

## Gometra Fish Farm Landscape/Seascape & Visual Assessment Addendum

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A landscape and visual assessment was submitted by the Scottish Salmon Company to support an application under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 for a proposed 16 cage fish farm with associated feed barge, at North Gometra in Loch Tuath on the Isle of Mull, Argyll and Bute, on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (validated 22 May 2012).
- 1.2 This addendum is to be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Report, Revision 1 - August 2012 (hereby called the LVIA Report in this Addendum), which was prepared by The Scottish Salmon Company and submitted to Argyll and Bute Council in support of the development.
- 1.3 The original assessment presents a baseline description of landscape designations, landscape character and visual amenity and assesses the potential impact as a result of the introduction of the proposed fish farm in the landscape. The assessment concluded that the proposed development represents a slight impact to the landscape and visual receptors identified within a 5km study area.
- 1.4 Following submission of the planning application, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) raised a number of concerns in their statutory consultee response in relation to potential impacts on Landscape Character & Visual Amenity as set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: SNH Statutory Consultee Response**

<b>SNH Statutory Response</b>	<b>Action</b>
Insufficient information to determine whether the proposal will have adverse impact on the integrity of the Loch na Keal National Scenic Area (NSA) or the qualities it has been designated for.	Revision to the LVIA Report by The Scottish Salmon Company and LVIA Addendum by ASH design+assessment Ltd.
Concerned about the very large scale of the aquaculture development, structures and associated activities.	Addressed under paragraph 3 of Cumulative Effects in LVIA Report.
Had concerns that the conclusions of the LVIA underestimated the value and significance of the landscape character affected and the potential impact on where the proposed development will be viewed from.	A detailed assessment of potential impacts upon landscape and visual has been undertaken, and is presented in this Addendum.
Highlighted concerns in relation to the impact on an area described in the Argyll and Bute Local Plan 2009 as being 'very sensitive countryside' of which constitutes 'isolated coast'.	Concerns have been addressed in the Local Landscape Character Assessment in this Addendum.
Believe changes of view as a result of the proposed development would have a significant impact upon the integrity of the NSA and its qualities.	Concerns have been addressed in the Visual Impact Assessment presented in this Addendum.
Applicant omitted to undertake a number of significant and key assessments to	A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken by

inform decision making process.	ASH design+assessment Ltd.
<b>SNH Statutory Response</b>	<b>Action</b>
Require a detailed impact assessment upon local coastal landscape character or seascapes for which the area is designated as being nationally important.	As previous.
Consideration of cumulative and sequential cumulative landscape impacts have not been considered as requested at Scoping.	Addressed under Cumulative Effects in LVIA Report.
LVIA does not provide assessment of impacts on wild land experience, considers that proposed development will have a noticeable adverse impact on perceived qualities of remoteness and impact of large structures in an otherwise undeveloped area.	Addressed in LVIA Report, Section 5, Wild Land and in this Addendum.

- 1.5 This addendum sets out the specific issues and concerns highlighted in Table 1 of Scottish Natural Heritage and provides a response to the stated matter.
- 1.6 The addendum evaluates the effects of the proposed fish farm on the Landscape/Seascape and Visual resource. It describes and evaluates the change to the landscape and visual amenity during installation and once in operation, and the extent to which these affect perception and views of the landscape and seascape.
- 1.7 The assessment has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects ASH design+assessment Ltd in August 2012. A site appraisal of the existing landscape/seascape character and identification of local landscape zones was undertaken in late August 2012. Site recording involved the completion of standardised recording forms and annotation of 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey plans.
- 1.8 The assessment has been undertaken from the nearest public road, footpath or open accessible space. Not all of the footpaths or tracks in the study area have been walked or visited, due to time restrictions. Assumptions have been made about the extent and degree of importance of views relative to routes as a whole, based on assessment of sample routes/locations. Survey work was undertaken from both land and boat to inform the results of the assessment.
- 1.9 The subjects of landscape character and visual amenity, although closely related to one another, have been considered separately in this chapter for reasons of clarity and robustness. Related subjects such as ecology and cultural heritage are addressed elsewhere within the supporting documentation and therefore, consideration of these subjects in this addendum has been limited to the extent to which they influence the landscape/seascape character and visual amenity of the proposed development site and the wider area.
- 1.10 The term 'seascape' refers to the physical and visual combination of land and sea which contribute to the maritime, coast and hinterland character. The coastline forms

an integral part of the seascape and influence how people perceive the marine environment. A definition of seascape is 'the visual and physical conjunction of land and sea which combines maritime, coast and hinterland character' (Alison Grant, SNH 2008). The Department of Trade and Industry Guidance has noted that every seascape comprises of three compartments as follows:

- The seaward = an area of sea;
- The coastline = a length of coastline; and
- The landward = an area of land.

1.11 This approach has been applied to in this Addendum where seascape refers to an offshore area of sea and its relationship it has to the adjacent landscape. The process of assessing seascapes and coastal landscapes is essentially the same as that of landscape character and therefore the landscape and visual methodology set out in this Addendum follows the accepted landscape character methodology.

1.12 The assessment is structured as follows:

- 1. Introduction;
- 2. Scope of Assessment;
- 3. Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment Methodology;
- 4. Baseline Conditions;
- 5. Mitigation Measures;
- 6. Assessment of Environmental Effects;
- 7. Summary of Impacts to Local Character Zones & Designations;
- 8. Visual Impact Assessment;
- 9. Visual Method of Assessment;
- 10. Establishment of Visual Baseline;
- 11. Visual Receptors;
- 12. Assessment of Environmental Effects;
- 13. Visual Summary & Conclusions; and
- 14. Statement of Significance.

1.13 The assessment is supported by the following figures::

- Figure 1: Location Plan;
- Figure 2: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV);
- Figure 3: Landscape Designations with ZTV Overlay;
- Figure 4: SNH Landscape Character Types with ZTV Overlay;
- Figure 5: Local Character Zones with ZTV Overlay; and
- Figure 6: Visual Receptors with ZTV Overlay.

## **2. Scope of Assessment**

2.1 The aim of the Landscape/Seascape and Visual Impact Assessment (LSVIA) is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects resulting from the proposed development.

2.2 In light of the statutory consultee response provided by SNH the following potential issues have been assessed:

- The direct/indirect impact of the proposed fish farm, associated structures and access by sea on the baseline landscape/seascape of the site and its immediate environs; and
- The direct/indirect effects upon the landscape designations, character and visual amenity of the wider area arising from the introduction of potentially visible structures into the area.

2.3 The original landscape and visual study area undertaken by The Scottish Salmon Company extended to 5km from the centre of the proposed development. This addendum has widened the area assessed to include the entire coastline of Loch Tuath and its immediate hinterland. Using the same area for both the landscape/seascape and visual assessments allows for the evaluation of the relationship between the proposed development and the wider landscape/seascape and visual resources of the area in terms of potential impacts upon the landscape/seascape and visual amenity.

#### **Effects scoped Out of Assessment**

2.4 Effects arising from the process of decommissioning have been scoped out since they are of a similar nature to installation issues, but of a smaller scale and shorter duration. Where the assessment refers to installation effects these are also considered representative of predicted decommissioning effects.

#### **Policy and Legislation**

2.5 The assessment has taken account of international, national, regional and local statutory designations, regulations, strategies, national planning policies and the relevant policies from the statutory Development Plans for the area in which the Development is located. A review of planning policy has been undertaken and is presented in Section 2 of the LVIA Report.

### **3. Landscape/Seascape Assessment Methodology**

3.1 The following paragraphs set out the methods used to undertake the landscape/seascape in this Addendum.

3.2 The assessment describes the key components, features and characteristics that make up the various landscape/seascape types that form the coastline and hinterland of Loch Tuath. It refers to statutory designations and consultation responses relating to landscape value and sensitivity. It provides an evaluation of the implications of the proposed development in terms of direct/indirect impacts on key landscape components and features. It considers the extent to which loss of features and the introduction of the proposed development would influence perception of the landscape/seascape types and wider character of Loch Tuath.

3.3 The character of the landscape/seascape within the study area relates to the natural processes and human activities that have worked over long periods to shape the land/sea into its present condition. Many of the aspects which contribute to landscape character/seascape (e.g. cultural heritage, land use and ecology etc.), are addressed elsewhere in the planning application. Their contribution to and influence

on character has, however, been addressed within this assessment. The assessment of visual effects is presented in Section 8 and includes a Zone of Theoretical Visibility plan (ZTV) (See Figure 2) which has assisted in the assessment of landscape designations and landscape character.

### **Potential Impacts**

3.4 There are a number of ways in which development of the type proposed might impact on the existing landscape:

- The scale and form of development can prove inappropriate and intrusive in the context of the existing landform/seascape, and overall character;
- Development can involve the loss or fragmentation of important and distinctive landscape/seascape components, landscape pattern and built form;
- Development can introduce activity, features and forms out of keeping with established cultural or historic landscapes/seascapes;

3.5 In the context of the proposed fish farm, key concerns relate to:

- The introduction of 16 cages at 100m circumference (32m diameter) circular plastic cages arranged in one group in a rectangular shape, orientated east to west parallel with the coastline. The cages will be covered by bird netting supported by a 'hamster wheel' structure at 2m high; and;
- The introduction of a 220 tonne feed barge positioned between the two sets of cages which will sit 4m above the water when loaded; and
- The introduction of additional activity upon the seascape in terms of temporary activity related to installation works and on-going operational works.

