Mull. However, the setting of the Nunnery would need to be taken into account.

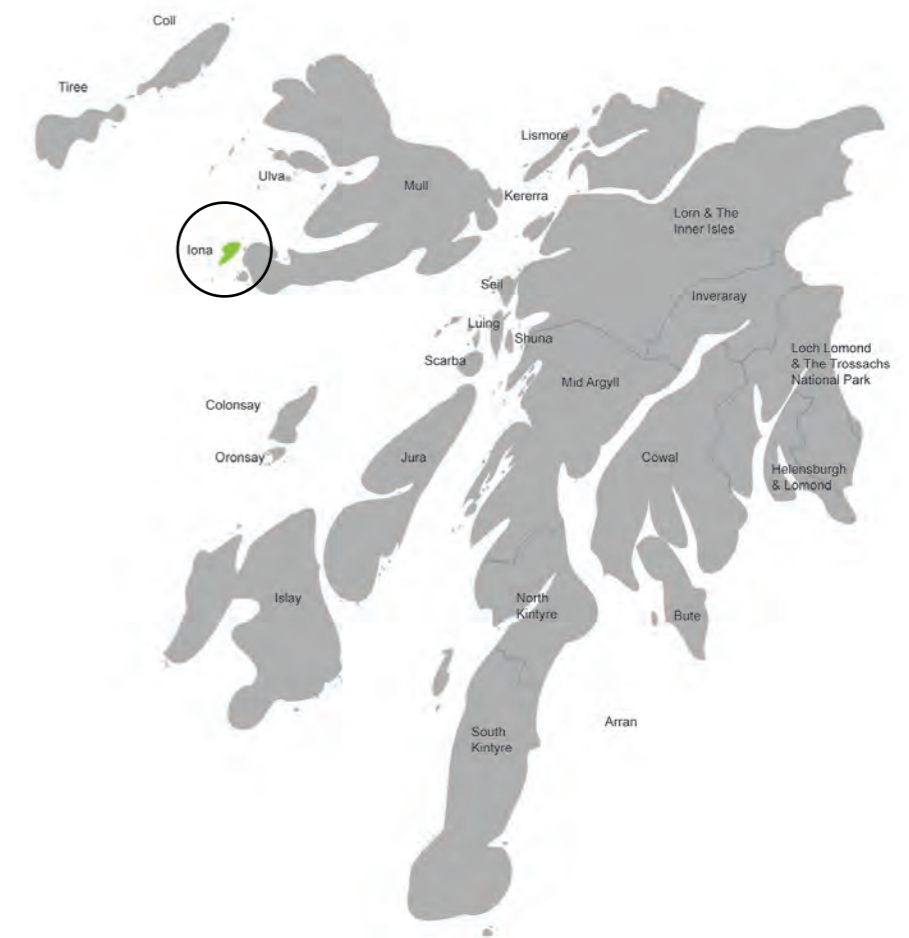
Northern Orange Area

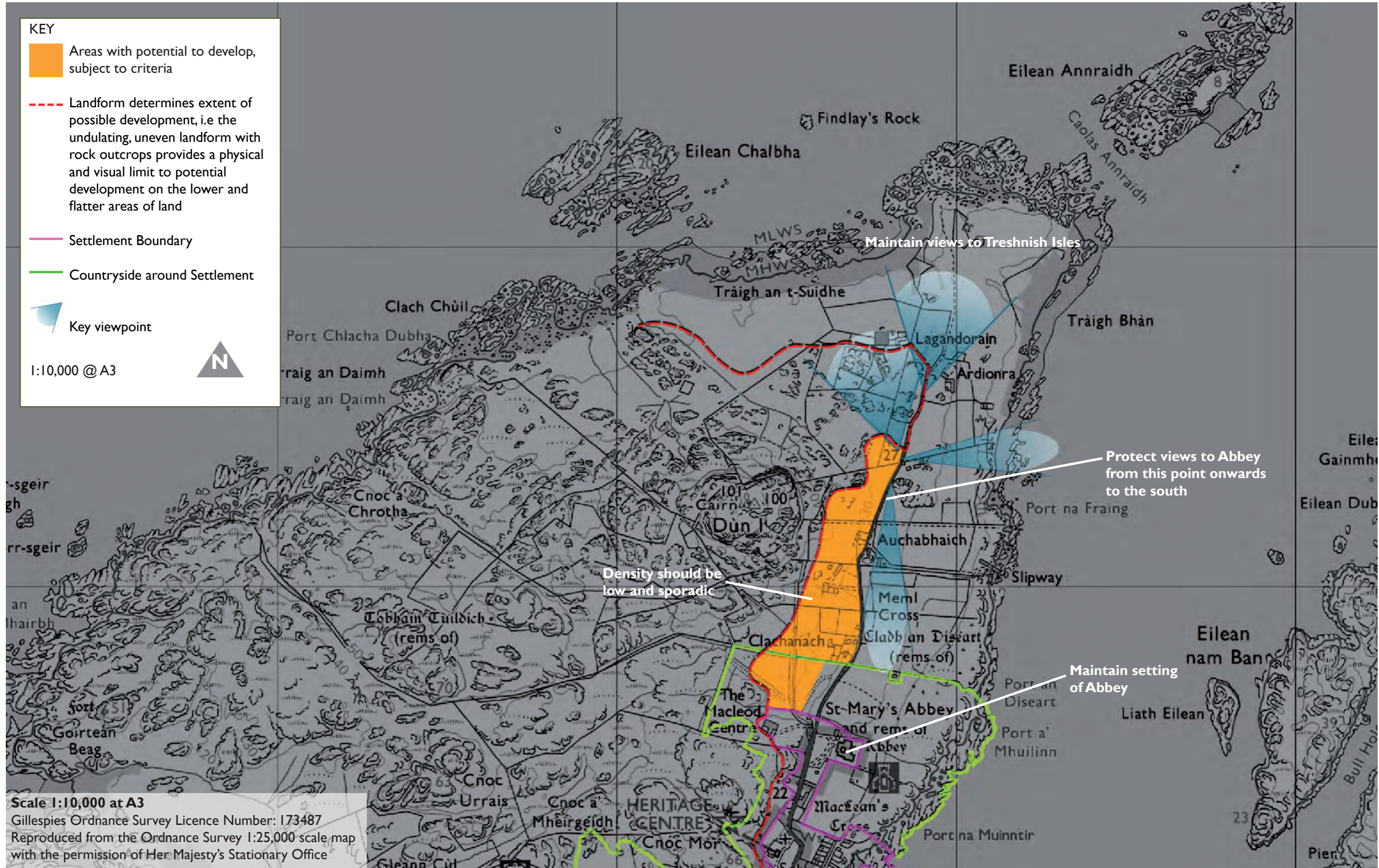
Some development could be accommodated, to the north of the Abbey, but density, scale and siting would need to be significantly more carefully considered to ensure that:

- Key views along and from the road are maintained;

