

POLICY ZONE D: STRONDOIR BAY TO SILVER CRAIGS

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The landscape is partially comprised of large-scale mosaic of forestry plantation and areas of open moorland. Smooth undulating slopes with hills not attaining the same altitude as of Strondoir Bay. Much of the coastal edge at Loch Gilp's hinterland is developed with settlement extending up hilly slopes. While Loch Gilp is not of notable scenic value, the loch has a naturalistic and simple, uncluttered character which provides an important contrast with the complex, developed coastal edge and hinterland. Some of the land around Ardrishaig and Lochgilphead is farmed for livestock and the upland areas are mostly coniferous forest plantation.

SEASCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

From Strondoir Bay to Ardrishaig, the coastline has a generally linear form, although is occasionally indented with shallow bays. The bay just south of Inverneill is picturesque and is one of the few on Loch Fyne with an area of hard-packed intertidal sand. In general though, the coastline consists of a narrow rocky shore, reinforced at places to protect the A83 trunk road, interspersed with shingle beaches.

Lower Loch Fyne indents into Loch Gilp at Ardrishaig. At this point the coastline becomes industrialised with a large seawall running along the coast in front of the town, and a breakwater and large commercial pier at the entrance to the Crinan Canal. At low tide, mud flats are exposed at the head of the loch.

Beyond Ardrishaig, the shore becomes rocky up to Lochgilphead with very shallow and intertidal mud flatertidal

Lochgilphead to Silver Craigs

There is a pier on the east side of Loch Gilp, although this is only accessible during high tide. There is no formalised public access to the loch from Lochgilphead round to Silver Craigs. Access to the shore in this area is limited to foot traffic through the Castleton Estate.

VISUAL AMENITY

The settlements of Inverneill, Ardrishaig and Lochgilphead have open views across the loch. From the trunk road, outlooks are generally open and there are a few stopping places from which the loch can be viewed. Views to the immediate sea area can be broad and distant over to the Cowal peninsula. From Ardrishaig, there are open views to Lochgilphead and vice versa. There are no formal hiking trails along this part of the coast, but there are numerous view