### **Method of Assessment**

#### Assessment Guidelines

3.6 The assessment has been prepared with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2002.

3.7 The GLVIA guidelines acknowledge a relationship between the perception of landscape character and the experience of viewers (referred to as receptors – residents or people in their workplace, using recreational facilities, using the countryside et cetera).

3.8 The GLVIA relies on an appreciation of the existing landscape, its sensitivity to change, a thorough understanding of the development proposals, the magnitude of change that would result from the installation and operation of the proposals and the potential to mitigate impacts.

3.9 There are four key stages to the assessment:

- Recording and analysis of the character, quality, value and sensitivity to change of the existing landscape/seascape;
- An appreciation of the nature, form and features of the proposed development;
- An assessment of the magnitude of change likely to result from the development;
- Evaluation of the significance of the changes identified based on magnitude of change and sensitivity.

### **Establishment of the Baseline**

3.10 The following specific tasks have been undertaken:

- A review of the following documents:
  - Landscape assessment of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde, 1996 (Scottish Natural Heritage Review no.78);
  - An assessment of the sensitivity and capacity of the Scottish seascape in relation to offshore windfarms. SNH Commissioned Report 103, (2005);
  - Guidance on Landscape/Seascape Capacity for Aquaculture. Natural Heritage Management, SNH (2008);
  - Marine Aquaculture and the Landscape: The Siting and Design of Marine Aquaculture Developments in the Landscape ((SNH, 2001) and revised 2011);
  - SNH's Policy Statement No 02/03 'Wildness in Scotland's Countryside'.
- Analysis of existing and proposed land use data and policies from the Argyll and Bute Local Plan (2009);
- Review of data obtained from SNH digital datasets;
- Analysis of ZTV plans validated by targeted field survey;
- Site appraisal of Local Landscape Zones (LCZ) and the key landscape, ecological and cultural components determining them. Site recording involved annotation of 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey plans;
- Drafting and description of Local Character Zones, including analysis of their sensitivity to change;

### Change over Time

3.11 Landscape/seascape impacts change over time as the existing landscape external to the development evolves and the proposed development weathers. The

assessment acknowledges change and reports on the impacts during the installation phase (two months), and as the proposal moves into operation.

### **Landscape/Seascape Sensitivity to Change**

- 3.12 Sensitivity to change considers the nature of the landscape/seascape and its ability to accommodate development of the type proposed without compromising its key characteristics and components. Sensitivity to change is defined through appraisal of scenic quality, value and the capacity of the landscape/seascape to accommodate change.

#### Scenic Quality

- 3.13 An appraisal of scenic quality has been carried out based on a three point scale and evaluated against the following criteria:

- **High** – Landscape/seascape components combine to create a stimulating and distinctive composition which is aesthetically and scenically outstanding or which is an exceptional example in the area of a reasonably well cared for landscape/seascape;
- **Medium** – Landscape/seascape components combine to create a pleasing but unstimulating composition which is aesthetically and scenically unremarkable or which is an example in the area of a reasonably well cared for landscape/seascape but with some degraded or obtrusive areas or features; and
- **Low** – Landscape/seascape components combine to create a poor composition which is aesthetically and scenically conflicting or which is an example in the area of a poorly cared for landscape/seascape with frequent degraded or obtrusive areas or features.

- 3.14 This evaluation is only relevant to landscapes in a local context, it should be noted that areas of different landscape scenic quality do not necessarily correlate with different landscape character areas.

#### Landscape/Seascape Value

- 3.15 Landscape/seascape value is another determinant of sensitivity and is frequently addressed by reference to international, national, regional and local designations, determined by Statutory Authorities (landscape related designations in the vicinity of Loch Tuath are shown on Figure 3). However, absence of such a designation does not necessarily imply a lack of quality or value. Factors such as accessibility and local scarcity can render areas of nationally unremarkable quality, highly valuable as a local resource.

#### Landscape/Seascape Capacity

- 3.16 Landscape/seascape capacity relates to the degree of a particular type of development the landscape/seascape may be able to accommodate.

Landscape/seascape capacity is appraised through consideration of the baseline characteristics of the landscape/seascape, and in particular, the scale or complexity of a given landscape.

#### Criteria for the identification of sensitivity to change

3.17 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed has been evaluated with reference to the subject areas above and using a three-point scale as follows:

- **High Sensitivity:** A landscape/seascape of particularly distinctive character susceptible to relatively small changes of the type proposed;
- **Medium Sensitivity:** A reasonably valued landscape/seascape with a composition and characteristics tolerant of some degree of change of the type proposed; and;
- **Low Sensitivity:** A relatively unimportant landscape/seascape which is potentially tolerant of a large degree of change of the type proposed.

#### Appreciation of the Development

3.18 Appreciation of the proposed development involves the accumulation of a thorough knowledge of the proposal, its nature, scale and location within the baseline landscape, and any peripheral or ancillary features proposed.

#### Variation of Effects over Time

3.19 Landscape/seascape effects change over time as mitigation, weathering or landscape evolves. This assessment acknowledges change and reports on the effects during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

#### Assessment of Landscape/Seascape Effects

3.20 The aim of the landscape/seascape assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the proposed development. The assessment of predicted impacts involves:

- A review of the sensitivity to change of designated sites and landscape/seascape character in relation to changes proposed. This is arrived at by a review of landscape/seascape value and scenic quality;
- An evaluation of the predicted magnitude of change experienced by designated sites and landscape/seascape character types, resulting from the installation and operation of the proposed development; and
- Assessment of the degree and significance of the potential effect of the proposed development on the identified landscape/seascape character types and designated areas during installation and operational phases.

#### Magnitude of Change

3.21 Magnitude of Change concerns the degree to which the proposed development would either alter the existing characteristics of the landscape/seascape. The determination of magnitude of change has considered the potential for both direct



and indirect change. Direct change occurs where the proposed development would result in a physical change to the landscape/seascape, whilst indirect change may occur where the proposed development would become a feature in the landscape/seascape, but would be physically located in an adjacent landscape/seascape area. The ZTV is used as a tool to gauge the extent of potential indirect change, supported by targeted field surveys. For more information on the use of ZTV diagrams refer to Section 3.29 and 3.30.

3.22 Magnitude of Change has been assessed on a four point scale of high, medium, low or negligible. These criteria are described as follows:

- **High:** Noticeable change in the landscape/seascape characteristics over an extensive area ranging to a very intensive change over a more limited area;
- **Medium:** Perceptible change in landscape/seascape characteristics over an extensive area ranging to a noticeable change in a localised area;;
- **Low:** Virtually imperceptible change in landscape/seascape characteristics over an extended area or perceptible change in a localised area;
- **No Change:** No discernible change in any landscape/seascape characteristics or components.

3.23 Intervisibility as a medium of indirect change to landscape/seascape character has been considered in determining the magnitude of change. The potential extent of this visibility is assessed from the ZTV, or visual envelope (Figure 2).Photomontages from viewpoint receptors have been produced and are presented in the LVIA Report.

3.24 The prominence of the proposed development in the landscape/seascape would vary according to the weather conditions. The assessment has been carried out, as is best practice, by assuming the 'worst case' scenario i.e. on a clear, bright day in winter, when neither foreground deciduous foliage nor haze can interfere with the clarity of the view obtained.

#### Landscape Effects Criteria

3.25 Evaluation of the predicted level of impact has been carried out through analysis of the magnitude of change anticipated to be experienced by a designated site or landscape/seascape character type, in relation to the identified sensitivity to change of the type proposed and using a degree of professional judgement. The assessment takes into account direct impacts upon existing landscape/seascape elements, features and key characteristics and assesses whether these would be lost or their relationships modified, in the context of their importance in determining the existing sensitivity of the character area in question. It also takes into account indirect effects on the wider landscape/seascape context.

3.26 The findings are represented using a descriptive scale, an explanation of which is provided below.

- **Substantial Adverse (or Beneficial)** – very noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;
- **Moderate Adverse (or Beneficial)** – noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;
- **Slight Adverse (or Beneficial)** – perceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;
- **Negligible** – virtually imperceptible deterioration /improvement in the existing landscape; and
- **No Change** – no deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape/seascape.

3.27 For the purposes of this assessment, impacts of moderate and above are considered to be significant.

3.28 The predicted impacts have been considered in light of primary mitigation measures associated with site planning, culminated in a statement of predicted effects and their overall significance to the landscape resource of the study area.

#### Establishing the Zone of Theoretical Visibility

3.29 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) defines the effective boundaries within which views of the proposed development could potentially be obtained. ZTV's have been prepared using specialist computer software, Resoft Windfarm (Version 4). This produces an analysis of a computer-based model that uses landform as the key determinant of availability or construction of view. The landform model is based on contours at 10m intervals derived from 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Land-Form Panorama tiles.