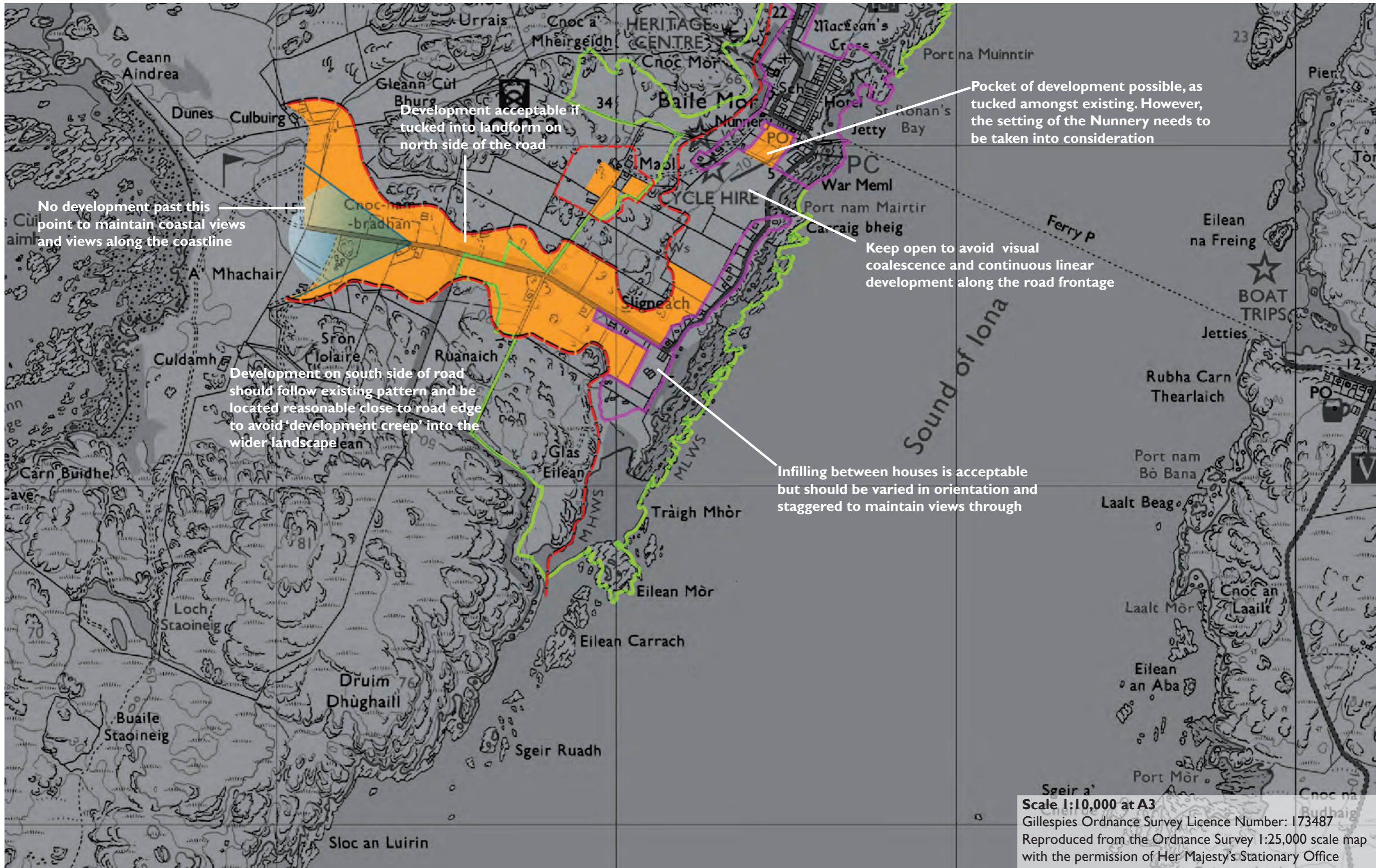
- The setting of the Abbey is maintained and uninterrupted views to the Abbey are preserved;
- The current sporadic arrangement of development, primarily set back from the road, should be maintained (to avoid the creation of a dense linear development extending virtually along the whole of the east coast of the island);
- The landform and character of the landscape, to the west of the road, has a greater capacity (relative to the east side of the road) to accommodate development as the landform can be utilised to act as a backdrop / 'anchor' development into the landscape;
- Development to the east of the road is visually and physically, significantly more intrusive due to the more open, gently contoured fields sloping down to the Sound of Iona.

The accompanying plans identify both the constraints to future development and the areas that could accommodate additional development.