CURRENT USES

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

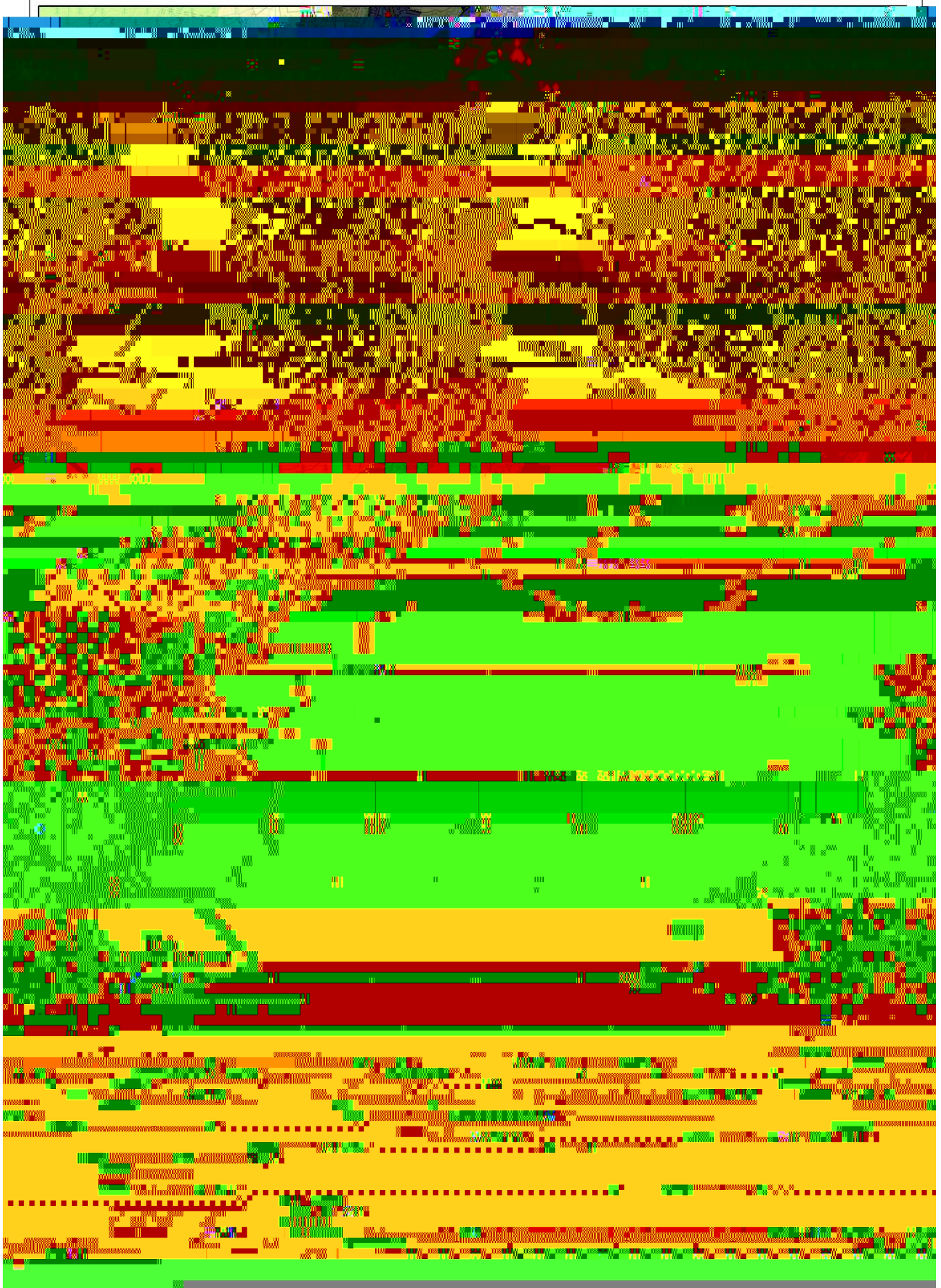
Aquaculture

Aquaculture activities in this policy zone are currently restricted to a finfish lease at Strondoir Bay. Adjacent to this site is a land base facility and fish farm workboats are kept on moorings in the bay.

POLICY ZONE D MAP – Current Uses & Activities



POLICY ZONE D MAP – Designations, Wildlife Interests & Historic Features



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Constraints

Future Use

Condition of Coastal Infrastructure

Coastal infrastructure at Ardrishaig is currently poor although the town is listed as an area for action in the Argyll and Bute Development Plan (Structure & Local Plan).

Areas sensitive

Development	
On-shore Aquaculture	Appropriately designed and located aquaculture land base facilities could potentially merge with the existing settlements.
Aquaculture	There is potential for expansion of the existing salmon farm in this policy zone without adversely affecting the landscape character.
	The 'Loch Fyne Coastal Strip' Shellfish Growing Water extends throughout the length of the policy zone, excluding the coastal area around Ardrishaig and Lochgilphead. Coastal water quality should be maintained at an appropriate standard for shellfish growing.
Coastal Infrastructure	Marina facilities such as pontoons with berths, more accessible slipways and public moorings would be of economic benefit to the area, as there is increasing demand for step-ashore facilities in the Clyde area.
	Strategic coastal infrastructure development and improvements would bring significant economic development opportunities to the area.
Strategic Development	Ardrishaig is listed as an area for action in the Argyll and Bute Development Plan (Structure & Local Plan) and is therefore identified as a priority area for strategic development and environmental improvements.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR AQUACULTURE²

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

MARINE FINFISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Marine Finfish Development Policy PZD-1

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

Justification

- In the area from Strondoir Bay to Ardrishaig, the landscape/seascape capacity study indicates that due to the presence of the existing fish farm, any new developments in this stretch of coastline would create negative cumulative visual impacts from the A83 (Grant 2007).
- No potential to accommodate aquaculture was identified within Loch Gilp due to visual impacts from settlements and the A83 (Grant 2007).
- Shallow depths in much of this policy zone mean there are few areas that would be suitable for finfish development (Marine and Coastal Development Unit 2009)

On-shore aquaculture development	Strandoir Bay and existing settled areas	-	New land-based facilities should be located within existing settled areas. These settlements are designated as 'Developed Coast' in the Argyll and Bute Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) and any development proposals would need to be consistent with Local Plan Policy LP CST 1, and any other relevant Development Plan policies.
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Future relinquishment of existing developments

If the existing fish farm at Strandoir Bay is relinquished in the future,