#### Limitations of the Assessment

3.30 It should be noted that the computer model used to create ZTV's does not take into account features such as trees or woodland, buildings and other structures or local landform, which can vary the ZTV locally and therefore the ZTV is not representative of visual impact in itself. Nevertheless, the ZTV is a valuable tool in assisting with the identification of areas of potential impact.

## **4. Baseline Conditions**

### Overview

4.1 The proposed fish farm is situated off the northern coastline of the island of Gometra in the outer reaches of Loch Tuath, approximately 9km west of the settlement of Ulva Ferry.

4.2 Loch Tuath, (the North Loch), forms a sea loch which cuts into the west coast of Mull and meets Loch na Keal between the narrow strait of water that separates Mull from the island of Ulva. The sea loch runs in an east to west direction in which Ulva and Gometra separate it from Loch na Keal to the south. The northern

coastline rises into terraced uplands with isolated flat-topped hills. These slopes and ridgelines help to create the northern backdrop of Loch Tuath. Settlement on the north side tends to be limited and found in the inner section of loch along the B8073 road. This road forms a single track coastal road which runs parallel and above the loch before heading inland at Burg towards Calgary Bay. Woodland is a common feature along the northern coastline, principally made up of native woodland species and helps to form a pleasing distinctive backdrop to the lower slopes. The coastline tends to be gently indented with a series of small bays including Traigh na Cille and Ballygowan Bay. The upland moorland area to the west of the B8073 road forms an important headland to the northern coastline and includes the hills of Cruachen, Treshnish, Beinn Reudle, Beinn Duill and Ard Dubh Bhurg.

- 4.3 At the mouth of Loch Tuath lies the Treshnish Isles which form an important focal point to views experienced westwards down the sea loch, in particular, the island of Lunga and Fladda are prominent landmarks.
- 4.4 The southern coastline of Loch Tuath consists of the two islands, namely Gometra and Ulva. The island of Gometra is characterised by swathes of elevated, open and uninhabited moorland with rocky outcrops. On the lower slopes rough pasture can be found around Gometra House and the south-eastern area of the island. Land use is predominantly utilised for sheep grazing with some wild deer also roaming around the island. This results in very little woodland found on the island with the exception of a small area of broadleaves to the north-west of Bail a' Chaidh Burial Ground. Some field boundaries do occur on the island including a number of old stone boundary walls and post and wire fences, although these do not form prominent features. Settlement is very limited with the 18th Century Gometra House located on the south side of the island and adjacent cottages, outbuildings, forming the main man-made elements on the island. The coastline of the island is predominantly rocky with a number of small inlets and larger sheltered bays which include two anchorages at Acairseid Mhor in the north-west and Bail a' Chlaidh on the south western shore between Gometra and Ulva. A larger bay and rocky shoreline can also be found on the northern coastline at Sailean Mor. The island of Gometra is separated from Ulva by a very narrow channel of water linked by a narrow drawbridge or beach at low tide.
- 4.5 The island of Ulva is orientated east to west and separated from Mull by a narrow strait of water called Caolas Ulbha. The island predominantly consists of upland moorland which is undulating, open and exposed with rocky outcrops. Dominating the island are two peaks found on the western side of the island, Beinn Eolasary and Beinn Chreagach which forms the highest peak at 313m. Land cover predominantly comprises of upland moorland species such as ling heather, grasses and bracken can be found in abundance on the lower slopes. In the east of the island and partly along the north-east coastline, areas of mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland can be found where it is more sheltered. The coastlines

on both sides of the island differ, in the south the coastline is more indented with a series of small islands and islets. The northern coastline is more regular with small inlets and two horseshoe bays at Lon Bhearnuis and Port Bata na Luinge. Settlement is limited with some properties, a church, farm and boathouse cafe scattered around the area of Ulva Ferry.

## **National Context**

### **Landscape Designations**

- 4.6 Landscapes can be ascribed an international, national, regional or local designation that recognises the importance of the landscape for its outstanding scenic interest or attractiveness. These designations include National Parks, National Scenic Areas, Special Landscape Areas and Gardens and Designed Landscapes. All areas so designated within the Loch Tuath area are shown on Figure 3 and described in the following paragraphs.

#### *Loch na Keal, Isle of Mull, National Scenic Area*

- 4.7 The proposed fish farm would fall within the Loch na Keal, Isle of Mull National Scenic Area (NSA). This NSA covers a major sea loch found on the Isle of Mull's Atlantic seaboard. The NSA comprises of 44,000 Ha covering the Ardmeanach peninsula, and the islands of Ulva and Gometra which divide the sea lochs of Loch na Keal and Loch Tuath. For a full description of the Special Qualities of the Loch na Keal NSA refer to Section 5 of the LVIA Report.

- 4.8 Scenic Quality for this NSA is considered to be High, due to the nine special qualities identified which distinguish it worthy of being distinguished as an NSA. The area is also valued for its remoteness, attractive rugged character, as evidenced by its inclusion as an NSA. The broad width of Loch Tuath and indented shoreline of Gometra would allow the NSA to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located and designed. However, there is potential for larger developments to be locally prominent along sections of the coastline and to detract from the existing character of the NSA, which lacks human influence.

- 4.9 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

#### Wild Land

- 4.10 SNH's Policy Statement No 02/03 'Wildness in Scotland's Countryside' recognises the concept of wild land / wildness as land that is sensitive to any form of development and provides psychological benefit to those seeking more challenging forms of outdoor recreation. SNH's policy statement notes that it is scarce in national terms and has declined in extent over the past few decades. Map 3 (within the policy statement document) 'Search areas for wild land' identified areas of search where it is considered most likely that wild land will be

present. The map indicates that, although the proposed development would not fall within any of these areas, there is the potential for more localised areas of wild character.

- 4.11 Recent mapping exercises carried out by SNH have attempted to identify relative areas of wildness to a greater degree of accuracy than previously existed. A preliminary 'Map of Relative Wildness' has now been produced with wildness indicated on a 25m square and coloured based on gradient from Low to High. The revision of SNH's policy and guidance relating to wild land is still in the early stages and the Map of Relative Wildness is still at a consultative phase, therefore, although the mapping has been given consideration in the identification of potential wild land, the assessment method has continued to follow the existing guidance.
- 4.12 The SNH document identifies wild land characteristics as follows:
- Perceived naturalness;
  - Lack of constructions or other artefacts;
  - Little evidence of contemporary land uses;
  - Rugged or otherwise challenging terrain;
  - Remoteness and inaccessibility; and
  - Extent of area (sufficient to engender a sense of remoteness);
- 4.13 As part of this assessment, the study area has been reviewed in light of SNH's criteria for identification of wild land status, taking into account the SNH Interim Guidance Note 'Assessing the Impacts of Wild Land' (February 2007). Reference has also been made to 'Assessing the Impacts of Wild Land' (February 2007).
- 4.14 As stated in the LVIA Report, the area assessed by The Scottish Salmon Company does not fall within any SNH Search Area for Wild Land. However, the LVIA Report does recognise that some areas on Gometra and Ulva do contain some of the characteristics of wild land listed above. Whilst the coastline is isolated and undeveloped, there are a number of elements which reduce or detract from the wildness of the area, in particular intervisibility experienced of the northern shoreline of Loch Tuath includes views of traditionally painted white properties which stand out against the muted tones of woodland and moorland. Users of the B8073 road can also be experienced from the islands as well as regular boat activity on Loch Tuath from fishing boats, yachts or boat tours. The hinterland of Gometra and Ulva also contain a number of man-made elements such as post and wire fences, access track, cables, discarded equipment and ruins of former settlements which all contribute to a reduced perception of wildness experienced.
- 4.15 It was therefore considered that the islands of Gometra and Ulva could not be classed as wild land and will not be assessed further in this report.

## **Regional / Local Context**

### Landscape Designations

#### *Area of Panoramic Quality*

- 4.16 Areas of Panoramic Quality have been identified by Argyll and Bute Council for their regional importance of physical landform as well as their flora and fauna that they support and environmental assets that they represent. Through Policy LP Env 10 – Development Impact on Areas of Panoramic Quality, the Council policy aims to provide protection against damaging development within these areas.
- 4.17 One of these areas is located to the north of Loch Tuath and covers an upland area adjacent to the Loch na Keal NSA and extends northwards to Calgary Bay and includes Carn Mor. This designation predominantly covers an area of upland moorland with an extensive area of native broadleaved woodland being found to the north and south of the Ensay Burn. The area is drained by a network of small watercourses and includes the lochans at Beinn an Lochain and various smaller lochans to the north of Carn Mor.
- 4.18 Scenic Quality for this regional designation is considered to be High, due to the distinctive undeveloped upland area that the designation covers. The area is also valued for its attractive rugged character and importance as a backdrop to Calgary Bay and Loch Tuath, as evidenced by its inclusion by Argyll and Bute Council as an Area of Panoramic Quality. The large-scale openness, undulating topography, woodland and distance from Loch Tuath would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.
- 4.19 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

### **Landscape Character Assessment**

- 4.20 Scottish Natural Heritage, in conjunction with partner Councils, has undertaken detailed review and classification of various landscape areas and types of Scotland. The area of the proposed development is covered by the Argyll and Bute Landscape Character Assessment (Scottish Natural Heritage Review no. 78, dated 1996).
- 4.21 Whilst Landscape Character Assessments can be carried out at a variety of scales, SNH usually identifies landscape character at two levels:
- Regional Landscape Character Areas: are those recognisable distinct landscape regions at broad scale, based on the general characteristics such as landform, geology, soils, land use, ecological associations, historical associations and urban and industrial activity; and
  - These Regional Landscape Character Types are further refined into Landscape Character Types. These are tracts of countryside, which have a unity of character due to particular combinations of landform, land cover

and a consistent and distinct pattern of constituent elements, which are reviewed in more detail than in the Regional Landscape Character Areas. Figure 4 shows those landscape character types found within the overall study area. These are also referred to in Section 5 of the LVIA Report.