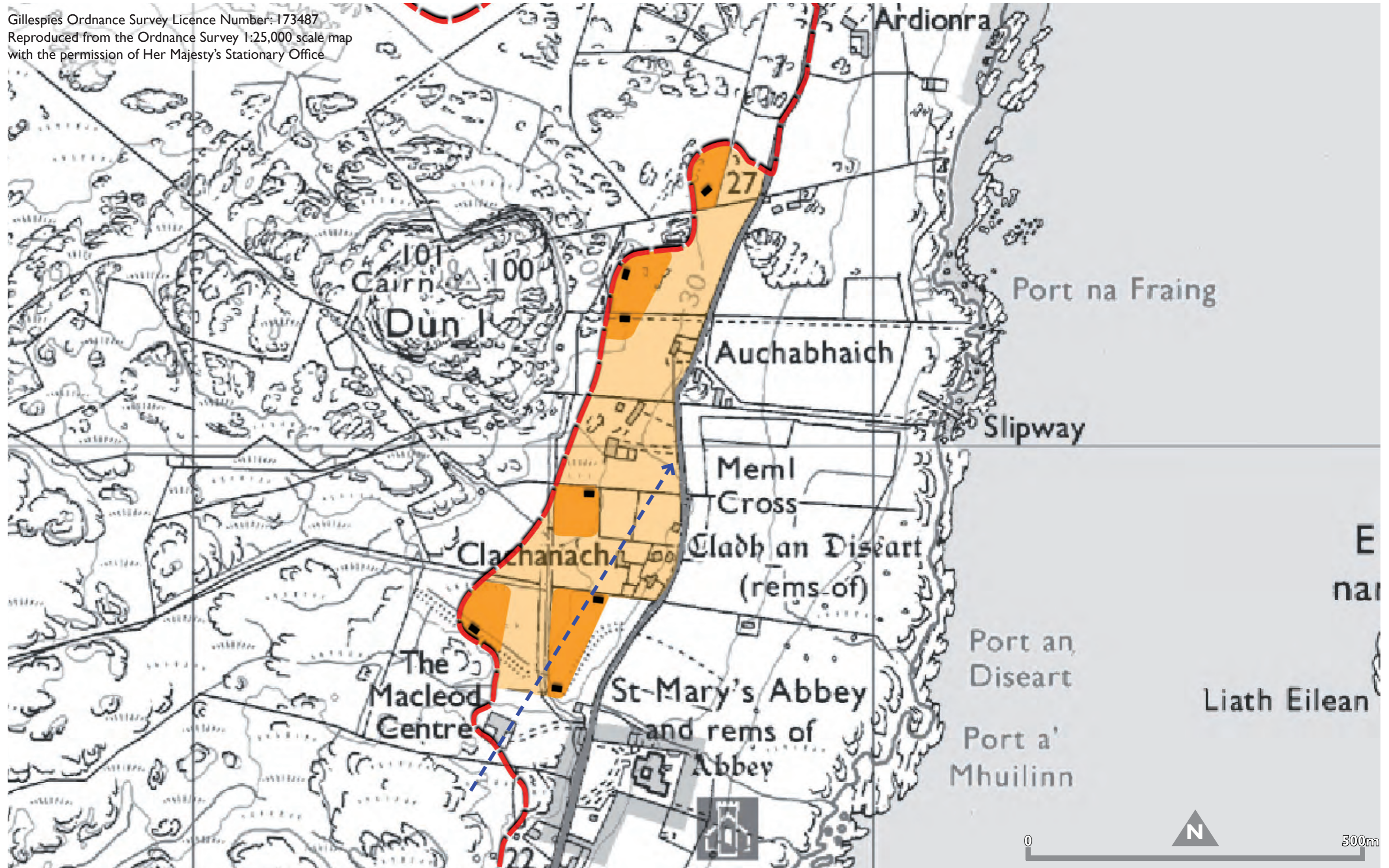




Iona - Development Areas





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Iona - Development Areas (Detail)

KEY

 Potential future development location subject to criteria