#### SNH Landscape Character Types

- 4.22 The Argyll and Bute Landscape Character Assessment divide their particular areas into thirteen Landscape Character Areas and twenty-five Landscape Character Types (LCTs) respectively. They provide a description of the specific characteristics and sensitivities relevant to each landscape type and outline the key forces for change acting upon these characteristics, providing guidance related to the potential impact of the forces for change on the key landscape characteristics.
- 4.23 The proposed fish farm development would fall adjacent to two of these LCTs as follows:
- Basalt Lowlands LCT; and
  - High Steeped Basalt LCT.
- 4.24 A detailed description of the relevant LCTs from the above document is included in Section 5 of the LVIA Report.

#### **Local Character Zones**

- 4.25 The identification of regional LCTs and LCAs included within SNH Landscape Character Assessment documents, do not often relate well to the more local context and scale of the area. Set within the broad pattern of principal landscape types there are a number of more local character zones where combinations of landform, landcover, water bodies, watercourses and settlement, frame scenes of distinct form and sense. The area around Loch Tuath has been assessed in detail and a number of Local Character Zones (LCZs) have been identified which have a closer relationship to the local character of the study area. LCZs are identified on Figure 5.
- 4.26 The five LCZs identified within the study area are:
- Local Character Zone 1 – Rugged Coastal Hills;
  - Local Character Zone 2 – Coastal Moorland Edge;
  - Local Character Zone 3 – Rough Coastal Pasture;
  - Local Character Zone 4 – Settled Loch Shore; and
  - Local Character Zone 5 – Coastal Edge.

#### **Local Character Zone 1 – Rugged Coastal Hills**

- 4.27 This LCZ can be found in four distinct areas surrounding Loch Tuath, as follows; the first extending from the centre of the island of Gometra to the northern coastline; the second occupies the eastern area of Gometra; the third contains a

substantial part of central Ulva; and the fourth an extensive area to the north of Loch Tuath. These areas help to enclose Loch Tuath and provide an important distinctive elevated backdrop to the Loch.

Generally the LCZ consists of:

- Underlying Basalt with extensive elevated areas of undulating moorland rising up in steps to sometimes high, rounded hills;
- Coastline is indented with some small scale cliffs and rocky shoreline;
- Moorland vegetation, generally of a uniform covering of rough grass with heather and bracken abundant on the lower slopes, this is penetrated by boulders and patches of bare rock;
- Often wet with a peaty groundcover and occasional patches of bog, although in the more sheltered areas low growing native shrubs can be found;
- Little tree cover, with the exception of a broadleaved woodland found to the north and south of the Ensay Burn north-east of Treshnish;
- The moorland slopes are crossed by numerous brown, peaty streams of varying sizes, which form small torrents in periods of heavy rain. On steeper areas these may form small rocky gorges with small waterfalls rushing over bed-rock and boulders;
- Open and extensive, with panoramic views obtained from high ground and windswept hill tops which include extensive views of Loch Tuath and the Treshnish Isles; on lower slopes views tend to be reduced in extent due to hollows, gullies undulating topography; and
- The lack of habitation and obvious signs of human influence on the landscape gives it strong impressions of remoteness, although locally these impressions can be depleted by the numerous paths and tracks which criss-cross the landscape and recent deer fencing installed to keep deer away from new woodland in particular on Ulva and the north side of Loch Tuath.

4.28 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be High, due to its distinctive hills and upland areas which form a backdrop to Loch Tuath. The area is also valued for its attractive rugged and remote character, as evidenced by its inclusion by Argyll and Bute Council as an Area of Panoramic Quality to the north of Loch Tuath and all four areas identified falling within the Loch na Keal NSA. The large-scale openness, undulating topography, would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.29 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.



## **Local Character Zone 2 – Coastal Moorland Edge**

4.30 This LCZ is found in three locations around Loch Tuath; the first is on the west side of Gometra; the second comprises the coastline surrounding Ulva; and the third a section of coastline at Treshnish on the outer reaches of the north shore of the Loch.

The LCZ comprises:

- Moorland and rocky shoreline, with raised beaches, and on Ulva there are two horseshoe bays at Lon Bhearnuis, and Port Bata na Luinge
- A transitional area between the upland areas of LCZ 1 – Rugged Coastal Hills and the shoreline of Loch Tuath;
- Predominantly moorland, although the LCZ does contain areas of rough pasture and riparian woodland;
- Small narrow valleys are a common feature, where small watercourses drain into the loch;
- Vegetation cover is mainly heather and grasses and in some areas bracken is prolific;
- Settlement is limited with a croft house being found on Ulva and some cottages at Treshnish. Throughout the LCZ are the remains of former settlements and lazy beds which form a reminder of crofting settlements pre-clearances. In particular remains can be found on east Gometra, alongside the road on Ulva and at Glac Gugairdh and Crackaig at Treshnish on the north shore of Loch Tuath; and
- This LCZ is generally experienced from the road between Ulva ferry and Gometra, and various footpaths and animal trails found throughout the LCZ.

4.31 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be High, due to forming an important backdrop to Loch Tuath that is largely undeveloped. The area is also valued for its forming a transitional area between upland areas and loch shoreline, as evidenced all three areas identified falling within the Loch na Keal NSA. The large-scale openness, undulating topography, would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.32 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

## **Local Character Zone 3 – Rough Coastal Pasture**

4.33 This LCZ occurs in two areas on Gometra, forming a ribbon around LCZ 1.

This LCZ comprises:

- A patchwork of rough pasture, found on the better drained land on Gometra;

- Predominantly grazed by sheep and deer, and includes marshy fields alongside moorland vegetation and bracken;
- The topography is undulating with some rocky basalt outcrops;
- Views can be extensive, though frequently framed where the topography is more open, but are generally limited by the landform;
- Evidence of farming and a worked landscape throughout including discarded equipment and materials;
- Settlement is limited and confined to the southern part of the island, including Gometra House and some small cottages. Other signs of human habitation include an ancient burial ground at Bail A' Chaidh, and occasional ruins of former settlements;
- Two sheltered bays which provide moorings for boats, namely Acairseid Mhor in the north, and Tigha An Duine in the south lie adjacent to this LCZ.; and
- Generally experienced from the access track from the drawbridge to Gometra House or from various footpaths/animal tracks leading from the jetties and pier.

4.34 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be Medium, due to its coastal location on the outer limits of Loch Tuath although presence of some man-made elements does reduce its scenic value. The area is also valued as both areas identified fall within the Loch na Keal NSA. The undulating nature of its topography and influence from human intervention and grazing animals, would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.35 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **Medium**.

#### **Local Character Zone 4 – Settled Loch Shore**

4.36 This LCZ occurs in two areas on the shoreline of Loch Tuath: the first is around Ulva Ferry; the second extends from the head of Loch Tuath along the northern coastline to Burg. The two areas of the LCZ are separated by a 150m wide strait of water between Ulva and Mull.

Key characteristics of this LCZ include:

- Native woodland along the hill slopes towards the shoreline, with an area of coniferous plantation to the west of Ulva Ferry;
- Adjacent to the shoreline are small fields bounded by post and wire fencing, which predominantly enclose areas of rough pasture, and some areas grown for silage, generally these are rectangular in shape;
- A rocky coastline with raised beaches, and numerous small bays, notably Ballygown Bay;

- Numerous small watercourses drain from the hill slopes into the loch, and include the distinctive waterfall at Eas Fors which forms a focal point on the northern coastline;
- Generally elevated landform on the northern sections, whilst the section on Ulva is lower in elevation. The landform is undulating throughout;
- Views restricted by the landform and by the extent of woodland, with occasional open or framed views of the loch and outlying islands;
- Settlement is scarce and scattered: on Ulva it occurs predominantly in the vicinity of Ulva Ferry, whilst on the north shore settlement mainly occurs alongside the B8073 coastal road;
- Other notable man-made features include the remains of Dun na Gall Broch, a chapel and burial ground at Kilbrennan, and occasional ruins of former settlements; and
- This LCT is largely experienced from the coastal footpaths on Ulva and the B8073 road, and various parking places along this route.

4.37 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be High, due to its diverse range of characteristics and backdrop that it forms to Loch Tuath. The area is also valued as both areas identified fall within the Loch na Keal NSA. The wooded nature and variety of views experienced would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.38 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

#### **Local Character Zone 5 – Coastal Islands**

4.39 This LCZ is found throughout Loch Tuath, and comprises of some very small islands and islets, principally at the head of the loch at Ulva Ferry, and the larger group of islands at the mouth called the Treshnish Isles.

The key characteristics of this LCZ comprise:

- Low lying series of islands and islets, of which Fladda and Lunga are the most prominent. The western sides of the islands form cliffs battered by the Atlantic Ocean;
- Islands are limited in physical extent, and predominantly covered by moorland vegetation, though smaller islands and islets have little vegetative cover;
- Exposed to the Atlantic, which has physically shaped the characteristics, making the islands and islets craggy and indented in form;
- These islands are uninhabited islands, but there is evidence of past settlement, such as fisherman's cottages; and
- This LCZ is a distinctive feature at the mouth and head of Loch Tuath which gives a perception of isolation in views from the adjacent LCZs. This LCZ is predominantly experienced by boat users and from the aforementioned LCZ's.

4.40 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be High, due to its coastal location and focal point in views that the islands form in the sea loch. The area is also valued as all islands identified in Loch Tuath fall within the Loch na Keal NSA. The craggy shoreline and presence of a number of islets would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.41 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

#### **Loch Tuath Seascape Zone**

4.42 Loch Tuath forms a sea loch separated from the larger Loch na Keal to the south by the islands of Gometra and Ulva. The main characteristics of the loch are:

- Broad loch orientated in an east to west direction and largely contained by the surrounding coastal hills;
- Inner section of the loch tends to be fairly sheltered with calm waters, as the loch heads west the sea becomes a bit choppy, past Rubh 'an t-Suibhein on the north coastline and Eilean Dioghluim off Gometra, the exposed nature creates large waves which can be experienced breaking over underlying rocks and along the rocky shoreline;
- From the majority of the loch a strong perception of the sea is maintained through distant views westwards towards the Treshnish Isles and between Gometra and Ulva towards the mouth of Loch na Keal;
- Views of the loch from land are generally experienced from above due to the elevated nature of the landscape with the exception of the head of the loch which is at a lower level;
- The coastline is indented with a series of bays at various scales and prominent headlands which often restrict longer views and help create complex views from sea level.

4.43 Scenic Quality for this Seascape Zone is considered to be High, due to its ever changing nature, indented coastline and views of the Treshnish Isles. The seascape is also valued due to falling within the Loch na Keal NSA. The craggy shoreline and presence of a number of islets would allow it to accommodate some change of the type proposed if sensitively located.

4.44 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed is therefore considered to be generally **High**.

### **5. Mitigation Measures**

5.1 Mitigation measures associated with the reduction of potential adverse impacts on landscape/seascape character and also minimising visual impacts, involved the consideration of the proximity to residents, visitors and other loch users, designations covering the area and potential visual impact of the site.

5.2 A series of mitigations measures are planned at the proposed development to mitigate against potential landscape and visual impacts. These include the following:

- Use of black fish farm cages to blend into the water and backdrop of small-scale cliffs;
- Use of low-lying cages and feed barge;
- Layout of cages and feed barge orientated with the coastline;
- Use of dark matt colours to help minimise potential visual effects of the feed barge and use of non-reflective materials; and
- Use of only navigational lights during hours of darkness.

5.3 Further information on the type and specification of the equipment to be used on the proposed development can be found in Annexes of the LVIA Report.

## **6. Assessment of Environmental Effects**

6.1 The extent to which the proposed development would affect the existing landscape/seascape character varies depending on the individual components of the proposed development and the capacity of the existing landscape to absorb these various components.

6.2 The following section provides an assessment of the effects that the proposed development would have on the designations, local character zones and Loch Tuath Seascape during installation and also in the longer term during the operational phase, in accordance with the impact criteria outlined in Section 3.25. The LVIA report has previously evaluated the proposed change in the broader landscape types and areas defined in the Argyll and Bute Landscape Character Assessments and the effects of the proposed development on the Loch na Keal NSA. However, following SNH's concerns with regard to the Loch na Keal NSA a more detailed assessment has been undertaken within this Addendum. An assessment of potential cumulative effects resulting from the proposed development in conjunction with other developments within Loch Tuath has previously been undertaken in the LVIA report and will not be discussed further in this assessment.

### **Loch Na Keal National Scenic Area**

6.3 The principal components with implications for the zone comprise:

- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
- Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
- Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
- Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.

- 6.4 During installation and operation there would be potential close direct impacts to a localised small section of the northern coastline of Gometra, indirect impacts to a small section of the northern Ulva coastline, and elsewhere more distant indirect impacts would be experienced from the northern coastline of Loch Tuath. Further intervisibility would be experienced from the more elevated areas of Gometra, Ulva and area to the north of Loch Tuath. However, the proposed development would form a small part of an otherwise extensive landscape from the majority of areas, with the exception of Gometra which would experience close views of the proposed development.
- 6.5 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:
- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
  - The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
  - The location and nature of the permanent features;
  - Proposed mitigation measures; and
  - The scale of the proposals adjacent within the NSA.
- 6.6 Sensitivity to change for this LCZ is High due to being falling within an area designated a National Scenic Area. Magnitude of change during construction would be Locally Medium but overall Low during the installation and operation of the proposed development.
- 6.7 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Locally Moderate Adverse** (significant) but overall **Slight Adverse** (not significant) due to the small section of coastline and hinterland affected.

#### **Area of Panoramic Quality**

- 6.8 The principal components with implications for the zone comprise:
- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
  - Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
  - Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
  - Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.
- 6.9 During installation and operation there would be potential indirect impacts to the south-western slopes of Druim na Cille, Beinn nan Clach-corra, and Beinn Bhuidhe. The proposed development would form a small part of an otherwise extensive view experienced from these areas and would be viewed against a backdrop of small-scale sea cliffs. There would be potential indirect impacts on some additional areas due to the increase of boat activity in the loch during the installation. However, this would be short term and would reduce during operation. These activities during operation would be similar to other boat activities that

currently take place, although at a potentially greater intensity within the localised area but appear overall little different to the existing situation.

6.10 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:

- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
- The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
- The location and nature of the permanent features;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- The scale and distance of the proposals adjacent to the LCZ.

6.11 Sensitivity to change for this LCZ is High due to being largely undeveloped upland area that forms an important backdrop to Calgary Bay and Loch Tuath. Magnitude of change would be Low during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

6.12 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Neutral** (not significant) due to the distance between the proposed development and small area potentially affected.

#### **Local Character Zone 1 – Rugged Coastal Hills**

6.13 The principal components with implications for the zone comprise:

- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
- Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
- Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
- Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.

6.14 During installation and operation there would be potential close indirect impacts to a localised small section of the northern coastline of Gometra, elsewhere more distant indirect impacts would be experienced from the northern slopes of Gometra Hill, the north-western slopes of Beinn Eolasky and Beinn Chreagach and the headlands on the east and west side of Lon Bhearnuis horseshoe bay. On the northern side of Loch Tuath potential intervisibility would be experienced from the southern slopes of Cruachan, Beinn Reudle, Cruachan Odhar and the south-western slopes of Beinn Bhuidhe, Beinn nan Clach-corra as well as isolated pockets to the east of Kilbrennan. There would also be potential indirect impacts from some areas due to the increase of boat activity in the loch during the installation. These activities during operation would be similar to other boat activities that currently take place, although at a potentially greater intensity within the localised area but appear overall little different to the existing situation.

6.15 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:

- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
- The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
- The location and nature of the permanent features;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- The scale of the proposals adjacent to the LCZ.

6.16 Sensitivity to change for this LCZ is High due to being largely undeveloped and forming an important backdrop to Loch Tuath. Magnitude of change during construction would be Locally Medium but overall Low during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

6.17 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Locally Moderate Adverse** (significant) but overall **Slight Adverse** (not significant).

### **Local Character Zone 2 – Coastal Moorland Edge**

6.18 The principal components with implications for the zone comprise:

- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
- Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
- Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
- Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.

6.19 During installation and operation there would be potential indirect impacts to a small section of the northern coastline of Ulva, in particular the small headlands north of Balgortan and at Rubha Chullinish approximately 2.5km east. On the northern coastline of Loch Tuath intervisibility would be experienced along a short section of the coastline between Rubh a' Chaoil eastwards to the lower slopes of Beinn Reudle. This section of coastline would be opposite the proposed development at a distance of approximately 3.4km to the south. There would also be potential indirect impacts from some areas along the northern coastline of Ulva due to the increase of boat activity in the loch during the installation. However, this would be short term and would reduce during operation and appear overall little different to the existing situation.

6.20 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:

- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
- The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
- The location and nature of the permanent features;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- The scale and distance of the proposals from the LCZ.

6.21 Sensitivity to change for this LCZ is High due to due to forming an important backdrop to Loch Tuath that is largely undeveloped. Magnitude of change during



the installation and operation of the proposed fish farm would be Low due to the small sections of the coastline experiencing intervisibility covered by the LCZ.

- 6.22 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) as the permanent features of the proposed fish farm would be low-lying in the water and potential intervisibility would be limited along the coastline that falls within this LCZ.