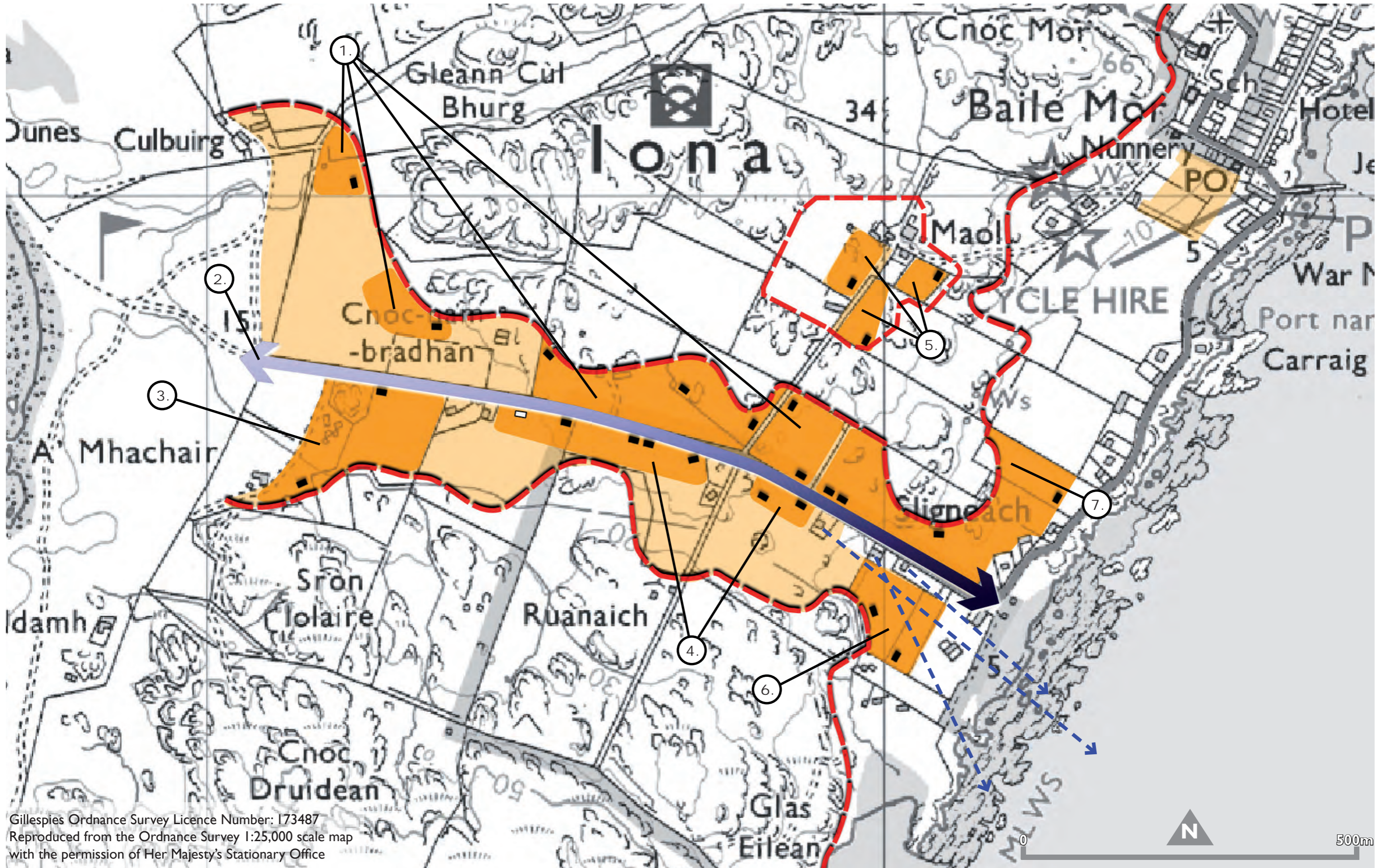
 Landform determines extent of possible development, i.e the undulating, uneven landform with rock outcrops provides a physical and visual limit to potential development on the lower and flatter areas of land