### **Local Character Zone 3 – Rough Coastal Pasture**

- 6.23 The principle components with implications for the zone comprise:
- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
  - Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
  - Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
  - Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.
- 6.24 During installation and operation there would be potential indirect impacts to a small section this LCZ on the northern coastline of Gometra, in particular the headlands at Tigh na Caillich adjacent to the proposed development and Rubh' a Mhill Mhoir approximately 1km to the east. The LCZ would experience close indirect intervisibility with the proposed development and boat activity at both headlands, however, the hinterland of the LCZ would largely be unaffected by the proposed development. The LCZ would experience an increase in boat traffic during the installation of the proposed fish farm, however, this would be short term and would reduce during operation and appear overall little different to the existing situation.
- 6.25 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:
- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
  - The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
  - The location and nature of the permanent features;
  - Proposed mitigation measures; and
  - The scale of the proposals adjacent and close to the LCZ.
- 6.26 Sensitivity to change for this LCZ is Medium due to its coastal location and man-made elements found within the landscape. Magnitude of change during the installation and operation of the proposed fish farm would be Low due to the small sections of the coastline experiencing intervisibility covered by the LCZ.
- 6.27 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Locally Moderate Adverse** (significant) but overall **Slight Adverse** (not significant) due to the small section of the LCZ potentially affected.

#### **Local Character Zone 4 – Settled Loch Shore**

- 6.28 The principle components with implications for the zone comprise:
- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
  - Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
  - Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
  - Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.
- 6.29 During installation and operation there would be potential indirect impacts to a section of this LCZ on the northern coastline of Loch Tuath between Dun Aisgain to the west and Camas an Lagain Bay in the east. Potential intervisibility experienced would range from approximately 2.8km to the north, extending eastwards approximately 9.4km. The LCZ would experience indirect intervisibility with the proposed development and boat activity along the whole of the coastline and part of the hinterland, however, with the exception of installation where there will be a notable increase in boat traffic, operations experienced around the proposed fish farm will be similar to that already experienced further up the loch to the east at the existing Tuath Fish Farm as well as current boat activity on the loch. The proposed fish farm would sit low within the water and would be experienced against a backdrop of small-scale sea cliffs reducing the visual prominence of the fish farm.
- 6.30 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:
- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
  - The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
  - The location and nature of the permanent features;
  - Proposed mitigation measures; and
  - The scale and distance of the proposals.
- 6.31 Scenic Quality for this LCZ is considered to be High, due to its diverse range of characteristics and backdrop that it forms to Loch Tuath. Magnitude of change during construction would be Low as the areas affected are already influenced to some degree by the existing Tuath Fish Farm and boat activity in the loch.
- 6.32 The resultant impact during installation would be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) due to the wide expanse of loch experienced from this LCT of which the proposed fish farm would form a small part off.

#### **Local Character Zone 5 – Open Moorland River Valley**

- 6.33 The principle components with implications for the zone comprise:
- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;

- Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
- Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
- Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.

6.34 During installation and operation there would be potential indirect impacts to the eastern shorelines of the Treshnish Isles. However, any intervisibility experienced would be distant at approximately 7.3km. The low-lying nature of the proposed fish farm and dark colours would result in the development appearing as part of a headland. Additionally, the intervening sea between the Treshnish Isles and Gometra tends to be rougher which would also help to limit views of the proposed fish farm infrastructure.

6.35 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:

- The temporary indirect nature of much of the activities;
- The longer term indirect nature of the activities;
- The location and nature of the permanent features;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- The scale and distance of the proposals.

6.36 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed for this LCZ is High due to its open, exposed coastal location. During installation and operation magnitude of change would be Low as indirect impacts would be distant and only affect the eastern shores of the islands.

6.78 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Neutral** largely due to the low-lying nature of the proposed development and distance.

### **Loch Tuath Seascape Zone**

6.89 The principle components with implications for the zone comprise:

- Temporary movement of boats and associated materials to form proposed fish farm;
- Long term movement of operational maintenance boats;
- Installation of the proposed fish farm; and
- Operations related to the running of the proposed fish farm.

6.39 The ZTV indicates that a large area of Loch Tuath could potentially experience intervisibility with the proposed development. However, due to the low-lying nature of the proposed development the main impacts would be more localised with the proposed development infrastructure being less prominent further away due to dark colours and viewed against the backdrop of small-scale cliffs.

6.40 The following issues have been taken into account in determining the order of impact:

- The temporary direct/indirect nature of much of the activities;

- The longer term direct/indirect nature of the activities;
- The location and nature of the permanent features;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- The scale and distance of the proposals.

6.41 Sensitivity to change of the type proposed for this LCZ is High due to its open, exposed nature and indented coastline. During installation and operation magnitude of change would be Locally Medium and overall Low.

6.32 The resultant impact during installation and operation would be **Locally Moderate Adverse** (significant) but overall **Slight Adverse** (not significant) largely due to the low-lying nature of the proposed development.

## 7. Summary of Impacts to Local Character Zones and Designated Areas

7.1 Table 2 summarises the order of impacts during installation and operation of the proposed fish farm within the designated areas and various local landscape zones. For the purposes of this assessment impacts of a Moderate value or greater are considered to be significant.

**Table 2- Summary of assessment of impacts on local character zones and designated areas**

LOCAL CHARACTER ZONE	INSTALLATION				OPERATION			
	Neutral	Slight Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Substantial Adverse	Neutral	Slight Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Substantial Adverse
Loch na Keal NSA		*	(*)			*	(*)	
Area of Panoramic Quality	*				*			
LCZ 1 – Rugged Coastal Moorland		*	(*)			*	(*)	
LCZ 2 – Coastal Moorland Edge		*				*		
LCZ 3 – Rough Coastal Pasture		*	(*)			*	(*)	
LCZ 4 – Settled Loch Shore		*				*		
LCZ 5 – Coastal Islands	*				*			
Loch Tuath Seascape Zone		*	(*)			*	(*)	

**Note** - (\*) local impact

## **Summary and Conclusions**

### **Designated Areas**

- 7.2 The assessment has shown that during installation and operation there would be a **Locally Moderate Adverse** (significant) impact for the Loch na Keal NSA. However, the overall impact on the National Scenic Area as a whole is anticipated to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) due to the small part of the overall designation affected by the proposed development.
- 7.3 The assessment has also concluded that there would be a potential **Neutral**, and therefore non-significant, impact to the Area of Panoramic Quality, as changes are likely to be imperceptible.
- 7.4 It is considered that in both cases, the integrity of the designation would remain unaffected.

### **Local Landscape Character Zones**

- 7.5 The assessment findings have indicated that during installation and during operation, the proposed fish farm would result in potential **Localised** significant impacts to two of the five LCZs identified, due to the presence of installation and operational activities alongside the actual fish farm infrastructure within a rural and remote, valued landscapes. Potential **Locally Moderate Adverse** impacts would be experienced by LCZ 1, Rugged Coastal Moorland, and LCZ 3, Rough Coastal Pasture, whilst potential **Slight Adverse** impacts are anticipated to be experienced by LCZ 2, Coastal Moorland Edge, and LCZ 4 Settled Loch Shore. LCZ 5 would experience potential **Neutral** impacts which are not anticipated to be significant.
- 7.6 The assessment findings also indicated the seascape of Loch Tuath would also experience a potential **Localised Moderate Adverse** (significant) impact during installation and operation. However, overall it is anticipated that the seascape would receive a **Slight Adverse** (not significant) impact as a result of the mitigation measures implemented, sea conditions and distance from the proposed development from many areas of the loch.

### **Conclusions**

- 7.7 The assessment has concluded that during the installation and operation of the proposed fish farm there would be some significant **Locally Moderate Adverse** impacts to the landscape designations, character and seascape of Loch Tuath. However, overall it is concluded that no significant impacts would affect the integrity of the Loch na Keal National Scenic Area, landscape character and the seascape of Loch Tuath.

## **8. Visual Impact Assessment**

8.1 This section of the Addendum reports the findings of the detailed visual impact assessment undertaken for the development. It describes and evaluates the potential change in existing views obtained from residential properties, places of work, routes, popular destinations and strategic viewpoints during the installation and operational phases of the proposed development, and the extent to which these affect residents, visitors and users of the landscape.

### **Potential Impacts**

8.2 Visual amenity relates to the way in which people visually experience the surrounding landscape. Adverse visual impacts may occur through the intrusion into established views of new features, out of keeping with the existing structure, scale and composition of the view. However, visual impacts may also be beneficial where an attractive focus is created in a previously unremarkable view or the influence of previously detracting features is reduced. The significance of impacts will vary, depending on the nature and degree of change experienced and the perceived value and composition of the existing view.

8.3 In the context of the proposed fish farm, key concerns relate to:

- The appearance of 16 circular cages at 100m circumference (32m diameter) circular plastic cages arranged in one groups of rectangular shape, orientated east to west parallel with the coastline. The cages will be covered by bird netting supported by a 'hamster wheel' structure at 2m high;
- The appearance of a 220 tonne feed barge positioned between the two sets of cages which will sit 4m above the water when loaded; and
- The appearance of installation activities and permanent components in views from receptors.

### **Study Area**

8.4 The study area for the visual impact assessment has been defined through use of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) diagrams (See Figure 2) and site appraisal which has identified that the visual envelope is likely to be further limited by the undulating nature of the surrounding topography.

## **9. Visual Method of Assessment**

### **Assessment Guidance**

9.1 The assessment has been prepared with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Second Edition), 2002, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (GLVIA).