 Key views

Development within this area should be low density, scattered and set back from the road (utilising where possible landform to act as a backdrop) to maintain the existing 'lighter' settled character of this part of the island contrasting with the more intensely settled areas around St Ronan's / 'The Village'.

NOTE:


The layout indicated for a potential future development pattern is just one possible option based on the recommendations for new development in this area. Whilst it is just one possible arrangement the recommendations would be to not exceed seven new small scale settlements.





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Iona - Development Areas (Detail)

KEY

 Potential future development location subject to criteria

 Existing new development

 Landform determines extent of possible development, i.e the undulating, uneven landform with rock outcrops provides a physical and visual limit to potential development on the lower and flatter areas of land

 Key views

1. Development on north side of road, ideally should be more scattered and set back from the road (utilising landform as a backdrop where possible) to avoid the likely risk of a visually dense settlement if combined with development on the south side of the road.
2. Development density should ideally reduce as it extends west
3. Development here should use landform to 'anchor' into landscape
4. Development here should follow existing arrangement i.e built elements close to road to avoid development 'creep' into the wider area. Orientation should be varied to reduce visual impact of linear settlement (street) pattern.
5. Opportunities to consider 1 or 2 small scale developments with landform as backdrop.
6. Development here should aim to use landform to 'anchor' into landscape and also aim to maintain views from adjacent properties
7. A denser settlement pattern here could be achieved to create a cluster arrangement as landform, road junction and existing settlement would work together for an appropriate grouping.

NOTE:

The layout indicated for future development pattern is just one possible option based on the recommendations for new development in this area. Whilst it is just one possible arrangement the recommendations would be to not exceed the number of units indicated to avoid over development.



Iona - View from the ferry to St Ronan's Bay



Iona - View looking south (near Port nam Mairtir)



Iona - View looking north (near Sligneach)



Iona - View looking west along road through centre of island (near Sligneach)



Iona - View looking back towards St Ronan's Bay from Maol

Site Photos



Iona - View looking towards southern end of settlement from Maol



Iona - View looking south towards St Ronan's Bay - Abbey on the left



Iona - View of Iona Abbey - setting must continue to be respected



Iona - View looking northeast (by Auchabhaich)



Iona - Uninterrupted views of Mull and Treshnish Isles from northern end of Iona



Iona - View looking south - Abbey and outskirts of St Ronan's Bay in the distance



Iona

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