### **Key Stages of Assessment**

9.2 GLVIA suggest that visual impacts are assessed from a clear understanding of the development proposed and any mitigation measures which are being adopted. Familiarity with the site and the extent, nature and expectation of existing views is also a key factor in establishing the visual sensitivity to change in terms of the development proposed. The guidelines require evaluation of magnitude of change to views experienced by sensitive receptors comprising individuals living, working, travelling and carrying out other activities within the landscape, and subsequent evaluation of impact significance.

9.3 There are three key stages to the assessment:

- Establishment of the baseline;
- Appreciation of the proposed development;
- Consideration of variation of effects over time; and

## **10. Establishment of the Baseline**

10.1 Establishment of the baseline conditions has been undertaken through a combination of desk study and site appraisal. The following specific tasks have been undertaken:

- A review of the relevant development plans and supplementary planning guidance as described in section 3.10 of this Addendum;
- Generation and review of ZTV diagrams (See Figure 2);
- Identification of sensitive visual receptors and key viewpoint receptors,;
- Field survey to establish the nature and context of individual visual receptors and the key elements and qualities of the existing view; and
- Identification of sensitivity of the existing view to the change proposed.

### Establishing the Zone of Theoretical Visibility

10.2 To aid the assessment ZTVs were produced to help establish likely visibility of the key features of the scheme. The following heights were assumed to illustrate the potential operational ZTV for the key elements of the proposed scheme:

- Feed Barge - Finished height of 4m above sea level; and
- Fish Cages – Finished height of 2m above sea level.

10.3 For further information regarding the use of ZTV's and their limitations see section 3.29 and 3.30 of this Addendum.

### Receptors

10.4 For there to be a visual impact there is the need for a viewer. Views experienced from locations such as buildings, recognised route ways and popular viewpoints used by the public have been included in the assessment. These locations are known as receptors.

10.5 Potential receptors have been identified through analysis of the ZTV in combination with targeted field survey.

### Sensitivity to Change

- 10.6 Sensitivity to change considers the nature of the receptor and the viewing expectation of those using that receptor. The importance of the area of change as a part of the view as a whole contributes to the sensitivity evaluation.
- 10.7 Sensitivity to change proposed has been evaluated with reference to the subject areas above and using a three-point scale as follows:
- **High** – Where the changed landscape represents an important part of a highly valued, impressive or well composed view with no detracting features;
  - **Medium** – Where the changed landscape represents a fairly important part of a valued or pleasing view, or forms a notable part of a less well composed view with some detracting features; and
  - **Low** – Where the changed landscape represents an unimportant part of the view or the view is of limited value or poorly composed, with numerous detracting features.

### **Appreciation of the Proposed Development**

- 10.8 Appreciation of the proposed development involves the accumulation of a thorough knowledge of the proposal, its nature, scale and location within the baseline landscape, and any peripheral or ancillary features proposed.

### **Variation of Effects Over Time**

- 10.9 Visual impacts change over time as mitigation, included as part of the proposals, establish and weather and as the existing landscape external to the development evolves. The assessment acknowledges change and reports on the impacts during the installation phase, and during the operation of the proposed development.

### **Assessment of Visual Impacts**

- 10.10 The aim of the visual assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate the significance of potential impacts to established views arising from the proposed development. This has involved the following specific assessment tasks:
- An appreciation of the nature, form and features of the proposed development in the context of the baseline landscape character (refer to Section 4 of of this Addendum);
  - An evaluation of the predicted magnitude of change likely to take place to existing views from identified receptors as a result of the installation and operation of the proposed fish farm; and
  - An evaluation of the degree and significance of the potential impact of the proposed fish farm on views from identified receptors during the installation and operational phases.



### Magnitude of Change

- 10.11 Magnitude of change concerns the extent to which the existing view would be altered by the proposed development.
- 10.12 Magnitude of change has been evaluated using a four point scale comprised of the following criteria:
- **High** – Where the proposed development would result in a very noticeable change in the existing view;
  - **Medium** – Where the proposed development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view;
  - **Low** – Where the proposed development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view; and
  - **Negligible** – Where the proposed development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view.

### Impact Criteria

- 10.13 The level of impact identified concerns the importance of changes resulting from the proposed development. Evaluation of the impact is based on consideration of the magnitude of change in relation to sensitivity, taking into account proposed mitigations measures, and is established using professional judgement. The assessment takes into account likely changes to the visual composition, including the extent to which new features would distract or screen existing elements in the view or disrupt the scale, structure or focus of the existing view.
- 10.14 The prominence of the proposed structures, and other components in the view will vary according to the prevailing weather conditions. The assessment has been carried out, as is best practice, by assuming the 'worst case' scenario i.e. on a clear, bright day in winter, when neither foreground deciduous foliage nor haze can interfere with the clarity of the view obtained.
- 10.15 Level of Impact has been evaluated using a four point scale and using the following criteria:
- **Substantial Adverse** – The proposed development would become a prominent and very detracting feature and would result in a very noticeable deterioration to an existing highly valued and well composed view;
  - **Moderate Adverse** – The proposed development would introduce some detracting features to an existing highly valued and well composed view, or would be prominent within a pleasing or less well composed view, resulting in a noticeable deterioration of the view;
  - **Slight Adverse** – The proposed development would form a perceptible but not detracting feature within a pleasing or valued view or would be a more prominent feature within a poorly composed view of limited value, resulting in a small deterioration to the existing view; and
  - **Negligible** – The proposed development would form a barely perceptible feature within the existing view and would not result in any discernible deterioration to the view.

### **Limitations of the Assessment**

- 10.16 The use and limitations of ZTVs is described in section 3.29 and 3.30. The assessment of visual effects has been undertaken from the nearest public road, footpath or open space to each property and assumptions have been made about the types of rooms, and about the types and importance of views obtained from these rooms.

### **Baseline Conditions**

- 10.17 The baseline landscape and its broad visual context are described in Section 4 of this Addendum.

### **Interpretation of the ZTV**

- 10.18 The ZTV indicates that the southern coastline of Loch Tuath would experience limited views of the proposed development due to the indented nature of the coastline. However, the northern shore of Loch Tuath would experience potential views from the headland in the west at Rubh a' Chaoil to Camas an Lagain in the east. Potential views of the proposed development from inland views would be relatively limited by landform and largely experienced in the more upland areas of the northern hinterland of Loch Tuath. The ZTV also indicates that extensive views would be obtained from the sea of the proposed development. Visibility of the cages is shown to have a larger visual envelope compared to the feeding barge, due to the larger surface area.

## **11. Visual Receptors**

- 11.1 Visual receptors included in the assessment are indicated on Figure 6.
- 11.2 The visual receptors identified can be subdivided into two separate categories
- Views from buildings; and
  - Views from outdoor locations.

### **Views from Buildings**

- 11.3 Eight receptor groups of built properties have been identified within the ZTV as potentially obtaining a view of the proposed development. These are described as follows:

#### *Receptor B1 – Kilbrennan Farm*

- 11.4 This receptor comprises a two storey house and farm located between Loch Tuath and the B8037 road and obtains main views across fields to the south-west including extensive views of Loch Tuath and Ulva.
- 11.5 Sensitivity to the change proposed is considered to be **Low**.

#### *Receptor B2 – Ballygowan*

- 11.6 This receptor comprises of approximately eight 1.5 and 2 storey houses located adjacent to the B8037 road with the main view looking south-west to south across

foreground road and fields towards Loch Tuath and Ulva. Some of these properties are slightly elevated and obtain views of the existing Tuath Fish Farm.

- 11.7 This property has therefore been given a sensitivity rating of **Low**.

*Receptor B3 – Fanmore*

- 11.8 This receptor consists of a group of approximately six crofts and houses located in a slightly elevated location with extensive views to the south-west towards Loch Tuath, Ulva and Gometra. Some of the views obtained are partially screened by foreground rocky outcrops and woodland, otherwise views experienced are open and include the outer reaches of Loch Tuath

- 11.9 These properties have been given a sensitivity rating of **Medium**.

*Receptor B4 – Normanns Ruh*

- 11.10 This receptor consists of a group of approximately four houses and farm with elevated views over foreground coastline towards Ulva and Gometra to the south-west

- 11.11 These properties have been given a sensitivity rating of **Medium**.

*Receptor B5 - Achleck*

- 11.12 This receptor consists of a group of properties located further inland and close to the B8073 road. Properties are scattered and include Torloisk House and Farm Mains and all experience mixed orientation of main views with the majority of main views being to the west or south-west, although these views are largely screened by woodland and local topography which surrounds the settlement limiting views further afield.

- 11.13 These properties have been given a sensitivity rating of **Low**.

*Receptor B6 – Kilninian*

- 11.14 This receptor group consists of three 1.5 storey houses, schoolhouse, church and graveyard in an elevated location. Main views tend to be orientated to the south towards Ulva and Gometra, although local topography and trees limit some views and frame others.

*Receptor B7 – Tostary*

- 11.15 This receptor group consists of three properties located in a very elevated location above Loch Tuath with views across foreground road and fields to Ulva and Gometra.

- 11.16 These properties have been given a sensitivity rating of **High**.

*Receptor B8 – Burg*

- 11.17 This receptor group consists of three properties located in an elevated location adjacent to the B8037 road as it heads inland. Main view tends to be to the south-

west and includes views of the Treshnish Isles, although most of the properties views would be fully or partially screened by boundary shelter planting.

11.18 These properties have been given a sensitivity rating of **Low**.

### **Views from Outdoor Locations**

11.19 Views from outdoor locations generally fall within one of three categories:

- views from public roads;
- views from footpaths and identified walking routes; and
- views from other outdoor locations, including mountain summits and popular tourist viewing locations.

#### Views from public roads and transport routes

##### *Receptor R1 – B8037 Road*

11.20 This receptor comprises the unclassified narrow single track road running north-east to south-west along the northern coastline of Loch Tuath. Views are predominantly seaward and towards the Isle of Ulva and Gometra with higher points on the road providing extensive views along the coastline. Along the majority of the inner section of the loch, views tend to be framed or filtered by adjacent native mixed woodland. Views towards the loch are also affected by a series of hairpin bends and undulating road which help to screen views of the loch.

11.21 Sensitivity to the change proposed is considered to be **Medium**.

##### *Receptor R2 – Dervaig to Torloisk Mountain Road*

11.22 This receptor comprises the unclassified road that passes through the hills between Dervaig and Torloisk in a north to south direction. Views are mixed generally of the surrounding uplands, however, when travelling southwards Loch Tuath and islands of Ulva and Gometra can be viewed from this route.

11.23 Sensitivity to change proposed is considered to be **Medium**.

#### Views from footpaths and identified walking routes

##### *Receptor F1 – Ulva Ferry to Gometra including Beinn Creagach*

11.24 This receptor consists of a constructed footpath that runs parallel with Loch Tuath before heading inland to the drawbridge joining Ulva with Gometra. Views tend to be orientated towards Loch Tuath to the north and include extensive views of the north shore including views of Tuath Fish Farm.

11.25 Sensitivity to the change proposed is considered to be **Medium**.

##### *Receptor F2 – Treshnish Walking Route*

11.26 This route consists of a circular walk from the B8037 on the northern side of Loch Tuath around the headland of Treshnish via Haun. Main view is orientated to the south and west seawards with the Treshnish Isles forming a focal point in views.

11.27 Sensitivity to the change proposed for these routes is considered to be **High**.

#### Views from other outdoor locations

##### *Receptor O1 – Eas Fors Waterfall*

11.28 This is a popular waterfall visited by tourists and obtains open views of Loch Tuath to the south and the northern shorelines of Ulva and Gometra.

11.29 Sensitivity to the change proposed is considered to be **Low**.

##### *Receptor O2 – Viewpoint and Seating Area at Tostary*

11.30 This receptor consists of two areas with parking and outdoor seating in an elevated location above Loch Tuath. Extensive views of Loch Tuath, Ulva, Gometra and the Treshnish Isles can be obtained from this location.

11.31 Sensitivity to the change proposed for this viewpoint is considered to be **High**.

## **12. Assessment of Environmental Effects**

12.1 The following section gives description of predicted impacts on all receptors. For the purpose of this assessment significant impacts are those considered to be moderate or substantial. Individual receptor references relate to those indicated on Figure 6.

12.2 Mitigation measures associated with minimising the visual impacts of the proposed scheme are described in Section 5 of this Addendum.

#### **Views from Buildings**

##### *Receptor B1 – Kilbrennan Farm*

12.3 During the installation and operation of the proposed development no views are anticipated to be experienced from this receptor due to the oblique angle. However, the receptor may experience views of additional boat activity although this would be similar to views already obtained of boats going to Tuath Fish Farm.

12.4 Magnitude of change is anticipated to be Low during both the installation and operational phases. The resultant impact is therefore anticipated to be **Negligible** during the installation and the operation of the proposed development.

##### *Receptors B2 – Ballygowan, B3 – Fanmore, & B4 - Normanns Ruh*

12.5 During installation and operation there may be some very oblique views obtained of the proposed development from these receptors, however, these would be approximately between 6km and 7km in distance in which the proposed development would form a small part of the overall view and barely visible. The receptors may view an increase in boat activity, however, this would be viewed in context with the nearby Tuath Fish Farm.

- 12.6 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Negligible during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Negligible** during both installation and operation.

*Receptor B5 – Achleck*

- 12.6 It is anticipated that limited or no views of the proposed development would be experienced from these receptors during installation and operation due to screening provided by local topography and woodland.

- 12.7 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Negligible during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Negligible** during both installation and operation.

*Receptor B6 – Kilninian*

- 12.8 It is anticipated that these receptors would experience potential oblique views of the proposed development although foreground local topography and trees may limit views from lower elevated locations. The proposed development would form a small part of the overall view experienced from this location.

- 12.9 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during both installation and operation.

*Receptor B7 – Tolstary*

- 12.10 It is anticipated that these receptors would experience elevated potential oblique views of the proposed development although the proposed development would form a small part of the overall view experienced from this location.

- 12.11 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during both installation and operation.

*Receptor B8 – Burg*

- 12.12 These receptors are predicted to receive elevated oblique views of the proposed development, although partial screening from trees and local topography will further reduce any visibility experienced.

- 12.13 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during both installation and operation.

## **Views from Outdoor Locations**

### Views from public roads

*Receptor R1 – B8037 Road*

- 12.14 There would be limited short term passing views from some locations of this road between Burg and Kilninian. Other views from the road would be limited or consist of

glimpses due to the hairpin turns and presence of woodland adjacent to the road. Overall, it is anticipated that the proposed development would not impede on coastal views and would be viewed against a dark back drop of small-scale cliffs.

- 12.15 Magnitude of change during installation and operation for this receptor would be Low, The resultant impact is predicted to be **Slight Adverse** during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

*Receptor R2 – Unclassified Road between Torloisk and Dervaig*

- 12.16 This road would experience potential views of the proposed development along a short section to the north of Achleck when heading in a southerly direction. However, due to the winding nature of the road and intervening woodland these views would be limited in which the development would be viewed at an oblique angle and distant. (5km away).
- 12.17 Magnitude of change for these receptors is anticipated to be Negligible during installation and operation. The resultant impact is predicted to be **Negligible** during both installation and operation.

Views from footpaths and identified walking routes

*Receptor F1 – Ulva Ferry to Gometra Footpath*

- 12.18 During installation and operation there would be oblique views or glimpses of the proposed development from a very short section of this route at Culinish and Baligortan in which views would be partially screened by an intervening headland. The footpath would experience an increase in views of boat activity; however, this would be viewed in context of existing activity experienced on Loch Tuath.
- 12.19 Magnitude of change for this route is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact is anticipated to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

*Receptor F2 – Treshnish Footpath*

- 12.20 This route would experience potential views of the proposed development from a section of the footpath that runs parallel with the north shoreline of Loch Tuath. However, views of the proposed development would be experienced in the context of very open views of the Atlantic Ocean and Treshnish Isles which form the dominant focal point.
- 12.21 Magnitude of change for this route is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact is anticipated to be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during the installation and operation of the proposed development.

Views from other outdoor locations

*Receptor O1 – Eas Fors Waterfall*

- 12.22 It is anticipated that potential views of installation works and the operation of the proposed development would barely be visible from this location. However, the

receptor may experience views of an increase in boat activity although this would be viewed in context with existing boat activity associated with the Tuath Fish Farm and fishing.

- 12.23 Magnitude of change is therefore anticipated to be Negligible during both construction and operation and the impact is therefore predicted to be **Negligible** during both phases of the development.

*Receptor O2 – Viewpoint and Seating Area at Tolstary*

- 12.24 It is anticipated that these receptors would experience elevated potential oblique views of the proposed development although the proposed development would form a small part of the overall view experienced from this location.

- 12.25 Magnitude of change for this receptor is anticipated to be Low during installation and operation. The resultant impact would be **Slight Adverse** (not significant) during installation and operation.

### 13. Visual Summary

- 13.1 Table 3 provides a summary of the collective visual impacts associated with the proposed development. For the purposes of this assessment a rating of Moderate or above is considered to be significant.

**Table 3 – Summary of Visual Impacts**

Location	Installation				Operation			
	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
Views from buildings	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	-
Views from road and transport routes	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Views from walking routes	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
Views from other outdoor locations	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### Visual Summary

- 13.2 Summary Table 3 indicates that, during installation and operation of the proposed development, of the nine receptors/receptor groups assessed, none are anticipated to experience significant visual impacts resulting from the installation or operation of the proposed development. This is due to the nature of main view from properties



and limited visibility experienced from outdoor locations due to local topography, woodland and the winding nature of footpaths and routes.

### **Visual Conclusions**

- 13.3 It is therefore concluded that no significant impacts would be experienced by any receptors located within the ZTV around Loch Tuath.

### **14. Statement of Significance**

- 14.1 The LVIA has identified that there would be a small number of locally significant effects on the Loch na Keal NSA, two LCZ's and the seascape of Loch Tuath and no visual receptors. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would result in a localised significant effect on landscape, but overall, the effect on the landscape and visual resource of Loch Tuath is considered to be **not significant**.